

the fact that in Canterbury a large number of men are paid 6s. a day. In some places it is 7s. In Nelson it is as low as 5s., but that is an exception.

23. Are there not a great many in the South paid 7s.?—Yes.

24. The majority?—I would not like to say that. I do not think myself they should be all paid the same irrespective of what they are worth. We endeavour to put the best men to the best work and the most responsible work.

25. Is this scale strictly adhered to?—I think so—fairly. You may find discrepancies. It is quite possible that men may have been overlooked.

26. Men may be underpaid through being overlooked?—It is quite possible.

27. When any new scale is introduced, do you not think the men should have fair notice before being reduced?—Certainly. The scale has never been materially altered since I took charge. It is supplied to all the offices; but I think it ought to be gazetted and made a legal document, and that every man should be able to get his rights under it. I think it should be a public document. There should be no concealment about it. I have recommended that it should be gazetted.

28. What is your opinion as to the pay of the drivers and firemen?—I think they are paid better than the great mass of the men.

29. Better than the officials—the men having charge of those drivers—the Managers, Locomotive Superintendents, and clerks?—They are certainly better paid than the clerks. The whole of them are far better paid as a body.

30. The officials had their 10 per cent. returned?—Not in every case. That reduction was not applied to the Railway Department in the same way as it was to other departments. The wages and salaries paid were previously on a most irregular basis. A scale was introduced so that the pay of the officials could not be put back to the former condition. They were put on a scale before the reorganization took place.

30A. Were the Civil servants in the department reduced too?—You cannot draw any line as to who is and who is not a Civil servant.

31. The officials were reduced 10 per cent. Is it not a fact that they have got a rise since?—Many of them have. That does not apply to any particular class more than it does to the whole. Almost every one of them have risen two steps—guards, porters, drivers, cleaners, and firemen have all got increases—all who were not paid before to the full scale. The men have got increases in accordance with the scale.

32. *Mr. Levestam*] The Manager at Nelson has been increased 25 per cent.?—I dare say he has, but not since I had charge.

33. *Mr. White.*] The Locomotive Superintendent at Christchurch has had an increase?—Yes; he is now doing the work that three men used to do. He has largely-increased work. There are 100 miles of line more than in 1880.

34. And do not the drivers do more?—No; I think their work has been decreased.

35. *Mr. Levestam.*] The labour of the guards has been increased?—You may find guards working longer hours.

36. *Mr. White.*] How have you arrived at the conclusion that the men want shorter hours and more pay?—I gather that from the general tenor of the petition.

37. I understand they complain they do not get paid for the work they do?—I think they get paid for all they do. It is possible there might be cases when they do not get paid quite all.

38. If the labourers get an increase, should not the mechanics?—That is a general question I cannot reply to. I could not state my opinion as to what would be right if certain things happen.

39. If the mechanics and artisans are entitled to a rise, should they not get it independent of an increase being granted to the labourers on this petition being presented?—I cannot answer that question in general terms. It is only a matter of opinion.

40. What has this to do with the matter of the public complaining of the high rates; what has that to do with the rate of pay of the men; or do you consider the men should be underpaid to enable you to reduce grain freights?—I suppose it depends entirely on what the country means to do with its railways. I merely stated the facts for the information of the Committee. I think it is a very important point which should be stated to the Committee—any point involving expenditure. I express no opinion, but merely state these things for the information of the Committee.

41. Should not the wages question be considered by itself?—No; I do not think so.

42. When you make a reduction in freights, do you make a corresponding reduction in wages?—No; I do not do that. I do not propose to deal unjustly with the employes to make the railways pay.

43. Are not Stationmasters better paid than these men?—Not nearly so well paid as a body. Some drivers earn £250 a year. At 12s. a day a man gets £187 a year. That is more than the majority of Stationmasters get. The Stationmasters do not get paid overtime. No doubt the great body of the drivers and firemen are better paid than the great body of the Stationmasters.

44. In reference to guards, porters, signalmen, &c., is it not wrong that they should work any number of hours without overtime?—There are cases in which they work long hours. They should not be called on to work any number of hours. I think there are cases in which it will be better to have more men, than for a smaller number to work overtime; but to arrange and carry out that is a question of time.

45. Take Christchurch and Addington Stations, should they not have shorter hours?—Yes, possibly; but it will take time.

46. What do you think of these men as a body; do you think you could get a better lot in any of the colonies or at Home?—I think there is not a steadier and better class of men in New Zealand than our drivers and firemen.

47. Why should not the drivers and firemen be treated the same as those who work in the shops? I understand those in the locomotive department—that is, the drivers and firemen—are not paid overtime until after they have worked ten hours?—No; but they get a higher rate of pay, and ten hours' work on a locomotive is not considered equal to more than eight hours in the shops.