

a little?—I do not think so, for this reason: that to be thoroughly acquainted with the conditions obtaining there a man must have the knowledge. For instance, if they had just gone and had a look at that particular point to which I refer they would have had it before their eyes—they would have been acquainted with it, and would have seen the necessity for improvement; but at the present time they do not see the necessity for doing such a thing, because the chairman of the executive at the present time of the A.S.R.S. says he does not see why painters should receive the 6d. extra we were asking for as well as other tradesmen.

11. That is not the point. I wanted to see how far your statement applies to the facts with regard to a dirty pit. You assert that in some part of New Zealand the pits in the engine-shed were very dirty?—Yes.

12. And that the executive of the A.S.R.S. were asked to make representations to the management with regard to the pit being dirty?—Yes.

13. Now, you admit that this matter was brought before the management by the A.S.R.S.?—Yes.

14. And at the same time you assert that those men were not capable of explaining this matter because they were not tradesmen. The president of the A.S.R.S. at that time was an engine-driver and had worked in the same pit?—Yes.

15. Do you not think that men who worked in that pit knew whether it was dirty or not?—They did not realize it sufficiently because they did not work in it. They knew it, but do not grasp the situation. I can explain it in this way: At Petone sometimes the engines come in for repairs in a very dirty state. There are men there who have been working there for years, and when I asked one of them to come and have a look at the place for himself he said, "I have been working just close to that place for years, and I never realized how dirty it was before." It is because of that statement I make the assertion I have made just now.

16. How many trades are represented in your association?—Fitters, turners, boilermakers, springmakers, blacksmiths, carpenters, patternmakers, painters, moulders, coppersmiths, tin-smiths, trimmers, angle-iron smiths, forgers, masons, bricklayers, plumbers, electrical engineers, signal-adjusting engineers.

17. Do you go outside the workshops?—Yes, we intend to represent the maintenance-men. Wherever tradesmen are employed in the service, that is our intention.

18. *The Chairman.*] You do not intend to admit anybody outside the service?—Oh, no. I should say we are satisfied with the conditions we have at the present time. We do not want any arbitration or conciliation or any other thing. In fact, the unanimous opinion of the men is that they do not want that. We want a union of our own members—men with identical interests to represent our grievances to the management direct.

19. *Mr. Veitch.*] You say that the tradesmen's interests are not identical with those of other branches of the Railway service, which must be admitted. Are you quite sure that the same principle should not be extended so that each of the various trades you have spoken of should have its own separate union, because there is a considerable difference between a fitter and a painter and between a turner and an electrical engineer?—I think the best answer to that is the deputation that is here. We represent almost all the trades, and you can see how unanimous we are. I am a fitter, but I represent really the whole. There is a fitter, boilermaker, moulder, blacksmith, and carpenter here. All the big trades are represented, and it is the unanimous wish of all the other trades that we should come and plead before this Committee. There is no desire on the part of the different trades to ask for small unions of their own. We recognize that all our interests are identical, and that is why we ask permission to form this association with official recognition.

20. *Mr. Field.*] You remember when a movement was on foot some years ago which succeeded in the direction of getting a separate association for the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners, it was then said that the next thing would be that other branches of the service would want to hive off as well. Is this the first attempt that has been made since then to split the Railway service?—This is the first attempt that has been made on our part. I think I made it clear in my evidence that we intended to be loyal to the A.S.R.S., and would have been if they had put our remits properly. Mr. Mack at that time said to the Railways Committee that if you grant them recognition you can never refuse recognition to any other body of men again.

21. Are you in a position to say whether another section of the Railway people will not want to hive off presently?—I have no knowledge whatever whether any other section desire that or not.

22. As far as you know there is not?—As far as I know there is no other section.

23. To what extent have you been represented on the governing body of the A.S.R.S.?—To the extent, as I said, that we have no direct representation. There is the workshops representative, and he may be from any of those I have enumerated. He may be a labourer, tradesman, or striker. There is nothing to say what he shall be. It so happens that at the present time the North and South Island workshops representatives on the council are tradesmen, but that is only by mere chance.

24. What number are there on the council of the A.S.R.S.?—I would not be positive. I believe you could get that information if you asked the officers of the A.S.R.S.

25. You say you are represented by one man there now?—We have the North Island workshops representative; we have also a South Island representative: they are two out of about a dozen.

26. Is two to twelve a fair proportion considering the number of your members?—No. We are not represented directly. What I endeavoured to point out was that the North Island workshops representatives are so tied that they cannot even represent our case, because if they do that they are up against the unskilled men, who are in the majority, and the result is that if they do it for us they are bumped out at the next election.