

1916.
NEW ZEALAND.

RAILWAYS COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF) ON PETITIONS OF JAMES McDougall and others, and thirty similar petitions as per schedule attached; with departmental report and minutes of evidence.

(MR. BUICK, CHAIRMAN.)

Report brought up 2nd August and, together with Petitions, Departmental Report, and Minutes of Evidence, ordered to be printed.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

FRIDAY, THE 19TH DAY OF MAY, 1916.

Ordered, "That a Committee be appointed, consisting of ten members, to examine and report upon questions relating to railways; with power to call for persons and papers; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Bollard, Mr. Buick, Mr. J. S. Dickson, Mr. W. H. Field, the Hon. Mr. Myers, Mr. Sidey, Mr. Sykes, Mr. Veitch, Mr. Witty, and the mover." (Hon. Mr. HERRIES.)

TUESDAY, THE 27TH DAY OF JUNE, 1916.

Ordered, "That the petitions praying for official recognition of the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association be referred direct to the Railways Committee."—(Mr. WILFORD and others.)

WEDNESDAY THE 5TH DAY OF JULY 1916.

Ordered "That Standing Order 219 be suspended, and that the names of Mr. Mander and Mr. Smith be added to the Railways Committee."—(Hon. Mr. HERRIES.)

REPORT.

No. 140.—Petition of JAMES McDougall, of Petone, and 57 Others (and thirty other petitions of a similar nature, schedule of which is attached).

PRAYING for official recognition of the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association.

I am directed to report that the Committee has no recommendation to make in regard to these petitions.

2nd August, 1916.

D. BUICK, Chairman.

SCHEDULE.

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| No. 162.—MacLean, T. L., and 25 others. | No. 177.—King, M. F., and 23 others. |
| No. 163.—Alexander, H. V., and 5 others. | No. 178.—Atkinson, W., and 43 others. |
| No. 164.—O'Brien, J., and 41 others. | No. 179.—Wilson, Frank, and 43 others. |
| No. 165.—Couchman, F. W., and 45 others. | No. 180.—Kirk, H. R., and 21 others. |
| No. 166.—Harris, D. S. D., and 49 others. | No. 181.—Melrose, W. J., and 21 others. |
| No. 167.—Mitchell, R. J., and 55 others. | No. 182.—Rennie, E. L., and 20 others. |
| No. 168.—Stout, T. W., and 50 others. | No. 183.—Rowles, Denis, and 164 others. |
| No. 169.—Sullivan, W., and 51 others. | No. 184.—Williams, A., and 49 others. |
| No. 170.—Ingram, S., and 49 others. | No. 185.—Croucher, E. G., and 3 others. |
| No. 171.—Gay, A. V., and 27 others. | No. 186.—McGill, Daniel, and 17 others. |
| No. 172.—Cameron, W., and 30 others. | No. 187.—Kennedy, E. B., and 8 others. |
| No. 173.—Leek, A. W., and 24 others. | No. 188.—Love, B., and 32 others. |
| No. 174.—Cuttle, W. J., and 52 others. | No. 189.—McEvoy, W. L., and 44 others. |
| No. 175.—Kilgour, J. N., and 13 others. | No. 190.—Williams, A. W. J., and 7 others. |
| No. 176.—Newlands, J., and 44 others. | No. 191.—Moffat, J., and 9 others. |

PETITION.

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives for the Dominion of New Zealand in Parliament assembled.

The humble petition of the undersigned sheweth as follows:—

1. The petitioners are members of that branch of the Public Service of the Dominion of New Zealand employed in connection with the Government railways under the Government Railways Act, 1908, and are tradesmen or tradesmen's apprentices in their last year belonging to the Second Division.

2. The petitioners are members or intending members of the association known as the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association, which is representative of the following tradesmen: Fitters, turners, boilermakers, springmakers, blacksmiths, carpenters, patternmakers, painters, moulders, coppersmiths, trimmers, angle-iron smiths, forgemen, masons, bricklayers, plumbers, electrical engineers, signal-adjusting engineers.

3. Tradesmen, members of the said association, have for years been members of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, and have endeavoured to work through the said society. Notwithstanding dissatisfaction, tradesmen have since 1910 hoped, through tradesmen's committees which were then formed to protect their interests, to remain in the society. The interests of tradesmen have (notwithstanding the representations of tradesmen) not been properly recognized, pleaded, or represented by the said society.

4. The policy of the said society on matters touching the skilled labour of tradesmen is in conflict with the interests of tradesmen. The society has absolutely refused to represent questions touching the remuneration, protection, and conditions of the skilled labour of tradesmen. Tradesmen accordingly were compelled to form their own association.

5. The said association represents a body of skilled labour having identity of interests and interests which are not the same as those of unskilled labour of the Second Division. Tradesmen desire permission to have their interests represented through their own association.

6. Locomotive-engine drivers, firemen, and cleaners, members of the said Second Division, have had official recognition accorded to their association, and your petitioners humbly submit that the Tradesmen's Association, representing a body of labour as large as, and having as substantial identity of interests as, the locomotive-engine drivers, cleaners, and firemen, should have official recognition accorded to it. Wherefore your petitioners pray that official recognition be accorded to the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will every pray, &c.

JAMES McDougall and 57 Others.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORT.

SIR,— New Zealand Government Railways, Head Office, Wellington, 27th June, 1916.

With reference to the petition (No. 140) of James McDougall and others, returned herewith, I have the honour to report—

1. The petitioners are employed by the Railway Department in the capacity of tradesmen and apprentices, and are members of the Second Division. The conditions under which they are employed are set out in the regulations of the Department, which are applicable to all members of the service. The rate of pay is governed by the schedule under the Classification Act.

2. The Department has no knowledge of what the intentions of the petitioners are.

3. The Department is not in a position to say whether the whole of the persons who have signed the petition were or are members of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, but it is not correct for the petitioners to state that the interests of tradesmen have not been properly recognized, treated, or represented by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. As a matter of fact, the interests of tradesmen have been strongly represented by the existing society on many occasions; but apart from this the Department watches over the interests of the employees of the service as a whole and would see that the interests of any section of the men were not neglected when making proposals for improvements in the pay or conditions governing the service.

4. These are questions that can best be answered by the representatives of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, whom I have no doubt the Committee will hear.

5. This presumably refers to the projected New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association, and not any of the existing Railway societies at least one of which includes in its membership a considerable number of men following various callings in the service of the Department, and includes skilled as well as unskilled labour.

6. Locomotive-engine drivers, firemen, and cleaners were not granted recognition until a considerable time after the society had been actually formed and its membership totalled at least a thousand persons. The question as to whether the Tradesmen's Society shall be recognized by the Department is a matter of policy. The increase in the number of Railway societies, however, involves a corresponding increase in the number of executives of societies with whom conditions of employment, &c., have to be discussed. It will increase the number of men who have to be relieved, and necessitate the employment of some additional staff to make up the time the members of the executive are necessarily absent from duty attending to business of societies.

In respect to the present petition it is desirable to remind the Committee that on two occasions the workshops staff was, in response to strong representations, given the opportunity of voting on the question of being dealt with by the Arbitration Court and taking Court awards and conditions, or remaining subject to Railway regulations, pay, and conditions. The votes were overwhelmingly in favour of remaining subject to the Railway Regulations. If, as it appears, tradesmen consider arbitration conditions preferable to Railway conditions there is no objection to another vote being taken on the question, but outside conditions cannot be given in addition to all the Railway privileges. The latter will not apply if the men decide to come under the arbitration awards.

I have, &c.,

E. H. HILEY,
General Manager.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

THURSDAY, THE 29TH JUNE, 1916.

JAMES McDUGALL examined. (No. 1.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You, I understand, wish to make a statement to the Committee in reference to the petition of the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association?—Yes.

2. Where do you reside?—In Petone.

3. What are you?—A fitter; and I have been in the service of the Government for fifteen years. I wish to state that I am president of the Dominion Executive of the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association. I desire to speak on behalf of the petition seeking for recognition for this association. I wish to state that this association was formed for the purpose of advancing and protecting the interests of tradesmen employed in the New Zealand Railway service, and was to be an association working within and through the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. At present the only union to which we tradesmen can belong having official recognition is the A.S.R.S. Dissatisfaction owing to the continued neglect of our interests dates back for a considerable number of years. This dissatisfaction culminated in a movement on our part in the year 1910, when letters were sent to the various workshop centres urging the tradesmen to band themselves together for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear on the executive of the A.S.R.S. to secure for us an increase in wages. The result of circularizing the centres thus was that tradesmen's committees were formed and set up to protect the neglected interests of tradesmen. Let me here tell you, gentlemen, that this movement originated in Dunedin, and also allow me to tell you that the prime mover was Mr. Barnett, who is now on the executive council of the A.S.R.S. The forming of these committees was productive of some good. In November, 1910, a conference of tradesmen's delegates was held in Wellington, and was received by the executive of the A.S.R.S., when a petition to be presented to the General Manager of Railways was placed before them. Might I draw your attention to one point in particular: that not only did we ask the sympathy of their executive towards our petition, but we asked their permission to plead our own cause before the General Manager ourselves. This they granted, and we took it as an acknowledgment that in the past they had not done us justice. The petition I refer to was one asking for an increase in wages. Now, sir, for about ten years prior to this we had not received an increase, so that, to quote from this petition that was presented, "That, excepting an increase of 6d. per day, granted ten years ago, our rate of pay stands at what it was after the 10-per-cent. reduction in the year 1881. . . . That in this respect our case is unique. . . . We are the only class of Railway servants that has not had restored to it the wages then reduced." Here, then, was an opportunity for the A.S.R.S. to show their interest in us by pressing for our well-deserved increase. But, gentlemen, what did they do? In the following year, 1911, the executive council of the A.S.R.S. presented a petition to Parliament asking for a 10-per-cent. increase all round for the Second Division. This attitude on their part annoyed us very much, and a letter was sent to them from Dunedin, which contained the following: "The matter that is giving us concern is the possibility of the

somewhat high demand of the A.S.R.S. for a 10-per-cent. increase all round, causing the Minister to recede from his promise to break up £50,000 in correcting anomalies in the classification list on the ground that it will take perhaps four times that amount to do what is requested of him. If you approve of the proposal we have made to the executive, we should be glad if you will act along the same lines and prepare a memorial to that body. It will be necessary also to proceed at once to make arrangements to give effect to the proposal. My committee suggest a deputation to Wellington. We have taken the matter in hand, feeling strongly that immediate action is required to save from disaster the cause that we have been striving for so long." That was signed by Mr. A. Peters, the secretary of the movement there. This annoyed us very much, and another letter was written to the A.S.R.S. as follows:—

M. J. Mack, Esq.

Hillside, 21st August, 1911.

DEAR SIR,—

In reference to the petition the executive council has presented to Parliament, there is one item to which the tradesmen desire to direct your attention—viz., the 10-per-cent. increase to all sections of the Second Division. Now, we wish to say that so far from protesting against the proposal we heartily welcome it. It has been ever our policy, during all the years we have been striving to better ourselves, to greet with pleasure the advances other sections have made. But what we do think is that our claim for consideration at the present juncture is paramount.

A reference to the petition presented to the G.M. through the A.S.R.S. in 1910 will disclose the statement, which has never been questioned either by the G.M., the Minister, or the Council, that "we are the only class who have not had restored to us the 10 per cent. reduced from our wages in the year 1881."

You may not be aware that the failure of the tradesmen to get an increase in recent years is due in some degree to the action of the A.S.R.S. The conference of 1906 actually threw out a request for an increase of 6d. per day for the smiths. Of course we do not wish to make the present executive responsible for the errors of past councils, but we certainly think it reasonable to expect you to help correct the injustice done by your predecessors in office.

Now we desire to be loyal to the A.S.R.S., and we hope that what we propose to ask will commend itself to you as a perfectly reasonable request.

We do not ask you to recede from your demand for a 10-per-cent. rise, but what we do ask is that the thousand tradesmen who have been agitating for years be allowed to represent their own case before the Railways Committee. We are advising you first hand of our proposal; we are also communicating with all centres, and are hoping to arrange some plan by which we may be thoroughly represented.

On behalf of the Tradesmen's Committee,

I remain, &c.,

A. PETERS, Secretary.

Now, sir, we felt just as keenly in Petone, but we were persuaded by the North Island representative not to go so far, as it really showed a want of confidence in the A.S.R.S. Shortly after this two attempts were made to form these Tradesmen's Committees into a Tradesmen's Association—namely, by the Dunedin Committee and by the Wanganui Committee. We thought in Petone, and, I believe, in other centres also, that it would be better in the meantime to give the A.S.R.S. another chance. In August, 1914, tradesmen again met in conference at Wellington, and were received by the A.S.R.S. Consent to receive us was, however, reluctantly given, as they considered they need not have been approached, seeing they had our workshops representative to speak on our behalf. In March, 1915, action was taken in every centre, and the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association was formed. Again allow me to emphasize the fact that our association was to work in and under the A.S.R.S. After the formation of our association the branches decided to hold a conference on the same date as the executive of the A.S.R.S. were sitting in Wellington, which took place in May, 1915. Time, sir, will not permit me to dwell on all that took place at that conference between us and the A.S.R.S., but the unsympathetic and at times hostile attitude they displayed towards us was intensely disappointing, more especially as we had come with our grievances as a body of men entirely loyal to them, though neglected. Representatives on whom we had built our hopes, more especially one of them, so interrupted one of our speakers that he had to be called to order, and so far lost control of himself that he flatly refused to obey his chairman until he (the chairman) reminded him that he would not tolerate interruption from any one, and commanded Mr. Hampton to be seated. Now, sir, if this was Mr. Hampton's attitude towards us when a workshop representative, what can we expect at his hands now that he has become president of the A.S.R.S.? A suggestion that we made, that they would allow one of our delegates to accompany them when approaching the Department on our behalf, was flatly and indignantly refused. Notwithstanding the many differences we had, their chairman thanked us for the forcible way we had put our case. But on the following day, when they requested our attendance, they accused us of coming in a "Stand and deliver" attitude towards them. Our first request to them was that they would endeavour to procure for us an increase in wages. Their answer to us was that they were not prepared to give preference to any particular branch of the service. They did not question or deny our right to this, but they were so tied to the overwhelming majority of the unskilled, whom they also represent, that they are afraid to push the just claims of the tradesmen from a fear of causing jealousy among the ranks of the unskilled. Approximately there are seventeen hundred tradesmen in the service. Of these, we believe about five hundred only are members of the A.S.R.S. They will not take our case on its merits. We are met with answers such as this: "I stand for the good of the whole." In other words, "I stand for the majority whom I represent." It has been forced upon us that the policy as actually pursued by the A.S.R.S. is to assimilate skilled and unskilled labour, and to regard them both as on the same footing. The climax came, sir, in the answers to our remits dealing with the encroaching on tradesmen's rights and our request that they be represented to the Department. Remit 13 read that no person be allowed to do tradesmen's work who had not served an apprenticeship. The 14th remit was that all tradesmen who may be employed in future by the Department should have served an apprenticeship and have indentures and papers to show they had served such apprenticeship. We look on this, gentlemen, as a point of honour with us; it is this question that has stirred the tradesmen from the North to the Bluff. It was the rejection of this remit that broke our loyalty to the A.S.R.S.,

and just as Britain lost her American colonies through the obstinacy and unfair treatment of George III and his Ministers, so the A.S.R.S. have alienated us entirely, and we mean to have no more dealings with them. We as tradesmen must at all costs have protection for our trades, even at the cost of severance from the A.S.R.S. I want to emphasize that this particular step we have taken is not only the wish of a few, as has been repeatedly thrown at us by the A.S.R.S., but is the emphatic wish of the many. We realized that although the delegates at our conference represented the great majority of our tradesmen in the service we had not the right to take such a serious step without consulting the tradesmen themselves, so it was decided that a ballot-paper should be issued to all tradesmen. This was accordingly done. The ballot-paper was as follows:—

VOTING-PAPER.

To the Tradesmen employed in the N.Z.R. Service.

The following remit was submitted for consideration to the executive council of the A.S.R.S. by delegates of the N.Z.R. Tradesmen's Association during conference held in Wellington from May 21st to May 25th, 1915:—

"That all tradesmen who may be employed in the future by the Department shall have served their apprenticeships, and shall have indentures or papers to show that they have served such apprenticeships."

This remit was rejected unanimously by the A.S.R.S. Executive Council.

After careful consideration of the A.S.R.S. executive's attitude on the above matter and the general welfare of the tradesmen of the N.Z.R. service, are you in favour of the tradesmen of the service throughout the Dominion forming an organization, with Government recognition, for the purpose of looking after the interests of such tradesmen?

YES.

NO.

The following was the result of the votes recorded:—

	Votes recorded.	Yes.	No.	Informal.	Total.
Addington	280	241	32	7	280
Petone	273	223	42	8	273
Newmarket	272	251	19	2	272
Hillside	206	184	20	2	206
Eastown	116	98	17	1	116
Napier	63	53	10	...	63
Invercargill	55	43	12	...	55
Westport	26	20	6	...	26
Nelson	9	6	3	...	9
Ballot-papers from different sources that were late	47	47	47
	1,347	1,166	161	20	1,347

Surely conclusive proof that the A.S.R.S. had been "weighed in the balance and found wanting." Broadly speaking, it is a form of dilution they intend to force on us, and dilution at the present time, as you gentlemen are aware, is a world-wide question. Mr. Asquith says, "Undoubtedly it is difficult to persuade skilled men to forgo their privileges and admit unskilled men to their work." Is there any question about the privileges which we have bought and paid for by the long years of apprenticeship? I think not. There should not be. This war has demonstrated the value of skilled labour. And when we look to our union for help to support us in this matter we find that on the point which is dear to every tradesmen's heart they are out against us. Engineered by an executive officer, Hillside Branch set up a committee to tackle the apprenticeship question, and the scheme evolved was taken from the West Australian Government agreement, as explained to the executive of the A.S.R.S. by the chairman of our Tradesmen's conference (Mr. Rowles). But, strange to say, this very essential point that appears in that agreement was omitted, that *all* apprentices must be indentured. What happened to that report when brought before the branch? A new clause was inserted by the predominant and powerful partner—namely, the unskilled—that all machinists be classed as tradesmen. Now, sir, machinists in the service are drawn from the ranks of the unskilled. Machinists do not serve an apprenticeship, much as we would welcome it; so that we are back to where we were, and, as I said, the A.S.R.S. find themselves in a tight place. There is no half-way house on this point. They must be for us or against us. They are against us, and, sir, in refusing to put these remits forward on our behalf they cut all official means of communication between us and the Department. So that we are forced to come to you, gentlemen, and ask that you will recommend to Parliament, which will give us the right to plead our own cause before the Minister or General Manager of Railways. What is our representation at the present time on the executive of the A.S.R.S.? In the true sense of the word, none. For we have no direct representation. The A.S.R.S. constitution provides that one delegate be elected by financial members employed in the workshops of the Department. The workshops representative represents iron and wood machinists, strikers, lifters, fitters, holders-up, furnacemen, labourers, and tradesmen. The first-mentioned group of workers, you will see, are labourers skilled and unskilled. Gentlemen, in making these comparisons I am casting no reflection on these men or their work either. In this small group alone you will see that we are not bound by identical interests, except, of course, in general welfare. Indeed, our interests are conflicting, and with few exceptions the non-tradesman holds the view that as he puts in the same hours of labour he should draw the same wages. Now, as I have pointed out, we are few in numbers in the A.S.R.S., and the reason is this: the majority of tradesmen belong to an outside union of their own, and they will not join a body whose particular interests are so divergent. In the A.S.R.S. there are upwards of fifty different sections, and, gentlemen, as the overwhelming majority belong to the unskilled, you will see

that our interests are not only not identical but often antagonistic. The engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners found this same difficulty; in fact, I believe they instanced my particular trade as having very different interests from theirs. I agree with that statement, and if the Railway Committee recommended that the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Association be accorded official recognition, surely you will not refuse the same privilege to the Tradesmen? Our opponents have often stressed the point of the advisability of one big union. But in its very size lies its weakness; so many divergent interests must be considered that there is not time for each one's claims—with all due deference to these gentlemen's abilities—nor expert knowledge, which is required to adequately represent our views. Let me give you an illustration of how our grievances are neglected by the A.S.R.S. compared with the way in which the E.D.F.C.s are looked after by their association. Fitters in a running-shed represented, through their branch, that owing to the very dirty nature of certain work, the extremely dirty state of drop-pits in which they worked, they considered themselves entitled to extra remuneration. The A.S.R.S., I believe, represented the matter to the Department, but did not take the trouble to see personally the state of the drop-pits and the conditions under which the fitters worked. The result was that nothing has been done for the fitters. On the other hand, cleaners in a certain running-shed complained to their association of the condition of some pits they did duty in. Note what took place. Officials of the E.D.F.C. Association visited the pits, saw the conditions, took up the cleaners' case, and the cleaners had the pits put in good condition for them. Why? Because their officials were able to speak from knowledge at first hand, and also because these men had been "through the mill" themselves. In conclusion, I desire to hand the following memorandum of reasons why official recognition should be accorded to the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association: Firstly, the tradesmen's interests have been neglected by the A.S.R.S. Secondly, more important still, the great majority of the A.S.R.S. have conflicting and hostile interests to the tradesmen. Thirdly, the tradesmen have for years been dissatisfied, but have endeavoured by every manner of means to be loyal to the A.S.R.S. They are forced by sheer impossibility of remaining any longer in the society to form their own association. Fourthly, tradesmen have substantial identity of interests. Their interests and grievances are different from those of the great mass of unskilled labour, such as porters, general labourers, keepers, surfacemen, and suchlike. Fifthly, matters touching special trades must be represented only by men in those trades. Sixthly, there is no reason why any requests or grievances or demands of the tradesmen should first be censored by a body representing unskilled labour, and if the unskilled be in any way affected or thinks itself affected that it should have power to block the grievances, demands, or requests of the skilled men. Seventhly, there is perfect unanimity amongst the tradesmen. The ballot shows how unanimous they are. Eighthly, their numbers are sufficiently large to have recognition accorded to them. Ninthly, they represent a body of men larger than the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Association, and they have as substantial identity of interests as have these men. Tenthly, tradesmen have formed their association and they have got the fixed and deliberate intention of continuing it; and, moreover, whether official recognition be accorded or not, to continue it. They will never be satisfied until they get official recognition. Eleventhly, essentially all they desire is permission to represent to the Department their own affairs. They are not now asking for any increase of wages in this petition, nor are they asking for the remedy of any grievance. They simply ask that the Department shall hear them upon their own requests, and shall not require that any request they make shall be first submitted for the approval of a body having hostile and conflicting interests. That is all I desire to say, gentlemen, and I thank you for the attentive hearing you have given me

4. *Mr. Veitch.*] Do I understand you to say that there are seventeen hundred tradesmen in the service, and that, roughly, five hundred of those are in the A.S.R.S. now?—It is like this: We estimated those numbers: we cannot get the definite number. I said there were seventeen hundred tradesmen employed in the service at the present time, and out of that seventeen hundred I believe only five hundred of them are in the A.S.R.S.

5. That is approximately the proportion in the A.S.R.S.?—Yes.

6. Can you say whether that small proportion is the result of men leaving owing to dissatisfaction which you say exists now, or has that always been the proportion?—Partly owing to the dissatisfaction I know some members have left; but, as I pointed out, the great majority of the tradesmen are in their own trades-unions outside, and they feel that they cannot join a body such as the A.S.R.S., whose interests are different.

7. With regard to the question of all tradesmen having indentures, did you mean that to apply to men in the service now or merely to fresh appointments?—When we brought that remit forward we were requested to explain that, and we said that as far as the men at present in the service were concerned we had no fault to find with them whether they had served an apprenticeship or not. We asked that they should represent to the Department that when they were employing tradesmen in future they would see that those men had served their apprenticeship, and that they had their papers or indentures or something equivalent. By "indentures" I do not mean the hard-and-fast legal term to apply. It is not the custom for outside employers to give indentures. Sometimes they simply give a written statement that So-and-so has served his apprenticeship for five years. That was all we wanted. If any one could vouch that a certain man had been employed in the trade for five years as an apprentice we had no objection.

8. You will recognize, of course, that it is possible for a man to serve his term of apprenticeship without learning his trade?—Yes, we recognize that.

9. There was one point I did not understand. You say the A.S.R.S. were asked to make representations about the dirty nature of the work in the engine-shed for a special allowance for fitters and boilermakers working in the engine-sheds?—Yes.

10. Do you really think it is necessary for a man to require expert knowledge to know whether a pit is dirty to work in or not—do you not think you were spreading that grievance

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.

27. With reference to the ballot that was taken, I understood you to say that 1,166 had voted in favour of hiving off?—Yes.

28. How many voted against you?—A hundred and sixty-one.

29. Did you send a ballot-paper to every tradesman in the service?—As far as we could reach every tradesman in the service we put a ballot-paper into their hands. We did not keep it to the members of our association. We simply asked them if they would fill up the paper and return it to us.

30. Do you think seventeen hundred ballot-papers were sent out?—At that time about two thousand were sent out.

31. You gave the number as seventeen hundred?—That is at the present time. You will understand from various causes that a great number of tradesmen are out of the service to-day who were in it a little over a year ago.

32. Did I understand you to say to Mr. Veitch that there had been a diminution in the number of tradesmen belonging to the A.S.R.S. as a result of dissatisfaction?—There has not been, for this reason: I advised and sent to every branch an intimation that they were not to pull away from the A.S.R.S. until official recognition was granted, and only then if they wanted to do so. I still retain membership in the A.S.R.S.

33. Will you give us the total number of tradesmen in the association?—At the present time there are 1,135 in our own association out of about seventeen hundred.

34. *Mr. Dickson.*] How many of your men have gone to the front?—We have never kept a tally.

35. You told us there were about two thousand papers set out—that is, 630 have not been returned?—They were not returned. We gave them the opportunity.

36. Is it your intention in drawing away from the A.S.R.S. to form a federation with the seamen, waterside workers, and miners?—That is just one of the questions that we fear. I believe that even at the present time the executive of the A.S.R.S. are in conference on that matter, and we fear, as tradesmen, that, being in such a small majority, we will be dragged at the heels of the unskilled man. If anything should happen they will compel us to follow them, and we object to that. That is one of our reasons why we want to be “on our own,” so that we shall not be dragged at the heels of the A.S.R.S. in matters such as you have referred to.

37. You really want to get away from them in order to be responsible for your own members?—That is so.

38. *Mr. Hampton.*] Your chief complaint seems to be in regard to the apprenticeship question, that we would not request the Department to insist that before employing tradesmen in the future they must produce indentures or papers showing they had served an apprenticeship: would you mind telling the Committee the reasons which prompted you in asking us to make that request?—As I said in my evidence, the infringement and encroachment by the unskilled was causing concern to the tradesmen in the service. We thought it was not right that if a tradesman had served his apprenticeship an unskilled man should do his work; and then, again, in several instances we found the practice was creeping in—although I will not say that as far as the officials of the Department are concerned they are aware of it—but the practice was creeping in of unskilled men coming in and working against tradesmen. For instance, take my own particular trade as fitter: it has occurred in that instance. It is a point that the other trades object to, and it was that which prompted us to bring forward remit No. 14 and submit it to our union—the A.S.R.S.—so that it would be brought before the Department in order that they might take reasonable care in the future that nothing like that would occur again.

39. Do you suggest that this was a general thing: in other words, do you suggest that the tradesmen now in the service are not competent men?—I do not suggest any such thing; but I object to any one, say, a street-sweeper, being allowed to come in and do our work.

40. In the engaging of a tradesman who do you consider should be the judge of the qualifications of the tradesmen—the men or the Department?—The men can come to an agreement with the Department if they have a grievance in regard to that. I might say that the Department recognizes that, and it was really only asking them to enforce a regulation of their own to see that such a thing was carried out.

41. You had laid great stress upon that in your circular, and you suggest it is the rock upon which you stand, and I am quite prepared to stand upon it too. Supposing you go to the Department and they say, “Yes, we agree to this.” Very well, they engage a tradesman. He goes into the shop, and you hear that he does not possess any indentures or papers. What are you going to do then?—If the Department agrees to that there will be no need for us to inquire into it. We trust the Department, and if they agree to that we accept and believe that they will see that it is truly carried out before they employ a tradesman.

42. But you suggest it is not carried out now?—By the under-officers.

43. To what extent: is it general or are there a few isolated cases?—In Petone within the last two years I think there were about six different cases.

44. That is to say, you know of six tradesmen in Petone whom the Department look upon as tradesmen and who to your mind are labourers, is that so?—No, they may not be labourers; they might be carpenters, and perhaps working in another Department.

45. You are laying great stress on this point, and I want you to kindly show to the Committee that the necessity existed for the Department’s attention being drawn to this. I want to know who are the labourers now in the service who are drawing tradesmen’s pay?—I am not going to make specific charges of that kind as to who those persons are. I have definitely stated that our concern is not with any men in the service at the present time—it deals with persons who may be employed in the future.

46. Have the Department in the past abused the trust you are prepared to put in them in the future: have the responsible officers of the Department put men in as tradesmen and paid them as tradesmen who are not competent men?—

The Chairman: I do not think that is before the Committee.

[The question of the admissibility of the question was discussed by the Committee, the Chairman finally ruling that the witness could decline to answer the question.]

47. *Mr. Hampton.*] Have the Department in the past abused the trust you are prepared to put in them in the future: have the responsible officers of the Department put men in as tradesmen and paid them as tradesmen who were not competent men?—I decline to answer the question.

48. Do you consider the possession of indentures by an applicant for employment proof that he is a qualified tradesman?—The possession of indentures proves that that individual has honestly tried to learn that trade to which he was indentured, and we as tradesmen consider that whoever enters the service as a tradesman should come through that door.

49. That is to say, the position you take up is that no one, no matter how skilled he may be, is to work as a tradesman for the New Zealand Railway Department unless he can show that he has served his time as an apprentice?—That is the attitude we take up.

50. Supposing through circumstances over which a lad had no control he was not indentured to a trade, and in after-years he has seen how he has missed his opportunity, would you deny him the right to acquire skilled knowledge?—You have asked me that question already, and I informed you then, as I do now, that it does not matter how old a person may be we have no objection to that man going into the trade provided he serves an apprenticeship.

51. What are your ideas of an apprenticeship?—I think that is a superfluous question to ask; but, as obtains at present, a man should serve five years to acquire that knowledge and skill necessary to make him proficient in the work he takes up.

52. Then your position is that if an adult finds himself in the position of a square head in a round hole, and finds that he has an aptitude for another trade, you would not allow him to work at that other trade unless he had served five years' apprenticeship at that trade?—That particular point we have not taken into consideration, where a man, if he had served an apprenticeship in one trade, should go to another; but, expressing my own personal view, I think he should not be allowed.

53. You have said to the best of your knowledge there are five hundred tradesmen who are members of the A.S.R.S.?—I said I believed there were.

54. Where did you get your information from?—I think that is a superfluous question, because I said I estimated that there was such a number. We had an idea of the number in the workshops in the different centres. We totalled those up and allowed for a certain percentage of those outside, and as far as we could make out our estimate was about five hundred.

55. Are you yourself a member of the Wellington Branch of the A.S.R.S.?—I think I already said I was.

56. Are you aware that as a member of that branch you are entitled to apply to the Head Office for this information?—No.

57. Did you apply?—I did not apply.

58. Do you know that less than a month ago twenty-seven tradesmen joined the Wellington Branch from the Petone Workshops?—I do, and I also know the reason why.

59. You said that most of the tradesmen in the service were also members of outside unions: are you a member?—No, I am not.

60. Do you know anything of the conditions of the engineering trade outside?—I know the conditions that obtain in my own trade.

61. Do you think, then, from your knowledge and conditions of your own trade that your conditions in the Railway are worse than those outside?—I was just going to say that I cannot see the use of that question. We are here for a particular purpose, and I do not see how that question is relevant to the matter, and I decline to answer it.

62. Do you know of any union outside the Railways which has a right to say that a man shall not work at a trade in which he cannot produce indentures and papers?—Yes.

63. Will you state what that union is?—The boilermakers can answer that question. We have a representative of the boilermakers here, and he will be only too pleased to answer you on that point.

64. You made a request to us for 2s. per day increase in wages?—

The Chairman: Where does the question of wages come in?

Mr. Hampton: I am not prepared to go on if these questions are going to be raised. I am here to get a fair hearing from the Committee.

The Chairman: You will get a fair hearing. You will get your turn to put your case before the Committee when the time comes.

Mr. Hampton: I think, then, it will save a considerable amount of the time of the Committee, and perhaps be better for our side, if I simply listen to these gentlemen, and then if the Committee will afford me the opportunity of reviewing what they have said, that that will be the better way of doing the business.

The Chairman: Please yourself.

65. *Mr. McVilly.*] You say in the Petone list of the petition which you have put in you are members of the Railway service: do you mean members of the permanent staff?—In the petition there are not only members of the permanent staff but any one who is employed by the Department, whether casual or permanent.

66. Whether they are termed "casuals" or "permanent"?—Yes.

67. You include amongst your list of tradesmen signal-adjusting engineers: what sort of man is that?—It should really have been "signal-fitter."

68. You are not including the man who simply goes round and adjusts the signal—he is a signal labourer?—No, we only take into our association those men who have served an apprenticeship in the particular trade they belong to.

69. You have said that you are quite satisfied with your present conditions so far as the Department are concerned?—We have nothing against the Department at all in this particular petition. Our claim is that if we have any grievances or if there is anything we have objection to that we should have the right of putting it direct before the management, and not to have it censored by the unskilled men.

SAMUEL INGRAM examined. (No. 2.)

1. *The Chairman.* What are you?—I am a boilermaker employed at the Hillside Workshops, and reside at Dunedin. I have been in the Hillside Workshops for six years, and a member of the A.S.R.S. since I joined the service. I have been president of the Otago Branch of the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association for two years, and I am leaving in the course of two or three weeks to join the Expeditionary Forces. I want to say at the outset that the evidence I am going to give has been perused by the members of the branch to which I belong, and therefore it is not only my own personal opinion, but the unanimous opinion of that branch. We desire official recognition for our association for many reasons. Our interests have been greatly neglected and not duly presented to the Railway Department. The A.S.R.S. is composed of members of the Second Division, including guards, truckmen, shunters, horse-drivers, lifters, porters, nightwatchmen, gangers, strikers, nurserymen, fencers, labourers, and suchlike, as well as tradesmen. The great majority, indeed the overwhelming majority, of the A.S.R.S. are not tradesmen, but unskilled labourers of various sorts. The unskilled labourers are paid of necessity, because they do work which is less skilled and which has not required the training and the working for low wages which tradesmen have to undergo while serving their apprenticeship, a slightly lower wage. This has been disapprovingly regarded by those other than tradesmen. To such an extent is this so that whenever a matter arises touching a tradesman at any of the branch meetings of the A.S.R.S. there is a great commotion, and they say, "Oh, there the tradesmen are again." They, so far as their expressions go, seem to think we are out to put them down, whereas the effect of our belonging to the A.S.R.S. is simply that we, and not they, have been kept down. We being in the minority and unskilled labour being greatly in the majority, they are able on all matters to outvote us and block us. Now, many of the matters which most deeply concern tradesmen are matters upon which their interests are not identical with but are in conflict with the interests, or what the unskilled think to be their interests. This conflict, or apparent conflict, is shown particularly in what are called demarcation disputes. These disputes do not arise outside the Railway service, because the Arbitration Court sees that tradesmen's interests are properly protected. A few years ago the labourers were encroaching on the tradesmen's work, and through the agency of the Arbitration Court this was remedied. These disputes do arise in the Railway service because there is no industrial or political force brought to bear upon the Railway Department, and because the A.S.R.S. disregards the interests of tradesmen and not the Department itself causes them. I was indeed surprised at what happened in the Government workshops. There matters which the Arbitration Court would not tolerate for a moment actually occurred. I refer to unskilled men endeavouring to do the work of skilled tradesmen. We object to this matter for many reasons. First, an unskilled man does not appreciate the danger and the risk he is running. He is a source of danger not only to himself, but to those who may be working with him. The second reason why we object to the unskilled men trenching upon skilled work is that they do not do the work so well by any means—the standard of work goes down; and also because a tradesman after his training is able to do it in many cases with an immense saving of time as compared with the time the unskilled man takes, and the general volume of work is reduced, and our wages will suffer because of that. We want to preserve the highest standard of efficiency amongst tradesmen. We want to do the best work and to turn out the best work we possibly can. Now, it will be readily seen that the unskilled men think when we raise these points we are out against them. They are matters which an association composed chiefly of unskilled labourers will not represent to the Department. Outside the service the Arbitration Court would immediately protect tradesmen, because men belonging to a particular trade can go before the Arbitration Court, but in our service we cannot go to any such Court, but have to refer the matter through the medium of the A.S.R.S. The A.S.R.S. represents a majority of those who think that in this regard their interests are different from ours, and we have no chance of representing fairly to the Department, or having represented to the Department, our grievances touching these matters. We are blocked in two ways, for this reason: Before a matter can reach the Department it must go through the branch of the A.S.R.S. where the matter arises. If it gets through the branch before it can reach the Department it must go through the executive council. Now, our grievances can never go past the branch, because the unskilled there can block us. Even if it got through there it might never go through the central executive, because it may be blocked there, as their policy, according to Mr. Wilson, is the greatest good for the greatest number. As a matter of fact it is nearly always blocked in the branch. For example, two years ago, at Hillside, tradesmen were very indignant over lifters doing fitters' work in fitting brasses to the axles of wagon-wheels, and the matter was brought up at the branch meeting. Tradesmen were unanimous, but the matter was promptly thrown out by the unskilled. When I went to the Railway Workshops I had been an officer of the Boilermakers' Union in Dunedin, and had been vice-president for one year and president for one year. I saw them doing work there and things tolerated there which

would never have been tolerated in a private outside workshop anywhere in New Zealand or Australia, and I pointed this out—drilling stays out of boilers and expanding tubes, making rivets and bolts. I was told that there was no hope of tradesmen getting anything represented. Even at that time tradesmen said it was useless, because the unskilled would block anything that tradesmen cared to bring forth. Indeed, the only use the A.S.R.S. has apparently for the tradesmen is to swell their numbers and to get their money. They are out to serve the interests of the unskilled. They are not there to represent matters touching the conditions under which tradesmen work. In May of last year, at the time of our conference, Mr. Hampton, then workshops' representative and now the president of the A.S.R.S., said in the presence of and to a deputation from the Railway Tradesmen's Association that he was referring to tradesmen who, being members of an outside union, paid only 5s. per year to the A.S.R.S., and for that reason said these tradesmen were no use to them. We asked the question, why did he represent them, and he answered, "Oh, you help to swell the numbers." The tradesmen want an association which has been formed to protect their interests, and where they are not welcomed only because they swell the numbers. The A.S.R.S. is, and has been as long as I have been in the Government service, dominated and controlled by unskilled—some seven thousand-odd unskilled to about five hundred tradesmen. The A.S.R.S. will not decide anything in our favour for fear of the unskilled complaining, and to show their preference in respect to the lower grades, I might instance the protection of porters in respect of promotion to guards. We are completely submerged in the unskilled labour. They will not represent our grievances properly to the Department, and even if they were willing they are not in any case qualified to place matters touching our skilled trade before the Department. Many matters touching our skilled trade they do not understand. We tradesmen even admit that in our own trades there are matters which we do not quite understand ourselves or as well as men in the trade. In 1915 a deputation was to wait on the Department. There was the president for a representative of a particular trade coming with the deputation. The matter in this case did actually touch the interests of tradesmen, and in order that our interests might be properly represented we asked that a tradesman might accompany the deputation. Their answer to our request was that they looked upon that as a want of confidence in the executive and refused it (see page 25 of the verbatim report of the official interview of the executive council with the tradesmen's deputation). When first formed—indeed, all through my connection with the Tradesmen's Association—we had not intended to separate from the A.S.R.S. We wanted to protect our interests, but had no intention of leaving the A.S.R.S. Matters, however, have during these years been becoming so impossible and intolerable that we have been compelled by sheer necessity and by neglect and unfair treatment to insist upon an official recognition of our own association, particularly after the unsatisfactory result of our interview with the executive council of the A.S.R.S. in May of last year, when such statements as the following were made to us: "We are prepared to fight for you men, but if you think you are better able to do it, by all means do it" (by J. Mack, secretary A.S.R.S., May, 1915, verbatim report), p. 14): and also their attitude in regard to remits 13 and 14. All we desire is permission to see the Department ourselves and to represent matters touching tradesmen. This will not make any difference so far as the Department is concerned. It will mean that matters can be represented direct by tradesmen, and not submitted first to the censorship of a hostile body, and in some cases not represented and in other cases not properly represented. They are unfamiliar with the real matters which concern tradesmen. There is a most profound and deep-seated dissatisfaction with the A.S.R.S. Tradesmen insist upon their rights to represent their own grievances. They deny the right of the unskilled men to sit in judgment upon disputes and grievances which the skilled men have against the unskilled. The tradesmen deny their right to prevent from reaching the Department any representation touching a matter in which the skilled men complain of the unskilled. They have a confidence that the Railway Department will do what is fair. They desire permission only that the Railway Department shall hear them upon their own matters. They say that the Railway Department should not compel them to be heard only through a hostile mouthpiece and indirectly. There is, so far as I have been acquainted with the South, complete unanimity. Out of 236 tradesmen in Dunedin 225 have signed, and in Invercargill 51 out of 59 signed. I wish to make it clear that the figures I have just quoted represent the number of tradesmen in Otago and Southland that had the opportunity of signing the petition, and every tradesman that came under our notice had that opportunity, but there are a number of tradesmen who are employed in the Maintenance Department and who work in the country whom we were not able to approach, and who consequently did not have the opportunity of signing the petition. There are possibly several tests which may fairly be applied before official recognition is granted. Our association satisfies every reasonable test. The first test is that the body should have sufficient identity of interests. This is a test that the A.S.R.S. itself does not satisfy, because it is composed of a body having divergent and conflicting interests, proved by the result of the conference with A.S.R.S. executive last year—preference to the greatest number, the unskilled. The A.S.R.S. itself could not have satisfied this test. The tradesmen have sufficient identity of interests. The second test is that the body should not be unreasonably small. We satisfy this test. The petition has been signed by over twelve hundred tradesmen. We estimated that there were seventeen hundred tradesmen in the service before the war. The tradesmen have been very greatly reduced since the war. In my workshop alone we have lost, I should think, about forty tradesmen. I venture to say that if the A.S.R.S. took up a petition against the Tradesmen's Association they would not get a hundred tradesmen who would not be in favour of official recognition. The E.F. and C.A. had no more identity of interest, and, indeed, had not such a large number as our association, and official recognition was granted to it. If they had a good cause for recognition, as we believe they had, so should official recognition be

granted to us. We have tried everything reasonably possible to avoid official recognition. It is only because we have been forced by the very necessity of things to require official recognition that we have reluctantly, and only after considerable deliberation, determined to seek it. There will never be peace between tradesmen and the A.S.R.S., and tradesmen will never rest until they get official recognition. If official recognition be not granted to them, then no doubt outside unions will take up their cause, and it will be a case of having to go to the Arbitration Court to protect their interests instead of coming direct and relying upon the fairness of the Railway Department. In my statement I referred to the work being done in the workshops. When I went to Hillside as a boilermaker I had to judge the men by the work they were doing as to whether they were tradesmen or labourers. I might say that I saw a man drilling stays out of a boiler, a thing that would not be tolerated for five minutes in private-owned shops in New Zealand. I have also seen a boilermaker at one end expanding the tubes, and at the other end of the boiler a labourer doing the same work. Those are the points I desire to bring before the Committee, and I do not think I have anything more to add. Our president has covered most of the ground, and I endorse all that he has said. I thank you for the patient hearing you have extended to me, and hope you will deal with the case on its merits, and in that case I feel confident you will give your judgment in our favour.

2. *Mr. Sidey.*] Have the responsible officers of the Department put men in as tradesmen and paid them as tradesmen when they were not competent men?—I have no objection to answer that question, but I want it to be clearly understood that we are not going to raise any question in regard to those who are recognized at the present time by the Department as tradesmen. We accept them as tradesmen in our society, and welcome them; but understand clearly that it is in the future we ask for protection. I will give a couple of instances to show what I mean. We have in Invercargill at the present time three labourers and three painters who were engaged in painting on the railway buildings. Lately the three painters were paid off and the three labourers were kept on to do the painting-work. There is also a labourer filling the position of leading fitter who has never served one month's apprenticeship. There is also a carpenter employed by the Department who served his time in a grocer's shop weighing out sugar and tea.

3. I want to know if the tradesmen have considered in the past that they have not been adequately remunerated by the Department?—Our answer is that we have not got the wages that we are certainly entitled to. We have asked for more wages.

4. *Mr. Field.*] Do you assert that you have not yet had restored to you the wages you were getting before the reduction in 1881?—I would like to have that question referred to our chairman. He has been in the service longer than I have, and he can speak better with regard to the conditions in 1881 than I can. I understand from his figures that the tradesmen in the service have not had the wages made up to them which were taken off about 1881.

5. With respect to the case you cited in Invercargill with regard to the painting of a building, were they railway employecs?—The whole of those men were railway employecs.

6. *Mr. McVilly.*] Will you give us some indication of what wages you think you are entitled to? The president has told the Committee that he is satisfied. What wages are the members of your trade earning outside?—I do not know whether the wages question is going to creep in here or not. We had no intention whatever of introducing the wages question into this matter: it is not in our petition.

7. You are not stressing that point?—No, not at all. We have no intention of introducing it.

CHARLES MEAD examined. (No. 3.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A blacksmith in the Petone Workshops. My evidence will run in a slightly different direction to that of the others. It will deal chiefly with the constitutional difficulties the tradesmen have to put up with by being members of the A.S.R.S. In supporting the petition of the tradesmen of the Government railway shops of New Zealand for a tradesmen's society I may say that I have been about fourteen years a member of the A.S.R.S., and that about twelve years ago I was elected by conference to a seat on the executive council and also its vice-president. I wish to place before the Committee a few events which occurred about that time, and which I consider is decisive evidence of the great difficulty tradesmen have to get matters which are considered to be in their interests properly discussed by members of an association the majority of whom are not tradesmen. About 1905 an increase of 6d. per day was given to the men in the lower grades of pay of the Second Division who were not tradesmen. At that time there was only a small difference between the wages of tradesmen and those who were not tradesmen. The new rise cut still more into that small difference. All tradesmen felt the injustice that was being done by reducing the small difference that existed, and considered that an increase should also be given to tradesmen to maintain their right to higher pay, because of the skill, expert knowledge, responsibility, and application necessary to produce tradesmen's work. The blacksmiths especially took the matter up, and by deputation to the Minister and to the General Manager pointed out the injustice that was being done by reducing the small difference that existed in the pay of tradesmen and some of those to whom the increase was given. As vice-president, before seeing the Minister, I endeavoured to get the executive to ask the General Manager if any increase was to be given to blacksmiths. This was refused by the executive. Executive refused what tradesmen considered important enough for a deputation to the Minister, which showed that the executive did not fully grasp the injustice that was being done to the blacksmiths. I was at that time acting as direct representative of tradesmen on the executive. A little later, when the conference met, I as vice-president applied to conference to be heard before them in respect to certain items that the branch of which I was at that time

chairman had placed on the conference sheet in the direct interests of tradesmen. Conference refused to hear me. They were within their constitutional rights in refusing to hear me, but the constitution of the society would not have been greatly strained if they had given me a chance, considering the special circumstances of the case. Another instance that occurred at that time in respect to the same items shows the true policy of the A.S.R.S. towards the direct interests of tradesmen. While visiting conference, which I was fully entitled to do as a member of the society, I heard part of the discussion on the items which my branch had sent, and which made certain comparisons with regard to the pay of tradesmen and the pay of others who were not tradesmen. I heard a delegate say that "Comparisons are odious," which is the same as saying that members of the A.S.R.S. should not make comparisons with regard to the pay for different classes of work. To say that "comparisons are odious" in such cases showed a want of knowledge on the part of the delegate as to how wages should be regulated in engineering-shops between engineering tradesmen and their helpers. By comparisons, Mr. Chairman, in my opinion, is the only fair way to regulate wages between engineering tradesmen and their assistants. The items were rejected by conference, which again shows what little hope tradesmen had at that time of getting what they knew to be justice from the A.S.R.S. conference. Another little event which occurred at that time shows the treatment that tradesmen may expect who endeavour to deal with matters which do justice to tradesmen through the A.S.R.S. At the time of which I speak certain workmen not tradesmen subjected certain tradesmen to quite a mild persecution because they supported items which made comparisons between the work and wages of tradesmen and the work and wages of those who are not tradesmen. Such treatment any tradesman may expect when he attempts to deal with matters in the direct interest of tradesmen, especially as regards wages, again showing what little prospect tradesmen have of receiving justice from the A.S.R.S. Tradesmen cannot get vitally important items passed conference. Their interests are therefore not fully placed before the General Manager. We are therefore now asking the right to place our interests before the General Manager through our own society. There is a tendency on the part of men who are not tradesmen to consider that the tradesmen's wages should be the lowest living-wage, and that all should receive the same as tradesmen. The cost-of-living argument is always being used by them to cut down any difference that exists between their pay and the tradesmen's pay, and they—the bulk of the members who are not tradesmen—completely ignore the just claims of skill, responsibility, and application necessary to produce successful tradesmen's work. This, in my opinion, is the mistake of the A.S.R.S., and has been the mistake for several years past. Then, you might ask, could internal reorganization of the A.S.R.S. be of any benefit? Any conference, however elected, could reject tradesmen's proposals. Direct representation is useless. That obtains now partly, both on the A.S.R.S. conference and executive. I have been direct representative on the executive as vice-president, and I know its futility. Tradesmen as such are practically in a tomb in the A.S.R.S., and might remain there unless our petition is granted. The tradesmen's direct representative must always feel the hopelessness of advocating on the A.S.R.S. executive the special treatment that the special work of tradesmen deserves. It is safe to say that any candidate for conference who advocated a higher proportion in wages than obtains at present for tradesmen would not be elected by the branches. Forming tradesmen in certain districts into a branch consisting of tradesmen only, and thus forming several branches throughout the Dominion consisting of tradesmen only, with tradesmen for delegates to conference, and the executive would prove useless, because they would be swamped at conference, both as regards numbers and the opinions that would be held by delegates elected by branches consisting of men who are not tradesmen, to the effect that "tradesmen must be content to accept what we (the majority who are not tradesmen) give them, both as regards wages and protection to their craft." The tradesmen's remits of vital importance to tradesmen would not under those circumstances reach the General Manager, and the remits that were sent to the General Manager would be accompanied by the statement that these remits were supported by the whole of the members of the A.S.R.S., which is sometimes not quite true. But, as I have said already, tradesmen are in a tomb in the A.S.R.S., and must often remain silent while they know very well that they are being undone by their true interests being evaded. This phase of the matter was well put by Mr. Samuel Kennedy, of the Engine-drivers' Society, in the report of the Railways Committee of 1910, bottom of page 24, where he says, "It is a well-known fact amongst leaders of trades-unions that the members of an amalgamated society drawing the higher pay can be of great assistance in lifting the lower-paid men up, but when it comes to getting higher pay for themselves they are in a minority." This paragraph from Mr. Kennedy's address seems to me to be applicable to the A.S.R.S. just now. There is not sufficient willingness on the part of men who are not tradesmen to do justice to the responsibility, skill, special knowledge, and application necessary to produce successful tradesmen's work. In my opinion the tradesmen who are most likely to be elected to the A.S.R.S. conference, under its present constitution, are those who sacrifice justice to themselves and to their fellow-craftsmen in the way of (a) adequate difference between skilled and unskilled labour; (b) insufficient remuneration for responsibility; and (c) protection for tradesmen. So that during elections for conference tradesmen's requirements just mentioned are never advocated by even tradesmen who are candidates amongst the members of the various branches, and consequently are never advocated by the delegate at conference, even though the delegate might be a tradesman, because conference must in the main confine its discussions to the remits sent forward by the various branches. But a tradesman might not be elected at all, though we have been fortunate in getting tradesmen on, I believe, every conference and executive. It is easily seen, therefore, that the interests of tradesmen are never fully represented to the General Manager by either the A.S.R.S. conference or executive, or even by the general secretary, because none of these three parts of

the governing body get the interests of tradesmen fully represented to it. The various matters connected with tradesmen are likely to be better looked after by tradesmen than by those who are not tradesmen; and the interests of the Department and the general public should be safe in the hands of tradesmen where the affairs of tradesmen are concerned. I ask this Committee to grant the prayer of the petitioners and give the tradesmen the chance to look after their own interests by placing them in the position of being able to represent their interests directly to the General Manager from their own union. The A.S.R.S. has done good work for many in the past, and if the tradesmen pass out of it it will still be able to do good work, since it will still have a large membership and important interests to look after. We wish no injury to the A.S.R.S., but can freely wish it success in all things that are fair and just to all concerned.

2. *Mr. Sibley.*] I understand that one of the reasons for your petition is that the A.S.R.S. have not made adequate representations to the Department in favour of an increase in wages for tradesmen, amongst other things?—Well, in part, but that has nothing to do with the position at the present time. Of course, it all helps in a series of years to cause dissatisfaction.

3. From what you said in regard to the wages question I understood you considered that the A.S.R.S. had not taken proper steps to put your claims before the Department?—That is partly true and partly not true. The great difficulty we have is not having proper means of bringing our claims direct before the General Manager.

4. And that you have suffered in the past because of that?—Yes, partly.

5. I want to know how you have suffered. Your petition says, "The society has absolutely refused to represent questions touching the remuneration, protection, and conditions of the skilled labour of tradesmen." So that, partly because of the fact that the society has not adequately put your case before the Department, you have suffered to some extent?—Yes, we have suffered.

6. Does that not mean that if you have suffered you are not receiving adequate wages to-day?—It might mean that. It could be construed to that. The proper answer to that is Yes-No, because it is mixed up. We all know you are trenching on ground now that is the result of a series of years. I repeat again that it is not a question of wages or what we have suffered. I say without hesitation that what we want is to represent our case to the management whether we may be considered to have had justice in the past or not, and that there will be nobody to prevent us meeting the Minister and the Manager and putting our requests directly before them irrespective of what we have suffered.

7. I understand you do not wish that the past treatment that has been meted out to you should be taken into consideration as a cause for what you are asking to be done now?—Past treatment by whom—by the society or the Department?

8. You do not wish the disadvantages you have suffered through the A.S.R.S. to be taken into consideration?—We have had very great difficulty in getting our requests adequately represented through the A.S.R.S.

9. And because of that you have suffered?—Yes, we have suffered.

10. I understand you do not want your present position to be taken into account as a reason why you should be entitled in future to have representation or not?—Yes, in regard to the difficulty of fully representing our grievances through the A.S.R.S., and we want you to take the constitutional question into account explicitly; that is one of the main difficulties. We want the privilege of going direct to the Minister and the General Manager without any one intervening.

DENIS ROWLES examined. (No. 4.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A fitter employed in the Newmarket Workshops at Auckland.

2. I understand you wish to make a statement to the Committee?—Yes. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I am president of the Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association. I spent my annual leave for two years in going round the country and coming in contact with the tradesmen in the different centres, so I can speak as to the personal opinions of the other tradesmen whom I met. From one end of New Zealand to the other I find that the feeling among the tradesmen was almost unanimously in favour of a separate organization. I wish to assure you, gentlemen, that this is not a movement engineered by a few irresponsible persons, but is the logical outcome of years of dissatisfaction among the mechanics of the service on account of the treatment they have received at the hands of the A.S.R.S. You have been told that we took a ballot among the tradesmen of the service in order that they could express their own free opinions as to whether they wanted this organization or not. You have been told of the overwhelming majority who voted in favour of it, and since that time, gentlemen, there has been no hesitation as to what course we should pursue. There has been no looking back, because less than three months ago, when I went round the different centres of New Zealand in company with Mr. McDougall, the president of the executive council, we found the feeling of tradesmen in the centres was keener than ever, and they were anxious to know when we could expect to get recognition given to our society. Now, one of the principal objects we had in the formation of the society was to raise up the standard of tradesmanship in the service, and it was with that object in view that we submitted that particular remit No. 14 which you have heard discussed this morning—that is, that no tradesman may in future be employed by the Department who has not served his time. Our idea was not to inflict a hardship on any man, but to uplift the standard of tradesmanship in the service. Whether they knew the effect of this remit or not, the A.S.R.S. struck a vital blow at the apprenticeship system, and that is the

system which has been recognized since the Middle Ages, by which artisans and mechanics were taught to become good and efficient tradesmen. Now, gentlemen, I want you to bear in mind—and I think it has been mentioned before—that it is not the Department which has taken up this attitude, but it is our own representatives, the last people in the wide world whom we would expect to do so. It is not those who are employing us—you can understand that; but fancy the very people who belong to our society and who are expected to represent us taking up this attitude and standing out against the right of tradesmen! Mr. Hampton said he did not think it mattered very much. If it mattered very little, why did he not put it through? We did not want them to force it on the Department: all we wanted was for them to bring it under the notice of the Department. We look on apprenticeship as the bedrock principle on which all tradesmanship is built, for, in spite of new methods, and notwithstanding the latest improvements in machinery, the highly trained and skilled mechanic is as important to-day as in any period of the world's history. I can say, further, that this great war has demonstrated that never in the history of the world was the mechanic so valuable to any country as at the present time, and surely we have the right to do everything we can to uplift the tradesmanship of mechanics. Now, the importance of the apprenticeship system was at one time not recognized very keenly in America, but during the last few years it has become more recognized every day. Up till a few years ago the enforcement of the contract of apprenticeship was not as strict in the United States as in the Old Country, and on the authority of men well acquainted with unionism we understand that imported men from the Old Country were in constant demand at the best wages in the United States, and this was a constant object-lesson to the American mechanics as to the value of a thorough training. Since that time the unions in the States have taken steps to look after the apprenticeship question. In the *Dominion* of the 15th June, 1916, appeared a statement made by the Hon. Mr. Barr. Speaking at the Conciliation Council in Christchurch he said, as far as I can remember the words, "The greatest acquisition that this country can have is well-trained apprentices and workmen." He says, "In this matter the British Dominions have been far behind the times, and I am hoping that New Zealand at least will be alive with regard to it." In all trades and in all countries this system is regarded as essential for the production of good and competent tradesmen. In England, Ireland, Scotland, United States, Canada, and all through the British Dominions this system is in vogue, and on the Continent they look on this system as being of more importance than we do. There is not the slightest doubt that the great industrial development that has taken place in recent years—a development which has astonished the whole world in a country which for the time being shall be nameless—has been due to a great extent to the manner in which they train their apprentices. Now, gentlemen, there is another aspect in connection with the importance of the apprenticeship system. You all realize that it would be absolutely impossible to watch the whole of every man's work. There are many little things a careless tradesman could let go, but owing to a great extent to the ideals which he has acquired while learning his trade his pride in his trade will compel that man to do a good job. Pride in high-class work still characterizes the skilled journeyman. Every true mechanic takes a deep interest in the general standard of workmanship for the entire craft, as well as pride in his own individual work, and that is the spirit we wish to foster. To be perfectly candid, we are not altogether disinterested. You may say, Why should you worry about the standard of the work? I will tell you: we want to raise the standard of tradesmanship, and we want to make the services of the mechanics more valuable to the Department. If we do so I have no doubt that the Department will recognize that our services are more valuable to them. We are not asking for everything and giving nothing. We want to make the services of the tradesmen of great value, and I am sure that the Department will be fair-minded enough to recognize that they are of great value. In protecting the standard of tradesmanship we are protecting not only our own interests, but the interests of the Department also, for you will recognize that it is essential for the good working of the service and the safety of the travelling public that the tradesmen's work should be absolutely above suspicion. The mechanic in the Railway service has to carry a good deal of responsibility, and if he is lacking in efficiency, or in that pride in his trade or that spirit which compels a good tradesman to do a good job, and he lets something go by, the consequences may be very serious. The tradesmen's work is peculiar in this respect: almost everything in the Railway Department goes through the tradesmen's hands at some time or another. The possibilities are great when you come to consider what may happen in the event of faulty workmanship. A faulty joint or weld, a badly brazed pipe, a loose bolt, or even a nut left off might mean not only a loss to the Department, but a great disaster also. Not only that, but we have to consider the responsibility of the tradesman from the financial point of view also, and here is where the financial responsibility comes in. Sometimes when a locomotive comes into the shop it is found that the cylinders are worn and require to be lined—that is, a bush is put inside. Now, first of all, this bush must be cast. After it is cast it must be sent to the lathe and turned down to the correct size, banded out to the proper size, and faced to the correct length, and then forced into its proper place inside the cylinder. That bush is held in its place simply by the fit. If the tradesman responsible for making that bush the correct size made an error of one sixty-fourth of an inch that job would be fit only for the scrap-heap. A job of that nature would take a fortnight to do, and if he spoilt it by an error such as I have mentioned the whole work would have to be done over again. In addition to that loss the engine would be delayed in the workshop for another fortnight. An error like that might mean a loss of £1,000. There is the loss of the material, the loss of the man's labour, and the loss of the engine when delayed in the workshop for a fortnight. That is the responsible work of the tradesman, and for that he gets 1½d. an hour more than the labourer. I do not want to go into technicalities, but I could show you that tradesmen in some cases work to one-thousandth part of an inch, and every day their skill and training

is being used to accomplish some object or to overcome some difficulty. A job must be done well before it will work well, and all the time the tradesman is responsible not only for the workmanship, but for the time he takes over the job also. That is bad enough, but to be told that any one has a right to come in and work alongside us, to practically serve his time alongside us, and be paid journeyman's wages while serving his time, surely, gentlemen, that is too much. Is it any wonder that the skilled mechanics in the service having identity of interests and sympathies in common have decided to pull together? All the skilled mechanics who have served their time will stick together on this question if on no other. That is the question that causes the tradesmen to stand on their dignity. They stand a good many things—they have stood many things in the past—but they will never stand any body of men telling them that their trade is not their own, that they have no right to it, and that Tom, Dick, and Harry can come in and work alongside of them. That is practically the language the A.S.R.S. use to us. We will never stand that, and whether we get recognition or not we will never be reconciled to the A.S.R.S. That is the reason we want to be "on our own," so that we can mind our own business. We will bring nothing but our own business forward; we have no wish to interfere with anybody else, and neither do we wish any one else to interfere with us. Is it not logical to suppose that the tradesmen know what they want better than anybody else? Is it not also patent that the tradesmen could represent the tradesmen's case from a tradesman's point of view better than any one else, and probably represent it in a more reasonable manner? That fact alone is a sufficient reason why we should be allowed to look after our own business, but taken in conjunction with the fact that we are first compelled to submit our case for approval, and then leave it entirely in the hands of an organization whose interests are conflicting, even if not hostile, it is sufficient reason for any impartial man why we should get recognition as a separate union. Now, in support of our claim that the A.S.R.S. are hostile, I would call your attention to the answer they gave to the remit on the question of wages over twelve months ago. They told us they were not prepared to give preference to any branch of the service. Now, gentlemen, do you realize what an answer of that kind means? It means that they are putting in a new form that played-out old fallacy that all men are equal. That is what it means. There are no two men in the world equal; not two leaves on the same tree alike, and certainly not two sections of the Railway Department of equal value; and when they say that they are not prepared to give preference they simply say "Whether you deserve this or not, we cannot afford to serve your particular case—we are not going to give preference to any section." Levelling up, they call it; we call it levelling down. Every skilled mechanic is an acquisition to the Department, and I think the Department will admit that. I do not think there has ever been such a shortage of skilled mechanics in the Railway Department as there is to-day. The mechanics have a right to stand and be judged on their merits, but under the present system we are not judged on our merits; we are forced by the A.S.R.S. to carry other sections on our back, as instanced by their reply that they are not prepared to give preference to any particular section. Now, owing to the reception which the A.S.R.S. gave our remits the tradesmen absolutely lost faith in the society. Many of them never did have any faith in it, and what little faith some of them did have was lost. It was felt that our whole salvation lay in our chances of obtaining official recognition in order that we could put our case forward and protect our trade if we did nothing else. The fact that we are here from all parts of New Zealand in support of our petition shows plainer than words that the tradesmen are not satisfied, and when a large body of men who have identical interests are thoroughly convinced that any particular union has not done the right thing towards them is it not better for all parties concerned that we should be allowed to go our own way? In June, 1915, shortly after the Tradesmen's Association remits were submitted to the conference and rejected, the delegates went back to their branches and reported. Then Messrs. Hampton and Moore, who were at that time the workshops representatives on the council, commenced a tour of the various centres for the purpose, they said, of putting the other side of the story. Everywhere they spoke they called meetings of the branches of the A.S.R.S., quite ignoring the fact that large numbers of tradesmen had never belonged to the A.S.R.S., and, further than that, as they were going to speak on tradesmen's business only, many of our tradesmen refused to attend the meetings because of the presence of non-tradesmen. They said, "We have no quarrel with the other men in the shops; our quarrel is with the executive council of the A.S.R.S.;" and they looked on the presence of the non-tradesmen at that meeting which was to deal with the business of tradesmen simply as a dodge to prevent an adverse motion being carried against the representatives of the A.S.R.S. Now, this is an illustration of what it would mean: Let us suppose that at one of their meetings they had fifty members present—twenty-five tradesmen and twenty-five non-tradesmen. If at the conclusion of the meeting the tradesmen were disgusted and wanted to carry a motion of no-confidence they would fail to do so if only one tradesman failed to support the motion. That would mean that, although twenty-four tradesmen out of the twenty-five voted for it, still the motion would be defeated, and it would be proclaimed as a great victory by the other side. That would then be considered as an indication of the feeling of the tradesmen in that particular centre. It shows that in a mixed meeting of that kind it is not a true indication of the feeling of the tradesmen. If such a thing could happen when the numbers are equal, try and picture to yourselves, gentlemen, the position the tradesmen are in to-day when they are outnumbered. Mr. McDougall stated that there were five hundred tradesmen in the A.S.R.S. I am not prepared to say how many there are, but we will give them a thousand members. The A.S.R.S. some time ago stated that the strength of their membership was 8,400. Well, say there are, roughly, a thousand tradesmen amongst eight thousand members—that is eight to one; what a hopeless position for the mechanics to be in! How could they possibly do anything against that weight of voting-power? They could not possibly do it; and, further than that, you see the great preponderance of unskilled labour. Even if some of those

gentlemen on the executive council were of opinion that we were right they dare not say so, because they would not reign for five minutes. In spite of the manner in which the meetings were called, and that the non-tradesmen were allowed to come in and vote against tradesmen on tradesmen's questions, in three out of the four principal centres in New Zealand—Auckland, Christchurch, and Dunedin—a motion of no-confidence was carried in the executive council after they had made their explanation. In Petone the tradesmen were absolutely indignant at the idea of having to vote and carry a motion against the non-tradesmen, and although they attended in large numbers they were careful not to put a motion of no-confidence forward because they said their quarrel was with the executive council of the A.S.R.S., and not with the non-tradesmen in the workshops. In Wanganui a motion of thanks was carried after hearing the explanation, but I think I am safe in saying that forty tradesmen resigned from the A.S.R.S. the next day after hearing the explanation. In three of the large centres out of the four, after hearing the explanation, they carried a motion of no-confidence. Even in the Addington Workshops, where Mr. Hampton, the president of the executive, is situated, he was unable to convince the tradesmen that we were not right, and in his own workshop, from the men who knew him better than we did, a motion of no-confidence was carried. In view of those facts, and in view of the large number who voted in favour of a separate organization, and in view of the larger number who signed that petition, can they, gentlemen, say they have the confidence of the tradesmen? We as tradesmen desire the right to put our own grievances direct before the Department, and not through another body whose interests are conflicting, if not hostile. In the Australian States the tradesmen can conduct their negotiations through their own trades-unions if they so desire, and the same can be said of Great Britain and America. Our desire is to take care of our own interest; we have no wish to interfere with any other section of the service, and neither do we wish any other section of the service to interfere with us. We consider, gentlemen, that our request is a reasonable one, and we trust, after hearing the evidence, that you will grant the prayer of our petition.

3. *Mr. Veitch.*] How long have you been in the service?—Three and a half years, within a day or two.

4. *Mr. Field.*] On the occasion you refer to when a number of tradesmen left the A.S.R.S. in the different centres, we understand that twenty-seven additional members joined in Wellington?—I do not say that a number of tradesmen left in the different centres, but I might say at the outset that it has been our aim right through to prevent men from leaving the A.S.R.S. We have never encouraged them to do so—in fact, we have discouraged them from leaving the A.S.R.S. until we get recognition. Even then they can stay in if they wish; but in Wanganui, absolutely on their own account and in spite of the advice given by Mr. McDougall, over forty resigned from the A.S.R.S. I know that a number of tradesmen have joined the A.S.R.S. lately, but representations have been made to them which influenced them to a certain extent. There is nothing to be taken out of that.

5. *Mr. Hampton.*] Are you a casual or a permanent hand?—I am a casual hand.

6. In regard to the forty whom you say left after hearing my explanation, are you quite sure that the whole of the forty heard my explanation?—I had information from the secretary of the Wanganui branch, who told me that after a meeting of the tradesmen they were so indignant that over forty of them resigned.

7. But can you say from your own knowledge that those forty were actually present at the meeting I addressed?—I could not say.

8. Can you say how many tradesmen were present at Addington when the motion of no-confidence was carried in me?—No, I cannot.

WILLIAM JAMES CUTTLE examined. (No. 5.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A painter in the employ of the Railway Department at Wanganui.

2. Do you wish to make a statement to the Committee?—I am president of the Wanganui Branch of the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association. I have been eleven years in the service. The first and essential point that brings us here to-day is one and the same. The interests of tradesmen and the desires of the petitioners are identical. They desire to obtain a tradesmen's association upon the accorded official recognition from the Railway Department. What we demand is permission that the Railway Department will hear us on matters touching tradesmen alone. We can at present belong to the A.S.R.S., but it is such a large body and its interests are not always our interests, and our interests have been neglected by it. All we ask is that the Department shall hear our requests touching tradesmen. We are not now asking for any increase in wages or any remedy of condition. We are asking that it is fair and right that when we have a grievance we should be allowed to tell the Department that we have such a grievance. We as tradesmen when we have a complaint or grievance must first submit it to a body which is represented by a majority of unskilled men. Our experience has been that they have regarded our interests as conflicting and hostile to their own, and we have been forced to the conclusion that it is no use mentioning matters to the A.S.R.S. because they will not be fully represented or will, indeed, be refused. Tradesmen in the service are completely dissatisfied with the A.S.R.S. The society is large, and it represents such a diversity of interests that it has come to look after the interests of its great majority and to neglect the interests of the minority. To show how tradesmen are in sympathy I may say that every tradesman in the Wanganui district with the exception of three signed the petition, and I may say that there was no undue pressure used or any subterfuge adopted to get men to sign the petition. For example, one man said he

was not in favour of a separate organization, but would sign the petition. This I flatly refused to allow. The tradesmen themselves are the best judges of whether their interests have been looked after or not. The fact of presenting this petition emphatically indicates that they have not. Our association is not a hasty scheme. We have decided on it only after earnest endeavour for the past years to have matters placed before the Department through the A.S.R.S. It is only because it is our only way to get justice. Indeed, it will be impossible from the very nature of the association to get this. We have various grievances. I mention these now only to show matters which we want remedied. We are, however, not now seeking to remedy these, but we want the Department to know of these things. We want to be represented by tradesmen who will represent them. We want to be sure that our requests will not be deleted or censored by the unskilled. We want the Railway Department to know just what we tradesmen say is our grievance. We deny the right of the unskilled men, or a body representative chiefly of unskilled, to say that they will not represent to the Department matters which we, the skilled tradesmen, say should be represented to them. If skilled men have a grievance we deny the right of the unskilled men to say it is not a grievance. We refuse to accept the final decision by any one but the Railway Department. I come now to the question of wages, and we feel that it is only right we should bring up some of the grievances that exist in the Railway Department which we consider could be remedied if we had our own association to deal with them. I place the heads of the Railway Department second to no other organization in the world as regards clemency and justice. I say that we have no grievance with the Railway Department at the present time. I want your minds to be quite clear on that point that we are quite satisfied, and although I am going into the question of wages it is simply an example of a grievance that existed. Take the position of an apprentice and a junior labourer: a junior labourer can start at seventeen years of age; he gets sufficient wages to keep him and pay his mother for his board, whereas the apprentice starts at a small wage which is not sufficient to keep him while he is learning his trade. Some six years ago a lady asked my advice as to what she should do with her boy. She said he had been at college, that he was seventeen years of age, and he was a careful boy. I advised her to put him into the Railway Department as a junior labourer. He went into the Railway Department as a junior labourer, and after being there six years he had saved sufficient to put £100 into a concern in which I am also interested, and also paid his mother board. He is now a machinist, and what chance has a tradesman of ever catching him up? Then there is the question of the apprentice when he comes out of his time. A boy can be apprenticed in the service when he is one month over fifteen years or one month before sixteen years of age. He has to serve his time until he is twenty-one years of age, and during that time he only gets apprenticeship wages. This means that one boy serves ten months more than the other. I say that that is unfair, and that is one of the grievances which we are going to represent to the Department which we consider we will have to rectify if we have the opportunity of representing it in our own way. Another point is that when a boy who has been apprenticed comes out of his time he gets 10s. a day, but the labourer goes on and gets to within 1s. a day of that sum. The question cropped up this morning as to whether any specific instance could be given of where labourers have come into the service as tradesmen. There was a little quibbling in regard to that question, but I have no fear with regard to placing before you an instance I know of where a man came into the service who had never served one hour in his trade, and there is at least one man in the service to-day in that position who is acting as leading hand. The first instance I will mention is that of a man who came into the service and worked for practically six years as a labourer in the Maintenance Department. He became friendly with the foreman, and at the end of six years, on the recommendation of the foreman of the Department, he was appointed to the position as a tradesman, and his name appears on the D.-3 list as having served his full years as a tradesman. When I went to Wanganui some three and a half years ago I went to work in the Maintenance Department. When I started there we were put on a good deal of rough work, such as cattle-stops, engine-sheds, and the rough work of the place. There was one man in the gang who I saw at a glance was a botch. Of course he had any amount of rough work to do, and so he continued on. When that work was completed I was left behind to complete what was considered the better work, while the rest of the gang went away with the leading hand into the country. Some months afterwards I met one of the men in the street and asked him what he was doing. He said, "I am off the job." I said, "Do you mean that that other man was kept on?" and he said "Yes; do you know the truth about that man?" I said I did not, and he told me that while there were other qualified painters there this man had a friend in the leading hand and he kept his job. The man had been working in the Southern Cross Biscuit Factory, and had previously never done any painting except perhaps his own roof. When the man was first put on he was questioned as to his knowledge of the various colours of paint, and having answered them correctly he was put on. That man at once became very nice to the leading hand because of his lack of knowledge of the work and lack of skill. He at once became servile. The other man, to put it plainly, was a cheeky beggar. When a gang goes out on the road they live in huts, and this man who was not a competent tradesman would get up in the morning and light the fire for the leading hand. That would go on for some considerable time. Now that man, owing to his incompetence, would do all he could for the leading hand in order to save his position, and when the time came for the leading hand to make a recommendation this incompetent man got the recommendation. That man who had never served his time left the service the other day, and was getting as leading hand 1s. a day more than I am at the present time. He has now started work outside the service as a full-blown tradesman. That is why we want the men who are in future employed by the Department to be competent tradesmen. I say that by that request we are assisting the Department. The head of the Department cannot possibly be acquainted with these things unless he is informed that so-and-so

is the case. We do not want to do that, but if we have our organization we will be able to protect ourselves against that sort of thing, and that is why we ask the Committee to give official recognition to the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association. Another matter brought before the Committee by the E.F.C.A. was the question of strikes. At that time the question of strikes was mythical, because we had at the head of the A.S.R.S. a level-headed man in Mr. Veitch, who always set his face against anything of a revolutionary character, but the position to-day is not so secure. Since 1910 this country has been deluged with revolutionary literature, and the recent waterside workers' strike in Wellington was an echo of it. I can tell you also that the men in the Railway service are being contaminated with stuff of a like nature. That is what we fear; we fear that we may be dragged at the heels of these men because we are in a minority; and in May last we had the executive of the A.S.R.S. listening to two speeches delivered by those agitators who brought out the waterside workers. Our parents are the pioneers of this country; my mother reared five sons, and had us all apprenticed to trades on a working-man's wages. That was the best she could do. She did it by self-denial, even to the extent of denying herself the very necessities of life. It is because of those things, gentlemen, that we want our own organization. We are afraid that our dignity is being undermined, that our birthright is about to be taken away from us, and we ask that you will pass your judgment in our favour. We are only asking that we shall have an organization whereby we can deal with the management direct, so that we can get justice meted out to us.

3. *Mr. Sidey.*] How long was that employee receiving full wages as a labourer before he went into the paint-shop?—In the first case I mentioned the man was a labourer for about six years. All the time that man was there he was receiving the full rate of wages as a labourer, which was quite sufficient to keep him. He was a single man. In the other case the man came right into the service as a tradesman on tradesman's wages.

4. *Mr. Field.*] The Department seems to be under the impression that the interests of the tradesmen have been fully served by the A.S.R.S., and you are quite satisfied that you have not been looked after by them?—I say that we feel it would be rather incongruous for us to come here without giving evidence on some grievances that have occurred in the service, but we are not here to put the Department on its trial. It is the A.S.R.S. that is on its trial, and we ask that this Committee will give us the chance to rectify the little grievances that are existing in the Department. I say that during this crisis in the world's history we tradesmen do not want to take up the wages question at all, and we only mention it to show that there are other grievances besides those statements in the petition.

5. Do you think that the granting of recognition to the association would have the effect of forcing the Department to increase the staff on account of the executive having to be away on matters connected with the association?—That is a question I have not gone into, but I think we could come to an arrangement with the Department whereby the position would not be worse than it is at the present time.

6. *Mr. Hampton.*] Would you have any objection to give the name of the man you referred to so that we could verify it if necessary?—Most decidedly I would object. I want you to take my evidence as the evidence of an honest man who has not come here with any flamboyant statements.

7. *Mr. Hiley.*] Will you give the name to the Department afterwards?—Yes.

8. *Mr. Hampton.*] What trade are you in?—I am a painter.

9. What wages do you receive?—11s. 6d. per day.

10. That is without the war bonus?—That does not include the war bonus—we have not received it yet.

11. You referred to a tradesman getting 1s. a day more than you?—Yes, he was a leading hand on the road.

12. And you decline to give his name?—I do. He has left the service

Mr. McDougall: That, Mr. Chairman, is all the evidence we desire to bring before the Committee.

FRIDAY, 30TH JUNE, 1916.

MATTHEW JOSEPH MACK examined. (No. 6.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You are general secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants?—Yes.

2. Will you make your statement to the Committee in regard to the petition of the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association?—Yes. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, at the outset I must candidly say that after hearing the evidence yesterday I am somewhat perplexed as to what is the real basis of the petition. The prayer of the petition says, "The policy of the society on matters touching the skilled labour of tradesmen is in conflict with the interests of tradesmen. The society has absolutely refused to represent questions touching the remuneration, protection, and conditions of the skilled labour of tradesmen. Tradesmen accordingly were compelled to form their own association." The only inference that can be drawn from that statement, sir, is that the tradesmen are suffering as regards remuneration and in their conditions as tradesmen,

and that as a result of the inaction, refusal, and hostility of the A.S.R.S. Then again, sir, we have in evidence the petitioners stating that they have no complaint with regard to the conditions under which they are working. Now, sir, if there is no complaint with regard to the conditions, and that the question of wages and conditions do not enter into the matter, then the ground for the petition is taken away. If, on the other hand, there is ground for complaint—that is, that the wages and conditions have not been attended to—then I respectfully submit that I am entitled to show to the Committee that the wages and conditions of the tradesmen have been attended to, and have been improved as a result of the representations made by the A.S.R.S. Now, sir, the petitioners have told you that in 1910 the tradesmen waited upon the executive council, and that the executive council accompanied them to the General Manager of Railways to put forward their own case. That is quite true. There was no definite decision arrived at then, and the matter was left in the hands of the Amalgamated Society, who continued to press the question of wages on behalf of the tradesmen, with the result that in 1911 an amendment to the Act was brought down which gave them an increase of wages of 6d. per day. In 1911 the executive council again had representations made to it, and they were then of the opinion that the tradesmen were not adequately paid. Further representations were made to the Department, which were rejected; but if Mr. McVilly will tell you, the fact is that the president at that time, Mr. Wilson, and myself subsequently waited upon the General Manager and urged the question of wages for tradesmen only. The result was that the Department considered the matter and granted a further increase of 6d. per day, which increase was brought down in the amendment to the schedules of the Classification Act, 1912. Now, sir, there are other matters affecting the tradesmen which have very conveniently been overlooked or not mentioned. For instance, reference was made to the conference of 1906, when the matters regarding the tradesmen were turned down. That conference asked the Department to allow each day's work to stand by itself for the purpose of overtime, but that was rejected. The Amalgamated Society has continued since that time up to recently to press the claim of the tradesmen for each day's work to stand by itself, with the result that that has now been accomplished, and the workshops are the only section of the Railway service to-day who receive overtime after completing a day's work. Every other section of the Railway service has to work a forty-eight-hour week. Then, sir, the question of carpenters being supplied with tools was another question affecting tradesmen. That also has been secured upon representations made by the Amalgamated Society for the tradesmen. Holiday leave has been increased from seven to ten days, and for over ten years' service to thirteen days, per year; and upon representations made by the Amalgamated Society with regard to passes, those members of the service who have had ten years' service are given first-class railway passes. In addition to that regulations have been brought down affecting the retiring-leave, and the fortnightly payment of wages in the workshops has been brought about as a result of representations being made by us. Now, sir, in addition to that, I find that the petitioners have stated that since 1910 they had hoped to have something done through the A.S.R.S. I have had taken out a return showing those matters which have been dealt with as affecting workshop hands generally, and I find that since 1910 we have made representations to the Department upon 637 questions affecting individuals and conditions in the railway workshops. That return I am prepared to produce to this Committee. I am prepared to produce every book and every document in connection with them if the Committee think it desirable, and I will give for the information of the Committee a tabulated statement in regard to what I have already stated, so that they may look through them and see for themselves the matters that have been dealt with by the Amalgamated Society on behalf of the men employed in the workshops. The great difficulty, it appears to me, has been narrowed down to about three or four matters. One is the question of remuneration, another is the question of apprentices, and the third has been mentioned by Mr. McDougall—namely, the question of tradesmen working in the running-sheds and dirt-money. A fourth has been mentioned in a circular to members of Parliament with reference to the remuneration earned by junior labourers and apprentices, and a fifth by the representative of the tradesmen who said that the constitution was the difficulty. The list I propose to hand in deals with the following: 1911 Amendment Act, 6d. per day increase; 1912 Amendment Act, 6d. per day increase; 1916 war bonus, 1s. per day increase; each day's work to stand by itself in workshops for overtime purposes; carpenters supplied with tools; first-class pass after ten years' service; holiday leave extended from seven to ten days, and if over ten years' service thirteen days; retiring-leave; and fortnightly payment of wages in shops in Department's time. I have not referred to the war bonus of 1s. per day because that will come in with regard to another matter. Now, sir, in 1914 the tradesmen met and approached the executive council, and the petition as placed before the executive council read as follows:—

Wellington, 6th August, 1914.

The Executive Council, Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, Wellington.

Sirs,—

The undersigned are tradesmen employed in the New Zealand Railways. We respectfully beg to make application for an increase of wages to 1s. 8d. per hour, and would earnestly call your attention to the following reasons why our request should be granted:—

1. That our work requires skill and involves responsibility comparatively greater than is expected from any other employees of the Second Division.
2. That in order to become efficient tradesmen have not only to serve an apprenticeship covering several years at a nominal wage, but have to give much time outside ordinary working-hours to the study of subjects connected with their various trades.
3. There is no encouragement given to young mechanics to perfect their trade; a large proportion of workshop apprentices do not find it worth their while to pursue courses of study with a view to become efficient tradesmen.
4. That the present remuneration to tradesmen is inadequate is proved by the fact that a large number of tradesmen leave the service for the purpose of improving their position.

5. That the two sixpenny rises received in 1911 and 1913 have only brought tradesmen up to the position that they occupied in 1881 before the 10-per-cent. reduction. That whilst other branches of the service have gone beyond what they then received tradesmen have actually remained stationary.

6. That the ever-increasing cost of living is felt keenly by us as by other members of the community, and as Railway servants we have to refrain from augmenting our earning in many avenues forbidden by the regulations of the Service we find it increasingly hard to provide for those depending on us.

7. In conclusion we trust you will regard the several clauses in the above petition as reasonable, and respectfully urge that you will grant it your immediate and favourable consideration.

We have, &c.

Then followed a list of signatures of the tradesmen. Now, sir, there we have an admission by the tradesmen that they have reached the position that they were in prior to the 10-per-cent. reduction, which was denied and disputed yesterday; and, again, the reason given here is the ever-increasing cost of living. Just at that particular time this unfortunate war broke out and the tradesmen immediately met and forwarded us this resolution: "1. That we impress on the executive council the justness and reasonableness of our claim embodied in the petition; that we expect them to push this at an opportune time, and that we do not wish to embarrass the Government at the present time. 2. That a copy of this resolution be handed to the executive council." My executive council believed at that time that that was the general feeling of the Railway service, and they immediately waited upon the Minister of Railways and told him that so long as the cost of living was kept within reasonable limits there would be no demand made by the A.S.R.S. for any increase in wages. Now, sir, what do we find? Eight months after that the tradesmen met again, and, notwithstanding the fact that the war was at its height and still going, the request was that the executive council should make a demand upon the Government for an increase of 2s. per day on behalf of tradesmen and tradesmen only. The request was of this character: that wages be increased to 1s. 8½d. per hour, and that in future all tradesmen be placed on the same footing as engine-drivers as regards wages. That has been kept back from the Committee, and our reply has also been kept back from the Committee. Our reply to that request was this: "We are not prepared to give preference to any particular branch of the service; we are prepared to push forward for a substantial increase to meet the increased cost of living for all branches of the service." We regard it—and I think the gentlemen of the Committee will admit rightly so—that whilst the cost of living was going up, if any increase of wages was to be given that increase of wages should apply equally to the man who is only receiving 9s. a day as to the man who is receiving 11s. 6d. or 12s. per day. The next request was that the present system of grading be abolished and the following substituted: one period of probation not exceeding twelve months, and that the wage for that period be fixed at 10 per cent. below the maximum rate of pay. The probationary period shall mean and include all time served in the Department, broken or otherwise. We replied to that request as follows: "We have made repeated efforts to have the second grade abolished, and that there should be a difference of 6d. in the first grade, and we support the suggestion *re* the probationary period." Their third request was, "That all apprentices on the serving of their time receive the maximum rate of pay on the completion of twelve months' service, during such time to be paid at not more than 10 per cent. below the maximum rate." Our reply to that was, "The answer to No. 2 covers this"—that is, that we had been making efforts and approved of it. Their fourth request was, "That all tradesmen working at dirty work received 1s. per day extra as dirt-money. 'Dirty work' to mean fitters and boilermakers in running-sheds, fitters stripping engines in repair-pits, boilermakers working in smokebox, firebox, or inside tanks or tenders." Our reply to that was, "The council now is, and has been, representing this matter to the General Manager." Now, before I go on I think I might just as well deal with that particular remit. I have here, as you will see, the file dealing with the wages of boilermakers in running-sheds. This question had been started by the executive council as far back as 5th September, 1912, and the correspondence in connection with it was finished on the 21st July, 1915. I am prepared, sir, to put this file in to the Committee. There is every letter received by me from our branches, there is every communication sent by me to the various branches, to the General Manager, and the General Manager's reply thereto; and if the Committee after perusing this file can conscientiously say that we have made no effort in the matter, then, sir, I am prepared to let the petition go right along without any further opposition. I might say just here that I am prepared to produce any file bearing upon any request that the tradesmen can put forward with regard to any matters that have been represented to us and have been neglected. Their fifth request was, "That all tradesmen employed on new engine-work be paid 6d. per day extra." Our reply was, "More information to be asked for." We wanted them to give us specific reasons or instances where men were employed upon new work and were not getting the 6d. which is provided for in the schedules, Classification Act. The sixth request was, "That all leading hands be paid 15 per cent. above maximum tradesmen's wage, rising to 25 per cent. in three years." Our reply was, "We favour the abolition of second-grade leading hand." The seventh request was, "That all tradesmen acting as acting leading hands for twelve months continuously receive the same increase as if it were a permanent appointment." Our reply to that was that we agreed to that remit. The eighth request was, "In all running-sheds and workshops where there are three or more tradesmen of any trade employed one of each trade be appointed as acting leading hand." The reply of the council went further than they asked. We replied, "Council supports this remit, provided that the word 'acting' is deleted. In that sense we have already represented the matter." What we urged was that instead of a man being appointed as acting leading hand a permanent appointment should be made to the position. Their ninth request was, "That all positions of Car and Wagon Inspector, Brake-bridge, Boiler, and Engine Inspector be filled from the ranks of tradesmen." Our reply was, "That deputation be informed that conference decided that all qualified persons

be allowed to take up these positions. We will press this decision of conference." The conference previously had decided that no particular position should be set aside especially for any particular class of workman, but we maintained the principle that any man who was qualified and was senior should be entitled to the position. The tenth request was, "That the attention of the executive be drawn to the fact that angle-iron smiths are not receiving the 6d. per day granted them by Parliament." The reply was, "That deputation be asked to supply specific instances through their branches." The eleventh request was, "That foreman painters be appointed in Hillside, Petone, and Newmarket, the same as Addington shops." The reply was, "This matter has been represented and we are at present dealing with it." I might say that right up to the present time we have this matter of the foreman painter in the large shops in hand. Mr. McVilly and the Department will bear me out in that. We had been representing this matter to the Department long before the tradesmen put the matter before us from their association, but up to the present time we have not been able to secure it. The twelfth request, "That the attention of the executive be drawn to the fact of casual relieving hands absent on holidays (Thorndon running-sheds)." The reply was, "That full particulars be supplied by the branch." The thirteenth request was, "That no persons be allowed to do tradesmen's work who have not served an apprenticeship." Our reply was, "We do not approve of remit 13, and the deputation be asked to interpret it." I do not intend to enlarge upon that question— that will be left to the tradesmen themselves; but the reply given by the president, I think, briefly and aptly covers the position, and I think will appeal to the Committee in regard to this matter. I might say, for the information of the Committee, that at this interview with the tradesmen we took the precaution to have a verbatim report of everything that was said. I have a copy of that report here, which I will hand to the Committee, and which they may retain. The arguments put forward by the tradesmen and the replies given by the executive to their requests are set out in the report. Mr. Hampton was not the president then, but his reply to that request was, "My opinion is that practical ability is worth more than all your paper, and the whole test is the man's ability to do the work. It is my opinion that if the Department chooses to pay a labourer 13s. as a tradesman that is their business, and not mine." Now, sir, I appeal to you and ask if that is not a common-sense, practical, straightforward statement. We do not say that the Department should not employ a labourer at tradesman's work at labourer's pay, and no single instance can be found where that has been done. When the Department have employed a man who might be skilled in some other branch of the service whom they considered fit and competent to do the work, and whose work they were satisfied with, they paid him tradesman's wages; and whilst I might say that the slogan of democracy throughout the world to-day is "Equal opportunity for all and equal pay for equal work," no tradesman in any trade can deny the right of a man if he has the skill and ability to do the work being employed to earn his living at that particular trade. That is the position. I might here remark that I am frequently called upon to approach the Department for clerical work for men who are injured in the service, or who are by reason of illness unable to carry on their ordinary occupations, and it would be just as reasonable for the Department to turn round and say to me, "This man has not served his time as a clerk and therefore cannot earn his living as a clerk in the First Division of the service." The Department has in very many cases replied, "We will find him clerical work and give him an opportunity"; and there are tradesmen, I believe, at the present time in the Railway service doing clerical work and not earning their living at their ordinary trade. Then, request 14 from the Tradesmen's Association was, "That all tradesmen who may be employed in the future by the Department shall have served their apprenticeship, and have indentures and all papers to show that they have served such apprenticeship." Our reply was, "Deputation to be given the same reply as to number 13"—that the deputation be asked to interpret it. Request No. 15 was, "That a tradesman be appointed to the position of leading hand to take charge of tradesmen in Nelson, as formerly." The reply was, "That the deputation be informed that this matter has already been represented by Council." For months and months we made representations to the Department in connection with this matter, but we were unable to get it redressed on behalf of the tradesmen. The request No. 16 was, "Does your executive recognize that a margin of from 2s. 3d. to 3s. per day should be recognized as the difference in the value of a tradesman's work and that of a labourer, and that thereafter all rises be granted on a percentage basis?" The reply was, "The Classification Act already provides for the margin stated, and we do not approve of any hard-and-fast rule as to percentage basis." Now, sir, what I want to point out is this: that the petitioners in quoting the difference between a labourer and a tradesman have taken those men who are machinists and lifters who are earning 10s. per day, and have called them labourers. Some of the lifters are getting 10s. 6d. per day, but the maximum for machinists is 10s. Those men are classed as labourers. I have recently had the opportunity of going through the Everleigh Workshops in New South Wales, and one surprise to me there was that the very class of men who are called "labourers" by the tradesmen in this country received higher wages there than the fitter. The fact is that machinists in the Everleigh Workshops in New South Wales received 12s. per day, and the maximum for a fitter is 11s. 8d. Now, sir, another statement has been made, and, I might say, published broadcast to members of Parliament, which states, "This union is composed of all classes of railway men in the Second Division, and its membership totals eight thousand, of which only about five hundred are tradesmen." I propose to hand to the Committee a return of the tradesmen in our organization at the 31st July last, when we took the last return. Evidence will be forthcoming to show that some branches have increased in membership since then, and the return will show that a number of branches did not send in returns at all. I may mention here, sir, that tradesmen are admitted into our society under two methods of subscription. The one method is for full membership, the members paying 1s. per month or 13s. per year; and the other for

tradesmen who belong to outside organizations, and who are subscribing to another organization outside, who are admitted at the rate of 5s. per year. Now, sir, of the former we had 1,143 members, and of the latter 197—a total of 1,338. I hand in for the information of the Committee a return setting that forth. Now, sir, some reference has been made to the question of the amount that an apprentice earns as compared with a junior labourer over a given period of years. A statement was published by the tradesmen to show that this was so, and in the circular that has been sent to various members of Parliament it will be found that they state there is about £40 in favour of the labourer. Now, sir, that is only half a truth. As I have shown to you as we have gone along, the statement to the Committee and to members of Parliament is that we have refused to ask for an increase in remuneration. We did nothing of the kind. We refused to ask for an increase of 2s. per day. Here again they issue a statement showing the tradesman starting as an apprentice, and the labourer starting as a junior labourer; but they conveniently leave out the fact that the apprentice starts at fifteen years of age, whereas the junior labourer has to wait until he is eighteen years of age before he can commence to earn his money with the Railway Department. I think you will, as practical men, recognize the difference in value as between the boy of fifteen years of age and the youth of eighteen. Further than that, it is assumed that he rises to the position of tradesman and stops there. That is the case with the labourer, who scarcely ever goes beyond 10s. per day. In fact, I do not think the Department could produce half a dozen instances where a labourer has gone beyond 10s. per day; but the apprentice has avenues of promotion after he has completed his trade both in the Railway service and out of the Railway service by which he can procure increased remuneration. Mr. Hampton reminds me that there are about fourteen leading lifters, but those men are regarded as leading men who can go up to 12s. per day. Now, I find upon computing the position of the apprentice starting at eighteen and the junior labourer at eighteen, that in six years the apprentice earns £819, and the junior labourer £694 4s. Taking an additional fourteen years, which covers a period of twenty years, the apprentice earns £3,330 12s. and the junior labourer £2,659 16s. The balance in favour of the apprentice is £124 16s. in the six years, and in twenty years £670 16s. Had we succeeded in the demand of the tradesmen of 2s. per day increase it would have meant to the Railway Department an increase of at least £52,000 for the tradesmen alone, and if that request had been put forward for the whole of the Railway service it would have cost the Department approximately £312,000. Now, sir, I ask you if any sane body of men would be justified in doing so in war-time—and that at a time when we had pledged ourselves to stand by the Department and the Government as far as possible—would we have been justified in making a demand for that increase? It would have been hypocrisy pure and simple for us to have done so. I hand in to the Committee a tabulated statement I have prepared in regard to that. There is just one other matter I wish to refer to before I conclude, and that is the recognition of our society. In 1890, as probably a number of members of this Committee will remember, there was great industrial strife in this country by reason of the fact that the A.S.R.S. at that time was affiliated with the Maritime Council. The result was a strike, and the society after that made representations to the Government for official recognition. They recognized that they had made a mistake. They asked for official recognition, but it was denied them except upon certain conditions. Now, sir, the conditions are here enumerated, and I will hand in a copy to the Committee. They are as follow:—

Conditions upon which the Society was recognized.

1. The general executive (annual conference) to consist of representatives from various sections to meet yearly to transact business.
2. The society not to be affiliated with any other union.
3. The officers of the society to be railway employees, the (general) secretary excepted, who need not be a railway employee.
4. No persons other than employees of the New Zealand Government Railways, the Wellington and Manawatu Railway, and the New Zealand Midland Railway are to be members of the society.
5. The local branches of the society to retain their organization, but all officers to be railway employees.
6. It must be open for all employees either to join or withdraw from the society at pleasure under reasonable regulations, and the society must not interfere with the individual privileges and rights of any employee.
7. The Commissioners will grant leave on pay and passes to members of the general executive of the society (delegates) so constituted to enable them to meet once a year.
8. The Commissioners will grant leave on pay similarly for a period of one month in each year to the secretary to enable him to attend to the society work should such officer be a railway employee.
9. The objects of the society to be exclusively confined to the consideration of matters affecting their interests as railway employees.

Now, sir, I would ask the Department to tell the Committee if we have in any respect broken that compact which was entered into between us and the Railway Department at that time. We have faithfully adhered to it, and the Department has faithfully adhered to it. And, sir, is it going to be the Parliament of this country that is going to break a compact which was entered into by its employees and the Department? Reference has been made to the question of our organizing for the purpose of a strike. Let me carry you back just a little way. Not long ago we had the Waihi strike. We were condemned from one end of the country to the other for our action in standing by the country and the people and running the train services as they

were run when we were requested to stop the train services and prevent free labour being taken on at Waihi.

3. *Mr. Sykes.*] Condemned by whom?—By the labour people in this country—the extreme labour people. Then, sir, came the great congress in Wellington. It was called the United Congress. The whole of the executive attended there. We are not afraid to meet any body of men no matter who they may be, because we know our own limits and we are not going outside those limits. As I have said, we attended that conference, but matters did not go as they ought to have gone and we withdrew. Our president at that time made a statement, and that statement was published not only throughout New Zealand, but published in all parts of the world. Magazines and papers throughout the world published that statement, and congratulated the railway men of this country for their common-sense in connection with the matter. Then, sir, we come down to the strike on the waterfront. Again we were urged and asked to show common cause with the men when they went on strike. What was the result? We earned the gratitude of every man in this country who is engaged in any sort of pursuit for our sanity and action in standing out of that conflict. Now, sir, is it not futile, is it not childish for any body of men to come before this Committee as the engine-drivers have done and present a petition and tell you that we are organizing for the purpose of a strike, and that they are afraid of being dragged at the heels of the A.S.R.S.? That statement was made before the waterside workers' strike, but we have proved to the country where we stand; but, sir, they have not proved to the country where they stand. The statement was made by the engine-drivers before the parliamentary Committee that we were organizing for the purpose of a strike, and that they had a "no-strike" clause in their constitution, and that without the engine-drivers the Railways could not go on; but, sir, within a couple of years their own secretary made a statement, when they were treated in such a manner by the Department, "Was it any wonder that men went on strike!" At the time of the last waterside workers' dispute I had a man come to me under these conditions: He said, "Mr. Mack, I am in a difficulty. I am a member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers; I am told that if that engine comes from Addington to Wellington and is handled by free labour I have not to touch it: what am I to do? I have coming to me in a few months 12s. per week retiring-allowance from the Amalgamated Society of Engineers; I have my superannuation coming to me from the Railway Department. If I do as the Amalgamated Society of Engineers direct I shall forfeit my superannuation. If I do not abide by the advice of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants I shall lose my 12s. per week from that society." He said, "What have I got to do?" I said, "Look here, old man, you have been ill; a rest won't do you any harm; take my advice, take a month off on sick-leave and the struggle will then be over." That was my advice to him. Now, sir, I ask you once again if it is reasonable that after the Department have fulfilled their part of the compact, that after we have fulfilled our part of the compact, and after we have shown to the Government and the country our loyalty, to suggest that we are organizing for the purpose of a strike? Such a statement, I think you will admit, is ridiculous. That is all I have to say, gentlemen.

4. *Mr. McDougall.*] You have stated that each day's work stands for itself in the workshops for tradesmen only?—No. I say that each day's work stands by itself for overtime in the workshops of the Department.

5. Then what you were quoting applies to the workshops staff as a whole?—Yes, as a whole.

6. Would you mind enumerating the different sections in the workshops?—As far as enumerating them is concerned, I think I can.

7. I do not want them all?—We might as well have them all. There are storemen in the stores department, labourers, watchmen, fitters, turners, boilermakers, springmakers, tin-smiths, blacksmiths, patternmakers, moulders, coppersmiths, trimmers, and wood and iron machinists. I would say here with regard to machinists that the maximum pay for machinists has never been increased for years. They have not participated in the increases that have been given. Those are the men whom the petitioners claim are labourers. Then there are strikers, holders-up, and forgemen. I may have omitted one or two.

8. Do the tradesmen or the unskilled men predominate in the workshops?—I should say the tradesmen predominate, but I cannot say for sure. That is a question you should put to the Department.

9. In your address to the Committee you mentioned the petition that was presented by the tradesmen in 1914. Do you remember asking us the question when we met in conference if that petition was superseded by one you were going to present at the last conference?—No, I have no recollection of that. I may have done so. If I did so it will be in the report of the proceedings before the Committee.

10. We have it in that report?—Then that is all right—I will admit it.

11. You also mentioned that we classed all those men as labourers. Did we not debate the point before you, and you admitted that they were skilled labourers that we were classing them as?—No; we have never admitted anything of the sort.

12. I think also that that report will show that we proposed that?—To the best of my knowledge we did not say so, but if I were asked that question now I would say that he is more of a mechanic than he is a labourer or a skilled labourer.

13. When you mentioned the number of tradesmen who were in your society did you include in those tradesmen bridge carpenters?—Yes, certainly.

14. You have said that your action has proved that you are entirely against strikes?—That is quite so.

15. Then what did you mean when appearing before the Railways Committee and arguing at that time against the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners who were applying for recognition—what did you mean by the statement that if recognition were granted the A.S.R.S. would

reserve the right to take action if they thought fit if the recommendation was given that another association should have official recognition?—It is very easy of explanation. If every section that comes along is to get recognition, then the compact which we regarded as a solid compact, and one which should be treated as such by the Government, will be broken, and once a compact is broken in connection with any matter either party is at liberty to do just as it thinks fit. They are under no further obligation.

16. The *Railway Review* is your official organ?—Yes.

17. And it represents the views, I presume, of the executive of the A.S.R.S.?—I do not know that. I am not prepared to say that. The editor, I may say, is under an agreement which lays down how far he can go or cannot go. The executive do not influence him in any way whatever. Whatever he writes in the *Railway Review* he does entirely "off his own bat," and he is to be responsible to members for it.

18. Then do you agree with an article in the *Review* headed "The Wage Crisis," wherein it says, "The waterside workers, as a large and well-organized body of transport employees, are approaching the executive council with a proposal to link up for effective corporation for mutual benefit. The possibilities are immense, and with a strongly dissatisfied body of State servants they would be sinister"?—I quite agree with that—every word of it—because I know this: that the saneness of the executive of the A.S.R.S. not only would have but has had an influence upon the waterside workers which, when the result is known, will be approved of by every man in this country.

Mr. Hampton: Seeing that the paper has been quoted from and only part of the article has been read, might I ask that the *Review* be put in in order that members of the Committee may read the whole of the article?

The Chairman: Yes.

Mr. McDougall: I will read the whole of the article for the information of the members of the Committee. It reads:—

THE WAGE CRISIS.

A definite development in favour of railway men's demands for consideration during this time of exceptional high prices has taken place since last month. The National Cabinet has promised a concession, and will evidently give a lead to Parliament as to the extent of the rise, which will operate retrospectively from 1st April. This is good as far as it goes, but unless the concession adequately meets the serious crisis which has arisen in railway men's affairs it will not lessen the discontent nor prevent the Department from losing more of its highly trained men, who get better pay and better treatment to-day from private employers. Workers outside the Government service have secured substantial increases to keep pace with the rising tide of prices, but they need not entertain even a fleeting hope of enjoying the remarkable prosperity of the farming classes, who get railway transport at bed-rock cost, and sometimes less than cost price. Between the millstones of fixed wages and advancing prices of necessities, the low-paid State employee is being crushed to the point of distraction. We may experience a lull in the men's agitation, but it must break, and with redoubled violence, under the impelling stress of living conditions, unless the Government's remedy is equal to the occasion. Producers, rolling in millions, continue to enjoy the full benefits of a transport system worked by men who are not paid a sufficient wage to decently maintain their families. The men have followed the constitutional path, seeing hopeful signs at its end, but they are in no mood for politicians' expedients. We are uneasy about the National Government's attitude. This dispute is not in the nature of a horse deal, in which each party seeks to get the better of the other, the deal being called off if either party is not satisfied. One party to this dispute is tied down to carrying on a great and essential national service for payment fixed in pre-war times, when conditions were different. The railway man cannot pay his war-time bills on the pre-war wage, and the weekly reminder of that hard fact is making the most staid of them dissatisfied to the point of desperation. It requires very little to turn the whole current of agitation pell-mell into a rocky channel. One of our branches has been urging the A.S.R.S. to take a stop-work ballot. Canterbury Branch—one of the largest—talks of drastic action if necessary, and that is the tone of every resolution published in this issue. The waterside workers, as a large and well-organized body of transport employees, are approaching the executive council with a proposal to link up for effective co-operation for mutual benefit. The possibilities are immense, and with a strongly dissatisfied body of State servants they would be sinister. Let the National Cabinet divest its mind of ideas of carrying through a horse-deal kind of proposition. Railway men's conditions are not attractive enough to keep the men in the service. It would require very little to provoke a crisis beyond power of the National Cabinet to control.

19. *Mr. McDougall* (to witness).] You mentioned about the machinists in New South Wales. Can you state that those men served an apprenticeship?—No, I cannot tell you that.

20. At one time I believe you gave permission to the General Manager to put machinists doing boilermakers' work when there was a shortage of boilermakers. If that is so, why did you not consult the tradesmen concerned?—Well, the position is this: I am delighted to hear that the General Manager came to me and asked my permission to allow him to do it, but out of courtesy I might say that the late General Manager, Mr. Ronayne, sent for me and said, "We have got a lot of boilermaking work to do, and we cannot get boilermakers. There are several men at Hillside who can do the work and with whose work we are satisfied, and we will pay them tradesmen's wages. Have you any objection?"

21. *The Chairman*.] He was speaking to you as secretary of the A.S.R.S.?—That is so. I said I could not see any objection to it. I believe they were put on, but there was immediately a protest from the boilermakers, with the result that the men were withdrawn. That, sir, in itself goes to prove what I have previously said, that the tradesmen desire to prevent any man having equal opportunity notwithstanding the fact that they want it for themselves. They object to any man encroaching upon tradesmen's work notwithstanding the fact that he may be paid tradesmen's wages. Now, sir, I would just like to draw your attention since the matter has been brought up before this Committee to the fact that the tradesmen must recognize that the very foundation of a tradesman's occupation is at stake more now than ever before by the high class of machines that are being brought in. You have only to take up any illustrated paper in this town at the present time and you can find that women are at present engaged in handling the most delicate and up-to-date machinery to the exclusion of tradesmen, and Mr. Lloyd George has stated himself that it is necessary, as he calls it, "to water the trade" for the

purposes of the Empire at the present time, and the fact remains that that having once got a start the tradesmen throughout the world are going to have a great difficulty in shaking it off. When I came here yesterday I heard for the first time that it was possible for a labourer who had not served his time to do tradesmen's work. I always thought that that was impossible, but now I find from the tradesmen themselves that any handy kind of man can cut in on their employment.

22. You stated to us at the conference that if we thought we were better able to represent our own case, by all means do it; but when we wish to do so I want to know why you are opposing us?—I do not remember saying it, but if I did I have no objection to it personally. I have shown to the Committee that our representations on behalf of tradesmen have been successful.

23. The A.S.R.S. say they stand to keep up the wages as far as tradesmen are concerned?—That is so.

24. That is to say, if the labourer is brought on, or if any one who has not served an apprenticeship is called upon to do a tradesman's work, he must be paid a tradesman's wages—the A.S.R.S. stand for that?—Oh, yes.

25. Then it was pointed out at conference that lifters were doing tradesmen's work in the bedding of brasses. You were told about that, and did you take steps to bring that under the notice of the Department?—I am not aware that it is tradesmen's work. What I do know is this, that the tradesmen themselves do not know where their particular calling commences and where it ends.

26. I ask you when we represented that matter whether you brought it under the notice of the Department?—No, we did not. It is a lifter's duty; but I wish to point out to the Committee that the tradesmen do not know where their particular calling commences or ends. For this reason I have just recently had a request to get a definition from the Department as to what is a fitter's work and what is a boilermaker's work. Two men had wrangled as to whether it was a fitter's duty to bore a hole in a boiler, or whether it was a boilermaker's duty.

27. I am glad that has come up because it is the duty of the general secretary to find out for us. We call it the "line of demarcation"?—Do you not know your own line of demarcation?

28. Yes; but, as you know, there is a difference of opinion, and it has got to be settled by the conference sometimes by a little give-and-take?—Yes, that is so.

29. You spoke about men having to do clerical work without having served an apprenticeship. Do you not think they were extenuating circumstances—you said those men had been injured?—There are always extenuating circumstances. If a man is injured he still has, in the majority of cases, to earn his own living, and if a man is able to do a tradesman's work and his employer is satisfied with his work, and agrees to pay him tradesman's wages, why should he be debarred from earning a better living in that way?—That is what I want to know.

30. You stated that one of the things you had done for tradesmen was to secure the war bonus. Was the war bonus due to your request, or to the request of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Association?—The request was first put forward by the A.S.R.S. for an increase of 1s. per day. The A.S.R.S. never at any time asked for a war bonus. We asked for an increase of 1s. per day for everybody to meet the increased cost of living, just as we told the tradesmen when they met us and asked us to apply for an increase of 2s. per day for them. We told them we were going to advocate for a substantial increase for all branches of the service to meet the increased cost of living, but that was conveniently kept back from the Committee.

31. You said you would press for all branches of the service?—Yes, that is so.

32. Then how is it that it is stated in the *Review* that the request you made to the Minister of Railways was for all branches of the service, but especially for the lower-paid men?—Because we received opposition from the Minister of Railways. I can produce before this Committee, and will do so, the whole of the correspondence. We went before the Minister and he informed us that the finances of the country would not bear the strain at that particular time, that there was grave doubt as to what the position would be, and that he was not in a position to say what he could do. I then urged this point upon him: I said, "If it is impossible to give it to all branches of the service, for Goodness' sake take into consideration the man who is getting 9s. per day, and upon whom the cost of living bears more heavily at the present time than upon any other class of worker." Was that an unreasonable thing to say?

33. My point was this: you said you would not give preference to any particular class, and when you found you had opposition you said, "If you cannot give it to all give it to the lower-paid man"?—And under those circumstances I say quite candidly that this Committee will, I think, admit that I did quite right.

34. *Mr. Veitch.*] Reference has been made to a branch having urged the executive to hold a stop-work meeting. Did any branch ask the executive to do that?—Yes.

35. Were resolutions passed by some of the branches to the effect that they were not satisfied with the executive not fighting hard enough for them, and urging them to take drastic action?—Yes, that is so. If this Committee chooses I am prepared to place correspondence and resolutions before them. I can assure you it will take the Committee at least three or four days to read them through.

36. In the face of strong pressure from large numbers of men in the service to take some drastic action, whatever that might mean, the executive council firmly stood through its agreement with the Government and the Department and fought for an increase on constitutional lines?—That is so, and they refused a request by a majority of the branches in the Dominion to call a general meeting of all employees in Wellington. They said, "No, we are managing the organization in our own way, and we are going to carry it on in our own way." They asked the Department to liberate a number of men in order to hold a meeting in Wellington for the purpose of approaching the Prime Minister.

37. *Mr. Field.*] You spoke of the Unity Conference of last year?—It was two or three years ago.

38. Who was that organized by?—By the United Federation of Labour.

39. There was some question asked here yesterday as to whether some representatives of the A.S.R.S. had attended before that meeting. Is there any association or connection between the A.S.R.S. and the Federation of Labour?—Absolutely none.

40. Do you say, speaking generally, that the requests that have been made by tradesmen through the A.S.R.S. to the Department have met with success?—I have put in a schedule of two increases of 6d. per day, and the other matters, such as the war bonus, which they participate in, each day's work to stand by itself in the workshop in regard to overtime, increased leave, first-class passes, and extended leave. I could not possibly tell you them all from memory, but if I were to produce to you my index files in connection with that matter you would be astonished.

41. You would not expect to succeed in every case?—We could not possibly do so. We would not have expected to succeed in the demand we were asked to make for an increase of 2s. per day.

42. Who is the editor of the *Review*?—Mr. Wheeler.

43. And he lives in Wellington?—Yes.

44. *Mr. Sykes.*] What is the present policy and the future policy of the A.S.R.S. in regard to co-operation with outside unions in regard to labour troubles?—I think you will recognize that I have only to carry out the instructions that are given to me by the executive, and they dictate the policy.

Mr. Hampton: Might I suggest that as I am president of the society and Mr. Mack is a servant that I be allowed to deal with that matter. I intend to go fully into the question, and make it as clear as I possibly can what is the present and future policy of the Amalgamated Society.

Witness: I might say that if there is anything of any kind or any question of any description hereafter upon which I have the information I will be only too pleased to supply it to the Committee, and to give them access to the whole of the files, of which there are 3,500 in connection with the different matters. I will be only too delighted to give all the information I possibly can.

RICHARD MOORE examined. (No. 7.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—I am employed in the Petone Railway Workshops. I have been in the service for seventeen years. I am a member of the A.S.R.S., and a member of the executive council at the present time.

2. Do you wish to make a statement to the Committee?—Yes, I wish to make a statement on behalf of the A.S.R.S. It has been clearly stated here by the petitioners that the representations made by the executive council on behalf of the tradesmen have not been completely represented. I have represented the tradesmen as workshops representative for something like six years, and I can say that to the best of my ability the questions arising in connection with the tradesmen have received consideration and been represented fully as far as our ability would allow. Reference has also been made to a certain conference that was held in Wellington in 1910. A conference of tradesmen was held here in Wellington in 1910, consisting of representatives from the large workshops in the Dominion. By "large workshops" I mean a representative from Newmarket, from the West Coast, Petone, Addington, and Hillside. A scheme was drawn up whereby we could get an increase in wages, and the matter was to be submitted to the General Manager, Mr. Ronayne, at that time by this conference. The conference assembled in Wellington and decided to make representations through the A.S.R.S. Now, I would like to say here that we were not successful at that time in getting an increase for the tradesmen, and the matter was then left in the hands of the executive council to push forward the claims of the tradesmen. I would like also to say that it has been stated here by the petitioners that they had, to a certain extent, through the action of the executive council in 1915, practically made the tradesmen suffer, or at any rate lose the hope of getting anything done by the present members of the executive council, but up till then intended to remain loyal to the society. Now, sir, I would like to point out here that in 1912 I was Dominion secretary for the Tradesmen's Association, and there was at that particular time a move made in Wanganui for the formation of a separate organization to be known as the tradesmen's organization. Therefore this idea has not been brought forward in a few minutes: it has been on the move for some considerable time. I would also like to say, in regard to Mr. Rowles and his statement about touring the branches for the purpose of bringing the tradesmen together, that at a meeting he addressed at Petone it was distinctly stated by Mr. Rowles that if we could get a sufficient force together—meaning the tradesmen—that they would be strong enough to hold a club over the head of the executive council and get any demand they wanted. Now, I do not know whether they intended to carry that out at the interview they had with us in May last, but I will say that, so far as the tradesmen are concerned and the representations that we have made, there is no branch that I know of in our society which has suffered because we have burked any question or refused to send forward any particular grievance affecting the tradesmen of our organization. In fact, the branch to which I belong has taken a keen interest in the tradesmen's movement, not only for tradesmen but for non-tradesmen who have come along to the branch meeting and put forward a grievance of the tradesmen themselves, so that to a certain extent shows the Committee that whilst it has been stated that some do neglect the requests, speaking of the branch of which I am a member—and I attend the meetings pretty regularly—I can say without fear of contradiction that non-tradesmen have been to the branch meeting and put forward requests on behalf of tradesmen. Now,

a good deal has been made of the ballots which were taken, I think, last year. There was a number of ballot-papers issued—I believe to the extent of seventeen hundred or eighteen hundred—and there were something like five hundred which did not turn up. I am only speaking approximately as to the figures. If the tradesmen themselves consider the movement is so keen amongst tradesmen, why did a large number of the ballot-papers go astray? Evidently a number took no notice of them, and a large number of the members never voted at all. I will give an instance to the Committee of the way in which the ballot was conducted. Members termed “casual” men, who are probably in the service for a certain period, were allowed to vote on that particular question. The members termed “casual” might be engaged for one month or for two. They were allowed to participate in the taking of that particular ballot in connection with which the members of the association placed the facts before you yesterday. Now, sir, we come to one of the most important points—namely, where the tradesmen themselves say they stand on rock: that is, in regard to indentures. They ask, sir, that nobody should be allowed to commence in the Railway service who cannot produce his indenture, and at the same time the petition has been sent round and signed, I dare say, by a number of men who cannot produce their indentures. Now, the petitioners claim to have those men as members of their association. Supposing, for argument’s sake, those men are members of the Tradesmen’s Association and that their services are dispensed with, should they seek to re-enter the Department again they cannot do so because they cannot produce their indentures. That is one of the things we were guided by in regard to the representations that they made to us. We did not know really what the Tradesmen’s Association have in their minds; but to carry the thing out to its logical conclusion with a railway man who seeks to better his position and leaves the Railway service and takes up land for the purpose of becoming a farmer, does the same thing apply in the Farmers’ Union, that because a man has been a Railway servant he is to be debarred from going in for farming? I would just like to say this: it has been freely stated that we would allow Tom, Dick, and Harry to come along and do the work. I know of no organization, except perhaps the Boilermakers’ Union, outside the Railway service who are asking for the same conditions as the Tradesmen’s Association is asking for—that a man shall not start work until he can produce his indentures. I say that the majority of the organizations to-day that I know of—and I speak of one of the largest organizations there is in New Zealand, United Furniture Union—do not take into consideration the fact as to whether a man can produce his indenture or papers or otherwise. The man is judged on his ability. If he can do the work he is paid accordingly, and that is the principle upon which the executive council are standing at the present time. We stand for the man to prove his worth. He has to pass the judgment of the other men. He has the leading hand, a tradesman, the workshops foreman, also a tradesman, judging the qualifications of that man and finding out whether he is competent to do the work or otherwise, and I think that if that man satisfies those men that he is able to carry out the work of the Department, surely that is a sufficient guarantee that the man is a competent tradesman. The man who is a competent tradesman has nothing to fear, and the majority of them do not trouble about papers of any description. I just want to touch briefly on one other matter that has come forward, and that is with regard to a certain movement that took place in the Petone Workshops. It has been stated that the Tradesmen’s Association did not want to be dragged at the heels of the A.S.R.S. in any industrial dispute. Now, sir, just quite recently there was a stop-work meeting of fitters held in the Petone Workshops, and the fitters at that particular time had a meeting for the purpose of getting more wages. They were advised that they were to be put on overtime, and they did not wish to work overtime unless they were to get more money. Now, to show you that the A.S.R.S. is not to be blamed for this, we find that proposal emanated from the Tradesmen’s Association. The fact of the matter is that the meeting was called for the Friday, and the resolution that they passed on the Friday was rescinded on the Saturday, and the men at that particular meeting were members of the Tradesmen’s Association. With regard to the Tradesmen’s Association, it has been freely mooted that the fitters are the men who are really at the bottom of this agitation and forming this organization. We have a diversity of opinion amongst the various trades, and they say that although the fitters are the prime movers in this agitation, they have not got the unanimous support of the tradesmen throughout the service. I would point out, and it has been proved, that a section of the tradesmen—turners—quite recently had a representative on the committee. I do not know whether they have one at the present time, but I desire to point out to this Committee that it has been stated that they practically have unanimous feeling of the men in their organization as far as the tradesmen themselves are concerned; but I would point out that there is a large number of men in the workshops who do not belong to the Tradesmen’s Association. They are members of the A.S.R.S., and it has been freely stated that they are quite satisfied that we represent their demands and have gained for them better conditions and better pay since 1906. In 1908 our organization was remodelled whereby the workshops representatives would have direct representation. We have not since 1908 had very many complaints with regard to the matters we have represented, and I feel sure that by the return put forward by Mr. Mack, the general secretary, it will be seen that we have, at any rate, been successful in connection with many of the demands. There was a question asked of Mr. Mack in regard to the bedding of brasses. At the present time we have lifters bedding their own brasses, but I would like to say the fitters to a certain extent think it beneath their dignity to do that class of work. A fitter was put on some time ago to do that work, but he thought it belonged to another branch of the Department, and, in fact, he said a lifter could do the work just as well as he could. He said he did not consider that it was really a tradesman’s work; he wanted to be relieved of it. I have nothing further to say, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, on behalf of the A.S.R.S.

5. *Mr. McDougall.*] You stated just now that an attempt was made by the Wanganui men in 1915 to form a Tradesmen's Association?—In 1912.

4. You mentioned the subject of the ballot-papers and the fact of casuals voting. Do you know what we mean by the term "casual"? Who may be employed, you said, for a month: can you give a specific instance?—I can give you two instances where casuals have voted. In the carpenters' show in Petone there were two men who had less than two months' service, and they voted on that particular occasion.

5. Does not the A.S.R.S. allow the casuals to vote on all questions if they are financial members?—As a rule we do not take them in until they have been twelve months in the Department.

6. Is there a rule to that effect?—No, there is no rule; but we do not do it in Petone.

7. You mentioned just now about the fitters holding a stop-work meeting. Are you sure there was such a meeting?—Yes.

8. What do you call a stop-work meeting?—Well, they had a meeting in the Department's time.

9. If I deny that what would you say?—You can deny it if you like.

10. Would you accept my denial of it?—That remains to be seen.

11. When you say we had it in the Department's time do you mean that we were paid for it?—I do not know whether you were paid for the time, but I know that it was in working-hours that the meeting took place.

12. If I tell you these special men you mentioned—the fitters—applied to their foreman under the regulations of the Department and were granted the time would you deny it?—I am not going to contradict your word on that point, but I say that they had a meeting in the Department's time and during working-hours.

13. You referred to a petition in 1910 that went before the General Manager when the tradesmen were allowed to put their own case, and that they afterwards found out it was successful?—They got no direct answer from the General Manager as to whether the request would be granted or not.

14. You also said it was left to the A.S.R.S. to push forward?—That is so.

15. Were you an executive officer at that time?—In the following year I was.

16. You will remember the occasion when you and I had a talk together?—There were so many times we met together that it is quite impossible for me to single out a single one.

17. But in reference to this particular matter?—That was before I was elected to the executive council.

18. You represented Westport at that time, did you not?—Yes.

19. And they appointed you distributing secretary for their various centres?—Yes, that is so.

20. Because of the action of Mr. Barnett and the Dunedin Tradesmen's Committee not passing the circulars or letters through your hands you threw up that position, did you not?—No.

21. You took offence at that?—I did not throw the position up.

22. But you took offence at it?—Seeing that I was Dominion secretary I thought the correspondence should go through me.

23. And I agreed with you?—I do not know whether you did or did not.

24. Did the Petone committee let the matter drop after you say they were unsuccessful?—No, the Petone committee did not.

25. What action did they take?—They had one interview with a member of Parliament, and that was the only thing they did as far as I am aware of.

26. If I were to produce correspondence of all that took place, and which you are well aware of, explaining about the various committees that were set up and how to go about the business, would you deny it?—I do not know what correspondence you are going to bring along any more than any member of this Committee, and I am not going to commit myself to anything you may bring along.

27. *Mr. Veitch.*] How many members are there on the executive of the A.S.R.S.?—Eight councillors and one president.

28. How many of those are tradesmen?—Three.

29. *Mr. Field.*] Is there anything in the constitution of the A.S.R.S. to limit the number of men in any particular branch of the service, or have the tradesmen got a fixed number: is it possible for the council to be elected without having any tradesmen on at all?—It is possible with regard to the workshops department that perhaps a labourer may be elected, but it has not been done so far.

Mr. Mack: There has been one instance.

30. *Mr. Field.*] It is not a fact, then, that every branch of the service is entitled to representation on the council—it is quite possible for the tradesmen not to be represented?—Yes, it is quite possible.

31. What is your trade?—Carpenter.

32. There were something like two thousand voting-papers printed or issued, and do you suggest that a large number of the tradesmen did not vote?—Yes; I think a large number of the men did not vote on the very important question the tradesmen considered.

33. Do you suggest any other means of ascertaining the feeling of the tradesmen on the subject?—No.

34. Do you think another ballot of all the tradesmen would show any different result?—It might do.

35. Can you suggest any reason beyond that which has been disclosed before this Committee for this unrest amongst the tradesmen and the desire to succeed?—I can only say that they seem to think they would be able to do better by their own representations, and whilst some of them hold that opinion there is a large number who think they would not do so.

36. You suggest they have not got anything to complain of as far as the treatment by the A.S.R.S. is concerned, but they want to run their own show?—Yes, that is so.

37. *Mr. Sykes.*] What is the relative number of tradesmen in the Petone Workshops—how many belong to the A.S.R.S. and how many to the Tradesmen's Association?—I could not speak for the Tradesmen's Association, but I know how many belong to the A.S.R.S.—there are 244.

38. With regard to the stop-work meeting at Petone, that meeting was held, I take it, prior to the granting of the war bonus?—Yes.

MATTHEW JOSEPH MACK further examined. (No. 8.)

1. *Mr. Field.*] I understand you can explain the constitution of the A.S.R.S.?—Yes. The conference delegates are elected in the proportion of two from each branch of the service in each Island—traffic, loco., maintenance, and workshops. The election is confined to each particular branch. When they meet at conference there are four representatives from the workshops, four from the traffic department, four from the maintenance, and four from the loco. department. At the conference they cut themselves down to eight, equally represented—that is, the workshops have one from the North Island and one from the South Island, the traffic have one from the North and one from the South. They have what we call equal and direct departmental representation. In one instance only, and that was the case of Mr. Carlyle, who was a machinist elected to the executive council from the workshops, and with the exception of Mr. Veitch, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Walker, the president of the society has always been a tradesman.

2. *Mr. Veitch.*] You have stated that the workshops representatives are elected by the workshops men only?—Yes, that is so.

3. You have also stated that the workshops men are not all tradesmen?—Yes.

4. And that there are a large number of other men in the workshops who vote on the question?—Yes.

5. You have stated also that it is possible for a man who is not a tradesman to come along to the conference as a delegate?—Yes, that is so.

6. And, further, it is possible that no tradesman at all may be sent along?—Yes, that is quite so.

7. You have also said that there are at the present time three tradesmen on the executive?—Yes, that is so.

8. Can that not be clearly taken as an indication that there is prejudice on the part of the other men against the tradesmen?—That is quite so. As a matter of fact, to show you how the position is viewed by the tradesmen, in several appeal cases by tradesmen where they have gone before the Appeal Board for redress they have selected a labourer as their advocate on behalf of the men.

9. *Mr. McDougall.*] You say there are three tradesmen on the executive?—Yes.

10. Is it not always looked upon as a fact that whoever is president of the A.S.R.S. does not represent any particular section or party?—No; but his is the guiding influence, and, if I may so put it, he is the ballast of the ship.

11. But he does not represent any party?—He represents all sections, as a reasonable man ought to.

JOHN ALEXANDER McDONALD examined. (No. 9.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—I am a coachpainter in the employ of the Railway Department.

2. Will you make your statement to the Committee?—I have been in the Railway service for twenty-six or twenty-seven years. I have been a member of the A.S.R.S. since 1894, having filled various offices, and at the present time I am branch secretary of the Wellington Branch. All business in connection with the branch and dealings with the executive council pass through my hands. I might state in connection with the membership question which came up just now that the membership of the Wellington Branch is at approximately 414. When I say "approximately" I mean this: that we have a balance-sheet made out at the end of every quarter, and in between the periods we cannot tell what the returns are, because there are a certain number of floating members. Members travel from one district to another, while others are transferred from other districts. There are also members leaving the service and others going to the front. Of that 414 members there are 220 tradesmen on the branch-book. I am positive that the Wellington Branch and the executive council have at all times done full justice to all the demands brought before them by all tradesmen or any other branch that it represents. I know of instances in the Wellington Branch where labourers and the lower-paid men have even supported and brought forward cases in favour of tradesmen for the betterment of their position, and I have never known on any occasion in any branch meeting I have attended that it has passed through the books that the lower-paid men have ever attempted to block the advance of the tradesmen. The Tradesmen's Association is at present systematically circulating in the Petone Workshops that the society is pledged not to move for any one particular section of the workers. That was part of the resolution carried the other day at a meeting of fitters. That, sir, is absolutely false. The requests of the tradesmen are generally supported by the lower-paid men. The tradesmen themselves do not take that interest in the society they should, and that is unfortunate. If the tradesmen had put more energy into the A.S.R.S., or the same amount of energy as they are putting into their attempt to secure recognition for their own association, I do not think for one moment there would have been the call for the formation of another association. These men,

by their own indifference to their own society, have allowed this spirit to creep in. I may state further that through their not attending the meetings they hear all kinds of garbled statements being made through the works, and they run away with the idea that they are true, that the executive council is not urging the requests of the tradesmen. All that sort of thing causes discontent amongst the men, and those men who should know better simply join hands against the organization that is at present in existence. When the Tradesmen's Association was first brought into existence one of the first resolutions agreed to was that it had every confidence in the A.S.R.S., but even the members passing that resolution did not bestir themselves to take any interest in the society, and they just drifted along in the same old way. By no improvement taking place on account of their not attending to the work of the society, and carrying out the requests of those whom they were supposed to represent, they simply dropped out through their own fault. Of course, I must contend that it is not in the interests of the workmen themselves that two separate organizations should exist. A statement was made before the Committee in regard to the question of casual employees joining the Amalgamated Society. I might state that men have come to me and asked if I would nominate them for membership in the society. I have asked how long they have been in the service, and if they have said "A matter of two months or six weeks" I have replied, "You do not know how long you will be employed. You are now a casual; you have had a certain amount of time out of work; you require the money in your own pocket; and when you are there and certain of employment for twelve months or a couple of years I will hit you up again and see whether you will become a member or not. In the meantime I advise you not to join. Anything we can do for your welfare we will be only too pleased to do." The executive council and the general secretary have represented matters that I have sent forward both to the General Manager and to Mr. McVilly, and those matters have been redressed even when the men have not been members of the society.

3. *Mr. McDougall.*] You said it was unfortunate that tradesmen did not take a greater interest in the branch meetings of the A.S.R.S. Could you give any reason for that?—I take it they are absolutely indifferent.

4. You said yourself that you have every confidence in the A.S.R.S.?—Yes.

5. You were present at a meeting when the election of the delegate who was to represent the tradesmen to the conference in 1915 took place?—Yes.

6. If you had every confidence in the A.S.R.S., why was it that you moved that particular remit before the tradesmen's conference, the necessity of urging again on the A.S.R.S. with reference to the foreman painter in Petone?—The reason is simply this: while the Tradesmen's Association was working in with the A.S.R.S. I, claiming to be a unionist and a labour man, was able to join with the Tradesmen's Association that was working and acting, as I understood it was intended in the first instance as an advisory to the A.S.R.S., gave it my whole-hearted support. When it sent forward a delegate I also wished to use every plank possible in furtherance of my trade and to see that the foreman painter was appointed.

7. You stated that in the Wellington Branch there were 414 members?—Yes.

8. And of that number 220 were tradesmen?—Yes.

9. Can you say how many branches there are in the A.S.R.S.?—Forty-seven.

10. Do you know of any other branch in which the tradesmen have a majority?—I do not know. I am only speaking of the Wellington Branch.

11. *Mr. Hampton.*] Could you tell me if during the last few months, since some tradesmen have become hostile towards the A.S.R.S., there has been any falling-off so far as tradesmen joining the society are concerned?—As far as tradesmen are concerned the membership has been increasing.

12. Just state the figures?—From the 1st January, 1915, to the 31st December there were thirteen new members elected, and from the 1st January, 1916, to the 13th June there were thirty-five members elected—they were all tradesmen—making a total of forty-eight members.

13. *Mr. McDougall.*] Would you state if those tradesmen joined before or after it was put about that we were to receive that war bonus?—I might state that there was a very large number who came before the war bonus was talked about—while we were urging for increase in pay. It came about through a circular issued by myself asking all men to link up in unity, and to make one common effort for the common good. That was to better their position by having unity of strength. I attribute it to that circular, and I believe it can be borne out by other members of the branch.

14. How long ago is it since that circular was issued?—I cannot tell you now, but the date is on it.

15. It was somewhere within a month?—It is four months ago if it is a day.

TUESDAY, 4TH JULY, 1916.

Mr. Hampton: Before going any further, sir, I should like to ask whether the petitioners have lodged a copy of their rules of their association.

Clerk of Committee: No.

Mr. Hampton: Do they propose to lodge a copy of their rules?

Mr. McDougall: I might say that we stated that this was an association working within another. Our rules only provide for the procedure in the branch. You will understand that this association is only asking that we shall have recognition. That is all we are asking for.

Mr. Hampton: The reason I had for asking the question was that a gentleman who joined the association at Addington has had supplied to him a rule-book headed "N.Z.R. Tradesmen's Association (Canterbury Branch), 1915." I would draw the attention of the Committee to Rule 5,

because I consider that such a rule precludes any possibility of this Committee granting recognition to this society. Rule 5 says, "All tradesmen at present employed in the N.Z.R. service and all apprentices in their last year are eligible for membership. Any tradesmen joining in the future who at present are not members of the service be required to produce their indentures or equivalent." Rule 15 states, "Any intending member applying to the secretary will be admitted subject to Rule 5." Now, sir, under the terms of our agreement there is this clause, which we abide by and are prepared to abide by: "It must be open for the employees either to join or withdraw from the society at pleasure under reasonable regulations, and the society must not interfere with the individual privileges and rights of any employee." Now, sir, under those rules the Department might engage a competent tradesman—a man whom they consider a competent tradesman: indeed, the framers of the rules themselves recognize, by stating that a tradesman joining in the future be required to produce his indentures, that a tradesman may be a tradesman and not have indentures. I submit, sir, that that is a rule which could not be registered under the present Conciliation and Arbitration Act; that it is put in there for the purpose of forming a close corporation; and I submit, sir, that no Parliament could give to any body official recognition which has for its object the purpose of setting up a body which proposes to exclude certain members of a State service. That is my contention, and I think on those grounds the petition should be rejected without proceeding any further. If those are not the rules, sir, then I am going to contend that the petitioners have no right to petition this Committee as the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association without they can produce registered rules under that heading. I should like the Committee either to consider this or to express an opinion as to whether or not the point is worth considering, and I should like the Committee to consult with the Department as to whether under those rules there is any possibility of this association receiving official recognition.

The Chairman: We are prepared to hear all your evidence, and will give our decision later.

Dr. Newman: I should like to know, Mr. Chairman, if the witnesses here to-day are to be confined to Railway servants, or can outsiders be called before this Committee?

The Chairman: Any available evidence we shall be prepared to hear, but we do not want repetition.

Dr. Newman: But evidence can be given by those outside the Railway service.

The Chairman: Yes, I think so—any one they like to call.

RICHARD HAMPTON examined. (No. 10.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A coach-painter in the service of the Railway Department at Addington.

2. You are also president of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants?—Yes.

3. Will you make your statement to the Committee?—I propose, sir, on behalf of the society of which I am president, to cover the ground as concisely as I can, and to put before you our side of the case. First of all I wish to meet the question of strike which has been raised by the petitioners. They have told the Committee that one of the reasons why they specially wish to leave the A.S.R.S. is because of what they term our strike policy. Now, in order that I shall be able to place the policy of the society fairly before you at the present time it will be necessary for me to go back a little into the past. It has been hinted here that whilst Mr. Veitch was in charge of the society he was a level-headed man, but that there is at present in charge of this organization an out-and-out "Red Fed." Now, sir, I want to go back to the time of the Waihi strike. I think that was in 1912. At that time I was a private member of the A.S.R.S., and there was a good deal of feeling throughout the country in labour circles over that strike. There was a certain section in the Addington Workshops who seemed to be favourable to that strike. They came along on one occasion to the Addington Branch in full force and proposed a motion that we vote £25 out of our funds to the support of that strike. I was there and in an absolute minority. I at once knew that that was contrary to our rules, and I drew attention to this fact, that in any case, if it was not contrary to the rules, at least notice of motion should be given of an intention to bring forward such a proposal. The Chairman upheld my contention, but did not rule that it was contrary to the rules. It was arranged that they should give notice of motion in due course, and that a special meeting should be called to consider the matter. When it was brought up again a fortnight or so later I again raised the question that it was contrary to the rules. The Chairman upheld my contention, and the others who were there challenged the Chairman's ruling and moved that he vacate the chair. I had anticipated something of that kind, and had gone to considerable trouble personally to ensure that there should be a majority there who would uphold the Chairman in keeping up the rules. We managed to defeat that movement on that occasion, and I think I can claim some little credit for defeating it. I was not satisfied then with the position. It had not been decided on a straight-out issue, and at the next meeting of the branch I made it my business to move a motion, which was seconded and carried, drawing the executive's attention to this matter and asking them to get legal advice as to whether it was possible for any branch of our society to vote money for strike purposes. Now, what happened? That legal opinion was duly obtained, and it bore out my contention that we had no right to vote branch money for strike purposes. As a result of that the executive sent out a copy of that legal opinion to every one of our branches, and that question was put on a sound footing for all time. Just immediately after that there was an election for branch officers, and those people whom I had fought said, "We are going to capture every office in this branch," and they nominated a member for every office. Now,

I was approached and asked to stand for the position of chairman. I stood for the position, and those very "Red Feds." with whom I am accused of being associated and assisting in this country were the very men who fought tooth and nail to prevent my being appointed chairman of the Addington Branch. However, I am not thought so badly of at Addington as they have tried to make out here, as I was elected by two votes to one. Now, what was the result of that? In 1913 came the Unity Congress, and our executive were there. There, I say, was a precedent for us conferring with the so-called "Red Feds." Mr. Wilson and Mr. Veitch prior to that had also conferred with the "Red Feds."; but our executive took this action, that as soon as "strike" was mentioned and as soon as it was made clear that the purposes of that organization was strike the executive got up and came out. What happened? Their decision was challenged in some places in this country by some of our members. It was challenged in Addington, and in consequence of that three or four of the executive belonging to the South Island went there to address a meeting of the branch as usual; and I say this to my friend Mr. M'Dougall, that the only ones, with very few exceptions, who troubled to go to that meeting were those extremists. I was chairman of the meeting, and after the four councillors had spoken—and I insisted they should get a fair hearing—after they had spoken a motion was moved at that meeting condemning their action straight out in leaving the Unity Congress. What did I say? I said, "Gentlemen, as chairman of this branch of three hundred or four hundred members I am not going to accept a motion from thirty or forty men to go forth to the country as being the expression of mind of this branch of which I am chairman." I refused point-blank to put the motion to the meeting; and there are men present here who can bear out and substantiate that statement. That is a little of my past policy as a private member in the ranks; and I say this, that if all the private members would show a little more enthusiasm like these other men show and attend the meetings you would hear very little of the "Red Fed." element in this country. It is not the "Red Feds." we have to fear; it is the apathy and indifference of the moderate man. Now, sir, I pass on to my present policy. What happened in 1915? I was returned to the conference, and what happened there? Mr. Wilson, who was president of the conference, in his opening said that he wished to give the delegates a timely warning that in the great national trouble it behoved them to be extremely cautious in regard to proposals which were going to involve the country in any material additional expenditure. Now, those were wise words of Mr. Wilson's, and I supported him in those remarks right throughout the conference, as I shall presently show. When the question of wages arose at the conference, what did this so-called "Red Fed." say? This is my policy, gentlemen: Mr. Hampton moved, "That this conference affirms the principles of a general increase of wages on a percentage basis. Conference is further of opinion that the present is not an opportune time to press for such increases, and leaves the whole question of increases of wages to the incoming executive." That is what I said. Now listen to this, and then ask yourselves if these are the words of a "Red Fed." socialist: "Nobody realized more than himself that the cost of living had gone up. Increases of wages had invariably been followed by higher prices of commodities. The Cost of Living Commission had discovered the same thing, and it also stated that the increase in commodities was greater proportionately than the increase of wages. It would be bad policy to go forward at a time of undoubted financial stress, and the society would not have public sympathy, which it was so necessary to secure in connection with its demands. It was most important that at a time like the present the workers should all be kept employed, and it was the duty of the Government to keep in employment, not only railway men, but all workers. If railway men were granted increases it would hamper the Government in giving employment to casual employees. If we could be sure of getting through the crisis on as good a wicket as at present they could congratulate themselves. What were New-Zealanders suffering in comparison with Belgians, whose country had been absolutely laid waste? It was the duty of railway men to help those in authority to make the path smooth. The delegates should join with other labour bodies in trying to get stringent treatment for any monopoly which was proved to exist." I submit that those words are not the words of an extremist or of one who is at all likely to create industrial trouble in this country at the present time. Regarding that latter precaution, it may need some explanation. I believe that labour, whilst it is critical and finds fault, should take up a more constructive policy. I do not think any one can have any objection to any representatives of labour meeting together to discuss things like co-operative societies, or even making general representations to the Government on any question affecting the cost of living, or of joining together to get evidence which they may place before the Board of Trade in order to help them to get right down to the root of things, instead of continually crying out for this increase in wages. That was the object I had in mind; and whilst our agreement, I know, states that we must not affiliate, that agreement was made as the result of the great maritime strike, and I believe the object of that agreement is that we must take no action which would in any way involve the railway men in a general strike, or that we must take no action which will place ourselves, so far as striking is concerned, in the hands of any other body of men. That is my interpretation of the agreement, and if I am wrong in that respect, then I would be glad to be put right. But, as I have said, it has been the custom for years for our society to confer with labour bodies, and that position has never yet been challenged. Now, sir, I pass on regarding our present policy. What happened? I am not here to blame any one or to say who is responsible for the cost of living rising, but unfortunately it did rise. I believe to a large extent it was unpreventable so far as the importation of goods and shipping freights and that sort of thing is concerned; but anyhow it went up, and unrest so far as this matter was concerned began to creep into the ranks of our men. They became insistent that something should be done to get them an increase of wages. They sent messages to us from all over the country asking that they be allowed to come here themselves. They evidently

thought we could not do the business for them, and they wanted a representative from every branch to come up here and hold a conference and get the matter fixed up. Of course, as you know, these men outside think it is only a matter of asking Mr. Herries, and the question is fixed up in five minutes. Sir, some of them may learn a little later that that is not so. We resisted that request from the branches, and we refused as an executive to ask for an increase of wages at that time, and here are my words as spoken to the Hon. the Prime Minister and the Hon. Mr. Herries. I am quite sure Mr. Herries does not mind me making this short quotation, and I am sure members of the Committee will not make use of anything I say against Mr. Herries or Mr. Massey, because they have been perfectly fair to us right through the whole thing, and everything that has been done has been done with the utmost courtesy. On the 22nd November we waited upon the Hon. Mr. Massey and the Hon. Mr. Herries, and amongst other things I said: "We are not here, sir, to put forward any extreme requests. We are not here to do anything that will embarrass the National Government, of which you are the head, at a time like this. As regards wages, Mr. Herries told us very plainly some months ago the mind of the Cabinet on the matter: that an increase of wages was out of the question. We are not here to-day to press for a general increase of wages for our men. We realize the position that exists and we are not prepared, as I say, to make any extreme demands which may possibly embarrass the Government; but whilst I say that, I am here to say that we expect, and I think can reasonably expect, the Government to do all they can, and to exercise some degree of courage in doing it, to keep down the cost of living so far as the workers are concerned. We notice you are making a new move—that you are setting up a Board of Investigation—and we are looking forward with a great deal of confidence to that Board doing something practical and something courageous to try and keep down the cost of commodities to the people of this country." We then submitted a number of matters which were not matters of finance which we thought the Department might have assisted us to get right in order to help us and try and allay any unrest and feeling which existed in the country. Some of those matters have since been fixed up. I then said, "You must understand that whilst we are prepared to go to our men and take the responsibility, and I have gone to the branches recently, and said to these men, 'You fellows have no right to press for an increase of wages,' assuredly if we are prepared to take that responsibility we have the right to expect that the Department and Minister will in turn help us in little matters." Now, sir, those are my remarks as president of the A.S.R.S. on the 22nd November, 1915, and I submit again that they can hardly by any stretch of imagination be interpreted as the words of an extreme "Red Fed." Well, after that interview Mr. Mack and myself visited a number of the North Island branches, and in every branch in which I spoke, in spite of strong opposition, I told those men to give the Board of Trade a chance and not to press the Government for an increase in wages. Mr. Mack can support me in that statement. I went, Mr. Chairman, to your own town, Palmerston North, and when we got there in the afternoon we were told we were going to be eaten—that we would not get out of the town alive because we had not pressed this matter of wages. We had a meeting there lasting from a quarter to 8 till a quarter past 12, and I may say that they did not have it all their own way. We got away alive at a quarter past 12 and went on to the next place. Now, I have never since I entered unionism in a public way made it my business, and am not going to make it my business, to toady to any section of men. I realize my responsibilities as a leader and I know what those responsibilities are, and if I think any body of men are in the wrong I am going to say so plainly and bluntly. The Board of Trade went on, and when we met again in February it became apparent that the position was becoming more aggravated. We again had requests from about thirty of our branches asking us to immediately convene them together in conference. We were to do this immediately, they said, in order to insist that the Government should do something, and all that kind of thing. Still, the executive took the view, and I supported them in it, that that of all times was not the time when our affairs should be handed over to any body of possibly irresponsible men. The position at that time was most delicate. We said, "If this thing is going to be brought to a successful issue the negotiations are going to be carried out by those who have the responsibility." I was not prepared to say what might happen if we agreed to a body of irresponsible men coming here to meet us. I do not say they are irresponsible intentionally, but the position was that a large number of new men who did not understand the real difficulty in the way would come in to the thing, and we were afraid of possible complications arising. We resisted that and went again to the Prime Minister and the Hon. Mr. Herries on Tuesday the 15th February. We said, "We have to thank you, sir, for agreeing to meet us again, and there are just two or three very important matters to which we wish to draw your attention. Mr. Mack and myself are the only speakers, and we will endeavour to be as brief and concise as we possibly can. The first thing, and what we consider as most important, is the request for an all-round increase in wages. We had hoped that there would have been something done in connection with the cost of living—that the cost of living would have been reduced—but apparently the National Government has found that there are insurmountable difficulties in the way of that being done, as we find that the cost of living, instead of being reduced, is going up day by day. We therefore have no option but to renew our request, as made to Mr. Herries some months ago, for an all-round increase of 1s. a day for the men of the Second Division." There is nothing there about only labourers, as suggested by the tradesmen. The position was accentuated by this fact, gentlemen, and our position was made more serious by the fact that the men on the waterfront had received an increase of wages, and our men were using that as a lever and an argument why they should have it too. Mr. Mack said, "I do not know that I can say very much more than has been said by Mr. Hampton, further than that we are having the utmost difficulty with our men at the present time. You will remember it is only a little over two years

since the watersiders' strike, and that at that particular time everybody thought the waterside workers were done with and we would have no recurrence of what then took place. Our men remained loyal to the Department then, but to-day we find unrest creeping right through the service, by reason of the fact that these very men who created the disturbance are getting increases in wages whilst the men who stood by the Government then have not had an increase for about four years." Now, that was the position as we put it to the Prime Minister and the Hon. Mr. Herries. We were promised, sir, as a result of that deputation that we would receive a definite reply, I think, within a month. Well, what happened? When that month was up, owing to difficulties over which I honestly believe they had no control, the Prime Minister and the Hon. Mr. Herries informed us that they could not give us a definite reply. We pointed out that while we acknowledged that there were difficulties in the way, at the same time our men in the country would not understand that difficulty which had arisen, and we were anxious to avoid any possibility of trouble.

Hon. Mr. Herries: What we said was that we could not give you a definite answer until after the end of the financial year.

Mr. Hampton: Yes, I said there were difficulties in the way of giving us a definite answer. As a result of that interview we got Mr. Herries's authority to send out on the 16th March a circular to all our branches in which we stated, "We urge the branches to accept our assurance that from the information in our possession, which must be treated as confidential, the position is now, in our opinion, satisfactory, and their interests will be closely watched and safeguarded.—R. HAMPTON, President; M. J. MACK, General Secretary." That circular, sir, went around to every one of our branches, and as the result I believe that circular to some extent allayed the feeling; but I want to say here that you will notice we have been accused of publishing a revolutionary article in the *Review* of the 7th April. It was on the 16th March that we made an appeal to the men to be patient and await the final decision of the Department. I do not remember for sure, but I think I did not see Mr. Wheeler in those few days I was in Wellington. In fact, I do not know whether he is aware of this circular or not, but I remember a number of newspaper men were chasing us at that time, wanting to get information, and I remember mentioning to Mr. Mack that we had seen nothing of Mr. Wheeler. That would be accounted for by the fact that Mr. Wheeler knew the men and knew that he would get no information. But the point is this: this article in the *Review* was on the 7th April. I do not know when the article was actually written, but the *Review* goes to press a week prior to the date mentioned on it. I did not myself see the article before it was written, and I am not going to say now that Mr. Wheeler did wrong. I believe that Mr. Wheeler's intention was to impress upon the Government the extreme gravity of the situation, and from what I know of Mr. Wheeler he is the last man in the world, as I shall presently be able to show you, to write revolutionary articles for the purpose of making a strike. Now I come to this labour conference business; and what is the position in connection with that? The position is that we had invited the delegates from the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Association to come and confer with us with the avowed object of making one railway society in this country. There had been bitterness and that kind of thing between us, and as I was president of the society I was anxious that all bitterness should be forgotten—that we should make a fresh start, and try and form some common basis under the one organization. While we were engaged in that conference we were asked by the Waterside Workers' Federation to receive a deputation from them. Now, that was surely a harmless thing. As a matter of fact, I have since learned that the Waterside Workers' Federation is not affiliated to what is known as the Federation of Labour. They asked us to receive a deputation, and we received that deputation. We understood, with the E.F.C. delegates—to be perfectly fair to them, who were also interested—that it was purely to hear what those gentlemen had to say. They came along and made certain statements before us, and with part of what they said I agreed. I cannot say that I was in entire accord with everything they said. However, they were moderate men; they did not tell us they wanted us for any extreme purposes; on the contrary, I concluded that anything they wanted to be done was to be done in a lawful and constitutional way. Well, as a result of that deputation certain statements appeared in the newspaper Press right throughout the Dominion. I take no responsibility for any statements in the Press—absolutely none; but, as a result of certain articles in the newspapers, I felt it my duty as president of the society to make a statement on the position, and this is what I said to a Press reporter on Saturday, 29th April last: "In view of certain statements that are appearing in the newspaper Press throughout the Dominion, and which have called forth certain editorial comments, I wish to state that no outside labour organization has suggested to the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants that they should join with them for the purpose of adopting syndicalist methods of organization. It seems to be imagined that the railway servants wish to combine in order, as it were, to hold up the general public at the point of the pistol. In any action we may take, either as a separate organization or in conjunction with any other bodies, the public may rest assured that no such action will be taken for our own selfish ends, and nothing will be done or agreed to by us which is opposed to the welfare of the general public. In return for this we expect only fair and sympathetic treatment at the hands of the Minister of Railways and the Department, and we hope that, if we study the public interest, the public in return will see that we receive such treatment. It appears to me that if the editors of our papers would devote their attention to certain other combinations in this Dominion, which are adopting syndicalist methods and holding up the foodstuffs of the people, their time would be better employed than in setting up a bogey for the purpose of knocking it down." That is the statement I made; and I ask, can any one honestly say in face of those statements that there is anything of the "Red Fed." element in connection with it? That is so far as the deputation is concerned. Then they asked us if we would meet and confer on matters of common interest. I have already given

you some slight indication as to what I considered those matters were. I may state that under our rules the executive council have no power to bind our organization to affiliate in any way with any outside union. We have no power to do that: we are a purely administrative body: and if any motion had been proposed by any member of that executive council in any way committing our society to any particular course of action, I, as president of that society, would have refused to have accepted it. A motion was moved that Mr. Mack, Mr. Moore, and myself be appointed to confer with those delegates, and I pointed out to the executive that it was not quite clear on what terms they were acting, and I suggested this resolution: "That we meet the watersiders in conference, the president, general secretary, and Mr. Moore to be the representatives, it being understood that these delegates have no power to commit the executive or members in any way." That that was the understanding of the other parties is also made clear by an extract from the *Maoriland Worker* which was quoted in our own *Review*: "The conference is purely consultative. The delegates will discuss the various matters which affect all the organizations represented, and will report the result of their deliberations to their respective bodies, as may be mutually agreed upon. Delegates will not be called upon to bind their organizations in any way." Now, I do not consider, and I do not think any other fair-minded man will consider, that going to a conference under those conditions is a breach of our agreement with the Department. I would just like to say here that this same strike bogey was raised by the engine-drivers themselves when they came before the Railways Committee in 1909 for recognition. This is what was said by Mr. McArley: "With regard to strikes, the Amalgamated Society here has practically the same object in view as the labour leaders in America had when they wanted to get all the workers into one union, so that they could go out on strike. I may say that strikes are altogether out of the question, and on behalf of the E.F.C.A. I may say that no such thing has ever entered our heads. I, as secretary of that organization, will never make use of a strike as a weapon to be used against the Government." Those were the words of Mr. McArley, and history generally repeats itself. My answer to that is: Mr. McArley raised the question in 1909, and since then the country has been involved in two or three strikes, and you, gentlemen, know the attitude of the railway men in connection with those strikes. As far as I am concerned, as leader of the society at the present time, if anything of the kind occurs in future my attitude will be the same as it has been in the past. Another aspect of the strike question is this: I say, gentlemen, if you are going to break the railway unions up into small sections you are going to actually encourage strikes and create a graver danger of strikes occurring. In proof of that I would point out to you what is happening in New South Wales. Mr. Mack, who has been over there lately, tells me that in New South Wales there are seventeen different unions dealing with the occupations in connection with the railway service. Each trade represents its own grievances. Well, if you have read the papers lately you will know that there has been nothing but continual strikes amongst those tradesmen. I am reminded that they represent their grievances before a Wages Board. Well, here is a cable from Sydney dated 21st March, which states, "The New South Wales Minister for Railways, talking to a deputation from the Eveleigh Workshop employees who sought his advice after going on strike, said, 'We have about reached the dizzy limit on this strike business, and this kind of thing must stop. If it goes on we will have to say, "You will darned well have to stop on strike and take the consequences."' We cannot allow men to dictate to us.'" Those, gentlemen, are the words of the Minister of Railways of New South Wales in connection with a system which the present petitioners are proposing to introduce into New Zealand, and those words are absolutely true. You can see where that comes in. If you want to prevent strikes you must have one solid organization, for this reason: if the tradesmen have a grievance, if the guard has a grievance, or the shunter has a grievance, it is considered by minds which are not immediately interested in the particular matter, and men can enter into the discussion who can take a fair and impartial view of the position from both sides, because the matter does not immediately concern them. The danger of strikes lies in this fact, that a section of the men have a particular grievance; they go to the employer, they negotiate with him, a bad feeling arises between them, and the consequence is a strike; but if you have some system whereby the labour men or any other men can go into the thing with an open mind, there is every probability that in the majority of cases no strike will take place. I say that so far as the strike issue is concerned that is one of the benefits of our organization, that we can take an impartial view; and I say that it has never operated in any instance, so far as I know, as we have already proved, against any particular body of men. Now, I have already said that we are standing by the agreement, and the Department, so far as I know, have also stood to the agreement. Representations have from time to time been made to them by the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and by the Boilermakers' Union, and they have been in every instance, I believe, turned down. The Department has said, "No, we are dealing with the A.S.R.S." And, gentlemen, I am going to say this: that it is my belief that it is the result of those unions having been turned down that this movement is now being engineered to get a separate Tradesmen's Association. But what I want to know is this: is Parliament going to be the party to depart from this agreement? We have abided by it and the Department has abided by it. Is Parliament going to give a lever to men outside which they can use in order to try and get us to affiliate with outside labour? That has been the lever that has been already used. When we have said to those men who have advocated affiliation, "But we have an agreement," they have said, "That is broken." They have referred to the recognition of the E.F. and C. Association: the agreement, they say, is cast on one side, and they have made great use of that. Are you going to give them further encouragement in that direction and a greater lever by recognizing still another society? The terms of our recognition are perfectly plain. They provide for one executive representing each of the various sections of the service, and they state, secondly, that the society is not to be affiliated with any other union. They do not even provide for affiliating

with a railway union, so that when this agreement was drawn up it is quite apparent that it was the clear intention of those who were then in power that there should be one union representing the Railway service conditionally on its not affiliating with outside bodies. Now, we say that the statements made in the petition are absolutely incorrect. We say that we have represented to the best of our ability and with a considerable degree of success the representations which have been sent forward by these men and other men. It is quite true that we have refused to represent certain questions. We have refused, as you know, to represent the request of 2s. per day increase. Certain gentlemen representing the petition have tried to make you believe that they wished that to come in after the war, but let me make it perfectly clear to you gentlemen that no such indication was made to us. We have put in a verbatim report of what transpired at the interview, and I ask you to peruse that report yourselves if you are under that impression, and if you can find any indication that that was to be after the war, then I shall be extremely surprised. The request, as we understood it, was that it was to be immediately asked for, and our answer clearly indicates that, because we said, "Whilst we are not prepared to ask for 2s. a day for you, we are prepared, on the grounds of the increase in the cost of living, to ask for 1s. per day for all." The whole argument for the increase had been on the question of the cost of living, and as we felt that that affected not only those particular individuals but the whole of the men of the Second Division, we did not feel at that time warranted in asking for special concessions for any one. It has also been left for you to infer that we men are supposed to believe in the extreme socialist doctrine of equal pay for everybody, regardless of what they are doing; and I say that that is nonsensical, and there is absolutely no justification for such assumption—none whatever. The Classification Act is there in its various gradations, and we stand for that. We recognize that there are anomalies in it which require rectifying, but we recognize also that this is not the time to ask for any amendment of the Classification Act or any alteration in connection with it. Now I come to the indenture question. We refused to represent that every man in future shall be able to produce his indentures. That is the rock, they say, on which they stand. It has been said that I toadied to the labourers in connection with that business. Let me say that I never for one moment in connection with that matter had the aspect of the labourer in my mind. I considered the matter entirely from the tradesmen's point of view. I myself was a tradesman, and I was anxious that our request should be put forward in the best possible way. I considered that it would be foolish to ask, as we were asked to do, for an increase in wages, and then in the next breath come along and practically tell the Department that those men who we considered were particularly skilled men and deserving of a high rate of pay—that it would be very unwise to make any suggestion to them that the men on behalf of whom we were pleading were labourers or anything of the kind. I knew, gentlemen, as one well acquainted with the service, as one who has been interested in the A.S.R.S. since I was an apprentice—I knew of no circumstances that would justify such a request being made. I knew also that if the request was made it would be difficult to enforce it, and that if enforced it might do injustice to many highly skilled men who have no indentures. I also considered, gentlemen, that it would also do an injustice to very many tradesmen now in the service, and possibly even to some of those who were asking for it. What do I mean by that? I mean this: that there are quite a number of casual tradesmen in the service. There are more casual tradesmen in the service than any other section of workers, I think. We have had lately a slight reduction in the number of casual tradesmen, only the other day nine or ten moulders having been put off at Addington. What does that mean? This request, if agreed to, means that if those men wanted to get back, no matter how satisfied the General Manager and Workshops Manager and others might be with their skill and ability as workmen, if they could not produce those indentures or papers they would not be allowed to secure re-employment.

Mr. McDougall: You are wrong on that point.

Mr. Hampton: Very well, you will have an opportunity of putting me right later on. What I would ask this Committee to do is this: I would ask them to get the responsible officers of the Department to find out just how many tradesmen there are in the service who can comply with this request. I am sure if you do that you will see for yourselves that what I say is quite right, and such a request if granted would be the means of injuring a number of really skilled and competent tradesmen. Now, a statement was made the other day in the form of a question. Mr. Rowles said, "If Mr. Hampton thinks there is nothing in it, why did he not put it?" I may tell you, gentlemen, that that is not my method of carrying on the business of the organization. Of course, the executive may overrule me, but as far as I am concerned, and I think I can honestly speak for the whole of the present executive, we have made it the policy, at the repeated requests of the Department, to try and keep down our interviews and requests to matters of vital concern. Consequently, I could not honestly go forward with any proposal unless I was fully persuaded in my own mind—and I am speaking for the executive—that it was just, and that I could say so to the Department when asked. I knew very well that I could not go there with that request. Mr. Hiley and Mr. McVilly would want to know what that was for, and I have to be prepared to give them a reason for every request, and if I cannot give a satisfactory reason then I am not prepared to take it there at all. There is a doctrine in this country I know of, "My class, right or wrong." Well, I do not subscribe to that doctrine, and I never have done so; and while I am not going to take up the position of dictator, and while I am not going to say that my word shall be law, still I am going to say this: that if I honestly and conscientiously as an officer of the society consider that any men I represent have done wrong, or any body of men are asking for what I consider to be a wrong thing, I am going to say, "Gentlemen, you are wrong, and I am not going forward with that proposal." We say, then, that the executive are honestly trying to meet the Department's request to keep down proposals which do not matter, and we considered that that was one which did not matter, because as far as I can see

there has been no abuse, and, after all is said and done, you cannot get away from the principle that whilst we may ask for increase of wages, and whilst we may get certain wages under the Classification Act, and whilst the unions may ask for wages to be increased in the Arbitration Court and secure a certain minimum wage, I cannot for the life of me see how you are going to get away from the principle that the man who pays the money must be the judge as to whom he shall pay it, and whether the man is a competent man or not. Now, sir, the question has arisen as to whether the machinists in Sydney were labourers or not. That question was raised the other day, and Mr. Mack cabled to the secretary of the society in Sydney on the point, and received this reply: "Present machinists mostly worked-up labourers' engineers. Recently forced Department promise future appointments machinists other than drillers from apprenticed men only, indentures not imperative; other tradesmen, proof fitness essential." I say that no matter what test you apply—a man can have a sackful of indentures—as a matter of fact I have seen a man with a sugar-bag full of papers and references who could not do what he was put to do. I know myself of a case only two or three years ago. A young fellow served his time as a boilermaker at Addington. He had frittered away his time, he had neglected his opportunities, and when his apprenticeship expired the Department took the course of saying, "Here you are; here is your walking-ticket." That young fellow came to me and wanted me to appear for him before the Appeal Board. I said, "Well, candidly, you have been a young fool, and you know it; but you have lodged this appeal—I do not think you have much chance, but seeing you have lodged the appeal I will do the best I can for you." I went down there and took up the point that here was a man who had served his apprenticeship and had his indentures. The foreman boilermaker said he was not a boilermaker, but I said, "Here is the indenture duly signed by the engineer certifying to this young fellow being a fully fledged boilermaker." That was the only point I could find in the young fellow's favour, but unfortunately for him and for my side of the case that point was not upheld. I just use that as an illustration to show how indentures are, after all, not what they are supposed to be. Now, sir, I have a further reason why that request of the branches was turned down, if that is wanted, and I say with a full sense of responsibility that if this request is right and we acted in good faith in turning it down, that this of all times was not the time to bring such a proposal forward. Who knows—what men in this room know, and what tradesmen know—who may be called upon yet in this country to take up the work of skilled men? I have here illustrations contained in the *Auckland Weekly News* of the 22nd June showing women engaged in railway work and munition work. There are two pictures to which I wish specially to draw your attention. The pictures show women there using the acetone welding plant for which the Railway Department are called upon to pay 1s. per day additional to the tradesmen who do that particular work.

4. *Mr. Rowles.*] On what ground?—I do not know that affects the position. I only know it is a fact that there are women doing the work. The picture also shows that there are two women with soldering-irons and a furnace apparently engaged in some mechanical work. I say this, that even had I been in favour of that proposal, I am not prepared as a responsible officer to go forward to the Department with any request that will in any way hamper the proper carrying-out of railway work under circumstances such as we are under at present. We have, however, repeatedly represented this question. We have always insisted that in the event of a labourer encroaching on a tradesman's work he should be at least paid the minimum wage for tradesman's work. Here is a letter of the 9th July, 1914, sent by the general secretary to the Hon. the Minister of Railways. It states,—

"On several occasions recently we have made representations to your Department that tradesmen are working in the various shops at the minimum wage of 10s. per day. This, I would respectfully submit, is out of all reason. A man is either a tradesman or he is not. If he is not a tradesman and unable to earn tradesman's wages, then he should be dispensed with. If, on the other hand, he is a tradesman, he should be paid for the work he is doing. There are many labourers in private employ who are receiving 10s. per day, whilst, as I have previously said, we have tradesmen, such as fitters, moulders, carpenters, employed under the Government at 10s. per day. I may say at once that there is a considerable amount of unrest with the tradesmen in the various shops on account of the wages they are receiving, and I sincerely trust that you will go into the matter as early as possible with a view to seeing that the men I have referred to receive more than the minimum provided by the Act, as it would appear as if an effort is being made to make the minimum the standard instead of the maximum. The position is, as far as I can understand, that if the foreman will not recommend a man as being worth more than the minimum your Department will take no action in the matter. This really means that the foreman is controlling the wages of the staff instead of the heads of the Department."

Here is the Minister's reply, as follows:—

"In reply to your letter, No. 613-14, of 9th July, with reference to the pay of tradesmen in the workshops, I have the honour to inform you that your representations have received careful consideration, and I regret that I cannot see my way at present to make any alteration in the schedule of pay for tradesmen. To accede to your request practically means abolishing the second grade, which is not at present warranted. I find on looking into the matter that over 90 per cent. of the tradesmen are in Grade 1, which discounts your statement that it would appear as if an effort is being made to make the minimum the standard rate of pay instead of the maximum. I consider that in view of this there is no justification for the unrest which you allege exists in the shops at the present time on account of the wages."

Now, it is only fair to say that the facts as stated by the Department are correct—that there are 90 per cent. of the tradesmen in Grade 1, and I believe on the present D.-3 it would work out at a greater percentage. We did represent the real question in a proper way. I just want to say this, that we did not consider the circumstances sufficient to justify us in asking for it. We considered it would do harm to the tradesmen themselves asking for it, and we considered the time most inopportune. I say I have no time personally for such movements as were made at Petone by those tradesmen the other week. I say this is not the time, when the Department has difficulties on account of the scarcity of men and when men are called upon to work overtime, to quibble about that kind of thing, and the least we can do is to help on the work of the Department. If there is anything of that kind we can easily bring it up after we are over the present trouble in which the Empire is engaged. Now, it has been said that wages have nothing to do with it—that the indenture question has nothing to do with it; all the petitioners want, they say, is the privilege to represent their own grievances. That may be the crux of the whole position, and I am prepared to stand or fall by it. If you say the tradesmen have that right, then where are you going to draw the line? You are going to get us and also the Department into "Queer Street." You are going to say, in effect, that the Department must open their doors to every little section which can say they are distinct from any other section. What is going to happen? I know the tradesmen, and I know how long they will hang together in a tradesmen's society. They will first of all have a row in regard to who is to be Car or Wagon Inspector, the carpenter or fitter. It has already been a great bone of contention amongst them, and for the life of me I cannot imagine them agreeing on that vital point. I say, gentlemen, there is a big principle involved here, and if you are going to say that that is to be conceded, then you will have to consider in future the question as to whether you shall not concede the same thing to every other section, which will result in nothing but chaos and disaster both from the society's and the Department's point of view. I cannot argue that our constitution is absolutely perfect: I am not here to say that our constitution is so-and-so and that it is unalterable. As I have already said, we have made representations to the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Association, and invited them to come along and talk matters over. We put before them certain proposals which we thought reasonable and would adjust the matter. Those proposals I am going to put in before the Committee, and I am going to put in also the proposals of the E.F. and C. Association. Our proposals were—“(1) That we believe in one organization throughout the Railway service; (2) that we believe in one head or executive to control the destinies of such organization; (3) that to give effect to such proposal, each branch of the service—viz., Locomotive, Maintenance, Traffic, and Workshops—shall have equal representation on the said executive; (4) that each of these departments shall have the sole right to consider their own grievances and conditions, and also to constitute branches for the consideration of their own affairs; (5) we are prepared to allow each branch of the service to elect their own representatives, or, as an alternative, that all representatives shall be elected on the basis of proportional representation.” Those were the proposals that were considered by our executive and submitted to that conference as a possible settlement. However, they were turned down by the E.F. and C. Association. What they were after was different to what we were after. We were after doing away with so many societies, and we found that what they wanted was an additional society called the "Federal Council." That was no good to us; and, while there was a good feeling, we could come to no agreement at the conference; but I am pleased to say there is a movement amongst the engine-drivers in the direction of supporting the proposals submitted to that conference. The Masterton Branches of the E.F. and C. Association and also the A.S.R.S. have held a combined meeting and endorsed the proposals that were put before the combined conference. I have also heard that other places in the North Island have similar movements in vogue. I think I can now put to the Committee our position as regards reorganization, and perhaps I should here quote a statement made by Mr. Webster, the Federal Postmaster-General, who not very long ago visited New Zealand. The following was cabled from Sydney on the 21st March: "As a result of his visit to New Zealand, Mr. Webster (Federal Postmaster-General) expects to save £50,000 a year in the administration of the Postal Department. This will involve no radical changes, but simply a rearrangement of methods. He saw nothing in New Zealand to alter his conviction that divided control made for neither efficiency nor economy. He was pleased with the organization of the New Zealand employees, eliminating the dozen unions in existence here." That is Mr. Webster's opinion in connection with his Department, and you are opening up a big question in regard to this matter. If you are going to say, so far as the Railways are concerned, that this concession is to be made, then the same thing will crop up in connection with Education and Post Office management, and you will have dozens of unions springing up all over the place because some little section is dissatisfied with their executive council. I can best place before you our view of the position by reading what I told the editor of our *Review* at the conclusion of the conference with the E.F. and C. Association. The editor waited on me and asked if I would give him some expression of opinion for the *Review*. I said, "I am not disappointed that we have not reached any final decision so far, but we have made a start, which we hope will result in good in time to come. The contention of the Loco. Association is that our proposals were amalgamation, and therefore could not be considered by them; but whilst that may be true, it is not amalgamation in the old form that existed before they left us, inasmuch as it provides for representation on the governing body of the different sections elected by each particular section itself. We have gone further and offered the right to what may be termed sectional branches, where particular groups might discuss their own affairs without interference by other groups. It is apparent to me that for some reason or other the E.F. and C.A. wish to retain some independent existence. What is this desired for? Is it to push for higher wages as against other sections of the service; and if so, is that policy worth while? Our

own conference has affirmed the principle of the all-round increase in wages being asked for, in order to avoid the creation of anomalies which are the cause of friction and give endless trouble. In the second place, the Department must recognize that if anything is requested on behalf of one section of the service it has to be viewed not from the standpoint of that particular section of the service alone, but from the point of view of the effect upon the service as a whole. Any request from the E.F.C.A., therefore, would necessarily have to be taken into consideration in conjunction with the requests of other societies. I must emphasize the phrase 'in conjunction,' for that is vital to the argument. So, again I ask, is independent existence worth while if that is the object of it? The representatives of the E.F.C.A. have repeatedly stated that they have no antipathy to the A.S.R.S., and in this I believe they are perfectly sincere. They claim, therefore, that their form of organization is the best. Well, it necessarily follows that if it is the best for their particular section it is the best for other sections, and the only logical conclusion would be for the other sections to go and do likewise, with the result that the A.S.R.S. would be no more. Then we would have to consider what would take its place, and that answer is found in the very loose form of federation put forward by the E.F.C.A. delegates. Let us see what this would involve. It would mean that there would be at least four railway societies in the Dominion, each having their separate entity. It would mean four separate executive councils, four general secretaries, four offices, and, I presume, four newspapers, with four editors. On top of all this there would be a federal executive, with a federal secretary. What I would like members of both organizations to carefully consider is, do we really need such an elaborate organization as this, with the resultant overlapping, &c., which would be involved in it? I am of opinion that the scheme of organization outlined by the A.S.R.S. which seeks to place all sections on an equal basis within the one governing body, speaking with one voice on behalf of all, will best suit the purposes of the railway men of New Zealand. That it will entail mutual forbearance, with consideration for one another, I do not deny, but surely it is time we dropped suspicion, and trusted each other to do what is right and reasonable for the welfare not only of a particular section, but for the service as a whole." That, sir, is our policy on that matter. Now, sir, I want to say this: that it is not correct for the tradesmen to come here and say that they are out-voted in any branches of the society. I have already shown that in the headquarters of the Tradesmen's Association at Petone they have a majority in that branch and can control the whole branch. At Newmarket, where the chief organizer comes from, they have also a majority in the branch, and the same applies to Hillside, so there are at least three of the largest branches in which they can control the whole branch if they so wish. Now I say, sir, that the tradesmen do not now desire and never have desired—that is, the great majority of them—to separate from the A.S.R.S. The Tradesmen's Association started with the idea that it was to be kept within the A.S.R.S. organization, that it was to be a kind of subsidiary organization, and the proof of that is found in the rules which provide the payment of the sum of 1s. per quarter per member, on which sum it would not be possible to run a separate organization. The Committee has been told that we could not get a hundred signatures in any one centre—that we would be fortunate if we could get a hundred in the whole of New Zealand. I have here a petition from the Addington centre containing 124 names objecting to separation from the A.S.R.S. I have also a petition from the great majority of the painters in Petone objecting to coming under this Tradesmen's Association. Now, sir, this present petition before the Committee has been got together very hurriedly, and is only *prima facie* evidence that there has been some misunderstanding on the matter. We did not know it was the intention of the tradesmen to petition Parliament on this matter at all. We were entirely taken by surprise. They talked about Addington and Mr. Hampton and that sort of thing. Here is a significant fact: there is not a painter in the paint-shop at Addington who is in favour of breaking away from the A.S.R.S. except one, and he is not a member of the A.S.R.S., and that is the shop in which I work. I can go further, and say that I do my business hurriedly in the dinner-hour and in the mornings before work commences, and before I came up here I personally got in touch with the men, and in every instance where I put the position before them in regard to this petition which seeks that the tradesmen should break away from the A.S.R.S. they signed the petition that I have here against it. I never had a refusal. Attempts were made to get the men to withdraw their signatures. One man came to me who was white in the face. He said, "Where is that petition of yours?" I said, "Steady on, old chap, take it quietly." I could see that he had been got at and that misrepresentations had been made to him. I said, "Look here, I do not want your name on this petition if you want to take it off, but surely it is a fair question to ask what has changed your mind." He said, "I do not want a labourer coming in here and putting me out of my job." I said, "Who told you that yarn?" He said, "I heard it." I said, "Yes, you are not the only one who has heard that." I never said at any time that I was personally in favour of the labourers coming in and doing tradesmen's work. What I have said and will continue to say is that if a man can say and can prove to the satisfaction of the officers of the Department that he can do tradesman's work, then he should be given the opportunity of doing so at tradesman's pay. As far as painting is concerned, we say that the labourers cannot do tradesmen's work, and if they try they will soon be bumped out. That is the position I take up. I say the Department has never to my knowledge introduced such a system. If the heads of the Department choose to employ men in such positions, then I am not going to dictate to them as to whom they shall employ. I have a petition signed by men who are opposed to the object of the petitioners. I do not say that it contains all the names we could get. It is simply put in as an indication that the men have been mistaken, and there are twenty or twenty-five names of men who have signed the Tradesmen's Association petition who have also signed the petition I put in. The men have admitted that they made a mistake, and I believe I am right in saying—I

do not know whether the men are here who can certify to it—that the secretary of the Tradesmen's Association at Addington said himself that he would sign my petition and has no intention of leaving the A.S.R.S. Now, another misrepresentation that has been indulged in in order to secure those names in conjunction with the apprenticeship question—which is the main thing that this petition has been built upon—is the statement of comparative earnings between the junior labourer and the tradesman. Mr. Mack has already referred to it, but there are one or two aspects that I want to have the opportunity of referring to. They are, first, that those figures as presented here are purely suppositious. They cover a period of twenty years; but when I tell you, gentlemen, that it is only four years since those respective scales of wages as given here were brought in, you will see that it will be at least sixteen years before such a thing as that could actually happen in practice, and, as Mr. Mack has pointed out, the difficulties in the way of men attaining to that rate of wages are absolutely tremendous. They talk about labourers at 10s. 6d. a day, and get out statements like that to mislead the men. Does any one believe that labourers are getting 10s. 6d. a day as a general thing? Very few men are. About 160 on the D.-3 have reached that amount; but this statement saying they go up automatically year by year is the most misleading thing that could ever be put in the hands of any body of men. The agitation has been built up mainly on that sort of statement. Everybody knows that when a junior labourer enters the service he goes up to the position of adult labourer. There is no guarantee that he will go up to the position of lifter at 10s. 6d., and I know personally of labourers who have been fourteen and fifteen and more years in the service who are waiting and ready to jump at some of those higher positions of the service, but they cannot get the opportunity. The Department is quite right—there is 90 per cent.—I believe I would be safe in saying there is 95 per cent. of tradesmen in the New Zealand Railways who are in the first grade. The petitioners have taken what is a general thing—what is practically a certainty. They have put in a statement showing the comparative earnings of a tradesman and a labourer, and have built up their argument on that. I want to ask you, gentlemen, if that is a fair thing?

5. *Mr. Field.*] What is that paper?—This is the paper on which the Tradesmen's Association has been principally constituted. I should like the Committee to secure a report on it from the Department, whether it is a fair statement of the actual position. We now come to the question of the ballot-paper. A vote has been taken, and it has been said that the proposal was carried unanimously. I could get lots of votes carried unanimously. If I asked the men to vote on the question as to whether they were in favour of a wage of £1 per day I believe every man would vote for it; but there is still another question behind that. Would it be in the public interest to give it to them? Apart from that, I say that this ballot-paper, which professes and which has been brought forward here as evidence that the men want to leave the A.S.R.S., I say that it is not a fair ballot-paper; that it puts one side of the view to the men, and it gives them no explanation as to why the proposals were turned down. It was purely a catch question, and was not a straight-out vote, "Are you in favour of leaving the A.S.R.S. or not?" I just want now, sir, to refer to the question which has been raised in connection with the *Review*. You have had an article put before you as showing our "Red Fed." policy. Now, this is about the best joke of the whole thing. If there is one thing that Mr. Wheeler has been found fault in by one section more than another, it is that there has not been enough "ginger" in the *Review*; and when Mr. Mack and I went around the branches the members said to us, "For Goodness' sake why don't you get the editor to shake up things in the *Review*." Now, I look on Mr. Wheeler as a most moderate and safe man for the editing of the paper. He has held the position for eight years, and I do not think we have had a libel action yet—have we, Mr. Wheeler?

Mr. Wheeler: We have had one threatened—that is all.

Witness: He has not let us in so far, and I am not going to be one to instigate him to do anything that is going to land us in financial trouble. I am not going to deny responsibility for what appears in the *Review*. At the time that article appeared it was certainly a most critical period, and Mr. Wheeler's intention was, I believe, to impress upon the authorities the imperative necessity of doing something to relieve the situation; but I want to say this, that it is quite plain that Mr. Wheeler is appointed by the supreme body of our society, which is the triennial conference. He takes up the position—and I am inclined to agree with him to a large extent—that he is responsible to that body and the members as a whole, and not to the executive council. When he was re-elected at the last conference of 1915 he issued a circular to the members of the A.S.R.S. in which he made the statement as follows: "I guarantee to the branches an independent voice in the *Review*. I am not to be regarded purely as a servant of the executive." Now, upon that circular, which the members of the conference were aware of, Mr. Wheeler was elected to the position; but I say that while we are an administrative body, if I thought for one moment that any editor should hold that position at the hands of the conference, and that he was going to adopt a policy which was going to land us in a revolutionary action, if I thought he was going along those lines, I would have no hesitation in taking the matter up and taking strong exception to it. Another matter which I might illustrate here is this, as showing the attitude of the editor to the officers: One editor by propaganda work in the paper got the secretary who held the position prior to Mr. Mack removed from office. If Mr. Wheeler wishes to "slate" me in the columns of the *Review* it is perfectly open and competent for him to do so so far as I can judge. He has never tried it on yet, but there is nothing to prevent him doing so, and as far as my controlling him is concerned it is absolutely ridiculous. Honestly and candidly I say that I do not really know, and I do not know whether any one else knows, how far I can go and how far I cannot go; but this I do know, that if the branches thought for one moment that I interfered with Mr. Wheeler and told him not to put this or that in the *Review* I know they would make it pretty hot for me. I say, sir, that it is not a fair action to

put one view before you as an indication of the general policy of the A.S.R.S., and to quote an article which was written at a very critical time, and which I believe Mr. Wheeler honestly wrote not with the view of stirring up turmoil or strife, but with a view of stressing on the Government the possibility of a crisis at hand. I want to make this clear: that while the article appeared in the *Review*, and while the branches in the South Island were carrying the so-called drastic resolutions, I believe it to be my duty to the men I represent and to myself to make it clear that had there not been any war bonus at all, I for one minute would not have countenanced any proposal on the part of the railway men to down tools. Now, Mr. Veitch himself knows that when I went to Wanganui I was on my holiday. Previously, owing to Christmas-time coming on, Mr. Mack and myself were unable to include Napier and Wanganui in our tour. I was enjoying a holiday after strenuous efforts and anxiety in connection with the wages business, and I heard there was a good deal of dissatisfaction at Wanganui and Napier. I said I would go to Wanganui and Napier, and I did so, and there I met two of the hottest crowds I have ever met in my life. They were simply boiling over. They started talking stop-work meetings, &c. I said, "I am here in a responsible position, and you have got to get that sort of thing and all that nonsense out of your heads, otherwise you are going to do your case harm. We must stand for reasonable methods, and I believe if we are reasonable we can attain our ends." When I went to Wanganui Mr. Veitch happened to be there, and he can bear me out in what I say. I opened my address with the statement that so far as the railway men of this country were concerned, strike at a time like this is quite out of the question. I was met by cries of derision from a certain section, and "What are we going to do?" I said, "I do not care what you intend to do, I know what I intend to do, and all my influence is going to be thrown on to the side of reasonable methods." I say this, gentlemen, and I would not think it any honour to be president of the Amalgamated Society if I could not say it: that even if the war bonus had not been agreed to, my efforts would have been concentrated in telling the men not to take any drastic steps, but to show their patriotism and seize their opportunity at a later date to attain their ends. Now, gentlemen, I think I have dealt sufficiently with the question, but I may here say that if there is any point on which I have not made myself clear I will be only too willing to answer any question. In conclusion, I just want to submit for your consideration the following reasons why the prayer of this petition should not be granted: (1.) That it has been shown that clauses 3 and 4 of the petition are untrue, and therefore the grounds for presenting the petition are removed—(i) by the witnesses for the petitioners having admitted that there is no complaint regarding wages and conditions, and that the departmental attitude towards them is satisfactory, and (ii) by the Amalgamated Society having produced proof that wages and conditions have been attended to and improved as far as possible, and that no reasonable request has been refused. (2.) That the claim of the petitioners that they are unable to get representation owing to being outnumbered by other classes of labour is also untrue, because the constitution of the Amalgamated Society provides for equal and direct representation both on the conference and executive council, and in the majority of the workshops the tradesmen predominate, and in every case under this constitution a tradesman has been elected. (3.) That, on the contrary, the Rules Nos. 5 and 15 of the Tradesmen's Association only provide for the admission of those tradesmen who can produce indentures: therefore those tradesmen who by skill and ability may be accepted by the Department are excluded from the said association, and are consequently unable to get representation regarding matters affecting their employment through the association referred to. (4.) That the Minister and the Department cannot, in view of clauses 2 and 6 of the Amalgamated Society's terms of recognition, officially recognize any association which excludes from membership any class of men engaged in that branch of the service which the association is established to protect. To do so would be to give preference to those men who could produce indentures, which is creating a distinction between tradesmen, and establishes a principle which the Arbitration Court has refused to accept.

WEDNESDAY, 5TH JULY, 1916.

RICHARD HAMPTON examined further. (No. 11.)

1. *Mr. McDougall.*] Do you know that Mr. Mack sent wires to the workshop centres asking the tradesmen whether they were prepared to accept the wages and conditions that obtained under arbitration?—Yes.

2. Do you know what replies were received?—Some of the replies were against it and some said they would leave the matter in our hands. We asked that question because we anticipated the question would be raised here, and, as a matter of fact, it was mentioned in the Department's report. We wanted to get the minds of the men on the question in order to be able to meet anything that might arise in connection with it. The replies can all be produced to the Committee if they wish it.

JOHN SEPTIMUS BARNETT examined. (No. 12.)

1. *Mr. Hampton.*] What are you?—A leading blacksmith.

2. How many years have you been in the service of the Railway Department?—Thirty-two years.

3. *The Chairman.*] I suppose you call yourself a tradesman?—Yes, I have my indentures with the Department.

4. *Mr. Hampton.*] Have you had experience in connection with the A.S.R.S. business?—Yes, I have. I joined the A.S.R.S. twenty-five years ago, I think, and I have been a member of the society during the whole of that time. I have been returned to three conferences by the workshops constituency, and have not been opposed at the three elections. I was returned as a councillor in 1912, and am now in my second term as a councillor.

5. Have you heard the clauses of the petition of the Tradesmen's Society read—especially clauses 3 and 4?—Yes.

6. Are the statements therein contained true?—No, I do not think they are. I think that so far as my experience goes—and it covers a wider field than that of any of the men who are representing the petitioners—the A.S.R.S. have faithfully undertaken to represent the reasonable grievances of the tradesmen, and they have done so with tolerable success. I regard the latter part of clause 3 as a reflection upon the representative of the workshop on the Dominion council. It declares that the affairs of the tradesmen have not been treated or represented by the said society. Now, it has been my function, as representing the workshops of the South Island, to do this very work, and I believe with my colleagues on the council that we have treated to the best of our ability and faithfully represented the genuine grievances of the tradesmen, and, as I have already said, have done it with tolerable success. Not only that, but the council, which is composed of eight men representing the four big departments of the Railway, have given the workshops representatives their unanimous support in representing the grievances of the tradesmen so far as they have come before us during my term upon the council. Moreover, I would like to add in respect to the attitude of the representatives of the other departments that they have sometimes been more keen to represent the tradesmen's grievances than the tradesmen upon the council have themselves, notably when the question of dirt-money in connection with one of the running-sheds in the North Island was before the council. The matter was actually represented by the then president of the society, Mr. W. T. Wilson, who was, as you are aware, an engine-driver.

7. Do you believe that the prayer of the petition represents the views of the majority of the men?—No, I do not. I did not know what the petition contained until I left Invercargill on Friday last. As a matter of fact, I did not see the petition, although I was asked to sign it, until I passed through Dunedin on my way to Wellington. Therefore I had little opportunity of questioning my fellow-craftsmen in Invercargill as to whether they favoured the petition or not. I did meet one man who did not know that the petition meant severance from the A.S.R.S., and not knowing that it intended to deprive the A.S.R.S. of rights which it already possesses. I met another man who hoped that the prayer of the petition would not be agreed to. Apart from that, I am convinced that there are scores of tradesmen in the South Island, particularly in Hillside—where I have worked for nearly thirty years—who have displayed the utmost confidence in me as their representative, and would not say, if they knew really what they were signing, that I had not faithfully represented their grievances.

8. How would you account, then, for the signatures being obtained for the petition?—I would say that this petition has been brought up hurriedly and that the men have not had time to properly appreciate the prayer of the petition which they have signed. I do not mean to suggest so far as Invercargill is concerned that any of the signatures obtained to the petition were obtained by misrepresentation—that is, deliberate misrepresentation—but I do believe that in both Invercargill and Hillside if the matter were properly brought before the men and they were made to see that the prayer of the petition was deliberately intended to deprive the A.S.R.S. of the sole right it possesses to represent the tradesmen's grievances, that they would not sign this petition.

9. Were you connected with what is known as the tradesmen's movement?—Yes, I have had some connection with the tradesmen's movement since 1900. I was asked in that year by some of the oldest smiths in the service, and all of them are out of the service now, to draw up a petition to the Department for an increase in wages. The petition was in due course drawn up and unanimously approved of by the men, and the Department very readily granted the request contained in that petition. The prayer of the petition was granted in about three weeks' time from the date it was presented. Since that time no movement on the part of the tradesmen has been undertaken in which I have not had a leading part. There were intermittent attempts made during the years succeeding 1900—right up to 1910—to obtain an increase in wages. In 1910 a simultaneous movement was made in Newmarket and Hillside to form a Dominion committee to watch the interests of the tradesmen, and to seek an increase in wages. That Dominion movement resulted in a conference in Wellington in 1910, of which I was appointed chairman. The first resolution was to the effect that all transactions should be done through the A.S.R.S.; that the committee would take no independent action and would carry on all its negotiations with the Department through the A.S.R.S. As the outcome of that movement a permanent committee was established with headquarters in Wellington. Since then the sole purpose for which that committee was set up has been largely accomplished, and I should say that the sole purpose of this movement was to secure an increase in wages. In the first petition to which I have referred in 1900 the petitioners deliberately expressed satisfaction with the conditions of their employment—their only quarrel was that their pay did not equal the pay of those in like crafts engaged in private employment, and when that was accomplished the operations of that committee practically ceased. There was another factor which operated in bringing to an end for the time being the tradesmen's committee, and that was the reorganization of the A.S.R.S. In 1911 a conference was called for the first time consisting of equal representation of all departments, and it seemed to me, and I think it seemed to the great bulk of the tradesmen, that the new constitution of the A.S.R.S. gave the tradesmen as well as the workshops staff generally some assurance that their legitimate grievances would be faithfully attended to and properly represented.

10. Have you any reason to think that that has been a success—have the objects generally been achieved?—Yes, generally speaking they have. As I said, the question was one of wages, and the

A.S.R.S. since 1910 have been able to do what we tried to do in 1900—they have been able to bring up the wages of tradesmen to within a reasonable range of what is paid by private employers outside.

11. What do you think the object is behind this petition?—I think there has crept into the tradesmen's movement something that was never intended originally. There is now evidently an intention to raise artificial barriers to protect the trade—a thing that was never contemplated in the original movement amongst the tradesmen. I have never heard in all my experience in Hillside of any serious complaint against the treatment that the Department were meting out to the tradesmen in respect to their trade. When I say "serious complaint," of course I have not mixed up with the men without knowing something about the doctrines that the petitioners propound, but they were never serious enough to gain or command the attention of the great bulk of the men. So far as I know, not until 1915 has this doctrine taken hold of the men. In 1914 the tradesmen sent a Dominion representative to Wellington, and their demand was for wages, but I am not aware that any of the new proposals were seriously contemplated or got the seal of any properly organized body of tradesmen until 1915.

12. Would you expect that the tradesmen expected to get an increase of wages as the outcome of this petition?—I do not know what their hope is in the matter of wages. It seems to me there has been imported into the movement since the days it was established, and the days in which I took a lively interest and acquired some part of it, a new matter which seemed to be stressed more by the tradesmen than the question of wages.

13. Your idea is that the artificial barrier is the main part of the question?—So far as I am aware the protection of the trades by artificial barriers is their chief concern. We, on the contrary, believe there are difficulties about our trade and that it will not be snatched away from us. There is also the question of labourers doing tradesmen's work. It seems to me that the petitioners, according to what I have heard, desire to place restrictions upon the Department so that the Department cannot use the labourers in the service of the State up to the limit of their capacity which they might reasonably expect to do. This seems to be quite unwarrantable. It is behind the trouble we are witnessing in the Old Country to-day in connection with the manufacture of munitions.

14. Is there any other matter you wish to refer to?—No.

15. *Mr. Sidey.*] Having granted the request of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Association to break away from the A.S.R.S., providing the Tradesmen's Association comply with a similar condition, can we reasonably refuse their request? You can please yourself whether you answer the question or not?—Of course, I am not aware that the Engine-drivers' Society has yet got official recognition. I believe they have a recommendation; but I would say, further, that, having made one mistake, it does not seem to me reasonable that you should perpetuate that; and I would say, further, that after all the Engine-drivers' Society and the proposed Tradesmen's Association are different things, and they are working for different purposes. The very protection which the tradesmen are working for the engine-drivers have. They did not ask for a society because they wanted their trade or profession protected, because they have already got protection. Every man who stands upon a footplate of a New Zealand locomotive must go through one channel: he must become a cleaner, then a fireman, then a driver. But the position is entirely different with a tradesman. The Department gets its craftsmen from all sorts of sources, and the Department could not man one-half of its shops by the men it trains itself. They certainly could not man those of one Island alone if they demanded from every man his indentures. There are not the craftsmen in this country possessors of the indentures who could man the shops of this Island.

16. What is the proportion of the men in the service who have indentures?—I am quite convinced on this matter of indentures that there are not 20 per cent. of the men who are working at their trade who have indentures. I might say that I walked into a shop yesterday and asked the foreman if he could give me a job, and if he wanted my papers. He said "No, I have seen sacks of papers—I do not want to see papers." He then told me that some little time ago he had been working in the Auckland docks when a man came to get work who had papers from Vickers (Limited), one of the finest firms in the world. The foreman said, "I started him to work and I found within half an hour that he could not hit the ship let alone the rivet."

17. Your name has been mentioned as one of the founders of the Tradesmen's Association: is that so?—Yes. There is no man in Otago who took a livelier interest in the affairs of the tradesmen than I did, and there was no man who enjoyed the confidence of the tradesmen more than I did, and there was no man who more fully represented their grievances before the Minister and members of Parliament. Mr. Sidey knows of the movement I was associated with. There was no intention to create a separate organization, and on several occasions we expressed ourselves as satisfied with the work of the A.S.R.S. As a matter of fact, apart from the resolution passed in 1910 when we declared we would only operate through the A.S.R.S., when the general secretary and the president visited Dunedin in 1912, the president made a statement that somewhere in some remote corner of the North Island some tradesmen were attempting to form a separate society, and I went down to Hillside and informed the men of what was said. I asked them to convene a meeting of the Hillside tradesmen in the A.S.R.S. The right was granted to me to meet the tradesmen during the week, and a resolution was carried expressing our confidence in the A.S.R.S. as our representatives and continued loyalty to the A.S.R.S., through which benefits had come not only to the tradesmen but to all sections of the Railway service. That resolution was carried unanimously. That organization with which I was identified was an altogether different organization to the one now before you. I will read the resolution that was read in Hillside and carried unanimously: "Special meeting of tradesmen to consider statement of president of A.S.R.S. in his address to Otago and Hillside branches that there was a movement on foot in the North Island to establish a society of railway tradesmen apart from the A.S.R.S. :

Resolved, (1) That we repudiate any connection with the movement referred to; (2) in all our endeavours to better our condition we have never been disloyal to the A.S.R.S., and we see no reason why we should change our attitude to the society through which improved conditions have come not only to the tradesmen but to all sections of the Railway service." So that Mr. Sidey will see that this organization with which I was associated had behind it altogether different proposals and different intentions so far as the A.S.R.S. was concerned.

18. *The Chairman.*] You said that that originated in some remote centre in New Zealand?—Yes.

19. Would you object to say what centre it was?—Well, I believe it was somewhere in the vicinity of Aramoho.

20. *Mr. Field.*] The Department regards the separation of the engine-drivers from the A.S.R.S. as a mistake?—I think it will ultimately be shown to be a mistake. The enginemen will themselves find it to be a mistake.

21. And you think they will come back to the parent body?—I think they will. The Masterton men met and passed a resolution to come back on the same terms they were on when they went out from the parent body.

22. You say the executive of the A.S.R.S. have invariably represented the grievances of the tradesmen as far as they could. You are aware there is one rock on which they stand—namely, the question of indentures. You did not represent that grievance to the Department because you did not approve of it?—Well, I was not on the council when that deputation came up, but that would have made no difference. I would not have been a party to representing that particular grievance because I believe it is a harsh and unjust proposal, and a proposal that should not commend itself to any representative in this democratic country. It means this: that the lad from the country, for instance, is debarred if he has not served his apprenticeship. If he comes to town and becomes associated with mechanical work and shows an aptitude for it, this proposal says that because he was not bound apprentice to a trade that he should be forever compelled to become a labourer, or a doctor, or a lawyer, but one thing he could not become was a tradesman. The country requires lawyers to pass an examination, not because it desires to protect them as a ring, but because it desires to protect the public against imposters; but our friends do not advocate that the Department who employs the men should be protected against imposters, but that they themselves should have an artificial barrier put around them.

23. Do you not think if you refuse them it would have a discouraging effect on apprentices?—I do not think so at all. We have in the A.S.R.S. a proposal now before us which is taking concrete shape which will do away with any injustice there might be in regard to apprentices. I cannot for the life of me see that because I had to put in six years and five months apprenticeship that every other fellow who enters should be bound to serve a similar term. The Department has recognized this, and apprentices who enter the service now are in a different position to those who entered the service years ago. An apprentice who enters the service now goes for five years, and is paid at the end of his term 10s. per day. The petitioners' attitude is because they have served five years apprenticeship, that all boys for all time should be compelled to do the same. We say that in this country at the present time, with our national education system, for a boy who has not the opportunity of becoming something better, that at least he should have the opportunity of becoming a tradesman, and we cannot for the life of us see that any injustice is done to any one. All the trend of modern industrial history goes to show that our friends are like Mrs. Partington with her broom, trying to keep back the tide of industrial progress. When a man went for a job the other day the employer said, "All I want to see is how quick you can put the work on the floor, and that is all I want." That is all the State has a right to expect from the Railway Department. I do not see why the Railway Department, because it is a great public concern, should be hampered and restricted any more than any other concern. Mr. Hampton was careful to show you that he was not a "Red Fed.," but I am a socialist to this extent, that I think all public utilities should be owned and controlled by the country; but that will not happen when public industries are restricted more than private industries.

24. If a fair ballot was taken in the service on the question of separation from the A.S.R.S. do you think the result would be that there would not be a large majority voting for separation?—I think so. If we had the opportunity of taking a ballot I do not think the majority of the tradesmen would vote for severance from the A.S.R.S.

25. Do you suggest that the method followed was not a fair way of obtaining a ballot—apparently a large majority of the tradesmen signed the petition?—A large number have repudiated it.

26. You would not be afraid of another ballot being taken?—Oh no, I would not be in the least.

27. You will be prepared to put the question to the test of another ballot?—Yes, that is all we want.

28. *Mr. Dickson.*] You mentioned the fact of a meeting at Masterton and of the meeting passing a resolution. What do you know of that?—I say the resolution was passed; I do not know anything about the circumstances.

29. Do you know how many there were there?—No, only that there was a combination of the whole of the Second Division.

30. You know how many men of the Second Division are in Masterton?—No.

31. The engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners are not taking part in this petition at all, but you have brought them into it by the statement you have made?—I know there was a meeting of the combined railway men of the Second Division, and they passed a resolution favouring one organization with equal representation upon the council, and a conference of the maintenance, loco., traffic, and workshops departments.

32. Would you be surprised if evidence was given here that there were only three engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners present at that meeting?—No, I would not be.

33. You are not in a position to contradict that statement that there were only three there?—No, I only know what I saw in the *Review*. I am not stressing the point, but I took it—

34. But you are stressing the point that they had gone back?—No. What I understood was that the Masterton resolution was a straw upon the surface as showing the way the tide was running.

35. What right have you to say that this Committee has made a mistake by granting a favourable recommendation to the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners?—I hope I have not done anything improper.

36. You said the Committee made a mistake: what grounds have you for saying that—were you here then?—Yes, I was here.

37. What right have you to come to this Committee and say we made a mistake?—

Mr. Hampton: Mr. Barnett was asked by somebody a fair question and answered it, and I take it he did so in mistake.

Mr. Sidey: He only gave his own opinion.

The Chairman: Mr. Dickson is quite in order.

Witness: I am sorry if you take it in that way, but when Mr. Sidey asked the question I thought he had a right to ask it, and having asked it I thought I had a right to answer it in a perfectly honest way as far as I could. The common ground for that opinion is that it is the best thing for the Railway servants, the best thing for the Railway Department, and the best thing for this country, that all railway men in the Second Division should be combined in one union with one head to represent its affairs to the Department. I believe that would be the most economical. I believe in the end it would be absolutely the most just method, and for that reason I believe that if all were in one body then no one section of the service would be able to bring any undue pressure upon the Department to gain their ends at the expense of any other section. The one grand thing about the A.S.R.S. is that all sections are equally represented, and all sections present their own deliberations to safeguard the interests of that section. For those reasons I believe it will ultimately be found that one union for the Second Division of the Railway service is the best.

38. And do you think there has been a mistake in forming the Officers' Institute? You said one mistake had been made. Did not the officers at one time belong to the A.S.R.S.?—I have been a long time associated with the A.S.R.S., although I was not actually working with the A.S.R.S. till 1910, but I really cannot say where the Officers' Institute came from.

39. You do not know that the A.S.R.S. used to provide them with brass buttons?—I do not follow your question.

40. It was said that that was about all they ever did for them?—I can state this: that so recently as the beginning of this week I met an officer who belongs to the Officers' Institute, and he told me there was a likelihood of a large section of the Officers' Institute seeking membership with the A.S.R.S. That may be another straw to indicate which way the tide is running.

41. Do all the tradesmen in your workshop belong to the A.S.R.S.?—That I could not say.

42. You could not say that and yet you represent them?—I have represented them for years, but I could not say that. As a matter of fact, I do not happen to see them individually.

43. At this meeting you had in Invercargill at which you carried this resolution how many were present?—That was carried in Dunedin. I have only recently been in Invercargill. The resolution was carried in Dunedin; it was a unanimous meeting of the tradesmen, and all the men unanimously approved of the resolution. If you have any doubt as to my standing with the Dunedin tradesmen, I appeal to the member for Dunedin South, Mr. Sidey, who knows my position.

44. You ought to know how many tradesmen belong to the A.S.R.S. and how many to other unions. You have taken a great interest in this thing for years, and you ought to be able to give us that information?—During all the time I have been connected with them, and during all the elections, I have not had the good luck to strike any opponent, so I have not had the acquaintance of my constituency.

45. Do you consider, then, that 1s. a day is all that is necessary to pay a tradesman over and above a labourer?—I am not sorry you asked that question. I said I was associated with the tradesmen's movement since 1900, and that I was identified with it in close combination with them until 1914. There are men sitting behind you representing those who have signed this petition who know and can produce the book if they will to prove that in all that time I have steadfastly resisted any attempt to make comparisons in the wages of tradesmen with the wages of the men who are not tradesmen. That has been my position the whole time. I have stood for increases for tradesmen, but I have never allowed comparisons, and I have carried men with me right up to the present moment. The tradesmen have never attempted to score off the men under them. We have steadfastly resisted any attempt to draw any comparison between our rates of pay and the rates of pay of the men under us, and I want to say further that everything goes to show that the old distinction between tradesmen and non-tradesmen can never come to pass again—that is to say, that the margin which existed once can never exist again. When I started at the trade thirty-three years ago, the first striker I had could not sign his own name. I am not saying this to the man's disparagement, but I know that that is not the class of man you have nowadays. The non-skilled man was more frequent in those days; but as long as the Department is allowed to use a man's skill up to his limit, they should be allowed to pay him up to his limit.

46. And you think 1s. a day additional is enough to pay a tradesman over and above a labourer—I want you to say Yes or No?—The thing that we have stood for is this: that no comparison should be made.

47. That does not answer my question: I want to know do you or do you not consider that yourself?—I consider that as long as I have the wages which any private employers are prepared to pay me, I have nothing to do with the man under me. I do not reckon he comes into it at all, and we have steadfastly refused to ever express our views on that point.

48. I want you to answer that question whether you consider 1s. a day is the proper difference ?—I will answer the question in a minute, but I am not going to answer until I have done with you. I believe that a mechanic is such a valuable member of the community at all times that his wages should favourably compare with a lawyer, as far as I can see.

49. Some mechanics earn more than lawyers ?—The only useful men in the community to-day are soldiers, mechanics, and doctors ; and the time may come when the mechanics cannot be paid too highly.

50. And is that a mechanic who has not served his apprenticeship ?—Yes, as long as he is a mechanic. Of course, papers do not prove that a man is a mechanic. Do you know that I can bring you papers from scores of men who are not mechanics. They have got their papers but they have not got the skill.

51. Are you going to answer that question now as to the difference in pay between a tradesman and a labourer ?—I have told you that a mechanic cannot be too highly paid.

52. Will you answer the question Yes or No ?—I will say that I will not answer. I have always refused to answer that question.

53. Some years ago the A.S.R.S. made a noise about the taking on of a lot of men, some of whom were promoted over the heads of others employed in the service. Would you object if the same thing happened again ?—I do not remember the circumstances.

54. I am speaking of the returned soldiers from the South African War ?—I was not connected with it and do not know anything about it.

55. *Mr. McDougall.*] Have you told the tradesmen at Hillside what your views were with regard to labourers encroaching on tradesmen's rights, also your views on credentials ?—Yes, I have, and when I was speaking to the tradesmen at a meeting I told them of an instance I knew of personally of a lad who commenced his apprenticeship with the Department. He came seven miles to the centre in which he worked. He told me one day that his father had been stricken with a serious illness and could no longer work, and the lad asked if he could not have his indentures cancelled and become a rivet boy in order to earn more to assist his parents. I appealed to the men at Hillside and asked them if they would agree to the lad becoming a tradesman in after-years. Yes, I told them my views on this subject.

56. You are working at the present time at Invercargill ?—Yes.

57. You said that before you left Invercargill one of the men approached you or you approached that individual, and he told you that if the men had known that we were asking for the sole right to represent the tradesmen, that they would not have signed our petition ?—Yes, that is so.

58. Are you aware that we are not after the sole right to represent them ?—No. I said it was depriving the A.S.R.S. of what it already possessed—the sole right to represent grievances.

59. How are we depriving the A.S.R.S. ?—If you had the sole right, for instance, to sell Ford motor-cars in this country and somebody else came along and sold them you would be deprived of your sole rights.

60. Do you know that with the exception of four or five every tradesman signed our petition ?—I did not know it ; and I am not distressed at being informed.

61. You inferred just now that quite a number of men had signed the petition, and that the ink was scarcely dry before they wished they could reverse their action ?—Yes.

62. Was that hearsay or did you know from the men themselves ?—I believe the petition is in.

63. I was only asking you if it was hearsay ?—I believe the petition is in, and members have the information there.

64. Were there any men in Invercargill who signed the petition ?—There were no men asked so far as I am aware of.

65. You took a prominent part in the deputation which came to Wellington and you gave evidence when the tradesmen gave evidence ?—I was appointed chairman of a large deputation which came to Wellington representing tradesmen, and I was appointed speaker before the General Manager.

66. And also chairman of the Hillside Tradesmen's Committee ?—Yes.

67. You said you were always satisfied as far as the A.S.R.S. had represented the tradesmen ?—If I said that I wish to retract and wish to say this : that since the reorganization in 1910 I have always been satisfied under the existing conditions.

68. Previous to that you were not satisfied ?—Previously I was not.

69. *Mr. Hampton.*] Can you tell the Committee what are the wages of labourers at the present time ?—9s. per day.

70. And what do tradesmen get ?—11s. 6d., in general.

71. The labourers' wages in general would be 9s. per day, and the tradesmen's wages in general would be 11s. 6d. per day : is that so ?—Yes.

72. Then there is more than 1s. difference ?—Yes. I am glad you asked me that question, because so far as tradesmen are concerned I have always stood for the abolition of the second-grade tradesmen. I have always stood for this : that the Department itself should give every boy who serves his time with the Department the right during his apprenticeship to qualify for the first grade.

73. *Mr. McDougall.*] You said that the wages of a labourer were 9s. ?—I believe that is right.

74. Could you tell the Committee what the wages of a skilled labourer are—for instance, you will admit that a lifter is a skilled labourer ?—10s. 6d. a day is the maximum.

75. And the maximum of a tradesman is what ?—11s. 6d.

76. *Mr. Hampton.*] Are there any tradesmen who get more than 11s. 6d. ?—Oh, yes.

77. Who are they ?—Leading tradesmen get 13s. 6d. a day as a maximum.

78. But apart from leading tradesmen are there any special allowances ?—Yes, there are. Smiths engaged upon new engine-work get an extra allowance of 6d. ; fitters employed on new work, and carpenters and angle-iron smiths, 6d. a day extra ; acetone workers get an extra allowance of 1s. per day, and the men in charge of new locomotives 1s. a day.

79. In view of there being some tradesmen getting a special allowance—say, acetone workers getting 12s. 6d. a day—you would not say that all the men got 12s. 6d. : because a few got a little extra you would not go round the country and say all the men got 12s. 6d. a day?—No. I would like to say, in connection with lifters, that I am told that in some countries a lifter is classified as a mechanic and is called a “carriage-fitter.”

JOHN HENRY JONES examined. (No. 13.)

1. *Mr. Hampton.*] What are you?—A leading turner employed at the Addington Workshops.
2. How long have you been there?—Close on thirty-five years.
3. You have known of my connection with the A.S.R.S. at Addington?—I have known it very intimately.
4. You heard the statements I made yesterday as to my attitude towards what is known as the “Red Fed.” element?—I did.
5. Are those statements correct generally?—Absolutely correct so far as my memory goes. I know you took a most prominent part in condemning the proposed assistance in connection with the Waihi strike and other things that have occurred during the period of unrest at that time, and possibly it was entirely on your efforts on that occasion that that was knocked on the head.
6. Do you think that the tradesmen, from your knowledge of them at Addington, really want complete separation from the A.S.R.S.?—I am satisfied from those with whom I have come in contact that they do not require severance from the A.S.R.S., I think that to a very large extent those who have signed the petition have signed it under a misapprehension as to its real meaning, and when the real meaning was put to them, numbers of them in my hearing repudiated their desire for severing their connection with the A.S.R.S. under any conditions.
7. Have you taken any part in the tradesmen’s movement?—I have. I was one who represented the tradesmen at a deputation on two occasions, and I was asked on two other occasions to represent the tradesmen at Addington. On one occasion I could not go owing to domestic arrangements, and on the other occasion I could not get away owing to a departmental matter. I was engaged upon some important work and my superior officer did not wish me to go away, otherwise I would have been up here on four different occasions.
8. Were you satisfied with the treatment you received at the hands of the executive?—I was quite satisfied with the treatment we got from the executive, and I can fully bear out the statements made by Mr. Barnett that one of the first resolutions passed when the delegates met in Wellington was to the effect that all our requests should be put through the A.S.R.S.
9. Do you know of any reason why that should be departed from?—I do not know of the slightest reason why it should be departed from. In fact, I think it would be a mistake under any circumstances to depart from that course.
10. You have heard clauses 3 and 4 of the petition read out condemning the A.S.R.S. : are those statements true?—I think those statements are misleading. I do not think the compilers think they are true. I think they go too far.
11. Are you a member of the South Island Appeal Board?—Yes, I have been so for nearly twelve years.
12. Whom do you represent on that Board?—The entire workshops branches right through the Middle Island.
13. Have you any reason to suppose that the labourers are antagonistic or hostile to the tradesmen?—I have not had the slightest reason to suppose they were so. I come in contact with the labourers and tradesmen a great deal, and I have heard nothing that would lead me to form such an opinion.
14. Do you think the other side could obtain many witnesses from Addington to state that their desire was to leave the A.S.R.S. and separate entirely from us?—I cannot speak really as regards a large proportion, but I am of opinion that they could not obtain very many witnesses. If they got a dozen it would be about the limit of their capacity.
15. What do you think is the object of the petition—what is behind it?—I consider the object of the petition is to form an entirely different society.
16. But after that do they want an increase in wages?—After that I presume they would petition the Department for restricting certain workers or for an increase in wages. I think that that is behind the whole thing.
17. *Mr. Field.*] Do you suggest that the signatures to this tradesmen’s petition were unfairly obtained?—I do not know that I could say definitely that they were unfairly obtained, but I can say truthfully that large numbers of men who signed that petition signed it under a misapprehension as to its true purport. They considered that the petition was really one from inside the A.S.R.S. Of course, I was asked to sign the petition myself, but I did not do so, and of course did not read it.
18. Have any of those who signed it told you that they did not read it before signing it?—Yes, they have.
19. Would you be prepared to abide by the result of a new ballot?—Most certainly. I think it is a most necessary thing to do. If the whole position was explained to the tradesmen beforehand I am satisfied that the petition would be reversed in a large number of cases.
20. *Mr. Dickson.*] In speaking of the petition you said you thought the petitioners could not get a dozen men to come along and give evidence in favour of the petition from your workshops?—Yes, I stated that, and that is my opinion. I do not lay that down as an absolute certainty.
21. You saw the voting-papers sent around?—No, I did not.
22. Well, this is the voting-paper [produced to witness]?—I have not seen this before.

23. In Addington there were 280 votes recorded altogether—241 “Yes,” 32 “No,” and 7 informal?—Yes.

24. I suppose they did not know what they were voting for, according to you?—I do not say that. Any one reading that voting-paper intelligently, I should say, would know what he was voting for. Personally I have no recollection of that paper coming round Addington at all. I do not know where I was at the time.

25. Did your society carry a resolution to federate with the waterside workers or the Miners’ Federation?—Not to my knowledge.

26. Would you favour such a proposal?—Decidedly not—not if it meant that we were compelled to strike. I am absolutely opposed to strikes.

27. Would you favour it in the event of strikes?—There may be conditions on which I would favour it, but, speaking generally, I would want to know sufficient about it before I did favour it.

28. Has the A.S.R.S. passed resolutions in New Zealand in favour of the federation of the different branches of the association?—That I could not say definitely. Possibly there are other officers who could answer that question.

29. You have not seen it reported in your paper?—No, I could not just remember for the time being. Of course, there may have been at the time of the excitement when the strike business was before the country. It is quite possible that such resolutions might have been carried by a small majority. You generally get small meetings that will pass resolutions like that, but when put to the general body of men all those things are generally thrown out.

30. What is the average attendance at the ordinary meeting of your branch?—It all depends on the question at issue. At the meeting at which Mr. Hampton spoke I suppose the hall was full—somewhere about 150. That was to meet the President of the Society, not to meet Mr. Hampton. That is, amongst ourselves.

31. Was not Mr. Hampton there?—He was an ordinary member there—not president.

32. *Mr. McDougall.*] Are you aware that we have never asked any one to sever his connection with the A.S.R.S.?—That is rather a strange question. I should think that the matter of the petition itself is putting that request to every one.

33. That is just the reason I asked the question. We do not ask any one to sever their connection with the A.S.R.S., and seeing that I have stated that, were you aware of it?—No, I am not particularly aware that the request was put individually or personally, but there is only one inference to be drawn from the petition, and that inference is that no numbers of men, at any rate, would remain in the two societies. They would have to support one or the other, and the rational sequence to their signing the petition would be their withdrawal from the A.S.R.S.

34. *Mr. Hampton.*] Would you consider a ballot taken by one side entirely controlled by them a fair ballot?—Decidedly not. Both sides should have their case put before the men and let the men judge for themselves.

35. Would you consider it fair to put to the ballot one side of the statement as to what the executive had done?—Certainly not. I should want a full statement of the work of the executive.

EDWARD CAMERON examined. (No. 14.)

1. *Mr. Hampton.*] What are you?—A carpenter in the employ of the Railway service at Addington. I have been seventeen years in the service.

2. What branch of the society do you belong to?—I am a member of the Canterbury Branch of the A.S.R.S., which embraces every railway man.

3. Can you give the Committee some indication as to how your branch of the society does its business?—Yes. For the last fifteen years the Canterbury Branch have always done their work so as to give the least trouble of any description as regards agitation, and we allow the different sections of the Railway service and the different grades every opportunity to state their different grievances if they so desire. The guards have a Guards’ Council, the shunters have the Shunters’ Club, as they call it, and they meet together to discuss their grievances and suchlike as they come along. They bring along their grievances in a concrete form to the branch and we deal with them there.

4. Does that method work satisfactorily?—Yes, most satisfactory. In many instances where a particular section of the men have a grievance and they come along expecting to right it in their own way, by going into the matter with all the different sections of the service they seem to have a greater advantage than if the matters were brought along and discussed only amongst themselves.

5. There is no conflict or overlapping between one and another?—None whatever. I have had the greatest assistance from even the surfacemen.

6. Have you read clause 1 of the petition?—Yes, I have.

7. Is it correct to say that the petitioners are all members of the service?—I am absolutely certain it is not.

8. What makes you say that?—A member of the service is a man who is permanently employed by the Railway Department.

9. Where did you get that from?—From the Act, under which they state they are petitioning.

10. Do you consider the majority of the tradesmen at Addington really want to break away from the A.S.R.S.?—I feel confident they do not.

11. Why do you think that?—Well, with the whole of the men in the carpenters’ shop whom I come in daily contact with, there was not one who said he wished to get away from the A.S.R.S. I

might say that I saw the petition going round, but I would like to make it clear to the Committee that although they have had evidence that some members have not read the petition, I know that some did not see it.

12. *Mr. Dickson.*] Did you sign it?—When sitting at dinner a young man came around with a sheet of paper and asked me if I was prepared to sign a petition for the association to be recognized by Parliament. Being an old bird I was not caught. He asked three others alongside of me to sign it and they did so, but within two hours of signing the petition they said they did not wish to leave the A.S.R.S. If you wish their names I could give them. When I stated that this petition meant that they should separate from the A.S.R.S. they then signed the other petition.

13. *Mr. Hampton.*] Speaking for the Addington Workshops, do you know of any other men in the same position?—Yes. The whole of the tradesmen in the Ways and Works are also under the wing of the Canterbury Branch. Every member working in the Ways and Works shop was present at a meeting which I addressed last Friday at dinner-time. I asked them straight out what they intended to do, to remain in the A.S.R.S. or get recognition for the Tradesmen's Association, and they unanimously agreed that we should do our work through the A.S.R.S. That is the whole difficulty in regard to this question, and it has not been placed fairly before the men on any one occasion. They have always had the idea that if an association was formed in the same way as the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Association—it would be to discuss our own affairs and bring them before the A.S.R.S. That is what is behind the minds of the men at Addington who are tradesmen.

14. And you were authorized by those Ways and Works men to speak on behalf of those men against the petition?—Yes.

15. *Mr. Veitch*] I am not quite clear about the statement you made in regard to the blank sheet of paper. You said you were sitting at dinner and a young man came along?—Yes, the secretary of the Addington Branch.

16. And he asked you to sign a petition for recognition for the Tradesmen's Association?—Yes.

17. Do I understand you to say that he brought along one sheet of blank paper not being attached to the petition?—There was no petition on it. It was a blank sheet with the exception of a few names on top. They dropped the petition on the straight in the shop, and one of the men in our society saw it and kept it.

18. *Mr. Field.*] Does it not seem strange that of 280 men who recorded their votes, 241 should have voted for and only 32 against?—I should like to see the ballot-paper. [Paper produced to witness.]

19. That does not state distinctly that there is to be separation from the A.S.R.S.?—I can safely say that I never saw that voting-paper in Addington.

20. And there were similar numbers voted at other places—namely, at Petone, 223 “Yes” and 42 “No”; Newmarket, 251 “Yes” and 19 “No”; Hillside, 184 “Yes” and 20 “No,” and so on?—If they put it through at Addington they kept it from men who could understand the thing.

21. You would not mind submitting to another ballot?—I would be very pleased to do so.

22. Do you say that a lot of men did not see it?—I am sure they did not.

23. Of the tradesmen in the Addington Workshops there are 280 represented here on this petition: do you not think that is a good proportion of them?—I do not know, but I should think it would be a good proportion.

24. You think there are only thirty-two who understood the ballot-paper—that is, who voted against it?—Well, I have given you the plain facts, and I defy even intelligent gentlemen in this room to understand at a glance. It was dinner-hour and the men were in a hurry. There were seventy men there, and it did not give them much time to see what they were doing. If you took another petition around Addington to-morrow, even if the petition was asking for an increase in pay, they would not sign it. They will not sign any piece of paper at all now.

25. Will you tell the Committee the contents of the circular you received from the Department?—I did not receive any.

26. The circular about the indentures before you held this meeting?—Not from the Department.

27. Where was it from—was it from the A.S.R.S.?—No, I have not seen it. I know there was such a thing going around, but not in Addington.

28. Were you asked by any foreman or Workshops Manager at Addington about indentures?—No, I have not heard anything from the Department about indentures at all, and if so I would be in trouble myself because I have not got any.

29. Do you belong to the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters?—I used to.

30. Did you believe in that society?—Certainly.

31. Did you believe in the conditions of that society?—I was in it for three years after joining the Railway service, and I found it was no good to me after that. When I joined the Railway service and found that I was likely to remain there, the only Society that I found would be of any benefit to me was the A.S.R.S.

32. You did belong to the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and you know their conditions in regard to trade. Do you agree with other witnesses about a man being an apprentice to the trade?—If he can be apprenticed I think he should be, but if he has not had the opportunity of being apprenticed here, he should have an opportunity of working his way through life.

33. You know that is one of the principal things laid down in your own union?—Yes.

34. There is no union so strong on that as the Carpenters' Union?—But it cannot be carried out in all cases.

35. You know the Carpenters' Union would not allow a labourer to do a bit of carpentering on a shed?—They allow permits, and those who hold them work at the trade. I have not heard of that in the Railway Department—of a labourer being put on to do a tradesman's work—and to prove that you have only to see the splendid work turned out at Addington. None but tradesmen could turn out such work.

36. The position that your society takes up is so different to what your old union did?—No, there is no difference. In the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters if a man proves himself capable and the employer says he is capable and pays him the Arbitration Court rate of pay, the Carpenters' Society accepts him as a safe member of their society, providing they are satisfied and the master is satisfied; but they will not even recommend a man who has got indentures to a master unless they are absolutely satisfied that he is a good man. They will put him down to work on the transport ships and so forth.

37. *Mr. McDougall.*] Are you in favour of the abolition of the apprenticeship?—I am if you can bring in a better scheme, and I think there is a better scheme coming into existence. The present system can be improved upon.

38. Can you give a definite answer—are you in favour of the abolition of the apprenticeship question?—I have given you my opinion that the apprenticeship question can be greatly improved upon, and we are here as a society to do so. I would just like to say, Mr. Chairman, that I strongly protest on behalf of a large number of men, unfortunately placed like myself, who are unable to produce indentures or other written document except from the Department, and if this association is recognized we are going to be debarred from becoming members and protecting our own interests in the A.S.R.S.

39. That is not the case? I should like to point out that that is according to the rules which have been handed to me. Another thing is that I am absolutely certain that if this splitting-up of the society is allowed to go on it will not be in the interests of the Department or in the interests of the public. There is no greater safeguard that the New Zealand Railways have than the A.S.R.S. in the way they do their work and in protecting this country from any industrial strike so far as the railway men are concerned. We have a job, I admit, to satisfy every one—no one can do that, and it is no use trying. I am absolutely satisfied that it will be far more satisfactory for the men themselves to have one society such as the A.S.R.S. than to have this splitting-up into small sections of trades societies.

(GEORGE YENN examined. (No. 15.)

1. *Mr. Hampton.*] What are you?—A leading carriage-trimmer at Addington; and I have been in the service for thirty-six years.

2. Have you taken any part in the working of the branch of the A.S.R.S. at Addington?—Yes, I was the first chairman of the Addington Branch.

3. Do you know of any who have held the position of chairman who have been tradesmen like yourself?—I think every chairman of the branch has been a tradesman.

4. How many would that be?—Seven, including the present.

5. You have heard what Mr. Jones and Mr. Cameron have said here regarding the position at Addington?—Yes.

6. You generally endorse what they have said?—Yes, I do.

7. Have you seen that famous circular, "Junior Labourer v. Apprentice"?—Yes.

8. Have you seen that in circulation at Addington?—Yes.

9. Do you think that was a factor in the working up of this agitation amongst the tradesmen?—I think it had something to do with it.

ALFRED PETERS examined. (No. 16.)

1. *Mr. Hampton.*] What are you?—A fitter at Hillside.

2. What length of service have you had?—About eighteen years.

3. Are you secretary of the Hillside Branch of the A.S.R.S.?—I am, and I have held the position since 1912.

4. How many members are there on the branch books?—Three hundred and sixty-two.

5. And how many members are tradesmen?—One hundred and ninety-three.

6. You have heard what Mr. Barnett has said about the position of Invercargill and Hillside in regard to the tradesmen's movement: do you generally endorse what Mr. Barnett has said?—I do.

7. And you have a good knowledge of the men there?—I have very fair knowledge of the men there. I was secretary of the Tradesmen's Association when it first started at Hillside. I have been elected as delegate for the tradesmen, and sat in conference with the delegates in 1914. I believe that the tradesmen as a whole are quite content to remain under the A.S.R.S. I believe that as far as Hillside is concerned the men have not realized what the prayer of the petition means. In my opinion the men have been misled, and that is by the fact that they were told that it did not mean separation. That has been argued by the chairman of their branch and by others in the shop. Whenever I had an opportunity I pointed out that it did mean separation, and wherever I did that the men expressed their regret at having signed the petition for separation.

8. *Mr. Siley.*] Do I understand you to say you were secretary of the association?—I was secretary of the Tradesmen's Association at its inception. Of course I am a member of the present Tradesmen's Association, but as soon as I found out where I stood I protested strongly against any separation, and seeing that I am so opposed to it I cannot continue my association as a member under the circumstances.

9. Are you still a member or have you withdrawn?—I have not withdrawn. I believe there may yet be developments which will enable me to remain a member of the association.

10. *Mr. McDougall.*] You know remits 13 and 14 which were forwarded by our executive to the last conference?—Yes.

11. Did you agree with us in regard to those two things?—I am of opinion that the A.S.R.S. made a mistake when they turned down that remit, but my opinion is that the tradesmen are making a far more serious mistake in seeking for separation.

12. You were at that meeting at Dunedin a few months ago when I spoke and made the statement that a petition was shortly to be circulated asking for official recognition. Do you remember my making that statement?—Possibly you did.

13. The question came up as to whether that necessarily meant withdrawing our membership from the A.S.R.S. You heard that discussed, did you not?—Yes.

14. And I stated that we would never ask any man to withdraw his membership from the A.S.R.S. if we received recognition?—You have no control over the men as men; you are withdrawing as a body, and to withdraw as a body is separation.

15. Is it not possible that any one could retain membership in the two bodies?—Yes, they could, but if I have my way they will not do so for long.

16. Have you attended all the meetings of the Tradesmen's Association at Hillside?—Not all—I have missed one or two of them.

17. Then I suppose you do not know what took place at those meetings?—I cannot say that either. A man hears a good deal that he does not hear at a meeting.

ARTHUR EDWARD FISHER examined. (No. 17.)

1. *Mr. Hampton.*] What are you?—A painter at Newmarket; and I have been in the service for fifteen years.

2. Are you secretary of the Newmarket Branch of the A.S.R.S.?—I am.

3. How many members are there in the branch?—The total on the roll is 306.

4. How many are tradesmen?—One hundred and sixty-one.

5. Have you the register with you?—I have.

6. And you could give the name and occupation of every member?—I could.

7. *Mr. McDougall.*] As far as you are aware it is the feeling of the tradesmen in the Auckland Workshops that we should receive official recognition?—Well, as far as that goes I saw the petition going around and saw at least three men sign it. The men were just asked, "Will you sign this petition?" The man who took it round did not say what it contained or anything else.

8. To the best of your knowledge do you think the majority of the men in the Auckland Workshops are in favour of a separate organization of their own?—I was a member of the Tradesmen's Association when it started. I attended the meetings until a resolution was moved that when the Tradesmen's Association was strong enough they would withdraw from the A.S.R.S. That was afterwards rescinded; but as soon as the resolution was moved that they secede from the A.S.R.S. I resigned.

9. *Mr. Hampton.*] What year was that?—I could not say.

10. *Mr. Dickson.*] You say there are 161 tradesmen belonging to your branch of the A.S.R.S. Do you know how many belong to outside unions in Newmarket—those who pay 5s. a year: there are roughly about nineteen?—I would not be sure.

11. Were you present at the A.S.R.S. meeting when they passed a resolution against the A.S.R.S. for not taking action in connection with the tradesmen—did they not pass a non-confidence motion?—They passed a motion that they had no confidence in the executive as at present constituted.

12. Were you present at that meeting?—Yes.

13. They were almost unanimous, were they not?—Yes, almost unanimous.

14. *Mr. Hampton.*] Do you know if men were brought to that meeting for the purpose of voting for the motion?—I think so.

15. Was there any organized attempt made to get the men there?—I think so.

16. Was there a resolution written out and brought to that meeting before ever they heard Mr. Moore and myself speak?—I do not think so; I think the resolution was written after Messrs. Hampton and Moore spoke.

17. *Mr. Dickson.*] But they carried it?—Yes. Mr. Hampton and Mr. Moore addressed the meeting on the 10th June, and on the 17th June I received a list of resignations. I said to one of the chaps, "Why have you resigned?" He said, "After what Mr. Hampton said we are full up." At the top of that list of resignations was the date 1st June, before Mr. Hampton spoke at Newmarket. That list was signed by sixteen or seventeen men.

18. *Mr. Hampton.*] And the date at the head of the list was prior to my being there at all?—Yes.

19. And it expressed dissatisfaction with my action there?—The list I received only contained resignations. Dissatisfaction was expressed to me verbally when the list was handed to me.

20. *Mr. Dickson.*] Was not the same resolution carried at Hillside and Addington?—From what I have heard it was carried at every meeting.

JAMES MCDUGALL further examined. (No. 18.)

1. *Mr. Veitch.*] Could you give the Committee any information as to the procedure that was adopted in connection with the taking of the ballot?—The procedure was that we got a little over two thousand ballot-papers printed, and distributed them to the various branch secretaries. We told them they were to endeavour to put the ballot-papers into the hand of every man in the service. They were to act as returning officers. When they received the numbers they were to wire the result, and then afterwards to send the ballot-papers forward in order that we could check them.

2. Was each man handed a ballot-paper?—They were reminded that each man had the opportunity of keeping that ballot-paper for a week.

3. What proof has this Committee got that those ballot-papers were actually handed to each man, that each man got only one copy of the ballot-paper, and that each man voted on his own account?— I cannot bring absolute proof about each man, but the instructions sent out were that the secretaries were to put a ballot-paper into every tradesman's hands where he could do so, because we wished as an executive to get the opinion of the tradesmen in the service as to whether our organization should be a separate organization or not. We wanted the separate opinion of the tradesmen in the service.

4. *The Chairman.*] Has your society been registered as a society?—No, sir.

5. Have you applied to the Department for official recognition?—No, sir.

(Close of evidence.)

Mr. McDougall.] Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, in summing up the evidence which has been given before the Committee I wish to say on behalf of the New Zealand Railway Tradesmen's Association that my intention was to make as brief a reply as possible, but much matter has been introduced into this discussion which is irrelevant to the business in hand, and I am compelled to take up more of your time than I intended. To begin with, I feel it my duty to emphasize this fact: that we have no quarrel whatever with the Department as our opponents have inferred, and so tried to place us in a false position. Our quarrel is simply and solely with the A.S.R.S. and their treatment of us. The climax was reached, as I have already stated, when they absolutely refused to place our remits before the Department. Now, gentlemen, these remits are to us tradesmen most important and essential, and we shall never swerve from the position we hold. It is not a matter of wages or anything pertaining to wages, but the right to defend and protect our trades, and they have given no reason why we should be denied that right. We have heard more than enough of that cry of equal opportunity for all. We do not deny this right. But what we are opposed to, and will oppose, is unequal opportunity which is being claimed for the unskilled by our opponents. A nasty and sarcastic remark was made by Mr. Mack—viz., that he always thought that nobody but a tradesman could do a tradesman's work, but now he understood that any one could. I want to meet that remark with a flat denial. Any one cannot do tradesman's work, but any one can try. This remark of his is a sure indication of their feelings towards us. I know that there are tradesmen, members of the A.S.R.S., who hold the same views as I have expressed on this apprenticeship question, and who have not signed our petition. Now, these are men who do not realize that unless we fight for our rights we shall never get them at the hands of the A.S.R.S., and that through time, according to their method of working, we will be absorbed into the ranks of the unskilled. The question has been asked, Have we the right to dictate to the Department *re* whom they shall employ? Certainly not. Have the A.S.R.S. the right to dictate on any matter to the Department that which they want? But we ask the right to negotiate in the same way as they negotiate with the Department. They have admitted that it is quite possible for a labourer to represent us according to their rules. Let it not be forgotten, gentlemen, we are out for direct representation, and this the A.S.R.S. are combating to deny us. The apprenticeship question is the crux of the position. They say they are not in favour of the abolition of the apprenticeship, but their actions and speeches, especially in recent times, would easily lead one to believe they that were. They do not deny that the great majority of tradesmen are anxious to protect their trades, but it seems to me they are doing their level best to prevent us from protecting our trades by standing between us and the Department. We claim that this is not a matter for the A.S.R.S. to decide, we cannot keep them from opposing us, but what we object to is their denying us the right of putting our own case before the Department. As I said before, this is a serious question, and is being discussed and treated with deep concern throughout the English-speaking world. A statement has been made that, should any one who is employed as a tradesman at the present be dispensed with, our rules would debar that tradesman (providing the Department agreed to us) from again entering the service. We have stated again and again that this is not our intention and never has been so. It was because of the possibility of such a thing happening that we so framed that rule, and we believe that the wording of that rule makes the position quite clear. As has been said before, these rules were made when it was our intention and desire to work in and through the A.S.R.S., as must be plainly evident by the amount of our subscriptions. We are at one with our opponents on this point, that indentures or papers only do not make a tradesman in the fuller sense of the word, and are not sufficient qualifications. Ability must be taken into consideration. But on that point we leave it to the Department to exercise their prerogative. Our claim is that if we have gone to the trouble to serve an apprenticeship we are entitled to protection, and that claim is generally recognized throughout the Empire. Much, very much has been said to combat the statement of ours that we feared we would have to follow the A.S.R.S. should an understanding be come to between them and the waterside workers. Now I contend, sir, that our inference was a fair one, being the result of reading their article in the *Review* entitled "The Wages Crisis," and later on reading the report of the conference that took place between the A.S.R.S. and the waterside workers *re* the suggestion of forming a transport workers' union. I fully expected that Mr. Hampton would place on the table for the perusal of you gentlemen a copy of that interview, and I now invite him to do so. You have heard from both sides regarding our ballot, so that can safely be left without further comment. I am glad that Mr. Mack has given you a copy of the verbatim report of what took place when we met the executive of A.S.R.S. in May of last year. An assertion was made by Mr. Hampton that our argument when speaking on the matter of an increase was that we wanted an increase owing to the higher cost of living. That assertion of his is not correct, and the report will bear this out. Mr. Hampton also says, "I believe that this seeking for recognition is the outcome of the Department turning down outside unions." I deny this emphatically. To be quite candid, I have been taken to task over this by a prominent official of one of these outside unions. Now, sir, I will say that if Mr. Hampton will prove that statement of his to me, instead of making vague

assertions, I will resign to-morrow from the position I hold as president of the Tradesmen's Association. If any proof were needed, sir, of our contention that tradesmen's affairs should be represented by tradesmen, in that section to which they belong, it could not be demonstrated more clearly than by the attitude and display of ignorance that Mr. Hampton shows towards tradesmen and trades other than his own. For instance, Mr. Hampton declared that women could do that special branch of work done by boilermakers—viz., acetoneing. I am not a boilermaker, so cannot do this justice, but I flatter myself I know a little more about this work than Mr. Hampton. I have not seen that illustration, Mr. Hampton, but I am positive that the part of boilermakers' work which women can do must be small work, and repetition work. But does Mr. Hampton, or, for that matter, any one, think seriously that these same women could weld, say, a broken cylinder, cut out boiler crown stays, rebuild the worn-out places in horn cheeks, &c. ? I wish, gentlemen, you could come and see for yourselves, not only the skill that is required, but at times how very dangerous, also injurious, to health is the nature of the work which a boilermaker is called upon to do. I remember, some years ago assisting in welding an engine-frame with this acetone process, and I assure you, gentlemen, I do not envy the boilermaker this job, nor grudge him the extra allowance granted him for it. Mr. Hampton made a point of the fact that women were working in the factories at Home, operating machines. He might have gone further, and reminded you that women have even invaded the professions, and are practising in the legal and medical professions. He might have also stated that there were women blacksmiths, engaged in the chain-making industry, for many years, and he might also have added, that even in New Zealand we have girls engaged in the workshops at brass-finishing. Does he know, however, that the machines, as illustrated, are almost automatic in their action, and that the use of them by comparatively unskilled workers is nothing new. These machines are so made that when properly set they are almost fool proof. They are used on repetition work, and a number of them are under the charge of a skilled artisan. That tradesman looks after the tools, sets them in their place, and adjusts the machine for a certain job. For each tool on the machine a stop arrangement is provided, and when these stops are properly set the operator simply goes through a certain routine and the articles are turned out, one after the other, and each exactly alike. The operator need never worry about the size or shape of them, because the setting of the machine looks after that. When a different article is required the tradesman is again called on and the machine is reset for another job; but it might happen that the same operator was doing the same job for days or even weeks at a time. Another objection raised was that in granting recognition to the tradesmen you would be paving the way for other secessions from the A.S.R.S. Now, our answer to this is that it lies with the A.S.R.S. themselves whether or not there will be need for further secessions. Let them reform from within and set their house in order and so avoid any further ruptures. Gentlemen, we have tried to state our case as clearly and concisely as we are able, and in summing up I wish to reiterate this fact: that we have now no desire whatever to be represented through the A.S.R.S., but humbly seek from you the recommendation we ask for.

(No. 19.)

Mr. Hampton.] Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I do not think it at all necessary that I should take up the time of the Committee. You have heard from Mr. McDougall that the crux of the position is that we turned down remit No. 14 dealing with the apprenticeship question, and I am quite prepared to let our case stand or fall on that question. I want to say here that the Committee will have to take this into consideration: that that having been made chief factor in working up this agitation, and being given as the reason why a separate organization should be recognized, if the Committee recommend that the association be granted recognition, these men will take it as expression of opinion from you, gentlemen, that you believe in the principles for which they are contending. I only wish to say that in our action we were guided with what we thought was best for the tradesmen themselves, and we acted honestly and conscientiously in what we did. I think if we do that we have the right to expect the support of Parliament and the country. I think, sir, I might add that I personally know all these gentlemen. I believe they are acting quite conscientiously, but at the same time mistakenly. I give them credit for sincerity of purpose, and I only trust that their abilities and effort will in the future be centred in helping us to assist the Railway service generally. I bear them no animosity whatever, and I trust that whatever happens we will be always the best of friends. I thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, for the attention and courtesy we have received from you, and I might say that right throughout we have received the fairest treatment by all concerned.

Mr. McDougall.] On behalf of the Tradesmen's Association I also wish to thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee for your attention and courtesy.

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