

30. Do the Chinese really work, as some people say, at midnight, or all night?—Oh, no!
31. Give some idea as to when they begin and when they stop?—Sometimes, when they have extra clothes in, they work a little later, but they do not start until very late, and they cannot do anything until the clothes are dry. Then they gather them in and starch them, and do not begin to iron them until very late at nights.
32. So their work is irregular, and not methodical?—That is so.
33. It is for no definite period?—No.
34. *The Chairman.*] Is there anything more you wish to say?—No.
35. *Mr William Pryor (Secretary, Employers' Federation).*] Can you give us any idea of the number in Auckland?—I think there are about thirty-three laundries there.
36. How many are registered as employers?—I cannot say.
37. Can you give us some idea as to how many laundries there are in which there is only the employer—neither a partner nor an employee?—I think there are only about six or seven employing labour
38. And the rest consist of only one or two?—Partners.
39. Do I understand you to say that a majority or a large number consist of shops where there is only the owner?—Yes.
40. I want approximately the number in which there is only one, and no partner?—There are several, but I cannot give the exact number
41. Would that apply to half of them?—About eight or nine, I should think.
42. What position would these persons be in under the Bill?—I might explain that during the time licenses have been issued several may have been working there, and some have gone home to China. They do not work very long—not more than two or three years.
43. The Bill as drafted at present says “in every laundry where two or more are engaged.” This will not touch them?—Yes.
44. What will the result be where at present two are engaged in partnership, and this Bill says “two or more are employed”?—I think you will have to close up at 7 every night.
45. Would not the effect be that they would split up, and register as separate owners?—I do not think so.
46. Would they not do that rather than come under the restrictions of the Bill?—I do not think so.
47. You think that where there are only two persons they will prefer to carry on under these restrictions?—If it comes on they must abide by the law.
48. Regarding the hours: You gave the Committee the idea the hours are not very long, after all?—Not the working-hours.
49. At Shortland Street, as you go up to the Grand Hotel?—There are only two in that laundry, and generally it is carried on by only one.
50. Recently I was some weeks there, and I noticed that place open at 9 o'clock in the morning, and I was frequently out until 9.30 or 10 at nights, and it was open then. Would that be a regular thing, or exceptional?—They open very late, because they rely on people to bring their clothes there. They do not go out collecting.
51. Are there any especial sanitary arrangements in connection with a Chinese laundry?—The Inspector inspects them, and he feels satisfied.
52. As a general rule, have they got concrete floors?—Generally concrete, but in a lot of old wooden buildings they are wooden floors.
53. *Mr Fraser*] When he said that the wages were £1 15s. to £2 per week, did that tally with the fact of them being partners?—I mean, those who are employed there.
54. How many are generally employed?—Just about one.
55. Is there never four?—Not in Auckland.
56. Including the employee?—There are not four. There are only six or seven laundries there employing labour
57. *Mr Poole*] The Chinese laundries there find competition very keen with the machine laundries?—Well, this last year they have been very slack. Of course, I do not know how the European laundries feel. The lot are complaining.
58. Is the Chinese laundry business increasing?—They are decreasing. There has been a considerable falling-off. In Ponsonby there have been three Chinese shops closed down.
59. You do not consider that people are having less washing done?—No; the Chinese are getting less to do.
60. *Mr. Luke.*] You say that Chinese are not increasing in Auckland?—No.
61. Is there any proper system to see that their wages are paid, or are they on the boarding-house system?—The men receive their wages weekly.
62. There is no collusion between the proprietor and the men?—No, sir
63. It is a straight-out deal?—Yes.
64. Could they not carry on their business and conform to the same hours as the European?—I do not see how they could. If they had machinery it would be different, but to do it by hand is impossible. The trouble is the drying. They have to wait about five hours for things to dry, while if they had machinery the work would go on without any stoppage.
65. You reckon it is on a par with family laundry-work?—Just the same.
66. Do you not think you ought to conform—to bring up the sanitary arrangements and the flooring to the level of the European?—Everything is done to the satisfaction of the Inspector. If he wishes anything done it is done. I think, every month he goes through the laundries and sees that all the sanitary arrangements are right. He is perfectly satisfied, and I think he is the best person to judge.