

16. And in your evidence you stated that time-tables were submitted to Traffic Inspectors for report as to how the time-table would affect the public and the service?—Yes, they report on the time-tables in connection with the various events as to how they have worked, and make suggestions if there is room for improvement.

17. In your experience have you known the management to materially alter their time-table as a result of recommendations made by Traffic Inspectors?—Yes, they have on occasions.

18. I presume you only speak for your own section?—Yes, from my experience only.

19. You do not know whether there is a general rule of the Department that time-tables are submitted or should be submitted to Traffic Inspectors for a comprehensive report before those time-tables are adopted by the Department?—There is no general rule on that question.

20. Do you know if time-tables are submitted to Stationmasters for an expression of opinion beyond an expression of opinion as to how the working of their own station will be affected by the new time-table?—They do as regards their own station.

21. But in no other respect?—No, they are not called upon to report in other directions.

22. Stationmasters are not called upon to say how the time-tables will affect the public or the traffic?—They are not asked, but they could report if they wished.

23. From your lengthy experience as a Railway officer, do you think the average Stationmaster would in reporting go beyond the questions put to him in connection with time-tables?—No, the average Stationmaster would not.

24. You are of opinion that he would not consider it advisable to do so?—Some of them would not.

25. *Mr. McVilly.*] Mr. Ennis, touching this question of special time-tables which you made reference to, is it not a fact that every Traffic Manager has a staff of trained experts to do all the detail work in connection with those time-tables?—Yes, that is so.

26. The Traffic Manager has a staff of trained experts attached to his office?—Yes, to work up the time-table that he decides on.

27. Then the Traffic Manager's function on the railways, in so far as the time-table is concerned, comes down to one of deciding on the details put before him?—Oh, no; the Manager frequently checks the time-tables to see they are correctly made up.

28. How many Managers check the time-tables?—I have known them to do it frequently.

29. What is the instruction in regard to time-tables?—I could not quote the instruction as regards Traffic Managers, but the majority of Managers look upon themselves as responsible for the time-table.

30. Does not the instruction require the Traffic Clerk and another train-running officer to plot the services on a diagram and certify that they have done so?—That is so.

31. Then it does not necessarily require the Traffic Manager?—Well, that must be a matter of opinion. If there was a serious error in the time-table that missed those two men, I doubt if the Traffic Manager would not be responsible.

32. If the two train-running men certify to the time-table being correct, how, in face of the instruction, would the Traffic Managers be held responsible?—Their names are at the bottom of the time-table, and I think they must accept the responsibility for it. I might add that some years ago a Traffic Manager was reduced for a mistake in a time-table.

33. Who was that?—Mr. Gastin.

34. Well, at that particular time was the instruction in force that is now in operation?—I could not say without turning up the books. I could not give the year he was reduced.

35. If I say it was not in force, will you accept that?—I would not contradict it.

36. Is it not a fact that the reason that particular officer was reduced was that he had not carried out the instructions that were in force at that particular time?—Well, I could not say as to that.

37. Well, if I say again that it was so will you contradict me?—No.

38. Now, you stated that the Traffic Managers at Dunedin and Wellington carry out the same duties that their predecessors did. Will you tell the Committee the frequency with which the present District Traffic Manager, Wellington, has visited the other sections of the North Island in performing the duties which were carried out by his predecessor?—No, I certainly could not do so.

39. Well, again, if I say that the Traffic Manager at Wellington has only been off his section once—

*Mr. Hine:* I object, Mr. Chairman, to evidence being got out in this manner. I hold that evidence should not be put on record during cross-examination which the witness cannot deny or affirm. I hold that it is altogether wrong that a person should combine cross-examination and evidence in one effort.

*Hon. Mr. Millar:* I maintain that in cross-examination a person has a right to ask a witness whether he will deny a certain statement, and the witness can say Yes or No. It is a perfectly fair line of cross-examination, and is accepted in other places.

*Mr. Arnold:* The Department, I presume, afterwards will call evidence to contradict the present evidence which is being given if they can do so, and Mr. McVilly in all probability will be that witness or one of them, so we will be asked to hear Mr. McVilly twice.

*The Chairman:* I think those points can be brought out by Mr. McVilly when he is making his statement.

40. *Mr. McVilly (to witness).*] You made a statement to the effect that the Traffic Clerks had been on duty twenty-four hours at a stretch. Will you quote instances?—Yes, one instance is the accident on the Kingston line some time ago. The train ran into a bullock on the line and was derailed, and the Traffic Clerk was on duty all night.

41. What were the circumstances which necessitated his being on duty all night?—They were clearing the road, and it was doubtful whether the road would be cleared in the morning for the first train.