

Division, and it is hardly reasonable to ask that men who are divided on a matter of discipline should discuss their grievances in the presence of the officers concerned. I think it is in the best interests of the First and Second Divisions that they have separate institutions. Now, with regard to Mr. Brown's statement that things were better twenty-four years ago: It is misleading. As Mr. Veitch pointed out, at that time the cleaners started at 5s. 6d., and twenty years ago the Commissioners reduced the cleaners' wages to 3s. 6d., and we have now managed to get them raised to 5s. I know a cleaner who was working for 3s. That is a positive fact. He is working down at the Thorndon yards now. It is misleading to say that in 1884 they started at 5s. 6d. and now only start at 5s. Other things should also be taken into consideration in making statements of that kind. Twenty years ago firemen were getting 7s. 6d. for practically as long as the Department wished. Now they start at 8s. 6d., and the hours have been reduced from anything to forty-eight a week. That applies to both drivers and firemen. And, although 13s. was the maximum wage at that time, there were very few getting it. At the present time we have succeeded in getting a maximum of 50 per cent. for the first grade. With regard to the first-grade percentage provided for in the new Classification list, D.-3, Mr. Kennedy insinuated that the present executive were responsible. Well, the Minister does not take us into his confidence when he makes reductions, and until the matter is made public we cannot protest. We were not in a position to protest. We did not know what had taken place. I think I have made it clear that the claims of the locomotive-men have not been neglected. I do not think there is any need for a separate organization. The locomotive-men have every facility given them to conduct their own business through the present society if they will only put energy into it and help us to put forward reasons as to why they should progress better than they are doing now.

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