4. I will touch on some of them in a moment or two; but may I take it for granted that before a scheme of insurance against unemployment could be formulated in this Dominion a large amount of information would have to be collected?—Undoubtedly.

5. I suppose the extent of the unemployment in the organized trades would have to be inquired into?—Yes, before the scheme could be made practicable.

6. It would be very difficult; but as a basis you would require, would you not, to collect information as best you could as to the extent of under-employment here in the organized trades?—Yes, undoubtedly, and in that connection I may mention that about two years ago I had a great deal to do with the collecting of statistics as to the duration of employment in the manufacturing trades—in addition to the ordinary statistics relating to rates of wages, and so on.

7. Have you that information brought up to date?—No; we propose to do so every five years. We did it in the same year as the census so as to make the statistics concurrent.

8. Was that confined to organized trades, or does it cover labour generally?—It covers the manufacturing industries only. The workers are organized in most of those industries.

9. Have you that information available for the Committee?—Yes, I have it here. I can put in the annual report of the Department containing the results of that inquiry.

10. It would be too much to expect you to give us generally the results of your inquiry as to the extent of under-employment; I take it that would differ in different industries, would it not?—Yes. The extent of it is quite clear from these tables.

11. Do you consider that you have in that report covered as much of the ground as is possible before you would be in a position to formulate a proposal?—I do not think so, quite, because for one thing in those tables we have dealt only with those workers known to be actually employed in the industries. There might have been numbers of others who did not happen to be employed during the year, and, of course, we could not include those.

12. May I take it this way: that before you would be in a position to formulate a scheme further information would require to be collected in addition to that contained in the table which you have put in?—I do not think so, so far as that information goes; it only covers the manufacturing industries, and so far as it goes I think it could be used as a basis of calculation.

13. I understand that—as far as it goes; but my point is that it does not cover the whole ground. You must try, must you not, to cover the whole ground before you formulate a scheme?—What do you mean by the whole ground?

14. You must ascertain the extent of unemployment and under-employment in every trade or class of labour that you propose to cover by insurance against unemployment before you can formulate a scheme?—Yes.

15. Have you given any consideration to the question as to whether the system of insurance against unemployment should be compulsory or voluntary?—I made an investigation of the systems in Europe with the view of preparing a report on the practicability of some such system in New Zealand, and the conclusions I came to were that such a scheme is not practicable at all under any circumstances, whether compulsory or voluntary.

16. Does that mean that you think a scheme of insurance against unemployment is not practicable in the Dominion?—Yes, that is the conclusion I came to, and I am strongly of that opinion, too.

17. Do you go so far as to suggest that it would not be safe and expedient to begin such a scheme on a small scale in regard to some organized trades, as has been done in the Mother-country?—I am afraid I must say I do not think it would be practicable in New Zealand in any trade.

18. You know that in the Mother-country the scheme at its outset was confined to two highly organized trades?—Yes.

19. Will you tell us, shortly, why you think such a scheme is not practicable or expedient here?—The reasons that led me to that conclusion are these: England, on the one hand, is an old country. It is thickly populated. It is not liable to large or sudden increases or decreases of population. Its trade and commerce have been firmly established for hundreds of years, and there are not likely to be large fluctuations in them. Not only that, but all its callings are highly specialized. On the other hand, in New Zealand exactly the opposite is the case. New Zealand has got a small population—small and scattered, and liable to a sudden increase at any moment. It has got a lot of new country to open up; it has new industries to establish; development of existing industries; and I suppose there are other reasons which I cannot think of for the moment. It seems to me that from every point of view the conditions in New Zealand are totally different from those obtaining in England or in any other European country. Under circumstances like these in New Zealand it does not seem to me that it would be possible to make even a fairly accurate calculation of the extent of unemployment from year to year.

20. Surely if such an inquiry could be made in the Old Country, with enormous numbers to deal with, with our comparatively small number of workers the task should be much easier?—Certainly it would be much easier to ascertain the extent of unemployment in the immediate past, but what sort of idea could we form as to what is likely to happen in the ensuing year or in future years? It seems to me that it would be utterly impossible to make any sort of reliable calculation as to the extent of unemployment in the future in a country like this.

21. There either is or there is not unemployment or under-employment in New Zealand?—Yes.

22. If there is under-employment to a large extent, do I understand you to say that you do not think it would be expedient to provide for it by social insurance?—I think I would if it were at all possible to limit our population to the present population. But take the engineering trade. Suppose there are at present ten thousand workers engaged in that trade, and suppose on the average they lost two months' work in the year, it would be possible on that information to make a calculation as to what insurance we would have to effect to give them remuneration for