

records of the Department will prove in thousands of cases, that when a man gets to the top of his grade he does not necessarily remain there but goes through to the next grade—that is, if the Department considers the position is worth it. Those men who you have been discussing are men who have been promoted from the positions of gangers.

13. No, I am not discussing those. I am discussing the men who have been in the positions of Inspectors of Permanent-way for seven years and have been at the maximum of the grade and have worked right through the grade?—Those men all came from the ranks of gangers. How does his district compare with his predecessor?

14. In the case of the Inspectors of Permanent-way, the districts have increased if anything?—Have you got your facts? I have already stated, Mr. Chairman, what the position is, and if Mr. Dennehey is to be allowed to introduce matters foreign to the subject such as superannuation, the average life and the chances of a man living to one hundred and retaining his position, I will have to discuss some other proposition. I have given answers to Mr. Dennehey which he knows to be absolute facts. Every officer of the Department knows that the men go through from time to time as circumstances warrant.

15. In the cases I referred to vacancies have occurred. In your evidence yesterday you stated that the Senior Traffic Managers at Dunedin and Wellington were not performing the same duties as their predecessors who were designated Traffic Superintendents?—Yes, I said they were not performing exactly the same duties as their predecessors.

16. Are you aware that a circular was printed and issued by Mr. Arthur stating that Mr. Whitcombe had been appointed to the position of District Traffic Manager in succession to him to take charge of the district and perform the duties carried out by him?—I am not responsible for what Mr. Arthur did: he must take the responsibility of his own circulars. He had no authorization from the head of the Department to issue that circular.

17. But the fact remains that the duties have been the same?—They have not been the same.

18. In what respect do the duties differ now?—I cannot say straight off, I could turn up the instructions, but I cannot carry them all in my head.

19. Now, concerning the Stationmaster at the Bluff, that position which is now filled by a seventh-grade officer was formerly occupied by a sixth-grade officer. What was the reason of the reduction?—The reason was that the man who is there at the present time was considered to be the best man for the position. He was the senior man at £255 and was promoted to the £260-£300 grade. He may work up the same as his predecessor. His predecessor went there at £260.

20. Why was not an officer taken from the seventh-grade to fill the position?—Simply because this man was considered to be the most suited for the position.

21. Then the position has been reduced?—It has not been reduced.

22. The evidence points that way?—Well, I think I have already told you that this officer is working through his grade the same as his predecessor did.

23. Then will you guarantee that he will work through?—I am not here to give any guarantees on behalf of the Department, but I am here to deal with facts. I am not the General Manager.

24. Do the facts not prove that the position has been reduced?—The fact does not prove anything of the kind.

25. Your evidence is to that effect?—It is not. My evidence is to the effect that a man is a junior who has to work through to the top position the same as his predecessor did, and he was first in order and considered to be the best man for the position at the time it was vacant.

26. Now in regard to the Locomotive Foreman at Auckland: is it not a fact that this position had been occupied by an officer in the £300 grade previous to the appointment of the present man?—Yes, it is a fact that the man in Auckland previous to the present man had more money.

27. Why was the man kept at that position for three years?—We know at the present time he is at the top of his grade, and in due course he will go up. The officer knows that as well as I do.

28. Seeing that he is performing the work of an officer in the £300 grade and is fit for the position, do you consider it is fair to keep him at £255 when his predecessor got £300?—I stated yesterday that the positions were not graded. The institute has always opposed grading the positions because they were afraid that would lead to less men being promoted, and I do not consider any injustice or hardship is being done to this officer by the way the Department is treating him.

29. You do not think there is any injustice in the Department singling him out for a position at £255 in which his predecessor got £300?—No. What about other similar positions that have gone up?

30. Coming to Schedule A again, I propose to take each position down the grade and announce it, and in connection therewith I should like to ask this question regarding each officer: has that officer a chance of reaching his predecessor's salary while graded as at present?—I have given the answer to that. I have stated that every officer in a lower position will ultimately reach the position of his predecessor if he is in the service and the Department considers the position worth it and the man goes through his grade. I will take those positions seriatim. District Traffic Superintendents: there are none now. District Traffic Managers, Wanganui and Invercargill: I stated the position in regard to those yesterday. Traffic Clerk, Christchurch: you show this officer at a salary of £300 to-day based on the D.-3, 1910, and D.-3, 1910, shows him at £355. He was not transferred from Christchurch till the 17th May, 1911. Yet you stated yesterday that your Schedule and figures were all worked out on the D.-3 for 1910. In regard to the Stationmaster at the Bluff, I have already explained the position. With reference to the Chief Clerk to District Engineer, Wanganui, I have already stated that the gentleman who previously occupied that position was a man who years ago held a very high position in the service. He was subsequently reduced, but ultimately worked up to £300 per annum, the same as the man there now ultimately will do. As to the Chief Clerk, Traffic Branch, Napier, the same position applies.