

places for them they are promoted; but they have never to leave the service. They enter the service with the knowledge that they will be promoted as opportunity serves. They have to wait until they get the work. They do not get a boy's pay for men's work.

*Mr. Haden*: What I wish to point out is this: It is hard to define what is boys' work.

*Mr. Maxwell*: You cannot.

*Mr. Haden*: Possibly you may by-and-by. All the clerks in the service are cadets.

*Mr. Maxwell*: I have been here for the last ten years, and it has not come about.

*Mr. Haden*: It is possible to do so. The tendency is that way.

*Mr. Maxwell*: It is not so.

*Mr. Haden*: How can you judge it?

*Mr. Maxwell*: Because we have only a sufficient number of cadets on.

*Mr. Haden*: There are any amount of them doing clerk's work. They are doing the work clerks formerly did.

*Mr. Maxwell*: No; we have gone on the same lines for eight or nine years. We ceased to take on adults. We preferred to train our men, and promote them. That system has gone on satisfactorily for years, and it is much better than before.

*Mr. Haden*: You say the reason you take on cadets is that you require them to take a man's place. Why not have a limitation to that number?

*Mr. Maxwell*: Because you cannot sit down here and say, "I will only take one to three." A lad is required here or there. The want is governed by the number of men raised to the higher grades. The proportion we have now is the proportion we usually have.

*Mr. Haden*: After a person has served as a cadet, say he shall be rated as a clerk, and have a yearly increase of salary.

*Mr. Hannay*: The work is very difficult to define.

*Mr. Haden*: I think the Commissioners might see their way to do it. If a man is not fit to receive a clerk's wages he is not fit to receive wages at all.

*Mr. Hannay*: Although there are a good many at £105, all taken on during the last three years will go up to £110.

*Mr. Haden*: I can quite understand that by-and-by the whole of the employés in the clerical department would be cadets, because it would pay to keep them as cadets.

*Mr. Maxwell*: No; I do not think so.

*Mr. McKerrow*: The business has been increasing, and their number has been greater.

*Mr. Haden*: But the proportion has been increasing.

*Mr. Maxwell*: I dare say if you go back some years you will find that the Government have taken on old men—adult men—most unfitted to be in the service at all; but we determined, years ago, to stop that, and to put on young men, and promote them. I do not think it would be reasonable to commence again putting on adult men in the service who are not fitted for the work over the heads of juniors who are more fitted than they.

*Mr. Haden*: You might keep clerks for ever at the same salary, and still call them cadets.

*Mr. McKerrow*: We might do that, but there is only one, as stated, at twenty-four. Twenty-one is about the limit. One came on later than usual—at nineteen. I think the matter is not worth this consideration. There is not a single case of adult labour being taken off to give place to a cadet.

*Mr. Haden*: But you have cadets doing work which has been done by clerks in days gone by.

*Mr. McKerrow*: Cadets should be promoted sooner—they should go on up to this stage.

*Mr. Haden*: If they keep going on they must go on to clerks.

*Mr. McKerrow*: We have a large number of applications. Several get up to £180. But they cannot get higher until the doors are open upstairs. They have a progressive system to go up to the top story. The service could not carry on without.

*Mr. Haden*: In the sixth year a cadet should receive a clerk's wages. He is no longer a cadet.

*Mr. Hannay*: What is a reasonable wage for a class of lads at that age?

*Mr. Winter*: I think you are hitting the nail on the head now.

*Mr. Maxwell*: A cadet has to wait until there is a vacancy. There is not the number you think waiting. When we want a lad we take one we think fit for the vacancy and put him in. We do not take on boys for the purpose of displacing men.

*Mr. McKerrow*: There are more lines every year. The lines are increasing, and more boys are required. There are about three hundred more employés now than a year ago.

*Mr. Winter*: You say that is not an excessive number: the clerks say it is an excessive number: we represent them, and we have come primed, as it were, with what they have told us. They say there is too great a number, and we want the number reduced. If you say there is not more than the proportion, you cannot have any hesitation in granting the request that the proportion shall not be greater in the future.

*Mr. McKerrow*: I have not the number at my fingers' ends. I do not think the number is greater than the proportion of one cadet to three clerks and a stationmaster.

*Mr. Hannay*: Oh, yes; I think there are more.

*Mr. Winter*: It was stated just now that when a cadet arrives at £105 a year he was occupying the position of a clerk—he was doing a clerk's work. "Very, well," says Mr. Maxwell, "that is what he is paid for;" but, on the other hand, you say that you are not going to let a clerk do cadet's work.

*Mr. Maxwell*: Not adult clerks' work. We are not going to employ men to do clerical work that a boy can do as well.

*Mr. Winter*: But you keep an individual on boy's pay to do a man's work. I say there should be some distinction. It is unsatisfactory. You should either restrict the proportion of cadets to