

workmen instead of dismissing them. It is practically the same thing as dismissing a man, because he need not be put on again. If the clause as worded would interfere with the business of an employer in any inimical way I should prefer to see it worded otherwise. If in the opinion of the Committee the clause as worded would have that effect I am not in favour of it.

33. *Mr. Taylor.*] Subsection (1) of clause 2 of the Bill provides, "Notwithstanding anything in the principal Act, all proceedings for enforcing any award (whether made before or after the commencement of this Act) shall, where the maximum penalty for the breach complained of does not exceed fifty pounds, be heard and determined by a Magistrate." Do you not think it is a mistake to make it compulsory that the cases where the penalty does not exceed £50 shall be heard before a Magistrate? Supposing it is an involved question, why should not a party have the right to insist upon the Court that made the award hearing the case of breach?—Practically there is a difficulty. Just the same as giving to either party to a dispute the privilege of going to the Arbitration Court direct had the practical effect of superseding the Conciliation Boards, so you would find that in this case you would practically supersede the Magistrate, because anybody who was interested in continuing a wrong or the breach itself would certainly object to the Stipendiary Magistrate's Court dealing with the case, for the Stipendiary Magistrate could settle it at once, whilst if the case were taken to the Arbitration Court it might have to wait eight or nine months, and in the meantime the employer would derive benefit.

34. Do you say that the Arbitration Court is more likely to get congested with work than a Magistrate's Court, having regard to the fact that the Magistrates are very hardworked now? I think it is. I do not know of any Magistrate's Court that is months behind in its work as the Arbitration Court is.

35. *Mr. Davey.*] It has five hundred cases before it?—There are one hundred and fifty cases waiting now to be dealt with.

36. *Mr. Aitken.*] Do you mean in the whole colony?—Yes, in the whole colony. Who said there were five hundred?

37. *Mr. Davey.*] A representative of the Trades and Labour Council told us that there were between four and five hundred cases awaiting decision now?—He exaggerated.

38. *Mr. Taylor.*] Do you not think it would be a wise thing to say "may" instead of "shall" in clause 2 of the Bill, and so give parties the option of taking a case before the Magistrate's Court or the Arbitration Court?—I am afraid it would make it totally inoperative.

39. You said that there were twenty-five disputes before the Court last year and 123 cases of breach of award. Is that not a much smaller volume of business than there was in the previous year?—There were more industrial disputes the previous year and very many fewer cases of breach.

40. Industrial disputes take a much longer time to adjust, do they not?—Yes, as a rule.

41. Days longer?—Yes; sometimes a very long time.

42. As a matter of fact, is not the original business of the Arbitration Court—that is, the hearing of disputes—getting less year by year?—Yes, it is.

43. Because the conditions of labour for all the principal industries have now been fixed?—That is true.

44. As a matter of fact, will not the Arbitration Court have more time at its disposal now for dealing with cases for breach of award than it has had in past years?—I should hope so.

45. Under those circumstances would it not be wise to leave it optional with the parties concerned as to whether they go to the Magistrate's Court or the Arbitration Court in cases of breach of award?—No, because I think an unfair advantage would be taken of it. They would go every time to the Arbitration Court and keep it congested on purpose that their case should not be called on. I have to deal with hundreds of good employers, of course, and I have to deal with some very bad employers, who take advantage of every little turn and twist of the law.

46. Have you ever thought whether it is possible to provide that every inspector of factories should be made a registrar of workers, and to make it compulsory with all workers in certain industries to register with him, whether they are members of a trades-union or not?—No, I have not thought of that.

47. That would get over the difficulty of unionists *versus* non-unionists. If every person's name was registered with the Inspector of Factories, then he would be subject to any award?—If he wanted to evade the award he would not register.

48. Make it compulsory that he must register, and that he cannot be employed unless he is registered and has got his certificate to show that he is registered. The colony would then know of his existence through the Inspector of Factories, and he would then be subject to all the awards that had been made and penalties for breach of them. The disputes between employer and employee as to whether unionists and non-unionists should be employed would then cease to exist?—I do not know that simple registration would cause the disputes to cease to exist. A unionist has something to do besides having his name put down. He works for a certain line of conduct in regard to raising the wages in his business, and so on.

49. But still the non-unionist is the troublesome man. I want to know whether the colony ought not to know of the existence of the non-unionist?—It should.

50. I am suggesting that the way to secure that knowledge would be to insist upon every man of any calling registering his name every year—as a person has to register his vote—with the Inspector of Factories in each district. If all workers were so enrolled then it would do away with the friction over the question of unionists and non-unionists, would it not?—I do not know that it would do that, but it would be very valuable statistical information to have.

51. Why should he not register?—I do not see why, unless on account of the talk about "the liberty of the subject" and all that.

52. A man who carries on a factory has to register, has he not?—Yes.

53. If we had this compulsory registration of all workers it would give the Arbitration Court the very information it repeatedly says it wants. It does not know how many men there are in a certain industry: it only knows the number who are members of a union?—I think it would be very valuable information indeed.