

responsible. The duty of a manager is to make the lines pay. The power reposed in a man placed at the head of a railway department should be considerable. He holds a very responsible position, and has a great deal of hard work to get through, and unless he possesses considerable authority it cannot be got through.

*Mr. Conyers.*

16th Aug., 1877.

444. What is your opinion with respect to the 14th clause of the Report on the Management of New Zealand Railways, relative to the abolition of return tickets altogether?—I have no objection to the issue of single tickets only, but I do not know exactly how it would answer. It is a very serious innovation. On some grounds it may be recommended. The adoption of such a course would necessitate the keeping in stock of only half the number of tickets at present in use. A saving would also be effected of a considerable amount of clerical work.

445. I understand that in the United States return tickets are issued for any period of time?—I see no objection to doing so here. The only difficulty would be in not knowing the time the people would be coming, in order to have the necessary accommodation provided for them.

446. *The Chairman.* It happens here that a large number of tickets are at times sold without due regard being paid to providing sufficient accommodation for the passengers?—In Otago we formerly issued return tickets at single fares for any distance. Under the new regulations return tickets are not issued for stations within twenty-five miles of the station from which they are issued.

447. You commenced on the railway as a mechanical engineer?—I was articled as a locomotive engineer for six years, and have been nearly nineteen years subsequent to that engaged on railways in the capacities I have already named.

448. *Mr. Bunny.* You said, yesterday, you would throw some light on a sum of six guineas shown in the Report of the Commission on Auckland Railways, and chargeable under the head of "Wear and tear of line, engine, and carriage, in the hire of special train from Auckland to Mercer"?—Yes; I think the sum of six guineas charged is very high. I have also looked at the cost of wear and tear on the Auckland and Mercer line and it amounts to 3s. 1d. a-mile. A special train can be worked cheaper than an ordinary train as no extra assistance is required. As to the charges for special trains on the Auckland and Mercer line, I cannot account for them being so high, knowing that no extra hands need be taken on to run them. The detailed items of expenditure shown in the charges for a special train in the Commissioners' Report are exorbitant. In working a special train it would not be fair to take the average cost per mile for the number of miles run as the sum chargeable, because no additional expense is incurred by the department. The usual maintenance and staff must be kept up whether special trains run or not. And that fact cannot but be recognized that the more miles of railway run the lower will be the expenses, always providing that we can get sufficient traffic to pay the extra expenses.

449. What do you consider a fair rate to charge for a special train?—10s. a mile.

450. Is it necessary to have a collector on a special train, as is shown in the charges for a special train on the Auckland and Mercer line?—No collector at all is required on a special train. On several points connected with railway matters Mr. Passmore and myself do not agree.

451. You think 10s. a mile would pay the Government handsomely?—Yes; but I do think the charge for special trains should not be too low, because at busy times much inconvenience might be occasioned. In Dunedin, on one occasion, one hundred and six trains were run in twelve hours—nearly nine trains an hour.

452. Were the rules and regulations for the management of the railways ever printed, and were they framed by the Railway Commissioners, or by whom?—The rules and regulations were printed, but the Commissioners did not prepare them, and I, as General Manager, had nothing whatever to do with them.

453. By whom, then, were those instructions laid down?—By Mr. Passmore, I believe. I never saw them, and was never consulted respecting them. Although I am called a Superintending Engineer, I hold the situation of a General Manager. Those under me now called General Managers are really Traffic Managers. It is usual for a General Manager to prepare his own book of instructions and those regulations relating to the detailed working of the lines. Such instructions are a General Manager's protection in case of accident. If a man on the line omits to perform his duty properly, I have my instructions to fall back upon in the event of an appeal to a Court, and if I can show that he has been properly instructed, that will clear me. Many things in the regulations for the New Zealand Railways cannot be carried out. On the Canterbury plains, for instance, a ganger has six miles of the line to look after. The instructions state that each ganger will walk over his portion of the line every night and every morning. This would necessitate his walking twenty-four miles a day, in addition to doing his ordinary work. I have had to issue a circular overruling the regulation regarding a man being fixed at every point on the line. In Otago, the lines there are walked over every morning before the train passes.

454. Has there been any saving effected in the machine-shops in Christchurch?—Yes; we have saved about £2,000 a year; about £6 a day in wages alone have been saved.

455. Were you ever instructed or reminded to close these shops?—No; I acted on my own behalf and reorganized them.

456. An honorable member has sent in this question to be asked: Why the Railway Department in Canterbury have not carried out the instructions directing that the Malvern coal should receive a trial for railway purposes?—I received instructions about the matter, and if blame is to be attached to any one it is to myself. It was my fault the coal was not tried before. In order to give the coal a fair trial an engine was required having a special chimney similar to those on engines used in America; the grates also required altering. The work hung a little at first, but I did the best I could, and the engine is at work now.

457. To give the coal a fair trial is it not necessary to alter the chimney-stacks?—Yes; to prevent the sparks from scattering about too much the chimney is made with a bonnet. Necessary alterations had to be made, and in so doing we availed ourselves of an engine at the time undergoing repair, instead of taking one off the line.

458. You stated the cause of the block in the railway system in Canterbury last grain season