

*Mr. Ormond.* whole railway management, but interferes little as regards the traffic. Mr. Carruthers would not have anything to do at all with the management of the traffic. For instance, with regard to the time-tables Mr. Carruthers would have nothing to do. If a recommendation came up from Mr. Conyers, it would simply be for approval.

1670. Mr. Conyers could not have £50 worth of work done out of earnings, and then report it? Would he not have to get the consent of the Engineer-in-Chief?—I do not think he would. He would do it out of earnings, and send it on for approval. If out of loan, he would apply. If it were a large matter—for instance, as to the alteration of gauge—he would apply. He reports that it will cost so-and-so, and asks to have it carried out.

1671. Do you find that the Engineer-in-Chief has enough to do to attend to the construction?—Yes; I think he has got his time very fully occupied.

1672. And therefore any time he devotes to the management of constructed railways interferes with his other work?—Yes, it is undesirable.

1673. Will you tell us the position of Mr. Higginson and Mr. Knorpp?—They are what are called the Superintending Engineers under the Engineer-in-Chief. Their business is to go about over the lines and see all the works. Until lately they had nothing to do with constructed railways. Mr. Knorpp is on the North Island lines, and is responsible for the permanent way and locomotive branch in addition to construction work; and, as I said before, it does not impose any great deal more work upon him. When he travels he sees that the permanent way is kept up. Mr. Higginson has charge of construction of the Canterbury and Otago railways. He has also charge of permanent way and locomotives on the little lines where Mr. Conyers does not extend.

1674. Then Mr. Higginson's business is to attend to Westland, Marlborough, and Nelson?—Yes; and of course the construction going on in the Southern Island.

1675. Have you Constructing Engineers besides?—District Engineers. There is one for each important piece of work going on.

1676. Have you got also on the constructed lines civil engineers looking after the permanent way?—Yes; there is a multiplicity of work which they have to do.

1677. And then in the South Island we have Mr. Higginson for lines being constructed, and Mr. Conyers over these District Engineers again?—Yes, he would be over the men on the constructed parts: like Mr. Lowe, for instance.

1678. Mr. Lowe is under Mr. Conyers?—Yes.

1679. Then in the North Island you have no District Engineers?—Yes, we have an officer in charge; for instance, Mr. Stewart, at Auckland. It depends entirely on the amount of work going on.

1680. You said Mr. Passmore was dismissed, because Mr. Knorpp in visiting the lines being constructed, passed over those constructed?—And, therefore, no cause for both officers.

1681. Who looks after the goods and passenger traffic?—The different local Managers.

1682. And do they report to the Engineer-in-Chief?—They carry out the regulations. The Engineer-in-Chief is virtually the head. This question about Mr. Passmore has only recently happened. I look upon this as quite a tentative state of things for the present. My wish is to give the local men sufficient power to manage those local lines.

1683. You say you found that your predecessor had left Mr. Carruthers as manager?—I do not think he was in a different position to what he is now.

1684. How is it that Mr. Conyers is called the Superintending Engineer? Is it because they want to make him inferior to Mr. Carruthers, or Mr. Carruthers inferior to him?—I cannot say why that particular term was picked out. Mr. Carruthers is the head, but I think Superintending Engineer is not the best name that could be given Mr. Conyers.

1685. I think I understood you to say that you regard this present arrangement only as tentative?—Yes.

1686. And I understood you to say that you think a person ought to be appointed General Manager, like Mr. Conyers, if you could only find him?—That is the direction my convictions have taken. You must have somebody at the head.

1687. In the nature of a Commissioner?—Yes. As far as I see, it is very difficult to find such a man.

1688. You do not regard it as necessary that he should be a civil engineer alone?—No; I do not think so.

1689. Is it not the case that you are now carrying two guards on the lines in the North?—No; not two. On the North Island lines the traffic is of a very different class to that at Canterbury. On the Napier line, for instance, the traffic is comparatively small. There is a guard, and a man travels and does the loading and unloading at the various stations they pass where there are only sentry boxes, and no Stationmasters.

1690. What does the guard do?—Helps too.

1691. There are no Stationmasters?—Yes, at places; but there are places without Stationmasters where they put things out.

1692. Do you think it absolutely necessary that this man should go with the trains?—Yes; these men have plenty of work.

1693. Are you aware that Mr. Conyers has stated they are simply superfluous, and not required?—Yes, I have heard him give that evidence in respect to the Southern railways.

1694. Are you not aware that on the Canterbury and Otago lines there are stations, the same as in the North, where there are no Stationmasters, and even parcels and goods left without carrying a man to do it?—I believe there are, but I do not know how they do it, unless they have people to attend to it.

1695. You are aware there are ticket-vendors appointed. Were they appointed with your sanction?—No. The whole thing was a misconception altogether by the officers who appointed them. I do not think the instructions at all justified their appointing them.

1696. Did the instructions go from Mr. Carruthers?—Yes.