

you must not establish a prohibitory entrance-fee to qualify a man for joining. Take the sum of £3 or £5: where is the man coming along seeking employment who can put down the money? A man is debarred getting into the union where such a prohibitory fee is charged. I remember being asked to take a respectable settler's son in to shovel coal in one of our ships. It was necessary that he should join the union. He went and paid his money. What was the result? Although I was using all my influence to get him in, it took ten months, and he was blackballed four or five times! I have never since tried to put in another man, and, whenever any one came to me now, I simply referred him to the officers of the union. I would never have anything to do with such a case again. But it has always appeared to me an extraordinary thing that the chairman of the Union Company could not put a man of unblemished character into one of their own boats to shovel coal! It has always appeared to me that the entrance-fee to the union is too large in amount. There are not many men who have the money to pay it. Probably a man who is in poor circumstances has a wife and family, and such a one is prevented from obtaining a living. It was only the other day a sailor from the "Doric" came, and we had to give him a passage away. He could not gain entrance to any union, because he had no money. As far as we could see he was a well-doing man. Although you all look upon it as a grievance, I believe this strike will set you all to work to reconstruct your unions, and that the outcome will be for everybody's benefit. I believe that good will come out of this trouble.—(Hear, hear.)—First of all, impulsive men have been getting the better of their officers, and pushing them to do this and that. Therefore they were not able to restrain them. If these leaders wanted to bring the men to their senses, let them put them in power. It is only then such a man begins to see his responsibility; it is then he sees that he has been led astray himself, or that he has been leading others astray. It is all very well to talk about killing the unions. No one wants to kill the unions. Why should he, unless they are not unions but "corners" in labour, as in America? Unions should really be for the amelioration of their own class. I am quite satisfied that you can work union and non-union men together, and that you will by doing so be better off and more likely to succeed in the amelioration of all the people whose welfare everybody has at heart. At all events, all through this struggle I have taken care that there should be no irritation so far as I could prevent it. In regard to all the misrepresentation which has appeared in the papers, I have never answered it by so much as a line. Some cases there were of great exaggeration of statement, but we let the exaggerations answer themselves. All reasonable men knew what they were—that they were exaggerations. Let us all work together: that is what I ask of you. I have shown you that the seamen, when men were scarce, did not object to work on board ship beside non-union men. That appears to be a cardinal point with you. I do not think it should be so. At all events, with regard to the men whom we have now employed, we take up this reasonable ground: that we cannot part with these men. We will take back any one that has left our service; we are taking them back now. We are not going to keep even the most remote feeling of bitterness against any man who has been called out. We will make no difference with him any more than with any other man in our service. We will forget, we will forgive. When it is all over we will bear no feeling of bitterness or ill-will towards each other. It is not long since we had a fight—the lumpers' fight—(laughter)—in Dunedin. We won the day; but, notwithstanding, the men came to us and said, "You fought us fairly; we are beaten. Do not make any difference among us, and we are quite ready to go to work." We said, "All right; let bygones be bygones." We might let this end in the same way. Then we can work in perfect harmony again, and continue to be the success and credit to New Zealand that I believe we have been in the past.—(Applause.)

*Mr. J. A. Millar:* As Mr. McLean has put his side of the question before the Conference, I suppose it devolves on me to lay down the other side. In the first place, I may say that I do not intend to deny what Mr. McLean has stated with regard to the wages paid by his company, and that he personally was willing to do all he could for the welfare of the men. The proof as to that may be found in the fact that we are not asking for any increased pay at the present time. But he gives us to understand that the origin of this dispute was the withdrawal of the men from the "Corinna." This I deny emphatically. That is entirely an error. The withdrawal from the "Corinna" took place two months before the present dispute originated. Nothing whatever was said by the men all that while. When this dispute commenced the matter of the "Corinna" was brought in with the rest. The actual dispute arose when the Shipowners' Association denied to the officers the right to do as they pleased outside of the contract of service which they had with the association. The whole matter lay in this: We say that we have the right to do as we please outside our contract with the employers. The right that was denied to the officers is practically denied to us, and every right that is denied to us is held on to by the Shipowners' Association, by the Union Company, or any other company which holds the same view. I mention the Union Company because it is local, and has federated itself to the Shipowners' Association. Well, the officers federated with the Maritime Council. If the Union Company had the right to federate with the Shipowners' Association—and I do not say they had not—the officers had the same right to federate with the Maritime Council. If the Union Company found it desirable to federate with the Shipowners' Association for the protection of their interests, we contend for the equality of right in the officers to federate with the Maritime Council if they pleased, having the same object in view. It is quite incorrect to say that we requested that the Union Company should withdraw from the Shipowners' Association. We never made any such proposal; so that, as far as we were concerned, they were never asked to withdraw from the Australian society. We knew that the Union Company must keep in with that association so as to prevent them interfering with the Union Company's trade, and their boats being swamped by the opposition that might possibly be started against them. When the whole of the employers met and dealt with this question of labour they practically said that when a man has done his work he is not at liberty to go to his home and do as he pleases with the remainder of his time. We say the man is under a contract to perform a certain duty, for which he receives remuneration. So long as that contract is performed there is no further