

own free-will. We consider his case, and we accept or reject him just as we think proper. The firm has nothing whatever to do with it.

14. Who are the honorary members?—They are the bosses, who do not care about belonging to the society.

15. Do the honorary members share in the benefits?—No.

16. Do they share in the voting?—No.

17. Are women and girls accepted as well as men?—Yes.

18. Without medical examination?—Yes.

19. Without any restriction as to age?—Yes; the society is open to all, from the youngest to the eldest in the factory.

20. A member of the society goes round and collects these amounts?—Yes.

21. They are never collected by the clerk of the firm?—Never.

22. I notice that if a man leaves the society but does not leave the firm he gets nothing from the society: what happens to him if he leaves the society and the firm together? Is he able to draw any surrender value?—No.

23. *Hon. Major Steward.*] Do you divide at the end of the year?—No. We have done so up to the present year, but at the last meeting we thought it advisable to build the fund up, and pay out no more dividends.

24. *The Chairman.*] So you carry the balance forward?—We intend to do so next year.

25. *Hon. Major Steward.*] There is a limit to prospective members; you are not obliged to accept all?—If their case is considered satisfactory we accept them. If we had an application from a very drunken man or immoral man we would please ourselves whether we accepted that man or rejected him.

26. Subject to that—that is, if the applicants for membership were of good character—you would not reject them?—No.

27. You do not take into consideration their state of health, or possible state of health; you do not debar them on medical grounds?—No; we established the society for the very purpose of assisting those people.

28. What is the number of employes in the factory altogether?—I suppose, between two hundred and fifty and three hundred.

29. How many members of the society have you?—I think we have just over two hundred.

30. So about four-fifths of the employes are members of the society?—Yes.

31. I suppose those who are not members have stayed voluntarily outside the society; they have not been rejected?—They have never made application.

32. You would know if you had rejected them?—Certainly.

33. The firm does not interfere in any way with regard to the funds?—None whatever.

34. Have you ever considered the question as to whether it would be to your advantage to be registered under any special Act or anything of that sort?—Yes, I have thought of it.

35. What do you think of it? Supposing an Act was passed which would recognise the existence of a number of these societies in New Zealand—I mean societies outside the ordinary friendly societies—and enable them to register with such rules as you have, would you not consider it an advantage to be recognised so as to be able to enforce your rules?—Most decidedly. I think we should have some claim over the men who hold our funds.

36. *The Chairman.*] Do many members of your society already belong to friendly societies?—Yes, a number of them do. I do myself.

37. What benefit do you see you get from this society that you would not get from a society like the Druids or Foresters?—Well, we only receive our sick-pay, and if a man was in the Druids, Foresters, or any other friendly society he would receive medical attendance and medicine besides sick-pay.

38. *Hon. Major Steward.*] But his contribution would be very much larger?—As much again.

39. There is also the fact that you accept persons quite irrespective of age and constitution: some of these persons, by reason of their being too young or being unable to pass the doctor, would not be accepted by a friendly society?—Yes; and, again, we have members in our society who, if they left us to-morrow, would never join an ordinary friendly society.

40. Are there members of friendly societies among those who are not members of your society?—Yes.

41. Have all the members votes, irrespective of age?—Every financial member has a vote.

42. *The Chairman.*] How is it that when friendly societies base their benefits upon a certain scale of contribution you are able to give larger benefits, with smaller contributions—I mean, funeral grants?—A friendly society cuts up its funds, and I do not think there is any more paid into the separate fund—that is, sick-pay fund—than we pay. There are doctors' fees to be paid out of it, and funeral grants, and some have a benevolent fund set aside, so when sick-pay money is taken from your ordinary contributions I do not think they would amount to any more than ours.

43. *Hon. Major Steward.*] Is not the Chairman under a misapprehension in assuming that your benefits are larger than those of friendly societies—the funeral benefits in the case of the Oddfellows go as high as £10 and £20, and yours only go to £6?—Just so.

44. Then, it is not correct to say that the benefits given by you are larger than in an ordinary friendly society?—No.

45. Your maximum sick-allowance would be £1 for nine weeks?—Yes.

46. And half of that for the next nine weeks?—Not quite; about two-thirds.

47. That, again, is smaller than what is paid out by a friendly society?—Yes.

48. *Mr. Fisher.*] It is not, then, a condition of employment that a man shall join the society?—Oh, no.

49. It is a fact that on leaving the employ he forfeits whatever he has paid into the society?—Yes. At one time we allowed them to remain in the society until the end of the year should they