

28. I want to know if you, on behalf of the railway servants, are willing to give up that right?—No. But that is a matter for you to consider in justice to the members.

29. You urge on this Committee that Parliament should do that?—I would rather the members of the society themselves gave an opinion on that point. I am only the secretary.

30. *Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] You are aware that the Railway Department makes provision under the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act for all its employees?—I thought it was only those on the casual staff, but it is extremely gratifying to learn that all employees are now covered.

31. Supposing that under the Workers' Compensation Act as it is at the present moment a man met with a serious accident and was incapacitated, thus being entitled to a direct payment of, say, £400: do you not consider that it would be a fair thing that until the time arrived for determining whether he was to go on the fund for good he should in the meantime receive the £400 without going on the Superannuation Fund when it came into operation?—With regard to this question, I think that all that the men look for is something fair. They want provisions which will act fairly all round. That is the spirit of the majority of the men. There are some, of course, who would demand right up to the hilt, without reason.

WILLIAM LOCHEAD BARR examined. (No. 2.)

32. *The Chairman.*] What is your name in full?—William Lochhead Barr.

33. What office do you hold in the executive?—I am the treasurer of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.

34. *Mr. Pirani.*] Are you in the service now?—Yes.

35. *The Chairman.*] What evidence do you wish to give with regard to the proposed superannuation scheme?—I think our secretary has gone pretty well into it; but the evidence that I proposed to give was that the Bill as it was would not be acceptable unless it made some provision for the older hands in the service.

36. Have you seen the new Bill?—Yes.

37. Do you consider that it meets the requirements and the desires of the railway servants? Give us your opinion with regard to the provisions of the new Bill?—Yes, I think that Bill meets the requirements very well. I may state that the conference we had at Invercargill adopted the scale that is in the new Bill; but we had a meeting with the representatives of the First Division, and they adopted another scale. I think the scale adopted by the conference would meet the requirements pretty well; it is pretty much on the same lines as the Police Provident Fund. The only thing is that some members seem to think that 10 per cent. is too high, but I think it is recouped by the retrospective time that is to be counted to their credit. I certainly think the new Bill is a very great improvement, and I am quite confident that it meets with the approval of the majority of the old hands in the service.

38. Are there any other points that you wish to refer to—the constitution of the Board, for example?—I think the Board provided for in the Bill is quite sufficient. I have no objection to the Board at all. I approve of the Bill generally.

39. *Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] You approve generally of the amended Bill?—Yes.

40. *Mr. Guinness.*] Whom do you represent?—The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants—the whole New Zealand society.

41. What office do you hold?—I am the treasurer in the executive.

42. Mr. Edwards, who has just given his evidence, is the secretary and you are the treasurer?—Yes.

43. Have you considered clause 23 of the Bill?—Yes. Our attention was drawn to it, and we came to the conclusion that the compensation clause would not prevent a man from still drawing his superannuation. I do not know whether that is a correct rendering of the clause or not.

*Hon. Sir J. G. Ward:* I may say that I have told the members of the deputation the addition I proposed to make to the clause—*i.e.*, that while a person is in receipt of payments under the Compensation Act he shall not draw on the fund.

45. *Mr. Pirani.*] You said just now that there was a difference of opinion as to the scale?—Yes.

46. That the representatives of the First Division wanted a reduced scale?—They do.

47. But that the Second Division are satisfied?—The Second Division agreed with the First Division, because theirs was certainly a more liberal scale; but the scale adopted prior to that at the conference was the scale that is in the Bill.

48. What I want to get at is that the objection to the scale in the Bill has come solely from the First Division, and with that objection the others have naturally agreed?—That is the case.

WILLIAM REID HAIG examined. (No. 3.)

49. *The Chairman.*] What is your full name?—William Reid Haig.

50. Do you hold any office in the executive of the society?—I am president of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.

51. Have you considered the new Bill?—Yes; pretty well.

52. You might tell the Committee what is your opinion and the opinion of the executive with respect to it?—I take it that you refer to the Bill which has been handed to us—the amended Bill. My opinion is that the Bill is a satisfactory one; but the opinion of the executive is that the sliding-scale contributions from the members who may join the fund are rather heavy. We think the 10 per cent. rather heavy; but before going further I should like to make myself clear that at the Invercargill conference of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants the delegates considered the Superannuation Bill very carefully, and to get over the difficulty, as far as providing for the senior members of the service was concerned, we adopted the sliding scale.