

260. But your president was not at all sure as to the power of himself and the secretary over the other branch—the £237 10s. which represents the contribution of the firm. Can they operate upon that also?—Certainly.

261. Supposing the whole of the employes in the factory, having held a public meeting, and by a majority decided they would terminate this arrangement and join another society, and supposing, in view thereof, they decided to withdraw all the funds then in the hands of the firm, including the two accounts, could they do so?—Yes.

262. It does not say so in the rules?—No; and I will tell you something else: They could now take the £400 and invest it in any other way they liked.

263. The rules say nothing about that?—No; the society is simply worked by the employes themselves. Neither the firm nor myself have anything to do with it. It is left entirely to the control of the men themselves.

264. The rules use the word “shall” all the way through. Then, we have it in evidence—I suppose, for the convenient working of this society—that the contributions of the employes are deducted every month from their wages, and paid over to the fund. Now, supposing an employe objected, would he be dismissed because he wanted payment of his wages in full?—He would.

265. Because you consider the thing ought to be carried out thoroughly?—Yes; in accordance with the wishes of the employes themselves. He joins the factory on the understanding that he pays his 1½d. a week to the funds of the society.

266. As a matter of fact, has anybody ever objected?—Never.

267. There is a general feeling of approval?—Yes.

268. *Mr. Fisher.* It follows as a condition of employment that they must join?—Yes; they come in on that condition.

TUESDAY, 1ST JUNE, 1897.

JAMES SWANNERTON was examined on oath.

1. *The Chairman.* What is your business?—I am a carter, on my own account.

2. You wish to make some statements?—Yes; I wish to make a contradiction in connection with the Roslyn Woollen Mills benefit society. I notice in the *Star* last night there was a statement in regard to myself. The evidence was about a young man getting his arm taken off in the mill, and the benefit society giving him £10 out of its funds. But the statement I wish to contradict is that Mr. Glendinning offered to send me to school, and that I would not go. Of course, that is not true. He did not offer to send me to school. He said if I went to school he would give me employment, or if he did not give me employment he would find me employment. I have been to him several times, and he always says, “There is nothing to do.”

3. Did you receive wages from him after you were hurt?—I was only fifteen when I got my arm off. But this letter will tell you what occurred: “Stafford Street, Dunedin, 27th October, 1887.—Mr. T. Swannerton, Mornington.—DEAR SIR,—We desire to express our deep regret for the injury your son has sustained by the recent accident, and our sympathy with you and your family in the sad loss that has resulted. We trust he will soon be restored to health, and that, though unable to continue the same kind of work, he will yet be fit soon for some other suitable employment. He will be more likely to get this if he has a good education, and we think the best thing he can do now is to go back to school, and work diligently at his lessons for a time. We will be glad to assist him by paying 5s. per week for twelve months from this date. We hope he will make a brave start again, and if he perseveres there is no fear of his being able soon to push his way and earn a livelihood. Sympathizing with you in this great misfortune, we are, dear sir, yours faithfully, ROSS AND GLENDINNING.”

4. They did offer to pay 5s. a week for twelve months?—Yes.

5. Do you know whether Ross and Glendinning did pay this 5s. per week?—That I could not say.

6. You would have preferred to remain in the mill with permanent employment after your accident?—Yes. I have been to Mr. Glendinning fifty times to ask for employment, and he has always said, “There is nothing to do.”

7. *Mr. Fisher.* After you lost your arm they did not want you?—So it appears. I could have done the same work, and fed the wool on the roller that goes round. I simply stood at the end of the roller and spread the wool on the board.

8. *The Chairman.* Have you a difficulty in obtaining employment in consequence of the loss of your arm?—Yes; I was two years driving a grocer’s cart, and I had to leave him through illness. I have not done anything for nineteen months.

9. Has any one else been hurt?—Yes; a young man named Malone, who had his hand taken right off in a carding-machine.

JAMES SOUNNESS was examined on oath.

10. *The Chairman.* What is your occupation?—I am a compositor, in the employ of the *Otago Daily Times*.

11. Have you the rules of the *Daily Times* Mutual Provident Society?—Yes [Exhibit 21].

12. *Mr. Fisher.* Are these the correct rules as existing at the present date?—With the exception of one or two amended alterations, one at the end of the book rescinding a rule; and I see you have a copy of the last alterations, carried in February. The rules have not been printed afresh since those alterations were carried.

13. *The Chairman.* How long have you been in the service of the *Otago Daily Times*?—About eleven years.

14. How long has this society been in existence?—About eighteen years—before I joined.