

438. Then, you know nothing as to why the union refused to take their flour in March, if they refused to take it at all?—No, further than the resolutions I referred to. They wrote to the president of the union complaining about the union not keeping the arrangement with them, and I and the president waited upon Mr. Steven. Mr. Steven said that all they wanted was peace, and if the members of the union would take some of their flour from him he would let well alone. Some of the members said the question was not one as between the union and A. Steven and Co., but as against Steven and Co.'s representative.

439. Who is the representative of Steven and Co.?—Mr. Dall.

440. Is he an employee of that firm?—I understand so.

441. The arrangement referred to in the letter from Steven and Co. is the same working-arrangement which exists between your union and the Flour-millers' Association, is it not?—Exactly the same.

442. And the terms of that agreement are simply these: that members of your association agree to buy from the millers or associated millers, provided neither party act against their own members?—That is so; we endeavour to adhere to our registered rules.

443. But your agreement with Steven and Co. is that they must not cut the prices of other mills?—Yes.

444. Otherwise you will not deal with them?—That is so.

445. And they must not deal with any baker who undercuts the members of your union?—Yes.

446. That is the agreement you make with any miller who comes within your operations—that is the working-agreement, is it not?—Yes, so far as I know.

447. *Mr. Taylor.*] Did the Flour-millers' Association ever contribute to the funds of the Bakers' Union by way of a gratuity?—I said before, that to my knowledge, No; but there is a minute stating that the millers had given a gratuity of £50. It does not say "the association at all." That was in January, 1903.

448. At that time were not all the millers in Dunedin members of the Flour-millers' Association?—That I cannot tell you.

CHARLES HENRY BEYNON examined. (No. 6.)

449. *The Chairman.*] What is your occupation?—Baker.

450. Resident in Wellington?—Yes.

451. *Mr. Taylor.*] You are a master baker?—Yes.

452. When did you start business in Wellington?—About eighteen months ago—last Easter twelvemonth.

453. What was the price of flour then?—£9 per ton.

454. Do you know what the price of bread was at that time?—6d. the 4 lb. loaf.

455. Did you start a cash business?—I did.

456. No carting?—No carting.

457. What did you charge for your bread?—2½d. per 2 lb. loaf—that is, 1d. below what was being charged for the 4 lb. loaf at that time.

458. Did you find that that paid you all right?—Yes; it paid me very well.

459. Did you have any difficulty in getting flour then?—Not at all then.

460. You bought from whom?—Laery and Co.

461. How long had you been in business before you had difficulty in getting supplies of flour?—About three months after I started. I could not tell you exactly the date.

462. What happened then?—I ordered my flour from Laery and Co., and it did not arrive. I then saw Mr. Mitchell, the representative of Laery and Co., and he informed me that unless I raised the price of bread I could not be supplied by his firm with any more flour. I said, "What is the reason of that?" and he replied, "I have orders from Mr. Virtue, the representative of the Millers' Association, that unless you raise the price of your bread I am not to supply you. He thought it was hard that he should have to refuse me."

463. Do you remember what brand you were using?—The "Atlas" brand.

464. The Timaru brand?—Yes.

465. Do you know whether Mr. Evans was a member of the Millers' Association at that time?—I believe he was then.

466. What did you do?—I went with Mr. Mitchell, Laery and Co.'s representative, to see Mr. Virtue.

467. Who is he?—The representative of the New Zealand Millers' Association.

468. You asked him what?—I asked him the reason why I was not to be supplied with flour, and he said he had received instructions not to sell to any undersellers. I said, "Do you term me an underseller? I do not deliver bread, nor do I book any." He said, "Of course, that has nothing to do with me. I think you are in the right in doing what you are doing, but we will ring up Mr. Kellow." Mr. Kellow is the president of the Federated Master Bakers' Union, and also president of the Master Bakers' Union in Wellington. We rang him up, and his answer was that I was to receive no flour whatever until such time as I had raised the price of bread to 6d. for a 4 lb. loaf.

469. Now, if you had raised the price of bread to 6d. the 4 lb. loaf, would not that have given you an excessive profit?—It would have been a very good profit. I would not like to say it would have been excessive.

470. It was 20 per cent. better than you were getting?—Yes.

471. What followed that statement?—Well, of course, I merely had to raise the price of bread to get my flour, because I was stuck and could not do anything. So I raised the price of the bread to a uniform price, and, in consequence, my trade went away to nothing. People would not come to my shop and pay cash for their bread when they could have it booked at the same price.