

grievances are of a minor character, which are in some respects a disgrace to a large and prosperous Department. The abnormal increase of traffic in New South Wales has created a large increase in the running staff, and consequently increased membership of the association.' Those, sir, are the words of the secretary of the Locomotive Association of New South Wales. What do we learn from that? We learn, also, that they have not yet got a forty-eight-hours week. That may seem to be an exaggerated statement, but, sir, I will give you proof and the proof is again Mr Hollis, the secretary of the New South Wales Locomotive Association. It is as follows: 'That Sunday work be paid for at one-and-a-quarter rates, and to be overtime independent of the fortnight's work. That all time worked in any one day over that asked for as excessive hours—viz., eight hours and a half on passenger-trains and ten hours on goods-trains or shunting-engines or in or about the locomotive sheds—and all time worked over fifty-two hours in any one week, shall be paid at one-and-a-quarter rates and as overtime, independent of the twelve days per fortnight.' Then, sir, the next clause I wish this Committee to take particular notice of—'That in all cases where such employees are ready, able, and willing for duty they shall be paid not less than twelve days per fortnight, irrespective of Sunday work.' Just imagine, sir and in the hotbed of the locomotive association, where they have all their own way, where it is claimed that they have benefited the men, that they have not yet got a forty-eight-hours week, and that Sunday time does not stand by itself, and then that time-and-a-quarter rates are asked for. Compare that with New Zealand with its definite forty-eight-hours week, compare that, sir, with overtime at rate and a quarter and Sunday standing by itself at time and a half; and yet we are told that the Amalgamated Society has done nothing for the locomotive-men. Here is another letter from Mr Hollis:

I am directed respectfully to ask your remedy for hardship imposed on Driver ———, of Junee, whereby in two pay periods he lost three days' pay, and consequently was paid short that amount. This was owing to his being booked off duty away from his home station and for the convenience of the Department. In each case he was at the barracks waiting on call; but his services were not availed of. The particulars are—On October 11th he was at Goulburn, on November 15th at Narrandera, and on November 19th at Harden. Away from his home he was on extra expense, and it is submitted that under such circumstances a man should not be paid less than twelve days per period.—Assured of your consideration, I have, &c., ROBERT HOLLIS. Now, sir, that was on the 9th February, 1910. Is that not sufficient proof to show this Committee that locomotive associations have not been to the benefit of these men, and that in this country, where we have had amalgamation for the last twenty years, the men have increased accordingly? We have been told that they have been neglected, and yet we find the conditions of other countries are far behind our own. Now, sir, I have another letter here which I should like to read to you. It is a letter written by a man who has now unfortunately gone to the great beyond, but this was his experience:

I am sending you under separate cover two copies of our Staff Regulations, with some recent amendments, as requested. I cannot supply you with the locomotive society's balance-sheet, but I will ask their general secretary to do so. They are not too well off to make known such matters. As to the senseless—I might say criminal—act of your locomotive-men in attempting to divide your association, it utterly confounds me. They cannot know the disastrous effects upon us in Australia this sectionalism has worked. You will find, whatever the present arguments, professions, and protestations are, that division means ultimate subdivisions, every one of which is another vampire sucking the life-blood from unionism. Time was, twenty years ago, when we were all in one union like our New Zealand comrades to-day, but, alas! the drivers, firemen, and cleaners separated themselves first, and now we are cursed with six distinct organizations in Brisbane, each with its own executive and officers—namely, stationmasters, assistant stationmasters, locomotive-men, guards, amalgamated, which is open to all grades, and a few months back three or four men have, after much trouble, started a new Traffic Association, and its membership is limited to wages-men of the Traffic Department. This last consists chiefly of men persuaded from the other unions, so that they have organized those who were already organized, whilst the great majority of our men remain aloof from any union, excusing themselves on the ground of our little petty sections of 'Tooley Street tailors' called 'unions.' Mr J Walker, Cross Creek, Wellington, one of your ex-presidents, whom I happen to know, will surely throw himself into the prevention of such a catastrophe befalling your association as this division portends. God help you if you begin dividing, for surely will your strength and usefulness begin to ebb away, because with weakness comes dissatisfaction and further subdivision; while one section is played against the other by the officials until 'Ichabod' is written upon your escutcheon—'The glory is departed.' Fight this to the death, and prevent the thin end of the wedge at all cost.—Yours fraternally, T. HALE. Those are the words of a man who had years of experience in Australia, and I think it should be sufficient to satisfy the railwaymen of this country that their interests can best be served by throwing their energies into one organization and working for one common good. Now, sir, the question of federation has been brought before this Committee. The federation proposals were passed in September of last year, but we did not receive those proposals until eight months later, when the Conference of the association had gone by. However, we immediately began to make a determined and sincere attempt to meet these men, but what was the result? Why, sir, Mr Russell, for the association, says we were "like drowning men grasping at a shadow." He said we had treated their correspondence in a scandalous manner. And that was because we put a conciliatory article in the *Review*, which is here for the perusal of the Committee. They immediately said that all negotiations were off, and that any further proposals must come from the Amalgamated Society. Now, sir, my time is just about up and I should like to say this: that we informed the Premier of what had been done, and he said, 'The legitimate reasons for a separate society are now removed.' And in reply to a question as to whether he thought it was a fair thing, the Hon. Mr Millar said, "I do not see that they would want a society at all then: they would elect their own representatives to the executive to meet as a whole," and he has also