

porter. The night porter would have an extra holiday—thirteen days every three months—and the additional wages to be paid would come to another £20 a year. In a house such as that which I have—a medium-class house—that extra cost would be beyond it altogether. As to the cost of commodities, there is certainly no indication that they are going to be reduced. As a matter of fact, I had a notification from the butchers last week that meat had gone up—some joints had gone up to 7d. per pound. Well, I am not taking in that increase at all in that rough calculation; but with all those things added it would be an exceptional hardship on hotels such as mine. To suggest that we should pass the cost on to the hotel patron—well, that is an impossible thing to do to such an extent: it simply could not be done. The matter of leases, and rent, and that sort of thing has been raised, but that is quite beside the question; there is no possibility of getting a reduction of rent to cover the extra cost of wages. If you have to alter your staff and their working, and you ask the owner of the premises to make a rebate commensurate with the additional outlay, he will look upon it as a mad proposal and turn it down. As far as I can see, the passing of an Act such as this would inflict a hardship on us which I do not see how we could overcome at all. I only put down an additional staff of four: it might need another one; but, as far as I can judge, four might be able to cope with it. Mr. Beveridge stated that his staff were not worked more than was necessary on a Sunday, and I do not think any hotelkeeper does that. The duties on Sunday, of course, in a hotel are much the same as on week-days. The public have to be attended to; they pay for it, and naturally they expect it. In addition to that, we have the Licensing Act, which compels us to make certain provision, and without a competent staff that provision cannot be made.

1. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] Do you admit that, theoretically, every man and woman should have one day off in the week?—I do not admit it.

2. Would you go so far as to say that men and women should work every day in the year?—I have got to work every day in the year, and I work for longer hours than the staff.

3. I am asking in regard to employees: you think it does them good to work every day in the year—is that it?—Certain hours.

4. Certain hours every day: it does them good?—It does not do them any harm, as far as I can see.

5. Then, theoretically, you believe that men and women should work every day throughout the year: it does them good?—You may take it in that way.

6. *Mr. Glover.*] Assuming this Bill is passed, would it not be possible, so as to recoup you the additional expense, to raise the tariff?—I do not think it would, to such an amount.

7. Mr. Beveridge stated that he has forty-one employees, exclusive of those in the bar, and that he would have to employ an extra six. You state that you have a staff of eighteen, and you think you will have to employ four more. How does that work in as against Mr. Beveridge's reckoning?—Mr. Beveridge no doubt has worked it out to fit in with his business. I have done the same. I have not compared my estimate with Mr. Beveridge's at all.

8. *Mr. Okey.*] It is generally admitted that the cost of living has gone up within the last few years: have you increased the cost of meals in any way during the last few years?—No.

9. That must be a pretty stiff item to you?—Yes, it is.

10. You do not consider that this proposal in the Bill could be carried out without increasing the cost to the travelling public?—Not on present indications.

11. Take a small country hotel, perhaps employing one or two: how are they going to carry it out?—I take it their staff would have to be increased proportionately. If two hands are employed—one in the kitchen and a housemaid—and that housemaid has to be off, some one else will have to be employed to carry out the duties. The same thing applies whether a man has a staff of one or of forty: the principle involved is just the same. If he has to let his employee off, he will have to get some one else to take the vacant place, or else the duties will not be carried out.

12. It would fall more heavily on the small man than on the large man?—It certainly would not be any lighter, as far as I can see.

13. You work yours out to cost more than Mr. Beveridge's?—Proportionately.

JOHN H. FAIRBURN examined. (No. 6.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Do you wish to make a statement?—I do not think I can say anything further than what Mr. Beveridge has stated. I am licensee of the Occidental Hotel, Wellington, and employ seventeen hands and four in the bars. I cannot do with less than four more if the Bill is carried, which would mean £450 or £500 a year for me. We do not get any extra for board now—in fact, people are singing out for something cheaper. My house is an 8s.-a-day house, but if this weekly holiday is given I shall have to increase the tariff, and do not know whether the public will pay it. If you put up the tariff there is a row. You can easily lower a rate, but cannot raise it.

2. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] Do you admit, generally, that it is better for every man and woman to get one day's holiday a week?—Generally, I think the hands are quite satisfied with the half-day. My hands are satisfied. There is no grumbling or talk about it.

3. But, generally, should not a man have one day's holiday a week?—It is a very awkward thing. We are there for the convenience of the public and are supposed to get a meal ready for a man whenever he comes. Often my wife has to get up and get a meal for a man, so that the hands do not work overtime.

4. Theoretically, do you think every man and woman should have one day's holiday a week or not?—I do not see how it is workable in hotels. It is very nice to have a holiday, but we have to keep the dining-room open seven days a week.

5. *Mr. Okey.*] You say you have no complaints amongst your hands?—No, none whatever. I have had some of my hands for years.