

statutory day in the city. In connection with the exemption of shops, we consider there should be no exempted shops outside chemists—that is, where the statutory closing-day is Saturday. With regard to clause 18, I may point out that in Christchurch there are two holidays in the year which fall on Friday—Good Friday and Show Day. We want a clause defining the late night when Friday is a special holiday. We would suggest that Thursday be fixed. Clause 23, closing in certain districts: where it is 8 o'clock we suggest that 7 o'clock should be substituted, and where 10 o'clock we suggest 9 o'clock. Clause 37, suitable heating appliances: we have no objection to the heating-appliances, but we do object to the powers given Inspectors. Clause 43: I think there has been a good deal of misconception with regard to the fifteen minutes' grace. From my experience in Christchurch I do not think it has ever been taken advantage of as far as shops are concerned. We look upon it as being necessary only in the case of delivery-vans being out. A man may meet with an accident on the road or he may be delayed by other causes, and we think under the circumstances that half an hour would be a reasonable time to give that man to be in the stable. I have no knowledge at all of this half-hour's grace that we have at the present time being used in any grocer's shop in Christchurch. I believe I am correct in saying that the door of every grocer in Christchurch is closed at 6 o'clock. It may be a minute or two afterwards before the shop is anything like cleared. But we have never looked upon it as a half-hour's grace in connection with the business of the shop. It has been found to work very well in connection with the delivery-vans—that is, on special occasions. Clause 51: we agree with this, but we consider that it would be better if the hours were fixed at 7 and 9. Clause 55, tending horses: I think this is a very important thing. Those tending horses are already under awards, and we desire to protest against legislation beyond this.

4. *Mr. Davey.*] You suggest that Saturday closing in Christchurch should be extended over a ten-mile radius?—From the Chief Post-office.

5. Do you know where that will extend to?—It would take in Lyttelton, Sumner, New Brighton—

6. Four miles of the Peninsula?—Yes.

7. Would you wish that to be done?—We think the present conditions are very unfair as far as the present Saturday half-holiday is concerned in our city. I can give you an instance where in one road one man is allowed to keep open and another man compelled to close.

8. Papanui is in the same condition, I know. Is not the radius somewhat too great?—We are quite prepared to cut it down.

9. And it would apply to Auckland, too, if that alteration were made?—Provided that we got what we term the city and suburban shops within that radius we would be quite satisfied. Take the store at Papanui at the terminus of the railway, quite a lot of our business comes from that direction, yet they are allowed to keep open on Saturday afternoon and Saturday night.

10. Regarding the definition of a dairy-produce seller, do you really wish that these people shall not be permitted to sell eggs or butter?—We think that these form a good portion of our business, and we do not think it right that these people should be allowed to keep open on Saturday afternoon and Saturday night and sell those lines.

11. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] How does the Saturday half-holiday work in Christchurch: are you satisfied with it?—Generally speaking, I think the opinion in Christchurch at the present time is that when we have had two years of it we shall not want to go back. There are quite a number of business people in Christchurch who were opposed to it but are now coming round, and they seem to think it will work out all right.

12. How do you think a license system would work? Supposing a man had to apply for a license—not necessarily pay a heavy sum for it—to sell certain goods, and the trades were defined and the goods that they could sell were classified by the Labour Department, how do you think it would work?—I have not had any experience of it, and I am not prepared to pass an opinion on it.

13. Do you think it is fair to the shopkeepers generally that a firm like Kirkcaldie and Stains in Wellington should carry on a drapery business and should also sell boots, and furniture, and tea, and run a restaurant, and try and monopolize every kind of business?—Yes. Is it not the same in the Old Country? Provided we are all working under the same conditions I do not see any objection to that.

14. *Mr. Veitch.*] With regard to Saturday half-holiday, do you think the people would be satisfied with a Dominion vote as to whether we should have a universal Saturday half-holiday, and avoid all this friction? To get over a difficulty now you suggest a widening of the area, and the moment you do that you bring in another difficulty. Would it not be far better to have a Dominion Saturday half-holiday, deciding the issue right over the Dominion, and have every place observe the same day?—That is what we advocate. We believe in a universal Saturday half-holiday.

15. *Mr. Wilkinson.*] If the issues were decided in provinces it might suit the case: what is your opinion? Supposing the Province of Canterbury had the opportunity of voting, would that suit?—I consider it would be very much better than the conditions we are working under at the present time.

16. In the Bill it provides that you can vote for any day in the week: would it not be better to narrow that down to, say, Wednesday as against Saturday, in place of allowing people to vote for any day they chose?—If you limited the choice to Wednesday and Saturday it would not suit Canterbury. It would not suit Christchurch in particular. The reason is that our market-day is Wednesday?

17. Say Thursday, then?—Thursday would suit us. But the other parts of the Dominion generally keep Wednesday, I understand.