

resolution could be carried in any centre of New Zealand by locomotive-men. The resolutions are carried by workshops men, by platelayers, and by other workers. The fact of the matter is that the men are with us, and they wish us to do their business. Of course, these resolutions are misleading. It only shows that when you pay a secretary to do your business he has his position to look after. I have now a few words to say with respect to internal dissensions. Ever since the Amalgamated Society has been started there has hardly ever been a conference but what two or three days have been spent in washing up dirty linen. There is the same thing with regard to the different branches. In Dunedin the Chairman has resigned in the middle of his term owing to internal dissensions. Mr. Walker mentioned that there never were very many of the First Division in the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. Mr. Walker is a comparatively young man, and I can assure him that at one time there was a very large number of the First Division in the Amalgamated Society. There was a time when they held prominent positions in that society; they had representatives at the conferences, and were upon the executive. How is it that when they formed their own association there was no protest from the Amalgamated Society? In our case we only want to do our own business, and we ask you to consider the matter fairly, and grant us the right of looking after our own interests.

Mr. W. MCARLEY, Secretary, Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union, examined. (No. 4).

*Witness:* Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I do not wish to take up a great deal of time, or to go over any of the ground already gone over by Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Brown, but there are one or two arguments I should specially like to bring before you as to why we in New Zealand should have an association of our own. In almost every civilised country these associations exist especially for the benefit of the locomotive-men. In the first place, I will deal with America. In America a great number of years ago these associations started, and after a while it was proposed that the different associations should join together and amalgamate because by doing that they would have more power, and it was thought they would be able to demand pretty well what they liked from the railway companies. Some of the labour-leaders asked that such an amalgamation should be given a trial, and they decided to give it a trial. They all amalgamated into one association, numbering something like a million men, and the result showed that the object the labour-leaders had in view in getting this million men together was that they wanted them to go on strike. Well, they did go on strike, and it was the most disastrous thing that ever they did. They went back twenty-five years through that one act. However, a few years elapsed, and again in the same way the labour-leaders persuaded everybody to join the one union. They did that, and gathered in about three million men; and the ultimate result was that it completely broke up through internal dissensions in the ranks, just in the same way as is occurring with us here at the present time. Then arose the different sectional associations, which have been very successful in securing better conditions and in other ways improving the interests they represent. I may say that the different sectional associations work in harmony through a system of federation, which has been found throughout the world to be the best system. Now I am going to give you the word of Mr. Carter, who was president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen of America, who was through all these different changes during a period of about twenty years, and this is what he says: "I have seen all kinds and classes of unionism, and I can honestly say that the union made up of the men working in locomotives is on the correct principle." That is coming from a gentleman who has had years of railway experience on the subject. With regard to strikes, the Amalgamated Society here has practically the same object in view as the labour-leaders in America had when they wanted to get all the workers into one union so that they could go out on strike. The same thing was tried in New South Wales, and the result was the big strike in Sydney, which proved that amalgamation and strikes were useless among railwaymen. I may say that strikes are altogether out of the question, and on behalf of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union I may say that no such thing has ever entered our heads. I, as secretary of that organization, will never make use of a strike as a weapon to be used against the Government. We only propose to bring our grievances under the notice of the General Manager and the Minister of Railways and discuss the conditions under which we work, and endeavour to gain improved working-conditions in that way. One of the other objects of the Amalgamated Association is to control votes. I have here a speech given by the general secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants in Auckland. He said, when alluding to the power that is behind their association, as follows: "We control 25,000 votes, and we must have our grievances redressed." That is how they are going to exercise their power. Speaking again at Frankton, the president of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants said: "I see present a number of members of Parliament and several prospective members, and their chances of success depend on how much they attend to our requirements." That is a very significant statement: "If you are not going to get better wages for us, then out you go." That is the way they are going to use their power; and we ask you not to back them up in their opinions and aspirations, and to allow us to be recognised as a separate union, when these are the two objects they seem to have principally in view when objecting to our wishes. Now, I wish to bring before you the manner in which the executive of the Amalgamated Society is representative of the locomotive-men. In Wanganui the president of the society represents four locomotive-men, in Hawera he probably represents one, three in New Plymouth; in Palmerston North Mr. Wilson represents about six locomotive-men, the rest of them are in our union; in Taihape Mr. Walker represents about three. Although Mr. Walker is on the executive, he never was put there by locomotive-men, and to show you that we have no confidence in the Amalgamated Society I may say the general secretary of the Amalgamated Society sent round a circular to all their different branches urging them to pass resolutions asking the Government not to grant the request of our union. I may say the whole agitation emanates from the general secretary and the execu-