

otherwise?—We are very well pleased with the Act, with one exception. It shortens the hours of labour: that we do not object to, as we suffered as much as them by long hours. What we object to is having to pay for the holidays; we have to pay for half a day on Saturday, and about fifteen or sixteen holidays in the year besides.

60. Not under the Act?—We never know what are under the Act. I should like to explain that we lose money directly by these workrooms, and of course we think it hard to have to pay for what we get no return from. We object to all the holidays: we object to have to pay for any day on which the girls cannot work.

61. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Cannot you take that into consideration in the weekly payments, and give so much less wages?—We have not come to that yet. It is capital running after labour at present.

62. Can you not get as many women as you wish?—No. At present we are advertising for additional hands, and could employ twenty more useful hands.

63. Is the number of hands on the increase or decrease since the Act came into operation?—I do not think that the operation of the Act has made any great difference, although the number employed since the Act came into force has increased very much.

64. If you increased the number of hours, say, to twelve hours a day, would you lessen the number of hands?—They would not, in all probability, be so faithful. All that we object to is the holidays.

65. Are your workrooms well ventilated?—Yes; we should be very glad to have a visit as to that.

66. *Mr. Strode.*] This is the clause with regard to forwarding the notice to the nearest Resident Magistrate (the 8th clause of the Act of 1875).—We shall attend to that; I was not aware of it.

Mr. JOSEPH FLETCHER ANDERSON examined.

67. *By the Chairman.*] I am manager of Messrs. Hallenstein Bros.' New Zealand Clothing Factory. The clothing we manufacture is all for men and boys. The factory is opened at half-past 8 a.m., and closed at half-past 5 p.m. We employ perhaps ten persons under the age of fourteen, and about 150 between fourteen and eighteen. We do not bind apprentices as such, but take them, and teach them the trade. We have 300 hands altogether. All the young persons live with their parents. As a rule, we do not take a note of their ages. When very young persons are employed, I ask them their age, but do not register it. I simply register their names. Notices of the number of hours under the Act are posted in every room. The dinner hour is from 1 to 2 o'clock throughout the factory. All the employés do not leave the factory during dinner-hour; some who live at a distance bring their meal with them. There are conveniences for making tea, and they take their dinner in messes of half a dozen each. The works are entirely suspended during the hour. They remain or not, at their option. It would be a hardship to turn them out, and we rather encourage those young persons who live at a distance to remain during the dinner-hour, as it keeps them from the street. About one-half are employed on piecework. It is chiefly those who are learning the trade that are paid by the week. As soon as they can do something they are paid by the piece. The ordinary pay of these learners is from 5s. to 10s. per week, for no regular period; it entirely depends upon themselves. They are paid in proportion to their skill, whether young or old. They are not put on piecework till they are competent, and then get the full rate of wages, no matter what age. The average earnings of skilled workwomen are 30s. a week; some get 25s. Those who act as overseers at the tables get 35s. Exceptional women, who act as teachers, get 40s. a week. The proportion of females employed is three-fifths of the whole number of hands. The men do the heavy part of the work, and their average earnings are £3, and are mostly paid by the week. Those employed on piecework average 10s. a day. We have never had any difficulty with the men combining together. We have not procured any of our hands from Great Britain. We have taught almost all here. All who act as teachers have got their trade with us.

68. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Do those who are under fourteen years of age work the same number of hours as the rest?—Yes.

69. You know there is a great number of places in town employing two, three, or five women and boys—do you think the present supervision sufficient and complete?—I do not.

70. Is your place properly ventilated?—The ventilation is as good as we can make it. I have always found this a difficult matter where people are sedentarily occupied. Having no exercise they feel the slightest cold, and object to the least draught. I have often broken the windows to let in the air, but they have closed them up again with rags. We have not tried the plan spoken off by the Chairman, of an open pipe or tube communicating with the open air and ascending from the floor about four feet along the wall of the workrooms. All our place is ventilated by windows.

71. You spoke about a number of young persons earning from 5s. to 10s. a week, and who are living with their parents; they are just assisting the household, I suppose?—Yes; but there are cases in which more than one—sisters—entirely support the household. I know of instances where the father does nothing. Several of the girls keep their parents, instead of their parents keeping them. A great many of the women support their husbands, and I generally find on inquiry that these husbands, if not drunkards, are unemployed, not being able to obtain work at their trade, and refusing any other kind of employment that they might obtain. There is a great deal more of that here than in Victoria and other places where I have been.

72. Do you think an Act limiting the number of hours is beneficial?—Yes; I consider eight hours quite long enough, particularly in a factory where there is a large number of hands.

73. *The Chairman.*] Have you any suggestions to make respecting the Act?—The only alteration I should desire is, that we should be allowed to work by double shifts in cases of emergency. At times our machinery is not adequate to the demand upon it. I do not say that we should work our hands more than eight hours; but it would be very beneficial to us if we could put on one set or shift, say, from 6 a.m. till 2 p.m., and from 2 p.m. till 10 p.m.

74. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Do you know that no women are permitted to work after 6 p.m. in England?—I understand they work three four-hour shifts there. I do not mean that we should work