

Are you sure that there is no Harvesters' Union, and that the hours are not fixed for their work?—I am sure of it. I took the trouble to obtain information, because it was our business to consider the question from all points of view before getting the support of all concerned as to the Bill.

You read out the names of various local bodies who passed resolutions in favour of the Bill, and I noticed right through that they were all organized bodies connected with towns and not organized bodies in country districts. You did not ask the County Councils to pass resolutions in connection with the matter—there must have been some reason for not doing that—however, I take it that the County Councils are quite as important as Borough Councils and City Councils, are they not?—Certainly, sir.

Surely you will admit that the County Councils represent the country people?—That is so, but the Borough Council is where you have the best chance of securing consideration with respect to a question of this description.

Most of the Borough Councils mentioned in the list represent the distributors and not the producers?—That is so. I admit that the country people are against the Bill, and they are against the Bill because they do not understand it. I also admit that the County Councils in the majority of cases would not vote in favour of it, not because the Bill is no good to them, but because they do not understand it.

And they are prejudiced against the Bill?—Yes.

*The Chairman.*] You commenced your evidence by stating that the objections to the Bill were more or less illusory, or made by those prejudiced against the movement, or by those refusing to understand it?—That is so.

And you have told Mr. Girling that you think the Borough Councils were in the best position to formulate an opinion and understand the measure: do you think there is any difference in the intelligence between the members of the Borough Councils and the members of the County Councils?—Oh, no.

You think, then, that the members of the County Councils can understand the provisions of the measure just as fully as the people in the town?—I think the city members are more alive to the merits and demerits of a Bill of this sort than the country members.

From their own standpoint?—From the standpoint of the general good.

You think, then, that they know the business of the farmers better than they do themselves?—No, I do not suggest that.

Do you think that the man on the land is not sufficiently intelligent to come to a proper and reasonable conclusion just as the man in the town?—I do not say that.

You say that, so far as leaving off work is concerned, the farmer can leave off when he likes. That is just the point. That is why they object to the Bill. They have got to commence according to the hour fixed by the legislation?—Which legislation?

This legislation. You must surely understand that if the train is running at a certain hour it is not the men only who put the milk and the cream on to the train that are affected, but the dairy factories are also affected. They have to have their produce ready to get it to the train an hour earlier, and consequently these dairy factories will have to start their work an hour earlier. The objection is that this is going to add an hour to the day's work of the dairyman, and give him an hour's less time for recreation?—The connecting-link between the dairy factory and the train is according to the time-table. The time-table may be one hour earlier at, say, Te Aroha than it is at Morrinsville. The effect of this would be that the Morrinsville people would be on the same footing as Te Aroha was if the Bill was not passed. The dairy factories, as a rule, I do not think are hurried in order to get their produce away by the train. There is time to come and go on. And what is the time-table of one dairy factory to-day would be the time-table of another to-morrow according to this Bill.

With regard to the man you have mentioned who is improving his home and doing odd jobs about the house, could he not do that in the morning before going to work?—It is of far greater advantage to himself and to his employers to do his employer's work first and his own work afterwards.

Now, with regard to the question of the local bodies, of which you have given us a list of those who were in favour of "summer time," did you have replies from them stating that they had passed resolutions in favour of it?—From a good many of them. A number of them replied that they had received our communication, but did not pass a resolution in favour of it. None of them passed a resolution in opposition to it.

When you say that your league has considered the question you are speaking of the executive, I suppose?—Yes.

Are they all business men?—Town and country men.

Any farmers among them?—Yes. Mr. Riddiford put it into operation on his own station.

But when you came to consider this question it was considered by a body which was purely and simply townsmen?—Oh, no, certainly not. Sir George Clifford is president; Mr. Skerrett is chairman. Then there is Mr. Riddiford, who is a farmer, and Mr. Nicoll, who has farming interests.

Well, now, coming to shearing, I suppose you are aware that in mustering in the morning you cannot move the sheep while the dew is on the ground?—That is so.

That would affect the shearing to that extent?—To what extent?

As far as the mustering is concerned?—There are no hours for musterers.

But the musterers could not commence to muster the sheep for an hour later?—Why?

Because of the dew?—That is not affected by this Bill.

Pardon me, it does?—No. This Bill does not affect them at all.