

219. And when he becomes a member of the association what takes place?—We get from the employers the number of men they want every day, and we try as far as possible to distribute the work evenly and fairly amongst them.

220. Is there any sort of rota?—No; it would be difficult to do that. There are many members of the association who are not fit for all classes of work, which in some cases is hard and laborious and in other cases light. Shovelling coal is hard work, and carrying grain is hard work, and many members of the association are physically incapable of doing that work.

221. The accusation might be made against you of having favourites?—It frequently is.

222. You can give your opinion that no such favouritism has taken place?—Most decidedly; I have no favourites one way or the other.

223. It is the case also that until all the members of the association are in full work no other persons may work on the Lyttelton wharves?—No; it has happened frequently on busy days that we have exceeded the roll, and then we have gone outside. Until we have exceeded the roll we never go outside. I may say the election of members is entirely in the hands of the men themselves. We do not interfere with that at all. If an outsider wishes to become a member he sends in an application to me, which I indorse and send on to the secretary of the association, and they elect him or reject him as they choose.

224. You swear that you use no influence?—Yes.

225. Why should they send in an application to you?—You see by the rules they have to be elected by the committee, but afterwards the employers gave way and said the men could elect whom they liked. When the association was initiated the applications used to come to me, and they have continued to do so.

226. What would happen if you refused to indorse the application?—The men could still elect him if they chose.

227. Do you exercise any discretion or influence at all?—None whatever. I may say, in regard to the matter of influence—I want to be perfectly candid—that it happened in the month of January last we were very short of labour, a great many of our men having gone to grass-seeding and other things, and, with the consent of the chairman, I wrote to the secretary of the association and said that, as we were so short of labour, I must ask them to elect a few more members, and I suggested the names of some twelve or fourteen men who had been working for the association casually. These men the committee subsequently elected.

228. They were not members of the Casual Labourers' Union?—I cannot say that.

229. And you would not allow that to make any difference?—I would not.

230. *Mr. Fisher.*] You said just now that some members of your side of the committee were absent, and did not attend meetings: do you mean absent from Christchurch?—I meant to convey they were either dead or retired, and we did not fill their places.

231. You could fill their places?—Yes; but we have not done so.

232. No question sufficiently large has arisen to require that?—I do not think any more directors will be elected. When the association was formed I think they had eight or ten directors.

233. What I mean is this: that the rules give you such liberty that you may fill all vacancies when and how you please?—So far as the number of directors is concerned.

234. I am talking about the Wharf-lumpers' Association: have you looked at Rule 9, which provides that all directors of the Canterbury Stevedoring Association shall be members of the Lumpers' Association, and that four besides the chairman shall be members of the committee?—They are members. They pay their subscription, which constitutes membership, but they do not attend the meetings, and they have no votes at the meetings.

235. Suppose a large question to arise, and there to be vacancies on your side of the committee, do you think you would experience any difficulty in filling up your vacancies?—We would always have the four and the chairman.

236. I mention that to clear up any possible misconception in regard to your being short-handed or weak on the committee?—I do not know that I made any reference to being weak on the committee. I did not intend to convey that impression.

237. Has any difficulty arisen with you and any or one of the men in regard to the question of the registration of this Wharf-lumpers' Association as a society?—Not with me personally.

238. Do you know that the question has arisen?—Yes; it arose at a meeting of the joint committee, when both sides were represented.

239. What was the effect of this move in the direction of registration?—The directors did not wish it.

240. What happened to the men?—Nothing happened to the men.

241. For instance, one man who moved in this direction was not dismissed, it is true, but he received no further employment, we are informed?—Do you mind telling me who you are referring to?

242. Henry Burke?—Burke has not worked for us, and has declined to work for us. I believe he is president of this Casual Wharf-labourers' Union. He worked for the railway, and declined to work for us.

GEORGE LAMBIE was examined on oath.

243. *The Chairman.*] What is your occupation?—I am manager of the Union Steamship Company at Christchurch.

244. You are acquainted with the working of the Lyttelton Lumpers' and Wharf-labourers' Association?—Yes, a little.

245. Are you in a position to say if any favouritism has been used in selecting the men?—Not so far as I know.