

119. Working under these rules?—Yes.

120. You considered these rules were good as they stood?—Well, no; I took no part in the forming of the rules on the managing committee. The employers' portion of the committee had a preponderance of five to four, and if any grievance cropped up the workers were out-voted.

121. There actually was that five to four majority?—Yes; and the employers' section insisted on keeping the preponderance of votes. Then, in the course of two or three years there were one or two cases. Take my own, where I omitted to pay the 1s. 4d.—that is, the monthly contribution—exactly up to time, but proffered the money on the following morning to the secretary, and I have been debarred from work for the month.

122. You have been stopped for work for a month because you did not pay your contribution to this benefit society?—Yes, on two occasions.

123. And you actually proffered this money a short time afterwards?—Yes, on the following day.

124. *Hon. Major Steward.*] Then, if your secretary, who has just been examined, were to say—?—He is not the present secretary; the secretary at that time was Smith, who is working for the Government now.

125. Do you know anything of the working of the association at the present time?—I see how it works.

126. Are you at all familiar with any persons who are members at the present time?—Yes.

127. Do you know if they are treated as sharply as you were?—Since the time I am speaking of all the secretaries who have followed Smith have relaxed that stringent rule; and they have taken the money, I believe, at any time.

128. You would not be surprised to hear that at the present time men have been allowed to go in arrears for twelve months?—No; that is possible.

129. *The Chairman.*] No person, unless a member of this association, is allowed to help at loading or unloading ships at Lyttelton?—No; that is according to the rules. But I may state that a few men have taken a contract to discharge or load a few ships outside the association, and the association has boycotted them for doing so—that is, has kept them out of work, because they saw a chance of making a few shillings outside the association.

130. Supposing you kept up your contribution properly, is there anything in the membership of this association which would gall you or any other person? What objection have you to offer to this as a society if you had still remained a member of the society? Do the members of the society themselves find anything to grumble at?—It is like this: There are probably two hundred members of this association, and Mr. Barnes or his subordinates engage the men, and there is a system of favouritism by which some men get more than others.

131. You are speaking from hearsay?—No. I am speaking of my own experience, when I was working for the association.

132. How long ago is it since you worked for the association?—I have worked but very little for the association for these last two-and-a-half years.

133. You cannot state from your personal knowledge that that system of favouritism is going on now?—Only from hearsay.

134. *Mr. Fisher.*] How many men do you think are working about the wharves as wharf-labourers outside the association?—I should take it there are very few. To make it plain to you, I may say that when the Government passed the Conciliation and Arbitration Act I was a member of the Wharf-labourers' Association, and a section of the members tried to get the association registered under the Act, and you will get witnesses before you to prove this. It appears that the "upper ten," as we term the employers' section of the association, demurred to having the association registered. They said they were the arbitration court, and they would not have their business conducted from Wellington, and consequently a section of us formed the Lyttelton Casual Wharf-labourers' Union, and had it registered. We are principally employed by the Railway Department; in fact, as soon as the Stevedoring Association knew we had formed this union they would not employ us at all, and we had to depend on the little overtime that we might get from the Railway Department.

135. Then, the Canterbury Stevedoring Association are really the stevedoring kings of Lyttelton?—Yes; they have a monopoly of the work. In the Railway Commissioners' time they actually employed men for the Commissioners, but through my action, and others with me, and the honourable member for Lyttelton, the present Government took the work from the Canterbury Stevedoring Association, and employed the casual labour direct themselves.

136. *Hon. Major Steward.*] Do you know Rule 7 of the association, which provides that a person wishing to join the association has to apply to the secretary of the Stevedoring Association?—Yes.

137. Have you ever known that secretary to reject any person so applying?—I have known scores of men send in their names to Mr. Barnes, who, as a matter of form, sent on the names to the workmen's section of the committee to deal with; and I have known a lot of men debarred from joining the association for years.

138. By whom?—By the workmen's section.

139. Why should the workmen's section reject them?—There is a clique of men in the association, some thirty or forty, who get the cream of the work from the Canterbury Stevedoring Association.

140. There is so much pudding to divide, and they do not want too many boys to eat it: is that the position?—Yes; and owing to this action these men are thrown on to our pastures.

141. Then, in fact, this business is a close corporation?—It is a monopoly. I reckon it is one of the biggest monopolies in New Zealand.

142. *Mr. Fisher.*] How many men are there in your casual union?—We have, I think, somewhere about sixty on our books; we had ninety at one time. Some few months ago the Govern-