

as under that?—One great security against fraud now is the short date of the ticket. The whole fraud must be done at once. *Mr. Carruthers.*

20th Aug., 1877.

233. That is your only objection?—Yes.

234. I understand you read the Victorian report to apply not only to locomotives but to all rolling-stock?—Yes.

235. I was in Victoria a few weeks ago, and, in conversation with people well up in these matters, learned that the only objection was to the engines?—The evidence that I have given on that point is entirely from memory. It is some months ago since I read that report.

236. I understand you to say it would be economy on the part of the Government to import stores from England. In such a case would not larger stocks have to be ordered, and the outlay greatly increased?—Not very much. The plan that would be adopted I should think would be to call for tenders for the supply for a year, delivery to be monthly. No doubt it would sink a large amount of capital.

237. If you were in the position of a large landowner, having a number of tenants under you, and requiring a large stock of butter, hay, and such things, would you not prefer taking it from them, even though you might save a little by importing?—If I could get it cheaper by importing certainly I should import, and get something else from them which probably they might be able to sell cheaper than the imported article. If I wanted to give them an advantage, I would rather lower their rent than give them a false value for their articles.

238. The Auckland Commissioners, in their report, say, "To make the lines pay two things we believe to be necessary, which will essentially change the character of the management: (1.) The responsible head must be at Auckland, on the spot where the business is to be done, and not at Wellington, where it is not to be done." Do you agree with that recommendation?—I do not.

239. The second recommendation is, "The responsible head, instead of being restricted by rigid rules and regulations, must have a discretionary power, and a personal interest in the line." What do you say to that?—He should have no discretionary power to alter charges without authority from the Minister, or to grant away public moneys.

240. Do you know any lines worked under the superintendence of the construction engineers?—Sir John Hawkesshaw is the principal man on the Liverpool and Yorkshire Companies' Railways, and there are others, I daresay, if I could look up documents. I do not think, when railways are completed, that he should have anything to do with them. He would drop into the position of resident engineer, and below the position of manager. I know, however, that there are a good many lines in England that are being worked under the superintendence of civil engineers.

241. These lines in England are working very satisfactorily and paying well?—Yes.

242. The regulations under which officers in the Railway Department are appointed provide that all appointments have to be approved by the Minister. I want to know if the General Managers have not really the matter entirely in their own hands, except that the appointments require approval?—Yes; and approval has never been withheld, except when there was good occasion for it.

243. Presuming that there was a change of Stationmasters found necessary, would such change be made by the General Manager instantly, without reference to Wellington?—Yes, if there was no increase of pay necessary, but a reference would be necessary if it led to an increase of pay.

244 *Hon. Mr. Ormond.*] But would not the alteration be made if required, and the recommendation for increase of pay forwarded afterwards?—The recommendation for increase of pay would be forwarded first.

245 But in the meantime what would be done with the office?—I do not think any alteration would be made until the increase of pay was agreed to. But so long as the telegraph is accessible it would make very little difference.

246. Supposing a Stationmaster misconducted himself, what would the General Manager do?—He would suspend him, and put another man in his place, I suppose. The thing has not occurred, so I do not quite know. I must say that I think generally there are too many small matters which have to go to the Minister for approval. I suppose it is in accordance with the practice of Government, but I think a small increase of salary might be left to the chief officer in the district, so long as the vote was not exceeded.

247. *Mr. Macandrew.*] Is it not laid down in the rules that no Stationmaster can be changed unless with authority from headquarters?—No; it is not in the rules.

248. I think you said the rates on some of the railways are lower now than they were previously. To what lines do you refer?—Canterbury and the Northern lines. They were higher in Canterbury, if you take in the Lyttelton branch.

249. Are they higher or lower in Otago?—They are lower in Otago.

250. Can you say whether or not the rates are lower for long distances?—They are lower, especially when the Lyttelton line is taken into account.

251. Can you give the Committee any information with reference to the relative charges on the lines of New Zealand and other colonies?—I think they are about the same. For instance, take the Victorian rate on fifty miles, drapery would be 29s. 2d.; in New Zealand it is 27s. 6d.; at the old Otago rate it would be 29s. 2d.; between Christchurch and Lyttelton it would be 19s. 4d.—that is under the old rate.

252. *The Chairman.*] What would it be by the New South Wales rates?—I have no information on that point.

253. With reference to the position of Engineer-in-Chief, what is your opinion? When all the lines are constructed will there be any necessity for an Engineer-in-Chief?—No necessity for him at all; he would then go away, and let the Manager take his place.

254. In what way would it work if an interference were allowed with the present duties of the Engineer-in-Chief?—It would practically leave the construction of lines to one with no reputation at stake, and one who would have no interest in keeping down the first cost of railways. It is difficult to say what a constructed line is. There are hundreds of thousands of pounds to be spent this year on