

1878.

NEW ZEALAND.

EMPLOYMENT OF FEMALES ACTS

(REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE WORKING OF THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSION.

(L.S.)

NORMANBY, Governor.

To all to whom these Presents shall come, and to CHARLES KNIGHT, of Wellington, in the Colony of New Zealand, Auditor-General; ALFRED ROWLAND CHETHAM STRODE, of Dunedin, in the said colony, Esquire; the Hon. WILLIAM HUNTER REYNOLDS, of Dunedin aforesaid; JAMES FULTON, Esquire; and JAMES BENN BRADSHAW, of the same place, Esquire, greeting:

WHEREAS it has been represented to me that it would be desirable if an inquiry were made into the operation of an Act passed by the General Assembly of the colony in the year 1873 the short title whereof is "The Employment of Females Act," and which said Act has also been amended by several subsequent enactments: And whereas it is expedient that a Commission should be appointed to make such inquiry with, under, and subject to the powers, terms, and conditions hereinafter set forth:

Now, therefore, know ye that I, George Augustus Constantine, Marquis of Normanby, Governor of the Colony of New Zealand, having full trust and confidence in your ability and integrity, in pursuance and exercise of all powers and authorities enabling me in this behalf, and by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council of the said colony, do hereby appoint you the said

CHARLES KNIGHT,
ALFRED ROWLAND CHETHAM STRODE,
Hon. WILLIAM HUNTER REYNOLDS,
JAMES FULTON, and
JAMES BENN BRADSHAW,

to be Commissioners, by all lawful ways and means, and subject to these presents, to examine and inquire into the several matters hereinafter set forth:—

First—To inquire into the operation of the hereinbefore-mentioned Act and the several amendments thereof, and to what extent the said Acts or any of them have accomplished the purposes for which they were passed;

Second—To inquire whether, in your opinion, any of the said Acts are capable of amendment, and in what respects such amendments should be made; and

Third—To inquire whether the said Acts or any of them ought, in your opinion, to be repealed or cease to operate.

And I do hereby authorize and empower you, before you shall enter upon the subject-matter of this inquiry, to appoint one of your number to be Chairman at meetings to be held by you under these presents; and, in case of the illness or absence of such Chairman from any meeting, then that you may appoint any one of your number to be Chairman at such meeting:

And I do hereby declare that the powers and authorities hereby given to you the said Commissioners may be exercised by any three of you sitting and acting together:

And I do hereby further authorize and empower you the said Commissioners as aforesaid, by all lawful ways and means, to examine and inquire into every matter and thing touching and concerning the premises in such manner, and at such time or times and at such place or places within the Provincial District of Otago as you may appoint or determine: Provided that any such inquiry may be adjourned by you from time to time, or from place to place, but so that no such adjournment shall be for a longer period than ten days at any one time, nor to any place without the limits of the said district:

And I do hereby also authorize and empower you to have before you and examine, on oath or otherwise, as may be allowed by law, any Inspector appointed under the said Acts or any of them, and all such other person or persons whom you shall judge capable of affording you any information touching or concerning the said inquiry or any part thereof, then and there to produce any books,

reports, or papers relating to the subject-matter of the inquiry held under these presents or any part thereof :

And I do hereby require you, within two calendar months from the date of these presents, or as much sooner as the same can conveniently be done (using all diligence), to certify to me under your hands and seals your several proceedings, and your opinion touching the premises, and stating therein what measures (if any) it would, in your opinion, be desirable to adopt in respect thereof, or of any matter or thing arising out of or connected with the said inquiry :

And, lastly, I do hereby declare that this Commission is and is intended to be issued subject to the provisions of "The Commissioners' Powers Act, 1867," and "The Commissioners' Powers Act Amendment Act, 1872."

Given under the hand of His Excellency the Most Honorable George Augustus Constantine, Marquis of Normanby, Earl of Mulgrave, Viscount Normanby, and Baron Mulgrave of Mulgrave, all in the County of York, in the Peerage of the United Kingdom ; and Baron Mulgrave of New Ross, in the County of Wexford, in the Peerage of Ireland ; a Member of Her Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council ; Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George ; Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over Her Majesty's Colony of New Zealand and its Dependencies, and Vice-Admiral of the same ; and issued under the Seal of the said Colony, at the Government House at Auckland, this eighteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight.

J. BALLANCE.

Approved in Council.

IRWIN C. MALING,
Acting Clerk of the Executive Council.

No. 2.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

THE Commissioners appointed by His Excellency the Governor to inquire into the operations of an Act entitled "The Employment of Females Act, 1873," and of the several amendments thereof, have closed their inquiry, and, in returning the Commission with which His Excellency was pleased to honour them, report as follows :—

That the several Acts referred to are necessary, and have mainly accomplished the wise purposes for which they were enacted.

According to the testimony of the adult women, the law has worked a favourable change in the comfort, independence, and well-being of females employed in the Dunedin factories and workshops. Some of the women who have for years been employed in Dunedin expressed their gratitude for the protection which the Legislature had secured for them by the limitation of the hours of labour, and for the consequent improvement in their social condition and physical health.

The investigation shows that women cannot combine together as workmen do in their trades union, to protect themselves and limit the hours of labour. In the case of married women compelled to work in factories for the support of their families, it is especially necessary that the Legislature should step in to do for women what trades union effect for workmen and others.

The Acts, as far as the limitation of labour is concerned, take a middle course between those antagonistic forces termed "meddling legislation" and "freedom of labour," and secures the interests of the public, which are so vitally concerned in the health and social condition of women.

The Commissioners are unanimous in the opinion that an alteration of the Act which would make the limitation a weekly one of fifty-four hours instead of a daily one of eight hours, would certainly defeat the objects of the Legislature.

The investigation shows, however, that the law is not effectively carried out in many cases, owing to the insufficient inspection of the workshops. The Commissioners are unanimous in the opinion that the indifference or repugnance which is sometimes shown to carry out the provisions of the Acts limiting the hours of labour can only be guarded against by a thorough system of inspection. There are no difficulties in the way of securing the non-violation of the law in this particular. Any person having the right of entry into a workshop can, with perfect facility, determine whether children, young persons, and women, are engaged in work beyond the hours fixed by law.

The investigation was extended to the sanitary arrangements of the workshops. It will be seen from the reports of the Inspectors of Nuisances that the conveniences for the work-people require consideration.

Two of the workshops inspected by the Commissioners were well-ventilated, and large in proportion to the number of hands employed. The whole of the arrangements in both were good. No doubt the employers find their advantage in this. It must secure for them the best and most expert women ; and, on the other hand, induces the women, by good conduct, to retain employment where their health, comfort, and respectability are studied.

In another and extensive establishment the foul air, heated by furnaces below, vitiates the atmosphere of the crowded rooms above. The Commissioners would earnestly recommend that, at least, the cubic contents of the workrooms should be proportioned, by law, to the number of persons employed in them ; and that, generally, the sanitary arrangements should be made satisfactory to the Medical Officers of the Boards of Health.

The Commissioners find that the violators of the law have had their offences practically condoned by mere nominal fines. This tends to render the law a dead-letter where the employers choose to set it at defiance. It should be guarded against by making the minimum penalty forty shillings for breach of the provisions of the Act.

In respect of the registration of notices, provided by the eighth section of the Act of 1875, the minimum penalty for non-registration should be £10.

The recommendation of Inspector Connell, that more stringent measures should be enacted for the regulation of the employment of girls in private houses, does not meet with the concurrence of the Commissioners. The interpretation of "workroom" by clause 4 of the Act of 1874 includes any place where females are employed. Private houses, therefore, where women, young persons, and children are employed for gain come under the operation of the existing law.

27th May, 1878.

CHARLES KNIGHT,
Chairman.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

At a meeting of the Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Employment of Females Act held at the Custom House, Dunedin, on—

TUESDAY, 7TH MAY, 1878.

PRESENT:

Mr. James Benn Bradshaw.
Mr. James Fulton.
Dr. Charles Knight.

Hon. W. H. Reynolds.
Mr. A. R. C. Strode.

Resolved :—

- (1.) On motion of Mr. Strode, That Dr. Knight be elected Chairman.
- (2.) On motion of the Hon. Mr. Reynolds, That the Chairman be requested to telegraph to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary for authority to incur such expense as may be necessary for conducting the inquiry.
- (3.) On motion of Mr. Fulton, That the Commissioner of Crown Lands be requested to give the services of Mr. Sessions to this Commission as Clerk.
- (4.) On motion of Mr. Fulton, That a notification be put in the papers, intimating that the Commission is willing to receive the names of such persons as may desire to give evidence as to the working of "The Employment of Females Acts, 1873-74-75."
- (5.) On motion of the Hon. Mr. Reynolds, That Messrs. A. J. Burns, John Roberts, Robert Gillies, and Allan Holmes be requested to attend the Commission, with a view to giving evidence on the subject of the inquiry.

On motion of Mr. Fulton, the Commission adjourned till 2 o'clock p.m. the following day.

WEDNESDAY, 8TH MAY, 1878.

PRESENT:

All the Commissioners.
Dr. Knight in the chair.

Minutes of the first meeting read and confirmed.

Arthur John Burns, Esq., M.H.R., a Director of the Mosgiel Woollen Factory Company, and Allan Holmes, Esq., Solicitor, attended and gave evidence.

Resolved, on motion of Mr. Bradshaw, That the undermentioned gentlemen be requested to attend to-morrow for the purpose of giving evidence :—

Mr. A. Inglis, and Mr. Haynes, of Herbert, Haynes and Co., Drapers, &c., at 2 o'clock p.m.; Mr. Anderson, Manager for Messrs. Hallenstein Brothers' New Zealand Clothing Factory, and Mr. Ewing, of Messrs. Brown, Ewing, and Co., Drapers, &c., at 3 o'clock p.m.; Mr. Glendining, of Messrs. Kirkpatrick, Glendining, and Co., Drapers, &c.; and Mr. Marcus Hume, Boot Manufacturer, at 4 o'clock p.m.

The Commission adjourned till 2 o'clock p.m. the following day.

THURSDAY, 9TH MAY, 1878.

PRESENT:

Dr. Knight in the chair.

Mr. Bradshaw,
Hon. Mr. Reynolds,

Mr. Strode.

(Telegrams.)—The Chairman read a telegram from the Colonial Secretary, authorizing the Commission to incur such expenses as may be absolutely necessary for conducting the inquiry.

The Chairman also stated that, having telegraphed to the Colonial Secretary with regard to allowance to Commissioners, he had received the following reply :—

"Government Buildings, 8th May, 1878.—Dr. Knight, Dunedin.—Colonial Secretary desires me to say that Sir George Grey, in his letter to Mr. Burns, expressly stated that an unpaid Commission would be appointed. No payment, therefore, can be given.—(Signed) G. S. COOPER."

Commissioners having expressed dissatisfaction, the Chairman was requested to telegraph to the Colonial Secretary an expression of the Commissioners' dissatisfaction; that no such condition as non-payment was stated in the letters of appointment; and that they were quite unaware of any understanding with Mr. Burns on the subject.

Letters were received—

- (1.) From Messrs. Murray, Roberts, and Co., stating that Mr. Roberts had been compelled to leave town for a day or two, but would be happy to give evidence, if required, on his return.
- (2.) From Mr. Henry Hogg, Secretary to the Operative Tailors' Society, offering to give evidence on the working of the Act from the artisan's point of view.
- (3.) From Messrs. Brown, Ewing, and Co., asking that Mr. Ewing, being unable through illness to attend, might be allowed to give evidence on another day.
- (4.) From Mr. Marcus Hume, of Haig, Bramwell, and Co., stating that Mr. Haig would wait upon the Commissioners instead of himself.

Evidence was taken from,—

Daniel Haynes, of Herbert, Haynes, and Co.; John Glendining, of Kirkpatrick, Glendining, and Co.; Joseph Fletcher Anderson, Manager of Messrs. Hallenstein Brothers' New Zealand Clothing Factory; and Joseph Haig, of Haig, Bramwell, and Co.

Mr. A. Inglis did not attend to give evidence.

Resolved, That the undermentioned persons be requested to appear before the Commission to-morrow.

At 2 o'clock.—Mr. Thomson, of Thomson, Strang, and Co.; Mr. Henry Hogg, Secretary to the Operative Tailors' Society, and one of the firm of Reynolds, Clark, and Co.

At 3 o'clock.—The Manager of Messrs. Guthrie and Larnach's New Zealand Timber Factory and Sawmills; and the Manager, or one of the firm, of Findlay and Co., Timber Factory and Sawmill.

The Commission adjourned till 2 o'clock p.m. the following day.

FRIDAY, 10TH MAY, 1878.

PRESENT:

All the Commissioners.

Dr. Knight in the chair.

Witnesses.—The following persons attended and gave evidence:—

Mr. John Clark, of Reynolds, Clark, and Co.; Mr. Henry Hogg, Secretary of the Operative Tailors' Society; Mr. Andrew Thomson, of Thomson, Strang, and Co.; Mr. George Findlay, of Findlay and Co., Steam Sawmill, &c.

Resolved:—

(1.) That a list be obtained from the Resident Magistrate's Court of all workshops, factories, &c., registered under the Employment of Females Act.

(2.) That the Chairman call such further witnesses as he may consider desirable.

(3.) That the Commission, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday, the 14th instant, at 2 o'clock p.m.; and that, at 7 o'clock p.m. on that day, the evidence of certain female employés be taken.

The Commission then adjourned.

TUESDAY, 14TH MAY, 1878.

PRESENT:

All the Commissioners.

Dr. Knight in the chair.

Witnesses.—The following persons attended and gave evidence:—

Mr. T. G. Pascoe, Clothing Manufacturer, of Stafford and High Streets; Mr. Frederick Mallard, Inspector of Police, and Inspector under the Act; Mr. W. D. Herman, Clothing Manufacturer, Stafford Street.

Appointment of the Commission.—*Resolved*, That this Commission is of opinion that scant courtesy has been accorded them in their having been appointed without their wishes having been previously consulted or consent obtained; and that it is quite unreasonable to ask those who are not in the service of the Government to serve without remuneration. That the Chairman be requested to telegraph the resolution to the Honorable the Colonial Secretary.

The Commission adjourned till 7 o'clock p.m.

Seven o'clock p.m. Sitting resumed.

Certain female employés from several establishments in the City of Dunedin attended, and gave evidence, on the understanding that their names should not be published in the minutes and evidence.

Mr. Clement White also attended and gave evidence.

Resolved:—

(1.) That at 2 o'clock to-morrow the Commissioners will proceed to visit some of the factories in the city.

(2.) That on Thursday, at 11 a.m., the Commissioners will proceed to Mosgiel for the purpose of visiting the Mosgiel Woollen Factory.

The Commission adjourned till 2 o'clock p.m. the following day.

WEDNESDAY, 15TH MAY, 1878.

PRESENT:

Dr. Knight in the chair.

Mr. Bradshaw.

Hon. Mr. Reynolds.

The Commissioners proceeded to inspect the establishment of Messrs. Hallenstein Brothers' New Zealand Clothing Factory, and took evidence from the following employées :—Catherine Kirk, Marianne Jane Wilson, Sarah Palmer, Margaret Gow, and Elizabeth Amy.

The Commissioners next proceeded to the establishment of Messrs. Saunders and Co., Drapers, Clothiers, &c., Princes Street, and took evidence from two of the employées, as under :—Annie Bower and Sarah Harris.

The Commissioners then proceeded to the establishment of Messrs. Brown, Ewing, and Co., Drapers, Clothiers, &c., Princes Street, where the evidence of the following employées was taken :—Mrs. Scott, Rosina Jewitt, Christiana Morrison.

The Commissioners also inspected the premises of Messrs. Herman and Co., Otago Clothing Factory, Stafford Street, but took no evidence there.

The Commission adjourned till 11 o'clock a.m. the following day.

THURSDAY, 16TH MAY, 1878.

PRESENT:

All the Commissioners.

The Commissioners proceeded by train to Mosgiel, and visited the Mosgiel Woollen Factory, at which place the evidence of the following persons was taken :—John Dryden, Manager; Jane Thomson, Jane Renwick, Jane Riddle, William Patun, employées.

The Commissioners, having returned to Dunedin, met in the Customhouse, when the Chairman read the following telegram he had received from Wellington :—

“Government Buildings, 15th May, 1878.—Dr. Knight, Dunedin.—No. 466. Ministers regret to find from your telegram that, in appointing the members to an unpaid Commission without asking their prior consent, they have imposed a duty on them which it seems they are not satisfied to undertake upon such terms. Ministers much regret that they should have unintentionally behaved with any discourtesy, and apologise for it. Your telegram is accepted as a resignation of the Commissioners, so you will return at once to Wellington.—G. S. WHITMORE.”

Resolved, That the consideration of the telegram be adjourned till 10.30 o'clock a.m. the following day.

The Commission adjourned accordingly.

FRIDAY, 17TH MAY, 1878.

PRESENT:

Mr. Bradshaw in the chair.

Mr. Fulton,
Hon. Mr. Reynolds,

Mr. Strode.

Consideration of the telegram read at the previous meeting resumed.

Resolved, That, there having been no intimation, either in the Commission or in the letters appointing the Commissioners, that the usual practice would be departed from of remunerating those whose time was to be occupied in inquiring into a matter affecting the public interest, the Commissioners are of opinion that it does not now meet the case, when the work of the Commission is nearly completed, for the Government to interpret the telegram sent into an intention by the Commissioners to resign; and therefore it is proposed, with the concurrence of the Government, that the Commissioners complete the duties devolving upon them under the Commission.

Resolved, further, That Dr. Knight be requested to transmit a copy of this resolution, by telegraph, to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Resolved, That the Commission adjourn till 2 o'clock p.m. on Wednesday next, and that Mr. Ewing, of Brown, Ewing, and Co., and the Sanitary Inspector be requested to attend on that day for the purpose of giving evidence.

The Commission adjourned accordingly.

WEDNESDAY, 22ND MAY, 1878.

PRESENT:

Dr. Knight in the chair.

Mr. Bradshaw,
Mr. Fulton,

Hon. Mr. Reynolds.

The Chairman read the following telegram which he had received previous to forwarding the resolution passed at the last meeting :—

“Government Buildings, 17th May, 1878.—Dr. Knight, Dunedin.—Please consider my direction to mean return when your Audit duties are completed. I do not desire to interfere with your action with regard to them. Of course, if Commission does not wish to close proceedings, you are at liberty to take part.—G. S. WHITMORE.”

Evidence was taken from the following persons:—

Mr. Ralph Ewing, of Brown, Ewing, and Co.; Mr. Inspector Mallard (further evidence); Mrs. Sophia Simkins, a late employée at the City Steam Laundry; Mr. William Connell and Mr. Bennet J. Lowry, Inspectors under the Public Health Act, &c.

The Commissioners decided that no further evidence should be taken, and, having deliberated, agreed upon the heads of a report.

The Chairman was requested to prepare a draft Report.

Commission adjourned.

MONDAY, 27TH MAY, 1878.

PRESENT:

Dr. Knight in the chair.

Mr. Bradshaw,
Hon. Mr. Reynolds,

Mr. Strode.

Minutes.—The minutes of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th meetings of the Commission were read and confirmed.

Report.—The Chairman read draft Report.

Resolved, That the Report be agreed to, and that the Chairman be authorized to sign the same on behalf of the Commissioners.

Resolved, to recommend, That the sum of £20 be paid to Mr. William E. Sessions for his services as clerk and shorthand-writer to the Commission.

On the motion of the Hon. Mr. Reynolds, a vote of thanks was accorded to the Chairman, and the proceedings terminated.

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

WEDNESDAY, 8TH MAY, 1878.

Mr. ARTHUR JOHN BURNS, M.H.R., and a Director of the Mosgiel Woollen Factory Company, examined.

1. *By the Chairman.*] His Excellency the Governor has appointed a Commission to inquire into the working of the Employment of Females Act, and the Commissioners wish to learn from you whether, in your opinion, that Act and the amending Acts have answered the purposes for which they were enacted. You are a member of the House of Representatives, are you not?—Yes, but I was not a member when the Act was passed. I introduced a Bill to amend the Act last session. That Bill only applied to the Mosgiel Factory. It contained but one clause, and was an amendment regarding the hours of employing females in the factory, and as to holidays, I think, but I have not a copy of the Bill here.

2. Did that Bill embody the whole of your views?—Yes, so far as I can recollect.

3. *Hon. Mr. Reynolds.*] How do you find the Act is working? Will you make a general statement?—There is one point with regard to the Bill that I introduced that I wish to allude to, if I may be allowed. There was an impression abroad that I introduced the Bill into Parliament for the benefit of the Mosgiel Company. I wish distinctly to give a negative to that impression. I never would have touched the Act if it had not been for the spontaneous action of the female employées themselves. It arose in this way: The Inspector, as in duty bound, insisted on a compliance with the Act. In regard to the hours it is not true that our manager brought pressure to bear upon the employées, but they, on his insisting that the hours of the Act should be kept, complained to such an extent that there was almost a "strike" amongst them. The Chairman of the Company telegraphed to me, asking what could be done in the matter. I replied that I would do nothing at all, unless the girls were in earnest themselves, and it came spontaneously from them. Some days after this, I received a telegram to the effect that the girls themselves wished a change in the Act, and had petitioned the House for it. I then said that I would present the petition, and endeavour to get the Act altered. I think it right to make this statement, to remove a wrong impression. On the second occasion that the Act had been infringed regarding the holidays (two cases were brought before the Resident Magistrate at West Taieri), the Directors decided that the Manager must insist upon the girls keeping the regular hours, in accordance with the Act, and preserve the law by not working on holidays. The hardship in the case here is this: With the exception of a very few (not more than six), the whole of the girls are employed on piecework, and, as the Act does not provide for anything in this way, when the holidays come round the girls are forced to leave their work, and do not get paid. Another reason why the terms of the Act with regard to holidays are objectionable is, that many of the days chosen are unsuitable. We always give a certain number of holidays during the year, but we think it hard that the days should be specified, particularly when they have more of a religious element about them than anything else: a great many do not value these holidays. With regard to the working hours, the mill, from the day it started, has been shut down at 2 o'clock on Saturdays, the employées being allowed to make up the number of hours during the week, as we considered it unfair towards those employed on piecework not to allow them to make up their full time. On the other hand, it is but fair to state that, having a large amount of expensive machinery kept idle, we think it a hardship that the hours should be limited, whilst not allowed to put on another shift of people. But, in regard to putting on a shift of hands upon a loom, there is a difficulty, arising from the fact that it is very seldom that any two weavers will weave in the same way, no two women giving the same attention or turning out the same amount of work—a web of cloth might soon be spoiled by changing hands upon it at any given hour. Consequently, by limiting the hours to those in the Act you reduce the production of our mill to a large extent, as also the pay of the employées, and the value of our machinery. Of course, it may be said, "Why not pay higher wages, and make up the difference by employing more skilful hands?" but you must bear in mind the struggle to compete with foreign productions. After giving our people a fair and reasonable wage to induce them to come from the old country, the placing of too severe restrictions upon us naturally has the effect of checking the enterprise, or inducing us to fall back upon expedients which we have no wish to do. There has been strong temptation to evade the Act. Our manager has experienced great difficulty, after getting these girls, to keep them. I do not think, in principle, the Act refers to such places as our factory. I can quite understand it to apply where girls are shut up in a close room, but anybody who knows our factory knows very well that the atmosphere in the buildings, which are well ventilated, is very good and pleasant. I do not consider it would be at all oppressive for any female if the hours were altered to fifty-four hours per week—the old hours.

4. *Mr. Strode.*] How long do you work in one day?—The mill is going nearly all day and night, but of course these girls are only employed the exact number of hours mentioned in the Act. We conform to the Act—as nearly as possible to the letter of the law. The females are dissatisfied with the provisions of the Act in regard to the working hours and holidays.

5. *The Chairman.*] I understand that, in the interests of the Company, it is desirable to keep your machinery constantly at work; you have a large capital invested, and the interest on that would be very small unless the machinery was kept at work?—Yes; I may say that the Company, wishing to show a fair spirit in this matter, have ordered an additional number of looms, to make up for time lost in production, and so get over it in that way—by expending extra capital. Each of these looms costs £100 by the time they are fitted up. To make up the production anything like what it used to be we must employ additional hands. Just now the engines are going from 6 in the morning till 10 at night, the females keeping their hours in accordance with the Act, the other hands being employed at carding and spinning. We are obliged to do that, so as to bring up the production nearly to what it was before.

6. Have you ever come to a determination as to the number of hours?—We should be satisfied if we could keep our looms going fifty-four hours in the week.

7. How many hours do you consider a fair day's work for a female paid by the day?—Nine. It would be no hardship to make it nine hours, giving them Saturday afternoon.

8. Supposing they worked beyond that?—We would not ask them to do so; but, when employed by the piece, they grumble because not allowed to work at times not permitted by the Act.

9. Supposing the law did not limit the hours for the employment of females, what would be the practice of the Company with regard to over hours—what would they pay for them?—They are paid far higher in proportion than other labour.

10. Then, if the Company and the females be anxious to get as much work through as possible, would the Company pay a higher rate of wages for overtime?—We have never asked them to work overtime.

11. No; but, supposing the labour perfectly free, what would be the general practice with respect to overtime?—We pay our men overtime. The Engineer, for instance, gets double for overtime.

12. I suppose the women are as eager as the manufacturers to increase their gains?—Yes.

13. Do you not think some restriction should be placed upon the time and mode of employing females?—Oh, yes; I think that an Act is very necessary; but, taking into consideration the difference between town and country, and the difference in the nature of the work, I consider the present Act rather too strict, so far as our factory is concerned.

14. How many of your employes come under the Act?—Between twenty and thirty females, and several males. Mr. Dryden, the manager, will be able to tell exactly, and give the ages. He will not take in any under eight or nine years of age.

15. Then, altogether, you consider the three Acts very useful and necessary, but require amendment?—Yes, so far as we are concerned—if slightly amended in regard to the working hours, and holidays. The mill is not closed during holidays, except to the females. I may state, also, that there are two fast days in the year during which, out of deference to the feelings of the community, the mill used to be closed; but, owing to the rigid enforcement of the Act with regard to the other holidays, we have opened the mill on fast days to those who choose to work on those days. With regard to the New Year's holiday: we give a whole week. The Inspector of Machinery compels us to clean out our boilers once a year, and, as this takes nearly a week to do, it is done at the New Year; and, if the mill is shut down for that purpose on a Saturday night, we do not start again till the following Monday week. The females thus get a holiday which they value, as it enables them to visit their friends; whereas, if they merely obtain a single day, they do not value it.

16. *Mr. Fulton.*] Has the piecework been given in consequence of the provisions of the Act being an interference with the working of the factory, or was it the practice before?—They have been paid by the piece since the first web was turned out of the factory. A number of first-class weavers from the old country bargained to be paid by the piece. There was never a piece of tweed made in the factory by day wages.

17. Was the petition from the girls really got up by them voluntarily?—Yes; they asked Mr. Dryden how to lay their complaint, and he told them by petition, and, if they were in earnest, to sign it.

18. Do not the girls who are weaving stand the whole time?—Yes, they are pretty much standing the whole time, but need not; as a fact, they cannot do very well without standing, but they can go away perhaps for half an hour at a time. In working plain goods, a girl might be away almost half a day, her neighbour attending now and then to the loom.

19. How far do the girls live from the factory?—The furthest off will have about sixty or seventy chains to travel.

20. *The Chairman.*] Do they club together to employ a medical man?—No; they all live with their parents. There is a medical man in the district.

21. *Mr. Fulton.*]—What provision is made as to dinner time? How long do they stop working?—They get an hour. Some bring their meals with them, others go down to the village, and those who are living in the Company's houses get their meals regularly in them.

22. *Mr. Strode.*] The last Act, that of 1875, says, "A child, young person, or female shall not be employed continuously for more than four hours and a half without an interval of at least half an hour for a meal."—We have never limited them to half an hour, but give ample time for them to take their meals. The manager sees that they get their meals.

23. *The Chairman.*] Do they take them in the factory?—No; they are not allowed to do so. If the day is fine, they go outside the factory, if wet, they can go into the engine room, or to a large room in which there is a fire. The fact is, that it is to our interest to be kind to our people in every way.

24. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] You do not know exactly the number of women, young persons, and children employed in your factory?—No, not having had so much to do lately in the supervision of the establishment; but there are sixteen at the looms, and a number in the picking shop. The manager will be able to tell the number above or under the age of eighteen.

25. Did your Bill contemplate the working by night in shifts?—No; I do not say so. You cannot put two different women on the same loom.

26. Did you not say that your machinery was about to work all night?—It has been, but on carding and spinning only; women are not employed on that. I may say that during the day some of the girls are employed on the carding machines, but when they leave men are put on.

27. Do these women complain because they are not allowed to work a larger number of hours, or of insufficient earnings?—They look upon it that if they are only allowed to work a certain number of hours that there is so much deducted from their wages.

28. Then they complain of the amount that they cannot earn?—Yes.

29. Do you know anything about the Factory Acts at Home? Do you know what constitutes a factory at Home?—I am not quite sure, in terms of the law; but there is no doubt that ours is a woollen factory.

30. There must be not less than fifty women and children employed to constitute a factory at Home. Are you aware that these Acts are not half so strict as at Home regarding work?—We do not complain, except on the points I have mentioned.

31. Are you aware that the machinery is not permitted to be worked during meal hours at Home?—I am aware of this: that in the mills of the old country the engine is never shut down from 12 o'clock on Sunday night to 12 o'clock on Saturday night; but it is necessary to stop occasionally to oil complicated parts of the machinery.

32. What time do these women go to work in the morning?—Well, I am not in a position to answer that question since I dropped the management, but I know it is strictly within the four corners of the Act. They cannot begin much before 7, as the rooms are not lighted up.

33. Are you aware that piecework, in England, is in every way discouraged?—No; but in the tweed factories of Scotland all are paid by the piece.

34. Do you know that that is called the "sweating system"?—It is perfectly true that, owing to great abuses, the Factory Act was a necessity; but I do not believe, with the exception of perhaps one, that any factory in England has the same accommodation in proportion to the number of hands employed that we have. I would recommend the Commission to go to the factory, and take evidence on the spot.

35. *The Chairman.*] That is our intention.

Mr. ALLAN HOLMES, Solicitor, examined.

36. *By the Chairman.*] I am solicitor for the Mosgiel Woollen Factory Company. I do not know that I can give any practical information with regard to the working of the Employment of Females Acts, 1873-74-75.

37. *Mr. Fulton.*] You know the legal aspect?—So far as the legal aspect is concerned, I have had to do with some informations brought under the Act, but they were not a true test of the real operation of the Act, because the informations laid were not drawn by competent persons. In one case the information failed through an omission to bring in one of the three existing Acts. Another failed in consequence of a technical point. That is the only practical experience I have had from the legal aspect. I do not know of any insufficiency of the Acts to effect the purposes for which they were intended, providing the informations are properly drawn.

38. You will remember the objection taken by the manager of the factory with reference to the wording of the 10th clause of the Act of 1875, which reads as follows:—"Notwithstanding anything contained in the said Act or this Act, it shall be lawful to employ any female in any woollen, cloth, flannel, or hose factory, in which machinery or appliances of any kind are worked by steam, water, or other motive power, at such time or times in any one day, not exceeding eight hours in the whole, as may be agreed upon between such female and her employer; provided that no female shall be so employed at any time before six of the clock in the morning, or after six of the clock in the evening." The manager stated that, upon his construction of the words "in any one day," he intended to work upon Christmas and other holidays?—I do not think that the section bears out the construction which the manager intended. Of course the information for working on holidays turned upon a different point—namely, two offences being included in one information. I understand that section to mean that any female in a woollen factory, where machinery is used as stated, may choose any eight hours for working, but that others, not so choosing, can only work any eight hours between 6 in the morning and 6 in the evening.

39. Do you think that clause requires amendment?—Of course, if it is misleading, it would be desirable to amend it. A solicitor would take the view I have given of it. There is another point on which there is a little obscurity, in fact, a little difficulty, as the Act stands at present, with reference to the loss of wages, which is made by the Act to apply indiscriminately both to day and piece work. The Act only intended it to apply to daywork, but would seem, as I read it, to apply to both.

40. There is a little difficulty also as to the word "female," is there not?—Yes; I think in two of the Acts it is defined in a different way. It would perhaps be more satisfactory to pass a consolidating measure.

41. Would it be too much to ask you to look through these Acts, and make any suggestions to the Commission that might occur to you?—No; but those are the principal points which I have referred to.

42. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] You will find that the first Act, with regard to the word "female," is repealed by the second?—Yes; but there is a definition in the second Act at variance with that of 1875.

THURSDAY, 9TH MAY, 1878.

Mr. DANIEL HAYNES examined.

43. *By the Chairman.*] I am a partner in the firm of Herbert, Haynes, and Co., drapers, clothiers, &c., in Princes Street. We have a millinery, dressmaking, and tailoring department, in the nature of a factory within the meaning of the Act. It is opened at 9 o'clock in the morning, and closed at 6 o'clock in the evening. As a matter of arrangement, the tailors prefer working from 8 till 5. There are not more than two persons in our employ under fourteen years of age. There are about twenty between the ages of eighteen and fourteen. We do not register the ages when they are employed; so long as they are good workers, we do not care whether they are young or old. The youngest are employed running up and down stairs with messages. Notices, under the Act, as to the hours of employment, are posted up in the establishment. The dinner hour is, by arrangement, from 12 to 1 with some, and from 1 to 2 for others—the tailors, 12 to 1; dressmakers, 1 to 2. Only a few of the young people and females remain in the workshop during the dinner hour. We prefer them all to go out. If they remain, it is voluntarily on their part. All in the establishment, except some of the tailors, are paid by the week. None of the females are allowed to take work home.

The youngest of the girls come for nothing for a time, to learn the business; afterwards, at first, they get from 6s. to 8s. a week, according to what they can do. These young people are employed eight hours a day, except Saturday. The skilled workwomen get from 26s. to 35s. per week. The average rate among the females would be about 20s. a week. A tailor, at weekly wages, gets £3 10s.; at piecework a tailor will earn £4 or £4 10s. The reason why the women get so much less than the men is because they cannot do the same work so well as the men, not being sufficiently skilled; but the tailoring is only a small part of our business. There are only five men and two women in the tailoring branch. They work together in the same room. In the dressmaking department there are thirty hands; millinery, twelve; and mantle-making, eight. We employ some outside, who take their work home. The men combine to obtain what they consider a fair rate of wages. The women do not combine for that purpose. I am not aware of their having any special arrangement with that object.

44. Supposing in your factory the employment of females was entirely free, would they be able to earn more wages?—They are quite free now.

45. In your business they are?—Yes; that is to say, we do not ask them to work more than a certain number of hours.

46. The Commission has been appointed, Mr. Haynes, for the purpose of inquiring how the Employment of Females Act works—whether it is efficacious or not for the purposes for which it was enacted. Have you any suggestions to offer?—As far as I am concerned, I am satisfied with the present Act; but if the clause which compels us to pay wages on holidays were omitted it would be an advantage. It is scarcely fair that we should have to pay for holidays. We never keep our hands after 6 o'clock.

47. *Mr. Strode.*] Do you object to any of the holidays—there are Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, and Easter Monday?—We do not object to these; but we have too many other holidays, for which we pay all our hands. There are at least sixteen. And there is another hardship arising out of the restrictions with regard to holidays, and that is the fact that, while we are compelled to close our establishment, the smaller places of business are kept open.

48. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] You are speaking of all the holidays—fast days, and others?—Yes.

49. *The Chairman.*] You are not compelled to pay for any not mentioned in or proclaimed under the Act?—It is the custom to pay for them. It would not be a bad thing to include all females employed in shops—saleswomen—and allow them to leave at 6 o'clock on Saturdays. I have heard it stated that it would be more convenient to adopt the same regulations for saleswomen and milliners.

50. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] What number of hands have you employed who come under the Act?—About seventy.

51. Has the number of hands decreased or increased since the Act came into operation?—Increased. It follows as a necessity that if you shorten the hours you must employ more labour.

Mr. JOHN GLENDINING examined.

52. *By the Chairman.*] I am a partner in the firm of Kirkpatrick, Glendining, and Co., drapers, clothiers, &c., Princes Street. We have a millinery, dressmaking, and tailoring department. The milliners and dressmakers commence work at 9 o'clock in the morning, and leave at 6 in the evening, Saturday excepted. The two machinists in the tailoring department also commence at 9 and leave at 6. We have four or five apprentice girls, about fourteen years of age. They work the same hours as the others. I cannot say whether we have any between fourteen and eighteen years of age, called "young persons" under the Act; but I suppose we have about twenty females between the ages of twenty and twenty-four. We do not take a note of the ages. Having only just removed into our new buildings, we have not yet posted up the notices required by the Act; but a copy of the Act was posted up in each workroom in the old buildings. The dinner hour with some is from 12 to 1, with the others 1 to 2 o'clock. The majority go out for their meals. Out of sixty that we employ, about six to ten of them bring their luncheon with them. None of the females work by the piece. None are allowed to take work home; it is all done on the premises. We do not encourage them to take work away. The lowest rate of wages for females in our establishment is that of the apprentice girls, 5s. per week. The average rate would be about 27s. 6d. for females—as high as 35s. and as low as 20s., according to their skill. The learners get 5s. per week for the first year, 10s. for the second, 15s. for the third, or more, if worth it. The tailors—the men—that are employed earn, on the average, £2 15s. per week, sometimes £3 10s.; it depends upon the quantity of work. The men can do the same work as the women in tailoring. The females in the tailoring branch are kept at the machines, button-holing, &c. They do not make coats, not being strong enough in the fingers. The tailors and tailoresses work in the same room. The tailors have a society to protect themselves and fix a scale of prices. The females have nothing of that sort. Had the tailors been a little more reasonable there would not have been so much imported clothing in the market.

53. As far as your business is concerned, supposing there was no law on the subject of working hours, and the employés were allowed to work as long as they pleased, would there be any advantage?—Not for us. If the law allowed it, they might have been working overtime. Before the Act they were working all hours, and got nothing extra for it.

54. Then it is a great benefit to the women?—Certainly.

54A. As to health?—They looked as well then as now.

55. You do not think them better off, then, in that respect?—Yes; they must be.

56. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Do you think the inspection insufficient?—Certainly not.

57. You know something about the English Factory Act?—Not much. I know that the inspection under it is very efficient, and that if anything goes wrong it is very strictly inquired into.

58. Have you sent the notice required by the Act to the Resident Magistrate?—No; I was not aware of that requirement.

59. *Hon. Mr. Reynolds.*] How does the Act affect your establishment—is it advantageous or

otherwise?—We are very well pleased with the Act, with one exception. It shortens the hours of labour: that we do not object to, as we suffered as much as them by long hours. What we object to is having to pay for the holidays; we have to pay for half a day on Saturday, and about fifteen or sixteen holidays in the year besides.

60. Not under the Act?—We never know what are under the Act. I should like to explain that we lose money directly by these workrooms, and of course we think it hard to have to pay for what we get no return from. We object to all the holidays: we object to have to pay for any day on which the girls cannot work.

61. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Cannot you take that into consideration in the weekly payments, and give so much less wages?—We have not come to that yet. It is capital running after labour at present.

62. Can you not get as many women as you wish?—No. At present we are advertising for additional hands, and could employ twenty more useful hands.

63. Is the number of hands on the increase or decrease since the Act came into operation?—I do not think that the operation of the Act has made any great difference, although the number employed since the Act came into force has increased very much.

64. If you increased the number of hours, say, to twelve hours a day, would you lessen the number of hands?—They would not, in all probability, be so faithful. All that we object to is the holidays.

65. Are your workrooms well ventilated?—Yes; we should be very glad to have a visit as to that.

66. *Mr. Strode.*] This is the clause with regard to forwarding the notice to the nearest Resident Magistrate (the 8th clause of the Act of 1875).—We shall attend to that; I was not aware of it.

Mr. JOSEPH FLETCHER ANDERSON examined.

67. *By the Chairman.*] I am manager of Messrs. Hallenstein Bros.' New Zealand Clothing Factory. The clothing we manufacture is all for men and boys. The factory is opened at half-past 8 a.m., and closed at half-past 5 p.m. We employ perhaps ten persons under the age of fourteen, and about 150 between fourteen and eighteen. We do not bind apprentices as such, but take them, and teach them the trade. We have 300 hands altogether. All the young persons live with their parents. As a rule, we do not take a note of their ages. When very young persons are employed, I ask them their age, but do not register it. I simply register their names. Notices of the number of hours under the Act are posted in every room. The dinner hour is from 1 to 2 o'clock throughout the factory. All the employés do not leave the factory during dinner-hour; some who live at a distance bring their meal with them. There are conveniences for making tea, and they take their dinner in messes of half a dozen each. The works are entirely suspended during the hour. They remain or not, at their option. It would be a hardship to turn them out, and we rather encourage those young persons who live at a distance to remain during the dinner-hour, as it keeps them from the street. About one-half are employed on piecework. It is chiefly those who are learning the trade that are paid by the week. As soon as they can do something they are paid by the piece. The ordinary pay of these learners is from 5s. to 10s. per week, for no regular period; it entirely depends upon themselves. They are paid in proportion to their skill, whether young or old. They are not put on piecework till they are competent, and then get the full rate of wages, no matter what age. The average earnings of skilled workwomen are 30s. a week; some get 25s. Those who act as overseers at the tables get 35s. Exceptional women, who act as teachers, get 40s. a week. The proportion of females employed is three-fifths of the whole number of hands. The men do the heavy part of the work, and their average earnings are £3, and are mostly paid by the week. Those employed on piecework average 10s. a day. We have never had any difficulty with the men combining together. We have not procured any of our hands from Great Britain. We have taught almost all here. All who act as teachers have got their trade with us.

68. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Do those who are under fourteen years of age work the same number of hours as the rest?—Yes.

69. You know there is a great number of places in town employing two, three, or five women and boys—do you think the present supervision sufficient and complete?—I do not.

70. Is your place properly ventilated?—The ventilation is as good as we can make it. I have always found this a difficult matter where people are sedentarily occupied. Having no exercise they feel the slightest cold, and object to the least draught. I have often broken the windows to let in the air, but they have closed them up again with rags. We have not tried the plan spoken off by the Chairman, of an open pipe or tube communicating with the open air and ascending from the floor about four feet along the wall of the workrooms. All our place is ventilated by windows.

71. You spoke about a number of young persons earning from 5s. to 10s. a week, and who are living with their parents; they are just assisting the household, I suppose?—Yes; but there are cases in which more than one—sisters—entirely support the household. I know of instances where the father does nothing. Several of the girls keep their parents, instead of their parents keeping them. A great many of the women support their husbands, and I generally find on inquiry that these husbands, if not drunkards, are unemployed, not being able to obtain work at their trade, and refusing any other kind of employment that they might obtain. There is a great deal more of that here than in Victoria and other places where I have been.

72. Do you think an Act limiting the number of hours is beneficial?—Yes; I consider eight hours quite long enough, particularly in a factory where there is a large number of hands.

73. *The Chairman.*] Have you any suggestions to make respecting the Act?—The only alteration I should desire is, that we should be allowed to work by double shifts in cases of emergency. At times our machinery is not adequate to the demand upon it. I do not say that we should work our hands more than eight hours; but it would be very beneficial to us if we could put on one set or shift, say, from 6 a.m. till 2 p.m., and from 2 p.m. till 10 p.m.

74. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Do you know that no women are permitted to work after 6 p.m. in England?—I understand they work three four-hour shifts there. I do not mean that we should work

eight hours without giving time for refreshment. If we were to work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., it would be an advantage.

75. *Hon. Mr. Reynolds.*] Do you find any hardship with regard to holidays?—Of course there is a hardship. Every holiday costs us £30. We give, however, two holidays more than the Act specifies—namely, the Queen's Birthday and the Jewish Day of Atonement.

76. Do you consider there is any hardship in the general working of the Act?—No; I am quite satisfied with the Act; it is not more liberal than I have always been to my people without it, during my experience of seventeen years in the trade. I do not think it is oppressive. The only thing, as I have said, is, that I should like to be able to work a double shift when there is a demand for it, especially seeing that if we were to make a further investment in machinery we have not space to accommodate it.

77. *The Chairman.*] To get a greater interest on the money invested you require to work the machinery to a greater extent?—Yes, we do not work the machinery sufficiently long to obtain a fair remuneration.

Mr. JOSEPH HAIG examined.

78. *By the Chairman.*] I am a partner in the firm of Haig, Bramwell, and Co., boot manufacturers. We employ eighteen females and from twelve to thirty boys; just now we have fourteen boys. We commence work at 8 a.m. and close at 6 p.m. There are not more than six boys and girls under fourteen years of age. We do not care about taking any under twelve. We have about twenty young persons altogether. We do not bind them as apprentices at first, but at fourteen or fifteen they are bound for four or five years under regular articles of indenture, the wages being 5s. a week at first, with an increase of 2s. 6d. every six months. We have a notice posted up in the factory in terms of the Act. During the hour for dinner the work is entirely suspended. A number of the hands who live at a distance remain in the factory to take their dinner. Fire is provided for them. The men are paid by the piece, the women by the day. The wages of the females are from 25s. to 40s. per week, according to skill. The men make much better wages—some as high as £5 17s., others as low as 35s. The women could not do the work of the men; they do the light work. We have had difficulties in consequence of the men combining together with regard to wages. They do not want to do away with piecework. There are such combinations in every large centre of population. The women do not combine for a similar object. I am not aware that any in our employ support their parents. The parents of all of the young persons we employ are, I believe, able enough to do that themselves. I consider 25s. enough to keep a woman in comfort.

79. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Our place is well ventilated, so far as windows are concerned. There was a complaint some time ago in connection with the urinal in the men's department. The grievance has been remedied. There are no married women in the establishment, excepting the wife of one of the partners in the firm.

80. *The Chairman.*] I am not aware that we have ever been visited by the Inspector under the Act.

81. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] I do not think the inspection sufficient. I hold that the Act is a good and useful measure. The only objection we have is to the number of holidays it has become the custom to pay the females for. We do not object to four holidays, but we do to sixteen. I was under the impression that we were bound to pay for all public holidays.

82. *Hon. Mr. Reynolds.*] We have never found the Act to go against us in our business. If we want to get through more work we must employ more labour. I hold that this Act ought to be strictly looked to.

FRIDAY, 10TH MAY, 1878.

Mr. JOHN CLARK examined.

83. *By the Chairman.*] I am a partner in the firm of Reynolds, Clark, and Co., boot manufacturers. We employ fifty-eight hands, all told. We open the factory at 8 o'clock in the morning, and close at half past 5 in the evening. Six o'clock is the general hour for closing. We keep none later than 6. We have perhaps six boys and one girl under the age of fourteen; fifteen or sixteen boys and two girls between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. We have three apprentices over fifteen, who were indentured before they were fourteen years of age. They are apprenticed for four years. The rates of wages are entered in the indentures. The first year they get 5s., the second 7s. 6d., the third 15s., and the fourth 22s. 6d. We do not give piecework to bound apprentices, and there is no work done by them outside. The females do not do piecework. We have not posted up the notice under the Act. The dinner hour is from 12 to 1. It is the only meal during working hours. None of the females remain in the factory for dinner. Those who remain take their chance as to facilities for meals. About half of the men remain. There is a fire, and they can warm anything they require. We employ thirty men. The girls above eighteen years of age, not apprenticed, earn from 18s. to 27s. per week. The average wages of the men, mostly piecework, are £3 a week. The females do not do the same kind of work as the males; they do the light work, not being fitted for the heavy work. It is not usual in the trade for the women to do the heavy work, nor would it be advisable they should. If it were attempted the men might combine against it. There is a shoemakers' society here. It is confined to Dunedin. The men here have never combined to carry any point against the manufacturer, except to keep up the wages. They have not particularly insisted on piecework, but all prefer it. The reason why the women are not employed on piecework is not because the manufacturer refuses to give it to them. The women have not the same opportunities as the men to combine together. If they were to combine they could carry their point as well as the men. All the women do their work by machines. They sit to it. They have never complained of it as being injurious. We have never attempted piecework by the women; Hallenstein's, I believe, have. The Inspector has visited our factory once, I think.

84. *Mr. Fulton.*] We have not posted the notice required by the Act, but we have registered in the Resident Magistrate's Court, Dunedin.

85. *The Chairman.*] Do you think the Act works favourably—have you any objection to it?—We are perfectly satisfied with it.

86. Do you find the holidays objectionable?—We do not object to the holidays mentioned in the Act; but we do to any holiday that may be proclaimed by the Mayor.

87. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Do you think the inspection sufficient and complete?—I cannot say that it is.

88. You do not object to the Act, but regard it favourably. Do you not think others may be breaking it?—Undoubtedly.

89. Are any of the females married?—None that we employ.

90. *The Chairman.*] Do you know if any of them support their parents?—No; nor is it necessary with any that we employ, so far as I am aware.

91. *Mr. Fulton.*] Are you acquainted with these Acts?—We have a copy.

92. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Do you think that eight hours a day is a sufficiently long time for any female to work?—Yes; we are satisfied with eight hours.

93. *Mr. Strode.*] Do you think they are capable of working any longer continuously?—I do not think so.

94. *The Chairman.*] It would be no advantage to the women?—No; nor to us either.

95. *Mr. Fulton.*] Are there any clauses you feel specially burdensome?—No; the only objection is the holidays.

Mr. HENRY HOGG examined.

96. *By the Chairman.*] I am Secretary of the Operative Tailors' Society. It is a society for males only.

97. Do you desire to explain any particular view to this Commission?—Yes; the object of my writing to the Commission offering to give evidence was to represent that to a great extent the Act is, for the purposes for which it is intended, a dead letter, for, notwithstanding that the Act limits the hours during which females may be employed, there are establishments in this city where girls work the given number of hours, and then roll up their work and take it home with them, working into all hours of the night. In other establishments they work long after the hours prescribed by the Act. If you go to these firms they will tell you that their employes are earning large wages, and show you their books, taking care to keep out of sight the fact that to earn that amount of wages they have to work twice or thrice the legitimate number of hours. I know of an instance of one person working till past midnight. There are factories in this city (Mr. Hermann's, of Stafford Street, is one) in which the girls have been kept working till 4 or 5 o'clock on Saturday afternoons, and keeping some one standing at the door, to watch. I came to know this in consequence of looking about for information to expose the abuses of the trade in the columns of the *Trades Journal*, to which I was asked to contribute, being Secretary to the Tailors' Society. There is another place, not in my own trade, the proprietors of which were fined for an infringement of the Act. I refer to the City Steam Laundry Company. This case came to the knowledge of the Inspector, I believe, in consequence of a letter which appeared in the *Evening Star*, stating that the women were working in the place in question from 8 in the morning till 8 at night. The parents of some of the young persons let them go to such places to earn money that they may spend it in drink, but well-to-do people do not allow it. The effect of this is very detrimental to the physical health of these girls as the future mothers of the population.

98. *Mr. Strode.*] In what direction do you suggest the Act should be amended?—One direction should be, to prevent work being taken home.

99. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] You mean, to prevent any person, firm, shop, or factory from giving work to any of their employes to take home after they have been working during the day?—Yes; I think there should be a penalty for allowing that to be done.

100. From what you say, I infer that the inspection is not sufficient or complete?—It is not. In fact, it is a dead letter; and the same may be said of the weights and measures' inspection.

101. Do you know anything about the conveniences for males and females on these premises?—I know of no complaint with regard to the accommodation for males. I do not know what accommodation is provided for the females, but there ought to be in all places proper lavatories, water-closets, &c.

102. *Mr. Fulton.*] Are you aware of any places where there is not proper provision in this respect?—No. I knew of one some time ago; but the accommodation has been completed since.

103. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Do you consider eight hours is a sufficient time for any woman to work in this country?—Certainly, quite sufficient, because they are continuously at work, and not supposed to be looking up from it, particularly in my own trade. They must keep constantly going.

104. *Mr. Fulton.*] With regard to holidays—there are four specified in the Act?—Yes, that is a sore point with the employers. If it were all piecework, they would not object, but I do not think there is more than one-third paid for holidays. I always tell them they regulate the wages to make up for it.

105. *Mr. Bradshaw.*]—Do you know of any married women being employed in these places?—Yes, a great many.

106. What becomes of their children?—In some cases they are left to take care of themselves; others are left in charge of their sisters. I know of one case in which the mother works at a factory, her husband in a brewery, the eldest son also out at work, while two or three young ones, the youngest five or six years, are left to take care of themselves. The husband is a most inveterate drunkard, and I have known him to turn his wife out into the street, after she has been working hard all day for the support of the family. There are a great many married women working in factories, whose children are left uncared for,

107. *Mr. Fulton.*] Is there any other direction in which you think the Act requires amendment?—I have not read the Act with the view of suggesting particular amendments.

108. *The Chairman.*] You think the law good if carried out in its integrity?—Yes; the only alteration I consider necessary is with regard to inspection, to enforce its provisions.

109. *Mr. Fulton.*]—Is yours a large Society?—Nearly one hundred men.

110. Would the Society take up the subject with the view of suggesting improvements?—I do not know; but, speaking generally, I have given expression to their views of the question.

111. *The Chairman.*] Is there not a jealousy as to females taking part in your trade?—Not that I am aware of. The males cannot overtake the whole of the work. Our trade is subdivided into three classes—1st. work done entirely by hand labour; 2nd. part hand labour and part by machine labour; 3rd. slops made in factories by as much machine labour as possible.

112. The kind of work done by men and women is well known?—Yes.

113. Would there be any jealousy if the women were to do what the men are accustomed to do?—I cannot say that there would not. It has not been attempted here. It has in some parts.

Mr. ANDREW THOMSON examined.

114. *By the Chairman.*] I am a partner in the firm of Thomson, Strang, and Co., drapers, clothiers, milliners, &c. Our premises are opened at a quarter to 8 a.m., and closed at 6 p.m. The women commence work at 9 a.m., and leave off at 6 p.m. The meal hour for the females is from 1 to 2. Our practice is for them to leave during the hour. We do not employ any under the age of fourteen. We employ about twenty-five females altogether, who come under the Act—no males. A notice, as required by the Act, is posted up in the workroom. They are not employed on piecework. We do not give them, nor allow them, to take work home. The earnings of the females vary from 10s. to 35s. per week, according to skill. The head dressmaker gets 80s. A fair average is 25s. for ordinary female employées, and 10s. and 15s. for learners and indifferent hands. There is no combination or society among the women.

115. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] Do you think the women could combine without outside women combining with them?—They have no need to do so; they are thoroughly independent as it is.

116. Have you any married women in your employment?—None.

117. How often has the Inspector under the Act visited your establishment?—I cannot say; not very often.

118. There are small places that compete with you—are they properly inspected, do you know?—I do not think so; they ought to be looked after.

119. Then you are of opinion, speaking generally, that the inspection is not complete?—Yes; but there is one thing I should like to say—namely, that I do not see why I should be held responsible if these women, against my wishes, choose to remain after 2 on Saturday. It has happened that the headwoman, in order to finish some work urgently required, has detained them after hours on Saturday on one or two occasions, but entirely against my orders.

120. *Mr. Fulton.*] The employer is responsible. You have power to compel them to leave. Does the question of holidays affect you—do you object to them?—Yes. We consider it unfair that we should be compelled to pay for what we do not get, especially when we get no adequate return from their employment; we cannot make it pay.

121. Have you registered a list in the Resident Magistrate's Court, as required by the Act?—Yes; it was done some time ago.

Mr. GEORGE FINDLAY examined.

122. *By the Chairman.*] I am a member of the firm of Findlay and Co, timber merchants, &c. Our factory is opened at 8 a.m., and closed at 5 p.m. We employ about 200 hands altogether. There are twelve lads, the youngest of whom is about sixteen years of age. We do not employ any women. Some of the boys are apprenticed, but not by regular indenture. They usually work down stairs for about a year, then go up stairs, excepting such as prefer to be saw-millers, who remain in the body of the mill. We have never had in our employ any lads under fifteen. We pay them—for the first year, 10s. per week; for the second, from 15s. to 20s.; then advance them 10s. per week per annum, till it reaches £3 a week. In four years they will be earning from 9s. to 14s. per day. The boys are employed during the time the factory is opened, and sometimes a little overtime. If a large order necessitates working overtime, the boys work as well as the men. Both men and boys are paid for overtime, at the rate of time and a half. We sometimes work a night shift, on which boys are employed. I was not aware that it is an infringement of the Act to employ boys under eighteen thus. I did not know the Act applied to us. We have no notice posted up except as to time of starting and leaving off. The boys are not aware that we could not employ them on overtime. The dinner hour is from 12 to 1. Some of the lads who live at a distance bring their dinner with them, and remain on the premises during the meal hour. There are conveniences for heating anything, or making tea. All the hands knock off at 12 o'clock on Saturday. At some places they do not leave off till 2 p.m. All the hands are on daywork. We tried piecework once with about two-thirds of the hands, but found it did not suit. They did not object to piecework—they were making higher wages at it. They have no means of earning money out of the regular hours. We do not give out work. A good many of the lads attend evening classes for instruction. Some good hands get £4 10s. a week at the joinery. Twelve is the average number of boys under eighteen employed at our mill.

TUESDAY, 14TH MAY, 1878.

Mr. THOMAS G. PASCOE examined.

123. *By the Chairman.*] I am a manufacturing clothier. The factory is in High Street. I employ about sixty hands in all, principally young women; six men. I do not think I have any under fourteen.

They are not apprenticed, as a rule. I have only two or three apprentices. Some as old as sixteen or seventeen are taken for a limited time. Perhaps nearly half are under eighteen; but I have no idea as to how many are between seventeen and twenty. I should calculate by appearance over one-half. I do not take their ages. I object to take very young ones, and will not, as a rule, take any under fourteen. They are never taken in Melbourne under fourteen. I have no notice under the Act posted up in the factory, not having been aware of the Act until lately. The rules I have had here have been precisely those carried out in Melbourne. These rules are posted up in the factory. We commence at half-past 8 in the morning, and close at half-past 5 in the evening. The time allowed for dinner is from 1 to half-past 1, and close on Saturdays at 2 p.m. Some take their meal in the factory, others go home. In exceptional cases an hour is allowed for dinner. It is sought as far as possible to get forty-eight hours of labour a week. Fully seven-eighths of the hands are employed by the piece. Work is taken home by them. Those who bring their dinner with them can warm it at the stove, or boil water for making tea. The wages which the young women earn vary considerably. Some get from 10s. to 15s. a week, others 20s. to 30s. The machinists, who are paid by the day, get from 15s. to 27s. 6d. There are only five machinists. We also employ five men and two lads. In reply to the question, whether any of the females support their parents, I think I have only one girl, about eighteen or nineteen who does so, with the assistance of two or three sisters similarly employed in other places. There is a widow, with her daughter, working in the place, and another mother with two or three daughters working with her. In all cases the parents are working themselves. With regard to holidays: we do not, as a rule, give any, for this reason: that fully seven-eighths are pieceworkers, and I always think that if we give a holiday to dayworkers it is only fair to give it to pieceworkers also. As the machinists are paid by the day, the others object, because if they do not work they do not get paid, and you could not determine at what ratio they should be paid, being pieceworkers.

124. *Mr. Strode.*] The question is, whether they work in your factory, whether piece-work or day-work, on any of the days mentioned in the Act?—I am not yet acquainted with the New Zealand Factory Act. I only commenced here in September last. On referring to the Act, we do not work on any of the days mentioned.

124A. Are any besides the machinists employed upon daywork?—Only two apprentices (two young girls). Their engagement is for eighteen months. They are paid 2s. 6d. per week for the first six months, 5s. for the second, and 7s. 6d. for the third. At that rate they are bound. At the termination of the eighteen months they become pieceworkers. Prior to becoming pieceworkers they are paid for every day in the year.

Inspector FREDERICK MALLARD examined.

125. *By the Chairman.*] I am an Inspector of Police, stationed at Dunedin. I have the inspection of factories under the Employment of Females Act, and was nominated for that purpose by the Resident Magistrate.

126. Would you be good enough to state, for the information of the Commissioners, your experience with regard to the working of the Act?—My experience is confined to the City of Dunedin, and as far as that goes, I think the employers of female labour seem desirous to comply with the requirements of the Act, though sometimes they complain that the headwomen will have certain work in hand completed, and the girls are sometimes kept longer than would otherwise be the case. Such has been the excuse on two or three occasions by some of the proprietors of establishments I have visited.

127. Have you often been called upon to lay an information for infringement of the Act?—I have laid four informations since I had the inspection. The first was laid on the 14th May, 1875. It included four charges against Messrs. Kirkpatrick, Glendining, and Co.—the first was dismissed, the second withdrawn, the third withdrawn without prejudice, and the fourth was withdrawn. As it was the first case under the Act, that course was deemed advisable. The second information was against Messrs. Thomson, Strang, and Co., on the 3rd November, 1876. They were fined 1s., and costs. The third was against Messrs. Brown, Ewing, and Co., on the 29th October, 1877. They also were fined 1s., and costs. The last information was against the proprietors of the City Steam Laundry, who were also fined 1s., and costs.

128. Do you know what number of persons are employed in the Steam Laundry?—There were from fifteen to twenty, I think, when I inspected the premises on the Saturday afternoon.

129. *Mr. Strode.*] Were all the informations for working on the Saturday afternoon?—Yes.

130. You have not laid any information for working beyond the specified hours on ordinary days?—No. I have visited several places after 6 o'clock, and, although I have never found any one working, I have good reason to believe that the Act has been infringed in this respect.

131. *The Chairman.*] When did you last inspect Messrs. Hallenstein Bros.' New Zealand Clothing Factory?—I think about six months ago, but I cannot say for certain. I have always found them willing to comply with the Act, and generally they have complied with it. The Act compels me, when I find a breach, to report to the Resident Magistrate. I recommend whether an information should be laid or not, and in all cases he acquiesces.

132. Have you no discretion?—I have used none. When I have found a fair breach of the Act I have reported to the Resident Magistrate, and he has said, "Lay an information;" and it was done.

133. The offences, then, against the Act for which informations have been laid have been confined to the employment of females on over-hours on Saturdays?—Yes; for, although I am thoroughly satisfied that the Act is infringed with regard to the ages of children, it is thought that I cannot prove the ages, and that it would be useless to lay an information.

134. You mean those between ten and fourteen for the half-day?—Yes, that I believe is generally broken. Some time ago I visited Herman's factory, in Stafford Street, and found on inquiry that some of those under fourteen were working whole time. The difficulty of proving the age is one thing that has occurred to me in the working of the Act.

135. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] You have no way of determining the age of a child?—No.

136. Do you know how that is determined in England?—Yes; I have read in the English “Justice of the Peace” that it is determined by a doctor’s certificate.

137. Are you aware that in England no child is taken on unless a certificate is given as to age and physical state of health?—Yes; but there is no provision of that kind in the Act here. It did occur to me to bring a case into Court; but, upon consideration, it was deemed inadvisable to do so, as, in absence of proof of age, I was sure to be beaten, and the matter becoming public would have done more harm than good.

138. The penalty inflicted for any breach of the Act so far has only been 1s. Do you know what the maximum penalty is?—Yes, £50.

139. Do you not think that, if the employers were not more stringently dealt with than they have been, it would pay them to infringe the Act with regard to overtime?—Yes, if only fined 1s. every time they were brought up.

140. Are you aware that the proprietors of the Steam Laundry keep girls beyond the specified hours, and have done so since they were fined?—I have been told so.

141. Can you perform the duties of Inspector of Factories, in addition to your other duties, with satisfaction to yourself?—I cannot. I do so to the best of my ability, but my duties are so multifarious that I cannot give that amount of attention to the Act I should like.

142. Have you any knowledge of how the Acts are administered at home in the matter of inspection?—There is an Inspector appointed solely to supervise the Act, who has power to appoint sub-inspectors. It is a separate department altogether. The Inspector has very great powers—can call in police or any one to assist him in any place during day or night.

143. Do you also know the practice under the English Acts as to meals?—Yes; the hours for meals are simultaneous, and the machinery is stopped. The Inspector could not be deceived by the employer shifting the employes from one place to another.

144. Have you heard of any case here of the employes being shifted from one place to another after hours to avoid detection?—Well, I remember seeing on one occasion, when visiting an establishment, the young women running away from one place to another.

145. Is the ventilation perfect and complete?—In some places I should say it was, in others not; but there is no specific provision in the Act as to that: simply that every workroom shall be properly ventilated.

146. With regard to sanitary arrangements, waterclosets, &c.?—In some instances they are very good, in others not so good.

147. *The Chairman.*] Do you consider the duties under the Act part of your duties as Inspector of Police?—I am not quite sure as to that.

148. You make no report?—None.

149. Do you keep any memorandum of your visits?—Not unless the Act is broken.

150. You could not say how often you visit any establishment?—It depends upon my memory. I only visit when I have time. I may state that I always make my police duties primary and this inspection secondary.

151. The Act only requires you to report in the event of a breach of it?—Yes.

152. *Mr. Fulton.*] Would it take the whole time of an Inspector here?—I do not think it would. It would not take up much time. Of course I am speaking of the City of Dunedin. The inspection, to be properly organized, would require one Inspector for the whole colony.

153. *The Chairman.*] Could it be carried out if put entirely in the hands of the police?—There are many reasons why it is objectionable for the police to have it; for instance, the very name of a policeman going into a room where there are twenty or thirty young women at work; they do not like it, and the employers do not care about a policeman going over their premises.

154. How would you get over that difficulty?—By having some one appointed altogether independent of the police.

155. *Mr. Fulton.*] Look at the 8th clause of the Act, 1875, and say whether or not, in your opinion, it is carried out?—It is not. It is carried out partially with regard to notices posted in the factories and workrooms: that is done in almost every instance, and in a good many the notices are sent—I have some nineteen or twenty—but whether they are sent to the Resident Magistrate or not I cannot say.

156. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] A copy of the notice sent to the Resident Magistrate is supposed to be sent to you?—Yes.

157. *The Chairman.*] How is it so many have posted up the notices?—I have called their attention to the necessity of doing so.

158. *Mr. Fulton.*] The Clerk of the Resident Magistrate’s Court says that only two notices have been sent to that Court during the last eighteen months?—The employers complain of difficulty in procuring copies of the Act.

159. *The Chairman.*] Have you found the Act oppressive in any way?—Only with regard to the Steam Laundry. It is entirely a question of paying. If the Act were enforced the proprietors could not make it pay. Mr. Denniston, who defended the case brought against the Steam Laundry, pleaded that.

160. You do not think there are any alterations required in the Act?—If the Act is to be carried out in its entirety, an Inspector should be appointed for the whole colony, and persons whose time is not wholly occupied in the different centres should be appointed Sub-Inspectors, who would report to the Inspector. And there is the question as to certificate of age. If that part of the Act with reference to children and young persons is to be enforced we must have some proof of age, otherwise we should be put out of Court at once.

161. *Mr. Fulton.*] Have you heard any complaint by employers or employes as to holidays?—No; the employers seem very well satisfied to comply with the provisions of the Act in that respect. The proprietors have complained that they should be liable for a breach of the Act in consequence of the forewomen insisting, without the knowledge or consent of the proprietor, on having a certain amount of work done or completed before allowing the girls to leave.

162. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] When a breach of the Act has been made they speak in that way?—Exactly.

163. *Mr. Fulton.*] Do any of the workwomen complain to you as to departures from the Act?—Yes; in the shop, and by anonymous letters, they have complained of having been working overtime; and if I get a hint in that way I call at the establishment, ask to be shown the workroom, walk round, and see what is going on.

164. *The Chairman.*] You do not ask for any complaints?—No.

165. *Mr. Fulton.*] How many factories or places come within these Acts in Dunedin?—It is almost impossible to say, because any one employing one or two persons would come within them. There must be upwards of fifty. You see, one dressmaker employing only one woman would come under the Acts as much as the one who employs fifty.

166. In the cases referred to by you as having been brought before the Court, and in which only a fine of 1s. and costs was inflicted, were there any special reasons given by the Magistrate why the fine should be so small?—I do not remember anything special. I did not press for a heavy penalty, but merely asked that the law should be enforced, with a view that it should be understood and become publicly known that such was the law.

167. Then I understand it was as much because you did not press for a penalty as anything else that the amount was so small?—Yes; I did not ask for a penalty.

168. *Mr. Strode.*] It was the first offence in every case?—Yes.

168A. And with the view of giving publicity to the Act?—Yes.

169. *The Chairman.*] Is there any salary attached to your appointment under the Act?—None.

Mr. NATHANIEL DAVID HERMAN examined.

170. *By the Chairman.*] I am a clothing manufacturer, of the firm of Herman and Co. Work is commenced in the factory at half-past 8 a.m. and ended at half-past 5 p.m., in summer, and 5, in winter. I have at present between thirty and forty hands employed. I am not aware whether any are under fourteen years of age. I do not question their ages. The majority are under eighteen, the others are married women. Some are engaged on piecework, but the greater number are paid by the week. The apprentices are weekly hands; they are bound for eighteen months, and paid according to abilities. Sewing apprentices get 2s. 6d. for the first six months, 5s. for the second, and 7s. 6d. for the third. Machinist apprentices get 5s. for the first six months, 10s. for the second, and 15s. for the third. I have five machinists. All the others are either working for the machine, making up, or finishing off. The machinists are all girls, and work continuously at the machines—sewing-machines. One hour, from 12 to 1, is allowed for dinner in the summer, and half an hour in winter, on account of leaving off at 5 o'clock. Nearly all remain on the premises to take their dinner, as they live at a considerable distance. They can warm anything they require at the stove. There are means for heating the room if required. The pieceworkers take work home, but not the apprentices. The pieceworkers are at liberty to take home whatever work they think proper. They are always required to work the ordinary time in the factory. The pieceworkers earn on an average 30s. to 50s. a week. Men are employed damping and pressing, also a cutter. The cutter gets £7 a week. The women never do that work; they are not strong enough to use the shears or iron, and I never allow them to do it. I think in some houses in Dunedin women do use the iron, but it is not proper work for them. The men I employ have not combined together. I do not take in unionists. There is no tailor in the establishment, that I am aware of, who belongs to the Society. If I took them on, the Society would not let them stop with me, and would use all sorts of inducements to take them away. It is simply because of the machine work. Mine is entirely a tailoring establishment. I keep all the holidays mentioned in the Act, and make no deduction in the wages of apprentices and machinists. The Act is oppressive in one thing—namely, when we are compelled by the limitation of the hours to leave off work when we are pushed to complete an order on a Saturday, when sometimes a quarter of an hour's extra work would enable the order to be completed. Although that is the case with every factory, it is especially hard in my case, from the fact that I manufacture for nearly all the retail shops in town, the small orders from which are often particularly pressing on Saturdays. I have been regarding as coming under the Act all public holidays declared by the Mayor or otherwise. I have complied with the Act as regards posting up the notice required, but have not registered at the Resident Magistrate's Court, not being aware of the necessity for so doing.

Miss ——— (a.) examined, stated:—

171. I am twenty years of age. I am employed at present in ———'s establishment, and have been there about four months. I commence work at 9 o'clock in the morning, and leave at 6 in the evening. We are allowed one hour for dinner, from 1 till 2. Most of the girls get their dinner on the premises, as they come from a distance. We have everything very convenient for so doing. I am employed at dressmaking, and work principally with the machine. I get higher wages than those who do not work with the machine. My wages are 25s. a week. I am not working constantly at the machine, there not being sufficient to keep two machinists going. The second machinist is kept going. There is no piecework. I never take work home, or ask for piecework to take home. We are not allowed to take work out of the room. The average earnings of the young women are from 25s. to 30s. a week; the others, younger ones, get from 7s. to 20s. There are two apprentices. There are thirteen dressmakers, and as many mantle-makers. In our room I do not think there are any under fourteen. Some of the young women sit at their work the whole time. Some of them think it unhealthy. I do not find it so. As regards the room, it is the best I have been in. The young persons know of the regulations under the Act: we all know about them. We get paid for four holidays, and do not expect to be paid for more than four. I am living with my parents. I give them a portion of my wages. My father earns his living. I have a brother older and a sister younger than myself. Both are in employment. We have a machine in the house, which is only used for ourselves. I have no particular statement to make to the Commissioners. I should not like the

Act repealed, or the hours lengthened, or the Saturday half-holiday done away with. I was speaking to the other young women in our department about the Saturday half-holiday, and they say if the half-holiday were taken from us it would have the effect of keeping us at home on Sunday, depriving us of any exercise on Saturday, or of the opportunity of doing a little work for ourselves at home. Then, some of the girls come from Mosgiel and other places, and they would have to wait for the midnight train. I was in the employment of ————. I was employed at this work before the Act was brought in, but have not had much experience before that time. I am quite satisfied with the Act, and with the way it is carried out by my present employers. We used to be kept by my former employers sometimes after hours on Saturdays, but not by our own free will. If we had refused we should have lost our places. It was when there was certain work to be finished, and the forewoman insisted on our staying, although the proprietor told us to go. It is the forewoman who engages or discharges the hands. We did not get paid for that overtime. The forewoman superintends the work. I know there is an Inspector under the Act. He only came once to the place I was formerly in. It was after that the proprietors were fined; but even subsequent to that we were kept a little late, without pay. We used to think the inspection insufficient.

Miss ———— (b.) examined, stated:—

172. I am an employée in the establishment of ————. I am over sixteen years of age. I have been eleven years in the establishment. We commence work at 9 a.m. and end at 6 p.m., Saturdays excepted, when we leave off at 2 p.m. We have an hour for dinner, from 1 to 2. The work is all dress-making in our room, in which there are twenty-four hands, and as many in the mantle room; the youngest is about fourteen. There are four apprentices, who commenced under fourteen. All get an hour for dinner. A great many stay on the premises during the hour, as they live so far away. There are no conveniences for dinner. There are only two machinists; all the rest are employed sewing. With the exception of one or two, the machinists get rather more wages than others. All are paid by the week. There is a female superintendent and a second hand in each department. The best ordinary hands get from 20s. to 26s.; one or two, 30s. I get 40s. The employment is perfectly healthy. Our present room is very comfortable. The old one was not so good. We get paid for the four holidays mentioned in the Act; the others are deducted from our wages. If we stay away half a day it is deducted. They all understand that. There was a notice posted up in the old room, but it has not yet been posted up in the new one. All, however, understand what the provisions of the Act are, and cannot be imposed on. We have never had any difficulty in regard to the Act. Before it was brought in we suffered enough; but are now independent, and feel thankful every day of our lives for the Act. We think the Act protects us fairly. We have not the advantages that men have of getting into unions. Before the Act we never got away before 12 o'clock on Saturday night. The Saturday work in our room is very well managed. The superintendent arranges the work and engages the hands. If she told us to stay we should have to do so. Although before the Act we were working till all hours, both on Saturdays and other days as well, the wages were just the same as now—nothing was allowed for overtime. Many used to be sick and in bad health in consequence of being overworked; and some had to go to other work, not being able to stand it. The Saturday half-holiday has been a great advantage physically. We have about the same number of hands as before. We get just as much work done, perhaps more, than in the ten hours previously; the girls work constantly during the eight hours, whereas before they would perhaps idle the time away, knowing that they had to remain so long a time, and would say, "Oh! we might just as well take our time over it." We are perfectly satisfied with the law as it is, and are very thankful for it.

Miss ———— (c.) examined, stated:—

173. I am a dressmaker at ————. We commence work at 9 a.m., and leave off at 6 p.m. We have an hour for dinner. About twenty-four hands are working in our room. They are all, I think, over fourteen years of age. There are three apprentices. The apprenticeship lasts a twelve-month, when that is up they get higher wages. I am always sewing—hand-sewing. We have not to sit all day. There are two machines in our room. The employment is healthy. The wages of some are from 20s. to 26s. There is no piecework, and none of them get piecework to take home. We have a machine at home, but do not work it for pay—merely for our own use. I was working before the passing of the Act nearly a year. The hours then were from 9 in the morning till sometimes 10 at night, often till 9, without extra pay. We were compelled to work; if we had refused, I suppose we should have had to leave. If such had been the case, there would have been no difficulty in filling our places. I am in favour of the half-holiday. I am in favour of the Act altogether, just as it is. The young persons quite understand how many hours they are to work, although no notice is posted up in the workroom. If the work is badly done, we just get a scolding—the wages are not stopped. The factory is very well managed. I have no complaints to make.

Miss ———— (d.) examined, stated:—

174. I am working for ————, and have been in the establishment for two years. There is a good deal of machine-work done. Two machinists are employed. The workroom is very comfortable. The women generally do certainly consider the Act a very great protection. I was only working for a short time before it came into operation. I should not like to see the holidays done away with. We feel the benefit of the Act every day. The employer is very good in cases of sickness. If otherwise we miss a day it is deducted from our wages. We are not kept beyond the hours now; we were some time ago. We never received a penny for overtime.

Miss ———— (e.) examined, stated:—

175. I am employed at hand-sewing in the establishment of ————. About twenty-five hands are working in the same room. None are under fourteen, I think. I am quite satisfied with the pro-

tection which the Act affords us. I was working in the same establishment before the Act was passed. Six in the evening was the usual hour for leaving off, but sometimes we were kept till 9 o'clock. We were paid extra for overtime. There are several apprentices, all above the age of fourteen, I believe. There is no difference in the wages now, although we get the half-holiday. I have no suggestion to make with regard to any alteration of the Act. I am quite satisfied with it, and wish it to remain as it is.

Miss ——— (f), examined, stated:—

176. I do not wish to make any suggestion to amend the Act in any way. I am quite satisfied with it, and do not want it repealed, or the half-holiday done away with. I am employed at———. There are about twenty workwomen in the room I am working in. I should think there are fifty females in the establishment altogether. The youngest are about or over fourteen years of age. We have the usual time—an hour—allowed for dinner. About half remain and half go home during the dinner hour. Those who stay, if they like can have a fire to warm anything. They do not complain of having no comforts in that respect. We are mostly machinists. Several get 30s. a week. I get 35s. I am a machinist. I do not consider the work injurious to health; mine is a very heavy machine—Whitemore's wax-thread machine. If I did not like to work it I could leave it. I could not work it any more than eight hours. They would not get any more work out of me, nor I any more pay, if the hours were longer. I am quite satisfied with the protection afforded by the Act, and every girl I know says how thankful she is for it, especially for the half-holiday. That is the greatest boon we have had. It is faithfully carried out, and there has been no attempt to interfere as far as we are concerned. There is no notice posted up in conformity with the Act, but we all know its provisions.

Miss ——— (g), examined, stated:—

177. I am employed at the establishment of ———. All in our room are quite satisfied with the working of the Act. We do not want any alteration of it. That is what we are afraid of. I have been nine years in the same establishment. We get paid for some of the holidays—those mentioned in the Act. We do not do piecework. I am a cutter. I do not work with the machine. Under the old system we used to work till 9 o'clock at night sometimes, but we got paid for it. We prefer the present hours with less pay. The Act protects us with regard to hours. We are allowed an hour for dinner. A good many of the young persons stay on the premises during the hour. We do not get hot water for making tea; the proprietor has an objection to it.

Mr. CLEMENT WHITE, examined, stated:—

178. I am connected with a newspaper. I have taken an interest in the working of the Act. Before it came into operation I used to see the workshops open till 12 o'clock and after at night, and have called attention to it by letters in the papers. I am related to some of those who are employed, and frequently I have had to go down to the workshops at 12 and 1 o'clock at night in the olden time to bring them home. They were injuriously affected in health though overwork. The Act is working very well, I think. It has been a great boon for the workwomen, especially the half-holiday, which is a great relief to them. I have known Miss ——— to come home at 12 o'clock on Saturday night so fatigued as to be quite unable to get up on Sunday morning. It is quite different now, and the difference is ascribed entirely to the restricted hours. The females could never do anything by themselves for protection without the Act. Nearly all of these persons support, or help to support, their parents, who belong to the working classes. I have never known of any case of young girls going home at 12 o'clock at night being insulted, as their friends or relatives have come down for them generally. If the working hours were made so many a week, instead of so many each day, the employers would be apt to take the advantage—they would manipulate them; they would be the gainers. It would be prejudicial.

WEDNESDAY, 15TH MAY, 1878.

At the Establishment of Messrs. Hallenstein Bros.

CATHERINE KIRK examined, stated:—

179. I am about twelve years of age. I have been over six months here, and am learning to make vests. I am an apprentice. I get 5s. a week at present. I work from half-past 8 to half-past 5. From 1 to 2 is the dinner hour. I do not know when I shall get higher wages. There is no arrangement, but I expect to get 7s. 6d. soon. I leave off work at 2 o'clock on Saturday. I do not go home to dinner; I bring it with me, and get the use of the boiler for making tea. I have two sisters at school, and one brother working at Findlay's sawmill. Father works at Otepopo.

MARIANNE JANE WILSON examined, stated:—

180. I was fourteen years of age last November. I am working at vests. My wages are 2s. 6d. a week. I have been here about six weeks. I am an apprentice. I do not know when I shall get an increase; I have not asked. I am not bound, and there is no arrangement. I commence work at half-past 8, and leave off at half-past 5; on Saturdays from half-past 8 till 2. I have four brothers and one sister at home younger than myself. My father is a carpenter. My mother is at home. I like this work, and am very comfortable here.

SARAH PALMER examined, stated:—

181. I came here in July last. I am employed at coat-making—hand needlework. The hours are from half-past 8 to half-past 5, with meal hour from 1 to 2 o'clock. I remain during the dinner hour. The amount of wages depends upon how long here, and what sort of hands. I am over eighteen years of age. The highest wages of the hands in my room are 10s. to 12s. 6d., I think; I cannot say what

are the lowest. I am speaking of table hands—not machinists. I have three brothers and a sister; one brother is working at Mr. Hudson's, the rest go to school. I have parents—father and mother. Father works at Hudson's; he is an engine-driver. Mother attends to domestic duties at home. My brother comes home at night.

MARGARET GOW, examined, stated:—

182. I am over eighteen years of age. I sew at a table, making coats. I am not a machinist. I earn 10s. a week. The hours are from half-past 8 a.m. to half-past 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner. I sometimes go home, but oftener remain during the hour. I have three brothers and two sisters. One brother is at work—he is a plasterer; the other two go to school. One sister is working here at a table. We take our meals beside the table at which we work. We do not work during the dinner hour, excepting for ourselves. The machines are not working at the time. We find it very cold in our room in the winter. We get away at 2 o'clock on Saturday. I know the contents of the Act. We are perfectly satisfied with it, and should not like to lose the half-holiday.

ELIZABETH AMY, examined, stated:—

183. I am eighteen years of age. I am working at a sewing-machine, making trousers. I am on piecework, and earn from 24s. to 26s. a week. I work from half past 8 till half-past 5. The meal hour is from 1 to 2. I have my dinner on the premises. I have been here about five months. I have worked at the machine at Home, but not in any other establishment here. I do not take any work home. I do not know whether any of the hands take work home. We have the half-holiday on Saturday, when we leave off work at 2 o'clock. We appreciate the holiday, and would not like it taken away. Although I am working in the room above the furnace, I do not find it too close or warm; it is sometimes too cold. In summer time the windows are kept open. I do not think the room is unhealthy. I have not had a bad cold since I have been here. I am satisfied with the Act, and should like it to remain as it is.

At the Establishment of R. Saunders and Co.

ANNIE BOWER, examined, stated:—

184. I am over fifteen years of age. I have worked at a machine for a year, and am paid by the week. I get a rise of wages every six months. At first I got 5s.; I am now getting 12s. I commence work at 9 in the morning, an leave off at 6 in the evening. The dinner-hour is from 1 to 2. On Saturday we leave at 2 o'clock. I have a brother and a sister. My brother is twenty-one years of age, and works as a tinsmith. My sister is at school. My father is not living. My mother is at home, and is supported by my brother and myself. I know the provisions of the Act as to hours, and do not want any alteration. I go home to dinner. Some who work at the machine get 25s.

SARAH HARRIS, examined, stated:—

185. I am not yet eighteen years of age. I begin work at 9 o'clock, and leave off at 6. I get one hour for dinner, from 1 to 2, and go home for it. I get 17s. 6d. a week, at mantle-making. I have been at this work about four years. I have been at this place since it was opened—a few months ago. I was not working before the Act came into operation. I have parents. Father is a gardener; mother attends to domestic duties at home. I have one sister married; another, fourteen, at home; two brothers and a sister at school; and a younger brother, three years old, at home. I know the provisions of the Act, and do not wish them altered. Some of the girls live at a considerable distance—three and four miles from town.

At the Establishment of Messrs Brown, Ewing, and Co.

Mrs. SCOTT, examined, stated:—

186. I am over eighteen years of age. I work at a sewing-machine. I have been here since I began to work—between seven and eight years. I get 30s. a week at daywork. I begin work at 9 in the morning, and leave off at 6 in the evening. The dinner hour is from 1 to 2. I go home to dinner. I know the provisions of the Act, and am very well pleased with it. I do not wish it altered. As a rule, we leave at 2 on Saturday. Sometimes it is a little later than that, but very seldom, and only in order to finish some work in hand urgently required. I am in the mantle room. I should not like the half-holiday done away with. I worked before the Act came into operation. We began then at 9 in the morning, but did not get away till 8, and very often 10, o'clock at night on the ordinary days, and 12 on Saturday night. The pay was no better then than it is now. I am a widow, and have a child between eight and nine years old. He attends school. My mother takes charge of him while I am at work. There is no piecework done here that I am aware of. We never take work home. There was a notice posted up in the workroom, but the painters have painted it out. I have no desire that the Act should be amended in any way. We get the holidays mentioned in the Act, and are paid for them. I think all the girls are of the same opinion with regard to the Act.

ROSINA JEWITT, examined, stated:—

187. I am going on for fourteen years of age. I am in the mantle-room, sewing. I have been here about four months. I get no wages at present. I am apprenticed as a learner for just a year. I do not know what I shall get when the year is up. I commence work at 9 in the morning, and leave off at 6 in the evening. The dinner hour is from 1 to 2. I generally bring my dinner with me, and remain on the premises during the hour. Sometimes I go home. We have conveniences for making tea. Nearly all take their meal in the workroom. My father is a shoemaker; my mother is at home. I have two brothers, one two years old, the other ten, who goes to school. I have three sisters, two of whom are machinists, one working here, the other at home. We get the half-holiday on Saturday, and we should not like to have it taken from us.

CHRISTIANA MORRISON, examined, stated :—

188. I am over eighteen years of age. I am a mantle-maker ; sewing. I get 23s. a week. I have been over five years at this work. The hours are from 9 to 6, with an hour for lunch. I stay in the place during the hour. There are conveniences for making tea. We get the half-holiday on Saturday. Sometimes we have been kept half an hour after 2 o'clock on Saturday. I have never seen the Inspector visit our workroom. I work by the day. There is no work taken home. I do not wish the Act altered. I came here as an apprentice. There are more girls working here now than when I first came. I do not think the inspection is sufficient. Once or twice lately, to get an order finished, we have come at 7 and 8 o'clock in the morning ; but Mr. Ewing objected to it. It was the forewoman who asked us to come. We got paid once or twice for extra time. My father is a gardener, and mother is at home. I have two brothers, one a traveller, the other a clerk. We are all staying in the same house. I have six sisters, three of whom are married ; two of the others older, and one younger, than myself. I give a portion of my earnings to my parents. I have no suggestions to make with regard to any alteration of the Act. I should not like the holidays done away with.

At the Mosgiel Woollen Factory.

THURSDAY, 16TH MAY, 1878.

JOHN DRYDEN, examined, stated :

189. *By the Chairman.*] I am the manager of the factory. There are different hours for commencing work in the factory. The factory is opened at 6 o'clock in the morning. The females commence work at 8 o'clock just now, and leave off at half-past 5 in the evening. Some of the machines are kept running till 9 o'clock at night. Girls attend to these through the day, and when they leave off work men attend to them. None of the women work after half-past 5. There are about twenty-five females employed altogether. There are no females under fourteen, but there are two boys under that age. We have no apprentices under fourteen. There are five or six between fourteen and eighteen years of age. The women do not come at 6 in the morning ; the young persons do. We work shifts with the young persons, three of whom come at 6 in the morning. All the young persons live in the neighbourhood, and go home to their meals. The machines always commence work at 6, whether in winter or summer. The young persons earn from 10s. to 13s. per week. There are twenty men employed on different machines. They earn much higher wages than the women. It is different work they are employed on. The men who have served their time keep the machines in order.

190. *Hon. Mr. Reynolds.*] How many men do you employ altogether?—Something like seventy.

191. *Mr. Bradshaw.*] What do the females earn?—Those paid by the day, old hands, get 20s. a week. Those paid by the piece average 25s.

192. *Hon. Mr. Reynolds.*] Do any earn 35s.?—Some have earned more than that occasionally, but only in exceptional cases.

193. *Mr. Fulton.*] In the interests of the factory, have you any complaints to make about the working of the Act?—Yes, specially with regard to the holidays. I want them so that we can take them when we like. I object to their being specified. The New Year is regarded by our people, being nearly all Scotch, as the principal holiday, and the one they value most. We are only bound by the Act to give one day at the New Year, but we like to give more.

194. Have you any other complaint?—No further than this: that it would be to the advantage both of the Company and those employed on piecework if, instead of eight hours, the females could work to something nearer the Home hours. They complained when the hours were shortened.

195. *The Chairman.*] What I understand is, that the machinery costs more money here, and, to enable you to realise a proper interest on the outlay, it is necessary that the working hours should be lengthened?—Yes; there is just a medium required between the Home hours and those out here. I consider eight hours too little. It would not be too little if we had not to compete with people who work longer. If we cannot sell at the Home market prices we must shut up. If the Home people were only to work eight hours then we could work eight hours too.

196. *Hon. Mr. Reynolds.*] How many hours do they work at Home?—I used to work sixty hours a week, but before I left it was brought down to fifty-seven. They scarcely work that now, as provision has been made for Saturdays, when they stop at 1 o'clock in the afternoon. I am referring to Scotch factories. I do not know anything about the English factories. I regard this in the light of a Scotch tweed factory.

197. *The Chairman.*] I understand, then, that the machinery would not pay unless working for more than eight hours a day?—Yes; I clearly state that it would be better both for the employers and the workers if they were allowed to work an hour a day longer. Some of them would earn 3s. or 3s. 6d. a week more. The work is not hard, but simply requires attention.

198. *Mr. Fulton.*] You think they could work extra time without injury to themselves as regards health?—Yes; they would not be hurt by it. In my experience of ten years, where they have been working fifty-seven hours a week, they have always been healthy. Indeed, I have known persons who have been sent to the mill to improve their health, and with satisfactory results.

199. You have no complaints as to the Saturday half-holiday?—No; we always keep that, and appreciate it.

199A. You are not under the impression that you are compelled to keep any other holidays than those prescribed by law?—No.

200. *The Chairman.*] If the females could be employed fifty-four hours per week, how would you divide the time?—Nine and a half hours per day, except Saturday, when they would leave off, as now, at 2 o'clock.

201. *Mr. Fulton.*] Is there anything else oppressive?—Nothing.

JANE THOMSON, examined, stated:—

202. I am twenty-one years of age. I come to work at 8 o'clock in the morning, and leave off at 5 in the evening. The dinner hour is from 12 to 1. I go home for dinner. I have parents here. Father works in the factory, and mother remains at home. I have two sisters working in the factory, and two at home, who go to school. I have no brothers. I get 20s. a week at day labour, and give part of it to my parents. I am satisfied with eight hours a day, and should not like to work longer. We get a half-holiday on Saturday. I would rather have the half-holiday on Saturday, even if we got more pay. If the hours were lengthened to fifty-four hours a week, I should have no objection, if the wages were raised in proportion. I do not think the work would be too much. I am in good health, as are also all the girls in the factory.

JANE RENWICK, examined, stated:—

203. I am over eighteen years of age. I come to work at 8 o'clock in the morning, have an hour for dinner, from 12 to 1, for which I go home, and leave off at 5 in the evening. I have a mother, two sisters, and a brother. My mother lives at home. My brother—eighteen years of age—works in the factory, also my sisters, both of whom are younger than myself. I am working on piecework, and average 25s. a week. I am aware of the provisions of the Act with regard to the number of hours for working. Of course, the longer we work the more we make, and for that reason the pieceworkers like longer hours. Before the Act, we used to begin work at 6 in the morning and leave off at half-past 5, with an interval for breakfast as well as one for dinner. We always had the half-holiday on Saturday, and we have no wish to do away with it.

204. *Mr. Fulton.*]—How long could you work without being injuriously affected, or how many hours would you like to work, so as to earn more wages?—We used to work from 6 to half-past 5, and had three-quarters of an hour for meals—breakfast and dinner.

205. *The Chairman.*]—You would like to work as you please?—Yes, those on piecework would.

206. *Mr. Strode.*]—Would nine and a half hours a day be too much?—No.

207. *Mr. Fulton.*]—Would it not be too much for your younger sisters?—I do not think so.

208. *Mr. Bradshaw.*]—All the pieceworkers would like to work longer?—Yes.

209. *Hon. Mr. Reynolds.*]—You remember a petition being signed, and sent to the General Assembly, asking that the hours should be altered?—Yes, I signed the petition. It was asking the same hours as before.

210. Who asked you to sign it?—Some of the men said, if we wanted to work longer hours, we had better sign the petition.

210A. Did the girls all sign it willingly?—Yes.

210B. Who wrote out the petition?—I do not know.

JANE RIDDLE, examined, stated:—

211. I am over eighteen years of age. I am a weaver, working at piecework. I commence work at 8, and leave off at 5. I have an hour for dinner, for which I go home. I have a mother, two brothers, and two sisters. Mother stays at home, one brother is working, the other attends school. My sisters are working here. One is twenty-one, a weaver, on piecework; the other—fourteen—attending the machines, daywork, and gets 12s. a week. I earn, on an average, 25s. a week, and give the whole to my mother. I have been working here for three years. I did not come out from the Home country to work here. I know the provisions of the Act as to number of hours for working. I would rather have the nine and a half hours a day, because I should earn more wages. I do not think the occupation at all injuriously affects the health. I am perfectly well. I do not desire to do away with the half-holiday on Saturday. I signed the petition which was got up and presented to the General Assembly. I do not know who wrote it out. Mr. Dryden asked us to sign it. He said we need not sign it unless we liked to do so. He explained the nature of it.

WILLIAM PATUN, examined, stated:—

212. I shall be fifteen years of age in November. I am working at a "spinning jenny." I come at 9 in the morning, and leave at half-past 5, and have from 12 to half-past 12 for dinner. I get 10s. a week, daywork. I have been here nearly a year. I go home to meals. My father is a labourer. My mother stops at home. I have two brothers, thirteen and eleven years of age, both of whom go to school; and one sister, about seven, who also goes to school. I have not been to school since I came here. I can read and write. All know the number of hours for working. I am satisfied with the eight hours a day. I would not mind working a little longer if I got paid for it. I get the Saturday afternoon. I would not mind working all day on Saturday, if I got a little more pay. I give some of my money to my parents.

WEDNESDAY, 22ND MAY, 1878.

Mr. RALPH EWING, of Messrs. Brown, Ewing, and Co., Drapers, &c., examined.

213. *The Chairman.*] The Commission has been appointed to inquire whether any amendment is necessary in the Employment of Females Act. Have you any remarks to make, as an employer, that you would like brought under consideration?—The only suggestion we have to make is, that the Inspector should have power to grant us permission to work for a half-hour, an hour, or two hours, as the case may be, beyond the specified hours, when we have a pressure of orders, such as mourning or wedding garments, to finish within a certain time. At present we are bound to close at the exact hour, or run the risk of being fined.

214. Who is to determine the necessity of the case?—The Inspector, of course, would be able to find out whether or not the privilege was abused.

215. Is that the only thing?—I think it is a hardship that we should have to pay for the four holidays, seeing that we receive no equivalent.

216. None of your hands are employed on piecework?—None.

217. So that the holidays tell against you, because you get no work done for the wages paid for those days?—Just so, and, as we employ about eighty girls, it is a large item.

218. *Mr. Fulton.*] Could not that be considered in the matter of wages?—We have never reduced the wages. Labour is still very scarce in our line in consequence of the factories employing so many hands.

219. *The Chairman.*] There is no other point?—No; otherwise we approve of the Act thoroughly.

220. You think, generally, that young persons should not be employed more than eight hours?—Yes, and should have the half-holiday on Saturday.

221. Do you not see that there would be scarcely any check for such an arrangement as granting permission to work an hour or more extra in cases of urgency?—The Inspector would be the check. If permission was not granted, there would be an end of it.

222. You mean that application should be made?—Yes, to the Inspector or to the Resident Magistrate. I do not mean that it should be an everyday occurrence, but only occasionally, in cases of emergency, in which the girls are always willing to lend a hand. We might not apply at all, but sometimes, if we had the liberty, it would be a great convenience.

223. On any day in the week except Saturday?—I would include Saturday, making it any day in the week.

224. *Mr. Fulton.*] Have you found the inspection sufficient so far as you know of it?—It has not been very frequent, about four times in the twelve months, I think.

225. *The Chairman.*] Do you remember the dimensions of the workroom which the Commissioners visited in your establishment the other day?—The length is 78 ft., breadth 26 ft., and height about 14 ft. There are two ventilators and two fire-places in it.

226. How many young persons are employed in it?—Between seventy and eighty.

227. *Hon Mr. Reynolds.*] Is it not the case that sometimes the forewomen, in order to finish some work in hand, keep the girls later than they ought to do?—Yes; we were fined from that cause. The forewomen kept them, contrary to our instructions. We had notices posted up, and told the forewomen they must keep the proper hours. They make promises to the customers sometimes unknown to us, and cannot get the work done without breaking the rules; and for this we are held responsible.

228. The question is whether these forewomen should not be fined instead of the employers?—Yes; I think it would be a wise thing to do so.

Mr. INSPECTOR MALLARD, re-examined, stated:—

229. As requested, I visited the City Steam Laundry on Saturday afternoon last, at 3 o'clock, and found ten women working there. I ascertained that their hours of working are from 8 in the morning until 7 at night every day, including Saturday, and that they are allowed an hour for dinner. The Saturday makes no difference with regard to hours of working. They, in fact, ignore the Act. I then went to the Otago Steam Laundry, in the North-East Valley, at ten minutes past 4. The proprietors are Messrs Clark and Co. They had no work for their employées to do, or they would have been working, as the employers frankly told me. Their hours are from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., with an hour for dinner between 1 and 2, and tea at 5. There is a very marked difference between the way in which the Otago Steam Laundry and the City Steam Laundry are conducted. In the City Steam Laundry, the one I first visited, the average wages are from 12s. to 24s. per week, day-work. The ages of the employées are from fifteen upwards. In the Otago Steam Laundry all the employées reside on the premises, and the proprietors find them in food just as they would domestic servants. At the same time, their wages are equally as high as in the other establishment. The head woman, or manager, gets 25s., and her food and lodging; the rest average 20s. a week. They are engaged by the year or by the month, just as ordinary domestic servants. There are four employed in the washing-room, and five in the ironing-room.

Mrs. SOPHIA SIMKINS, examined, stated:—

230. I was nine months in the City Steam Laundry, as a shirt dresser, but I washed occasionally, when required. I worked from 8 in the morning till 8 and sometimes 10 and 11 o'clock at night. The number employed varied from five to sixteen, according to the work to be done. We were only allowed ten minutes for lunch and ten minutes for tea. When there was extra work to be done we were obliged to stop till it was finished, and not a penny extra did we get for it. I received 4s. a day; but the wages were cut down to 3s. a day for new hands. I was not cut down to 3s. I did not engage for a certain time. I only ironed shirts. There was no engagement by the month. They just took on hands as they wanted them, and dismissed them when not required at any time. There were no notices posted up, or rules or regulations about hours. There were girls as young as eight—about six of them—marking the clothes, and their hours were as long as ours. They were getting 5s. 6d. a week. I left the Laundry when my husband obtained a situation, as we could not both be away from home. I have seven children—one in England, and six here. I worked as late on Saturday as any other day. If we did not work as long as they required they would stop a proportion off the wages. We were told that if we did not like the place we could leave it, and they would get others.

Mr. WILLIAM CONNELL, Inspector of Nuisances, and General Inspector under the city by-laws, examined.

231. *By the Chairman.*] I was appointed in 1876. Under the Public Health Act the Inspector can determine whether, in his opinion, the necessary waterclosets are provided for the number of persons employed in a factory. If I knew the number of females and males employed in a factory I,

should be able to judge whether the conveniences were sufficient or not, and if I considered any insufficient I should report to the Board of Health.

232. Have you ever done that?—No.

233. Is it because there is no occasion for it?—There has been no movement in the matter until lately, and other business under the by-laws has had to take precedence.

234. In fact, you have not interested yourself in it?—Not to any great extent except with regard to new buildings.

235. What is your general opinion—is it that the accommodations are sufficient?—I cannot say one way or the other, for this reason: so many places are doing factory business, not factories themselves, but places where clothes are made for factories and the trade, that it is difficult to determine what places are to be included under the Act.

236. I understand you to say that your attention has been drawn to this matter lately?—Yes. I have visited a number of these places on the south of Stuart Street, and I find that in most of them the accommodation is not what it should be. I made a memorandum of the accommodation in each place that I visited.

237. Will you have the goodness to write out your notes in the form of a report, and forward same to the Commission?—I will do so. (Report attached.)

Mr. BENNET J. LOWRY, Assistant-Inspector of Nuisances, examined, stated:—

238. I have visited a number of factories and other places on the north side of Stuart Street, where females are employed under the Act, and have taken notes of the accommodation provided in the shape of waterclosets, lavatories, &c., which I will, as requested, write out in the form of a report, and forward same to the Commission. (Report attached.)

REPORTS BY THE INSPECTORS OF NUISANCES.

Inspector of Nuisances' Office, Dunedin, 22nd May, 1878.

The Inspector respectfully desires, in laying the attached reports before the Commissioners, to add a few remarks as regards the working system in some of the factories in town. It is a known fact that webs of stuff for various garments are taken from some shops in the town by private individuals, who have private residences, and can get a number of sewing-machines, and employ girls at a price to make up the stuff. Those girls are kept hard at work in private houses not in the retail line, and who do not come under any jurisdiction, or are in no wise under any rule according to the Act, as they are private persons. Therefore, to do away with those places, make the wholesale merchant keep a register of the name and residence of the persons—private parties—he sells his webs to for the purpose of making up, and bind him to do so under a penalty, same as the druggist who sells poison must keep a register open at all times. Then those private persons who now make up for the trade will be compelled to put up a proper place for the carrying on of such trade, and, if no sufficient inducement offers, they will abandon the trade; and it will then fall back into the hands of the large factor, who will then be compelled to do his own work on his own premises, and who will be also under the supervision of the Inspectors, and who must keep the necessary conveniences in and on his premises when he is protected by the Act. In many instances, girls who work for those private parties are debarred of all the privileges as regards holidays, &c., and early closing. Another matter is that in some instances the factor allows the work to be taken away at night, when working hours are over, to be finished by his helps when at their homes; so that, in a manner, they are still employed by him, though not doing his work on his premises at the time. The matter is all thus: make the wholesale dealer register the name of the parties who take from him stuff in the web to make up, no matter whether it is for him or not, if it be for a sub-factor; if he does not, and is detected, have him fined. Cause the sub-factor to pay a license for doing the work, and be under the Act also, so as to have a suitable workshop or shops; and, if they consider their profit is not sufficient from the extent of work they do, then they will abandon the work, and the girls will be compelled to work for the wholesale factor, and have all necessary comforts according to some Act, and the factor will then be encouraged to improve his department according to his numbers employed; but now he must send out his work, either cut up according to the number of suits he wants, or else in the web, as he cannot get the girls to come to the shop to work. Lastly, compel all parties who do such work to have their names over their shops or private houses.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM CONNELL.

To the Chairman and Gentlemen appointed by His Excellency the Governor to inquire into the working of the Employment of Females Act.

GENTLEMEN,—

In accordance with your request, I have the honor to submit for your information the under-mentioned evidence respecting the conveniences—viz., privies, lavatories, &c.—in connection with several of the principal factories and places used as such in this city where females are now employed.

HALLENSTEIN BROS., Rattray Street, Clothiers.—Employ daily, on their premises, in Rattray Street, 200 girls (or females); also males. For the convenience of such there are, upon the lower floor, leading to and from the factory, eight waterclosets—four of these are for the use of the females, and the other four for the males. All the closets are together in the same area, but divided from each other, that is, the men's from the women's, by a 9-inch brick wall, about six or seven feet high. In each closet area there are four compartments, with doors; but the main doors opening into the halls are both in the same side, consequently male and female must see each other entering together if they chance to meet at the outside doors. The space occupied by such closets is an area of 11 feet 10 inches in length, by 2 feet wide of a passage—the same for the men—and each closet is 2 feet 10 inches

by 2 feet 10 inches; all having brick division walls, and a door with a spring. There is nothing in the shape of a washhouse or place for the females to clean themselves in, the only substitute being basins in their workrooms, the water supplied from the several taps in the rooms. There is nothing provided, such as a dressing-room, to adjust their toilet in upon coming to work or upon leaving.

SARGOOD, SON, AND EWEN, Dowling and High Streets, Clothiers.—Employ about forty girls daily, who work up stairs in the building, and have five waterclosets, and have no occasion to come down amongst the males. The convenience for washing and dressing is incomplete, there being only a sink for a basin in the corner of a recess, and only one towel fixed on a roller.

THOMSON, STRANG, AND COMPANY, Princes Street, Clothiers.—Employ about twenty-five females daily, who work upstairs in the building, and have one watercloset, therefore do not come down amongst the males. There is also a cloak and a hat and bootroom; but the dressing-room is incomplete, no provision being made for washing purposes except a sink supplied with water from a tap. In this establishment there is no closet for males at all.

SAUNDERS AND COMPANY, Princes Street, Clothiers.—Employ about from thirty-five to forty females, who all work upstairs, and have a convenience of two waterclosets on the same floor. There is nothing for toilet purposes supplied, except a sink, and the water supplied by a tap. A lobby, with a hat and cloak rack also. In this instance, the males and females do not meet during working hours.

HERBERT, HAYNES, AND COMPANY, Princes Street, Clothiers.—Employ about forty females, who all work in their establishment. For their convenience there is only one earthcloset, and that is on the lower floor of the building. The girls work upstairs, and therefore, as a necessity, must mix amongst the men during working hours, as there are also two closets on the same floor, but distant from each other, for the male portion employed. No provision made for toilet purposes.

MOSGIEL, Retail Branch, Princes Street, Clothiers.—Employ eight females, who all are daily employed in a large room upstairs in the building, where there is for their convenience one closet. Therefore they do not require to mix amongst the males during their working hours. In this instance, also, there is no suitable requisite for dressing or toilet purposes, except the sink, and water supplied by a tap.

PASCOE AND COMPANY, High Street, Clothiers.—Employ daily upon their premises forty females. For the necessary convenience of such there is only one earthcloset, such being divided by a partition of wood. The main door to the steps leading to such closet is the same as leads to the portion divided off for the males; therefore, if both closets are occupied at same time, such must be unpleasant, as the walls are not 9-inch brick. There is no provision made for toilet purposes, except the sink and water-tap system.

HERMAN AND COMPANY, Stafford Street, Clothiers.—Employ about thirty females, who work upon the premises. For their convenience there is only one earthcloset, situated in a yard, and divided with a wooden partition, thus making the other portion of the building for the use of the male sex employed; there are two doors in the same side, and the closet is open to public view. There is no provision for toilet purposes, the only thing being a half of a barrel filled with water, under a tap in the same yard, to wash out of.

MISS BROWNLIE, Milliner, Princes Street.—Employs females only, numbering six. There is no convenience attached to the workrooms, consequently the girls have to go down into an open yard behind the house, where there is a double earthcloset, divided by a 9-inch brick wall; the doors to each closet open on same side; there are three compartments in same building. There is the necessary convenience required for toilet purposes in this department.

HAYMANSON, LOW, AND COMPANY, Clarke Street, Boot Factory.—Employs seven females, also males, upon their premises, where there is only one earthcloset, upon the third floor from where the girls work; therefore they have to pass and repass through the department where the men work, and also to pass in close proximity to the only convenience for the men in the building—namely, a urinal. There is nothing but a sink and tap to wash with on the premises.

POCKLINGTON AND COMPANY, Maclaggan Street, Boot Factory.—Employs only two females, also four men. There is no closet attached to premises, but owner has made private arrangements with the landlady next door, from whom he rents the premises. There is no convenience for washing purposes either on premises.

W. J. WALLER, Princes Street, Boot Factory.—Employs daily seven females; also, a number of men and boys. For the convenience of such there are two earthclosets, very badly built, but separate, in the yard. There is no convenience or requisite for toilet requirements.

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WILLIAM CONNELL,

Inspector of Nuisances' Department,
Council Chambers, Manse Street, Dunedin, 22nd May, 1878.

Chief Inspector of Nuisances.

To the Hon. the Commission re the Female Factory Act.

The Sanitary Inspector begs to report having visited the undermentioned premises:—

No. 1. Mr. B. Isen, George Street, Tailor.—Males, 3; females 7; total, 10. Only one closet for males and females, 3ft. by 3ft.; closet door facing the workrooms, 30ft. distant. No other accommodation.

No. 2. Skinner and Buckland, King Street, Bootmakers.—Males, 22; females, 4; total, 26. Only one closet for males and females, 3ft. 3in. by 4ft. 2in. Two other workshops adjoining main building, occupied by carpenters and wheelwrights, all using the same convenience. The boot factory has no other convenience for its employes.

No. 3. Mr. Stokes, King Street, Tailor.—Males, 4; females, 6; total, 10. Three closets, each 3ft. by 3ft. 9in. Other accommodation very good.

No. 4. Haigh and Co., Castle Street, Bootmakers.—Males, 52; females, 13; total, 65. One closet for females, 2ft. 8in. by 3ft.; one closet for males, 6ft. by 3ft. 2in.; both in small yard, quite exposed to view of each sex. No other accommodation.

No. 5. Mrs. Keates, Castle Street, Dress and Shirtmaker.—Females, 14; family—males, 3; females, 3; total, 20. Only one closet, 2ft. 7in. by 3ft. Accommodation the same as household.

No. 6. Reynolds and Clarke, Cumberland Street, Bootmakers.—Males, 51; females, 9; total, 60. Closet for females, 3ft. 1in. by 3ft. 4in.; closet for males, 3ft. 4in. by 4ft.; female closet separated by brick wall, with private entrance. No other accommodation.

No. 7. Mrs. W. Poole, Hanover Street, Dressmaker, &c.—Females, 20; male, 1; total, 21. Only one closet, 2ft. 8in. by 3ft. Very small yard. No other accommodation.

No. 8. Mr. Searle, Stuart Street, Shirtmaker.—Females, 9; male, 1; family, 3; total, 13. Only one closet, 4ft. by 3ft. 4in. Good accommodation.

No. 9. Messrs. A. and T. Inglis, George Street, Drapers, Manufacturers, &c.—Male assistants in shop, 38; females ditto, 4; total, 42; males in factory, 28; females ditto, 30; total, 58. Female closet for factory and shop, 4ft. by 3ft.; male closet for shop, 8ft. 6in. by 4ft. 10in.; closet in yard for males in factory, 6ft. by 3ft. Other accommodation very good.

No. 10. Mr. W. Wallace, George street, Draper, &c.—Females, 15, in workroom; family, 5; total, 20. Only one closet, 3ft. 7in. by 4ft. 2in. Other accommodation, good.

No. 11. Mr. W. H. Walters, George Street, Tailor.—Females, 3; males, 2; total, 5. One closet open to the street by right-of-way about one hundred feet from back of shop, 3ft. 4in. by 2ft. 9in.; in a most filthy state. No other accommodation.

No. 12. Mr. Evans, George Street, Draper, &c.—Females, 6; males, 5; total, 11. Two closets—one for male, 4ft. 11in. by 3ft. 2in.; one for female, 4ft. 9in. by 3ft. 6in.; divided by fence. Other accommodation good.

No. 13. Mr. Dreaver, George Street, Draper, &c.—Females, 8; males, 1; total, 9. One closet, 3ft. 2in. by 3ft. 10in. Yard very dirty. No other accommodation.

No. 14. Shelton and Read, King Street, Bootmakers, &c.—Females, 4; males, 12; total, 16. closets; one for males, and one for females, 3ft. 9in. by 2ft. 9in.; very small yard; no fences between closets. No other accommodation.

No. 15. Mr. J. Yates, George Street, Draper, &c. Females, 12; males, 6; family, 5; total, 23. No closet. No other accommodation. Building new premises.

No. 16. Mr. Beckingsale, George Street, Draper, &c.—Females, 7; family, 6; total, 13. One closet for all, 4ft. by 3ft. 6in. Other accommodation good.

No. 17. Coombs and Son, Cumberland Street, Tanners, &c.—Males, 40; females, 4; total, 44. Three closets, one in each storey, for the use of the employés, with every other convenience.

No. 18. G. H. Glover and Co., George Street, Hatters, &c.—Males, 4; females, 4; total, 8. Only one closet, 4ft. by 3ft. Other accommodation good.

REMARKS.

Every person who employs females should apply to some authorized person to be registered, so that the Inspector, or any other person appointed to act, might inquire into the character and into the accommodation of the premises in which they intend to carry on business.

The person or persons not complying with this section should be subject to a small fine before any Justice of the Peace.

Every person employing males and females should have two closets, eight feet apart, with separate entrances, divided by a proper fence about five feet high.

I am led to make these remarks by being brought into contact with factories and places where females are employed. Some of the rooms are very small, very dirty, and very badly ventilated; some rooms, with eight or ten working in a space of 10ft. by 12ft., and no accommodation for washing and cleansing.

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BENNET J. LOWRY, Inspector.

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