

cases. You quote them for continuous labour. I could quote any amount. There are men simply walking about, but they come under the eight hours. I could quote cases of men coming under the continuous labour term as you say, but they are not continuous workers; they are actually intermittent workers. I do not want to compromise them in any shape or form. They are there when the necessity arises, but they are no more continuous workers than we are.

Mr. Maxwell: This intermittent labour is not generally treated differently outside. I think I pointed out that the tram-drivers' work is sixty-six hours, as agreed by the Trades and Labour Council.

Mr. Winter: The Trades and Labour Council repudiate that entirely. The deputation never had the power to accept such a thing.

Mr. Maxwell: What did they demand, Mr. Winter?

Mr. Winter: I cannot tell on the spur of the moment; but they repudiate the idea *in toto* that they demanded sixty-six hours.

Mr. Maxwell: They called out the men because that demand was not fulfilled. The demand is for sixty-six hours.

Mr. Winter: No; they did not demand that. Dr. Grace is willing to concede that.

Mr. Owen: We would be stultifying ourselves by accepting your terms. They would say, "They are not men at all." I cannot see how it is possible to accept ten hours. Take the Home-country: ten hours has gone by.

Mr. McKerrow: I do not think so.

Mr. Hoban: I think we have been harping upon this question long enough. It is like running our heads against a stone wall. The Commissioners have made up their minds, as we could see by their having their replies written out, not to give us what is fair and reasonable. They do not look at it on the side of labour, but on the other side. It is only a question now of who is the stronger when it comes to the point. I think, as they have pushed us so far, there is nothing like plain speaking in these things. We shall have to fight it out to the bitter end. We will pass it over. With regard to piecework, here again the Commissioners do not debate the matter fairly. When we debated the matter fairly their only argument was that they feared it would result in the "Government stroke;" and, if you think that replies to all the arguments in the matter, I can only say that your judgment is not altogether that of Solomon's. We pointed out defects in the system, but you said if we allowed the system to be abolished it would result in the "Government stroke." It was pointed out that you have Government men watching the others—looking through windows at these men, who are industrious men. You practically say, "We will have the piecework as we think fit." We ask you if you will abolish piecework—yes or no; but you simply reply, "Where piecework is considered desirable the pay shall be not less than the ordinary wages rate, but workmen will be able to earn up to time and a quarter."

Mr. McKerrow: I think you can take our word for it that, as only one-eighth of the work is done on piece, and as Mr. Rotheram informs me the proportion can still be lessened, it will be restricted.

Mr. Hoban: Why not have day-work? What is your objection besides the "Government stroke?"

Mr. McKerrow: We want the best workman to show the way to the others to work, and give him a chance to distinguish himself. In this way you set up a standard of work, and do not get into a humdrum system.

Mr. Hoban: Do you not see the humdrum system all over the world.

Mr. McKerrow: In the Home-country, at all the great engineering shops where they build so many engines, wherever it is practicable, the work is all done by piecework. That shows that where the greatest experience is gained in conducting work it has dropped down to a system of piecework.

Mr. Hoban: Well, admitting that, we are not in England; we are in New Zealand. We are far more enlightened than they are in Great Britain.

Mr. Maxwell: We still will have to follow the Old Country in many things.

Mr. Hoban: You know how the Old Country in our time treated unions—how they were put down, and men sent to gaol for holding meetings. But we can discuss matters more fearlessly in New Zealand. Surely you do not mean to say that if you give a fair day's pay to a man, and have a foreman over him, that that man will revert to the "Government stroke."

Mr. McKerrow: I say it is inherent in human nature to do so.

Mr. Hoban: But if you had a foreman to keep him at work some men would not do better.

Mr. McKerrow: No. I have known men who would sham in your presence. You can take a horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink.

Mr. Hoban: You could turn them away.

Mr. McKerrow: You hesitate greatly before you turn a man off. He may have a wife and children, and comradeship and other ties.

Mr. Hoban: The Government do not consider that.

Mr. McKerrow: The Government service is the best employment in the country. Many are extremely eager to get into the railway service. I have some difficulty in fending people off who wish appointments for their friends. It is the same with my brother Commissioners. It is the same with other positions in the Government service. The people are eager to get appointments.

Mr. Hoban: Yes; some positions are very snug; I should be glad to get one myself. But if you ask men who work in the Government workshops they will tell you to-morrow they would prefer outside shops.

Mr. McKerrow: The advantage of the Government service is this: The work goes on steadily year after year; and the pay is there for certain on pay-day.

Mr. Hoban: So it is with other large firms.