

32. That is compulsory?—Yes.

33. *The Chairman.*] Did you ever know of any men belonging to the Druids or any other friendly society who, by their own choice, left to join the Union Company's society?—Not that I am aware of.

34. Do you think you would have known if such had been the case?—Yes; I have never heard anything of the kind spoken about by any members on the boats I have been in.

35. *Hon. Major Steward.*] Are you an officer of your own lodge?—No; I never have time for that. I may be here to-day and not be back again for a month—just according to the running of the boats. I have been a member of the Druids for about twelve or thirteen years.

36. *The Chairman.*] As a member of a benefit society where the men have some control over their funds, you would consider it an advantage to belong to a registered friendly society rather than to one in which the control of the funds is in the hands of private persons?—I do not see much difference. I do not know exactly on what lines the Union Company's society is carried on. I do not know whether it is a registered society; I do not think so.

37. But that is what I am asking you: Do you not consider it a greater advantage belonging to a registered benefit society than to one not registered?—I should think so.

38. Then, if it is an advantage, you think also that a man who leaves a registered friendly society to join a private benefit society would be doing a thing to his own disadvantage?—I should think so.

39. Do you think a man would do a thing voluntarily to his own disadvantage unless some big principle is involved?—I do not think so.

40. Therefore, if a man did leave a registered society to join the Union Company's society he would not do it voluntarily?—I have never heard of any man belonging to a registered friendly society having to join the Union Company's society.

41. *Hon. Major Steward.*] As a matter of fact, if a man did so would he not lose any accrued benefits in his society—for instance, suppose you left the Druids voluntarily, would you be entitled to draw anything in respect to your contributions?—No, nothing.

42. *The Chairman.*] Any surrender value?—I think members of the Union Company's society receive a surrender value.

43. *Hon. Major Steward.*] How did you become acquainted with that when you do not have any conversations with the men?—I was told by a shipmate who left the society that he had drawn his surrender value from the society.

44. *Mr. Fisher.*] Can you please give us the name of that man?—I do not recollect his name; we were shipmates on one of the boats.

45. *Hon. Major Steward.*] You only heard of that one case?—Yes.

46. *Mr. Fisher.*] We are not here to take one-sided evidence?—I am just giving it as far as I know.

47. I should have been glad to have got the name of that man?—I really forget it. I have been shipmates with so many men; we are continually being shifted.

48. Have you ever known of a man in any of the ships who wished to leave the Union Company's society with the object of joining an outside friendly society?—No.

49. Have you ever heard a man express any objection to being compelled to join the Union Company's society?—No.

50. *The Chairman.*] Have you anything else you would like to tell us?—No; I have not.

51. *Mr. Fisher.*] You are aware that it is compulsory upon a man, if not connected with an outside society, that he must join the Union Company's benefit society before he can enter the Union Company's service, or as a condition to obtaining employment. For instance, I will quote these instructions, issued to the purser of the "Grafton" on the 11th May, 1896: "Inform Dorling that unless he joins forthwith, paying as from the 1st April last, instructions will be issued for his dismissal from the service." Have you known of cases where men who did not join the Union Company's society were informed that unless they joined they would be dismissed from the service?—I have not heard of any case in the boats I have been in.

52. *The Chairman.*] Have you ever heard anything as to the point that men of a certain age were not allowed to join the Union Company's society?—Well, I think there is one man I know over a certain age who is not in the Union Company's benefit society.

53. *Hon. Major Steward.*] What is the limit?—I do not know.

54. This man over forty years of age that you refer to could not join the society?—I know he is not in the society, but he is working all the same.

55. *The Chairman.*] Consequently, if a man could not join the society he could not join the Union Company's service?—He is in the service, and is working now on one of the boats.

56. *Mr. Fisher.*] What is his name?—Cummock.

57. *Hon. Major Steward.*] On what boat?—The "Waihora."

58. *The Chairman.*] Now?—Yes.

WILLIAM DAVIES was examined on oath.

59. *The Chairman.*] What is your occupation?—I am a lamp-trimmer on the "Waihora."

60. How long have you been in the Union Company's service?—Fifteen years in the "Waihora."

61. *Hon. Major Steward.*] All the time in the one boat?—Yes.

62. *The Chairman.*] How long have you been a member of the Union Company's benefit society?—I do not belong to it.

63. Do you belong to any other society?—I belong to the Foresters.

64. What is your contribution to the Foresters?—It comes to about 9s. a quarter; it is 8s. 6d. one quarter and 10s. 6d. the next.