

SESSION II.
1912.
NEW ZEALAND.

LABOUR BILLS COMMITTEE:
SHOPS AND OFFICES AMENDMENT BILL.

(MR. BRADNEY, CHAIRMAN.)

Evidence brought up on the 6th November, 1912, and ordered to be printed.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

FRIDAY, THE 2ND DAY OF AUGUST, 1912.

Ordered, "That Standing Order No. 219 be suspended, and that a Committee be appointed, consisting of eleven members, to whom shall be referred Bills more particularly referring to labour; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Anderson, Mr. Atmore, Mr. J. Bollard, Mr. Bradney, Mr. Clark, Mr. Davey, Mr. Hindmarsh, Hon. Mr. Millar, Mr. Okey, Mr. Veitch, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. MASSEY.)

TUESDAY, THE 13TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1912.

Ordered, "That Standing Order No. 219 be suspended, and that the name of Mr. Glover be added to the Labour Bills Committee."—(Hon. Mr. MASSEY.)

MONDAY, THE 28TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 1912.

Ordered, "That the Shops and Offices Amendment Bill be referred to the Labour Bills Committee." — (Hon. Mr. MASSEY.)

REPORT.

Report brought up on 6th November, and not ordered to lie upon the table, and not ordered to be printed.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

THURSDAY, 31ST OCTOBER, 1912.

ELIJAH JOHN CAREY, Secretary, New Zealand Federated Hotel Workers Unions, made a statement and was examined. (No. 1.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Will you lay your views before the Committee?—The principle contained in the Bill has been before the Labour Bills Committee of Parliament since 1909. I did not know that the Committee were going to require any lengthy evidence on it at all. As far as the federation are concerned, seeing that this Bill merely gives effect to the principle of a twenty-four hours holiday on one of the seven days of the week, we are content to let the principle stand on its own bottom. The Bill does not at all give effect to very many of the reforms that we want in the trade. We recognize that it is too late now to attempt to get into the Bill other remedies which we want. We are quite content to let the thing go in the hope that next year we shall be able to come along and put a case before the Labour Bills Committee for still further improvements. I gave evidence before on the subject of the operation of a similar provision in other countries, and I do not think it is necessary to repeat that here. In Sydney—the place nearest here—the principle has been in operation through an award of the Court for, I think, the last three or four years—probably longer. We have been working for this now for six years. As I say, it has been before Parliament since 1909, and in 1911 the Labour Bills Committee recommended the principle to the favourable consideration of the Government, especially as far as hotel and restaurant workers are concerned. The Bill does no more than give to those men and women who are working in hotels seven days a week, and are getting only the half-holiday from 2 o'clock, after having worked on the day of the half-holiday, in many cases, six or eight hours—the Bill does no more than give them the morning off in addition to the afternoon. Girls who are working in restaurants which do not open on Sunday are not affected, nor are barmen in hotels. They will carry on just the same as heretofore, if the Bill is passed. There is one word I should like to see altered in subclause (1) of clause 2—the word “exclusively.” This word has been used in one or two Acts, and when we have tried to give it a fair application the Court has held that it is meant in its full restrictive sense, and that the person employed exclusively on one thing must be doing that and doing it all the time, or else he is not deemed to be exclusively employed at it. It may happen—I do not say it will—that if the word “exclusively” is left in, a barmaid, for instance, might be put into the office of the hotel for half an hour, and then she would not be exclusively employed as a barmaid, and she would lose the Sunday holiday that she already enjoys and has enjoyed since, I think, 1900 by the licensing legislation. We are very thankful to the Government for having met our wishes in this respect. As I say, the Bill does not go nearly so far as we would wish it to do, but it will be a concession to a good many hotel and restaurant workers who have for years worked seven days a week for 365 days in the year. The last clause safeguards any arbitration award obtaining, and prevents any criticism of the Bill on the ground that the Legislature is interfering with judgments of the Arbitration Court. Proof of the efficacy of such a clause can be seen in the case of our own trade. We secured an award in 1910, and the award was to last for two years. The Act was passed a few months after the award was made, and the Act said that notwithstanding anything in the Act the award should last. The award laid down sixty-five hours. The sixty-five hours lasted for the two years, despite the fact that the Act said sixty-two hours, because of an exactly similar provision to this. So I say that the addition of clause 3 will remove any ground for the statement that the Bill in any way interferes with the jurisdiction of the Arbitration Court.

2. *Mr. Veitch.*] Will you tell the Committee exactly what reduction of hours this means to male employees and to female employees?—The Bill does not deal with hours at all, and does not mean any reduction of hours at all, except perhaps a two-hours reduction so far as male workers are concerned. At present our working-week is sixty-two hours for males and fifty-eight hours for females in hotels. We do that work on six days and a half. Even when we do get the half-holiday we work in some cases six or eight hours on that day. The half-day starts at 2 o'clock, and in the ordinary way many an employee would be off till about six o'clock on that evening and only be required to come back two hours to serve the dinner. The half-holiday in many cases only means the cessation of the two hours' work that would be ordinarily performed were there no half-day granted. As I say, the men work sixty-two hours on six days and a half, and the women fifty-eight hours on six days. We should be liable under this Bill, I take it, to work sixty hours for males and fifty-eight for women.

3. That is, a reduction of two hours a week for males and nothing for women?—There is no provision in this Bill for any reduction of hours. We have not asked for any reduction of hours at all. We are simply asking that every man and woman that works in a hotel shall get up one morning and be able to say, “I have not got to go to work to-day.” The position at present is that on no morning can they get up and say they have not got to go to work that day.

4. *Mr. Davey.*] Who selects the day?—The employer has the right to say on the preceding evening. We have never asked that we shall say what day it shall be. The present Act leaves it entirely to the discretion of the employer as to which shall be the day.

5. What do you propose to insert instead of this word “exclusively” in clause 2?—There is a word that the Judge of the Arbitration Court has himself substituted very often, when he has seen the hardship the union has suffered by having the word “exclusively” put in: he has substituted

“substantially.” As interpreted by the President of the Court, “substantially employed” would mean employed during the major portion of the time at some particular work.

6. “Mainly” would be just as effective, would it not?—I am always content to take Mr. Justice Sim’s word.

7. As a matter of fact, you are prepared to accept the Bill practically as printed?—Yes. [There is one other word. The personal pronoun “his” is used.

8. That covers both?—Very well.

9. *Mr. Glover.*] How would this Bill affect the large hotels—say, the Grand Hotel and the Star Hotel in Auckland—conducting their business on Sunday? What arrangements could they make reasonably to meet the requirements of the travelling community?—I think the employers themselves will admit that the workers’ unions have tried to meet them in every way. We have never yet said that we insist on the day being Sunday. All that we ask is that on one day of the week—that day to be at the employer’s dictation—each one of the staff shall have a day off in rotation.

10. But what would you do in the case of the chef?—At present when the chef gets off for the half-day he is relieved by the second cook. We have never yet asked that the man doing the work of the superior man on the day of his half-holiday shall be paid anything extra for it. We have always said that he shall do it as part of his ordinary work and at his ordinary wages.

11. How would it affect the hotel as far as the night porter was concerned?—At present they get one day a fortnight off, and this will give them one day a week. We can quite understand that any section of employers will object when some special legislation comes along affecting their vested interest—they will object on business grounds. But I should like to see the trade come to a realization of the fact that the country deems it only a fair thing that men and women working in hotels shall have the right to say that on one day in the week they shall not be required to go to work. I feel keenly on the point because I worked for eighteen months in one of the leading hotels in the town, and during the whole of that time I never missed a day, except on one occasion when I got four days’ holiday; every other day I went to work at 6 o’clock in the morning. Another thing that makes the holiday all the more necessary is this: Our day is not an eight-hour day started and finished in the eight hours. It runs over eleven to fifteen hours, a fair average being thirteen hours. The men start work at from 6 to 8 in the morning, and finish at from 8 to 12. They get off a little in the morning and a little in the afternoon. They have a long day to put in, and the time they are off is of no use to them to do anything that any ordinary man does after his day’s work.

12. You think, then, that arrangements could be come to amicably between employers and employees without causing the general public or the employers much inconvenience?—We ask our employers to get the sixty-two hours work out of us in six days instead of six and a half, and I think that by a little adjustment, and management, and rearrangement it can be done with a minimum of inconvenience to them.

13. You will remember that there was evidence given on this matter, with regard to the accumulation of holidays—thirteen days, I think, in every three months?—Yes.

14. Provided that every chef in Wellington were to take those particular thirteen days at the same time, how would that work out for the employers?—It is almost an impossible supposition; they could not get off thirteen days at the same time. But if it happened in Auckland, say, that by bad management on the part of the hotelkeepers all their chefs were off at one time, the chefs could have a good picnic together, and the second cooks would do the work. The second cook does it now when the chef is off. As a matter of fact, when we get a holiday we get it at our own expense. I know that the chef at the Grand Hotel, Auckland, was away for a time, and during the whole of that time the second cook did the work.

15. Providing they did not all want to go off on the one day, would it not be possible for the Empire chef to go over to the Grand Hotel for these thirteen days, and so on?—It would be possible, but it would be unnecessary. Mr. Beveridge will tell you that he would sooner have his second cook there than a strange chef.

16. *The Chairman.*] Would it not be necessary to increase the staff in most of the large hotels?—It will be, I candidly admit. It may be necessary to increase the staff to make up for the men that are off, but it will not be necessary to increase it by any skilled hands. Probably another couple of general hands to do the general cleaning-work will be necessary. I believe that I could manage one of the leading hotels here, like Mr. Beveridge’s, employing forty-two or forty-three men, and give the seventh day off, by a little rearrangement and the addition of another two men at a cost of £3 a week to the hotel.

17. *Mr. Clark.*] Supposing that a man who has leased a hotel and is paying a fair rent under the existing conditions has to employ 14 per cent. more hands: it is rather rough on him, is it not, if he is sailing pretty close to the wind now?—If a hotelkeeper has gone into a proposition in which he has to sail close to the wind, he has gone into it with his eyes open, because we have been asking for this piece of legislation for the past six years. In 1911 it was recommended to the favourable consideration of the Government. In 1909 it was before the Committee. Almost every candidate for Parliament agreed that it was a fair thing. If hotelkeepers buy into a proposition where the labour-conditions are so bad that any Government is ready to remedy them, that is the hotelkeepers’ funeral. But the 14 per cent. proposition would not come along. The hotelkeepers know quite well that we have been asking for this: we have been to them several times, and have asked them to give it. It has been granted in Sydney and everywhere else, and we believe that we are entitled to it here.

18. *Mr. Veitch.*] Would not the hotelkeeper be in the same position if the price of beef or beer went up?—Exactly the same.

19. *Mr. Glover.*] Do you not think that something might be arranged for the owner of that hotel to make a reduction in his rent?—I know that the wholesale people are prepared to support our pro-

position. Influential men in the wholesale trade have said that the demand of the workers was a fair thing and that it was not in the interests of the licensees to refuse it—that they themselves would advise the licensees to give way. I feel certain that if there is a hotelkeeper in the position that Mr. Clark suggests—and I do not think there is—the trade will come to his rescue.

20. *Mr. Okey.*] With regard to smaller places where they only keep one cook, such as coffee-palaces: how would you arrange in those cases?—If a place is so small that it only keeps one cook, the employer there is just as much a wages-man as the cook, and the employer should get a day off and so should the cook.

21. The employer may not be able to cook?—Oh, yes, he will. If the place is so small that it only needs one hand to cook, the employer can do it. What happens is this; so much of the meal can be prepared on the previous day; the cook could prepare all that could not be done by the employer.

JOHN BEVERIDGE, President, Licensed Victuallers Association of New Zealand, made a statement and was examined. (No. 2.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Will you place your views before us?—I am going to take the liberty of asking you to postpone further consideration of this question till a day next week. My reason for asking that is, first, because of the late distribution of the Bill, and because of the ambiguity contained in the drafting. I do not think the Legislature quite recognizes the seriousness of this Bill and how it is going to affect the licensees of the whole of this Dominion. I take it that it is not the intention of the Legislature to place a hardship on any section, either employers or workers, but if this Bill is put on the statute-book it is going to create a very serious embarrassment and place a very serious hardship on the licensees of New Zealand. That being so, I ask that consideration of this Bill be postponed till a further date, so that we can get better evidence and go better into the question than we have been able to do up to the present. This matter requires evidence from Auckland, Dunedin, and Christchurch, and it is a thing that we cannot deal with lightly. I am not prepared now to advance any evidence, but, in justification of what I am asking and to point out the seriousness of the position to the hotelkeepers if this Bill goes through, I should like to give you a concrete instance of what the effect will be. This instance is only one of many. Take the position of the Grand Hotel, Wellington, of which I am the unfortunate proprietor. I employ a staff of from forty-six to fifty hands. If this Bill goes through I shall be restricted to a six-days week. That means to say that on Monday, on Tuesday, on Wednesday, and on Thursday I shall be without six or eight hands, as the case may be, according to the season of the year, and I generally keep a full staff all through the year. From six to eight will not turn-to at all on those four days of the week, and on the other days eight or nine hands will not turn-to. I ask you gentlemen who patronize hotels and have travelled how a proprietor is going to carry on his business with eight of his staff absent during working-hours? It is a well-known fact that no business man employs more hands than can economically work his business. That being so, with forty-eight or fifty hands and eight hands away every day in the week, what is the position for the unfortunate hotelkeeper? It means that he has either got to ask the forty-two remaining hands to do the work of the forty-eight or fifty—in which case the work will be scamped, and the patrons of the hotel will not get the attention which they should get and which they pay for—or he has to put on so-many more hands, if the work is to be kept up to the best conditions, and if it is a first-class hotel it is absolutely essential that the conditions should be kept up. We are bound by law to keep open on seven days in the week in order to meet all requirements—provide meals and refreshments when travellers come in—and therefore we are in quite a different position from any other business. I would myself be very pleased to allow the staff one whole day in the week if I could participate in that whole day—if I could close up the hotel one day in the week. There would be no hardship then, and I could very well do with the holiday myself; but we cannot. Then it resolves itself into this: that I have got to pay, if I do not put the tax on to the remaining servants, from £12 to £15 a week extra wages. I contend that that is not a fair proposition for the hotelkeepers of this country to have to face. I am not advancing this as evidence; I do not propose to give evidence: I am only giving you a concrete instance of what is going to be the effect of this Bill if it is not gone into and properly thought out. I am quite sure it is not the intention to create any hardship as between employer and employee, and if the Legislature intends to make a fair Bill of this I think the question should be gone into more exhaustively than can be done by two representatives appearing here and giving evidence; it is a question that must be dealt with at length and gone into very deeply. I do not propose to say any more, but I do seriously hope that you will take this into your further consideration and see your way clear to postpone the matter until we can get proper evidence to put before you in order to show just exactly what this Bill is going to mean to the hotelkeepers throughout the Dominion.

2. *Mr. Clark.*] Do you think it is fair that the hotel workers should be compelled to work just to suit the public?—The hotelkeeper is compelled by law to suit the public, and he cannot do the work himself, and he must employ men to do it.

3. He will merely pass it on to the public, will he not?—How?

4. By increasing the price?—If we do that we simply drive people into the boardinghouses, which are not covered by legislation.

5. *The Chairman.*] They will be under this Bill, will they not?—No, this only deals with public-houses.

6. And restaurants?—Restaurant employees do not work on Sunday; they get a full day. Supposing the Grand Hotel, and the Empire, and the Royal Oak, and the Hotel Cecil raised their tariff

to 15s. or 13s. 6d.—that will have the effect of driving a percentage of the people who patronize these hotels to the second-class hotels: they will go there sooner than pay the extra money. Then, if the rise takes place in the second-class hotels, people will be forced to go to the boardinghouses.

7. *Mr. Clark.*] That would mean they would require more labour, would it not? These people would not go and work at the boardinghouses for nothing?—No. If we put up our tariff we are not going to make ourselves any better.

8. But it would affect the boardinghouses just the same?—But they are not required to give the employees a holiday.

9. They would have to get extra hands to do the extra work?—But do you not see that they could compete with us most unfairly by not having to give a holiday.

10. The workers get the holiday now on Sunday in the boardinghouses?—They only get so-much time off; they have to turn-to in the morning. It is all very well to say that the work of the chef, who goes off during the day for his half-holiday at present, can be done by the second cook. Before he goes off the chef has only one meal to prepare. Before he goes off in the afternoon he sees that things are on the way. But to ask that the chef be away for one whole day is a different matter.

11. Is there anything different in this Bill from the Bill on which evidence was given so exhaustively before?—I do not think we had evidence on a six-days Bill before.

12. *Mr. Veitch.*] You say there is ambiguity in the Bill: will you explain to the Committee in what respects the Bill is ambiguous?—In the second clause, to which Mr. Carey pointed. We have had legal advice, and our advisers say there is a certain amount of ambiguity there—in the word that Mr. Carey mentioned, “exclusively.”

13. What evidence do you want to call in connection with that ambiguity? What further evidence can you produce in connection with that matter?—I am not alluding to that. That was only one of the reasons why the matter should be postponed, so as to permit us to get a better definition and see where we are. My main reason for asking for postponement is that evidence may be brought to show how seriously this Bill is going to harass hotel employers throughout this Dominion.

14. I am asking about the ambiguous clause?—That is for our legal adviser to say. His advice is that there is a certain amount of ambiguity.

15. You could get evidence in Wellington to-day with regard to the ambiguity of that clause, could you not?—Yes.

16. And that is all that is necessary so far as that is concerned.—Yes.

17. With regard to the extra cost, you say it will cost from £12 to £15 a week extra in your case?—Yes.

18. Is it not a fact that in this Bill there is not really a reduction of hours at all?—It is a fact that there is a reduction of hours. At the present time the Shops and Offices Amendment Act says that males shall work sixty-two hours and females fifty-eight hours a week. If this Bill is passed—and you only give us six days a week, and you restrict us to ten hours a day under the Shops and Offices Act—how on earth are we going to work our employees sixty-two hours? We can only work them sixty hours. That is a reduction of two hours. Take the last six years: we have reduced the hours of work for employees in hotels from, I think, seventy-two or seventy-five down to sixty-two. Is not that a drastic reduction enough?

19. I cannot see where a reduction of two hours a week for the male employees and no reduction in the case of the female employees in the actual number of hours you are allowed to work them is going to increase, in a staff of, say, fifty?—You are missing the point. We are not dealing with hours at all. I am dealing with the whole holiday, when a man does not turn-to at all. If it were a question of hours and getting off we could adjust it, but when it is a question of a day off I cannot see how I can adjust it unless I put the rest of the work on to the remaining employees, and then it will not be properly done. The alternative is to augment the staff by the number of employees that are off. If there are eight off every day I must augment the staff by that number.

20. Even though you can work the others longer hours?—I could not do that. If I have five housemaids—one for each floor—and each has twenty rooms, do you mean to tell me that if the housemaid on the first floor goes off the four remaining girls can do the work of No. 5 just as effectively as it would be done if the whole five were there? I say we cannot do it. It cannot be done except by augmenting the staff or putting the extra work on to those who are remaining. Eight people go off on Monday, and I require fifty to work the place. This Bill asks me to work that house with a staff of forty-two. I say it cannot be done with forty-two. The Bill, then, asks me to augment my staff by employing eight extra hands.

21. If you knock off eight you have forty-two left. Surely you will admit that forty-two people working ten hours would do more work than forty-two people working, we will say, eight hours?—You are getting away from the point.

22. Is it not a fact that forty-two people working ten hours a day will do more work per day than forty-two people working eight hours a day?—If they like to do it, possibly.

23. Would not the boss have a say in the matter, too?—The boss cannot go and stand over all the staff when they are distributed over the house. If it was only one day in the week I should say it could be done at a stretch, but when the thing is spread over the whole six days in the week it is not reasonable to ask the staff to carry on. It would not be a reasonable thing for me to ask forty-two of my staff to carry on the work, for six days consecutively, to allow other members to get off for a holiday.

24. Is it not a matter of asking them to do amongst them just half a day's work?—They would not do it: they would leave. It is a hard enough job to get them to assist one another now.

25. Is there much difference between the total amount of work done on a Sunday and the total amount of work done on the other six days of the week—that is, so far as the people affected by this

Bill are concerned?—That is a matter in which there is differentiation. If you ask that question in Auckland they will tell you “Yes,” and if you ask it in Dunedin they will tell you “No.” The conditions vary in the different centres. In Auckland the hotelkeeper’s busiest day is Sunday. The steamer arrives from Sydney with between three hundred and four hundred people; the steamer arrives from the south, and there is a coastal steamer arriving; and you have got the train arriving on Sunday morning—all pouring people into the hotels. In Dunedin, on the other hand, Sunday is the slackest day in the week. There is one steamer arrives from Lyttelton in the morning, and very few of these go to hotels, because such people come up by train. The steamer leaves in the afternoon for the Bluff, and she clears the hotels out in the afternoon. Then take Wellington: we have the same conditions as in Auckland, and in Christchurch it is the same. That is why I say that evidence ought to be taken from each place to show what obtains in the different centres.

26. Am I to understand, then, referring to this question of hours, that your statement to the Committee is that your staff can do no more in ten hours than they could do in nine?—I am not dealing with the hours; I am dealing with the holiday. It is twenty-four hours off—one day. You are asking me in connection with two hours reduction. That has got nothing to do with it at all. That two hours reduction is simply brought about by bringing into existence the twenty-four hours continuous holiday. I cannot deal with that now. I can deal with the holiday. I say that the holiday is going to seriously embarrass the hotelkeepers of New Zealand if this Bill goes through in its present shape.

27. Is it your opinion that you can get no more work out of your hands in each of the six days, if you give them the seventh day? Roughly speaking, you will get an extra hour a day from them?—Where?

28. You have sixty-two hours now for seven days in the week. Roughly, that is an average of nine hours a day. Under the Bill you would get ten hours work out of them for each of the six days?—We are supposed to.

29. You can get ten hours?—That is a question. I should not like to make a definite statement as to that.

30. You have power to do it?—But could we get it? You cannot deal with a hotel servant right up to quarter-hours; you cannot say to ten minutes what he does. You are asking me whether I could not get as much work out of a servant in ten hours as in nine. Take the housemaid. Some people will get out at 7 o’clock, and then the girl can easily be finished by 2 o’clock in the afternoon; but the next day, perhaps, some of the people will not turn out till 10 or 11 o’clock. It all depends on the exigencies of the business. Hotelkeeping is different from anything else. People come and go, and you have to be guided solely by what is obtaining in the twenty-four hours. The conditions vary every day in the week.

31. Your answer to my question, then, is that you do not get any more out of the servants?—If you like to put it in that way, I will say that we cannot get any more out of them.

32. Assuming that the number of hours worked by your staff was one hundred per week, would you consider that too many?—Yes.

33. Would not the arguments that you are bringing forward now apply just as well to a reduction if the number of hours worked was a hundred?—No, you must have a medium in everything.

34. *Mr. Davey.*] Your suggestion that the Bill should be hung up for a week has prompted Mr. Veitch to say that that means that the Bill cannot be put on the statute-book this year. That is so, is it not?—I take it that that is what it means.

35. Supposing the Bill were hung up in order to allow hotelkeepers in other parts of the Dominion to give evidence, would their evidence materially differ from yours?—I should say it would, because the conditions that obtain in Auckland and in Dunedin are totally different. While I have given you a concrete instance of one phase of the question, there may be many others.

36. But mainly, in your opinion, the evidence of other hotelkeepers would follow what you have said?—Possibly, yes. I am quite sure of it.

37. Then what would be gained by hanging the matter up for a week?—It would give them time to find out exactly what they have got to say about it and how it is going to affect them. I take it that the Legislature do not want to inflict any hardship on any one section of the community, and if we are going to have an extra expenditure of £400 or £500 put on us for wages, without our having a say, I consider that it will be a hardship.

38. You do not suggest that by legislation we can differentiate between the various cities in New Zealand?—No; I should not like to say what you can do. That is for you to say. But I should like you to hear their evidence and give them a chance to defend themselves.

39. You state that you employ on an average forty-eight hands. If this Bill passes you will have to give them twelve hours more than you give them now?—I shall have to give them one full day instead of a half-day. I shall have to give each one five or six hours more time off.

40. Which practically means, for forty-eight servants, twenty-four days for all?—Yes.

41. Will that cost you £15 a week?—To augment the staff so as to replace those that would be away would, in my estimation, cost me between £12 and £15. The extra wages would possibly come to between £10 and £12, and the balance would be for their keep. At the present time I board and lodge my staff, with very few exceptions—I suppose four or five at the outside—and to do this takes up all the available accommodation I have got for the staff. If I have to augment my staff by five or six, I cannot lodge them in my hotel, and I shall have to get accommodation for them outside, and that means another 5s. a week each. Altogether the extra expense will be brought up to about £15.

42. Supposing, for instance, two housemaids go off on one day?—I should not require to put two housemaids off on one day.

43. Well, say one housemaid goes off, and two men out of the kitchen, and the other five from the rest of the staff: would you have to get an extra individual for each of those positions?—Possibly not

for each. In the case of the housemaids I should have to engage one extra, and to keep her on permanently. She would take the place of the girl that went off. In the kitchen I should probably have to employ two more men. I would like to point out, with respect to the housemaids, that it is just a question if you can get a girl to occupy a position in which she is here to-day and in another place to-morrow. She will say, "Where are my tips to come from if I am on this floor on Monday and on another on Tuesday? I shall get no tips."

44. You suggest that if you could close up the hotel on one day—?—It would be as easy as falling off a log, and I would welcome it.

45. But you would not care about doing it, would you?—I would do it willingly.

46. I think you are about the only hotelkeeper in New Zealand who would?—I think that if you take the consensus of opinion you will find they would be only too pleased. It is a most harassing business—more especially during the last four or five years.

47. This clause 2 that you referred to: would you be satisfied if the word "exclusively" were altered to "substantially"?—I would not like to commit myself as to that. I am not prepared to say.

48. Is that the only legal ambiguity in that clause that you know of?—That is all. Would we be allowed to give the holiday on the Sunday? Could we use Sunday as a holiday?

49. Yes, I presume so—any day of the week. It is left to your discretion now as to which day you shall give the half-holiday?—It was not formerly.

50. I am asking about now: you decide now?—Yes, but we cannot give Sunday: the holiday must be given on one day of the six working-days. Under the Shops and Offices Act Sunday is not a working-day within the meaning of the Act.

51. That applies to hotels?—Yes.

52. *Mr. Okey.*] You represent a large hotel: do you not think that the evidence that would be given by some of the small hotelkeepers would be very different from what you are giving now?—It might be. That is why I say that all phases of the question should be put with respect to all classes of hotels. There are conditions that apply only to the smaller hotels.

53. A hotel, perhaps, that keeps two girls to do all the different classes of work?—Yes.

54. It would be a very different class of evidence that we would get from them?—Essentially different.

55. Do you not think there would be more difficulty with these smaller places than with the larger hotels?—At the country hotels there would be still more difficulty, I should think, than in the cities, because they would have a difficulty in keeping the hands.

56. *Mr. Davey.*] With reference to what I was saying, I find that the old Act does not include Sunday as a day for the half-holiday: but this Bill obviously does include Sunday; it says, "any day in the week"?—I am very pleased to hear it.

57. *Mr. Glover.*] In reference to the thirteen days in every three months, instead of seven days: how would that affect your business?—I have not gone into that question, but I do not see how we could do it.

MONDAY, 4TH NOVEMBER, 1912.

WILLIAM PRYOR, Secretary, New Zealand Employers' Federation, made a statement and was examined. (No. 3.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Will you please place your views before the Committee?—I am instructed to give evidence not only on behalf of the licensed victuallers of the Dominion, but on behalf of employers of labour generally. We submit, very respectfully, that the Bill should not be allowed to proceed, for the reason that the present Shops and Offices Acts require remodelling. The Shops and Offices Acts are easily the worst pieces of labour legislation that are on the statute-book at present. Proof of that is at once found in the fact that there are several clauses which the Government dare not put into operation. There are some other clauses which are in operation and which impose such very grave hardships on those affected that they should not be permitted to remain longer on the statute-book. Earlier in the session a statement was made that there would not be time to go on with the Shops and Offices Bill this session. For that reason my federation took scarcely any steps towards getting information to put before the Labour Bills Committee or before Parliament regarding the alterations and amendments that are required, outside altogether of this special hotel legislation. For that reason I am instructed by my federation to submit that the Bill should not be proceeded with this year; that apart from the merits of this Bill, apart from whether it is right or wrong, any dealing with the Shops and Offices Act should be left until next year, and the whole of the matters that require attention should be dealt with in a comprehensive manner. It seems to us that that is a reasonable proposition,—a businesslike proposition—that this legislation should be taken hold of, time given for consideration, and dealt with next session and not at all this session. At all events, I am instructed to enter the protest of my federation at the short time that has been allowed for consideration of this Bill or for any representations to be made regarding the very necessary amendments required by my federation in the interests of shopkeepers generally. Having stated that about this legislation generally, I desire to place some information at the disposal of the Committee with regard to the Bill itself. When you come to consider what has been done for hotel workers by means of Arbitration Court awards and by legislation, it is no exaggeration to say that hotel workers in this Dominion have received more consideration and greater concessions than any other section of workers. The first award will be found in Book of Awards, Vol. iii, page 288; that award was made in 1902. At that time evidence was led

to show that hotel workers were compelled in very many instances to work a hundred hours a week. We start, then, at a hundred hours a week. An award was made in 1902 giving seventy-seven hours to all classes of workers except porters, whose hours were eighty-four—twelve hours a day. That was the first reduction hotel workers got with regard to hours. They got, at the same time, an increase in wages. I have not the figures by me, but the increases have been considerable right through. In 1906 the Conciliation Board's recommendations came into force, and then the hours were further reduced to sixty-five per week. That will be found in Book of Awards, Vol. vii, page 522. Those recommendations were declared by Mr. Justice Cooper to be invalid after they had been in operation for about twelve months; and in the following year—1907—the case was fought out before the Arbitration Court—and fought very strenuously, as Mr. Carey knows—and again sixty-five hours were awarded. That award is in Book of Awards, Vol. viii, page 970. In 1910 another award was applied for and secured, and again sixty-five hours per week were prescribed by the Arbitration Court. Following that the union took action to get legislation in connection with the matter, and succeeded in getting the 1910 Act giving sixty-two hours a week for hotel workers, and thus compelling employers to pay wages based on a sixty-five hours week for sixty-two hours work. If this Bill goes through, all that the employers will have the right to ask for is sixty hours per week, which will mean a reduction in ten years of forty hours per week—a reduction of 40 per cent. in the hours worked. So when, in addition to that, you take into consideration the increases in wages and the improved conditions otherwise, I claim that I was not making any exaggerated statement when I said that the hotel workers of this Dominion had received more consideration than had any other section of workers. Now, with regard to the Bill, its main provision is twenty-four hours off in each week. I take it that that is the intention, and the intention is to do away with the present half-holiday; but I do not see anything in the Bill which repeals section 5 of the Act of 1910, subsection (e). That subsection reads: "Except as hereinafter provided, an assistant shall not be employed in or about a hotel or restaurant or its business at any time after two o'clock in the afternoon of such working-day in each week as the occupier in the case of each assistant thinks fit." Now, the Bill prescribes a twenty-four hours day on any day in the week, not on a working-day. Those words "working-day" in the present Act have been held to mean some day other than Sunday; and if this Bill goes through, unless some special provision is made for the deletion of subclause (e) of section 5, those affected by the Bill will probably find themselves in the position of having to allow in many cases a full day of twenty-four hours and another day from 2 o'clock in the afternoon. With regard to the practicability of a measure of this sort, while one has to admit that, sentimentally, nothing can be urged against the proposal, and while one has to admit that so far as possible no work whatever should be done on a Sunday, I submit that the question of whether legislation of this sort should be placed on the statute-book or not is bounded by the practicability of the proposals. The granting of a twenty-four hours holiday in each week to hotel assistants will be serious enough in all conscience to employers of that class of worker; but if that once becomes law, then where is that sort of thing going to end? There is no doubt that there are certain trades and occupations other than hotel work which require seven days a week worked, and, while we should make conditions as liberal as possible and as reasonable as possible, it is submitted that we must take into consideration the requirements of these trades and businesses. If this principle is adopted, then Parliament and the Government will be deluged with claims from all sorts of workers. Why, even the Government itself finds in connection with several of its Departments that it is absolutely unable to grant a twenty-four hours holiday in each week. And then, if you apply a six-day week to tramway services, ferry services, dairy factories in the busy season, and other trades that I could mention, you will simply wipe some of them out of existence; and I submit that no legislation should be passed that would involve such a consequence as that unless it were proved to be absolutely necessary in the interests of human life, or something equally serious, before such a thing is thought of. Now, in detailing to you the different awards and the changes in conditions respecting hotel workers, I should like to point out that each change made in connection with the hours involves a tremendous amount of reconstruction in the carrying-on of the businesses. In a large house it gives a very great deal of trouble. When the sixty-two hours provision came in with the ten-hours limitation I had a great deal to do with it, and those who were affected by the legislation found the utmost difficulty in arranging rotas so that the work could be carried on and the business be carried on at the same time. I was in Invercargill recently, in the Southland Club Hotel. There there is a staff of sixteen, and in order to comply with the provisions of the law Mr. Legge, the proprietor of that hotel, found himself compelled to let the whole of his servants off shortly after 7 o'clock in the evening. And if you went in there off the train coming in from Lumsden at about 8 o'clock, or the second express getting in very much later, all you could get was what Mr. Legge, or Mrs. Legge, or the daughter was able to provide for you. I submit that the very gravest reasons only should cause business people to be put under such conditions as that; yet this Bill proposes to put them under very much worse conditions—conditions that we claim will be found to be quite impracticable. Another serious aspect of the case is that in very many of our hotels—and I know what I am speaking about, because I have had occasion to go into the matter with regard to Arbitration Court work—the boarding parts of the establishment represent huge losses to the proprietors. And this alteration is not going to be made without expense. I have not gone closely into figures—Mr. Beveridge and some other witnesses have figures—but, as far as I can see, I shall not be at all surprised if in hotels that are recognized as hotels doing a boardinghouse business the extra cost is anything from £200 to £500 a year. It might be said, "What does the cost matter if we are going to do the right thing to our employees?" We submit that under present conditions the right thing is being done to the employees, that there is no real justification for this claim; and when, in addition, you take into consideration the impracticability of the proposal and the serious results likely to flow from giving a six-day week to this class of employees—and if it is right to give it to this class it is right to give it to every other class—when you

take into consideration the serious issues that are involved and what it is going to land us in, we submit that Parliament cannot possibly accede to the proposal put forward in the Bill. We submit, further, that Parliament makes a mistake in dealing with the question of hours in connection with trades that are in a position to go to the Arbitration Court. We know that the only answer we get to that contention is that Parliament is the supreme Court of the Dominion, and that Parliament must rule. Our retort is, "We grant you that, but Parliament has delegated its duties, so far as details and working-conditions in connection with these trades are concerned, to the Conciliation Councils and the Arbitration Court." As it is, unions go to the Arbitration Court and make use of that machinery, and then come to Parliament and say, "We have got all we can from the Conciliation Council and the Arbitration Court; now we want you to give us something more." We submit that it is most unfair for the unions to take up that attitude, because in the Conciliation Councils you have those who are themselves cognizant of all the details in connection with the work of these trades and industries. On the Arbitration Court you have those who are dealing with these matters week in and week out throughout the year, and they have information not only in the actual case that is before them, but information from all over the Dominion, which guides them in making their awards; and we submit that it is absolutely impossible even for this Committee, after hearing evidence in this way, and still less is it possible for Parliament itself, to get the information to justify it in going into these details in connection with the working of our trades and industries. We submit that as a very serious proposition, and we would ask this Committee in dealing with this measure to make a report to that effect—that this is a matter that should be dealt with by the machinery provided by law, and that it is impossible for a Committee of the House to get, in the short time at its disposal, sufficient information to warrant it in putting these restrictions upon employers.

2. *Mr. Okey.*] The Court has that power now?—Absolutely. That is just the cruelty of the position. Take the action of the Cooks and Waiters' Union after the last award. In 1910 the sixty-five hour regulation was made. It was renewed from the previous award. Evidence was given—if I remember aright the union here in Wellington put between thirty and forty witnesses into the box—evidence was given on behalf of the union and on behalf of the employers. The Arbitration Court had not only that information, but it had information from having been invoked in similar disputes throughout the Dominion; and after going into the whole matter it awarded sixty-five hours and some other conditions. The union immediately got to work, and got at Parliament, and got legislation giving hotel workers sixty-two hours, with ten hours a day limitation. If I remember rightly we had an eleven-hours limitation in the award, Mr. Carey?

Mr. Carey: All your statements are wrong.

Witness: I am quite prepared to stand by that, at any rate. And we say that it is wrong. We say that either Parliament should take the whole responsibility and do the whole of that industrial work—and, if it does, it will have quite enough to do without attending to any other legislation at all—or it should leave the tribunals it has set up by law to handle them, and refuse to have anything to do with them. I do not know that I have anything more to say. I want to leave particular details to those who have to follow me. Mr. Beveridge, I believe, gave some evidence last week, but he wishes to put before you some further facts and figures which he was not prepared to give you at that time. Then other gentlemen will give evidence.

3. *Mr. Okey.*] I take it that the employees are paid according to the hours they work?—As a matter of fact, by the award which has expired wages were provided for sixty-five hours' work. Those same wages are being paid at present for sixty-two hours' work. If the employees work overtime they are paid overtime rates.

4. If the working-time is brought down now to six days a week, will the employees expect the wages to be reduced?—I fancy there would be a great howl about it. I do not think they expect anything of the sort. Each reduction in hours that we have had so far has been accompanied by an increase in wages, and we are just afraid that a further reduction in hours may be accompanied by a further increase in wages. I do not think there is much hope of getting any decrease in wages with reduced hours.

5. You admit that there are some trades in which it is almost impossible to limit the hours to any great extent? Take milking, for instance: would it be possible to carry out these conditions on a farm?—That is one of our contentions. In both milking and dairy-factory work the milk must be handled day by day and every day.

6. How would this affect the smaller hotels where they keep only one or two waiters—perhaps one?—You cannot imagine any hotel that would want less than one extra servant, and where there is only one servant now that would double the wages cost. Where a hotel has two or three servants, one or two extra employees make a great difference. But take it from the point of view of a hotel employing fifty: they would need to have seven or eight extra hands. They would not only have to pay them the wages, but they would have to feed them as well and provide accommodation for them—or else pay them more. The award provides that if hotel workers do not get their board and lodging they shall receive extra wages. I think probably you will get the actual cost from some of the others who are giving evidence; but I am satisfied the extra cost will surprise even the members of this Committee. Then it must be remembered that in hotels the guests must be attended to on the whole seven days of the week, and that is what justifies the seven-days-a-week employment.

7. You argue that the Arbitration Court has full power to give these hotel workers this twenty-four hours off if they can bring evidence to show that it is justified?—Surely.

8. And they want now to come behind the Court to Parliament and make it impossible to work them more than six days?—That is so.

JOHN BEVERIDGE, Proprietor Grand Hotel, Wellington, made a statement and was examined. (No. 4.)

Witness: I should like to say that hotel servants are not the overworked, underpaid, and generally harassed people that one is led to suppose. In hotels we find that the staff is generally fairly well content, and those hours and the conditions that are being asked for them now are not being put forward by the large body of hotel employees. We find that we have no difficulty in getting housemaids to come from private employ and take service in hotels, where they find the conditions are very much easier than they are in domestic service. You will be told that one of the reasons for advocating this six-day week in the Dominion is that it is a success in Australia. I have just returned from Australia, and I can assure you that the six-day week there is not the success that it is said to be. The conditions there are totally different from the conditions obtaining in hotels in this Dominion. There the staffs work under altogether different conditions and are not so content as they are here. For instance, waiters in Australia get £1 10s. a week in the larger hotels, and out of that they find their own room—they live out. They dine in a mess-room and have to take whatever food is given to them, and in many cases they do not take that. Then they have to stand in the dining-rooms and stand by the tables, and are not allowed to have any time off during that working-hour—conditions totally different from those obtaining here. Again, we shall be told that the wholesale trade are in favour of this six-day week. The wholesale trade, although allied to us in a certain manner, has nothing to do with the retail conditions: so it is quite easy for members of it to say they are in sympathy with this proposal, when it is not costing them anything. That brings me down to the question of what it will cost if this six-day week is to obtain. I should like to emphasize that if this six-day week becomes law it is going to create one of the greatest hardships that hotelkeepers have ever had to contend with in this Dominion. As against the wages that are paid on “the other side,” waiters here are paid £1 12s. 6d. per week, and have board and lodging found for them, as against the £1 10s. paid to the waiters on “the other side,” who have to find their board—5s. a week for a room. In the Grand Hotel, which I am running now, I have a staff of three usefuls, seven in the kitchen, four in the pantry, eleven in the dining-room, four in the hall, two night porters, six maids, one storeman, and three clerks, making up a total of forty-one, not including the bar staff. If the six-day Bill comes into force, it means that on every day of the seven days six of my staff will not turn-to. If it takes forty-one to carry out the work of the hotel under normal circumstances, and we have to comply with the conditions of this six-day Bill, it means that we shall have to ask the remaining thirty-five hands to do the work of the forty-one, and it naturally follows that, if we ask that, the guests who are paying the tariff cannot possibly be as well looked after as they are now. The alternative would be to augment that staff by at least one housemaid at 17s., one cook at, say, £1 15s. to £2, one hall-porter £1 5s., two waiters £3 5s., and one useful £1 5s., making an extra minimum staff of six, at an actual weekly wage of £8 12s. Then board and lodging have to be added—£4 10s.—and I should like to point out incidentally that, whereas the extra staff would be over and above our actual requirements as they exist now, in my case I have no more accommodation for the staff, and they would all have to live out, so that would be an extra £1 10s. for room accommodation for the six. That would make up, with board and lodging included, £13 2s. per week, or £681 4s. a year, without including accident insurance or expenses for the six. I say that that is an extortionate charge to put on any hotelkeeper at the present juncture. It is a well-known fact that there are hardly any hotels in the Dominion that, with the present price of food, are even squaring themselves in the dining-room. Evidence was brought here some eighteen months ago, I think, to show that some hotels in the City of Wellington were actually making a dead loss of between £400 and £500 a year on the dining-room alone. To ask us to put on a further charge for extra staff is to place a hardship on the hotelkeepers. The hotels within the last six years seem to me to have been simply a chopping-block in the way of legislation. We have been giving and giving, and getting no protection whatever. Mr. Pryor has pointed out to you the reduction that has been made in the hours from 1906 and also the increase in wages that has taken place, and I can tell you that although the union only allows 15s. for boarding and lodging in the case of a man living out, I have gone into the cost of the staff, and I find that the actual cost of feeding members of the staff is 10d. per head per meal, giving 2s. 6d. per day, or 17s. 6d. per week. Then there is 5s. for a room, which makes £1 2s. 6d. We have to bear all that extra cost ourselves, because it is a well-known fact that nearly 75 per cent. of the staff are boarded on the establishment. In first-class hotels the cost of victualling guests runs from 1s. 8d. to 1s. 10d. per head per meal, thus leaving a very small margin, if any, where meals are given, and in many instances showing a large loss. I should like to emphasize what Mr. Pryor said, that we go before the Arbitration Court and have an award given, and immediately that award is given and the union find they have got everything they asked for, they approach the Legislature and have other conditions granted them, and we have no chance whatever of stopping it. Another phase of the question: You may say that one way of combating the extra expense would be to raise the tariff to the guests. But immediately we start raising the tariffs above what they are now it will have the effect of driving a proportion of the people who patronize the hotels to the large first-class boardinghouses, and would create a demand for first-class boardinghouses, which I should like to point out are in direct competition with first-class and second-class hotels, but are not bound by the legislation or by any award conditions, and thereby unfair competition is created. If legislation were passed bringing domestic servants, and boardinghouse-keepers, and private hotels under the same conditions as the licensed hotels, then possibly it would be a safeguard to some extent; but as things are now we have them in unfair competition.

1. *Mr. Hindmarsh.* Every reform is opposed, is it not, and all sorts of doleful prophecies are indulged in?—Yes, but we have facts and figures to prove what we are contending—that this would cause us great hardship. Of course, it is only natural that we will oppose the proposal—and so would you if you were in business and some one came along and desired to curtail your profits.

2. You oppose it because it hits your pocket?—Exactly.

3. Do you own the Grand Hotel—have you got a lease?—Yes, I lease it.

4. Do you not think, if you had to pay this extra £681 a year, that the landlord could make a little reduction in rent?—I should like you to approach him; you might be a little more successful than I have been. If you get the landlord to do it I shall be very pleased.

5. Men should be worked seven days a week in order that you may pay your rent—no doubt a very large rent—a very exorbitant rent, probably?—It is not only the rent, but there is the price of commodities going up every day, and we have no control over this. We have had to stand the brunt of all the increases.

6. This comes back to a brewer's question, does it not?—No, I do not see that it does.

7. Theoretically, you will admit that every one should have one whole day's holiday in the seven, will you not?—If we could close up the hotel for one day in the week, I should be quite agreeable to doing so. I am just as much in need of a holiday as any one of my employees.

8. But theoretically you admit it, and you would be able to pay these wages if you had a slight reduction in rent?—No, I do not see that a slight reduction in rent would cover it at all.

9. Supposing a thousand a year were knocked off?—If they knocked off a thousand there would be some other means found whereby we should have to pay it; there would be some other means of reimposing it, I dare say.

10. *Mr. Glover.*] Could not the owners of the hotels make a reduction in your rental equivalent to the amount of the extra expenditure?—It would be a very welcome relief. But we are not getting any nearer the question that is before us now. If this Bill goes through we shall be faced with that actual expense, whereas the other is problematical.

11. *Mr. Okey.*] I should like to know whether the work that your employees do on a Sunday is as much as they do on week-days?—That is one of the unfortunate phases of hotel life. From day to day we can never tell what we are going to do. We must keep the staff up to its maximum efficiency on every day of the year. Whether it is supposed to be a slack season or a busy season, we never know from day to day how many we are going to have in the house.

12. But you do not keep the whole of your staff there on a Sunday?—I always like my staff to have as much liberty as possible, and where it is consistent with the requirements of my house, on Sunday or any other day, I allow them to get away. If I have married men they all get off whenever it is convenient: that is an instruction to the dining-room manager. But what I can do voluntarily I do not want to be bound to do, because it will create a hardship; and I am quite sure it is not the wish of all the employees that they should get those holidays.

13. Are the employees asking for this?—They are asking for it through the secretary.

14. The employees: are they asking for it?—I do not know.

15. You have forty-one in your house; you must hear something?—They are all quite content, if you go and ask them; but if you go to them and say, "Would you like another £1 a week in wages?" they, like everybody else, will say "Yes." I may say that the hotelkeepers are doing so well in Sydney that they do not combat this. They say they are quite content to let the employees chip in and have a good time too; they can afford to pay them. Here we are in a different position altogether. We have had a bad time, are having a bad time now, and seem likely to have a bad time in the future.

16. I take it you get your work forward for Sunday as much as possible: you do not work the staff on Sunday more than is unavoidable?—No. Our employees do not work continuously like carpenters or bricklayers. They are there as the exigencies of the business demand it. You say that a hotel servant is working ten hours a day, but he is possibly not working ten hours: he is there on call—perhaps reading a book, or, in the case of the female servants, sewing.

17. You would not want to keep the forty-one there on Sunday working, would you?—If I only had twenty people in the house I might be able to let two of the staff away in the dining-room, and let the housemaid off. I do now when possible. I recognise that we are very much in the hands of our employees, and it is just as well to work in with them.

18. *Mr. Glover.*] You state that it costs you 10d. per head per meal for the staff?—Yes.

19. They have, I suppose, what is left over?—Oh, no. We have a mess-room for the usefuls and for the housemaids, and they sit down and have special meals—all fresh-cooked meat. In the case of the waiters and the hall-porters, possibly they come into the pantry and they have what is going in the dining-room. In the Hotel Australia the waiters have porridge and steak-and-onions in the morning. While I was staying there one of the best waiters was discharged because he was caught eating ham and eggs in the kitchen.

20. Some restaurants in New Zealand supply a meal of about three or four courses for 1s., and I presume they pay: you said it cost you 10d.?—It is the quantity. We all know that in catering when once you get up to a maximum, above it is all profit. Those cheap restaurants—I do not suppose you would like to go and see what is made up in them. It might change your opinion!

FRANK OAKES, Proprietor City Buffet, Wellington, made a statement and was examined. (No. 5.)

Witness: I do not know that I have much to add to what Mr. Beveridge has already stated. I employ eighteen hands—fourteen exclusive of the bar-staff—and if the Bill became law it would mean the addition, on a hasty calculation, of at least four to that staff. The cost of boarding them out—I have not accommodation on the premises for them—would be £1 per week, and their maintenance would be an additional £3. Then there would be their wages—porter, £1 5s.; waitress, £1 2s. 6d.; housemaid, 17s.; and in the kitchen it would be necessary to have a competent man to take the chef's place whom I put down at £2 5s. This makes a total of £9 9s. 6d. a week, or £488 per annum. There is another member of the staff that has to be considered, as far as I am concerned, and that is the night

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.

6. Do you have to keep your seventeen hands all the time on Sundays?—They have their time off. Some get off on Sunday afternoons: they arrange it amongst themselves, and so long as the work is done they can get off.

7. There is no hardship complained of?—We have no trouble whatever with our staff.

8. They arrange it amongst themselves, and you let one or more off?—Yes.

PATRICK JOSEPH GRIFFIN examined. (No. 7.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You are representing whom?—The Pier Hotel.

2. Just state your views?—My views are something similar to Mr. Oakes's. I employ sixteen of a staff, and my place is run on the same general lines as Mr. Oakes's.

3. You have nothing further to add?—No.

4. *Mr. Okey.*] Have you any difficulty in getting employees?—No great difficulty. Of course, you have to give a little notice and perhaps wait a day or two.

5. Have you had any complaints from your employees with regard to their hours of work?—No.

6. They are satisfied with the wages they get and the hours they work?—Yes.

7. They are generally satisfied?—Yes.

RICHARD DWYER examined. (No. 8.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—Proprietor of the Duke of Edinburgh Hotel, Wellington. I want to say that it is a small house. We have two housemaids and waitresses, a couple of cooks, and two porters. The first cook is a good man and the second does the rough work. On the half-holiday the cook prepares the evening meal when he leaves at 2 o'clock, and if he takes the whole day we shall have to put up with the other man, which will be a great hardship. With regard to the housemaids, if we take one off one floor we shall have to get another to take her place, and it is the same with the porters. Theoretically, a reasonable man believes in a six-day week, but this is a case where you might ask a man to fast for one day in the week: so it is unworkable in a hotel. That is all I have to say.

2. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] It is a pretty profitable business, is it not? How many hotels are you interested in—seven?—It is a question of what you call "interested in." As regards money, it all depends upon how much. There is not a great deal of money in it. There seems to be a fair amount of control and a great deal of work.

3. You have got on remarkably well in Wellington?—It is a question. I have a good deal of power and control, but if the business was wound up I do not know how it would wash up. I have seven hotels to do with.

4. *Mr. Okey.*] Have you found any complaints among the hands you employ?—None whatever.

5. As to the hours they work?—No. We could get them to work more if we wanted to.

6. Have you ever increased the tariff to the public while the cost was going up?—No.

7. You do not think your business would stand an increased cost without having to put the tariff up for the travelling public?—It would not.

8. *Mr. Atmore.*] What do you think the additional cost to you would be if the Bill were passed?—It would cost another couple of pounds for the cook. I suppose it would run into £200 a year. I should have to put the extra employees up, and that would increase the cost.

9. *The Chairman.*] How many do you employ altogether?—Exclusive of the bar, seven.

10. You are not bound to give them the same day off in the week: would it not be possible to let them have one day in seven?—If you let a cook go off you have to employ another skilled man.

11. Have you not a second man?—He could cook a chop, but could not make a good soup or entrée.

12. Would it not be possible to engage a second cook?—You would not get him to scrub a floor then. He would say he was a skilled man and was not going to do rough work.

TUESDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 1912.

JAMES SYDNEY PALMER made a statement. (No. 9.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Whom do you represent?—I am representing a number of the hotelkeepers in Auckland. Until quite recently I was a hotelkeeper there. At present I am interested in a freehold in the Marlborough District.

2. Have you any credentials authorizing you to appear here?—Yes, as representing the Licensed Victuallers' Association of Auckland.

3. Will you please state your views to the Committee?—I have given this matter some consideration, and if I were to say that I do not hold certain views on the question of a six-day week so far as labour is concerned I should be stating something that would be contrary to what is true. I have had considerable experience in hotels, large and small, town and country, and the fact is that I have a considerable amount of sympathy in the direction of confining the hours of labour—labour of all kinds—within a limit of six days, provided that all the conditions are made to apply on terms which are equitable both as regards the employee and the employer. The licensed-hotel business in New Zealand is quite distinct and apart from any other business, particularly with regard to the employment of labour. In every other business—for example, the grocery business or the drapery business—people can absolutely close for one half-day in the week and the whole of Sunday. Those conditions do not apply to hotels. It is well known, I believe, that a hotelkeeper is constantly on duty, from the 1st January until the 31st December. During the whole of that time and at all hours he has obligations to fulfil so far as the licensing laws are concerned and so far as the public are concerned. His duties are of a more or less strenuous nature, and his hours are very long. I hold that

if a six-day week is to be given effect to so far as the employment of labour in hotels is concerned, an equal right should be given to the hotelkeeper. For my own part, during the time I was running hotels I should have been very pleased to have had the privilege of being able to close my licensed premises just the same as a shopkeeper could close his and go home and have the necessary recreation that every man and woman is entitled to. There is another aspect of the matter which I think should receive some consideration, and that is that for a number of years—I think since somewhere about 1902—the hotelkeepers of New Zealand have been kept in a state more or less of turmoil because of the constant agitation that has been going on to change the labour-conditions with regard both to the hours of work and the wages to be paid. I think it will be found that during that time the hours of labour have been reduced by something over 20 per cent. or 25 per cent.—I want to keep well within the mark. Hotelkeepers to-day would welcome something in the nature of finality in this respect. They feel that if this Bill goes through in its present form, without provision being made for an equal reduction in the hours of employers themselves, it will be one-sided and not an equitable measure as between man and man. From the theoretical side it may appear at first sight a simple matter to introduce a six-day week into hotels, but in practice it is a different matter altogether. It is possible that there are certain hotels where the principle could be applied with a minimum of disadvantage to the employer and the public. As a matter of fact, during the last portion of the time when I was in the Edinburgh Castle Hotel, I employed seven hands outside the members of my family, and I instituted a system whereby six of those hands worked only six days a week. They were off on every Sunday, as well as on their customary half-holiday during the week; but, in order to do that, I was compelled to have regard—and I do not know that I should be compelled—to the necessity of observing hygienic rules and cleanliness, and in order to observe those rules I had to do the work myself, assisted by the members of my own family. Again, apart from considering the question from the point of view of principle, there is the matter of cost. I am credibly informed that if this Bill becomes the law of the land in its present form it is going to involve the whole trade in a very heavy increase in expenditure. Already hotelkeepers are taxed up to the hilt. Prices of commodities have risen; expenses all round have risen; but the hotelkeeper cannot see his way, for obvious reasons, to increase his tariff. There is another aspect of the matter to which I should like to refer, and that is that to the best of my knowledge and belief the employees in the Auckland District are not dissatisfied with their present conditions—in fact, a number have told me personally that such is the case. What they say is that it is not they who are seeking for further concessions, but it is a few of the leaders of their union or association. The employers, from their point of view, do not consider that they are placed upon a fair footing with what are called private hotels or boardinghouses. Those people are not being controlled, so far as the employment of labour is concerned, by the same conditions as licensed hotels. In conclusion, I desire to emphasize that the employer should be considered at least equally with the employees.

ERNEST NORDON, Secretary of the Canterbury Licensed Victuallers' Association, made a statement and was examined. (No. 10.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Will you state your views, as briefly as possible?—I should like to say at the outset that in the district in which I reside the relationship between employers and employees has always been of the most cordial character, a fact largely due to the very moderate demands of the employees in that particular district, and to the sensible attitude that has at all times been adopted by the secretary of the union, whom I see sitting in the room now—the Hon. John Barr. With regard to the Christchurch hotelkeepers, the exigencies of the position demand that every hotelkeeper in that city shall be in his hotel during this week. It is the busiest week in Canterbury, being Carnival week; and as each hotelkeeper is expected to keep the law and is at the same time made responsible for any lapse on the part of an employee, you will well understand that it is absolutely impossible for hotelkeepers from Canterbury to come before you this week and give evidence. There are forty-six hotelkeepers in the Christchurch District, and each hotel is full of boarders during Carnival week; and I respectfully submit to the Committee that before legislation of this kind is placed upon the statute-book, which is admitted on all hands to be going to mean a tremendous increase in the cost of running each hotel, it is only British justice that every licensee should have a chance to thoroughly consider the Bill. I respectfully submit that the hotelkeepers of the district which I represent have had no chance of considering the Bill, inasmuch as the text of it has never even appeared in the daily papers. By the courtesy of a member of Parliament representing one of the Christchurch seats I received a copy of the Bill, but the local hotelkeepers have had no chance whatever of considering the text of it. Although I tried very hard to get some of them to attend before this Committee, they one and all said the same thing—"It is absolutely impossible this week"; and it is for that reason that, on behalf of the members of the association I represent, I plead for some delay in the matter. I want to point out to the Committee that this proposed amendment to the Shops and Offices Act comes into conflict with the text of the last amendment, and for that reason also I submit the Bill wants further consideration. It was enacted in the last amendment that each employee should work sixty-two hours a week, and that no employee should work more than ten hours on any one day. The question I want to ask is, how can that time be worked out in five days and a half? It means that, in addition to the full day's holiday that is proposed in this Bill, the hotelkeepers are called upon to sacrifice another two hours, because they cannot under any circumstances get in more than sixty hours. No doubt the gentlemen who are supporting this Bill will tell you that two hours a week is a very small matter, but when you average that two hours over the large number of employees in some of the biggest hotels it represents a great deal to the licensee; and it represents even a greater loss than that which would be incurred by the half-day which it is proposed to add to the present half-holiday. I have gone into the financial aspect of the question in Christchurch, and I find that it is going to mean a loss of from £200 a year in the case of some of the smallest houses to anything from £800 to £1,000 a year in the bigger ones. I want, too, to point out that when a hotelkeeper has purchased the goodwill and the lease of a hotel under certain conditions, it seems rather unfair to spring legislation of this kind upon him, for in buying that hotel he has made no provision whatever for the extra cost that

this legislation would entail. I submit that that is a very important point, which should induce the Committee to hesitate before recommending that this Bill should be placed on the statute-book. I should like to say one word with regard to the case quoted by Mr. Palmer. He stated that, having given his employees a whole holiday per week, he had to do the work himself. As an old Auckland I happen to know the hotels of Auckland almost as well as I know the hotels of Canterbury, and I am sure that I am correct in stating that the hotel which Mr. Palmer used to run in Auckland was not and is not a residential hotel. I do not think they have a boarder a month in the Edinburgh Castle, consequently it cannot be compared with a hotel doing a residential trade. And the Edinburgh Castle stands by itself in that respect, because a large majority of the houses—I know it is so in Christchurch, at any rate—do a fairly large residential trade. Speaking from some ten years' experience as secretary of our association, I humbly submit that I know a little about the working of hotels. I am satisfied, apart from the increased cost of running the hotels, that this proposal would disorganize the whole internal economy of a hotel. There is just a chance that such a proposal might eventually fall upon the travelling public, because if these demands are to be constantly made it seems to me that hotel tariffs cannot remain stationary. As one who has travelled the world over and stayed at hotels in all parts, I am quite sure that at the present time the hotel tariffs in New Zealand are lower than they are in any other part of the world. It does seem to me that in considering this question that aspect might be taken into consideration—that if these demands are to be constantly made there is a possibility that the tariff may have to be raised, and that undoubtedly must fall upon the man who travels, and in that case a large number will suffer. However, I am not here to plead the cause of the travelling public. I would urgently request the Committee to stay their hand in this matter in order to give the licensees, not only of Christchurch but of the whole Dominion, some chance of digesting the clauses in this proposed amendment to the Act.

2. *Mr. Davey.*] Do you think that many of the Christchurch hotelkeepers would come and give evidence if they had an opportunity?—I am sure they would.

3. Assuming that this Bill is placed upon the statute-book, and as an alternative the hotelkeeper is given an opportunity of granting his servants a holiday in a lump, either once a quarter or every half-year, would that be more suitable than giving them one whole day a week?—That is a question you have sprung upon me. I should not like to answer it without consideration. That proposal is in the Bill now, is it not?

Mr. Hindmarsh: Only up to three months.

4. Supposing that principle were extended to the half-year, would that be more suitable to the hotelkeeper?—I should not like to answer that question. I am quite unprepared for it.

5. *Mr. Clark.*] Do you think it would disorganize the trade of the hotels in Christchurch if the employees got a whole day a fortnight off, instead of a half-day each week, as they are getting now?—I suppose there would be less disorganization, but undoubtedly that would lead to disorganization. Arranging the half-holiday at present leads to considerable trouble. So far as hotelkeepers generally are concerned in my district—and I believe I speak for the hotelkeepers of the whole Dominion—there is no desire whatever to overwork the hotel servants if it can possibly be avoided. It is the peculiar nature of the business that makes it almost impossible to extend the same privileges to that business that are given in others, because the travelling public have a desire to eat even on Sundays and holidays, and if you do not give them the same attention on those days as on other days they are not only dissatisfied but they talk about reporting you to the Licensing Committee, and so forth.

6. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] There is only one Carnival week on in New Zealand just now, is there not?—Yes, there is a Carnival week in Christchurch.

7. The publicans in the other parts of the Dominion are at liberty, but they do not seem to rush down here to give evidence?—I can only speak for my own district.

8. *Mr. Okey.*] Have you any complaint from your employees as to their treatment at the present time?—None at all. I am quite satisfied in my own mind that a large number of the hotel employees of Christchurch do not know that this Bill is before Parliament.

9. You do not consider that they are asking for it?—No; I am quite sure they are not. Of course, the hotel employees of Christchurch are open to take it if they can get it, for which I do not blame them a bit.

10. They do not expect a reduction in wages to meet this, do they?—I am afraid I should not like to be the one to propose a reduction.

11. A man writing to me from New Plymouth says that his chef has three afternoons off per week; the second and third men have each two afternoons; the maids have the statutory half-holiday every week, and in addition they are always at liberty to go out for an hour or two in the morning, with the exception of one maid per day. Do you treat your employees something after that fashion?—I think I can say that, with the exception of the very big hotels in Christchurch, when business is slack a few hours off is often given to an employee when he or she is not entitled to it by law. I would not say that with regard to the big hotels, because discipline demands that a man in a certain position should always be at hand if he is wanted; but in the majority of hotels it is so.

12. There is a certain amount of give-and-take?—Exactly. I might say, with regard to my own district, that if we as an association find that any licensee is breaking the law in regard to hours we are the first to jump on him and see that he obeys the award and the Act.

13. Has not the Arbitration Court got the power now to give them what they are asking for, if evidence is brought forward?—Yes, it has the power, but I am not at all sure whether the Judge would give it, in face of the Act that is on the statute-book now.

14. This is an attempt to override the Arbitration Act by coming to Parliament?—That is what I think it is.

15. What effect do you think it would have on the hotels if they had to increase the tariff? Have you had to increase the tariff through the rise in the cost of meat and other eatables?—We have not increased the tariff of late years. Taking the whole of the dining-rooms of Christchurch—and I have seen the books of many of the hotel-proprietors—there is not a single dining-room in that city con-

nected with a licensed house that does not show a loss on the year. To add the amount that I have stated—from £300 to £700 or £800 a year—would mean a tremendous loss to many of the licensees which have bought their houses under certain conditions, not expecting legislation of this character.

16. What effect do you think this proposal would have on the smaller hotels in the country—hotels that keep perhaps two girls, who have to do the waiting and the bedrooms?—I think the effect is going to be disastrous to them. But I think it will recoil upon the employees, because some of them will have to be discharged in those small houses, and the licensees and their wives will have to do the work.

17. While there is a Licensing Act that compels you to keep your house open during seven days, you consider that it would be hardship if this measure were to pass?—It would be a gross injustice.

18. We have had evidence that hotelkeepers would be glad to close their houses altogether on Sunday, if the Act would allow it: is that so in Christchurch?—I am positive about that. There is not a hotelkeeper in Christchurch who would not close up his dining-room on Sunday if he had the chance, and go out and enjoy himself.

19. That is an impossibility?—Exactly, because the travelling public arrive on Sunday, and they have a nasty habit of wanting to eat on Sunday just the same as on any other day.

20. What effect do you think it would have on the tourist traffic if we closed the dining-rooms of hotels on Sundays?—It would have a bad effect on the tourist traffic.

21. Do you think the profit made on the sale of liquor would not stand this additional £700 or £800?—No. Profits on liquor are largely a myth.

22. *The Chairman.*] You admit the principle, I suppose, that where it is possible every man should have one day off in seven?—I have said that, but the hotel business is so entirely different from any other business that it is almost an impossibility. In theory I believe in a six-day week, but it does not work out in practice.

23. The great objection to this one-day-in-seven proposal is the cost?—Not altogether. The cost is one great objection, but disorganization of the staff is another.

24. That would be an inconvenience?—Not only to the hotelkeeper but to the travelling public.

25. Do you not think you could recoup the extra expense from the travelling public by increasing the tariff?—I suppose you could, but the question is how an increased tariff would be received.

26. Is it not a fact that the New Zealand tariff at hotels is the cheapest in the world?—Yes, it is far too cheap.

27. Supposing that any hotel put its tariff up a shilling a day, would that not cover all the extra cost?—No, it would not so far as Christchurch is concerned, because in Christchurch there are only about four times in the year when from a residential point of view the hotels do any business worth speaking of. For a good part of the year large hotels like the United Service, Warner's, and the Clarendon have only from six to twelve boarders in them, and they have still to maintain forty or fifty servants.

28. Do they keep the full staff in the hotel all the time?—Yes. You cannot employ a man for a week and then put him off because there is no business.

29. With regard to the tourist traffic, do you think the average tourist that comes along here would care whether he paid 10s. 6d. a day or 12s. 6d.?—I do not think the average tourist who comes to New Zealand would mind much whether the rate was 12s. 6d. or perhaps 15s. a day; but the tourist is not the only person to be considered in this matter. The regular traveller in New Zealand, or the man who goes down from Wellington to Christchurch for a holiday, is entitled to some consideration. It would cause more dissatisfaction among that class if the tariff went up from 12s. 6d. to 15s. in a first-class house, and from 8s. to 10s. in a second-class house.

30. Is it not a fact that, speaking generally of the travelling public who use hotels, an increase in tariff of 1s. or 2s. would not make any great difference?—I think it would make a great difference to them. I think it would cause a great deal of dissatisfaction. As a matter of fact, the people of New Zealand have been treated too leniently in the matter of hotel tariffs, and would resist any attempt to raise them.

31. You say that the hotels all make a loss on the dining-room?—I am speaking for Christchurch. Many of the hotels in Christchurch put on a lunch for 1s. which in other places you have to pay 2s. and 2s. 6d. for.

JOHN MORRISON, Proprietor of Albert Hotel, Auckland, and President of Auckland Licensed Victuallers' Association, made a statement and was examined. (No. 11.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Will you please state your views to the Committee as briefly as possible?—I have a fairly long experience of hotelkeeping, and am sorry to say that I am not able to retire yet. I have been for thirty-two years hotelkeeping in New Zealand. I have not been hotelkeeping all the time, but the greater number of those years, and I have kept the smallest to the largest hotels in the Auckland Province. I assure you that if this Bill is carried through it will cause a lot of dissatisfaction not only to the hotelkeepers, but to the travelling public generally. For instance, the present tariffs will be increased by quite half-a-crown a day if this Bill is carried through. I may say that it is quite an accident that I am here. I left home last Thursday night to attend the Christchurch race meeting without knowing anything, practically, of this Bill. During my stay there I had two or three wires asking me to try to appear here to-day to give evidence before this Committee, and I may say that I am not prepared to give evidence. With regard to what Mr. Nordon said as to it being impossible for large hotels to give a holiday without upsetting their arrangements, of course it disorganizes the whole business of the hotel if you have to give a full holiday in the week. As regards the tourist traffic in New Zealand, I think it would be a great detriment to that part of the trade as well as to the travelling public generally. I spoke to some of the Christchurch publicans over this matter, and they were all up in arms about it, and, as Mr. Nordon said, none of them were able to attend here on account of this being their very busy week, or many of them would have come to give evidence.

What the publicans of Auckland—and I think the whole Dominion—would like would be that this Bill should be kept back so that all who wished to give evidence could appear. As far as Auckland is concerned, the trade there knows absolutely nothing about this Bill. As far as my staff are concerned, they are all perfectly satisfied under the existing conditions. I have never had any complaints, but have always got on very well with the staff; and I think with most other hotelkeepers it is the same. The workers are perfectly satisfied with the hours and the wages. If this Bill is passed it means increasing the expenses of the different hotelkeepers by from £200 to £800 a year, and I think it is a very serious matter. For instance, I have just sold out of the Metropolitan Hotel in Auckland and bought into the Albert, never thinking that such a proposal as this was going to be made the second week of my being in my new house. If I had I should not have given the price that I did, because in that house it is going to cost me from £300 to £400 a year more. And then you do not give the public the satisfaction. It disorganizes the staff right through when you begin to employ others to do a day's work. Extra labour is very expensive, and it simply means that there will be a big increase in tariff right through New Zealand. It is of no use talking of 1s. a day—that would never meet it; it means about 2s. 6d. a day. There is one other thing. The boardinghouses up our way are not working under the same conditions that we are, and when we put our tariffs up 1s., or 2s., or 2s. 6d. a day we shall lose our business. That is the serious part of it. It will give a good chance for more boardinghouses if this extra cost is put on to the hotelkeepers of New Zealand. They are sure to lose their trade.

2. How many hands do you employ?—I have employed as many as thirty-five.

3. I mean at present?—I have only just got into the hotel.

4. Do you not know how the house is manned?—I suppose I employ about fourteen.

5. How many would be affected under this Bill? It does not affect the barman and barmaids, does it?—I should have to keep an extra barman or barmaid—perhaps two. I should have to keep an extra man in the kitchen, an extra porter, an extra waitress, and an extra housemaid if this Bill became law.

6. *Mr. Atmore.*] Do not the barmaids get a holiday on Sunday now?—Yes.

7. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] Mr. Pryor, Mr. Nordon, Mr. Fairburn, Mr. Dwyer, and Mr. Oakes are fairly representative of your trade, are they not?—Yes.

8. Mr. Nordon seems to know all about hotels in all parts of the world?—He ought to know a good deal.

9. I think you complained that publicans had not been properly represented here: you would not say that, would you?—I would certainly say it when there is not one man from the Canterbury District.

10. Hotel workers seem to me to be the lowest-paid workers in the Dominion: what do you pay an ordinary waiter?—They get from £1 10s. upwards.

11. We will say £1 10s. What is a waiter's food and lodging worth—5s. for a room?—Yes.

12. And his food?—Fifteen shillings.

13. I should have thought you could have done it cheaper?—They live on just the same as the tourist who pays 10s. or 12s. 6d. a day.

14. That would amount to £2 10s. a week, then?—Yes; but waiters get from £1 10s. to £3 a week.

15. What do porters get?—From £1 5s. to £2.

16. Are they kept?—Yes.

17. A barmaid, I suppose, gets about £2 a week?—£1 5s. to £2.

18. And she is off on Sunday?—All day Sunday.

19. And a porter is not?—He has his hours off. They have many hours off during the day.

20. *The Chairman.*] The wages are fixed under an award, are they not?—Yes.

21. *Mr. Okey.*] You have a good deal of steamer traffic in Auckland on Sundays?—Yes.

22. That necessitates your keeping a fairly full staff on Sundays?—Yes; porters, and waiters, and housemaids—all through, with the exception of the bar-attendants.

23. What effect do you think it will have on the tourist traffic of Rotorua if such a measure as this is passed?—I think it will have a very serious effect on the travelling public generally.

24. The traffic on Sunday there, I take it, is as great as on any day?—Yes, perhaps greater, because people go there from Auckland on Saturday and return on Monday.

25. Do you not think this proposal will affect the smaller hotels to a greater extent than the larger ones?—It will affect all. I would not say that it would affect the smaller ones more than the larger ones. It will affect the smaller hotels very much where they keep perhaps two. There they will have to keep three hands, perhaps four.

26. Would not 6d. a meal extra have the effect of transferring the trade from the hotels to the boardinghouses?—We have put up with a lot of inconvenience and a number of increases up to the present time, in one way and another. Take meat, for instance, and bread, and all the necessities. No matter what the increase in cost has been, we have not raised our tariffs: we still stick to the same. In some hotels boarding does not pay too well. If this Bill becomes law we shall certainly have to raise our tariff. We cannot possibly go on as we are.

27. You would have to transfer this extra cost to the public?—Yes, the public will have to suffer.

28. And the public are complaining at the present time about the cost?—I do not see that they have much to complain about. The great stumbling-block with us is that we lose a certain amount of trade for certain when the tariff goes up, because the boardinghouses are not working under the same conditions that we are. We are under the Arbitration Act, and the boardinghouses are not.

29. You must make provision for a certain number, I suppose: if the trade is transferred you cannot reduce your hands to any great extent?—It is rather awkward to reduce hands, but I expect that is what it will come to. If we lose the trade we are sure to reduce the hands.

30. *Mr. Atmore.*] With regard to the keep of the employees, have you not the option of giving them 10s. a week and letting them keep themselves?—Yes, I believe we have that. But I am quite sure that we cannot board a hotel employee for 10s. a week, because they help themselves to the same food as the tourists get.

31. *The Chairman.*] You will admit, I suppose, that the large hotels will suffer the greatest inconvenience if this Bill goes through?—Yes.

32. Do you not think that it would not make very much difference to the trade if you raised the tariff, inasmuch as the patrons of first-class hotels would not go to a boardinghouse on account of that small increase? A man who has been accustomed to a first-class hotel would not go to a boardinghouse, would he?—I am quite certain he would. Some of the boardinghouses are equal to the hotels, but they are not under the same conditions as we are. They can work the staff to suit themselves. We cannot.

33. *Mr. Okey.*] Have you heard from your employees whether they are asking for this amendment of the Act?—Up to when I left home on Thursday night they knew absolutely nothing about it. My employees have always been satisfied. I have always, as a rule, got on well with my employees. They knew nothing about this Bill on Thursday night.

34. Many of the employees, if they thought it would put you to undue inconvenience, would rather not have such a measure?—Many of them, yes.

35. *Mr. Anderson.*] How many days a week do you work your employees?—Seven.

36. Do you think that is a fair thing?—Our business is so peculiar: it is so different from other businesses that we cannot possibly help it. Of course they do not work seven days, but they are on duty seven days. They have a half-holiday off. We are not allowed to work our employees more than sixty-two hours a week, and there are very few that work sixty-two hours a week. If it is a quiet afternoon they can go out for an hour or two. I am quite sure that our girls do not work fifty-six hours a week. I do not know that any of the employees I have had for the last few years have averaged fifty-six hours a week.

37. Do all other employers in the hotel trade in Auckland work on the same lines as you: I presume you have a first-class hotel?—I have run some of the first-class hotels. They are all on the same lines. You will notice the girls out for an hour in the afternoon, and the men as well.

WILLIAM DEVINE examined. (No. 12.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Whom do you represent?—The Palmerston licensed victuallers and the Wanganui licensed victuallers, and I am also proprietor of the Empire Hotel at Palmerston North.

2. Just state your views in connection with the Bill?—I do not intend to go over the ground already traversed, but wish to state that in Palmerston North and Wanganui we are working under the Cooks' and Waiters' award, and if the Bill passes it means great hardship to us, and we shall not be able to cater for the travelling public as we have done in the past. I keep a residential hotel and employ a staff of twelve. If this Bill goes through I would have to engage three extra employees. In places like Palmerston North and Wanganui you cannot replace a chef at a moment's notice, and my wages will increase from £3 10s. to £4 10s. per week under the award of the Court. I would have to employ a staff of four in the kitchen, with a first and second chef. If I can get a casual employee to take the chef's place in his absence it would mean an extra cost of £39 per year, which means 15s. per day for a casual chef. If that chef were able to find employment in Palmerston every day it would mean seven different hotels he would be employed at, and each hotelkeeper would know what the other was doing. It would mean that he would be getting £5 5s. per week for the seven days. If the Bill goes through, in the country districts that I represent it will mean that tourists and travellers arriving by the late trains at night—we have two or three trains arriving at night—will not be catered for. Motor-cars travelling from New Plymouth to Wellington—of which there are a considerable number—call at our places in country districts at all hours of the night, and we shall not be able to cater for the travelling public. The extra staff required in the way of housemaids and porters would entail an extra cost of £246 per year. Owing to the award already made I have had to increase my staff by two, and I think the secretary of the union can bear me out in that. Previously my staff was ten, and now it is twelve. That is in the residential portion of the house. Some gentleman has asked, "Why not increase your tariff?" But that cannot be done in the country, where gentlemen staying for a little while make the hotels their home. These pay a lower tariff than the ordinary traveller and do not get the same chances they have in the city, where there are large boardinghouses, of getting accommodation outside the hotel. With regard to increasing the tariff, so far as the tourists are concerned, I do not think it would be a wise thing for the trade to do, because it is recognized throughout the world that the tariff is from 8s. to 10s. per day, or £2 2s. per week. This tariff is advertised by Cook's Tourist offices, so we have no chance of increasing our tariff. If the Bill goes through you will be doing an injustice to the travelling public more than to anybody else. As far as the award is concerned, we are giving the employees half a day off every week and a half-day every alternate Sunday, so that on an average they get one day a week. The hours are fifty-two for housemaids and sixty-two for male servants, but they never work that time, because the hotel business is altogether different from any other calling. As soon as breakfast is over the waitresses have some time off; when lunch and dinner are over the employees can, if they are at all smart, finish in about an hour. One of our difficulties is that we cannot get a staff at a minute's notice—we cannot fill the place of a man at short notice if he happens to leave. If the Bill passes, the public will suffer and be put to a lot of inconvenience.

3. *Mr. Glover.*] You say you employ twelve of a staff?—Yes.

4. And you say if the Bill passes you will have to get three additional hands?—Yes.

5. Mr. Beveridge said that he employed forty-eight and would require to get six extra ones, and Mr. Oakes said he had fifteen and would require to get four additional hands, while you say you only employ twelve and would have to get three?—I said three additional hands, but one would be casual. The casual man would have to act as chef. The chef works up to 1 o'clock on the ordinary holiday, and would prepare the evening meal. I cannot see how I could keep my house going with less than two extra hands and a casual cook.

6. *Mr. Okey.*] You say you have been working under the award?—Yes.

7. How long has that award to run?—It has been in force since August, 1912.

8. How long is the award for?—Until August, 1913.

9. Would not the extra rooms you would require for the extra employees be an extra tax on you: would you have to build?—No, because in the country we have to keep our staff whether they are busy or not.

10. And you have plenty of rooms at the hotel for your staff?—Yes, but we have the option of paying them 5s. a week to go outside.

11. Do you not think it will affect the small hotels, where they keep a limited number of servants, more than the larger hotels? Take, for instance, a country hotel employing two girls who have to do the waiting at table and so on: how are they going to work their business?—They would have to get at least one additional hand.

12. So that it will affect those small houses to a greater extent than the larger hotels?—Yes, unless the proprietor and his family wish to do the work themselves, which would be very hard on them considering that they have to take charge of the bar until 6 o'clock the next morning. For twenty-four hours you are at the mercy of the travelling public.

13. Is there not a tendency at the present time on the part of a number of people to give up housekeeping and live in hotels?—That has been the case in the district I represent.

14. That is the growing tendency?—Yes.

15. And you have to keep servants for them?—Yes. We have to keep permanent boarders.

16. And the law requires you to supply them with food and drink?—Yes, at any time they come along. Under the Licensing Act, in a case at Taranaki, some one called at a hotel in the night and the proprietor refused him a meal, but the man laid an information and had the proprietor prosecuted for not supplying him. That was between 8 and 9 o'clock at night. So, if the Bill comes into force, how can we comply with the Licensing Act?

17. *The Chairman.*] Is not the statement you have just made, that the hotel charges are low, the reason why people are giving up housekeeping and living at hotels?—Yes. We have to cater for a different class in the country, and we have to keep a large staff at times during agricultural shows and race meetings. We have to keep our staff all the year round because we cannot always put our hands on extra employees. For that reason I have to keep an extra staff.

JOHN HOWARD HINTON examined. (No. 13.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Whom do you represent?—I am a master grocer and president of the Master Grocers' Association of Dunedin, which is not exactly affiliated to, but is in touch with, similar organizations throughout New Zealand. At the beginning of September our various organizations waited on the Premier with a deputation to draw his attention to certain hardships they suffered under the Shops and Offices Act, and Mr. Massey in the course of his reply gave us an assurance that in the event of amendments being made in the Shops and Offices Act our organization would be given an opportunity of voicing their grievances and objections to the clauses to which we were opposed. I have been touring the Dominion during the last month in connection with my office, and received a telegram yesterday from the secretary of our organization informing me that the Labour Bills Committee were taking evidence, and asking me to attend and give evidence this morning.

2. We are only considering one amendment to the Act at present?—This is an amendment to the Shops and Offices Act, I take it. Your point, I understand, is that it only deals with one amendment.

3. That is all we have before us now. Have you any other clauses affecting this Bill which you wish to put before us?—Our position is this, as we pointed out at the time of our deputation—of which, I suppose, reports are obtainable by members of the Committee—we run our business just now on certain occasions in defiance of the law. We find that certain restrictions with reference to the hours that our assistants can work—more particularly the hours of the carters—are simply such that we cannot comply with the law and carry on our business. We were promised consideration in this respect by the Premier, and word was sent to the Inspectors of the Labour Department not to insist on a rigid interpretation of the law; but we maintain that if there is to be any amendment of the Shops and Offices Act this session we are entitled to redress in the manner we indicate—that is, that the Arbitration Court should have restored to it the power to fix the hours of individual trades requiring special consideration. This is a matter of urgency so far as my association is concerned, because we are working under an expiring award and a new award is shortly to be made. The Wellington award has already been fixed, and the Auckland award has been fixed up in a similar way, practically perpetuating the grievances of the grocers for the term of the award—that is, three years. We would like, if there is any possibility, to get redress and to have power to go before the Arbitration Court sitting in Dunedin shortly, and get it to hear our evidence and settle our case on its merits. At the present time, when the Arbitration Court is faced with the proposition from either side with regard to the hours of work takes up the attitude that the hours are fixed under the Shops and Offices Act, and that it is not within their jurisdiction to make any alteration therein. I do not think it is necessary for me to enlarge on the actual way in which the hardships affect us, but I may say that at special times in our trade—such as at Christmas-time and before holidays—we are really placed in the position of being at the beck and call of the Labour Department's Inspector as to whether the Department will give us permits for our carters to work in the delivery of goods and to do two and sometimes three days' work in one. We would also say that in other Labour Bills there is legislation for the hours of women and youths, and in the Factory Act it applies to the payment of overtime to men who are employed. A very large proportion of our employees consists of male adults who are quite capable of looking after their own rights without the assistance of a law which is regarded as not essential in connection with factories. There is no desire on the part of the Master Grocers' Association to evade the payment of overtime, and we are quite prepared to pay for all work done according to the scale laid down by law; but we do maintain we have a right to ask that our employees, being adult males, should be at our disposal on certain occasions without our having to apply to an Inspector for a permit, as if they were women and children.

4. *Mr. Davey.*] I have a copy of the statement you made to Mr. Massey : have you anything new to add to that ?—I do not think so, only that the matter is urgent so far as Dunedin is concerned, because we are faced with a new award which will stand for three years if made.

5. *Mr. Clark.*] Have you the right to a permit from the Inspector of Factories if you pay overtime ?—We have the right to apply, but not to demand one.

6. Has it ever been refused ?—Frequently refused. I will just give you one instance. An Inspector in Auckland, when a case was brought before him, stated that a carter, if he were at a distance of a mile or two from his stable, found his time was up, it was his duty not to finish the work of delivery, but to take the balance of his goods back to the stable and finish the delivery next morning.

7. *Mr. Glover.*] Supposing you keep your people working up to 6 o'clock in the evening, do you think that a reasonable time ?—You take the conditions under which a carter works ; he is subject to weather-conditions ; he has a certain amount of work to do ; he gets a load out during a certain part of the day which under ordinary conditions would allow him to get back in good time ; but say it comes on wet, his work is done under very unfavourable conditions, and it takes him very much longer. But according to the verdict of the Labour Department, when a man has worked up till the ordinary time it is his duty to leave the work undone until next day, notwithstanding that the employer would recognize that he was entitled to overtime for the work done. Our point is that the discretion lies entirely with the Inspector, who is not acquainted with the conditions, to say whether the work is special work or not.

8. *Mr. Okey.*] If the man came back half an hour late, would you be liable to a fine ?—It is a breach of the award.

9. And if you were continually going to the Inspectors they would not give you permits ?—Our experience has been that they resent being asked for permits.

10. You may expect a man to be back, but if he is a quarter of an hour late would you have to get a permit ?—That is the position, and it really constitutes to our mind an absurdity. The Inspector will tell you, supposing that circumstances arise under which you cannot ask for a permit that night, that if you post an application for a permit it will be all right, and we really get a permit from the Inspector to work our man the night before it is granted.

11. *Mr. Clark.*] Has he ever refused in such a case ?—I cannot say he has.

12. *Mr. Okey.*] You are really in the hands of an Inspector ?—Yes.

13. Have any of your assistants complained of the request you are making, that you should have the sole right to say whether they should come back at night and work overtime ?—I think most of them would regard it as a privilege, especially married men. They do not mind coming back a few nights and earning money in the shape of overtime. We do not want anything for nothing, and they recognize it.

GEORGE HEALE examined. (No. 14.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Representing ?—The Empire Hotel, Wellington. We employ a staff of thirty-eight people. I have just come along to answer any questions you may wish to put to me. I am not here to say anything particularly one way or the other. I think I have very fair views with regard to the position of employee and employer. I know what the proposed Bill will cost us if passed : it will cost us over £500 a year, and from the amount of money supposed to be made by the Empire Hotel, at any rate, I do not think we can possibly meet the expense and keep going. I do not think there is any profit at all in the business. The little profit made in the bars goes to maintain the house for the welfare of the public. Ours is a commercial house, and most of our customers would be opposed to an increase in the tariff, and if you increased it by 2s. 6d. a day they would be very much affected.

2. *Mr. Okey.*] What number of a staff do you employ ?—Thirty-eight.

3. Have you got room in your hotel for the additional number of hands you would have to keep on under this Bill ?—No, a great many sleep out now. We would like to provide rooms for them, but we cannot, and have to pay a great deal of money for their outside keep.

4. You say that your house is mainly kept for commercial travellers ?—Yes, it is a commercial house.

5. Have you any families residing there ?—Yes.

6. Do you find that class of trade increasing ?—Many people would be glad to come along, but we cannot take them in at the amount they want to pay.

7. An increase in the tariff would drive that class of trade away altogether ?—They would have no chance. We could not take them in.

8. Are your employees dissatisfied ?—I never heard of one being dissatisfied. I have never had a complaint.

9. Have you heard of the Bill being discussed amongst your employees ?—No.

10. Do you think they are aware that this Bill is before the House ?—Some may be, but I do not think so. I have never heard anything about it. I think they are all very well satisfied. Mr. Carey could bear me out when I say that there has been no complaint from any one. They have never come to me from the union to make complaints. We have been looked upon as a happy family for the last four years.

11. Do you think the Arbitration Court, which is composed of experts able to take evidence, is the best tribunal to deal with a question like this, without anybody coming to Parliament to get really behind the Court ?—Yes, I think the Arbitration Court would be more fitted to deal with this question.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given ; printing (1,200 copies), £15 8s.