Index.

[i]

Drapers.
Wholesale:
Societies etc =

	Page		Page
Woolley, Sanders & Co (Mr Steward) Warehousemen	71	United Shop Assistant. Union Mr W.J. Arnold	131
Restall. Mr J.J. Re. trade.	74		
do Voluntary E.C. Ass^{n}	80		
Rundle. Mr J.A. Asst.	83		
Rudd. Mr E.A. Draper	88		
Wright. Mr Draper	92		
Crisp. Mr F. do	97		
Linen & Woollen Drapers Instit^{n} Mr John W. Stuttle	101		
Miss Collet's Evidence Labour Commission	104		
Mr W.J. Garling. Wholesale Trade.	109		
Percentage of Drapers at various Ages. Census	114		
Early Closing Ass^{n} Mr Stacey	115		
Shops (Early Closing) Bill 1895 Notes from Evidence	120		
do Mr Bryce grant	120		
do F. Debenham	121		
do J. Macpherson (W. Johnson)	121		
do Alfred G. Mabey	122		
do Dr Percy Kidd	123		
" Miss Macdonald	123		
" Dr W. Chapman frifs	124		
Provident Ass^{n} of Warehousemen & Travellers Mr Greenwood.	125		
National Union of Shop Assts Mr J. Macpherson	127		

J.W. Stewart, of the firm of Messrs Woolley, Sanders & Co. 127-9 Wood Street. E.C. Manufacturers of Straw, Velvet & Felt Hats & importers of feathers & fancy goods.

Hav

This firm has factories at Dunstable & Luton & a small factory for urgent & fine work at 6 Golden Lane.

J.W. Stewart gave me a short description of the Ladies straw hat & felt hat trade and an introduction to Mr Reid, their manager at Golden Lane. Particulars respecting this are given in the Hatters Note Book - Pages. . The following refers to the life in the Warehouses.

Warehouse. Apprentices. are taken for two years and during that time they receive no salary but have their dinner and tea. This the firms reckons to be worth £20 a year to the lad. At the end of this time they would start at £15 or £18 and their next rise would be to £25 a year. Subsequent increments would be £5 or £10 per annum but the £5 rise is unusual. It is reckoned that when a man gets £5 rise it is time for him

him to shift. The lads usually start at about 16 years of age.

Hours are nominally 8.45 am to 6 pm. but in the busy season they work longer to 8 or 9 pm. The hours used to be much later – until 11 or 12 pm. but are now never later than 9 pm. There is a tendency to concentrate the trade upon two days – Tuesday and Wednesday, the show days and it is upon these days that late work is needed.

They have been able to obviate the extreme long hours. This has been done partly by a change in the trade – e.g. a tendency to buy more frequently and in smaller lots; and partly by the introduction of the "silent system" of entering. Formerly the goods were sent to the entering room and then called over to the entering clerk. Under the 'silent system' each department enters its goods in manifold & the duplicate goes to the entering room and is copied by the clerks instead of the goods being placed on the counters & called. In this way, when there is a rush the goods can pass direct from the department to the packing room

and not pass through the entering room.

Showday. This institution is mainly a custom of the city houses. It is not done to suit the convenience of retailers as most of the buyers are principals or buyers who have nothing to do with the retailing. Mr S. does not think that show days are helpful to buyers as naturally they cannot receive the same amount of attention on Show day as they would on other days.

Mr F.J. Restall GA.

"Voluntary" Early Closing Ass^n.

Classes of Trade. Drapery

24

(74)

Mr F.J. Restall. Secretary of the 'Voluntary' Early Closing Ass^n 64 Cheapside. E.C.
[Was formerly an Assistant at Debenham & Freebody's.]

Divides the trade into the ready money, ~~and~~ cheap pushing trade ~~of~~ and the good class trade, which is generally a credit business. Of the former, A. Ponsford, Handley & Johnston and most of the suburban drapers would be types, whilst of the good class trade Debenham & Freebody and Lewis & Allenby are types. There is really a gradation from the best to the lowest class trade. The classification would include the large Stores. Spencer, Turner & Boldero do the lowest class trade but are now turning their attention more to the wholesale trade.

Engagements are usually without notice. Some houses give a month and some a week but these are the exceptions. "In most of the houses you never know whether you will sleep under the same roof at night" Mr R. thinks there are advantages in this:- It tends to make a man thrifty and then you are at liberty to take a new berth when you see it. A man may go out & get a berth

berth; come back and leave at once whereas if he had to give a months notice he would lose the chance.

Prospects of a shop assistant are meagre. The only chance is to make yourself invaluable to the "governor". That was his plan. Work for them as you would for yourself and it will be recognised. Unfortunately 90% of the assistants are apathetic. Their thought when they come into the shop in the morning is "How many hours have I to put in today".

Assistants, who have been in good houses will not go into inferior houses as it will spoil their character. An assistant from Debenham & Freebody can get into a first rate house in the provinces or London but an assistant coming from cheap houses such as those in the Walworth Road would not be looked at.

"Swap" is the drapers' slang term for being discharged. "So & so has been swapped". The word is not used if a man leaves on his own account.

Shopwalker sees that ladies are seated; that they are treated with civility and properly served. They would earn about £100 or if married £130 or £140 per annum. Shopwalkers are usually middle-aged men. In the suburban shops there are

58 hrs

70 & 80 hrs

In most of the houses the employers subscribe to the E.C. Movement to show their goodwill. Notwithstanding this the assistant are necessarily afraid of their employers.

are some young men but not in the West End. The shop-walker may also be a buyer, in which case when he was absent the first assistant would take his place.

Hours. West End and City. Generally 8.30 to 7pm; in the winter 6 or 6.30. Saturdays 2pm.

In Suburbs: 8.30 A.M. to 9— or 9.30 P.M. Saturdays 11 to 12pm. say 11.30. In small a suburban shops they are usually finished as soon as they can get the customers out of the shop. This sometimes takes a little while.

Early Closing. The assistants do not try for shorter hours. The employers ~~keep~~ do ~~no~~. They are bound to do something in order to obtain or retain the pick of the assistants. It is in this way the question affects the employers. Mr Frank Debenham supports the E.C. movement on the ground that it is a commercial gain to the employer

Shorter Hours have not involved harder work for the assistants.

Fines. Nearly all houses have fines: For being late down for squadding; may then go to breakfast & be fined if late in coming back. For omitting to put the initial of department (for dissection) when making

making out duplicate. 3d. Allowing a customer to go unserved without calling the attention of the shopwalker 2/6. Being out late at night 2/6, 4th offence is repeated, the 'swap'. Fines usually go to the library.

Food. At D & T's the food was plain but very good. "That is, of course, all you need". At Whiteleys, the food was sufficent but you did not get time to eat it. — 20 minutes allowed for dinner & it takes 5 minutes to get served. Wright & Bros of Richmond — good as a rule. Usually the food is good. Thinks most of the complaints respecting food are due to the housekeepers who may receive commissions from contractors. The firms usually pay the prices for the best things. This he knows as regards D. & T. as he was in the counting house and saw the bills. When complaints are made the grievance is remedied e.g. complained about butter at Shoolbreds.

While he will not say that you get better food in the small houses, it is better served

served and occasionally there are little luxuries such as fruit which could not be expected in a large house.

Sleeping Accommodation. At D.& J's slept 2 or 3 in a room; at Shoolbreds 2, 3 or 4. All the homes have single beds for the men. Thinks the double bedded system is most objectionable. Besides the natural objection of men to sleep together there is another reason — shop assistants are always on the move and you may not have the same man many nights but be constantly changing your bedfellow. Young ladies are put together where the men are not. They do not shift so much as the men so the objections are not so strong in their case.

Comfort in a large house depends much on the housekeeper. (Sometimes have two: one for bedrooms & another for food etc.). Asked whether the difference between large & small houses would be similar to that between barrack & home life, he said "badly that". In large houses clubs etc. There is a bar at Shoolbreds with a porter to supply drinks etc. When you are sick, go to a bedroom called the hospital. The doctor appointed by the firm comes

comes to see you for which you have to pay (This is to prevent malingering) You are then left to yourself. As regards the shop life. In the large houses it is all drive while you are about it, but in the smaller shops you have to wait for the trade. Payments. In the large houses there are a number of payments eg library fees (Shoolbreds 1/6 a quarter), boot cleaning etc

Supply of Labour. Many of the young ladies in the better class shops are farmers' daughters Employers are good class girls as a rule.

"THE VOLUNTARY" EARLY CLOSING ASSOCIATION,
64, CHEAPSIDE, E.C. (Over Bennett's Clock).

WHY SHOP ASSISTANTS SHOULD SUBSCRIBE.

1. **BECAUSE** UNITY IS STRENGTH.
2. **BECAUSE** Shop Assistants reap the reward of its labours.
3. **BECAUSE** the V.E.C.A. faithfully promotes and maintains Half-Holidays and Early Closing.
4. **BECAUSE** the Board of Management is a thoroughly representative one, and studies the interests of Shop Assistants.
5. **BECAUSE** every penny subscribed is economically spent to further the movement.
6. **BECAUSE** this Association was the salvation of the VOLUNTARY principle, which was practically abandoned in October, 1890.
7. **BECAUSE,** directly or indirectly, through the advocacy of Voluntaryism, thousands of Shop Assistants have had their hours reduced within the past 4½ years.
8. **BECAUSE** the **V. E. C. A. INITIATED** the following **Benefits for Shop Assistants, being Members:**—
   (*a*) **Free Legal Advice** from V. E. C. A. Honorary Solicitors, Messrs. Sayle, Carter & Co., 35, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.
   (*b*) **Reduced Boat Fares.**
   (*c*) **Half-Day Trips to Seaside.**
   (*d*) Reduction of Entrance to Baseball Park, Brixton, from ONE

The 'Voluntary' Early Closing Association

Notes respecting the Society.

The Association was formed in December 1890.

"to Safeguard, Promote, Maintain and Extend the Voluntary Early Closing Principle".

Objects as stated in Report are "The promotion of:-

(a) A weekly Half-Holiday in Shops, by Voluntary action only.

(b) An earlier hour of closing shops each night, by Voluntary action only.

(c) An Employment Agency for the convenience of Employers and Assistants being members.

(d) To cultivate and encourage cordial relationships between employers and their Assistants.

(e) Establishment of Tradesmen's Clubs.

(f) To promote a Recognised Summer Holiday for Shop Assistant who shall have held present situation for 12 consecutive months.

(g) To induce Railway & Steamboat Companies to issue Voluntary E.C.A. tickets at a reduction to the Society's members

(h) To arrange Excursions by rail, river & sea.

Subscription - 5/- a year - see handbill.

Medical Advice. There is a honorary medical staff, which gives advice gratis to members at certain prescribed times.

Finance. During 1894 the Society's income was £839. of which £817 was subscriptions & donations, and the expenditure was £826, a balance of £13 remaining in hand at Dec 31st.

Results. The Society has held a number of meetings in different parts of London and the suburbs, some commencing at 10 pm. It has also canvassed in many districts and with a certain amount of success. The results however even as shown in the Report are not favourable to the voluntary principle alone, something being evidently needed to make the work permanent. Thus at New Barnet 34 traders gave their names as favouring early closing & altho' time was spent canvassing "no unanimity could be brought about" owing to the action of 5 persons. In Brompton Road, many of the shops being under management afforded a pretext for not adopting the movement. At Earls Court a 5 o'clock Thursday closing was hindered by the refusal of two traders, whilst in

Lewisham one dissentient provision dealer rendered a canvass of the district for a 2 o'clock Thursday closing unsuccessful. Similar results are noted in other districts. The Sheathom tradesmen cannot adopt a 2 o'clock Wednesday until Buxton shops close at that hour. — Canvasses are also needed to prevent firms falling away from their agreements & a consequent collapse of the movement.

A similar diversity of opinion is shown as regards special closing, thus at Christmas 1894, an appeal was made for a four days' holiday from Saturday afternoon until Thursday, Christmas day falling on the Tuesday. A certain number of firms granted this, but a number of others advertised in the daily papers that they would not close on the Monday. On the other hand a number of firms, already closing early on Thursday, gave from Monday evening to Friday morning.

Legislation The Association (Mr Restall informed me) was not opposed to legislation, many of the members being in favour of it but as supplementary and completing voluntary effort. Mr J. B. Maple is opposed to all legislation and as President naturally influences the Society.

W. F. A. Rundle. Assist Secretary
Voluntary Early Closing Association. 64 Cheapside.

Thinks legislation ought not to fix an hours for closing. It would prevent the growth of the small shops, that depend on their late trade. D. H Evans started in a small shop & has now grown as large as Peter Robinsons. Peter Robinson also started in a small way.

Premiums known as "spiffs"

Assistants life. Mr R. was at Peter Robinsons. Started at 7 a.m. to dust. Every man would go squadding for the first year and after that he would have a week on & a week off. This takes half an hour & from 7.30 to 8.30 the squadding party is off, to get breakfast & wash. The other assistants come in at 7.50 ready dressed & having had their breakfast. The shop opens at 8 a.m. The window dressers then go on with their work and the others with whatever has to be done in the shop. Men must ~~not be behind~~ not be outside the counter after 10 oclock & the windows furnished by

by 10·30. The time required for window dressing differs according to the goods & kind of display. Should be done in 2 ¾ hours. Trade is very busy from 11 to 1 o'clock. The assistants are arranged in pairs & known as partners ~~and~~ One of each couple must always be at the counter, the two never being away together..

Food. Breakfast usually bread & butter with tea or coffee. The quality very good & as much as you like. The steward sells jam, fruit etc. These things are placed on a side table and any assistant can see at once what extras are available. It is a private speculation of the stewards'.

Lunch used to be allowed from 10 to 10·30 & usually consisted of bread & cheese. Half an hour was not allowed but they went up for a few minutes as they could between those times. This was stopped through one of the lady assistants. The housekeepers were very good & tried to give them anything they could. This young woman asked for a chop for dinner as she did not care for roast meat. It was given to her & then she would not eat it & the led to the case coming before the firm. It then came

out.

out that the girls often had no appetite at ~~dinner~~ lunch owing to the lunch & it was stopped.

Dinner. Hot and cold meat alternate days with vegetables – potatoes and another sometimes. No limit as to quantity. Always cold meat on Sunday and had to inform the housekeeper whether you would be in.

Tea. Same as breakfast. 20 minutes allowed.

Large v Small houses. Mrs R. much prefers a large house. There are all kinds of petty jealousies in small houses. Prefers the order & method of a large establishment enforced by fines to the looseness in the small houses where there are usually no fines. Girls leave boxes & things about. In a large house, you only have to call their attention to it & they must be cleared away. In a small house the governor usually is at the head of the table at meal times. Mrs R. prefers that he should not be there. In the small house, the assistants have to mind the house on Sunday in turns & have to wait breakfast for the governor until 9 or 10.. In many houses the Sunday life is practically

out

out of door; there is no place but the bedroom if you wish to be in. In many you have to go out at 10 am & be back at 1 if you want dinner.

~~Was~~ Went to Roberts, Islington when he was 20. There were 7 girls & 2 fellows there then. They were stocktaking at the time. Started work at 8 am and closed at 8.30 to 9 in the summer. Slept in a ~~two~~ room under a low pitched roof. The dining room was also their general sitting room. The shopwalker used to go out & come in the worse for drink & the assistants were left with a "growling old housekeeper. Believes that all the cases of immorality etc are due to the 'mixed house' system. Two of the girls here were on the street.

Carrington's Regent St. – One of the nicest houses. Always has a nice class of assistants.

The Prospects of an assistants are not so good now as they were. A man in the drapery would not apply for a place after he was 35 years of age unless he were qualified for a high position. They go into other occupation, being fit for anything.

H.

they can they save & go into business.

Assistants shift a good deal. One shop he was in at Bayswater, 70 people came into the shop in one year – it was not a large house. He gave notice three times, once he had a rise and the last time he left. It is only those who are not qualified that don't like the 'no notice' system. At that shop the girls never did any trade when the master was away: they were always larking about.

[Mrs R. seemed to be a confirmed misogynist, at least so far as regards the portion of the sex engaged in the drapery trade].

JH 17/7/95

Hours: Juniors 72½
Seniors 69½.

Mr E A Rudd. Family draper.
304 Harrow Road W.

Business is mainly a local trade.
Commence business at 9 am. The Juniors come down at 8·30; and go to breakfast at 9 o'clock & have to be back in the shop dressed at 9·45. Those who come in at 9 o'clock have breakfast at 8·30. Form two parties for meals. First party has dinner (30 minutes) at 1 o'clock & second party at 1·40. Tea at 5 & 5·30. Commence to close at 9 pm but it is usually 9·30 before work is finished. On Thursday close at 2 pm and on Saturday commence at 11 & closed by 11·30. Thursday 2 o'clock is exceptional here, 5 pm being the general closing time.

Early Closing. Mr R. is in favour of legislation. Thinks a universal closing hour should be the best: 8 pm & 10 pm on Saturdays. There is no hope of obtaining the shorter hours otherwise. In the Harrow Road 196 out of 200 signed a petition which was presented to Sir John Lubbock at the House of Common. The dissentients were sufficient to prevent the adoption of the early closing movement.

Have no difficulty in obtaining apprentices. Have people waiting for vacancies.

Does not think the early closing would throw the trade into the hands of the large shops. He has found the chief opposition come from the large shopkeepers. The small people are in favour of early closing. [Mr R's large shops are those of his district not the stores].

Apprenticeship. Term is shortened. Take boys for 3 years without premium & young ladies on the same terms. Have most of the latter. All get 'premiums' as soon as they begin to serve.

Salaries. Youths start at £15 and rise to £50 or £60 & young ladies start at £10 & rise to about £40. a year. This is while serving at the counter. As shopwalker the young men may get £80 or £90.

Premiums increase these amounts by £10 a year for young ladies and about £12 for the young men. Sometimes the young ladies make the most, especially in the fancy departments can this be done. Have a system whereby a prize (money) is given to the assistant & apprentice taking most money in a week. At sale times — spring & autumn — the assistants get 1/4% on all the money they take.

Fines. for sleeping out without permission &c. All fines

fines go towards the doctors bill. Has an arrangement whereby all the assistants have medical advice when needed towards which each pays 6d per month.

Shifting. Young ladies remain longer than the men. Have had some stay 6, 8 and 15 years. The following are the periods of service of some assistants as shown in the books & taken as they come:-

	Period of Service Young Ladies.	Young men	
Young Man		6 months	
Young Lady	14 months		
do	36 "		
The same Y. Lady.	40 "		
Young lady	45 "		
Young Man		4 months	
Young Man		36 "	Now getting £90 as shop walker & buyer.
Young Man		21 "	
Young Lady	2 months		Came at £70.
Young Man		7 "	
Young Lady	11 months		
" "	14 years		
" "	3 months.		
	8 average 40 months	5 average 15 months or counting 3 years as shop walker. 14 average 10 mth.	
or	7 average 21 mths		

Sundays. Always provide on Sunday & the assistant can stay. In the case of apprentices, if they go out, Mr R. expects to know where they are going. Apprentices must go to church or chapel once on a Sunday - a standing rule.

Have separate sitting rooms for the young men and women.

Meals. Rarely have cold dinner now that the number of hands have increased. Breakfast - Tea & coffee, bread & butter with some relish - bacon, eggs or fish 4 mornings a week.

Young ladies are quick over their meals but Mr R. thinks it is because they eat much less than the young men. It is rare for a young lady to send up her plate for a second helping.

Milliners, with one exception, live in the house. They are a grade lower than the assistants. Mostly tradesmens children.

~~Have no diffe~~

Mr Wright.
Harringay.

Small Drapers' Shops

Mr Wright. now managing a shop
at Harringay.

Mr Wright was apprenticed at Exeter, went to Bath for 2 years and then came to London. For two years (1875-77) he was in a wholesale house — Devas' of Cannon Street — Subsequently went into business at Hampstead. Wife was a first class dressmaker & together they worked the business up. She died & then the dressmaking declined & with it the business as a whole.

In small shops the work is much greater compared to the taking than in large establishments. Goods are sold in small quantities and the draper has to keep a varied stock of haberdashery & other goods that are in demand. He would not go in for a great variety of dress materials. Ladies buying a dress would go to the large shops; those from Harringay going to Holloway Road for instance.

Fancy Drapers.

Starting Small business

Hours. 77½ open
work 73 hrs.

Some houses only go into fancy drapery & then have all lady assistants. Heavy goods don't pay so well, on the other hand there is no risk of loss.

When starting in business a man should have at least £250. He can then get stock to about £400 & should be able to turn it over about three times a year. It is usual for a beginning to go to one of the wholesale houses and place the particulars of his position before them. If the firm is satisfied they become his reference or 'ref' house and when buying from other firms he would refer to this house. The information he gave might be given to another firm if asked for, but as a rule the wholesale houses are content to know that the 'ref' house is satisfied.

Today small shops are in an infinitely worse position than 20 years ago. It is a saying that two fail & the third succeeds.
Hours are usually from 8.30 to 9 pm for 4 days; 9.30 pm on Friday & 11 pm on Saturday. Get away at 5 pm one evening a week.

In these shops little is done until the evening. Here, a few customers in the morning; then some children during the dinner time; about 8.30 the people come in & may then have a constant rush until closing time, sometimes being kept open until 10 o'clock by the customers. These people are not working class but the wives of clerks and others who leave off early.

Apprentices in small houses usually belong to the neighbourhood. In the large houses, they are drawn largely from the country. As a rule an assistant or apprentice coming from the country can get into a medium house but he would have to take a lower salary. A man who has been in a small business is considered almost useless in a large house. Few go from the wholesale to the retail; those who do have usually been in the retail.

Age Limit. "The great difficulty in our trade is when you get on in years to obtain a place if you get out. After 35 a man has no chance unless he can take a manager's place."

Wholesale Trade

When at Devos's, lived in Finsbury Square. Women are employed in the wholesale but not to the same extent as in the retail. They are found in the costumes, mantles and millinery department.

Great changes have come over this trade. Formerly buyers bought for the season. Now they buy in small quantities ~~& at more frequent~~ and more frequently London buyers are in the City once a week. Tuesday is the show day & Wednesday is also a busy day.

A buyer going into a warehouse takes a docket which bears the name of each dept with space for ~~buyers~~ salesmans signature. This is given in afterwards & shows in which depts. he has made purchases. By this means those in the entering room can tell when they have received the complete order from the departments.

Dating Forward is a practice in the trade by which invoices are dated so as to give longer credit. Thus goods bought in July would be dated Sept. The accounts are then due on November 10, subject to 2½% discount. Some houses, usually those

engaged

engaged in the manufacturing will not give these terms.. Their terms are a clear month: thus goods bought on July 20 would fall due for payment on September 10.

Does not think there are 'tied' houses now. It used to be said that a certain firm was "backing" so & so but thinks it has dropped out of late.

Assistants in the house are paid monthly; those living out weekly. Apprentice here (Hannyay) has 2/- a week & board - lives at home.

GLA.

Mr. Stacey in his evidence a Shop (Early Closing) Bill says Crisps are frequently open till 9 p.m. & "the doors at some times are not punctually closed then"

Mr. Fred^k Crisp — Messrs Crisp & Co. Ltd
Seven Sisters Road N.

Drapery trade here may be termed a "good medium"

Shops opens at 8.30 and close at 8 pm on week evenings & 5 pm on Saturdays. Apprentices come in at 7.30 a.m. to dust; they are allowed half days off occasionally to make up for this extra time.

Apprentices. Young men serve 3 years and the girls two years. Thinks apprenticeship is essential if young people are to learn the trade. Apprentices are not bound but taken for the period on their good behaviour. If they are bound you are bound to keep them. Usually make them a present at Christmas & when they serve they get premiums the same as the others.

Salaries. When out of their time apprentices usually start at £15, if their services are retained. Retain most of theirs as the business is growing. Salaries rise as high as £70 for those behind the counter & they can make £50

£50 or £60 additional.

Board etc With exception of the married men & the work hands, all the assistants board & lodge on the premises. Reckon that board & lodging is worth £30 per annum. Thirty minutes are allowed for meals. There are separate rooms for the male & female assistants. Saw these dining rooms: they were barely furnished with a long table down the centre. Over the mantels were a number of notices – the day when salary dockets must be sent in etc.

There is also a library and separate sitting rooms. These were more fully furnished and might be cheerful apartments when the gas was lighted. There are tennis & cricket clubs.

The sleeping accommodation is on the cubicle system – a number of cubicles, each numbered, arranged on each side of a long corridor. In most of these only one assistant (lady) slept but in a few I noticed that two were

were occupying it. Thes cubicles were just large enough to take the bed & a chest of drawers ~~washstand~~ by its side; the space in front of chest of drawers formmy the clear floor space. Some of the girls had little nick-nacks hanging up, text cards etc. There was a bath & lavatories at the end of corridor. The whole is shut off by an iron grilled gate which is kept locked during the day.

Sunday. Some go home & others remain. Those remaining have to give in their names to the housekeeper.

Early closing. Does not believe in compulsory early closing. It would be good for them and other large shops but if the small shops had to close at the same time as the large they would lose all their trade. The small mans chance of building up a business would be gone. Thinks we have reached the limit of the early closing movement. The large shops would not close any earlier, if an act were passed

The wholesale and retail drapery are quite distinct. and cannot be properly combined. There were only two firms that really did it: Jeremiah Rotherham of Shoreditch and Spencer, Turner + Boldero of Lisson Grove. These were the only firms that would make up small orders – where you could get short lengths of goods + it was in this way that Rotherham's made their trade. Now the wholesale houses were more obliging.

Prospects of a Assistant are good. A young man can save money. They need not spend their salary. Many live on their premises. The only necessary expenses are clothes – two suits a year.

Mr Crisp gave me two drapery papers containing account of the growth of his business Cutting are given herewith.

Promised to give full return of wages.

The Linen & Woollen Drapers, Silk Mercers, Lacemen, Haberdashers and Hosiers' Institution.
Secretary: Mrs John W. Shuttle. 43 Finsbury Square.

The Society was established in 1832 to render assistance to aged & necessitous warehousemen and drapers and their widows and orphans.

Its objects are now defined as:—

(1) Affording pecuniary assistance to members being or having been Principals of Houses, Warehousemen, Shopmen, Clerks or Female Assistants, when in sickness or necessitous circumstances
(2) Affording pecuniary assistance to Widows & Children of members when in necessitous circumstances.
(3) Providing medical advice for members residing in the Metropolis.

Membership. Any person who has been 3 years in any of the above trades and is occupied at the time of application within twelve miles of the General Post Office. and is not over 45 years of age and in good health.

Names of pensioners are not published

Subscription. At 24 or under £1.1 – annually, rising to £5.3.6 at 45 years of age when joining. Life members pay £10.10 – at 24 the amount being increased to £50 at age of 45.

Benefits Medical advice & medicine in sickness, if living with 12 miles of the General Post Office. 10/- per week for 26 weeks during sickness. After completing 3 yrs membership, pecuniary assistance in necessitous circumstances to the extent of 15/- a week but the total amount must not exceed £150 except in special cases such as insanity. Annuities are granted to females after attaining 55 years & to males after 60. Amount not to exceed £25 per annum to single members or widowers or widows without children. nor £35 to married members or widows or widowers with children unless & more than 4 children are dependent when the amount may rise to £45.

Pensioners There are now 180 pensioners on the books receiving from 7/6 to 15/- a week. None of the men receive less than 10/- or 12/- a week. There is a movement started now to build some cottages at Mill Hill for the aged members. The ground has

been given and the plans prepared for building.

Membership is about 2000. House meetings are held to bring the Institution before other assistants.

Financial. The Invested funds amount to £37416 & their cash value is £54390. The Income during 1894 amounted to £9463. of which £2724 was from subscription of members + £5065 donations, whilst interest on investments amounted to £1508.

Expenditure was £7988 of which £3626 went to members in need; Sick members £213, Widows + orphans £1740, Medical accounts £879, and Funerals £90.

Extracts from Miss Collet's Report on the "Employment of Women" made for the Royal Commission on Labour" June 1892.

47

II.—SHOP ASSISTANTS.

The United Shop Assistants' Union (London) has but few women among its members, and of these none were desirous of giving evidence. The exact number of men in this union could not be ascertained; so far as I could gather it does not exceed 600, and the proportion of women to men was stated as being two per cent. The long hours of employment, and residence on the premises of their employers, make association for trade purposes difficult even when desired: amongst women shop assistants there is no sign of any desire for such association.

The same causes, long hours and the custom of residence, explain the fact that but few shop assistants are to be found in any of the religious, social, or educational societies or clubs which are very numerous in London. The opportunities for obtaining evidence from shop assistants have therefore been few.

(1.) Evidence of shop assistants.

Five assistants in shops closing at 2 p.m. on Thursdays gave evidence at the office of the Early Closing Association; two, working short hours in the West End, gave evidence at a girls' club to which they belonged; four girls working in a draper's shop in East London were allowed to leave their counter and to give me information as to the conditions of employment in other shops where they had worked, the employer allowing me to see each one alone in his office.

A very widely circulated invitation to shop assistants, working over 74 hours, to meet me on a Sunday afternoon met with no response, notwithstanding the efforts of the Early Closing Association and the Secretary of the United Shop Assistants' Union. A letter was, however, received, in consequence of this advertisement, from a former shop assistant, now in Ireland, who afterwards gave particulars relating to 16 shops in London in which she had been employed during the five years following her first engagement in December 1885. These particulars have been tabulated, and their accuracy may to some extent be tested by comparing the statement of hours with the statement obtained independently through the Early Closing Association. My own inquiries with regard to the best and the worst of the cases given in this table, lead me to believe that the evidence of this witness is trustworthy.

(c.) Hours of work and salaries.

Of the two assistants working in the West End, one was working 50½ hours a week, receiving 2*l.* a week without board and lodging, and had in a previous situation in Oxford Street, worked 64½ hours a week, receiving 50*l.* a year and board and lodging. The other was working 60½ hours a week in a shop in Oxford Street, receiving by salary and premiums nearly, if not quite, 60*l.* a year in addition to board and lodging. This witness (No. 50) had formerly worked in shops in East London; in one shop in Hackney the hours were from 8.30 to 10 on four days of the week, 8.30 to 11.30

The employment of women.

on Saturday, and till 5 on Thursday, making 77½ hours in all. For this she received 45*l.* a year and board and lodging. Notwithstanding these long hours she stated that she had never had a day's illness, and that in these small shops there were many things to compensate for the long hours provided the employers were considerate. She said, however, that several girls, not so strong as herself, suffered severely from the long confinement in a close atmosphere.

Of the five witnesses (all from East London) who gave evidence at the offices of the Early Closing Association, one (No. 15) worked 70¾ hours, No. 16 worked 71 hours, No. 17 worked 73¼ hours, and Nos. 19 and 20 worked 73¾ hours. The maximum salary in addition to board and lodging ever paid to women in the shop working 70¾ hours was stated at 35*l.* to 40*l.*; in the other shops 30*l.* was stated as the maximum salary ever given. These girls declared that they had nothing to complain of, except the long hours of work and the short time allowed for meals, which had seriously affected their health. Not one closed earlier than 11 p.m. on Saturdays, 9.30 on Fridays, and 9 on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, beginning in each case at 8.30 a.m.

Of the other four witnesses, No. 123 worked between 74 and 75 hours in Woolwich, receiving 20*l.* a year with board and lodging; No. 124 worked 72 hours in Forest Gate, receiving 25*l.* salary; No. 125 worked 73¾ hours nominally, being an apprentice for three years, and afterwards receiving 12*l.* and then 15*l.* salary without residence; No. 126 worked as an apprentice at least 69¾ hours the first few months, and then 72¾ hours. This last witness lived at home, and was eventually dismissed, owing to absence through headache and illness brought on by long standing.

The last nine witnesses all worked in shops closing either at 2 p.m. or 5 p.m. on Thursdays, but an examination of the tables appended, will show that for the rest of the week all were obliged to work many hours by gaslight, although in every case but one they would be unaffected by the proposed Bill for the regulation of shop hours.

(5.) Meals.

The total of hours given above includes time allowed for dinner and tea, and in some cases for rest. Half an hour is the usual time allowed for dinner, 20 or 30 minutes being the usual time allowed for tea. Shop assistants are liable to interruption during meals, and acquire a habit of "bolting" their food in a remarkably short time; one employer (Witness 122) stated that his assistants nearly all finished their dinner in about 10 minutes, and devoted the remaining 20 minutes to rest or amusement. Another employer (Witness 27) stated that his shop assistants ate very little at meals, but were much addicted to eating sweet stuff and pastry in the morning; this habit of eating sweet stuff was alluded to by the employer already referred to. Indigestion and anæmia are very common amongst the girls, and their hasty meals and short time for rest may fairly be assigned as the cause of their illness and their craving for unwholesome food. A physician with considerable experience amongst West End shop assistants has drawn attention to the fact, confirmed by employers and the few shop assistants I have seen, that according as a business is conducted on a large scale, and the girls are placed under the direction of men instead of women, there is much greater hesitation in applying for leave to take necessary rest during temporary illness, and less willingness to grant it; serious injury to health

witness giving the information. This employer (Witness 130) when called upon, at once consented to show the sleeping accommodation provided, and was quite unaware that it was at all below the average; comfortless and uninviting as were the rooms and beds their condition hardly warranted legislative interference.

(d.) Arrangements on Sunday.

The practice of obliging shop assistants to go out on Sunday for the whole day is much rarer than it used to be some 20 years ago, when, according to employers I have visited, it was very common. One employer (Witness 74) believes that the practice still exists, as applicants for situations frequently ask him whether absence on Sunday is compulsory. In a firm in which he himself formerly served, the employer made it a rule to employ no persons who said they had no relations in London, with the result that those without friends willing to receive them on Sundays concealed the fact. Witness 130 confirmed the statement given in Table II., that assistants in this shop were obliged to go out on Sundays, adding that all the assistants had relatives in London. Writing of this firm Witness 73 says:—"I "declined to go, as I considered Sunday being the Lord's "day should be a day of rest, and that young girls should "not be compelled to go out or Sunday, ill or well, after "working hard all the week, and then obliged to pay "2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* every Sunday for food and travelling ex-"penses, besides the misery of it. If people have friends "they do not want them every Sunday."

(e.) Disadvantages in poorer neighbourhoods.

The shop assistants in the poorer neighbourhoods, besides working longer hours and lifting heavy weights usually raised by men in better class shops, are more frequently obliged to work in badly ventilated rooms; the windows are frequently blocked with articles, and so little light admitted from any source, that in some cases gas will be found burning at any time in the day.

(f.) Seats.

Seats were only provided in four of the 33 shops of which information has been obtained.

Of the existence of very real grievances amongst shop assistants there can be no doubt, but of expressed discontent there is very little. On this point Witness 73 writes:—"I must also say the young girls employed in "these houses had the patience and endurance of martyrs, "but it is not advisable to have too much patience, "because then evils could not be checked. The Govern-"ment would think there was no grievance."

As the report of the Select Committee on the Shop Hours Regulation Bill 1886 contains evidence from several employers, and the Select Committee on Mr. Provand's Bill, sitting at the time of inquiry, was also examining employers, no systematic attempt has been made to secure further evidence from them. Nine were visited in the shops, and of these, three, one in West London, one in North London, and one in East London, readily consented to give particulars of the salaries paid to men and women in shops. The other six were not disposed to do so. Of these, Witness 53, in South

(2.) Evidence of employers.

(a.) Salaries of men and wo

A 2

(c.) Living accommodation.

The desirability of inspection of sleeping and living accommodation has been occasionally urged upon me; the difficulties of such inspection would, however, be very great owing to the impossibility of fixing any standard of necessary comfort or cleanliness. In Table II. appear complaints of insufficient food and of want of cleanliness. The employer who comes lowest on this list, may be regarded as evidently representing the worst class of hops in this respect in the view of the

Greater hesitation in applying for leave to take necessary rest during temporary illness, and less willingness to grant it; serious injury to health arises in consequence. In shops where late hours are the custom on Saturday, but little time is allowed for supper, and in some cases the girls do not sit down to supper until nearly midnight.

not inclined to think that a limitation of hours affecting women only would place women at a disadvantage with regard to men. I received a general impression that the men were much more actively discontented with their long hours than the women, and, that were a limitation of the hours of the latter by legislation possible, the men would of their own initiative be inclined to secure equally short hours for themselves. This statement, however, only applies to the drapery business; in places where only men are employed, with the exception of a few women as cashiers, a limitation of hours affecting women only might easily have the effect of driving women out of employment, unless a very decided difference in the rate of payment prevails. Witnesses 6, 8, and 13, all men recently engaged in provision stores, one in North London, one in West London, and one in South London, stated that the women cashiers in these stores earn from 12*s.* to 12*s.* 6*d.* a week, without board or lodging, working about 72 hours a week, and the manager of one provision firm, Witness 22, confirmed this statement. (The salaries paid by Witnesses 27, 32, and 122 are appended.)

35

(*b.*) Weekly holiday.

With regard to the question of early closing, Witness 54 stated that he allowed his assistants one evening off a week, and that they much preferred being able to choose the day each week to being obliged to take a holiday all together one fixed day. Witness 74 stated that he formerly tried the plan of giving an evening to his assistants by turns, but found that it was not a success; they frequently lost their holiday, and naturally did not regard a morning off instead as sufficient compensation. He found closing on Thursday at 5 o'clock much more satisfactory to all concerned. Witness 53 stated that his firm was the only one in the neighbourhood for a long time which closed at 5 p.m. on Thursdays; they took no notice of their neighbours, and did not find that they lost anything by early closing. Witness 75 pointed out that the hours of closing were not a satisfactory index of the hours of work, the time allowed for rest varying in different shops, and the work of putting articles back in their place, and arranging shelves, being in some cases postponed till after closing time, and sometimes done during the day.

(*c.*) Legislative limitation of hours.

No strong practical objections were raised against the proposed limitation of hours by those who objected to the Bill on principle, but Witness 75, an employer, considered that whether such limitation by legislation were desirable or not, it would be quite impossible to enforce it, owing to the great difficulty in proving that assistants had been working the whole time the shop was open, and also to the unwillingness of the girls to give evidence against their employers.

A further objection to the Bill was raised by Witness 122, an employer, on the ground that by sanctioning so high a minimum as 74 hours, employers would be encouraged to increase their hours of work to that standard.

Salaries and Commission of Shop Assistants, 1891, Witness 32, South London.

—	Women.			Men.		
	No.	Board only.	Board and Residence.	No.	Board only.	Board and Residence.
£						
Under 25	23	—	23	4	—	4
25-30	10	—	10	9	—	9
30-40	13	—	13	20	1	19
40-50	18	—	18	26	—	26
50-60	18	—	18	19	1	18
60-70	6	—	6	16	1	15
70-80	1	—	1	23	4	19
80-90	4	1	3	13	2	11
90-100	3	1	2	3	1	2
100-110	1	—	1	6	1	5
110-120	—	—	—	5	3	2
120-130	—	—	—	6	4	2
130-140	—	—	—	4	2	2
140-150	—	—	—	2	2	—
	97			156		

Managers, &c. (Men).	No.	Board only.	Board and Residence.
£			
At 160 per annum - -	2	2	—
„ 175 „ - -	2	2	—
„ 180 „ - -	1	1	—
„ 190 „ - -	1	1	—
„ 200 „ - -	2	2	—
„ 220 „ - -	1	1	—
„ 230 „ - -	2	2	—
„ 240 „ - -	1	1	—
„ 250 „ - -	2	1	1
„ 275 „ - -	2	2	—
„ 300 „ - -	5	5	—
„ 330 „ - -	2	2	—
„ 350 „ - -	2	2	—
	25		

Salaries of Shop Assistants, 1891, as given by Witness 27, North London, in addition to Board and Lodging.

Women.

Without Premiums.		With Premiums.	
	£		£
12 approximating* to	15	24 approximating to	30
15 „ „	20	19 „ „	40
16 „ „	25	17 „ „	50
26 „ „	30	7 „ „	60
2 „ „	40	1 „ „	70
5 „ „	50	1 „ „	80
74 say average -	26	69 say average -	42

* *i.e.*, Between 12*l.* 10*s.* and 17*l.* 10*s.*

Men.

Without Premiums.		With Premiums.	
	£		£
2 approximating to	20	1 approximating to	20
3 „ „	25	4 „ „	25
11 „ „	30	3 „ „	30
9 „ „	40	3 „ „	40
9 „ „	50	11 „ „	50
7 „ „	60	„ „	60
3 „ „	70	8 „ „	70
2 „ „	80	3 „ „	80
1 „ „	90	5 „ „	90
1 „ „	110	1 „ „	100
48 say average -	50	1 „ „	110
		1 „ „	120
		2 „ „	140
		49 say average -	65

Salaries of Shop Assistants, 1891, Witness 122, East London, in addition to Board and Lodging.

Women.	Men.
£	£
Under 15 per annum - - 2	Under 15 per annum - - —
„ 20 „ - - 2	„ 20 „ - - —

Premiums.	Salary in addition to board and lodging.
—	6*s.* a week the maximum, average 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week.
	2 entered at 1st year 12*l.*, 2nd year 13*l.* 15*s.*, 3rd year 15*l.* 15*s.*
	10 entices rs. 3rd year maximum 40*l.*

TA
Shop

Mr W. Y. Garling at Messrs Ward, Shurt & Sharp's
Warehousemen, Manufacturers & Wholesale Hosiers etc.
89 & 91 Wood Street. EC

The firm manufactures hosiery at Belper. Sells its own goods and also buys from other firms. Supplies haberdashers, hosiers, drapers etc.

Mr G. began as an ordinary clerk at £20 a year with dinner & tea. Was placed in the entering room. This is usually the first step. Usually remain in the entering room for 2 or 3 years. ~~From this~~ All engaged here are rather young [Mr J. is a young man; not much past 20]. From the entering room you may go into one of the departments or into the counting house. If the latter the first duty would be to check the figures received from the entering room. Mr J. went into a department – the linens. It is not usual to go through all the departments. As a rule you stop in that first entered. Not usual to take apprentices; at least here. Mostly come as clerks.

The Entering room. All goods to be ~~sent out~~ despatched are sent here from the various departments to be checked. The only

only exception is heavy goods which are entered by a docket ~~at~~ the entering clerk only checking this, the goods going direct to the packing room. Light goods are packed in the entering room.

Department. The number and variety of goods comprised in a department varies according to the nature of the business and the firm's special lines. Here hosiery is divided into several departments; in other houses it may be one only. Linens – one line may be subdivided into many departments in other houses. Each dept is in charge of a buyer and to him the stockkeepers. e.g. those who look after the goods – are responsible. There are also salesmen and 'ordermen' the latter being those who attend to orders received by post or messenger. In a large department all the all these men would be distinct; in a small dept. the duties who fall to one individual. All these men except the buyer are also termed warehousemen.

Manufacturers agents. Nearly all manufacturers of dry goods have London agents, who are known as their representatives & keep their goods or samples

of

of them. These men, who have generally been trained in a warehouse are paid by commission on the sales they effect. When orders are received for goods not in stock, the department will know the agents dealing in its goods & will send a junior to obtain what is wanted. This is known as 'matching'. In this way the junior learns the trade houses. In the 'linens' there is much of this work as the variety of linens are great & they may have 30 agents to call upon in a day.

Show or Sale days. Tuesday is the sale day. The town travellers remain at the warehouse that day to look after their customers who may call. All goods sold on that day are credited to the traveller. The sale day is mainly for the town trade. Country buyers come up at all times.

Busy Seasons. Trade is busy in March & April for summer goods and in September & October for winter.

Hours & Salary. Hours opens at 7.45 am & closes at 5pm. Ordinary business is from 9 to 5. Packers & porters com ordinary hours are from 8 am to 8pm. These men are paid weekly wages & overtime if kept late

late. Those in the department can go as soon as their work is finished. Saturdays close at one o'clock: this is always 1 sharp.

Warehousemen are paid monthly altho some may & do draw their wages weekly.

Meals. Dinner and tea are provided & supper for those who are late. For dinner 30 minutes are allowed, the employees going in 3 parties: 1 o'clock 1.45 & 2.30. Tea 15 minutes is usual. Some do not ~~go~~ stop for their tea. Supper is at 8.30 pm.

Food is good & they have as much as they want. The following is the usual routine: — for Dinner

Monday — Hot round or ribs of beef. potatoes.
Tuesday. " Cold joints — Mutton potatoes, pickles or salad.
Wednesday Steak pie or entrees such as stewed steak.
Thursday Cod or other fish, Fruit pie or rice pudding
Friday — Hot joints. Greens & potatoes.
Saturday Cold " or Curry. do.

Potatoes are given every day and bread & cheese also.

~~Lodging~~: Very few of their men live in now. They used to but the practice is declining, ~~especially~~ certainly with their firm.

Sections 40-41. Percentage of Drapers etc at various ages — Census 1891

Age	Females				Males				Together
	Drapers	Hosiers	Silk	Total	Drapers	Hosiers	Silk	Total	
Under 25	5833	2440	36	8309	6674	914	574	8162	16471
Percentage	64·5	55·8		61·6	49·8	38·9		46·8	53·3
" 35	2197	894	16	3107	3566	655	427	4648	7755
Percentage	24·3	20·5		23·0	26·6	28·0		26·7	25·0
35 yrs & upward	1012	1037	25	2074	3182	779	665	4626	6700
Percentage	11·2	23·7		15·4	23·6	33·1		26·5	21·7
Total	9042	4371	77	13490	13422	2348	1666	17436	30926
Percentage	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Early Closing Association & Traders' Parliamentary Alliance -- 2d. New Budget Sheet.

Called on Mr Jas A. Stacey, the Secretary who gave me a copy of the last Report (1894) and allowed me to refer to the ~~back issues~~ previous issues. He also referred to ~~the~~ his evidence given before the Parliamentary Committee on the Shops (Early Closing) Bill on March 22/95.

It was untrue that the Assn was not doing 'voluntary' work now. As a matter of fact it had done more voluntary work during the past four years than ever before.

The Objects of the Association are:-

I. An abridgment of the hours of labour in all departments of industrial life wherever unduly prolonged.

II. The promotion of a Saturday or other weekly half holiday.

III. The abolition of unnecessary Sunday labour.

IV. The early payment of wages

V. The promotion, as far as possible, of a profitable employment of leisure hours.

VI. To watch over and promote the interests of traders

traders and their assistants in matters requiring municipal or legislative control.

These objects have been amended from time to time the last occasion being in 1887 when the addition of No VI was the chief alteration, the second part of the Society's name being added at the same time.

Medical Assistance. The Assn has an honorary medical staff which gives free medical advice (at certain hours) to assistants in all trades & young women in the dressmaking & millinery business (if assistants) provided they have paid their annual subn (5/-) to the Assn & have its members' card.

Ladies' Leagues are established in several districts for work in their own areas.

Present Position of Movement. "London is almost standing still"..... The readiness of firms here & there to offer opposition is increased by the apathy and surprising neglect of their own cause by the shop assistants themselves". The hours of closing on five nights of the weeks are extremely late in all directions. In some districts there has been a distinct retrogression on ordinary nights: there is little lessening of the midnight Saturday closing

Drapers.

W.	&	S
6	6PM	1
12	8 Bdhm 6+7	6
53	7	23
24	Between 7+8	23
34	8	54
—	Between 8+9	22
129		129

closing, neither is Sunday morning having abolished.

Hours of Closing. In the Report for 1886 particulars of the hours of closing of a number of forms are given from which the following particulars are taken:—

Silk Mercers & Drapers

Winter.		Summer
6 at	6.—	1
1 at	6.15	—
10 at	6.30	5
1	6.45	1
53	7 —	23
1	7.15	—
22	7.30	23
1	7.45	—
34	8.—	54
	8.30pm	21
	8.45	1
129 Total		129 Total

Warehousemen

Saturday		Other days.	
~~176~~	75-1PM	5pm	4 4
	9 — 1.30	5 & 5.30	6
	1 — 1.15	5.30	12
176	2 —	5 & 6	77
	5.3 —	5.30 & 6	15
266		5.45	1
2	No Return	6 —	113 113
268	Total	6 & 7	14
		6 & 6.30	2
		6.30	10
		6.30 & 7	2
		7 —	10
		7 & 7.30	1
		8 —	1
		Total	268

Abstract from Evidence given by Mr Stacey before Parliamentary Committee on Shop (Early Closing) Bill — March 22. 1895 & May 3. 1895.

Since 1886 there has been no great changes in the ordinary hours of closing but there has been an advance in the mid-week closing e.g. at 5 or 2pm on Wed. & Thurs.

Hours are slightly worse in some districts than 10 or 20 yrs ago but there has been improvement in others.

Voluntary actions is not making such progress as the leaders think necessary. Year by year some improvement are made but one or two men come along & upset the whole thing & the work has to be done over again.

Shop hours in the suburbs average 81 & 82, where 5 o'clock closing & 85 or more where there is no early closing. There are slack moments during the day but there are many busy periods when they are kept in after the shutters are up. Hours given are irrespective of work behind the shutters. When the shop is closed there is a vast amount of work done especially at Christmas & periods of special trade.

Meal times. Dinner 30 minutes & tea 20 min. usually.

Drapers shops commonly open from 8 to 9 and in some cases at 8.30.

Meal times. In giving evidence in May Mr Stacey supplemented information given previously. He did not know a single case where more than 30 minutes for dinner. He read a letter from a Manager in a West End shop engaged in the drapery, mantles, costumes, millinery etc. He wrote "In the largest houses the time allowed for dinner is but 30 minutes and that for tea 15 & 20 minutes. Now, in large houses of business, I particularly wish to point out

"out to you one great dis advantage; the dining room is usually a distance to get at, and one has to traverse various flight of stairs, invariably following a slow crowd the distance to travel, and by the time you have your seat at the table and served with dinner you find you have left but 20 minutes to be back to your department & ready for business"

Abstract from Evidence given before the Select Committee on the Shop (Early Closing) Bill. 1895.

April 2. 95

Mr Bryce Grant. Draper, of Penge; was formerly at Marshall & Snelgrove's. ~~He~~ Take a great interest in Early Closing; represented Messrs M & S on the Early Closing Ass^n and is now Vice-Chairman of the 'Voluntary' Ass^n

The shop assistants work shorter hours now than when he commenced in London or indeed when he commenced business 25 years ago. There can be no question in the case of the large shops & a large proportion of the smaller shops.

Finds that many young ladies are sent to the drapery trade because they are not robust & there the work is not excessive — it is tedious & at times there is practically no labour at all.

Thinks the tendency of legislative interference would be to create ill-feeling between employers and assistants and to introduce the principle of paying an assistant by the hour or the day so that the young people would lose advantages they possess such as weekly holidays, half holidays, holidays in the summer and bank holidays. These would be deducted from their wages and the assistants only paid for the hours actually worked.

When not actively serving a customer the assistants would be attending to their stock. A shopwalker would not allow an assistant to stand at the counter waiting for the next customer; would have to find work to do.

Mr Frank Debenham of Messrs Debenham & Freebody.

Hours of closing in West End are 7 o'clock on an average for the large houses in drapery etc. & on Saturdays 2pm. Hours vary with the season, being later in the summer than in the winter. Thus a house closing at 6 or 6.30 in winter would close at 7 or 7.30 in summer.

In my own house late hours have to be kept at certain times in the year, altho' the premises are actually closed. It is for the execution of orders, packing etc. It is more on the wholesale side of the business.

Mr J. Mackpherson - Secretary National Union of Shop Assistants.

& Mr W Johnson. General Treasurer, National Union of Warehousemen & Clerks. (These are the same union, the full title being the National Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen & Clerks) Society has 37 branches & about 2000 members. but comparatively few of these are in London.

Some amendments to the bill were suggested from the

the assistants point of view, amongst them being one that their time of work should be limited to half an hour after the shop closed.

Mr Johnson says that a large number of shops are understaffed and that consequently a necessary portion of the work is done after closing hours. In draper's shops there is "stock folding & so forth" to be done – also despatch of goods. The better class shops close earlier than the smaller shops for purely economic reasons. The question of giving their assistants leisure time has nothing to do with it. They close early because their trade is of such a character that it is unnecessary expenses for them to remain open any longer.

Mr Alfred G. Maher represented the United Shop Assistants' Ass^{n} which is a London ass^{n}. and has about 550 members. It is in favour of compulsory legislation. Their experience is that the large traders are more opposed to legislation than the smaller ones. Early closing would not harm the small traders. The voluntary movement has not made any perceptible difference in the hours of shop assistants except on Thursdays. Few close at 2pm on Thursday; most close at 5pm.

Dr Percy Kidd has been practising 15 years in London & is attached to the London Hospital & the Brompton Consumption Hospital. Has seen 24000 cases at Brompton amongst them a great many shop assistants. Has formed certain conclusions respecting the injurious effects of late hours of shopping on the health of shop assistants. The most common effect is a "general deterioration of health" which we medically attribute to over action, and debility of the nervous system, that includes a great deal more than what is called nervous disease, such as indigestion, constipation, a general slackness" &c. These symptoms are more marked in women than in men. Another symptom, especially amongst women, is anæmia, bloodlessness or pallor, that I have no doubt is connected with long hours indoors and largely to want of sunlight.

Miss Macdonald M.B. of the Hospital for Women, Euston Road. gave an ~~inst~~ instance of a patient whose work went on from 8.30 am to 10 or 11 pm. She did this for 15 years & was completely broken down. In the small shop in which she was the only shopwoman, she had to take her meals just as she could snatch them. She had no regular time, & suffered from that quite as much as

as from the long hours.

Dr W. Chapman Grigg senior physician to the Queen Charlotte Lying-in Hospital said that the prolonged hours have a very grave effect upon the generative organs of women entailing a great deal of suffering. It sets up inflammation of the organs. Has had some very sad cases: all tell him that it is the prolonged hours of standing. In the smaller houses they appear to be living in a more friendly & sociable way; they are allowed, for instance, to go into a back room & rest themselves sometimes. It is rather in the larger houses that I have seen my worst cases.

Sterility is often due to the inflamatory mischief. Thinks this is one of the greatest evils attached to these prolonged hours. Knows one case of a family, of which four members - shop girls - were sterile & two other girls - not shop girls - have borne children. Does not find this to be the case among milliners' assistants. Has often recommended shop girls in the West End to try & go into wholesale houses in the City, where the strain is nothing like so great. This deterioration of health is very common now.

Provident Ass^n of Warehousemen, Travellers & Clerks.

Secretary - Charles C. Greenwood. 98 Cheapside. EC

Established 1871.

Objects. (1) To provide a weekly allowance to Members out of employment.

(2) To provide medicines & medical attendance to members during sickness.

(3) To afford assistance to aged members in distress, & to members totally incapacitated from following their employment by accident, or by any physical or mental disease.

(4) To grant assistance to Members in any special cases of distress. ~~£5~~ [allow.

(5) To provide an annuity to Members so the Special Fund will

(6) To provide a sum of money at death.

Membership. Applicants must be between the ages of 18 & 40 engaged as buyer, traveller, salesman, warehouseman or clerk in a wholesale warehouse or buyer or salesman in a retail drapery, carpet or furnishing establishment or in any business approved by the directors or cashier, clerk or bookkeeper in any bank, assurance office &c... situated within the postal district or 12 miles around London and engaged on salary. Has 6000 members now & is the largest society of the kind.

Subscription varies from 2/6 to 7/6 per month and the benefit when out of employment from 20/ to 60/ per week for the first month; 10/ to 30/ for other two months & 5/ to 15/ for another 3 months

Government is by a Board of 20 directors, elected by the members, (~~two~~ employers are not eligible) and the usual officer.

Financial The income during 1894 amounted to £7583 of which £7320 was members' subscriptions. £2322 was paid to 477 for Loss of employment or sickness; Death payments were £155 & Medical fees amounted to £1210. From the Benevolent fund £185 was paid to members in distress. £2761 was paid to the General account during the year & at December the invested funds were £23999.

Medical advisers. There are a large number of medical men connected with the Ass^n to whom members may go for treatment.

NATIONAL UNION
OF
SHOP ASSISTANTS, WAREHOUSEMEN
AND CLERKS.

Head Office: 55, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON, W.C.

This Union was established at Birmingham in March, 1891, and has now 34 branches in various towns in England and Wales.

It endeavours to secure for every shop assistant, male or female, in the retail and wholesale distributive trades their rightful place in the social, industrial, and political life of the community, and more particularly that consideration from employers which is the right of every man and woman. In times of adversity, during illness or want of employment, it extends a protecting hand. There are 750,000 assistants employed in the United Kingdom eligible to join this Union. If 500,000 of this number were enrolled as members, paying 2d. per week, it would mean an annual income of over £216,000.

Too long have we depended upon well-meaning men outside our own ranks to do something for us, and the result is that as yet little has been done. Let us now realise that if anything is to be done to be of any real advantage to shop-workers it must be done by ourselves—by organisation.

We therefore appeal to *all* those employed, in whatever capacity, in the retail and wholesale trades to join the Union, and thereby form a strong and powerful organisation capable of protecting the interests of the assistants, and making the conditions of employment as congenial as they ought to be.

Branches of this Union have been established in the following towns:—Cardiff, Swansea, Newport (Mon.), Ebbw-Vale, Manchester (4) North-east, Central, Ardwick, and Hulme, Stockport, Burnley, Radcliffe, Rochdale, Heywood, Ashton, Leigh, Oldham, Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield, Crewe, Newcastle, Jarrow, Sunderland, York, Lincoln, Rotherham, Liverpool, Southampton, and in London (5) at South-west Ham, Stratford, Bow and Bromley, City of London, and Head Office.

MEMBERSHIP. MALE OR FEMALE.	SUBSCRIPTIONS AND ENTRANCE FEES. MALE OR FEMALE.

127

National Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen & Clerks. Secretary. J. Macpherson. General Secretary. 55 & 56 Chancery Lane. W.C.

Sam'l Mr Macpherson & Mr Wyatt Johnson, who form one express of the Rules & Report. (For Sc also pages 121-22)

Some of the members of this Union are in the Large drapery houses - Whiteleys & Peter Robinsons & Marshall & Snelgrove. Mr Mr. gave one some returns made by members but most of the men employed in grocery or food distribution of some kind. It may be better to [illegible] this Society on the Union containing general shop keepers only which section the Union would be retained in the Branch of they had not specified Warehouses.

The objects of the Union are:

(1) To promote the Early Closing of all shops, to secure for the Assistants an uninterrupted Weekly Half-holiday & to institute & support Legislation by the Imperial Parliament or Local Authorities for these objects.

(2) To establish all superannuation & pecuniary & to secure Mutual & Friendly fixed meetings.

(3) To secure further improvement of the sanitary arrangements in all shops & warehouses, and the gradual abolition of the present system of boarding & lodging employes.

(4)

Full Members, any Person over 18 and under 50 years of age.
Affiliated „ „ over 18 years of age.
„ Junior „ over 16 and under 18 years of age.

Full Members, Entrance Fee, 2/6.
Affiliated Members, 2d. a week; Entrance Fee, 6d.
„ Junior „ 1d. „ „ „ 3d.

Contributions of Full Members, Male and Female, as per Scale.

The Contributions of Full Members shall be according to the following Scales, PAYABLE IN ADVANCE:—

CONTRIBUTION AND BENEFIT TABLES.—MEN.

Age on Entry.	Monthly Subscription.	BENEFIT WHEN OUT OF EMPLOYMENT OR DURING SICKNESS.				PAYMENT AT DEATH TO MEMBERS OF		
		First 4 weeks.	Following 4 weeks.	Next 4 weeks.	Following 3 months, in sickness only.	2 years and less than 5 years.	5 years and less than 10 years.	10 years and upwards.
	s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
18 and under 30 ..	2 0	0 15 0	0 10 0	0 7 6	0 5 0	4 0 0	6 0 0	10 0 0
	3 0	1 2 6	0 15 0	0 12 6	0 7 6			
30 and under 40 ..	2 3	0 15 0	0 10 0	0 7 6	0 5 0			
	3 6	1 2 6	0 15 0	0 12 6	0 7 6			
40 and under 50 ..	2 8	0 15 0	0 10 0	0 7 6	0 5 0			
	4 0	1 2 6	0 15 0	0 12 6	0 7 6			
WOMEN.								
	1 2	0 10 0	0 7 6	0 5 0	0 3 0	3 0 0	4 10 0	6 10 0
	2 0	0 15 0	0 12 6	0 8 0	0 4 6			

Half benefit only will be allowed to members of six months standing, and full benefit to members of twelve months standing and upwards. The period of membership shall date from the first day of the month following that in which the application has been accepted.

Anyone desirous of obtaining any additional information should apply to Branch Secretary, or to me, at Head Office.

JAS. MACPHERSON, *Gen. Sec.*

The BATTERSEA BRANCH meets at GODDARD'S REGISTRY OFFICE, 16, Queen's Parade, Clapham Junction, S.W. (1st Floor) to enrol Members, take Subscriptions, and give any information that may be desired.

All Shop Assistants and Clerks, Male or Female, are heartily invited to attend these Meetings.

N.B.—Branch meeting nights First and Third Monday in each month from 9 to 10.45 p.m.

(4) The establishment of a term of apprenticeship for all persons (except porters) wishing to enter the various sections of trade protected by this Union - No one to be engaged under 14 years of age.

(5) To assist members in obtaining employment

(6) To regulate the relations between employers & employed.

(7) To give legal aid to members when necessity arises in their relations with employers.

(8) To provide a weekly allowance for ~~comp~~ members when out of employment through no fault of their own

(9) ~~The~~ To provide annuities for members & their widows or orphans.

(10) To assist in defraying the funeral expenses of members,

(11) To enable each branch of this Union to be represented on the Trades Council ~~in~~ its respective locality.

Membership consists of 4 classes - Full, Affiliated, Junior & honorary mbers. Full members ~~must~~ must join between 18 & 50 years of age. Affiliated members pay 2$ per week & must be over 18 years of age. Juniors over 16 & under 18 years of age. They may be of either sex but must be employed in or about any retail or wholesale shop, warehouse or office of any kind appertaining to the retail or wholesale trade. Affiliated & junior members are

are not entitled to sick or out-of-employment benefit except when called to give up their employment through any trade dispute when affiliated members are entitled to 10/- a week & Juniors to 5/- a week. Honorary members are contributors of £5 or not less than 10/6 per annum.

Entrance fees. Full members 2/6, Affiliated 1/6 & Juniors 3d.

Full members' Subscriptions vary. Men pay 2/- to 4/- a month according to age & amount of benefit. Women pay from 1/2 to 2/- a month.

Benefits. Men when out of employment get 15/- a week for the 1st 4 weeks, 10/- for 2nd 4 weeks, 7/6 for next four weeks when on lowest scale on higher scale these amount are half as large again. Sick benefit is the same as out of work with an additional 3 months at 5/- a week on lowest scale. Women receive 10/-, 7/6 & 5/- for similar period as the men & 3/- for additional 3 months in sickness. On higher scale their benefits are 15/-, 12/6 & 8/- & 4/6 for 3 mths sickness. [See scale for details]. Death Benefit Men £4 to £10. Women £3 to £6.10—. On the marriage of a female member of a full member for 2 years & has not received out of employment or sick benefit, the E.C. refunds 50% of the amount of her contributions.

Government is by an Executive Committee of not less than 6

6 members elected at the Annual General Meeting.

Branches in London are ~~five~~ six in number: South West Ham, Stratford, Bow + Bromley, City of London, Battersea + Head office. These included 162 members at December 1894.

Report for 1894 says that the progress during 1894 "was eminently satisfactory considering the terrible difficulties caused by the apathy + indifference of the greater number of assistants". The total income was £1327, an increase of £500 on 1893. Benefit has been paid amounting to £211. Three young ladies have claimed marriage portions. At Manchester the branches are preparing a list of fair shops.

United Shop Assistants Union.

General Secretary - Mr W.G. Arnold - Working Men's Club & Institute Bldgs - Clerkenwell Road. E.C. . See evidence of Mr A.G. Maher (Treasurer) on Shop (Early Closing) Bill - page 122-D.

The Union was registered in October 1893.

Its Objects are:

(1) The establishment of branches & districts.

(2) Of a Central Fund for the support of sick & unemployed members, for the advancement of wages & general trade purposes

(3) To reduce the hours of labour.

(4) To obtain fit sanitary conditions, longer & definitely fixed meal times.

(5) The abolition of all fines

(6) The establishment of a minimum wages in each particular trade

(7) To afford legal assistance.

(8) To assist members to obtain true references from previous employers.

(9) To abolish the prevailing system of contracts which place the assistants at the mercy of his employer

(10) The use of all legitimate means for the moral, social and

MANIFESTO
OF THE
United Shop Assistants
UNION.

TO THE SHOP ASSISTANTS OF ALL TRADES
(MALE AND FEMALE).

FELLOW SHOP ASSISTANTS,

We, the executive of the above Union, appeal to all employés in shops throughout the kingdom to join hands with us in improving the conditions under which we work, it being fully recognized that our grievances are such as can only be remedied by combined effort on the part of the assistants themselves, and call for immediate redress. We are of opinion that it cannot be done more successfully than by becoming members of this organization.

Some of the primary objects of the Union are :—

The Reduction of the Hours that we Work, which are intolerable, being in some cases as much as 96 hours per week, the average being as high as 84. The maximum should be 60 hours, including a fixed allowance for meal times.

The Abolition of the Living-in System, which is degrading to a man in so far as it completely kills his independence, and debars him from fulfilling his duties as a citizen. To extend the powers of the Truck Acts to cover the case of the boarding-in of employés.

To compel an Employer to give a True Reference, as the present system places an employé completely at the mercy of an employer, who can withold one to satisfy his own personal feelings, thereby depriving an assistant of the right to follow his or her employment.

To fix a Minimum Rate of Wages, as at present the pay is insufficient to keep a man in the position he is expected to hold, and being in many cases subject to numerous deductions for arbitrary fines.

The Abolition of all Fines, and to take up all legal cases in defence of its members.

The Union also provides benefits for Sick and Unemployed Members; the benefits being strictly within the financial liabilities of the Union.

The subscription for membership is 2d. per week for general trade purposes, and for the Provident Fund, which is optional, at the following rates :—

Per Week.	First 4 Weeks.	Second 4 Weeks.	Third 4 Weeks.	At Death.
6d.	18s.	14s.	10s.	£4 0 0
4d.	12s.	9s.	7s.	3 0 0
2d.	6s.	4s. 6d.	3s. 6d.	2 0 0
	YOUTHS AND FEMALES.			
4d.	12s.	9s.	7s.	3 0 0
2d.	6s.	4s. 6d.	3s. 6d.	2 0 0

ENTRANCE FEE, 1s.

For Forms of Entry and further particulars apply to the nearest Branch Secretary, or to **A. G. ARNOLD, Hon. General Secretary U.S.A.U.,** Club Buildings, Clerkenwell Road, E.C.

FORBAITH, PRINTER, BETHNAL GREEN ROAD

political advancement of members.

(4) To establish a system of inter-communication with the assistants of other countries.

Entrance Fee is 1/- & subscription 4d 6d or 8d according to scale of benefit adopted. Lady members & those under 18 years of age cannot join under the highest scale.

Benefits — Out of Employ or Sick. see below.

United Shop Assistants' Union
FOR MEN AND WOMEN.

OBJECTS :

Reduction of Hours.
Abolition of Living-in System and Fines.
To compel an Employer to give a True Reference.
To Fix a Minimum Rate of Wages. and to take up all Legal Cases in Defence of the Members.

ENTRANCE FEE, 1s. SUBSCRIPTION, 2d. per week.

PROVIDENT FUND.

Which is optional at the following Rates :

Per Week.	First Four Weeks.	Second Four Weeks.	Third Four Weeks.	At Death.
6d.	18s.	14s.	10s.	£4 0 0
4d.	12s.	9s.	7s.	3 0 0
2d.	6s.	4s. 6d.	3s. 6d.	2 0 0
	YOUTHS AND FEMALES.			
4d.	12s.	9s.	7s.	3 0 0
2d.	6s.	4s. 6d.	3s. 6d.	2 0 0

FORM OF APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.

Name in full .....

Private Residence .....

Trade or Occupation .....

Shop Address .....

I hereby request to be admitted a Member of the above Union.

Signed .....

For further particulars apply to —
W. G. ARNOLD, *Hon. General Secretary U.S.A.U.;*
or **Mrs. GRACE GOODALL,** *Hon. Sec. Women's Section.*
Head Office :—Club Buildings, Clerkenwell Road, E.C.

Government by an Executive consisting of President, Vice President, General Secretary, Treasurer, Organising Secretary, Press Correspondent, and two delegates from each branch, one of whom must be the Secretary or his Deputy. Branches are controlled by a Committee of 12 elected half yearly.