

140. Are you aware that boiler-makers are only paid here at the same rate as they are paid on the Clyde?—I was not aware of it. *Mr. Carruthers*

141. It appears by your evidence before the Committee that, since the General Government has taken over the management of railways, a large saving has been effected in the shape of oil on the Canterbury and Southern Railways?—Yes. 20th Aug., 1877

142. Are you aware whether that saving has been extended to any part of the North Island?—I think the North Island has always been more economical than Dunedin. Undoubtedly there was great extravagance in Canterbury compared either with Otago or the North Island.

143. Who accepts tenders for stores—upon whom does the responsibility rest?—Upon Ministers.

144. Upon whose recommendation do they accept?—Well, it would depend where tenders were called for. If they were called for and accepted in New Zealand, it would be upon my recommendation; if in England, the Agent-General would accept on the advice of the consulting engineers. If the tenders were in respect of local matters in New Zealand, they would be accepted upon the recommendation of the chief officer in the locality. If called for in Dunedin or Christchurch, then upon the recommendation of Mr. Conyers; if in Wellington, then upon my recommendation, and so on.

145. Do you compare the different tenders with each other?—Yes, very carefully.

146. They are not intrusted to any subordinate?—No.

147. I think you stated that this new system—this central system of audit and alteration from monthly to weekly accounts—will not involve any additional expense?—I think it will reduce expenses on the whole undoubtedly. We have not yet got things into working order, but there will be a considerable reduction.

148. Is there one officer less at the different offices of Dunedin and Christchurch?—A good many reductions have been made, and I know a great many more reductions will be made.

149. Will there be any extra men put on in Wellington?—I think there will have to be one or two more clerks; not more.

150. Can you describe the process by which the value of tickets is ascertained? How do you secure yourself against fraud?—The tickets are issued to the Stationmasters, having been counted and valued, and they have to account for them.

151. But what department deals with that?—The Audit Department. The ticket storekeeper will be under the Stores Audit.

152. I think you stated that you considered it necessary that a ganger should walk over his beat twice a day?—Yes; or he should see it done.

153. Would not once a day be sufficient—in the mornings?—It is better to have it done twice a day when it can be done.

154. On the Otago railways the gangers never went over it more than once. It involves something like 24 miles a day (the beat is usually six miles), so that a man would do little else?—He has trolleys.

155. Can you suggest any means by which the working expenses can be decreased as compared with the existing expenditure?—No; I have no special recommendation to make upon the subject. I think there would be a great amount saved in getting stores from England rather than getting them in the colony, unless New Zealand prices become very much lower. We have paid a great deal more for stores in the colony than we could have imported them for.

156. Do you not think it would conduce greatly to the successful working and management of our railways were the executive officers as much as possible brought into direct contact with the Minister for Railways, instead of there being so much circumlocution?—Well, I do not know why it should.

157. At present the business has to go through so many hands?—You could not have each Manager in direct correspondence with the Minister.

158. How many are there? Is there one in the North and one in the South?—There are eight or ten in the North.

159. Well, take ten. Would it not conduce to the better working of the railways if there was direct action?—I do not think so. There are yet many railways in course of construction, and there is a very great difference between the management of railways constructed and those in course of construction.

160. I think you stated that it was the invariable rule in England that the constructing engineer was also manager of the constructed railways?—It is so in my experience. He has become so as long as there is any construction going on. I have never known it to be otherwise.

161. Is it not one thing to construct a railway and another thing to manage the traffic upon it? They are two distinct things?—Yes.

162. I think I understood you to say that you had no experience in the management of traffic until you came to New Zealand?—I have had no experience and am not now engaged in managing traffic. I have a general supervision. But there are very few of the lines in New Zealand yet completed. Locomotives have to be specified and brought out, and I have to see that both they and the lines get fair play and fair usage; and until the lines are completed I ought to have that opportunity. Interference with the Traffic Managers is no part of my duty, and I should never think of doing so, nor do I suppose if I did so Ministers would agree to my doing so.

163. *Mr. Richardson* ] With reference to manufacturing rolling-stock in the colony, have you seen last year's report of the Engineer-in-Chief of the Victorian railways?—Yes.

164. Can you give the Committee in a few words the result of that report?—He reports that the rolling-stock manufactured in the colony was very expensive and very bad; that it had been a complete mistake; that it was not equal to the imported article, and much more costly.

165. Do you know to what extent the Victorian Government have assisted the introduction of the manufacture of rolling-stock in the colony?—I do not remember exactly. I know they have furnished capital and given large orders. I have an idea that they paid down in advance sufficient to cover the whole cost of the machinery and the starting of the workshops.