

15. *Mr. Roberts.*] In what way is the accumulator in the boiler-shop defective?—As far as I remember, the present accumulator was in position with the old machine; therefore, if the new machine takes more water, it is not sufficient to keep the present machine going at anything like its fair pace. I do not say that that was the entire cause of the slowness of the work. The gantry has as much to do with it as anything.

16. What is the defect in the gantry?—It is out of date, and the keeping of the boiler in a proper position for putting the rivets in must be deterred very much by the gantry in use.

17. How is it operated?—By the old-fashioned chain.

18. You have referred to the subject of working with the hydraulic riveter: what speed do you consider the hydraulic should accomplish?—Very much quicker than an average of one rivet per five minutes, anyway.

19. You do not commit yourself to any specific number?—No. In some parts of a boiler it is necessary that time should be taken for the rivets to cool. On a longitudinal seam difficulty might arise by putting the rivet in too quickly. I think, however, that I was right in saying that the work was done too slowly.

20. How did you come to know that there was a great deal of discontent in regard to the Classification Act?—By interviews with the men. Any member of Parliament will tell you that that is so.

21. They have complained to members of Parliament?—Yes.

22. You have used the term “spirit of the Act”: what do you mean by that?—Under the last Classification Amendment Act certain workmen who were engaged in a particular class of work were entitled to 6d. a day allowance in addition to the ordinary pay. The spirit in which that section was passed was that the skilled workmen, who were allowed to be competent by their superior officers to do their work, were entitled to 6d. a day allowance. I have, however, found that the Act was read in such a way that these skilled workmen were paid the extra 6d. a day only for the actual time at which they were engaged on the work of laying-off. I hold that that 6d. a day was supposed to be given to these men because they were supposed to be competent to undertake that work when it came along. The other day I noticed that the Minister agreed that 6d. a day should be paid to the enginemmen.

23. I think you stated that you learned from the Department that work at Addington costs more than in any other shop?—For the last twelve months or two years I have been met with such an answer.

24. Did you apply for that opinion?—No; I applied for concessions, and that was the answer I was met with.

25. Who made the answer to you that the work cost more at Addington than at other shops?—I cannot say that. Those are confidential matters.

26. I presume it would be some one in authority?—Yes. It is usual to go to some one in authority.

27. *Mr. Beattie.*] Do you think it is just to the Addington men to bring out the statements of departmental officers to the effect that the work of the Addington men costs more than that of the men in other shops, and yet refuse to give the names of the officers who made those statements?—I will give the names if I am assured that those who gave me the information would allow me to disclose their names.

28. Do you think it is just to make the statement and withhold names?—Yes. I have already said that I got this information in confidence from heads of the Department.

29. Do you recollect an interview you had with me about a year ago?—I may if you mention the particular circumstances.

30. You came to see me about a hand riveting-machine for which you were agent?—Yes; but I do not know that that should be brought up here: that was a matter of private business.

31. Do you recollect that at that interview you made very complimentary references to Mr. Henderson's work and methods?—I do not know that I made complimentary references. I think you will admit that on every occasion that Mr. Henderson's name has come up I spoke of him with unqualified praise.

32. In these interviews did you ever make any suggestion to me as to the necessity for an additional leading hand?—Yes, I recommended to you once that Mr. Hislop, Mr. Earwaker, and I think Mr. Ross should be appointed leading hands.

33. How long ago was that?—I should say two or three years ago. You may, of course, retort that Mr. Hislop went away and that Mr. Ross left the service immediately afterwards, and that Mr. Earwaker was made a leading hand.

34. Do you recollect how many years it is since Mr. Ross left the service?—Six or seven years ago.

35. Then your suggestion was made six or seven years ago?—The first suggestion.

36. As a result of that suggestion you said that Mr. Earwaker was appointed a leading hand?—I did not say it was really on my suggestion.

37. Mr. Earwaker was appointed a leading hand?—Yes.

38. Have you in any of these interviews with me suggested a second leading hand?—Yes.

39. When did you do that?—Times without number.

40. How many interviews did you have with me, do you think?—I cannot answer that question. We met pretty often. I do not pretend to remember how many interviews I have had with you, I have been with you so often.

41. Do you not know that questions regarding the staff are decided by the General Manager?—I know that the General Manager puts his name sometimes to letters which he has not carefully read. I saw a letter last week sent by the General Manager, and it was entirely in conflict with what the General Manager had told me just a little previously. I know that appointments go through the General Manager and through the Minister. No appointments can be made in any other way.