

14. Do any of your association carry on business in the suburbs, or are all of them in the city?—If you mean Newtown, we have members of the association there, and we represent them.

15. You say that you do three times as much business on the Saturday as you do on any other day in the week. Supposing that all the other shops were closed on the Saturday afternoon, and the shopping people did not come into town, how would that affect your Saturday business?—No doubt it would affect the Saturday afternoon, but we should make that up by using the Friday.

16. During which portion of the Saturday do you do the most business?—From 1 o'clock in the afternoon until 11 o'clock at night I am continuously at work.

17. Do you do a greater amount of business in the afternoon or in the evening?—It is as much as we can do both in the afternoon and evening.

18. Are there many assistants employed?—Yes.

19. What is their wish?—To have the present system continued. They enjoy the Wednesday half-holiday because it is a break in the week.

20. Have they taken any steps to represent their views?—No.

21. Suggestions have been made that a *plébiscite* of the people might be taken in the matter in the cities and surrounding districts: would you be in favour of leaving the matter to the people?—Yes. I do not see why those who do the shopping should not have a say in the matter.

22. Of course, the vote would be taken on the general electoral roll?—Yes.

23. You think there would not be any objection to such a course?—Well, I cannot say. If women had a vote you do not know how they would vote.

24. Would they not vote as their husbands told them?—No doubt they would.

25. *Mr. Davey.*] You say, Mr. Richards, that if the Saturday half-holiday is carried you should have an exemption. I would ask you would it be any good to you?—It would not be better to leave the provision out altogether.

26. The trouble is that the shop is in front and the hairdressing-room is at the back, and that to get to the room people have to pass through the shop?—Yes.

27. Supposing the Bill is carried with a universal half-holiday, would you prefer that to being allowed to keep your saloon open?—No; I should prefer to have the saloon open, because I believe if it has to be closed it will lead to Sunday trading.

28. Are you aware that the Christchurch tobacconists think that if the Bill is so carried they do not want an exemption?—I believe it is so.

29. You, Mr. Batkin, made a rather serious charge against hotelkeepers: do you know of your own knowledge that it is as you state?—I do not wish to bring a serious charge against hotels. What I know of my own knowledge is that hotels and clubs stock cigars and cigarettes, and in some cases tobacco, and that they are able to sell them to people all the week round, and I think we should be put in the same position.

30. *Mr. Colvin.*] If a man is stopping at a hotel the hotelkeeper supplies him with breakfast, and that man will get a cigar from him after breakfast; but you could not supply him with breakfast?—No; but I could supply him with a cigar.

31. *Mr. Davey.*] Do the clubs in Wellington supply others than members with tobacco?—I could not say.

*Mr. Berman:* I say they supply other than members. If a stranger is introduced into a club he puts his name down, and he is then supplied with cigars or tobacco.

32. *Mr. Davey* (to Mr. Downes).] You say there are hairdressers' assistants who go round to shave people after they have finished their work at the shop?—Yes.

33. Is that a common practice?—I think it has come into force since the award was made. People find it a convenience to have them come and shave them. They also go to the private hospitals. I know of one young fellow who did it regularly, and the consequence was that his employer lost one or two of his customers. The assistant acknowledged that he did it, and, of course, he was discharged.

34. Is there any hotel in Wellington that runs a barber's shop in connection with the hotel?—I do not think so.

35. I have been told that there are two or three?—I do not think so. My own shop is under a hotel, but I have no connection with the hotel.

36. You do not know of any case where they can be used on Sunday?—I do not.

37. *Mr. Hardy.*] You do not take exception to people shaving men on their own account?—I do not think it is right when you are paying that man to work for you.

38. But if you do not pay him?—I think this compulsory half-holiday on Saturday will lead to a great many assistants going round on Sunday to shave people, and we should lose custom.

39. *Mr. Ell.*] I would like to ask you, Mr. Batkin, if you have any objection to a *plébiscite* being taken in Wellington and the surrounding suburbs as to the day on which the holiday shall be taken?—I think it would be hardly fair to the shopkeepers. It would be a case of the frog and the boy, and we should be in the position of the frog. I think the best people to judge are the shopkeepers themselves, the people who do the business.

40. But the people who deal with the shops surely have some interest in the matter?—Yes; but their interest may not be on all-fours with that of the shopkeepers. Nobody is so well able to judge what suits him as the shopkeeper himself.

41. With reference to the hotels, you said that they sold cigars and tobacco?—With permission of the Committee I will withdraw that statement, and simply say that hotels stock cigars and cigarettes.

42. Are you aware from common report that they do sell them?—I will not go so far as to say that; but I know from my own knowledge that they do stock cigars and cigarettes, and in some cases tobacco, and I presume they would not stock them if they did not sell them.

43. With regard, Mr. Downes, to assistants going round from place to place shaving people, do you know of only one case?—I know of several, but I only referred to one specially.