

such instructions except in exceptional cases where we have no time to consult the affiliated bodies. In the event of an important matter arising the advisory board will go into it and advise what it thinks ought to be done, but we are not one big union in the sense that has been referred to at this Committee.

34. *Mr. S. G. Smith.*] From your long experience in connection with the amalgamation of the twelve associations mentioned, is not the cost less to the employers and more effective in working?—It is more effective in working, but I do not know about the cost. I may say that the federation does not take up cases that go before the Arbitration Court.

35. *Mr. Kellett.*] I take it that the object of this Bill is to give the industries—that is, those that are linked up by branch unions—the opportunity of obtaining one Dominion award. I think you stated that that provision is already made; all that is required is a slight alteration. Can you explain where a Dominion award operates?—Yes; you have an award for the Seamen's Union, and the Drivers' Union.

36. We were told, in fact, that it was a Dominion award, but in reality what happened was that we had to co-operate in every centre to get this award. What would be the objection to the Arbitration Court sitting in Wellington and fixing up a Dominion award?—It has been done time and again without legislation. It was done in the Wanganui district some time ago.

37. At present the representatives have to journey from one end of the Dominion to the other. I want to find out what real objection there is to the Arbitration Court sitting in Wellington. I think an honest attempt is made in this Bill to improve matters?—Even this honest endeavour would not simplify things, because cases would still have to go before the Court at the one centre and those concerned from outside that centre would go there very unwillingly. But it would not be possible for the Court to sit only in one centre, because it would have to go to the other centres in order to ascertain what local conditions have to be provided for. Even in your own trade, Mr. Kellett, the Dominion conference worked out very well at the time. Parties meeting in that way and coming to an agreement is a very different thing to the Court doing it, and by awards being made in that way you would avoid some of the difficulties you would have by the Court taking it. As you are aware, even in your own trade there were local conditions that had to be provided for. You cannot get one scrap of advantage as a result of this proposal.

38. Why do you object to it?—Because there is no advantage to be gained by it. The design behind the Bill is what we object to.

39. *Mr. Potter.*] The Dominion award is a side issue to the Dominion union: that is actually what you said?—Yes, that is so.

40. *The Chairman.*] Your objection to the Bill, Mr. Pryor, is more rooted than mere suspicion?—Undoubtedly so.

41. *Mr. Howard.*] As you know, there are two schools in the labour world to-day: there is the direct-action school, who believe in the one big union, and they are opposed by our friends who believe in the arbitration system and who wish to improve it. Now, the latter are trying to alter the Act by this Bill so that it may be more efficient and workable: do you not think that that is so?—That is not the design of this Bill, Mr. Howard.

42. Do you know who designed this Bill?—I have not the faintest idea.

43. *Hon. Sir W. H. Herries.*] Was there not an attempt made in 1911 to provide machinery for this Dominion award?—The machinery is there.

44. We have been told that Judge Sim did not consider it workable: do you remember anything about it?—My remembrance of it is that the difficulty occurred not in connection with the Act but in connection with the regulations. So far as we can see that section of the Act should be perfectly practicable and workable. The Act of 1911 gives the Court power to provide for a Dominion award.

45. *Mr. Kellett.*] We were never able to get Dominion awards even under that Act?—I am satisfied of this: that if there was a real desire on the part of the unions for Dominion awards the Act of 1911 gives the Court power to provide for them. It is not the fault of the Act: I believe there is some fault in the regulations. As a matter of fact there have been several Dominion awards made under that Act. There are the shearers, for instance, and I believe also the printing trade. My experience is that a federated trade will come and get a Dominion award by agreement, and then if they find there is some advantage in a district award they will get a district award. I am satisfied there is nothing in this Bill except the one thing.

J. F. ATKINS examined. (No. 7.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Your full name please?—Mr. J. F. Atkins. I am secretary to the New Zealand Chartered Clubs Association. I appear on behalf of the chartered clubs of New Zealand. We are opposed to our stewards being included under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. There is a great line of demarcation between them and the ordinary hotel workers. They have to be the very best men procurable, and their work is very largely of a confidential and responsible nature. It is necessary at times to employ them on relief work, but we adhere to the hours of hotel workers, and would not think of exceeding those hours. In regard to pay and matters of that sort, so long as we can get a good man we always pay good wages, for the simple reason that we must have the very best men. A great many of our clubs are also run on what is known as the partially-paid-secretary system, and this would be unworkable under the Arbitration Act. Therefore there is no doubt whatever about the necessity of our stewards not being brought under the Act. The great bulk of our stewards do not want to be included under the Act because they believe they can do better under the present conditions. I do not think there is anything further I have to say.

2. *Hon. Sir W. H. Herries.*] What is the present position with regard to employees of chartered clubs—are none of them under the Arbitration Act?—No.

3. Not the housemaids, for instance?—No.

4. Not the same as boardinghouses?—No.

5. Do you know whether they have expressed a desire to come under it?—No.

6. They have never applied?—No.