

Paragraph 2 concludes with these words: "At present, however, they [the Commissioners] have no information as to who constitute the society." I must beg here to apologize for not having forwarded a copy of the rules of the society at an earlier date; but I was desirous of sending them in book-form. A proof copy was, however, posted on Saturday, the 26th instant. You will perceive that most of the conditions laid down as the views of the Commissioners are embodied in the rules of the society.

I am in a position to state that the entire muster-roll of the society exceeds four thousand. As the enrolment of new members is continually going on, I am justified in saying that this is well within the actual figures.

The first branch of the society was formed at Auckland about three and a half years ago, and the Canterbury Branch was inaugurated 13th October, 1889. Branches have also been established in the following places: Timaru, Oamaru, Dunedin, Invercargill, Westport, Greymouth, Nelson, Picton, Wellington, Wanganui, Palmerston North, and Napier; and the Executive have under consideration the issue of dispensations for the opening of other branches.

The Executive Committee desire to state most emphatically that they have no desire to place themselves in antagonism to the views and wishes of the Commissioners so long as the just claims of the employés are considered; and the Executive Committee are fully sensible of the grave responsibility of their position, and are prepared to accept it.

Accompanying this I am instructed to forward a letter written on the evening of the 21st instant, which would have been posted to you before the receipt of yours of the same date but for my unavoidable absence through illness. The committee also desire to thank you for the facilities you have kindly offered to afford the representatives of the society should the committee decide that a personal interview is desirable, in which case they will place themselves in communication with you to appoint the time and place.

You will please find herewith a copy of the by-laws of the Canterbury Branch, of which I am the Secretary.

Should you require any further information, I shall be most happy, under instruction from the Executive, to furnish you with the same.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES J. RAE,

Treasurer and Acting General Secretary *pro tem*.

The Hon. the Commissioners of Railways for New Zealand.

No. 5.

The AMALGAMATED SOCIETY of RAILWAY SERVANTS to the RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS.

Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of New Zealand,

GENTLEMEN,—

Central Office, Hereford Street, Christchurch, 21st April, 1890.

I am instructed by my committee to forward for your information the following copy of a resolution passed at a meeting of the said committee on Tuesday evening, the 15th instant: "That the Secretary write to the Commissioners, pointing out to them the fact that, notwithstanding the letter recently sent to them by the Executive *re* boy-labour, a large number of boys are still being taken on at Invercargill and other places, and to request them not to add to the number of boys already employed until they have finally disposed of the question as submitted to them by this committee."

In the interests not only of the employés but of the colony at large, the Executive Committee most respectfully beg leave to urge upon you the great desirability of attending to this matter at once, and to request you to give a definite assurance that the matter is under consideration, and that no more boys will be taken on in the meantime; otherwise the committee will have to adopt more efficient means to procure for the unanimous wish of the whole of the railway servants that consideration which the question undoubtedly deserves.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES J. RAE,

Treasurer and Acting General Secretary, A.S.R.S.N.Z.

The Hon. the Commissioners for Railways for New Zealand.

No. 6.

The RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS to the AMALGAMATED SOCIETY of RAILWAY SERVANTS.

SIR,—

3rd May, 1890.

I have the honour, by direction of the Railway Commissioners, to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 28th April, with which I also received your previous letter dated the 21st April, together with a copy of the general rules of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of New Zealand.

The Railway Commissioners have perused the regulations, and think that for the most part they are reasonable and proper; but in some respects they are not appropriate for official recognition, having regard to the fact that the railway servants are employed under the provisions of "The Government Railways Act, 1887," by which Act also the duties of the Commissioners are regulated.

The society appears to admit honorary members not necessarily railway servants, who would not be amenable to "The Government Railways Act, 1887," nor in any way responsible for the economical conduct of the public services. Thus in many respects the operations of the society might not be in keeping with either the spirit or letter of the Act passed by the Legislature for the conduct of the railway service.