

51. Although the Act distinctly lays down that it should be only by annual increments?—That is so.

52. *Mr. Ross.*] Referring to clause 6, which is under discussion, if you read that you will find it says, "In many instances, requiring officers in a lower grade to perform the duties and accept the responsibilities of officers in a higher grade at a lower rate of remuneration than that payable in the higher grade. Consequently, efficient officers of long and faithful service are deprived by the Department of the promotion to which they are rightly entitled." That is the statement made by the officers, and do I understand from your replies that you admit that the exigencies of the Department in many instances which you have quoted require the officers in a lower grade to perform those duties at higher-grade stations without obtaining the amount of money or salary that was previously paid at that station?—No. If you take that statement and bring it down to a logical conclusion you come to this, that the claim of the institute is that every man should, immediately he is put into the position, receive exactly the same pay as his predecessor got.

53. I am not making that statement at all?—I am answering the question you have put.

54. No, I think not. The question I put was whether it is true?—If you ask me if I admit that I say No, I do not admit it.

55. You deny that in many instances officers in a lower grade are, through the exigencies of the Department, called upon to perform the duties of a higher grade and accept the responsibilities and not receive the salaries that previously were paid for those positions?—I have already stated that any officer who is in a lower grade than that occupied by his predecessor is working up to that position.

56. I am not asking you that—I am asking you whether it is true or not?—I am not going to give a general answer unless I am able to explain the position fully, which I claim I am entitled to do.

57. If you will give a direct answer I do not care how long you take to explain it?—I have already given a direct answer. If you deny my right to explain I do not give any more answer than I have given.

58. Well, I will put this question again, and if I cannot get a reply it is very little use going on. I am asking you this question: whether in many instances officers in a lower grade are now called upon to perform duties and accept responsibilities of officers in a higher grade at a lower rate of remuneration than that payable to the officer in the higher grade who previously held that position?—State your instances.

59. I am asking you?—Well, I am not going to reply to a general question except in a general way. And in a general way I will say No, it is not so.

60. *Mr. Arnold.*] Which is practically an admission that it is so in exceptional cases?—If the cases are stated I am prepared to say.

61. *Mr. Ross.*] Mr. Chairman, I am asking for a direct answer yes or no.

*The Chairman:* I understood that the answer given was "No." If you have a particular instance and ask a particular question you will get a direct answer. Mr. McVilly has answered "No."

62. *Mr. Hine.*] I understood you to say that the Department look to officers who are promoted to a higher position to work through their grades. Is there not a minimum and maximum salary to every grade?—Yes.

63. Has the Department ever promoted an officer to a higher position and compelled him to work through with annual increments?—We may have done so where a man has been two or three classes below.

64. Is the man promoted paid the minimum salary relative to that grade?—In scores of cases; that is the general rule. If a man is in the next class below he gets the minimum. If there is an intermediate class he is put at the bottom and has to work through it.

65. What is the reason of the Department in placing men in positions which previously were controlled by men in the higher grade? Why does not the Department put that new official upon the minimum salary of the higher grade?—Because the position is very often this: that the man most suitable or the man who is taken for the position may be one or two grades below, and in other cases the probabilities are that the man who should take the position is a man who is already in the same grade and it becomes a question of his transfer without promotion. A number of men object to being transferred. A man may be occupying a position which is not worth £300 a year in one locality, but for which he is paid £300, and the Department wants to transfer him to the new position which is worth the money. He may object to go and it becomes necessary to take another man who is promoted when appointed to the new place. The man who is transferred to the higher position in such a case is a junior, and you cannot put him over the heads of other senior men. If you force those men to transfer there is trouble. You have to take and deal with the whole staff as it stands in these matters.

66. The appointment is merely according to merit without increase of salary?—No man is appointed without increase of salary. He may not at the outset get the maximum of his predecessor, but he works through to it.

67. Do you mean to say that every man who is appointed to those positions in Schedule A has been promoted?—The last eight men shown on the Schedule, *i.e.*, those men in the £200 class, have not been promoted—£200 per annum is the ordinary schedule maximum rate for this class, but I believe all the rest have been promoted in a general way.

68. You are not certain?—I should require to look at the service cards of each individual before I could say definitely.

69. *Mr. Arnold.*] Mr. McVilly, I understand that the position is not classified but the man?—No, the positions are not classified, but the men are classified according to schedule. They are shown on the D.-3 in certain order.