

30. The request is that the ninth grade be abolished and that you should go up automatically to the eighth?—Yes.

31. Has not the class of station that has been opened made an increase in the staff and caused a reduction in the average salary? Have you any idea of the number of cadets we had in 1907 and 1910?—Speaking from memory, I think there was a less number in 1910 than in 1907.

32. Well, if that is so there must be promotions going on?—We do not refer to promotions when speaking of scale increases.

33. You are giving evidence on behalf of the institute, and is it the idea of the institute that a Stationmaster commencing at grade 10 at a station like, say, Waiouru should sit on his stool and get an increase up to £260 without any working through?—No, £200 is the maximum pay for Waiouru. He could not go up to £260 because £200 is the barrier.

34. I understand you want the ninth grade abolished, and then he goes up automatically by increases from the tenth grade to the minimum of the eighth grade. You said we were not making positions. Do you think it the duty of the Department to make positions and use public money?—No, I do not think that. You admitted yourself that the last years have been bad ones for the Railway staff.

35. We have got to show later on what your request will mean from a financial point of view, and how it will affect the public, because they have to find the money?—Yes.

36. Do you anticipate, then, that, irrespective of what the Railway earns, your salaries have to go up automatically—in other words, do you think the salaries ought to increase according to the revenue of the Department irrespective of the amount of work done by the particular officer?—No, sir, I do not maintain that at all.

37. That is your line of argument?—No, you must have misunderstood me. I do not wish that impression to be conveyed at all, but I took out the comparison for this reason: that sometimes we hear it said that salaries have been increased so much and the expenditure on salaries is going up, and I took out the comparison with the idea of comparing it on a ratio basis with the expenditure to see if it was increasing on a percentage basis.

38. Does the institute intend to give any evidence or produce figures in regard to a similar class of work performed in Australia?—No, sir.

*Hon. Mr. Millar:* Well, I propose to put that in.

*Mr. Ramsay:* We will object to them.

39. *Hon. Mr. Millar:* You cannot object. (To witness): Do you consider an officer ought to get an increase irrespective of a recommendation or his ability?—No, certainly not. We are quite willing to abide by the recommendations of our District Officers. We have no fault to find with them, but have every confidence in the District Officers' recommendation, and, besides that, if they do not recommend us we have our remedy in the Appeal Board. That is my view of it. I am always quite willing to do the fair thing, and I think that is the desire of our institute. That is the line we are going on.

40. Then if that is the case your own petition says the contrary—"That the system of promotion in the Railway service is defective by reason of the fact that efficient officers have been superseded by junior officers without a satisfactory reason being given to the officers who have been superseded"?—That is clause 7.

41. *Mr. Ross:* It has been suggested by the Minister in his cross-examination of you that there is no examination prior to promotion in the Railway service as applies to the Post and Telegraph Department. Are you not aware that examinations are held as to the officer's knowledge of the rules and regulations and also in the working of the tablet and in regard to the time-table?—Yes, I quite see that officers in the Traffic Branch are examined in all those details, but not those in the Maintenance Branch.

42. And you also know that no promotion is given to an officer if he fails to pass the examination?—Yes, I understand that.

43. It was suggested by the Minister in his cross-examination of you that your evidence went in the direction of suggesting that the Department should create positions. I understood you to mean by your evidence that you wished the Department to retain those positions?—Yes.

44. And not to create them?—Not to create them unless the revenue or the work warrants it, but many of our positions have not been regraded since 1902.

45. What you are complaining of is that the positions are not retained?—Yes.

46. And that officers in a lower grade are appointed to perform the duties of officers in a higher grade at a lower salary?—Yes.

47. In the comparison you made you have given the amount of salary paid to the average Railway man prior to the passing of the Classification Act and subsequent to it, which shows a reduction of £6. Are you not aware that there has been a considerable increase in the salaries of cadets, and that that increase would fully compensate for the large number of lower-class stations of late years that have been opened consequent on new lines being opened up?—Yes.

48. *The Chairman:* In connection with examinations, you were asked if the Railway men had to pass examinations similar to those in the Postal Department, or as many as they have to pass, and I think your answer was No. Does a Stationmaster, for instance, pass the Postal examinations when he takes up the duties of Postmaster and Telegraphist for the Postal Department?—I understand he does; but, as I said before, we have got men here who have worked in those positions, who are thoroughly conversant with them and are willing to give evidence.

49. *Mr. Ramsay:* In regard to the question of examinations, I think representations were made by the executive of the Officers' Institute to the Head Office in Wellington?—Yes.

50. And the following letter was received in reply:—"No. 423.—Head Office, Wellington, 9th January, 1911.—Sir,—With reference to the representations made by the executive of the New Zealand Railway Officers' Institute regarding the classification and examination of cadets in general and practical work, I have the honour to inform you that I find on looking into the