

114. Then, in this memo. occurs the sentence, "The men in the smiths' shop were also doing a Government stroke" ?—I never said that at all.

115. You heard what Mr. Ronayne said ?—Yes.

116. That these statements were substantially what were told him by the expert ?—Yes.

117. And you believe the expert referred to was yourself ?—He may have had other advice, or he may have inferred from what I said that the men were loafing where I did not imply that at all.

118. The men were not loafing ?—As much loafing is done there, I suppose, as anywhere else.

119. Did you see any loafing on the occasion of your visit ?—No.

120. Another statement of this expert, as given by Mr. Ronayne, is this : "There appears to be an utter disregard of the foremen's presence in any of the shops, the men being allowed to talk, loaf, and do a very indifferent day's work." Have you said anything like that to Mr. Ronayne ?—Those are not my sentiments at all.

121. You are quite satisfied, from your visit in November last, that the men at Addington Workshops were not loafing ?—I am prepared to say that loafing was not going on. I say that at Addington there are some men who take it remarkably easy ; but to class the whole of Addington in that category as the memo. does, or even a majority or a goodly number of them, is absurd.

122. It is absurd to say that the men at Addington are idlers and loafers ?—Yes.

123. You have been there very frequently ?—I go there about twice a year ; but my firm opinion is that there are just as few loafers at Addington as elsewhere.

124. Have you seen any men taking things remarkably easy at Addington ?—Yes.

125. You admit that you have waited on Mr. Ronayne these last few months ?—Yes.

126. Can you give us any indication of how long the interview lasted ?—I should say about half an hour.

127. During the course of that interview you were telling Mr. Ronayne how satisfied you were with the work that was carried on at Addington ?—Other points came up.

128. How long were you interviewing Mr. Ronayne, and what were you telling him against the men ?—I will not answer that.

129. You say you were not saying good of the men : what were you doing ?—Both Mr. Ronayne and I have told you that I spoke very highly of Mr. Henderson and of Mr. Wilson, a fitter. I approached Mr. Ronayne on behalf of Wilson and Watson, to get the extra 6d. a day, and I was met with the statement from Mr. Ronayne that Addington was not doing as well as it should.

130. In that interview with Mr. Ronayne did you make any complaints whatever against the men ?—I do not know that I did. I do not think I did.

131. You make that statement in face of what Mr. Ronayne said this afternoon, that that letter contained what an expert said ?—Yes.

132. You think Mr. Ronayne has taken a wrong inference from your remarks ?—Yes.

133. It is incorrect that you made any complaint against the men ?—Yes.

134. You have nothing against the men ?—I said before that there are men at Addington who are not doing quite as much as they might.

135. That is the result of your observation ?—Yes.

136. In what department are these men ?—I won't say that.

137. Do you believe that you made any statement to justify Mr. Ronayne writing that letter ?—I should say that the statements I did make were sufficient to convince Mr. Ronayne that things were not going right in Addington, because I told him there was extreme discontent, and that the method of doing work was slow. In consequence of complaints I had made to Mr. Ronayne, and the knowledge which he and others had expressed in regard to Addington, he may have thought it necessary to bring the subject immediately under the notice of his inferior officer, and accordingly sent the bald statement just in the same way as a private employer might to one of his heads of department about which a complaint had been received. He would never expect that it would go past the Mechanical Engineer or beyond the manager and foreman. It was drawing the attention of the Chief Mechanical Engineer to the fact that there was something wrong and asking him to inquire into it, and if that wrong existed to redress it, so that the work would be done in an economical manner. I do not blame Mr. Ronayne particularly for sending out a memo., because he firmly believed it would not be made public.

138. Is it not a fact that you visited the shops and afterwards interviewed Mr. Ronayne little thinking it was to be made public, and that you would afterwards have to refute or prove it ?—I have not said anything of that nature.

139. You mention the fact of men speaking to officers in an insulting manner : have you any personal knowledge of such conduct on the part of the men ?—I have already said that it was hearsay entirely.

140. Have you ever heard a man speak in an insulting way to a foreman ?—In a general way, yes.

141. When ?—I will not say.

142. You still adhere to the statement that Mr. Ronayne is wrong when he says that those words regarding loafing and Government stroke are practically yours ?—I say Mr. Ronayne is mistaken.

143. What led you to come here to-day ?—I want to put myself right about what I did in the matter, and I have already admitted that some of the words in the memo. were words of my own, and in consequence of that I thought it was right that I should come. Any public man who can bring matters into a better state than they are at present should come forward. I am only anxious that a better system should be brought into vogue.

144. You have seen a statement in the newspapers that you were the man who interviewed Mr. Ronayne ?—I should say that such a statement had not been published. I would take the first opportunity of bringing that paper to book.