

The Department looked into that, and as a result a second recommendation was made: "As already reported, the position can only be really satisfactorily and efficiently filled by a man with wider experience and other qualifications than are possessed by Mr. — or any other officer at present in the service. Mr. — has carried out his duties energetically and carefully." As a result of that letter and a personal explanation the man got the appointment. Then, after he had had it for a while, he found that the position was one that he could not satisfactorily fill, and he had to ask to be relieved, and he was relieved. "21st July, 1907.—Mr. — has sent me the attached memorandum of application for promotion. His present rate of pay—£250 a year—is unquestionably too low for an officer occupying the position he does. Mr. — is painstaking and trustworthy, and as the work has considerably increased in his office, and his present salary is insufficient, I recommend that he be promoted to the sixth grade at a salary of £260 a year." That is within three months of the date when the man had to ask to be relieved of his position. The head of the Department was never told that the man was not qualified. You have to hunt for all those things. Now we come to another case. This is a case that occurred in 1907. It refers to the Second Division, and it shows the trouble the head of the Department goes to to see the fair thing done. "If the only reason for withholding the recommendation for —'s promotion to Leading Hand in 1907 is as stated—viz., that 'his experience has been too limited to qualify him for promotion'—please state the grounds upon which you recommended him for promotion in 1901, seeing that he was then more inexperienced than now. Also state how you reconcile your memo. of 4th September, 1907, with your previous communications wherein you have made the following statements with respect to —: July 10, 1906: Leading Boilermaker—only two men suitable to act are — and —. July 11, 1906: Apart from case (for which he had been punished) he is a good tradesman and intelligent. August 4, 1906: It was on account of past irregularity, for which he was fined, that he was not recommended. February, 1907: You asked if — could be allowed to act as Leading Boilermaker *vice* —, and this was approved. — acted as Leading Boilermaker for about eighteen days, and you should now state whether he gave satisfaction. You were distinctly instructed on 10th August, 1906, that the fact that — having been fined in 1904 was not to debar him from promotion, and the reason now advanced shows either that the recommendations made prior to 1904 were made without due consideration or that the recommendation of 1907 is not capable of justification."

THURSDAY, 28TH SEPTEMBER, 1911.

RICHARD WILLIAM MCVILLY, examination continued. (No. 16.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Yesterday we were at clause 7, and you were giving evidence on behalf of the Department?—Yes. I was discussing, I think, the question of promotions. I propose now to read another instance of the failure of officers to carry out their duty in the matter of making proper recommendations to the Head Office respecting members of the staff. "28th May, 1908.—On your H/72 of the 21st May you recommended Mr. —, Stationmaster at —, for scale increase from £235 to £250 per annum, notwithstanding the fact that on the 19th May you found it necessary to make a special report in which you state that Mr. — is not competent to satisfactorily fill the position of —. In view of the conflicting recommendations made by you within two days of each other, I shall be glad to have your further remarks setting out the correct position. If Mr. — is not capable of carrying out the work of — Station, then it is evident that he is not fit to remain in grade 7. Any officer who is in a particular grade must be competent to fill any position in that grade. If he is not, of course he must be reduced. Recommendations for scale increases following an adverse report are valueless for the purpose of this office, and place the Department in an invidious position when dealing with the member concerned. If you are now of opinion after reflection that Mr. — can satisfactorily carry out the duties of —, then you should modify, or altogether withdraw your report of the 19th instant. If, on the other hand, you are quite satisfied that your report of the 19th May sets out the true position, then the recommendation for scale increase must be withdrawn and an amended H/72 substituted." "11th April, 1908.—District Traffic Manager,—The remarks regarding Mr. —'s record since being in charge of the booking office are not at all consistent with the certificates given on H/6's for scale increases. These have been regularly recommended, and the usual certificate of capability and efficiency given. If Mr. — had not profited by the warning given by Head Office in July, 1906, the increase for 1907 should not have been recommended. The circumstances do not warrant his reduction at present, but he is to be distinctly advised that his efforts do not commend themselves to the Department, and unless an improvement takes place and is maintained his increase will be withheld and reduction will inevitably follow." In July, 1908, the Department had the same officers before them. "District Traffic Manager,—The irregularities disclosed by the recent audit inspection of — Station indicate clearly that the Stationmaster has entirely ignored his responsibility for the proper conduct of the work generally, and failed utterly in the matter of supervision. Even when the series of short payments aggregating a large sum was brought under his notice by the Booking Clerk he failed to realize the position of affairs, and dismissed the matter from his mind in the most casual manner, and when he found by a chance inquiry a few days later that the matter had not been adjusted he allowed it to remain unsettled instead of at once personally investigating and adjusting it. Mr. —'s inaction in this matter, and his general want of supervision as again disclosed, are the more reprehensible in view of the fact that he was clearly and specifically warned as the result of irregularities reported on a previous audit inspection. It is evident from the adverse reports