

was fined £1, with costs 7s., for failing to grant a weekly half-holiday to a hotel-assistant. For failing to grant a weekly half-holiday to a chef he was fined 10s., costs 14s., and witnesses' expenses £1 2s. 8d."?—We have never doubted that in hotels cooks were bound to get the half-holiday.

19. Then, if he is entitled to a half-holiday he must be a shop-assistant?—In hotels?

20. Yes?—I referred to restaurants. I say now that the Department have never been able to insist that a man or woman working in the kitchen of a restaurant should obtain the half-holiday, and there are dozens of restaurant-keepers now who are depriving their kitchen hands of that privilege.

21. What is the definition of "shop-assistant" in the principal Act?

*The Chairman:* " 'Shop-assistant' means any person (whether a member of the occupier's family or not) who is employed by the occupier of a shop in or about the business of the shop."

22. *Hon. Mr. Millar.*] Mr. John Barr, speaking for the Canterbury men, asked me to read this letter: "Christchurch, November 5, 1909.—Hon. J. A. Millar.—DEAR SIR,—In connection with a deputation that waited on you a short time ago to solicit your support of a six-day week contained in Fisher's Bill, you doubtless remember that Mr. Carey, secretary of the Wellington Cooks and Waiters' Union, made a statement to the effect that the workers in the hotel business would rather work sixty-five hours and get one day in seven than accept the reduction proposed under your Bill—*i.e.*, sixty hours for men and fifty-two for women. Whilst wholly in sympathy with the six-day-week proposal, I doubted the correctness of Mr. Carey's statement, but was not in a position to contradict it. I, however, at the earliest opportunity returned to Christchurch, and put the two proposals before the Canterbury union, with the result that Mr. Carey's statement that sixty-five hours in six days was what the employees wanted was rejected by thirty to two. On my recommendation, however, it was decided to take a ballot of the members. That course was decided upon, ballot-papers in the form enclosed herewith submitted, and are now being returned, with the result that ten are voting for No. 1 proposal for every one for No. 2 proposal. I have suggested to the voters that they initial their voting-papers: some are doing so, some are not. One of the objects in asking that papers should be initialled was so that I might ascertain the position occupied by the respective voters. The result is that on examination I find that the few who are opposed to proposal No. 1 are all males, and are actually working not more than the sixty hours. You will see therefore that here is no supposition, but a clear evidence, that, so far as Christchurch is concerned, the proposal you intended to incorporate in your Bill is the proposal that is wanted. I have met some Wellington employees down here for the busy season, and they support No. 1. Your proposal *re* accumulation of holidays is going to meet with strong opposition, but there is a modification that I feel sure would be acceptable. That, however, I will leave, in the hope that I may see you about it when I return to Wellington." Mr. Barr informed me personally that my proposal was accepted almost unanimously. It was almost ten to one?—Even the whole letter and the ballot-paper does not discount anything I said. I think it is due to me to say that when I spoke on the deputation I said I believed that, if the workers had the choice of accepting the shorter hours of Mr. Millar's Bill or the clear day a week, they would prefer the whole day. You never suggested that you would give us the option of choosing your shorter-hour Bill, or a Bill giving us a six-day week; but for some reason or other the secretary of the Christchurch union divined that only such a choice was possible, and took a ballot. I wrote to the secretary of the Christchurch union suggesting the convening of a meeting, at which I would attend; but my letter was not answered. I also asked why in the ballot-paper only two propositions were put in. I asked why not put this proposition on the ballot-paper also: "Are you in favour of Mr. Millar's proposition, and also the six-day week?"

23. That is to say, sixty hours, and a full holiday in addition?—Yes.

24. I told you the Government could not accept Mr. Fisher's Bill, and that I had a Bill prepared and would introduce it?—Yes. We are glad of the Bill, but we ask why, if two-thirds of the members of Parliament are prepared to give us the full day, the Government cannot give us what we want.

25. We have to consider the interests of everybody, and we do not see our way clear to support the proposition?—The impracticability of the thing has been killed, because it has been proved to be workable on the Continent and in many other countries.

26. The Bill as first brought down was for a six-day week for everybody, which we considered to be absolutely impracticable in some trades. The provision in New South Wales is not generally applicable?—No, but I suppose it governs a radius of from twelve to fourteen miles of Sydney, and its operations affect some two thousand employers and twelve thousand employees.

27. Does the Act refer to all over Victoria?—Yes, so far as I am informed.

28. No, it does not. In New South Wales the whole of their labour legislation never extends beyond the County of Cumberland. It takes in Newcastle and Sydney, but does not apply to any other towns in the State?—That may be so.

29. You would not put the New Zealand climate against that of Queensland?—It is not fair to ask me that: I am a Queensland man.

30. *Mr. McLaren.*] About clause 2: You took exception to the words in line 12 referring to meals provided and sold to the general public for consumption on the premises. In this definition of "hotel" do you want to include boardinghouses?—It is very hard to draw the line. I have applied to have discretion used, and to select only those places which would be deemed to be private hotels, and so long as they are governed we shall be satisfied.

31. *Hon. Mr. Millar.*] You refer to places that are hotels in every sense of the word except that they have no license?—Yes.

32. It is places like the Hotel Windsor and Hotel Bristol; and the Bill is intended to cover all the defects in the present Act in that respect, and to bring all such houses under it?—Yes. We want the Bill so arranged that it will cover some of the private hotels which employ as many workers as a large number of the public hotels. Then there are the clubs. In Queensland, Western Australia, and Sydney all the club-assistants are included.