

43. You say there are heavier responsibilities in those combined positions?—I say the Railway. I tried to point out to you that the Railway service carries heavier responsibilities and I have tried to make myself clear on that point.

44. Well, we will take positions such as combined Post officers and Stationmasters. Do you know any places where the same postal duties are done by women for £80 a year?—No.

45. Well, there are eighty in the Queensland service?—No, I do not know that.

46. Do you know anything about the salaries paid to Stationmasters in Australia?—No. I do not think it is a fair question, because of the cost of living in one country as compared with the other.

47. Do you imagine that the cost of living is cheaper in Australia than in New Zealand?—Yes, I have been informed that it is so in certain things.

48. What does the Railway Stationmaster pay for rental?—I pay 8s. a week.

49. What accommodation have you got for that?—I have six rooms.

50. Is it a good house?—A fairly good house, but I might mention that my clerk went into a new house not owned by the Department and paid only 7s.

51. But the better accommodation you referred to, are those the houses that were built when the post-offices were built?—I could not say when they were built, but in a lot of cases they have hot and cold water supplied. I do not know of one Stationmaster's house that has that. It may be the case at the Bluff, but it is not as a general rule.

52. Can you tell me of any recent house built by the Railway Department which had hot and cold water—even for platelayers?—No. I have not had experience of that, but I have been in four houses, and when I went into some of them they did not even have tubs to do the washing in, in the washhouse, nor a bath-room.

53. How many years ago is that?—Four years ago.

54. Has there been an improvement?—Yes, after considerable correspondence. It may be that the men did not represent the matter to the Department; but then the Department had inspecting officers who inspected these dwellingplaces, and I take it their duty was to supply improved accommodation.

55. What you asked for was granted?—No, not all. One of the houses had a bath planted in the back bedroom. I wanted the increased accommodation, and I applied to have a bathroom, and the reply was that there was not sufficient money to put a bathroom up. I then said we should have to have the bath out, and that it was not healthy to have two or three people sleeping in the one room, and they took away part of the coal-house and put in the bath there. That is how they got over the difficulty.

56. Do you know of any Railway Stationmaster who pays more than a day's wages for his rent?—No, I could not say that. I cannot go into other cases but my own.

57. You yourself do not pay more than a day's wages for rent?—No.

58. So that the Department finds you accommodation plus the salary you are receiving at the present time?—No, I have to pay 8s. a week. I am paid a salary of £220, and 8s. is deducted. When we get increased house accommodation more is deducted. If a man went from a £180 class station to a £190 station he is actually only getting a few shillings a month increase, owing to the increased cost of the house.

59. Do you know why that alteration?—I do not know.

60. Was it not at the request of the Officers' Institute, so that it may be counted in the superannuation?—I could not say. I am not conversant with the records. If any of those matters want verifying the records will show.

61. You are speaking now as a member of the institute?—Yes.

62. Has your institute gone into the question as to how the Superannuation Fund is going to be affected by your proposals or requests?—I presume they have, but as far as I am concerned I have not gone into it personally.

63. Then you cannot speak on the question?—No. I have taken a certain part of the case to be put before the Committee, and I have dealt with that. I have not worked out every detail, as you are aware, and I have not the time to do it.

64. You said that my statement in regard to scale increases was not correct?—I said I thought it was incorrect.

65. Can you show any proof that it was incorrect?—I am leaving it to the Committee to ask for proof. I have heard it said by men who ought to know that it was otherwise.

66. The Committee are aware of the proof as members of the House at the time I made the statement that no members of the Civil Service in unclassified Departments received scale increases?—Yes, that may be.

67. You spoke about the hours the men work at Waiouru. Do you prefer the New South Wales system of working where they have two men dividing up the time?—I have already told you that I do not know anything about that system. I cannot answer the question.

68. Irrespective of New South Wales altogether, you prefer the Stationmaster to remain on duty for twelve hours?—No, certainly not.

69. You prefer the present system?—Certainly. As far as I am personally concerned, the system of hours worked by each man is quite satisfactory, but then I maintain that the irregular hours such as we have to contend with is not conducive to the health, and causes extra anxiety and extra work not only to the man himself, but to his whole family if he is a married man.

70. And still you object to regular hours taking the place of the present system?—I do not object to regular hours.

71. Would you prefer the system of regular hours or the principle of throwing the time of the heaviest traffic on the line on the man who comes on afterwards?—No, each man should have equal hours.

72. Well, is not that a system of equal hours, twelve hours for the Stationmaster and twelve hours for the porter?—It seems that we do not understand each other in regard to the question.