

Christchurch, Mr. Conyers informed me that he had a telegram from the Engineer-in-Chief having reference to Mr. O'Toole stating that he had been three times suspended, and his salary had been increased £75. I may add that Mr. O'Toole is a clerk in my office; he is a very efficient officer, performs his duties very well, and is of great importance to the department. Several times he got the worst for liquor—at least, so that I could detect it on him. I warned him, but did not wish to take harsh measures. He persisted, and I requested him (the fourth time) to resign at once and leave the service. I referred the matter to the Superintending Engineer, who was then at Invercargill. Mr. O'Toole made application to get back to his office, and Mr. Conyers favourably considered his case, and granted the application.

1517. *The Chairman.*] Has he gone through the Bankruptcy Court since he has been employed on the railways?—He has.

1518. *Mr. Macandrew.*] Is it the Mr. O'Toole who was in the Custom-house?—It is.

1519. When his case was favourably considered, did you report on the case?—I did personally to the Superintending Engineer.

1520. *The Chairman.*] When he was reinstated, was it under the General Government?—I could not possibly answer the question as to whether it was under the General Government or not.

1521. Was it since the 31st December last?—It was.

1522. *Mr. Lumsden.*] Do you know why he left the Customs?—I do.

1523. It was for something similar?—It was. That is four or five years since.

1524. *The Chairman.*] Has his salary been raised, or is it proposed to be raised?—I may say that I made application for an increase of salary, but that was about the time Mr. O'Toole was asked to resign. That was done specially on account of the extra work which was likely to fall on the department. It was my intention to manage the extra work with an efficient clerk, and I thought it necessary to increase the salary of the chief clerk.

1525. You did not mean to increase Mr. O'Toole's salary, but that of any one filling his position?—Of any one filling his position.

1526. *Mr. Lumsden.*] Who is acting as clerk on the Bluff wharf in connection with the shipping? John Anderson.

1527. Does he belong to your department?—He does.

1528. Is he an efficient officer?—He does his work very well.

1529. Is he steady?—Sometimes. I have never seen anything myself; neither have I had official reports about him.

1530. You never have had occasion to ask him to resign?—I have not.

1531. Is there any rule affecting a person in the Railway Department should he become bankrupt in the service?—I think reference is made to it in the Civil Service Act.

1532. *Mr. Larnach.*] What position do I understand you to hold?—General Manager, Invercargill division.

1533. How long have you been in the service?—I joined in 1865.

1534. What experience have you had in the management of railways?—Since then in New Zealand only.

1535. What business or calling had you been accustomed to before you joined the service?—A clerk.

1536. You had never any experience before in railway management?—None.

1537. What you know now has been acquired in the present service?—It has.

1538. I think I understand you to say that the system of furnishing railway accounts having been changed from monthly to weekly, in your opinion it has caused extra expense without being any particular benefit to the railways?—It has been no benefit as far as I can see.

1539. And the extra expense in your department amounts to £400?—Yes.

1540. And promises to be more?—Yes, another hand is required to compete with the work, at £150.

1541. Then the extra expense would be £550 in your department?—It would.

1542. Would not the traffic receipts of the railway be benefited by running trains on Sunday?—The receipts might be increased.

1543. Would it not be a great convenience to the public?—We run trains on the arrival of steamers. So far as I am concerned, I have always been opposed to Sunday traffic. I believe Sunday trains would be well patronized.

1544. Would it, in your opinion, not be a great convenience to the public?—I believe it would.

1545. And that the traffic receipts would be benefited?—They would.

1546. It would take many people out of town who would not otherwise move from it on Sunday. It would be a convenience to the public?—I believe, speaking generally, it would be a convenience to the public.

1547. What effect has dead weight, such as stone, iron, coal, &c., in the wear and tear of the line, compared with packages of loose lumber?—It altogether depends on the manner in which it is handled. If properly stored, it would be quite equal to weight.

1548. Take a carriage marked four or five tons, and you pack that with stone, you would not be able, perhaps, to put nearly so much weight on in loose lumber or packages. What effect has that dead weight on the line in comparison with lighter packages?—I consider that if a truck is not loaded beyond its carrying capacity the wear and tear could be nothing more.

1549. Would heavy dead weight not have more effect in the wear and tear of the line?—Not at all. That altogether depends on the strength of the springs. If a wagon is overloaded, the line suffers materially, but so long as the springs are loaded to work easily, it has no effect whatever.

1550. Then am I to understand that there would be no marked difference in the freightage of one material more than the other?—The specific gravity should be considered, and freightage regulated accordingly.

1551. I take it you are guided in your freightage by the actual wear and tear of goods carried on the line?—Of course that is taken into consideration with the value of the articles carried.

Mr. Arthur.
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11th Sept., 1877.