

most men are more satisfied now with this association than ever they were before. There are bound to be a few grumblers; they want all the toys and the big doll too.

167. *Hon. Major Steward.*] You say Mr. Stead and two or three others who were elected on the committee are away in England. Rule 9 says that the committee of management shall consist of nine members, four of whom shall be directors of the Canterbury Stevedoring Association, all the directors of which body shall be deemed members of the Lyttelton Lumpers' and Wharf-labourers' Association: so it seems, if this is the rule, that some others must be elected to take the places of the absent committeemen?—You can quite understand that at the time of the strike they were all up in arms against the wharf-labourers, and they started this affair; but since then they have got careless over the matter, and they let us go on in our own way.

168. *Mr. Fisher.*] As long as things run smoothly?—Yes.

169. *The Chairman.*] Was there any proposition as to registering under the Conciliation Act?—There was a meeting to discuss it, and I am not sure if the motion was carried that the association should be registered or not, but I am sure that the employers were not in favour of it.

170. *Hon. Major Steward.*] Do you or do you not think it would be an advantage if you could register under some special Act dealing with these private societies and organizations?—It comes to this: If we were registered, and these employers said they would not employ us, but somebody else, where would the advantage be to us?

171. Why should they not employ you?—They are not compelled to employ us.

172. Rule 8 says, "The Canterbury Stevedoring Association having undertaken not to employ any outside labour whilst members of this association are available, this association undertakes not to work for any other body or persons without the consent of the committee": so they have entered into a contract with you?—Yes; and we are satisfied with that.

173. Suppose your rules were registered, would it be an advantage to you?—In what way?

174. In regard to the control of your funds?—We do not want to register. They say, if we register, "You are breaking your agreement with us."

175. That is speaking of the Conciliation Act; I am referring to registration as a benefit society?—It would mean that we were going to register in defiance of the employers.

176. *Mr. Fisher.*] Is this the sense of what you say: You will do nothing opposed to the wishes of your employers?—Not so long as they treat me well. If a man treats me well I do not see why I should go against his wishes.

177. Your employers are members of the Canterbury Stevedoring Association?—Yes.

178. And you will do nothing opposed to their wishes?—Not so long as I am treated well, and so long as I think men belonging to the association are treated well. If I thought they were not treating me well I should be one of the first to say so.

179. Do not you see how far your remarks extend; they extend even to the matter of the registration of the association, and you say if they object to registration then you would not wish to register?—I would sooner join with them in objecting to it.

HENRY BURKE was examined on oath.

180. *The Chairman.*] What is your occupation?—I am a wharf-labourer at Lyttelton.

181. How long have you been wharf-labourer there?—About nine years.

182. You remember the formation of the Lyttelton Lumpers' and Wharf-labourers' Association?—Yes.

183. Are you a member of it?—I was.

184. About what time did you leave?—I had to leave about two years ago.

185. What was the cause of your leaving? Because you did not pay up?—No; on account of being a member of a registered union.

186. Was it on account of Rule 4 that you left?—Yes.

187. *Mr. Fisher.*] Who stopped you from working?—The employers.

188. Who are the employers?—Mr. Barnes is the recognised employer of labour; he is secretary of the Canterbury Stevedoring Association.

189. Did he give you any specific reason for your dismissal?—No; but I will explain the reason. I was elected in the month of February one of the four members who represent the wharf-labourers at Lyttelton on the committee, and we thought it would be beneficial if the association were registered under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. We applied to Mr. Mason, the Registrar, and pointed out that it would be beneficial to the working-men in Lyttelton if this society were registered. We fixed up all the correspondence, and forwarded it to Wellington; but it was returned with amendments. It was sent on again, and everything was ready, when some of the members told Mr. Barnes what some of us were doing, and he told us in a friendly manner that the best thing to do would be to acquaint the managing committee of it. He said, "I know there will be no objections to allowing you to register the society." Well, we had a meeting of the committee in Christchurch, when there were five men on the employers' side of the committee and four of the men, and they told us distinctly that they would not have their business transacted in Wellington.

190. *The Chairman.*] It was on account of the majority of five on the employers' part voting against the proposal that the association was not registered?—I do not think it came to a vote. It was discussed at the meeting when the nine members were present. This was in the month of March—two years ago. I could name the gentlemen present—they were Mr. Lambie (chairman), Mr. Isaac Gibbs, Mr. Kaye, Mr. John Anderson, and Mr. Peter Cunningham (since deceased) on the employers' side; and Mr. John Madden, Mr. Joseph Finnie, Mr. John Dempsey, and myself on the men's side. Mr. Barnes was acting-secretary.

191. *Mr. Fisher.*] I want you to complete my question. You attended a meeting at Christchurch, and the employers' committee told you they did not want their business transacted in Wellington: well, what happened then?—The argument about registration ceased then.