

15. We have no evidence that the men actually travel those distances?—My experience is that the men apply for passes over the whole of those distances. Those cases are not exaggerated—they are only a few typical journeys. 150 miles is Wellington to Wanganui, 200 to Napier, 230 Christchurch to Dunedin, 251 Wellington to New Plymouth, 369 Christchurch to Invercargill, 426 Wellington to Auckland, and 428 Wellington to Rotorua. Now, on the point of privilege tickets, a railway employee can get a privilege ticket for himself and his wife once a week. Taking a line over same distances for one adult and two adults, it works out: 150 miles—one adult, 9s. 5d.; two adults, 18s. 10d. 200 miles—one adult, 12s. 7d.; two adults, £1 5s. 1d. 230 miles—one adult, 14s. 5d.; two adults, £1 8s. 10d. 251 miles—one adult, 15s. 9d.; two adults, £1 11s. 6d. 369 miles—one adult, £1 3s. 2d.; two adults, £2 6s. 4d. 426 miles—one adult, £1 6s. 11d.; two adults, £2 13s. 10d. Those are return fares, at one-fourth of the rates paid by the public.

15A. *Mr. Witty.*] The time would not allow a man to use the full distance in one day?—But a man may get a privilege ticket and go off on leave when he cannot get his pass. If a man is away sick he travels on a privilege ticket. His wife also gets them.

16. *Mr. Buick.*] Privilege tickets are practically at half prices?—Quarter. The Department will be told that this is not worth anything. Very well, the actual cash value saved by the railway staff in respect of privilege tickets is £25,000 a year.

17. *Mr. Ross.*] By the officers?—I am talking about the staff. The officers save a considerable amount.

18. We are dealing with the First Division?—The First Division participates in those privilege tickets, and I am entitled to take a line through those and say the First Division make a considerable saving.

19. *The Chairman.*] Is that the saving on actual tickets?—Yes. Our staff actually pay the Department, according to the figures about eighteen month ago, in round figures, £8,000 for privilege tickets, and they actually make in round figures a saving of £25,000. It would be more if the figures were taken out to-day. Then we have been told, sir, that they want the Postal classification. I take it they want the same thing as the Postal officers. Well, I should like to ask the members of the institute whether they are prepared to bind the Railway servants down to pay the same rate for superannuation as the Postal and other Civil servants pay? I want to know whether the members of the Railway service realize the benefit they are getting by way of reduced superannuation rates. It will probably surprise members of the Committee to know that the Railway men are paying £20,275 per annum less for superannuation than is paid by a similar number of officers in the Postal Department and Civil Service.

20. *Mr. Hine.*] Which is sound and which is not sound?—I am not discussing that at present. Then, sir, when a member of the Railway service retires on superannuation he gets a free pass for the period of leave that he is granted on his retirement. Sometimes it is one month, sometimes three months. Members of other Departments do not get that privilege. We have already issued passes of that nature to the value of about £4,900. In addition there are uniforms, which amount to £1,577 for the First Division. Well, taking a line through the whole service, the benefits that the Railway men derive from free passes, privilege tickets, and in other ways run out roughly to 8d. per day per man for the whole service. That is about £10 per man per annum. I think that is a fairly considerable sum, taking the aggregate. I want now, sir, to point out the position in respect to Maintenance Clerks. Where in 1897 some were getting £250, they are now getting £355. Some who were getting £220 are now getting £355, others who were getting £160 are now getting £300. Where the position was £180 it is now £300; where it was £150 it is now £255; and where it was £140 it is now £255. The last position was held by a man who was reduced. He was getting £300 when he went out of the service. Now, sir, on Friday when Mr. Young was giving his evidence he spoke about the railways of the world. I do not know whether I would be in order in making a statement as to the rates of pay ruling on some of the foreign railways.

21. *The Chairman.*] I would point out that while making that statement I do not know whether you have attached sufficient importance to the fact that members of the Committee may not take it into consideration owing to the fact that you will not be able to give us the conditions existing in those countries?—So far as I am personally concerned I am not particular whether I put the statement in or not.

The Chairman.: I do not rule it out.

Mr. Buick.: It is my opinion that the conditions are altogether different.

The Chairman.: My own opinion is that the information will not be of very much help to the Committee. It is a question for Mr. McVilly.

Mr. Ross.: It is only fair that the Department should have every opportunity of bringing everything out.

The Chairman.: Unless the conditions of living are placed before us it will not be of much use.

Witness.: My object in getting it out was that I thought possibly the question might be asked, and I got the information ready. I will take the Hungarian railways. First-class Stationmasters get £75 to £133 6s. 8d. They have to wait three years between each increment. The increments vary from £4 3s. 4d. for the first two to £8 6s. 8d. for the subsequent. It takes twenty-five years in the class to get the maximum; the intervals are three of three years and four of four years.* Second-class Stationmasters get from £50 to £83 6s. 8d. They have to wait two years each for the first two increments, then one of three years, then two of four, and fifteen years in the grade to attain his maximum after his appointment. In the Austrian State Railways, first-class Stationmasters receive from £50 to £108. They are twenty-four years in the first grade before they get the maximum. Second-grade Stationmasters, £37 to £75; thirty-two years in the grade below before they get the maximum. Then, in the German railways the pay of first-class Stationmasters is £100 to £175; they are fifteen years in the grade, and get five triennial incre-

* See Exhibit No. 2.