

73. What you complained of was irregularity of hours?—I said in making comparisons we had to put up with irregular hours, whereas in the case of the men we were quoting they had not those irregular hours to contend with that we had in country stations.

74. And I asked you in reply to that whether you would prefer a system being instituted whereby there would be regular hours?—If it was possible to have regular hours and the status the same as the officers in the Post Offices have—forty-eight hours a week—then I say Yes.

75. But leave the Postal Department out altogether?—We cannot.

76. Well, if you are going to make comparisons with the Postal service I am going to make comparisons with other railway systems in the world. How many trains do you handle in a day at Woodlands?—There are twelve trains a day, I suppose. Of course, we handle a great many special trains, and on Saturdays we have additional hours; but I am not complaining of my hours—I am quite satisfied as to that.

77. What revenue do you get at the Woodlands Station?—I could turn that up.

78. Have you no knowledge of it?—I have not the exact knowledge.

79. Do you not send in returns?—Yes, but I could not mention the amount right off or attempt to average it.

80. *Mr. J. V. Brown.*] Have you no knowledge what the monthly returns are from memory?—About £500 or £600 for the Railway and £300 for the Post Office per month.

81. You are in a combined station?—Yes.

82. In regard to the ten trains that you say run through in a day, do they travel mostly during the day, or are there many of them at night?—One gets in about 5 o'clock in the morning, and the late express runs past about 9.10 at night. Of course, the tablet keeps us on till 9.35 and putting out signals; and then on Saturdays we have a train leaving at 10.40 which keeps us on till 11 p.m.

83. Do the Post Office men obtain better accommodation than the Railway men?—Yes as a rule.

84. For instance, you do not know about Takapau, but others?—Yes, Winton.

85. You have a six-roomed house, and you pay 8s. per week?—Yes.

86. What would the Postal official pay when he gets his salary?—The Postal man pays somewhere about £18 a year, so I am given to understand, while the Railway man pays something like £23.

87. And what is the similarity in the houses?—I have not been in the Winton Post Office house, but I am informed it is an up-to-date and better house.

88. What is the number of rooms?—I do not know. We did not go into the question of the number of rooms. Had we thought that matter would have been gone into we should have got the information.

89. A house built now for either Post Office official or a Railway official would be more up-to-date?—That is so.

90. But what we want to know is whether the Post Office men are dealt with more liberally than the Railway men?—I understand so. They have a better sliding rent scale from £220 to £260.

91. Your evidence would tend to show that the Railway officials were not treated so well when the combined office was divided?—Yes.

92. *Mr. Ross.*] Speaking of the amount of rent you are called upon to pay the Department, it was suggested that the rent was particularly low; but that would not justify the Department in paying you a lower rate of salary than is paid to the Postal officers. What would be the average rent paid for houses in Woodlands similar to the house occupied by you for which you pay 8s. How much would you require to pay if that house were owned by a private person instead of by the Railway Department?—Well, the only instance I know of was the one I quoted, where my clerk got a house for 7s. a week. He had to leave the house because it was sold; but it was an absolutely new house, and I believe he had every accommodation.

93. In other words, your clerk was able to get a house equally as good as you had for which you paid 8s. a week, while your clerk paid 7s.?—Yes. I have also known a case where I could get a better house for the same rent at Kirvee.

94. I presume that you as a member of the institute would be prepared to go into this question of comparison between the salaries paid to Railway officers in this country and Railway officers in other countries if allowed to consider all the matters connected with the running of the railways in those countries. What you object to is merely a bald statement being put before the Committee of the details of the salaries paid to officers in this country as compared with the salaries paid to officers in other countries without a full explanation being afforded to go into the details?—That is so.

95. *Mr. Hine.*] When combined offices are separated and officers appointed by each Department is the salary of the Stationmaster reduced?—Well, in the case of Wyndham the man was transferred and another officer took his place. He would have gone up to £180 at Wyndham, and the Post Office man went in at £245.

96. Do I understand from that that the Stationmaster was reduced?—No; the position was reduced, but not the man.

97. *Mr. Arnold.*] In regard to the income from your station, I suppose it frequently happens that a train runs up and you have very few outgoing passengers by it?—Yes. Frequently on Saturday nights the train may have no passengers. The train is put on to bring the people back from town.

98. So that the income of the station is not a true indication?—No. Take Waipahi, for instance—the junction. There they are dealing with a large number of wagons and all the branch traffic and main road traffic and adjusting loads on trains, and the income there is no true indication of that station. We have no objection to the Department cutting down Kingston and