

In America and Canada daylight-saving is in operation in the municipal districts, and it seems to be quite satisfactory?—Everybody seems to be enthusiastic about it.

You can only speak from the point of view of the town and not from the point of view of the country?—In many of those territories the number of voters living in the country districts must have been the larger section, and if it was unsatisfactory the country would have voted against its continuance.

Those municipal areas extend for a distance of twenty miles, do they not?—There would be other districts where the daylight-saving system was in operation where the country-folk would represent the greater proportion of voters.

It was well back in the country before you found the districts were not taking advantage of the system?—I believe that some districts fairly close to large cities were not in favour of it, whereas daylight-saving was in operation in other districts that were considerable distances away from large towns.

Mr. C. M. BOWDEN examined. (No. 9.)

*The Chairman.*] Your full name, Mr. Bowden?—Charles M. Bowden. I am a public accountant. And you represent?—The Association of New Zealand Chambers of Commerce. I am secretary of the Association of New Zealand Chambers of Commerce.

Will you make a statement?—Yes, sir. The evidence that has already been put before you probably covers very much the same lines, but, speaking from the association's point of view, I may say that remits in favour of the adoption of a system of daylight-saving by means of setting forward the clock for a definite period have been adopted by the individual Chambers of Commerce on various occasions. The matter was introduced in the Conference of Chambers of Commerce in 1922, the following remits being introduced and passed:—

“That this Conference supports the endeavour to have the clocks moved forward half an hour in order that New Zealand mean time will be exactly twelve hours in advance of Greenwich time.”

“For the purposes of daylight-saving during the summer months the clock be set forward one hour from the 1st October to the 31st March each year.”

Last year a remit as under was considered and adopted:—

“That Government again be urged to bring in a Daylight-saving Bill, advancing the clock one hour in summer.”

It should be noted that the association is thoroughly representative of commerce throughout the Dominion, membership being by no means confined to the chief centres. Arguments in favour were fully advanced, and the remits were adopted by the Conference only after full discussion. The advantages to dwellers in the cities are surely obvious, and the absence of protests from delegates from the smaller country towns seems to indicate that they at least see no valid objection so far as they are concerned. As regards the hardship to the farmers, of which a great deal has been said, I personally can see little in the objections. Surely it would make little difference to them, as, in any case, they work according to the daylight, not according to the clock. Moreover, after years of operation in Great Britain evidence taken showed that the majority approve, and in America, where a special or local option obtains in regard to this matter, scores of farming districts voted in favour of the measure. Through changed conditions there is not now the same need for farmers to catch milk-trains or be at milk-factories by a very early hour. Home separating or the growth of butter-factories, as distinct from milk-factories, have, I am informed, altered this to a great extent, as has also motor traction. The point may be raised that the same result could be obtained by alterations of the hours of work—viz., from 7 o'clock to 4 o'clock in the trades, and from 8 o'clock to 4 o'clock in professions. This, however, would present much more difficulty as involving endless adjustment throughout the country. It would necessitate alterations in train and steamer times, meal-times, &c., with resultant tremendous cost for reprinting of time-tables, &c. From the point of view of health, particularly in the case of workers—both male and female—in factories and offices, and from the point of view of children, the arguments are all in favour. It would render possible also more family recreation. Commercial men generally would favour setting the clock forward one hour for the summer season. The alternative proposal to adopt the twelve hours advance on Greenwich mean time, or, in other words, to advance New Zealand standard time by half an hour, is another proposal well worthy of consideration. It has the advantages of the proposal first mentioned, but, of course, in less degree. In addition it would make for saving in lighting and fuel-consumption through obviating or reducing the peak load. The former proposal—that is, to advance the clock an hour in the summer—has not that argument in its favour, as it is a summer measure only, and it is in the winter—say, between 4.30 and 5 o'clock—that peak load in lighting plants occurs. I am of opinion that the desired reform must be brought about by legislative enactment; that clocks must be put on. Uniformity would be improbable otherwise, and the resultant confusion would be inimical to the movement.

*Mr. Sidey.*] Is there any Chamber of Commerce in the country which has raised any objection to this daylight-saving?—Not to my knowledge.

You have quoted a resolution supporting the putting of the clocks forward half an hour in winter and an hour forward in summer: is that intended to suggest that the clocks should be put forward one hour and a half in the summer-time?—No. I think that was an endorsement of the principle of the desirability of daylight-saving.

Has your association considered the disabilities in the winter-time if New Zealand mean time is exactly twelve hours in advance of Greenwich time?—I could not speak on that point. I have only recently entered into these duties, and I was not present personally at the Conference. I believe