

41. Just lately?—No, the prices have been gradually increasing. There are always a few pounds more tacked on to my bills. A butcher told me the other day that meat was going to be very much dearer, too.

42. You have no bills, I suppose, showing these increases?—No, I have not brought them with me.

43. What is your tariff?—Permanent boarders, £1 5s. and £1 10s.; and casuals, 8s. a day, or £2 2s. a week.

44. How many rooms have you?—We have sixty-three bedrooms to let for the public.

45. You said that a girl you knew was getting £1 per week and made £1 10s. with tips: is that an extra £1 10s.?—Yes.

46. That makes £2 10s.?—Yes. There are many men in New Zealand who are not getting that, and have to keep a wife and family.

47. Is the tipping system general?—Yes.

48. It is getting quite a custom now?—Yes, too much so.

49. Do the assistants look regularly for tips?—Yes.

50. They expect them?—Absolutely.

*Mrs. Black:* Excuse my interrupting you, but one of my maids made £2 10s. one morning before breakfast.

51. *Mr. Wilkinson* (to witness).] You said that last year your wages increased by a certain sum?—Yes, the upkeep and everything combined.

52. By how much did you say?—£400. It is the increased cost of living.

53. You do not think there would be any chance of increasing the tariff?—I do not think so. People seem too hard up just now. There is absolutely no money.

54. *Mr. Pryor.*] It is proposed to exempt private hotels employing less than three hands: does that mean increased competition for you?—Oh, yes. I think that if we are brought under this provision the small boardinghouses ought to be brought under it too. The present proposal would mean that we should have to pay so much more money, and they would get out of it altogether. I think they ought to be brought under it if we are. Competition is so keen that it does not give us any chance at all. A lady may be running an establishment with three or four daughters, and she has a distinct advantage.

55. *The Chairman.*] You think there should be absolutely no exemptions?—I think it would be only fair to bring the private houses under it, unless we are all exempt.

56. *Mr. Long* (Secretary, Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Association).] You told the Committee that you are working under the Act?—Yes, the Shops Act.

57. How do you come to work under the Shops Act?—We had notice served on us that we should. We are not under an award. Judge Sim said he thought it too ridiculous for words to put us under an award.

58. Are you aware that you are not working under the Shops and Offices Act of 1910 at all? In the Wanganui decision given by Mr. Justice Cooper it was held that private hotels which are only doing a small casual business in the restaurant line do not come under the Act, and therefore you are not working under the provisions of the Act of 1910?—What am I working under?

59. You are working under nothing?—Then I am under a delusion. I have been adhering to the law, anyhow.

60. *Mr. Davey.*] Who told you that you were working under this Act?—I think it was Mr. Hagger, the Chief Inspector of Factories. Anyhow, there is no harm done: I am better off than I thought.

61. *Mr. Pryor.*] The Labour Department have put you under the Shops and Offices Act?—Yes, I think their officer did.

62. *Mr. Davey.*] Are there many private boardinghouses in Christchurch similar to your own?—Mrs. Cook's, "Warwick House," "St. Elmo," "The Lodge," and one or two others.

63. They are pretty large places?—Yes.

64. They would not come under this Bill at all?—No, and they can accommodate more than I do.

65. You think that if you are put under this Bill they should be also?—Decidedly. I think it is only just.

66. *Mr. Pryor.*] A private-hotel proprietor with a fairly large family and employing two outside hands would be clear of the Bill altogether, and in that way would be competing unfairly with you?—Certainly, and making more money.

67. *Mr. Davey.*] Do these large places in Christchurch take in casuals?—I could not say. "The Lodge," and "St. Elmo," and all those places do, but I do not know whether Mrs. Cook does. She told me that she did not take in many. But she was in a great state about this Bill.

68. It does not apply to her, does it?—Not at present. It is quite a one-sided affair altogether, I think.

69. (To Mrs. Black): Are there many houses in Wellington competing with you?—Oh, yes, dozens and dozens.

70. I mean large ones?—Yes.

71. And they would not come under the operation of the Bill?—No. They are all against it—"The Mansions," the "Columbia," "Waitangi": they do not want it. They said that it means ruination to them. "I could not carry on," one of them told me; "I would have to make my place into apartments."

*Mrs. Davies:* It has come to this: I would rather sell my furniture and hand over my business to the landlord. It is far too strenuous now to manage. I would be much better off in a position earning a decent wage; I would not have the responsibility.