

be hardly any use our going on; but if the Committee is to be controlled by you, Mr. Chairman, then it may be as well for us to remain and go on with the inquiry. I certainly object to any member of the institute, when speaking to a witness, being treated in that manner by Mr. McVilly.

*Mr. Arnold:* I also desire to protest, Mr. Chairman, against the manner in which Mr. McVilly is conducting the cross-examination. We are not in a police-court, and Mr. McVilly is not in charge of this Committee. I do not know who Mr. McVilly is—he may be running the Railways, or he may be running the Minister, but he is not going to run this Committee.

*Hon. Mr. Millar:* I object to any witness in this room tampering with another witness who is giving evidence.

*The Chairman:* I think the point is: that Mr. McVilly spoke to Mr. Graham instead of drawing the Chairman's attention to what he considered was an irregularity.

*Mr. Arnold:* And in a most ungentlemanly manner.

*Hon. Mr. Millar:* I will raise the point whenever I see any witness talking to another witness when under cross-examination.

*Mr. Ross:* I do not know whether it is absolutely necessary for us to prevent those gentlemen who are here assisting a witness who is giving evidence. We were here for the purpose of eliciting the whole of the evidence they are prepared to give, and we are here for the purpose of gaining all the information we can.

*Mr. Graham:* I did not know I was committing a breach of privilege, Mr. Chairman, but if I was the offender I wish to apologize; but I should like to say that when any one is giving evidence or the Minister is asking questions Mr. McVilly has had the right to speak to him all the time.

*Hon. Mr. Millar:* The General Manager and the Minister are practically on their trial before this Committee. The charges are made directly in the petition, and I claim the right to consult those men who are charged in this petition.

*The Chairman:* If there is going to be a consultation amongst the members of the Railway Department there may also be a consultation and suggestions amongst the officers representing the Railway Officers' Institute, and Mr. Graham may suggest to this witness, if he thinks fit, any answers that he cares to. You have the same right, Mr. Millar. The Committee wants as much information as possible—that is what we are here for, and if any point can be brought out which will assist towards that end, then it should be mentioned.

73. *Mr. McVilly.*] I should like to say this: that if I transgressed the rules of the Committee it was quite unwittingly done and through ignorance of Committee procedure. I must apologize for having unwittingly spoken to Mr. Graham direct instead of through you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Graham will accept my personal assurance that I did it without any feeling, but simply because it appeared to me to be wrong, judging from my past experience, for a witness to be prompted while under examination. (To witness): Seeing that the minimum there is £200, do you not think you should have it at the £200 in the Railways?—The minimum for the Railway is £200.

74. Do you not think you should take in the £200 for the Railway with the Post Office?—No, because the Postal man goes to £220. He stops a few years at £200.

75. It is the sixth grade I am talking about, and the minimum is £200. Grade 10 of the Railway is £200, and do you not think that, as you are comparing the £200 minimum in the Postal, that you should begin there with the Railway?—No, I do not think so, seeing that the Postal man eventually reaches £220.

76. Has your attention ever been directed to the unfair comparisons this Schedule B is?—No, it has not.

77. You read an extract this morning from *Hansard*?—Yes.

78. What *Hansard*?—No. 40, session 1907.

79. How long has this *Hansard* been in your possession, may I ask?—Since last night, I think.

80. Have you had it long enough to read it?—Yes, I read it this morning.

81. You read part of it this morning. What I am coming to is this, Mr. Chairman: that in this same discussion on the Railway classification, 1907, Sir Joseph Ward in the House directed attention to the unfair method that had been adopted in presenting this very same schedule before the House at that very time. "However, I can get the portion put in evidence later when I am making a statement to the Committee. (To witness:) Well, you spoke about the Traffic Inspectors' duties, Mr. Ennis, and incidentally you stated that it would be better, you thought, if you were relieved of inquisitorial inquiries?—I was asked if it would conduce to the better carrying-out of the other duties.

82. What are the inquisitorial inquiries that you refer to?—Frequent irregularities among the staff.

83. Is it not part of your duty to do that?—Certainly.

84. What particular reason have you got for suggesting that you should be relieved?—I did not suggest that I should. I was asked if I could perform the other duties better if those were taken away.

85. How much time is taken up in reference to staff irregularities?—Various at times. I may put in several days over one inquiry, and again I may not have one for a week.

86. Do not your duties in the ordinary course take you about your district a good deal?—Yes.

87. Then have you not exceptional facilities for making those inquiries?—That is so. I have never objected to making inquiries.

88. No, I am not suggesting that. When you were reading *Hansard* you did not read the whole of Sir Joseph Ward's speech?—No, certainly not.

89. *Hon. Mr. Millar.*] I think you were a member of the deputation which waited on me from the Officers' Institute last year?—No, I am not a member of the executive.

90. It was a brother of yours, then?—Yes.