

*Mr. Hannay*: No, I only want to know what you would do.

*Mr. Owen*: Say Wellington is my home, and I run out to another station, the Hutt, and back home. I would meet that in this way: that, in nine cases out of ten, shunting is required for the engine, and you can keep that man on to do the shunting, and the other man who would be doing the shunting runs the night train. That is a fair division of labour.

*Mr. Hannay*: That is not quite an answer. Suppose a case where it was most convenient, where the only arrangement for the public convenience was, that the train should be run out in the morning, and that you are clear of your engine altogether for five hours. All I want to know is— and I am not trying to catch you in any way—if you intend that the man who does this work should be paid for that five hours?

*Mr. Owen*: It is rather an exceptional case, because, if a man is running in that way to a place where he can go home, and where there are several people to look after his engine, surely there is other work that the engine can be put to. I think my explanation in the first case would meet it, though it is a most exceptional case where a man can get clear of his engine and yet cannot, by manipulation of the work, be kept occupied.

*Mr. Maxwell*: There is no work for him to do.

*Mr. Owen*: He is looking after his engine.

*Mr. Maxwell*: Never mind the engine; we are looking after his engine when standing, and he is running three hours in the morning and three in the evening.

*Mr. McKerrow*: The real question is, would you pay him for the interval he is booked off?

*Mr. Owen*: And is at his own home?

*Mr. McKerrow*: Yes.

*Mr. Owen*: Well, that is a very difficult thing to get at, but it is hardly fair to ask a man to come on so much in the morning, and then send him home.

*Mr. McKerrow*: That is hardly the question. You have laid down a principle of eight hours a day whether the man is working or not, and we want to know how it is to be paid. Mr. Hannay has propounded to you a case which, in my own knowledge, occurs, in which a man does a little service in the morning,—three hours,—and there is no further work for him and the engine, and they are laid aside. Then he repeats the same run in the afternoon or evening and takes other three hours. He has worked six hours, but he has five hours' resting-time. The question is, will you reckon to his credit eleven hours?

*Mr. Owen*: I do not want to beg the question, but it is this way: I think if the department finds that they have to pay the man or reckon his hours overtime, they will very soon find something else for him to do.

*Mr. McKerrow*: But there are cases where we cannot find him work to do. We are keeping away from instances, of course, and talking on broad principles; but there are cases where we cannot find such work.

*Mr. Owen*: I can quite see the drift of your remarks, and, with due respect, it is trying to corner one.

*Mr. Hannay*: I wish to disclaim that entirely, and in fact such a case occurs. You have asked that certain hours shall be recognised. How would you pay the men? That is all. I do not say that your demand is right or wrong, but how would you pay him? That is all I want to know.

*Mr. McKerrow*: You would pay him for the intermittent time?

*Mr. Owen*: I think that all his time should be reckoned.

*Mr. Hoban*: You may book a man on for two hours and off for three, keeping him going in that way from daylight till dark. Our programme is that he should not be brought on duty again until he has been off eight hours. You ask these particular questions about exceptional cases. I do not know that there are many branches at all where a man is off six hours. In the main branches he is off three hours at the most. It must be a case in an outlying district you refer to, known to no one but the Commissioners.

*Mr. McKerrow*: But still a man is put there.

*Mr. Hoban*: If you affirm the broad principle that a man is to be kept at work, I think you can do it. The man is always responsible for his engine.

*Mr. Owen*: A man has an engine at an outside station, and his fireman gets up and lights the engine, raises steam, and so on, and they run down, say, three hours, and three hours back, and are off five hours in the middle of the day, during which time he is cleaning his engine, emptying coal-wagons, and filling coal into coal-bags, coaling and watering his engine, and shunting if required. This is a typical instance. Do you not think it is rather hard to ask that man to be booked off in the middle of the day?

*Mr. Hannay*: I tried to explain that I only wanted to know whether the man should be paid or not, and you have answered quite frankly that you expect that man to be paid. It is only that we should clearly understand.

*Mr. Owen*: You leave such a loophole for the foreman to do as he likes in a case of that sort.

*Mr. Hoban*: As a matter of fact, I understand the question to be this: Would we pay a man for the time he is booked off, and we say simply Yes; because, although this particular man may get five hours off, there are cases where a man has been booked off for half an hour. This leaves so much power in the hands of the foreman. Of course, we know a foreman tries to run as cheaply as possible, and gets credit for it if he succeeds. And if we were to recognise the principle that booked-off time is not to be paid for, there is no knowing where it would end.

*Mr. McKerrow*: The drift of our information has been this: that it will bring in great inequalities to do what you suggest. The run of 150 miles to Oamaru has been brought in, and it appears, from the turn the discussion has taken, that the driver on that run would be paid less than the man who does a short run of three hours in the mornings and evenings, but with five hours intervening. It certainly introduces an element of great inequality.