

effect that it was imperative the shifts as detailed in my letter of the 11th October should be worked, was in no way refuted by the District Traffic Manager, who would, no doubt, have pointed out where an improvement in the hours of duty could be effected if this were possible. In view of these facts, I would ask you to again consider the matter, and see if some relief cannot be granted, and I would further ask, if you are still of the opinion that the staff at Edendale is ample to meet requirements, that a report be obtained from the Audit Inspector or some other responsible officer as to the need for action in the direction indicated." We got no reply to that letter, and the institute wrote again on the 24th March, 1911, to the General Manager, as follows: "Sir,—I have the honour to remind you that I have not yet been favoured with a reply to my letter of the 21st December last, concerning the excessive hours worked at Edendale Station, and to ask you to kindly advise me of your decision in the matter at an early date." Then the institute received a letter dated 1st April, as follows: "With reference to your representations regarding the appointment of additional staff at Edendale Station, I have the honour to inform you that upon reconsideration it has been decided to place a cadet at that station.—T. Ronayne, General Manager."

31. Which shows that the institute was corresponding with the Department, but it does not necessarily follow that the extra cadet was approved as a result of the institute's representations. Is that the only case you can call to mind in which extra staff has been provided?—No, I think there was one station on the Main Trunk in which the Department conceded extra staff—at Rangataua.

32. But is it not within your knowledge that it is the general practice of the Department to make additions to staff from time to time as the requirements necessitate?—If you ask me to quote personal experience, of course I am not going to do it, but if you ask me to give the experience of the Railway Officers' Institute I will tell you that we generally find that until some outrageous hours are brought before the Department—I do not say the management, mind you—the Department takes no action until the matter is forced upon them.

33. What do you mean by "the Department"?—Of course there are District Officers, and it may be their fault. I am not accusing the management in any one way. I only point out what has come under our notice in connection with the great number of cases that have to be submitted. It is generally a considerable time before we can get the thing rectified. It may not be the fault of the District Managers or management—we are not prepared to go into that question—but we submit that very few alterations are ever made of the Department's own accord.

34. Well, are you contending then that when a request is made for extra staff or a complaint is made to any responsible officer that he should not investigate it and be thoroughly satisfied before he deals with it?—Yes, he should investigate it.

35. You are not contending that he should not investigate it?—No.

36. Your contention is not that a man should accept without question a statement that is made when extra staff is required?—Certainly not; I never contended that.

37. You are aware of cases apart from those in which alterations and relief have been granted when it has been brought under the notice of the Department?—Yes, I am quite well aware of that, but I have already pointed out that the matter has not been brought under the notice of the General Manager except by the institute in those cases I am speaking of.

38. In those particular instances?—Yes.

39. Now, coming back to the question of overtime, you spoke about a daily duty of eight hours, and you say the payment made to officers in the Postal Department receiving salaries of between £200 and £250 is 2s. per hour?—Yes.

40. Then, with regard to the daily duty that you think a man should work, is the case you have stated worked out on the Postal hours?—It is worked out on the Post and Telegraph scale as compared with the Railway officers, who work nine and a half to ten hours at the rate of 1s. 6d. per hour.

41. It is seven hours as against eight?—We have quoted eight and compared it as against eight hours. We have given you the forty-eight hours a week.

42. Then the £23 per annum is on the basis of eight hours a day?—Yes.

43. Then you say £35 per annum if nine and a half hours per day?—Yes, that is one and a half hours' overtime worked out at 313 days in the year. We are not including any overtime work on Sundays—that is simply on the 313 days.

44. You are eliminating Sunday duty?—Yes.

45. Because you are paid for Sunday now when you work?—Yes, but many of the officers do work on Sunday without getting any pay at all. That extends their hours also.

46. Where?—At suburban stations where trains may leave on Saturday night and have to complete the journey. Instances were given yesterday where members have to wait on duty for trains on Sunday for which they get no pay, which is also overtime if added on, but we have not added it.

47. But is it not a fact that men who go on duty for Sunday trains get paid for Sunday work?—No, not in every case.

48. Do you mean to tell me that Stationmasters on suburban lines are not paid for Sunday work?—No, not all of them. Some go on duty, say, at 5 o'clock on Saturday and have to remain on duty till next day.

49. Now, you are aware that those men are paid for Sunday duty?—No, with those exceptions I told you of they are not paid. There are officers of the Department who work on Sundays but get paid no overtime or ordinary time.

50. What officers?—We have already quoted them. I cannot speak of any particular officers, but I will illustrate what I mean by one case I know of. A train was supposed to leave Christchurch at half past 11 or a quarter to 12, and it did not leave Christchurch till after 2 o'clock. She was delayed through some complications, and the Stationmasters all along the line were kept on duty after the ordinary shift was finished to attend to that train, and they got no Sunday time for that, although they applied for it.