

26. Do you think that the principle of six days a week can be carried out in all trades?—I do not see why it could not. It could be given a trial.

27. Supposing you were carrying on a farm of milkers?—We are not seeking the inclusion of farm labourers.

28. Do you not think it will be the next move?—Well, I suppose if it came to the question there could be a way of getting over the difficulty. Cows must be milked seven days a week. It does not follow that the same person must milk them.

29. If we close the hotels half a day in the week—the day of the holiday—will not that give them half a day holiday? Do you think it is right to close the hotels on the weekly half-holiday?—Closing the hotels would not give the employees a holiday. It would only close the bar. It would relieve barmen and barmaids, but not cooks, housemaids, and porters.

30. You do not think it would be wise to close the hotels?—I do not say anything about closing the bar, because that is all it does mean. The house could not be closed against the public.

31. We have had several lists put in by witnesses signed by employees that they are not asking for this measure of working six days a week, and are satisfied with the present position?—I am not surprised at that. Every attempt to bring the warehouses under the Shops and Offices Act has been met with huge petitions from the whole of the employees. We have had positive knowledge that they do want it, but when a petition is placed before a man and a pen offered to him or a notice of dismissal he chooses the pen. I suggest they have a feeling that if they do not sign the petition their occupation might be gone. I have had sixteen years' experience, and I have had some queer experiences. I have seen petitions signed by officers of unions against some things the unions were agitating for. I just want to say for that reason I do not attach any importance to petitions. I think a person signing in favour of something requires more courage than a person signing against.

32. *The Chairman.*] Would you consider, if an award went against your demands in an Arbitration Court, that you were receiving unfair treatment?—No, I would not.

33. *Mr. Veitch.*] Are you aware that the members of the staff of the Hotel Bristol signed petitions both for and against the Act?—I was not aware of it.

34. *Mr. Wilkinson.*] Are the people you represent in favour of Saturday, Wednesday, or Thursday for the holiday?—They could not all go off at once. My point is that there should be one day's rest in seven.

35. *Mr. Glover.*] Where only two persons are employed in a boardinghouse do you think the people would like to have the same facilities as those who employ more than two?—There are several places in Dunedin where if the Act was brought into operation as it is in the Bill it would deprive some of the workers of the benefit of the Act.

36. *The Chairman.*] Would you be in favour of an optional clause going into this Bill where the employee would get a day's pay instead of a day's holiday?—No, the object we are fighting for is a day, not the price of a day. We have laid it down as one of the laws of the land that a man shall not work on one day of the week—Sunday. If that were not compulsory a great many people would work just for the extra money. Six days' labour is sufficient for any man.

37. Do you not think it should be applied to every business, tramways, steamboats, &c.?—I think it should be possible for everybody to get it, but even if there are those who cannot that is no reason why hotel workers should not get it. I should like to emphasize this: that the hotel workers have to work on the statutory holiday—those are their hardest days—and they get nothing extra for it.

#### TUESDAY, 19TH AUGUST, 1913.

ARTHUR ROSSER, representing the Grocers' Assistants' Industrial Union of Workers, Auckland, examined. (No. 18.)

*Witness:* The Auckland Grocers' Assistants' Union has been formed since 1901. We are now in the currency of our fourth award. The struggle has been to reduce hours, more so than to increase wages; indeed, we have only asked for one increase of wages in twelve years. In 1903 there was a system by which grocers' assistants were compelled to work fifty hours per year without payment of overtime. In 1906 fifty-three hours per week was provided for, and the total number of hours to be worked without overtime payment was reduced to forty hours, but it was limited for certain months. In the eleven months of the year from January to November no more than two hours per month could be worked. That made twenty-two hours; and for the three weeks immediately preceding Christmas three hours per night on three nights per week could be worked, or eighteen hours, making a total of forty hours for the year for which no payment was given. During the currency of that award the Shops and Offices Act, 1910, came into operation, and when our award expired the Shops and Offices provisions took effect and further overtime was abolished. I have given you these details to show you that the Grocers' Union has been one that has suffered as much as any union from overtime hours. The Shops and Offices Act, 1910, was regarded by the Grocers' Union as a distinct advance, and now by the award which came into operation in October last year the hours are not mentioned. We are governed by the Shops and Offices Act, so it intimately affects the men I represent. I would like to say, taking the Bill seriatim, that there is a difference in the definition of the word "occupier" on page 2, line 26: "'Occupier' means any person occupying any building, and includes any agent, manager, foreman, acting or apparently acting in the general management or control of a shop or office; and, in shops and offices occupied by a body of persons, incorporated or unincorporated, also includes the