

1909.
NEW ZEALAND.

RAILWAYS COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF) ON THE PETITIONS OF E. W. HENDERSON AND OTHERS, AND SEVENTY-FOUR
SIMILAR PETITIONS; TOGETHER WITH THE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

(MR. HOGAN, CHAIRMAN.)

Report brought up on the 14th December, 1909, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

FRIDAY, THE 8TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 1909.

Ordered, "That a Committee be appointed, consisting of ten members, to examine and report upon questions relating to the railways; with power to call for persons and papers; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Arnold, Mr. Brown, Mr. Buick, Mr. Clark, Mr. Craigie, Mr. Hine, Mr. Hogan, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Ross, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. MILLAR).

REPORT.

REPORT on the PETITION of E. W. HENDERSON and OTHERS (also seventy-four similar Petitions containing 722 Signatures of Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners), praying that Official Recognition be granted to them as a Separate Organization from those of other Branches of the Railway Service.

I am directed to report,—

1. That in the opinion of this Committee the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants has represented the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners equally as well as the other sections of the Railway service.

2. That due prominence has always been given to the requirements of the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners when the Railway Department has been approached by the delegates of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.

3. That by internal reorganization of the society the petitioners could always get direct representation on the executive of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.

4. That as the Railway Department is a State Department it is desirable that one representative body should place the requirements of the men before the Department, the Minister, and Parliament.

5. That, having gone exhaustively into the evidence and given the fullest consideration to the prayer of the petitioners, this Committee has no recommendation to make.

14th December, 1909.

J. T. HOGAN, Chairman.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

FRIDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 1909.

Mr. S. BROWN, President of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union, examined.
(No. 1.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You reside in——?—I reside in Christchurch, the headquarters of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union, of which I am the president. I wish to speak in support of the petition for the recognition of the new union. I may say our principal argument is this: that we are not satisfied with the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants as at present constituted. This association of ours was started about fifteen months ago, and we have now got a duly registered society with branches all over the Dominion, and our numbers are something like eleven hundred out of fourteen hundred eligible members. We say that there is great dissatisfaction among locomotive-men, and for this reason they have formed their own association. We contend that the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants is based on too many trades and callings for one body to be able to look after their interests properly. There you have a body representing something like seventy different trades and callings. Now, these gentlemen meet every three months, and we say it is impossible for them to look after every man's interests. We also contend that a great deal of time and energy which ought to be devoted to the men's interests has been wasted through their arguing and quarrelling amongst themselves. I can give an instance which only recently took place in Dunedin. Last year the chairman of the branch, in consequence of their constant quarrelling and arguing amongst themselves, resigned. We contend that this is not unionism. I may state that in taking this step we are only following in the footsteps of all English-speaking countries. These societies are recognised societies throughout Australia, England, Scotland, Ireland, and America. In America they even go so far as to have a separate society for engine-drivers and a separate society for firemen; and I maintain that a thousand men with interests identical have far more weight than five thousand men quarrelling and arguing amongst themselves, and who cannot decide upon any point for fear that one section will be getting a little more than another. We also find that there is great jealousy amongst the lower-paid men, such as platelayers, &c. A platelayer will say he is entitled to as much money as a driver. I have heard several prominent members of the Amalgamated Society of Railway servants say the same thing. We contend that this is not right, and we cannot expect assistance from these men when the men themselves make such erratic statements. I maintain also that we have never been successful in increasing our rates of pay. I may say that I started in the service twenty-seven years ago. I started at 5s. 6d. a day as a cleaner. To-day we start at 5s. as cleaners. A driver then could rise to 13s. a day. They cannot do that now—12s. 6d. is the maximum. We have only to compare our wages with Australia, where these associations are formed, to see that they benefit the loco-men. I will also draw your attention to the First Division. They have formed an Officers' Institute. They withdrew from the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants; and what is their position to-day? These men were allowed to withdraw from the society to look after their own affairs, and now, because we propose to withdraw and look after our affairs, we are getting considerable abuse. I should like to point out to you the increases of wages of these gentlemen since they went out. I have got here the scale of pay issued in 1885. Here you have station-masters at £130. What is the position to-day? I think the minimum is £190 now. Of course, they had house allowance as well, £25, which brought the amount up to £155; and I think £190, including house allowance, is the lowest a stationmaster is paid to-day. I should like to present this schedule for your perusal. You can see how these men have benefited, and our position to-day is becoming intolerable. What do we find now? We find that the Classification Act has even placed us in a worse position than we have ever been in before, because it gives the Department power to say that there shall only be 1 per cent. in the first grade of engine-drivers and firemen. Yet have these gentlemen of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants made one word of protest? No, they have not. I may say that the wages of all the other divisions have been raised, owing to the increased cost of living, and yet this has never been done in our case; and yet the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants has the presumption to say that they have been looking after our affairs. Now, I think the Conciliation and Arbitration Act allows fifteen men—I think fifteen is the minimum that can form a union—and they can bring their employers before the Arbitration Court; and yet we cannot do so. We have got a combined body of men—engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners—with interests identical from one end of the Dominion to the other, and yet we find that they have no right to be represented and to form a union. I may say that I greatly regret that any man should oppose that right, and yet we have men who call themselves unionists who take up that attitude. I ask that the difficulty we labour under should be removed, and I say that no man has a right to oppose or refuse this request in a democratic country like New Zealand. I may say that our views are in accord with the principle of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, where men are debarred from taking part in a union unless of that particular trade or calling. I think that is quite right. I think there is no man better suited to represent any particular trade or calling than the man employed in that particular trade or calling himself. We do not want to injure the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants in any shape or form. There is not a man here who can say I have caused any friction, and my earnest endeavours have always been that we should form our union and go hand in hand with the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants and demand reforms if necessary, and I feel sure that, if we form our union and are recognised, we are prepared to meet the Amalgamated Society in every way, and

if we can assist them in any way in the upraising of the lower-paid men, we shall be only too willing to do what we can. The request we are making is a reasonable request, and a request that we have a perfect right to ask should be granted. I will not detain the Committee any longer.

2. *Hon. Mr. Millar.*] You stated, Mr. Brown, that when you joined the railway service drivers could rise to 13s. a day, while at the present time they can only rise to 12s. 6d.?—Yes, sir.

3. How many drivers received the 13s.?—I cannot give you the percentage.

4. Do you think there were more than one or two?—Yes; about twelve after the 10-per-cent. reduction, but, before, all drivers could rise to 13s. per day.

5. How many hours did they work for that money?—Ten hours a day.

6. Fifty-four hours a week?—Yes.

7. And now they work forty-eight?—Yes.

Mr. S. KENNEDY, Vice-president of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union, examined.
(No. 2.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You reside in—?—Christchurch.

2. And your calling?—I am an engine-driver. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I will endeavour not to traverse any of the ground that our president, Mr. Brown, has traversed. Of course, we understand that there are counter-petitions before you, as well as the ones we have presented. Of course, we do not know what the counter-petitions are, therefore I cannot deal with them. I can only speak for our own petition. Our petition is praying to have the Arbitration and Conciliation Act so amended or altered that it will entitle the Minister of Railways to legally recognise our association. In asking you this, I think we are only putting before you as open-minded men a fair and reasonable request. We are asking you to allow us to do our own business ourselves; and the reason that we ask you to allow us to do this business ourselves is that the men we have hitherto trusted it to have utterly failed in doing that business for us. They claim that they have done it, but we claim as engine-drivers that they have not done it. I could bring a large amount of evidence before you to prove that they have not done it, but I submit that we as engine-drivers being dissatisfied should be sufficient. I will, however, quote one or two instances. When I joined the Railway service about 1884 I started at a higher rate of pay as cleaner than cleaners start at nowadays, and the first-grade engineman of those days drew 6d. a day more than the first-grade engineman does now. That is the position with regard to the locomotive department—and I can tell you it stands out prominently as a fact—that the engine-driver is the only man who is in that position. If you take the New Zealand Postal service, the Police service, and the public services generally, you will find that, compared with other countries, you are paying as good, if not better, wages than any other country throughout the civilised world. But if you take the engine-driver of New Zealand you find, in comparing him with Australia, America, India, and other countries, in comparison to the rates of wages paid to engine-drivers all over the world, that there is a decided drop down in New Zealand. The engine-driver in New Zealand is worse paid than the engine-driver in Australia or America, and he is the only exception—he is the only one in the Railway service that is paid less in comparison. I think we can justly claim that, if the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants have succeeded in raising the wages of all other branches of the Railway service, and have put them on a better footing, they have failed in regard to the engine-drivers; therefore we claim that they do not suit us, and that they have not been successful in looking after our business. With respect to the last amendment of the Government Railways Department Classification Act, they have also neglected us. A reference to the Classification Act previous to the last one will show that the percentage of engine-drivers and firemen earning the maximum rate of pay was to be 50 per cent. of the total number in both grades; but now, under the amended Government Railways Department Classification Act, it provides that there is to be "not more" than 50 per cent., and if you look up the last D.-3, of 1909, you will find that the departmental officers have strictly adhered to this alteration in the Act. Instead of promoting drivers and firemen so that there would be an equal proportion in the first and second grades, they have not promoted a single driver or a single firemen last year—not one; and if this thing is to go on it will simply mean that you will have no first-grade drivers or firemen at all. There was an equal number of both grades in 1908; in 1909 there were 147 first-grade and 343 second-grade. Yet the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants omitted to check this legislation, and to see that the matter was brought prominently before the Minister and the House. They have entirely neglected us in the past, and at last we have fallen out. We have felt for a long time that the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants have not been representing our interests. We therefore started on our own, and have formed a new association. It is not a question as to whether we should be allowed to form an association or not. The association is formed, and we have a very large majority of the drivers and firemen in it. We have between 80 and 90 per cent. It is the recognised society of the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners, and is going to remain. All we ask from you is that you should have the Conciliation and Arbitration Act so amended as to allow the Minister of Railways to recognise us, and to make agreements with us. It is a very strange thing that this clause should be in the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. How it got there I do not know, but there is a clause in it that the Minister shall hear the grievances of the railwaymen through the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. Therefore no other union can be formed throughout the Railway service. We want you to alter that, so that any other union can be formed and recognised by the Minister. The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants are fighting us very hard. They are trying to block us. At the same time, to show how very inconsistent they are, I may say they are advocating a society which has been formed and recognised by the Minister. The society I refer to is the Railway Officers' Institute. They ask that that society should be recognised by the Minister, and yet at the same time bitterly oppose any alteration in the Conciliation and Arbitration Act—

3. *Mr. Buick.*] Why is the Amalgamated Society so much opposed to the enginemmen leaving them and forming an association of their own?—They say that we shall not progress; but we disclaim all that sort of thing. We have formed rules and regulations, so that when we are recognised by the Minister we can meet them in conference in respect to matters which concern the railwaymen as a whole, such as superannuation, &c. We can appoint delegates to act with the delegates of the Amalgamated Society, and all can go as a body of railwaymen when approaching the Minister. But we claim the right of dealing with the Minister direct with respect to matters concerning ourselves. Now I just wish to say a few words as to the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants and the general attitude they take up. It is known to be a very strong society. Mr. Veitch in public not so very long ago claimed that practically anything it asked for must be granted. He stated in public that they were a very strong body, and he claimed that because they have 25,000 votes this society should be upheld. I do not think that is a desirable condition of affairs. I do not think that one man at the head of a society like that should be able to control 25,000 votes at election time. I think that would be a very undesirable state of affairs. Then, again, the last *Railway Review* has an article in it headed "The Ostrich." The Amalgamated Society has come to the conclusion that they can and should run everything. Take the Sick Benefit Fund. They wanted to work things so that there would be only one in the Railway service in New Zealand. There is a very large one in the North Island in the district extending from New Plymouth to Napier, and the Amalgamated Society actually asked them to throw it up. They turned round and said, "No, we will not." The Amalgamated Society then wrote and published an article in the official *Railway Review* claiming that this society is acting the part of the ostrich because they wish to retain their own Sick Benefit Fund. Now, if the Amalgamated Society is allowed to go on in this way it will not be long before they will be able to dictate with regard to almost any matter that they like. I think, myself, that there should be some check, some finality, with regard to the Amalgamated Society. I think that we, as men, should be granted the right of acting for ourselves and doing our own business. They tell us that sectionalism will cause ill feeling. Now, what is the state of affairs at the present time. I can assure you that there is nothing but an undercurrent of ill feeling going on all the time. They do not seem to be able to agree for very long with respect to anything. Why, last year the chairman of the Dunedin Branch resigned owing to internal misunderstandings, and this year the same thing has occurred again. There is no harmony amongst them whatever, and there never will be so long as they represent so many different trades and callings, and have so many different interests to serve. It would be a great deal better if the society were broken up, and each different trade and calling were able to attend to its own business. It is not sectionalism for engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners to form a union of their own. We are a special line of labour. We have nothing in common with a plate-layer or with a fitter, or with the great majority of the men who are in the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants; and we are taking in the whole of the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners, and forming a union of our own throughout New Zealand. We are a separate organization. Finally, I should like to say that in the Amalgamated Society we know that we have numbers against us. The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, out of a total of 12,500, represent 6,000 members. They have nearly half of the Railway service of New Zealand. At the same time they have not got a majority of those eligible to become members. We, on the other hand, are a comparatively small body, but have 1,100 members of out of the 1,400 engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners in the service.

4. *Mr. Craigie.*] You mentioned a difference in pay in America and Australia as compared to New Zealand. Is there any difference in the hours? Do they work shorter or longer hours?—In America the minimum wage is 16s. 8d. on a ten-hour basis. They all work there on the mileage system, and some drivers earn from £40 to £50 a month. They are paid at the rate of so many cents a mile.

5. That is practically piecework?—Yes, sir.

6. *Mr. Buick.*] What is the wage in Australia?—The maximum wage in Australia is from 14s. to 15s.

7. *Hon. Mr. Millar.*] What is the minimum?—The minimum in Queensland, where the cost of living is the lowest, is something like what existed in New Zealand a number of years ago. Labourers are receiving 6s. 6d. a day there. The general minimum wage is about 11s. or 11s. 6d. for engine-drivers.

Mr. S. KENNEDY, Vice-president of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union, re-examined. (No. 3.)

The Chairman: Will you now reply to what has been said by the representatives of the Amalgamated Society, Mr. Kennedy?

Witness: Yes, sir. I am pleased that the president of the Amalgamated Society admits that we have grievances, but we have not come here to put our grievances before you. That part of his statement is entirely outside the question. It is not a matter of grievances. We have not come here with grievances. We have formed an association of engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners, and we have come here to-day to ask you to have the Conciliation and Arbitration Act so altered that that anomaly which exists and which prevents our having official recognition will be removed. We ask you to have that remedied, so that there will be no bar to the Minister of Railways recognising us. We have not come with any grievances. The grievances we have mentioned have been simply brought forward to prove our case—namely, that the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants does not suit us, and that we have therefore left it and formed another union of our own, and that in future we intend to do our own business. If we cannot get recognition from the Minister it will certainly be a great drawback to us. It will be a blow to us; but, at the same time, the members of the association are determined that they will not go back to the Amalga-

mated Society. We will keep our own association together, and it is to be very much regretted if we are forced to do the best we can under such circumstances, such as to join the Trades Council or become federated with the Australian unions. We think that this would be a deplorable thing—that we should have to go and federate with Australia. But that would be the only course open to us. Therefore we pray you to allow us official recognition, so that anything of that kind will not be necessary. Mr. Veitch does not admit that we have a large number of members. He can rest assured that we have over a thousand. We claim eleven hundred. Our membership has been going up. Mr. Veitch also referred to the statement made by Mr. Brown to the effect that he started as a cleaner at 5s. 6d. Mr. Veitch said that because of the weakness of the Amalgamated Society in numbers they could not prevent the cleaners' wages being reduced to 3s. 6d.; but Mr. Veitch is wrong: the cleaners' wages were reduced to 3s. 6d. only about nine or ten years ago, and they were a strong society then—

A Delegate: Twenty years ago cleaners' wages were 3s. 6d.

Witness: I do not think so. At any rate, eight years ago the cleaners' rate of wage was 3s. 6d., so that eight years ago the society was unable to get it raised, and they have not increased comparatively very much during that time. The greatest concession that railwaymen ever secured they procured from a Conservative Government, when the Amalgamated Society was only a thousand strong—and that was the nine-hours day. That does not look as if the society, because of its six or seven thousand, is going to get anything it asks for, and is going to control the legislation of the country. That is about all I have to say with respect to what Mr. Veitch has stated. Now, Mr. Mack claims that the enginemmen, firemen, and cleaners have not only had their fair share of representation on the Amalgamated Society, but that they have had more than their fair share of representation. We admit that. We do not dispute it. But we certainly object to the quality of the men who have appeared for the locomotive department on the executive of the Amalgamated Society. They are below standard; they are not up to grade; and if they had had to depend upon the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners to put them into their positions they would never have got them. Mr. Veitch has resigned his seat on the Appeal Board, and it is a well-known fact that he has not got a following in Wanganui amongst his fellow-workers. He represents a minority of the locomotive-men of Wanganui. He knows perfectly well he has not got the confidence of the locomotive-men. I do not think there is a single locomotive-man on the executive of the Amalgamated Society at the present time who would have a hope of getting there if he had to depend upon the vote of his own branch of the Railway service. We claim that these men do not represent us. We wish to have our own representatives, and we wish to go to the Minister with our own business. Now, Mr. Mack spoke about the petition which was sent round—the petition which is now before the Committee. I will refer to a petition which the Amalgamated Society sent round to the whole of the members of the New Zealand locomotive staff a few months ago, when they knew we had got a footing. They thought we should be stamped out, and they sent a petition round amongst the locomotive-men, and this petition asked that the locomotive-men's grievances should be sent to the Minister of Railways through the Amalgamated Society; and they could only get 280 signatures out of a possible 1,400—a very small proportion. That shows conclusively that the men wish their business to go through their own association. Mr. Mack, when speaking of sectionalism, said it was something like granting dairy-farmers one union and agricultural farmers another union. I think he has rather overdrawn that comparison. It is not proposed that all the different trades and callings should have separate organizations, such as the shunters, the porters, &c. We, for instance, are including not only drivers, but firemen and cleaners also in our union, and the whole of them throughout the Dominion of New Zealand. That is not sectionalism. Practically the whole of the men concerned in that calling are in our union, and we claim that we have a right to have them there. Now, the general secretary of the Amalgamated Society claims that they are now increasing in numbers, and each *Review* as it comes out claims increasing membership. Now, I think the Amalgamated Society if they were wise would allow the drivers and firemen to do their own business. They surely cannot claim that we are doing their society much harm by wanting to leave them when they are increasing their membership so rapidly. Mr. Mack says he does not think a hundred members of the locomotive branch have left the society. If he does not know, he has yet to learn that two or three hundred have sent their resignations in to their society—

Mr. Veitch: That is not so.

Witness: Why, there were 166 resignations in the Canterbury Branch alone. Another charge made against our association is that when we started at first we claimed we were going to assist and strengthen the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. That is absolutely incorrect: we have never made any such claim. We started our union to help ourselves. About six years ago there was a small society formed in Christchurch by the drivers, firemen, and cleaners. They met on Sunday afternoons and did their business, and when their business was done they took it round to the branch secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. Now, that society did work to assist the Amalgamated Society. But that was about six years ago. This society which we are representing has only been in existence sixteen months. This society was started sixteen months ago by a resolution at a meeting of engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners. Now, since the association has been formed no such assertion has been made by us. We hope that, as time goes on and we each do our own business, we shall forget our differences and be able to assist them in anything they want doing, and we trust that they will come round and help us should we require their assistance. We do not want to quarrel with them. There is another matter I should like to refer to: you will see from day to day reports that local branches of the Amalgamated Association of Railway Servants have carried resolutions that they have no faith in the Engine-drivers and Firemen's Union, &c. Now, these resolutions are being carried at the suggestion of the general secretary of the Amalgamation Society, who has written to all the branches to that effect. It would naturally be supposed that such resolutions were carried by locomotive-men; but no such

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-

tive of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. They put the resolution to the meeting in Taihape, and it was lost—they would not pass any resolution. All this just shows that the executive of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants are not representatives of the locomotive-men at all, and when a thousand of the men have joined our union it shows that they have no confidence in them whatever. Now, respecting the friction which it is claimed sectional associations will cause, I may say there is no friction at all in America and England, where these organizations exist, and the same thing applies to Scotland. The ill feeling is always caused by the agitations of general secretaries of A. S. R. S. In Australia they work in perfect harmony, and in Victoria, New South Wales, and Western Australia. Even in Tasmania, where they have only about 120 locomotive-men, they have their own special organization. The recognition of our union will have no injurious effect upon the Amalgamated Society at all. It is claimed by them that, if we are granted a union, the guards will then want a union of their own. I have no doubt they will; and, if the Amalgamated Society cannot prove to them that it is more beneficial to them to remain in the Amalgamated Society, then they should be allowed to have their own union. If they find that the Amalgamated Society is not properly looking after their interests, they should be allowed to have their own organization.

Mr. G. W. RUSSELL, M.P., examined. (No. 5.)

The Chairman: Will you now address the Committee, Mr. Russell?

Witness: Yes, sir. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I will only detain you for a few minutes. I should like, in the first place, to quote the clause in the Arbitration and Conciliation Act which stands in the way of official recognition of the Engine-drivers' Union. It is section 121 of "The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1908," and the essential clause is this: "The Minister of Railways may from time to time enter into industrial agreements with the registered society in like manner in all respects as if the management of the Government Railways were an industry, and he were the employer of all workers employed therein." I should like to explain to the Committee that there is not in the Railways Act, or in any other Act dealing with the management of the railways, anything that gives the Amalgamated Society such a status, and which prevents the Minister from officially recognising any other union. The only reference to it is in this section of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, the subsection of which I have just read to you; and under that Act the Minister has never made any industrial agreement with the Amalgamated Society. He has never been asked to do so, and he himself has never moved to have such an industrial agreement made; so that what the petitioners are asking is that, as the Minister is advised that this subsection of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act stands in the way of official recognition of the Engine-drivers' Union, an amendment should be brought in that would put the Minister in the position of being able to give official recognition if in the interests of the country he determines that that should be done. Now, so far as I am personally concerned, I have no feeling in connection with this matter at all. Some of my constituents are members of the Engine-drivers' Union, and I had the matter brought under my notice by them, and I say that, where a large body of men, whether in the Government service or any other service, desire to form a union, I do not think that on a technicality they should be prevented from doing so if they consider that by doing so they can improve their position. I fully recognise that the Amalgamated Society has in days past been the means of doing a great deal of good for the railway-men, and I myself, in former years, when I was Chairman of this Committee, have received every assistance in seeking to get and in obtaining concessions from the Government both in regard to wages and in other respects. But what I believe to be the case is that the Railway service has grown so enormously during the last ten or fifteen years, and there are so many different interests to be considered, that it is almost impossible for one association to adequately devote the time and attention that are necessary to the proper understanding and safeguarding of the interests of the whole of the men that are involved in it. I understand that there are some sixty or seventy different callings and occupations in the Railway service, and there are, I believe, about thirteen thousand men employed. Now, it must be a tremendous undertaking for one body, having its headquarters in one of the cities of New Zealand, to be able to deal adequately with the whole of the interests arising from so vast a body of men. There is one other matter I will venture to bring before you. By far the largest proportion of the Railway servants are the men who are receiving comparatively small rates of wages—platelayers, porters, shunters, &c. All these together form an enormous proportion of the staff. For example, you have been told that out of the whole of the Railway service there are only some fourteen hundred who are eligible to come into this union, which includes the whole of the locomotive branch, including the drivers, firemen, and cleaners; and you can easily understand that, if the total that they can claim out of the thirteen thousand Railway servants is only fourteen hundred, they are only a small minority of the total of the service. The large majority of the men are the men who are getting 6s. and 8s. a day. Now, I have publicly expressed the opinion, and I do it again without any hesitation, that the man who is capable of running our big express trains, such, for instance, as are running between Christchurch and Dunedin, and Wellington and Auckland—I say that a man who is competent to do that, and who has perhaps the lives of from five hundred to a thousand persons in his hands—I say the idea that that man is paid fairly and adequately at 12s. 6d. a day is absolutely absurd. In any other walk of life will you find men engaged in such responsible duties who would be considered to be adequately paid at 12s. 6d. a day? I say you will find no other position where you can get men to take such a responsibility and consider that that pay is adequate. The position is this: These men happen to be the highest-paid men in the Railway service, and the large body of men say to themselves, "These men are better paid than we are, therefore why should we fight to get their salaries raised when we are only getting our 6s. or 8s. or 9s. a day, while they are getting 12s. 6d.?" I believe that explains to

a large extent why the engine-drivers have now got a separate organization. They say, "Let us have a union which will confine itself solely to our interests, and then, instead of being submerged with the large body of underpaid labour, we shall get our wishes represented"; and, so far as that point is concerned, I am prepared to say that I think they are right. With regard to the other matters discussed it would not be proper for me to express any opinion. I should only like to say this: that, speaking as a public man, the conclusion I have come to is this: that they should not completely separate themselves from the Amalgamated Society. If they can get the recognition they ask for, then the two bodies should federate together and work side by side, and then, so far as their own particular affairs are concerned, they would be the correct representatives of the men. I think it would be improper for me to take up any more time, and there is only one other point that I wish to draw your attention to, and that is this: that the Amalgamated Society, as you have already been told, represents only about half, or perhaps a little more than half, of the total number employed in the Railway service, while on the other hand the petitioners are able to say that they represent over 90 per cent. of the men who are capable of belonging to their organization. They are the petitioners, and appearances are certainly in their favour on that point.

Mr. W. A. VEITCH, President, Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, examined. (No. 6.)

The Chairman: You reside at—?

Witness: I am an engine-driver, stationed at Wanganui. Mr. Chairman, I am not going to be very lengthy in my remarks. I find myself in the fortunate position that I can agree with a great deal of what has been stated by these gentlemen whom I am opposing, in regard to the grievances of the locomotive-men. I, as head of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, admit that the locomotive-men have grievances, and considerable grievances, which I think should be rectified, but we have not the power to rectify those grievances. All we can do is to represent them, and I claim that on behalf of the locomotive-men we have done everything that it is possible for us to do in that direction. Mr. Kennedy made some remarks about the Classification List. That list, which we have only just received, has been a very great disappointment to us, as we hoped for something very much better than that for the railwaymen of New Zealand. Depression has been prevalent in the country, unfortunately, and, to my mind, the whole of the effect of that depression has been shouldered by the staff. That, I think, is not fair. Some years ago the Government instituted the 3-per-cent. policy. That policy, you all know, was instituted by Sir Joseph Ward when he was Minister for Railways. He reduced the railway charges very considerably in order to bring the profits of the Department down to 3 per cent. Since then on every occasion on which the profits of the Railway Department have risen above 3 per cent., further concessions have been granted to the public. It is only fair to say that some concessions have been given to the staff, but now, when depression has come along, we are expected to shoulder the whole of the loss it has caused, while the public is not asked to repay one single penny given to them in reduced freights, passenger-fares, &c. I am very pleased that my friends on the other side of the table have brought this matter forward, and have thereby helped the Amalgamated Society to bring the subject before members of Parliament, and I seriously commend that aspect of the question to the Hon. the Minister of Railways. One statement was made which I regret very much. It was made by Mr. McArley, when he asserted that the reason why we wished to hold all the men together was because we had the same purpose in view that he asserts the labour-leaders had in America—that we were trying to hold the men together for the purposes of a strike. I can assure you, gentlemen, that nothing is further from our minds. I consider that a strike would be a great misfortune to the railwaymen of New Zealand, and it has never been seriously contemplated by us. If a strike by the men would be of benefit to them it would be time enough to seriously consider the position. We must do our duty to the Government and the people of the country. Now, with regard to the statements which have been made that the Amalgamated Society has failed to do its duty to the locomotive-men: I ask them if they can give particulars of any case where they have brought their grievances to the branches of the Amalgamated Society and those branches have refused to deal with them. I say, on the other hand, that the grievances these men are complaining about, such as increases in pay, which are undoubtedly due to locomotive-men, have been advocated by the Amalgamated Society. I have here a schedule of the claims that we made when the Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones was Minister, with respect to engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners.

Designation.	Grade.	Minimum.	Maximum.	Annual Increments.
Engine-drivers, and night-foreman of cleaners ..	1	s. d. 13 0	s. d. 14 0	2 of 6d.
" Fifty per cent. of total number in both grades to be first-class.	2	11 0	12 6	1 of 1s. and 1 of 6d.
Fireman	1	9 6	10 0	1 of 6d.
" Fifty per cent. of total number in both grades to be first-class.	2	9 0
Cleaners	5 6	..	3 of 1s.

You will see that we were advocating that engine-drivers should be paid up to 14s. in the first grade, and that, I believe, is practically what these gentlemen are asking for. On the whole, I find that the grievances put forward by them show that they are endeavouring to do the best they can for themselves. At the same time I realise the great danger which would exist if we start the sectional system here. There is no telling where it is going to end. You must either have the one system or the other. Which are you going to have? You must either have the sectional system or the amalgamated system. It will be impossible to run with any degree of success with the two systems, the one fighting against the other. That is what is taking place in Australia. I know it is having a very disastrous effect there on the interests and the service-conditions of the men. There must be at least an effort on the part of railwaymen to help each other. If you are going to have the sectional system, then I say it is only fair to institute it all round. The prayer of these men deals only with their own department. It would be only fair to see whether the other departments approve of the sectional system also. Another aspect of the question is that in Australia, where the sectional system exists, the first-grade drivers get higher wages than they do in New Zealand; but the history of our society proves that our men have made progress while the bulk of the men under the sectional system in Australia have had to tolerate retrogression. I saw a paper only yesterday setting out the wages of the men in Victoria some time ago. At that time large numbers of them were getting more money than they are getting now. That proves that those men have gone back. Why should we make a retrogressive movement? In New Zealand we started with the improved and better system, and we are going to do our best to hold on to it. In other countries they started under the sectional system, and now they find it difficult to get them to pull together. No attempt has ever been made by the Amalgamated Society to use undue influence, and members of this House will admit that we have done our very best for our men. We have urged their grievances before the General Manager. We have ventilated their grievances before the Hon. the Minister in Charge of the Railways, especially now that we have the privilege of meeting him occasionally; and we have also taken advantage of every opportunity to bring the grievances of all our men before Parliament. What more can we do for these men? I may say that the essence of the whole outcry and what started this agitation was the fact that the first-grade guards get 1s. and the first-grade drivers only get 6d. under the last amended Classification Act. Now, I say that the responsibility for that anomaly rests with you. We have done everything that we could do. We put forward a claim urging the Government to grant a shilling a day to the guards and also a shilling a day to the drivers. We put forward a schedule of suggested increases. It was sent to the Hon. Sir Joseph Ward, then Minister of Railways, who in turn handed it to a Committee of members of the House. That was in 1907. That Committee went into the matter, and made certain recommendations to the Hon. the Minister. For reasons best known to themselves, and reasons which I have never been able to understand, that Committee did not recommend any increases to be paid to the locomotive-men—to the drivers, at least. Now, the executive of the Amalgamated Society considered it unjust that the locomotive-men should not get anything, and they interviewed Sir Joseph Ward, who promised to do the best he could for them. They left the Minister on the understanding that the best he could do would be done for these men, with the result that when the amendment of the Act was passed by Parliament the engine-drivers got 6d. I admit candidly that, in my opinion, these men should have had 1s. But that had nothing to do with the Amalgamated Society. You, gentlemen, are responsible for that. I should like to read to you a letter which I sent to the Hon. the Minister, Mr. Millar, which I think just about covers the position, and gives a fair idea of the state of affairs:—

“SIR,—

“Aramoho, 26th July, 1909.

“In connection with the proposed interview of the Enginemen and Firemen's Association to-morrow, I beg to place before you the following facts: Since our last interview I have had an opportunity of addressing several meetings in the Auckland Province, and have succeeded in inducing a number of men there to secede from their association. I have given a challenge to their President, Mr. Brown, or any member of the association nominated by him, to debate the matter with me openly. That challenge has not been accepted, and I have not yet been able to meet the southern locomotive-men. There is a very great deal of anxiety on the part of the members of the A.S.R.S. that recognition should be granted to the new association, our men believing that recognition of the new union will be a severe blow to unionism in the Railway Department; and this is my own view of the matter. There is no violent hurry to settle the matter finally. Even if they have a thousand members—which I am not prepared to admit—it has already been proved that a number of them have joined on wrong information, and it seems to me perfectly fair to ask that they be required to maintain a membership of at least 1,000 for one year. This test would prove whether the membership has been obtained by a spasm of popular feeling or a genuine well-formed desire to form a separate union. Either the locomotive-men have been treated as well as other departments of the service or they have not. If, in your opinion, they have, then they have no grievance, and are not entitled to special consideration of any kind. If, in your opinion, they have not, then the remedy is to be found in the redress of their grievances, and not in disassociating them from the A.S.R.S. It is not a fact that the A.S.R.S. has refused or failed to urge for the redress of the many grievances existing in the locomotive department, as you yourself know by experience. It is desirable, and in the interests of fair play to both sides, that time be allowed to fight the matter out to a finish before a final decision is arrived at by you. I will be very grateful to you if you will arrange a conference between their men and ours in order to battle it out face to face in your presence. As the apparent intention of Parliament, expressed in the Arbitration Act, is that the A.S.R.S. is to be the only union for the Second Division, I would strongly urge you to throw on Parliament the responsibility of making any alteration of existing conditions.

It has taken twenty years of hard work and self-sacrifice on the part of a large number of railway-men to build our union up to its present standard of efficiency, and anything likely to endanger its stability is a very serious matter to the members of your Department; and I appeal to your well-known sympathy for trades-unionism not to take any action in this matter till the facts have been fully tested and the necessity for a separate locomotive union proved.

“I have, &c.,

“Hon. J. A. Millar, Minister of Railways.”

“W. A. VEITCH.

That is the way we look at it. We know these locomotive-men have grievances, but the forming of another union will not remedy them. If you grant separate recognition you have not got over the difficulty. The only way to promote satisfaction amongst these men is to redress their grievances, and I hope you will see your way to do that at the earliest possible moment. Sectionalism in other countries has not operated to the benefit of the men concerned. I am quite convinced that that is so. I should like to read to you a statement which was made by Mr. F. Barlow, President of the Firemen and Engineers' Association in Queensland. These are the words he uses: “At Bullock Island, where the shunters were reduced in position and lost 1s. per day, the Locomotive Association realised that unless unionists co-operate the infringements at Newcastle and Bullock Island will extend to other members of the staff. Grievances will increase unless we unite and work together.” In New Zealand we are united, and I sincerely hope we shall be able to continue working together. The President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, Mr. Carter, in America, has made this statement: “Many are the bitter lessons which have been taught as to how essential is federation to the complete success of the various brotherhoods in carrying out the objects for which they are organized.” We have been told that the Amalgamated Society has outgrown its usefulness. I assert that the Amalgamated Society was not of much use to the railwaymen until it grew to be a great organization. An argument Mr. Brown used was to the effect that when he joined the service he started at 5s. 6d., and that now cleaners start at only 5s. I will trace the history of the position, and show you clearly that Mr. Brown's argument does not uphold his case. In its early history our union was weak. It was not properly recognised. It had to fight against the prejudice of certain officials which we have not to fight against now. A reduction was made in the wages of juniors, and the cleaners had to share in that reduction, from 5s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. At that time our union was not strong enough to prevent this, but since then the Amalgamated Society has gathered strength and has brought the cleaners' minimum wages up from 3s. 6d. to 5s., and before long we hope to see them where they were before. I think that is a complete reply to Mr. Brown's argument with respect to the cleaners' wages. I claim that the locomotive-men's grievances have been pushed forward with a considerable amount of success by the Amalgamated Society. No reasonable man will admit that the progress made in years past is going to stop to-day. We have had bad times in New Zealand, but eventually they will pass away, and I feel sure that in the near future the finances of the country will justify the Minister in granting further increases and improved working-conditions to the railwaymen. Parliament has treated us very well indeed from time to time in granting increases and improved working-conditions, and it must be admitted that the railwaymen are much better off to-day than they were twenty years ago, especially with regard to hours of labour; but the fact remains that there are still other improvements which are urgently needed. I feel sure that we shall still retain the sympathy of members of Parliament, and that these gentlemen will be prepared when the proper time comes to grant further concessions. With regard to the locomotive-men being thoroughly dissatisfied with the A.S.R.S., I doubt that statement very much. It is a fact that a very great effort has been made by this new association to get locomotive-men to resign from the A.S.R.S.; but, as far as I can learn, not a very large number of men have resigned. The fact that a number of the men who have joined the new association still retain their membership with the A.S.R.S. shows that they still feel that the A.S.R.S. is a very useful instrument for the redress of their grievances, and a very useful protection against injustice. I think I am justified in claiming that it is the duty of those who are asking for a change to prove the necessity for that change. The necessity for this new union has not been proved. I think I am justified in urging on this Committee to take that view of the matter. These gentlemen have made a very good stand this morning, and done the very best they could for what they believe to be right, but I contend they failed to prove to you that a necessity for a new union exists.

Mr. W. A. VEITCH, President, Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, re-examined. (No. 7.)

The Chairman: Have you anything further to say, Mr. Veitch?

Witness: Sir, my reply will be very brief indeed. With regard to the Appeal Board I will not say anything, simply because I am entitled to be the guardian of my own honour in that matter. But there is one thing I must mention: Some remarks were made about the general secretary being a paid secretary, and that he had issued a certain circular to the branches. I wish to say this: that the circular referred to was issued by the general secretary under my direction. I instructed him to issue that circular. This association claim that they are trying to assist the A.S.R.S.: the assistance they propose to give us is that they will, if recognised, draw from our numbers over a thousand men. The necessity for the new union has not been proved, and I respectfully ask the Committee to give a decision to that effect.

Mr. M. J. MACK, General Secretary, Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, examined.
(No. 8.)

The Chairman: Will you now address the Committee, Mr. Mack?

Witness: Yes, sir. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I personally take a somewhat different view as to the manner in which this question should be considered. It appears to me that it is not a question as to whether any certain section or grade of the Railway service should receive increased wages, as to whether they have had a decrease, or as to whether the conditions in New Zealand are equivalent to those in Australia, America, and in other countries. What this Committee has to consider is whether this new association shall receive official recognition from the Minister; and so far, sir, I contend that there has not been one single sentence spoken which will justify that being done. It has not been shown that there is any need or necessity for this organization representing locomotive-men, because it has not been shown that their interests have been neglected. On the other hand, we are prepared to prove that the Amalgamated Society has done its utmost when representing the locomotive-men. Take, for instance, the Bankside and Rotorua accidents. We provided them with counsel on those two occasions, which cost our society £227. Recently I have had to pay out twelve guineas in arranging for the defence of locomotive members who are involved in inquests and suchlike. A small society could not get the funds to do such a thing. Take, for instance, the Locomotive Association of South Australia. If you take their balance-sheet for last year you will find that the credit balance of that association was the sum of £10. And the largest association of Australia—that is, the Victorian Association—where they have 1,510 members—their balance-sheet for the end of last year was £46 some odd shillings. Now, sir, has anything been said to prove the statement that the Amalgamated Society has done nothing on behalf of the locomotive-men? I should like to refer you to the schedule of the demands made by our society in 1908. On that occasion the enginemmen, firemen, and cleaners' positions were pointed out, and, if our application was rejected, that was no fault of the Amalgamated Society. If you peruse that schedule I think you will admit that every grade of the service received every attention at the hands of the society. With regard now to representation: The enginemmen, firemen, and cleaners have always had more than their fair share of representation on conferences, as evidenced by the fact that no less than eight enginemmen were elected to the 1908 conference—coming from Invercargill, Dunedin, Oamaru, Christchurch, Cross Creek, Dannevirke, Palmerston North, and Wanganui—as against six Traffic, five Shops, one Maintenance; and the executive council now consists of five enginemmen, three Traffic, 1 Shops, giving a balance of power to the Locomotive branch of the service, which has the least cause for complaint in this direction. The Minister has said that he can only recognise one society on behalf of the locomotive-men. We at present legally hold that right. The petitioners desire to deprive us of the right, and therein lies the cause of our objection, and until it is shown that we have neglected them or abused that right, we as a society strongly resent and protest against any alteration. To grant official recognition and alter the Act would mean that the great majority of the locomotive-men who are loyal to our society would be *compelled* to join such society against their will so as to obtain representation, which step they are opposed to, as evidenced by the voluntary request attached to the resolutions of our society from over the whole Dominion. It cannot be denied that all railwaymen's interests are identical, the safety of the public being their first and most important duty, and it cannot be in the interests of the public or of the men themselves that there should be a conflict of feeling among the men in the service; and I attribute the almost total absence of accident in the Railway service to the fact that there has been a good feeling and a common interest among the men employed. To separate them into sections would be wrong. It would be as reasonable to say that the interest of the dairy-farmer was not the interest of the grazier, and the interest of the grazier not that of the cropper, and that each should have a separate union of his own. I think that would be an absurd position. Finally, it is contrary to the true spirit of unionism and contrary to the principle advocated by the present Government, and absolutely detrimental to the best interests of the men as a whole. Our membership has been referred to. We have been told that our membership has gone back—that members are leaving the society. I may tell you our society is and has been growing ever since I have taken office, and to-day we have about six thousand five hundred members throughout New Zealand. Although the petitioners state that the men are seceding from us I do not think that we have lost more than a hundred members of the Locomotive department altogether. Now, sir, summarised, our objections are these:—

Memorandum of Reasons submitted by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants for Rejection of the Prayer of the Petition of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union.

(1.) The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants has existed since 1886, and constitutes one organization for the benefit of Railway servants.

(2.) The rules and regulations of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants have always been and are sufficiently wide to permit of any person employed in the Railway service becoming a member thereof.

(3.) The objects of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, as set out in the society's constitution, show that the society is constituted for the benefit of all Railway servants alike.

(4.) The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants is a strong organization which is much better able to guard and promote the interests of Railway servants as a whole than a number of separate societies would be able to do.

(5.) If the prayer of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union be granted, it would almost inevitably be followed in course of time by similar applications from other branches of the service, and would be the beginning of the disintegration of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants; and that would be detrimental to the interests of all Railway servants.

(6.) No section of Railway servants has ever had any reason to complain of their treatment by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, or that their interests have been neglected by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. Least of all have the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners any ground of complaint, inasmuch as their interests have always been protected, and they have always had more than their share of representation on the executive council of the society. At the present time the president, vice-president, and three councillors are engine-drivers, so that the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners have a representation of no fewer than five out of a total of nine members of the council.

(7.) From the point of view of the Railway Department as well as of the Railway servants as a whole it is submitted that it is much preferable that there should be one organization to represent the men than that there should be two or a number of different organizations. It is submitted that a division of the Railway servants into more than one society is only likely to lead to confusion, to difficulty, and probably to inharmonious relations between the different sections of the men and also between the servants and the Department. If the petition of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union be granted, similar petitions by other sections of the men could not well be refused, and the greater the number of societies the greater the confusion, the difficulty, and the probability of inharmonious relations arising.

(8.) When the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union was formed, one of its objects was expressed to be to strengthen the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. Its method of assisting the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants appears to be to attempt to break up the society altogether.

(9.) It is not correct to say, as the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners imply in their petitions, that they are compelled now to approach the Government "through another organization." They approach the Government through the executive council of the organization of which they form a part, and the executive council has always comprised at least a fair proportion of engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners. It is submitted therefore that they do approach the Government directly and in the same way as any other section of the Railway service approach the Government.

(10.) Nearly every branch of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants throughout New Zealand has passed a resolution strongly protesting against any alteration of section 121 of "The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1908," and impliedly therefore protests against what the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners are asking for, the ground being that any such alteration would be detrimental to the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants and contrary to the best interests of the railwaymen as a whole. Resolutions to this effect have been passed by the following branches: Frankton Junction, Nelson, Otago, Wanganui, Greymouth, Upper Hutt, Hawera, Timaru, Picton, New Plymouth, Masterton, Palmerston, Waipukurau, Napier, Dannevirke, Helensville, Oamaru, Paeroa, Auckland, Wellington, and Thorndon. Furthermore a large number of enginemen, firemen, and cleaners have voluntarily signed a request that only the Amalgamated Society shall represent them.

(11.) The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants asks the Committee to come to the conclusion and report to the House not only that the locomotive-men have not made out a case in support of their petition, and that therefore the Committee have no recommendation to make, but that the Committee should affirmatively report in addition that the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants has made out a case to the contrary, and that it would be detrimental to the interests of Railway servants as a whole to grant the petition of the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners. The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants asks this, in the event of its making out such an affirmative case to the satisfaction of the Committee, in order to have the question disposed of once and for all this year, and to avoid the recurrence of the question from year to year.

(12.) The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants in no way disputes the importance both to life and property, referred to in the petitions, of the occupations of the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners, but it must be pointed out that the same observation applies to every branch of the Railway service, and it certainly does not follow that that is a reason for the special and separate recognition of any particular section of the service as a separate society.

Those are the objections we have against your granting the prayer of the petitioners, and we ask that your Committee will give them careful consideration. It is quite evident from the statements made by your petitioners that they desire to upset existing arrangements not only by agitating throughout the country, but by legislation. I know that personal reference has been made to myself. I do not propose to say anything about that. The statement is there, and I admit all responsibility in connection with the matter. The question the Committee has to deal with is whether this organization shall or shall not be officially recognised, and as to whether we have done our duty towards them.

1. *Mr. Arnold.*] I should just like to ask you what method is adopted when electing your executive?—First of all the delegates are elected for the conference. Each branch which has up to 300 members sends one delegate, and if over 300 members it can send two. Every member has a right to vote. The delegates attend the conference, and the conference from amongst themselves elect the executive council according to rules and regulations which provide that the various

departments of the service shall be represented. I may say that the other departments have been very well satisfied with their representation by enginemen. Locomotive-men are coming constantly in contact with all branches of the service, and they are therefore elected on the executive council. Five out of nine on the council are engine-drivers.

2. You state your membership to be about 6,500?—Yes, approximately 6,500.

3. The total in the Railway service is about 14,000: what would be the possible membership of your society?—We only represent the Second Division, and I cannot tell you exactly the number.

4. Can you tell me what percentage of members you have?—We have probably about two-thirds. There are always a great number of men who are apathetic and who stand out, and there are also a great number of men in the workshops who belong to other organizations—carpenters, boilermakers, &c.

5. You think that is the reason they do not join your society?—That has been the reason in the past, but during the last year our membership has been increasing fast. They are beginning to realise that the Amalgamated Society is a useful organization.

6. You make every effort to get them to join?—Every effort.

Mr. J. WALKER examined. (No. 9.)

The Chairman: You reside at——?

Witness: Taihape. I am an engine-driver. I think that pretty well everything has already been said. The petitioners claim that they have not been properly represented, and that their interests have been neglected by the Amalgamated Society. Having had a great deal of experience of the management of the society during the past few years, I claim that the interests of these locomotive-men have not been neglected. An instance mentioned was that when the Classification Act was amended in 1907 we neglected to see that the percentages were not fixed. Now, I would just like to point out for your information that when the proposed amendment was sent to us we waited upon the then Minister for Railways, Sir Joseph Ward. The proposed amendment then provided that only 33 per cent. were to be first-grade. We protested against that, and got it altered to 50 per cent., and I asked Sir Joseph Ward personally to make it read that 50 per cent. were to be first-grade. That was not done. But the position is that the blame for that must be upon the Government, or the Minister, or the Department, whoever is responsible, and not on the society. I can refer you to the Hon. Mr. Millar and to the Prime Minister, Sir Joseph Ward, as to whether or not the claims of the locomotive-men have been fully represented to them. Now, in dealing with this question we have to consider, would it be beneficial to the locomotive section themselves that they should be allowed to go out on their own? I claim that it would not be beneficial to their interests. The society is what members make of it, and, if the society has done these members no good, then I say that the men have failed to take proper advantage of the organization that at present exists. There is every facility for them to put forward their claims in a legitimate manner if they desire to put them before the Minister, or before Parliament, or before the management. We have access to the Minister at almost any time and to the management, and on no occasion that I know of have the claims of the locomotive-men been neglected. There has been a great deal of talk about internal dissensions in the Amalgamated Society. Now, amongst six thousand men you will, of course, get differences of opinion, and I should like to ask if, even in the proposed new association, with only a thousand members, everything has gone smoothly with them.

Mr. Kennedy: So far it has.

Witness: Well, I am very pleased to hear it. Now, another question is that it is very doubtful whether the bulk of the locomotive-men will support this new association. The point was raised by one of the previous speakers that I represented at Taihape about three men. Now, as a matter of fact, there was a petition sent to the locomotive-men there—one of the petitions asking for recognition of the proposed association—and to show you what an interest the locomotive-men themselves take in it I may say that, out of about fifty-six locomotive-men there, only fourteen signed the petition. And it is the same all over that district. A great many men belong to it, but they do not take an interest in it. They seem to have an idea that if recognition is given they will have to belong to it, but at the same time they are praying that it will not be recognised. And so far I am not aware of any one of these men in that district who have left the Amalgamated Association, although attempts have been made to get them to do so. Here in Wellington an attempt was also made to get locomotive-men to leave the Amalgamated Society, but it was not a success. Now, in other countries they have separate societies. We are prepared to admit all that. In Australia they have them. I inquired personally into the working of them over there, and the conclusion I came to was that they are doing no good, and that they are making no progress. I am quite safe in saying that during the last twenty years the locomotive-men over there have made no progress. There is no denying that, though in many instances they are better off than we are. But that is not the fault of the Amalgamated Society. We have asked, and we have represented matters strongly to the Government. We have made every legitimate effort we could, and the Government has not assisted us. The fault rests with the authorities, and not with the society. There was another matter raised, in regard to the Railway Officers' Institute—that they had withdrawn. Now, as a matter of fact, there were never very many men of the First Division belonging to the society. There were a few—there are still some—but still it is not in the best interests of either the First or the Second Divisions that they should belong to the same society, because a great deal of the complaints we have to put before the management are the result of what we consider hardships imposed on the Second Division by officers in the First

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.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (1,500 copies), £9 16s.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1909.

Price 9d.]