

pleasure, or anything else, we should do so in such a way that we do not interfere in any way with the pleasure and comfort of others; and that is all we ask of non-union labour. If they wish to be "free," as they term themselves, we are quite agreeable, only we wish to get this from them: that unionism has done an immense amount of good for the working-class as a whole; they are a portion of the working-class; and if they do not recognise that unionism, and if they turn round and work directly in opposition to the best interests of that unionism, they are renegades and not true workmen, for unionism has benefited them, although they were non-unionists, to almost the same extent as it has benefited the unionists themselves. The whole condition of labour has been raised to a higher level by unionism, and we do not put anything unreasonable when we ask a man to come and pay his quota by way of subscription and entrance-fee towards establishing unionism on a firm basis and keeping it there. As far as interfering with individual liberty is concerned, there is no such thing as entire individual liberty. If we all had that right and claimed it we could all be drunkards, thieves, murderers, and whatever our passions and desires would lead us to. But here are a portion of society supposed to work for the welfare of the whole, and they say, in the interests of society you must not have individual liberty to the fullest extent, but we must restrain you in such a way that you will not interfere with the welfare of the community. Unionists say, "We will only interfere so far as it may have an effect on the well-being of the majority of the workers." We merely ask them to be unionists, or to allow us the privilege of refusing to work with them. Wherever a society finds it indispensable to enforce that rule, it should be regarded as a vital principle by both unionists and employers, and should not be infringed; but where there are societies who can very well work with them—where there is a possibility of unionist and non-unionist labour working together—very great benefit might be derived, because the unionists might by mere moral suasion bring the non-unionists round to their own way of thinking; to lead them to see that it is necessary for the welfare of the community that all should be unionists, and combine to form one solid body for the purpose of resisting all attempts to frustrate the aim we have in endeavouring to raise and improve the condition of the labouring-classes. As far as the railways, of which I am a representative, are concerned, I would rather not speak on that subject, as I hope our Commissioners will be here to-morrow. They have not definitely refused, as far as I gather from what has been read to us this afternoon, to come here, and until they do so I shall abstain from saying anything in connection with the Railway Servants' Society. When they are here, and can answer anything I state, I shall in all probability launch out.

*Mr. Sandford* moved that the Conference should adjourn until 10 o'clock the following morning.

*Mr. Seymour* seconded the motion.

*Mr. Meyer*: I beg to move an amendment. I may say that I am more than surprised that none of the other employers have accepted the invitation sent to them by the Government, because I heard on very good authority that several large employers in this city have expressed a wish that they could meet the various bodies implicated in this struggle, so as to point out to them how they could carry on this unionism with greater advantage to themselves and also to their employers. And no one here was more surprised than myself when I saw it in the paper, and that it came from Mr. Wright, that the employers considered they had no quarrel; yet, in the very next sentences they ask us what lines we are prepared to lay down as a basis of settlement. It seems strange that they should ask us to formulate anything whatever as a basis of settlement if they have no quarrel with us. Now, I am afraid, sir, if this Conference does not end with mutual advantage to both sides, instead of a lot of men going back to work, we shall have in a week or two eight or nine thousand more men out of employment, because it is impressed upon the men's minds that this quarrel is not with the Union Steamship Company, but with the whole of the capitalists of New Zealand. And I think I am right in stating that many men who came out of work in the first instance did not know what they came out for, although the great majority of them knew. But the few who did not understand what they came out for in the first instance fully understand it now, and the very men who were "shaky" about going back a week after they came out are the most determined to stand out until they have had their rights recognised so far that they shall band themselves into unions or associations for their mutual benefit. I would move as an amendment, sir, "That this meeting adjourns until 2 o'clock to-morrow afternoon, with the hope that in the meantime the employers may see their way clear to attend this Conference." I am positive if they do attend good will come out of it; and if they do not attend harm will come out of it, because, as one speaker remarked just now, unionism will never be crushed out. They have tried in all ways to crush it out in the past, and every time it has sprung up again with renewed vigour, and so it will go on until the worker gains what he is seeking—that is, freedom. Until such time capital will always be at war with labour instead of being friends with it; because no man with any common-sense can ever think that labour is going to enjoy any benefit whatever without capital, nor can capital enjoy much without labour. And, as to the presence of the Hon. Mr. McLean, we cannot help admiring him for the stand he has taken in the matter, and it bears out the old saying they have in Scotland, that the bigger or more numerous the foe the stouter their hearts are. I believe that if we got the other side here it would tend to bring about a better understanding between the Maritime Council and the other side now involved in this struggle, and that is my reason for moving the adjournment of the Conference until 2 o'clock to-morrow, in the hope that the employers may see their way clear to be represented here.

*The Chairman*: That really is a motion extending an invitation to employers to act independently in this city, and come to this Conference to-morrow. If that is your desire, I would ask you to move a motion directly to that effect, and not incorporate it with a motion for adjournment. If the motion for adjournment is put and carried, the employers will not be aware of any invitation being extended to them.