

is what happens on the half-holiday. Men find themselves at liberty, and if the shops are closed they go to the hotel-bars, and their wives and families have to go without. We submit it not only gives the hotels an unfair advantage over the shops in business competition, but it is also against the best interests of the community. While we as an Alliance are not concerned with the hours of labour, we feel we have a great deal of sympathy with those who seek to reduce the hours of labour within reasonable limits, and the fact that a female can be employed eleven hours a day, with the possibility of three hours extra, making fourteen hours in one day, appeals to us a very wrong state of things. The half-holiday needed for the rest of the community should also operate in favour of those who work in hotel-bars. We are strongly in favour of one day's rest in seven, and we desire, as far as possible, that it should be for all purposes on the same day, and that the day which is regarded in a Christian community as the day of rest. But we recognize that it is not possible for those who cater for the wants of the community in the way of food and other necessities to all have the Sunday off. We submit that no hardship would be entailed in asking that the hotels should be closed on the half-holiday, as on election day, but without reopening at 7 p.m. We submit that no member of Parliament wishes to repeal that provision. The reason we adopted that provision was that we believe it has been found to be practicable as well as salutary.

1. *Mr. Bollard.*] Are you in favour of abolishing hotels altogether?—Hotel-bars, sir.

*The Chairman* ruled the question out of order and did not allow any further reply.

WILLIAM STEWART WALLACE, Chemist, Wellington, examined. (No. 21.)

*Witness:* The chief point we want to draw attention to is paragraph (iv), subsection (c), clause (1), section 17, *re* half-holiday: "Notwithstanding anything in this Act, it shall not be unlawful for any chemist or chemist's assistant who resides on the premises of the shop to supply at any time medical or surgical instruments that are urgently required." We represent no body of chemists, but we feel that if we have to keep our shops open for the benefit of the public we should not be restricted to what we should sell, provided we sell our ordinary stock-in-trade.

1. *Mr. Anderson.*] Do you mean ordinary stock?—We mean everything in the shop.

2. Supposing chemists stocked tobacco and cigars: I am talking about country chemists?—By doing that they are bringing themselves within the ordinary provisions of the Act. We in Wellington have agreed by a three-fifths majority to close at 8 o'clock because we believe the hours are unnecessarily long. Some people take advantage of this little clause here, and are selling goods after hours which cannot properly come under the heading "Medicine or surgical appliances." They go on the system that anything asked for is urgently required. Our suggestion is that you should define what the clause empowers. One or two glaring examples in Wellington make it exceedingly difficult to carry on with them. When the Department sets traps the Magistrate takes it upon himself to be very nasty to them—to the trap, not to the man who gets his customer to break the law.

3. *Mr. Clark.*] In some places chemists sell tobacco and so on. In small towns they could not live if they did not?—There is nothing in the law to stop a man from keeping his shop open if he does not employ anybody.

4. *Mr. Okey.*] Have you any objection to chemists being rung up in case of emergency?—No; we treat it as a duty. We are actuated by sentimental motives, I suppose. We have no wish to stop that.

FRIDAY, 22ND AUGUST, 1913.

ROBERT MAYALL examined. (No. 22.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Whom do you represent?—The Dunedin and Suburban Operative Butchers' Union of Workers.

2. Have you their authority?—Yes. [Document produced.]

3. *Mr. Hindmarsh:* I should like to interpose here. The secretary of the Auckland Butchers' Union gave evidence the other day, and he handed me this paper as containing what they want. Now, if this witness were to read it over and say that this is all he wants it would save a good deal of time.

*Witness:* I understand that it is practically the same.

*The Chairman:* The clerk will read over this statement that Mr. Hindmarsh has, and if the witness endorses it he can say so.

*The Clerk* then read the statement, as follows:—

*"Suggested Amendments to Shops and Offices Act, 1913.*

"Clause 2: Date of Act.—Proposed date, 1st April, 1914. Date suggested, 1st January, 1914.

"Clause 3: Registration.—Required that this clause shall be amended so that it shall not be possible for a firm to register its first shopman as registered occupier, and deprive him of the privileges of the Act. First shopman in our case is a worker who at present receives £3 per week by an award of the Court of Arbitration.

"Clause 4: Time and wages book.—Section 2 of this clause provides that signature of worker shall be taken as certificate of accuracy. This is wrong, as it would facilitate evasion of Act. Employee often signs the book, which is afterwards found to be incorrect.