

23. In Addington there were 280 votes recorded altogether—241 “Yes,” 32 “No,” and 7 informal?—Yes.

24. I suppose they did not know what they were voting for, according to you?—I do not say that. Any one reading that voting-paper intelligently, I should say, would know what he was voting for. Personally I have no recollection of that paper coming round Addington at all. I do not know where I was at the time.

25. Did your society carry a resolution to federate with the waterside workers or the Miners’ Federation?—Not to my knowledge.

26. Would you favour such a proposal?—Decidedly not—not if it meant that we were compelled to strike. I am absolutely opposed to strikes.

27. Would you favour it in the event of strikes?—There may be conditions on which I would favour it, but, speaking generally, I would want to know sufficient about it before I did favour it.

28. Has the A.S.R.S. passed resolutions in New Zealand in favour of the federation of the different branches of the association?—That I could not say definitely. Possibly there are other officers who could answer that question.

29. You have not seen it reported in your paper?—No, I could not just remember for the time being. Of course, there may have been at the time of the excitement when the strike business was before the country. It is quite possible that such resolutions might have been carried by a small majority. You generally get small meetings that will pass resolutions like that, but when put to the general body of men all those things are generally thrown out.

30. What is the average attendance at the ordinary meeting of your branch?—It all depends on the question at issue. At the meeting at which Mr. Hampton spoke I suppose the hall was full—somewhere about 150. That was to meet the President of the Society, not to meet Mr. Hampton. That is, amongst ourselves.

31. Was not Mr. Hampton there?—He was an ordinary member there—not president.

32. *Mr. McDougall.*] Are you aware that we have never asked any one to sever his connection with the A.S.R.S.?—That is rather a strange question. I should think that the matter of the petition itself is putting that request to every one.

33. That is just the reason I asked the question. We do not ask any one to sever their connection with the A.S.R.S., and seeing that I have stated that, were you aware of it?—No, I am not particularly aware that the request was put individually or personally, but there is only one inference to be drawn from the petition, and that inference is that no numbers of men, at any rate, would remain in the two societies. They would have to support one or the other, and the rational sequence to their signing the petition would be their withdrawal from the A.S.R.S.

34. *Mr. Hampton.*] Would you consider a ballot taken by one side entirely controlled by them a fair ballot?—Decidedly not. Both sides should have their case put before the men and let the men judge for themselves.

35. Would you consider it fair to put to the ballot one side of the statement as to what the executive had done?—Certainly not. I should want a full statement of the work of the executive.

EDWARD CAMERON examined. (No. 14.)

1. *Mr. Hampton.*] What are you?—A carpenter in the employ of the Railway service at Addington. I have been seventeen years in the service.

2. What branch of the society do you belong to?—I am a member of the Canterbury Branch of the A.S.R.S., which embraces every railway man.

3. Can you give the Committee some indication as to how your branch of the society does its business?—Yes. For the last fifteen years the Canterbury Branch have always done their work so as to give the least trouble of any description as regards agitation, and we allow the different sections of the Railway service and the different grades every opportunity to state their different grievances if they so desire. The guards have a Guards’ Council, the shunters have the Shunters’ Club, as they call it, and they meet together to discuss their grievances and suchlike as they come along. They bring along their grievances in a concrete form to the branch and we deal with them there.

4. Does that method work satisfactorily?—Yes, most satisfactory. In many instances where a particular section of the men have a grievance and they come along expecting to right it in their own way, by going into the matter with all the different sections of the service they seem to have a greater advantage than if the matters were brought along and discussed only amongst themselves.

5. There is no conflict or overlapping between one and another?—None whatever. I have had the greatest assistance from even the surfacemen.

6. Have you read clause 1 of the petition?—Yes, I have.

7. Is it correct to say that the petitioners are all members of the service?—I am absolutely certain it is not.

8. What makes you say that?—A member of the service is a man who is permanently employed by the Railway Department.

9. Where did you get that from?—From the Act, under which they state they are petitioning.

10. Do you consider the majority of the tradesmen at Addington really want to break away from the A.S.R.S.?—I feel confident they do not.

11. Why do you think that?—Well, with the whole of the men in the carpenters’ shop whom I come in daily contact with, there was not one who said he wished to get away from the A.S.R.S. I