

1510. What is the point the outside leaders want to carry before they let you go to work again?—They want to settle the difficulty with the seamen.

1511. That is a question of wages?—Yes.

1512. Do you know anything of Mr. Champion's views: he is a prominent leader at Home?—He must be very young, because I never knew him at Home.

1513. Have you noticed his expressions as regards the cessation of strikes?—Yes; and I do not agree with him at all. His argument is that we should work with "free" labour.

1514. Will you explain why "free" labourers are not allowed to work with union men?—Because they do not subscribe to our association. Whatever benefit we may derive from that association they are receiving the same benefit, and they do not pay their quantum; that is my objection to them.

1515. Do they regard it as a benefit?—Yes, they do; but they will not give anything towards it. They are afraid of the contribution, I suppose.

1516. Do the unions hold that they have the right to a monopoly in any labour district in the labour market? If there were "free" labourers here, and they were excluded from work, would not that be an exclusion in the nature of a monopoly?—We would not exclude them from joining the union, but we could not work with them if they did not join.

1517. You recognise the free right of employment?—Still, we have no right to work with them.

1518. The position, then, is this: You are waiting orders from some outside body—the Maritime Council—and if they told you to go to work you would feel satisfied that they had obtained what they wanted. Supposing they sent you to work without getting what they wished to get?—I should still go to work.

1519. Supposing the Union Steamship Company's boats were properly equipped with "free" labour—that is, without union labour—would the Maritime Council then remove the restriction against your working? Would it be fair, or would it be any use making you fight hopelessly against such a state of things?—I can only give you my private opinion. I do not think they would give the permission to go to work.

1520. Even if the boats were manned with "free" labour, and though the consequence would be the shutting-up of this as a coal port and the transfer of the trade to Westport, would you be satisfied with that?—I do not know that I should be personally satisfied.

1521. *Mr. Moody.*] You would not like it, of course?—The thing is to carry our point.

1522. *Mr. Brown.*] It often occurs in life that when a man finds he cannot attain his object all at once he has to take his time, and he lies by, gaining a little as the time becomes ripe. Is there any use in lying absolutely idle while a principle is being fought?—Things of this kind can only be obtained by degrees.

1523. Do you consider the employers or the employes brought on this difficulty? Have there been any lock-outs in this case?—I understand that the employers brought it on. There has been a lock-out.

1524. Not on this question?—No; on the 20-per-cent. reduction question.

1525. That was settled and the men went to work. What occurred now is not a lock-out?—It is a strike.

1526. You are now striking here for the sake of raising the wages of the seamen?—Not altogether.

1527. I thought you said it was?—It is a question of wages and maintaining a position in which seamen were concerned.

1528. New Zealand seamen?—Yes; and all the colonies, I suppose.

1529. Are you aware that it is so? Have you been informed so by the Maritime Council?—No; but that is the general opinion.

1530. What is the general opinion in Brunnerton?—The general opinion is that it is for the Australian Colonies, and that the Australian Colonies were the cause of it.

1531. Is it there a question of wages?—I could not say exactly.

1532. Are you satisfied with the results of the union efforts up to the present point?—Yes, quite.

1533. You do not see the end of it?—No; I wish I could see the end of it.

1534. Have you anything to suggest as to obviating strikes in future?—No.

1535. Have you ever seen boards of conciliation appointed to consider matters of this sort?—I fancy an association of that sort might draw up some report, or try to induce something of the sort to settle these affairs.

1536. Does your organization go so far as to say that if a quarrel or dispute arose between employers and employed at any point in the Australian Colonies you should be called out?—So far as we are affiliated, we might be called out.

1537. Is it not your opinion that it would have been better for this affair to have been confined to New Zealand alone, and let New Zealand fight her own battles?—I would not like to venture an opinion upon that point.

1538. You have an opinion, I suppose?—I do not know that I have much of an opinion about it.

1539. Are many of the people up at Brunnerton in debt?—There may be some, but the indebtedness of many of them was incurred previous to this affair. I do not think it has been added to during the strike.

1540. Is the strike-pay sufficient to keep the wolf from the door?—Yes.

1541. That pay comes from the Maritime Council, I suppose?—It comes from different places. I would not say that the fund here was not drawn upon.

1542. Is there a large fund here?—I could not say what funds there are just now. What