

The Executive Committee, so far from being averse to meeting the Commissioners openly and fairly for the purpose of discussing grievances, or sending a deputation to Wellington to do so, are only too anxious to bring about that result; but it objects to the condition that such deputation must consist purely of railway servants, inasmuch as compliance with such a condition would materially endanger the fair, fearless, and impartial investigation and discussion of the grievances under which all classes of railway servants are labouring at the present time, and it must certainly reserve the right to itself to send such deputation as may seem to it most advisable.

Will you kindly inform the Executive Council whether you are prepared to meet such a deputation?

I have, &c.,

W. J. EDWARDS, General Secretary, A.S.R.S.

No. 10.

The RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS to the AMALGAMATED SOCIETY of RAILWAY SERVANTS.

SIR,—

Wellington, 23rd May, 1890.

In reply to the inquiry in your letter of the 16th instant, received on the 21st instant, as to whether the Railway Commissioners are prepared to meet a deputation at Wellington from the society you represent, I am directed to say that the Commissioners are willing to do so. They will be obliged by your naming a date when it will be convenient for the deputation to attend.

The Commissioners would like it to be understood that this should not be held to imply that they withdraw their invitation to the railway employés to send delegates to Wellington from all parts of the colony at an early date.

I have, &c.,

E. G. PILCHER, Secretary.

No. 11.

The AMALGAMATED SOCIETY of RAILWAY SERVANTS to the RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS.

SIRS,—

Christchurch, 28th May, 1890.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Memorandum 1315, under date 23rd instant, which has been duly considered by the Executive.

In reply, I am instructed to inform you that a deputation from the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of New Zealand will be prepared to meet the Commissioners on the 16th June next, to consider the points at issue as set forth in the society's communication to you of the 27th March last, dealing with the questions of boy labour, apprentices, unskilled labour, cadets, hours of labour, and piecework.

With regard to the remarks in the latter part of your communication—viz.: "The Commissioners would like it to be understood that this should not be held to imply that they withdraw their invitation to the railway employés to send delegates to Wellington from all parts of the colony at an early date"—I beg respectfully to inform you that the employés have already decided upon the plan they intend to adopt to get their grievances brought before your notice, and seek to obtain reform; and the deputation from this society which will wait upon the Commissioners will be in strict keeping with the ruling of the employés.

I have, &c.,

W. J. EDWARDS, General Secretary, A.S.R.S.

No. 12.

The RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS to the AMALGAMATED SOCIETY of RAILWAY SERVANTS.

SIR,—

25th June, 1890.

In pursuance of the understanding arrived at during the recent conference with the representatives of your society, I am directed by the Railway Commissioners to recapitulate the decisions mutually agreed upon with reference to the proposals brought under notice in the letter from your General Secretary of 29th March last, namely,—

1. BOY-LABOUR.

Apprentices.—The number of apprentices to be regulated in accordance with the request of the Executive Committee.

Where the present apprentices in any specific shop exceed that number, no more are to be taken on for two years, and if still in excess after that term one apprentice may be taken on for every three who leave.

Unskilled Labour.—That not more than one youth shall be employed for every four men among platelayers and workshop labourers.

That not more than one youth shall be employed in the Traffic Department to every four men, exclusive of clerical staff.

It is agreed that no youths under twenty-one, unless they have had three years' service, shall be employed as shunters in large yards or at important junctions.

Cleaners.—The age at which cleaners may be taken on to be from eighteen to twenty-one years, the pay, as per scale, to rise 6d. per day each year until it reaches 7s. a day.

Cadets.—Cadets shall be taken on as required, and they are promoted to clerkships after six years' service if eligible and if not previously promoted.

2. HOURS OF LABOUR.

Eight hours' continuous work is to constitute a day's work, as at present. Intermittent services are to be treated as the case may require, the following modified rules being adopted;—