

136. Do you know how that is determined in England?—Yes; I have read in the English “Justice of the Peace” that it is determined by a doctor’s certificate.

137. Are you aware that in England no child is taken on unless a certificate is given as to age and physical state of health?—Yes; but there is no provision of that kind in the Act here. It did occur to me to bring a case into Court; but, upon consideration, it was deemed inadvisable to do so, as, in absence of proof of age, I was sure to be beaten, and the matter becoming public would have done more harm than good.

138. The penalty inflicted for any breach of the Act so far has only been 1s. Do you know what the maximum penalty is?—Yes, £50.

139. Do you not think that, if the employers were not more stringently dealt with than they have been, it would pay them to infringe the Act with regard to overtime?—Yes, if only fined 1s. every time they were brought up.

140. Are you aware that the proprietors of the Steam Laundry keep girls beyond the specified hours, and have done so since they were fined?—I have been told so.

141. Can you perform the duties of Inspector of Factories, in addition to your other duties, with satisfaction to yourself?—I cannot. I do so to the best of my ability, but my duties are so multifarious that I cannot give that amount of attention to the Act I should like.

142. Have you any knowledge of how the Acts are administered at home in the matter of inspection?—There is an Inspector appointed solely to supervise the Act, who has power to appoint sub-inspectors. It is a separate department altogether. The Inspector has very great powers—can call in police or any one to assist him in any place during day or night.

143. Do you also know the practice under the English Acts as to meals?—Yes; the hours for meals are simultaneous, and the machinery is stopped. The Inspector could not be deceived by the employer shifting the employes from one place to another.

144. Have you heard of any case here of the employes being shifted from one place to another after hours to avoid detection?—Well, I remember seeing on one occasion, when visiting an establishment, the young women running away from one place to another.

145. Is the ventilation perfect and complete?—In some places I should say it was, in others not; but there is no specific provision in the Act as to that: simply that every workroom shall be properly ventilated.

146. With regard to sanitary arrangements, waterclosets, &c.?—In some instances they are very good, in others not so good.

147. *The Chairman.*] Do you consider the duties under the Act part of your duties as Inspector of Police?—I am not quite sure as to that.

148. You make no report?—None.

149. Do you keep any memorandum of your visits?—Not unless the Act is broken.

150. You could not say how often you visit any establishment?—It depends upon my memory. I only visit when I have time. I may state that I always make my police duties primary and this inspection secondary.

151. The Act only requires you to report in the event of a breach of it?—Yes.

152. *Mr. Fulton.*] Would it take the whole time of an Inspector here?—I do not think it would. It would not take up much time. Of course I am speaking of the City of Dunedin. The inspection, to be properly organized, would require one Inspector for the whole colony.

153. *The Chairman.*] Could it be carried out if put entirely in the hands of the police?—There are many reasons why it is objectionable for the police to have it; for instance, the very name of a policeman going into a room where there are twenty or thirty young women at work; they do not like it, and the employers do not care about a policeman going over their premises.

154. How would you get over that difficulty?—By having some one appointed altogether independent of the police.

155. *Mr. Fulton.*] Look at the 8th clause of the Act, 1875, and say whether or not, in your opinion, it is carried out?—It is not. It is carried out partially with regard to notices posted in the factories and workrooms: that is done in almost every instance, and in a good many the notices are sent—I have some nineteen or twenty—but whether they are sent to the Resident Magistrate or not I cannot say.

156. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] A copy of the notice sent to the Resident Magistrate is supposed to be sent to you?—Yes.

157. *The Chairman.*] How is it so many have posted up the notices?—I have called their attention to the necessity of doing so.

158. *Mr. Fulton.*] The Clerk of the Resident Magistrate’s Court says that only two notices have been sent to that Court during the last eighteen months?—The employers complain of difficulty in procuring copies of the Act.

159. *The Chairman.*] Have you found the Act oppressive in any way?—Only with regard to the Steam Laundry. It is entirely a question of paying. If the Act were enforced the proprietors could not make it pay. Mr. Denniston, who defended the case brought against the Steam Laundry, pleaded that.

160. You do not think there are any alterations required in the Act?—If the Act is to be carried out in its entirety, an Inspector should be appointed for the whole colony, and persons whose time is not wholly occupied in the different centres should be appointed Sub-Inspectors, who would report to the Inspector. And there is the question as to certificate of age. If that part of the Act with reference to children and young persons is to be enforced we must have some proof of age, otherwise we should be put out of Court at once.

161. *Mr. Fulton.*] Have you heard any complaint by employers or employes as to holidays?—No; the employers seem very well satisfied to comply with the provisions of the Act in that respect. The proprietors have complained that they should be liable for a breach of the Act in consequence of the forewomen insisting, without the knowledge or consent of the proprietor, on having a certain amount of work done or completed before allowing the girls to leave.