

expenses shall be allowed to married members and their families shall be—(a) Two days at the commencement of the journey; (b) one week after arrival at destination. It is also provided that provision whatever is made for increasing the time. That these allowances are insufficient by the General Manager may at his discretion reduce this time as circumstances permit, but no reason of the fact that in many instances it is impossible to make the necessary arrangements for removal within two days, and it is equally impossible to obtain suitable house accommodation within a week after arrival at destination, consequently officers often incur considerable expense which they are obliged to bear themselves.” These allowances are in many cases insufficient to compensate officers for their actual outlay. Officers do not wish to be unreasonable, and all they ask is that the Department shall pay to them the actual amount which they are required to pay. Take the case of a man in the Traffic Department who is transferred to some position in a town strange to him, and whose duty requires his attendance at most irregular hours. This necessitates his living within a reasonable walking distance of his work, and limits his area of selection considerably as compared with that of the ordinary business man. For such a man it is much more difficult to obtain a house suitable to him than one which would suit a business man whose hours are regular, and who can take advantage of the car service. These conditions frequently compel a man to take an unsuitable house temporarily, with the result that he has to bear the expenses of a second removal when a suitable house is forthcoming. In addition to the actual expenses allowed by the Department under the regulations, it invariably follows that a man is put to further expense through having to cut up and renew floor-coverings and also to furnish new blinds, and do other matters which only those transferred can appreciate. I put it to you, gentlemen, that if any one of you who is a married man were required to shift from one town in New Zealand to another, do you think you could at short notice pack up all your furniture and effects and square up other matters in the two days, find a house at the other end of your journey, and become settled in it within a week? I know from my experience that it is not an uncommon thing to see an advertisement in the papers in Auckland offering a reward of £1 to any one who secures the advertiser a suitable house of five or six rooms, as the case may be, and I have no doubt the same conditions prevail in other towns. Any one who is acquainted with the different towns in New Zealand must know how difficult it is to obtain house accommodation, and that one might be weeks before securing a suitable house. We ask that the regulations dealing with this matter should be made more elastic, so that an officer transferred should receive the actual cost incurred in connection with his transfer. Referring to clause 17, Regulation 48 provides that when members are transferred by way of punishment they shall pay their own transfer expenses, and shall not be paid for the time they are travelling. Under this regulation a member may suffer monetary loss as follows: (a) Reduction in salary from £5 to £55 per annum; (b) loss of pay through suspension; (c) loss of salary during transfer; (d) loss of expenses incurred in connection with the transfer of family and effects; (e) reduction in value of superannuation retiring-allowance. I think, gentlemen, this should be taken very seriously into consideration by the Committee. There is no necessity for me to dwell on this clause any further. I will leave it to the sense of justice of you gentlemen to say whether or not you consider that a man should bear the additional punishment of being required to pay the expense of transferring himself, his family and effects, possibly from one Island to the other, which might result in crippling him financially.

2. *Mr. McVilly.*] How long, Mr. Graham, has this regulation respecting transfer been in operation?—I have not got a copy of the regulations to refer to, but I think since May, 1910.

3. Can you tell the Committee why the alteration was made—what was the previous practice?—The previous practice was to pay the actual out-of-pocket expenses.

4. And what did a man get—take a married man?—He got his 10s. per day travelling-allowance.

5. For the whole time?—For every night he was absent from his headquarters.

6. Well, if a man transferred, say, from Wellington to Ohakune, he is paid 10s. a day while in Wellington packing up?—You pay him from the day he is discharged from the one section till he goes on to the other.

7. I think you said he got 10s. a day while absent from headquarters?—Yes.

8. He got 10s. a day while packing up: was not that so?—Not in every case.

9. Well, when did the payment of 10s. per day commence?—It commenced from the day he started travelling. It was usually counted in every night he was absent.

10. Well, if a man packed up to-day and remained in Wellington to-night he made no claim for that?—I do not know what claim he made, but I do not think he had a right to make it.

11. Well, when he gets to Ohakune, his next headquarters, how long do you think he should be paid 10s. per day there?—Well, in some cases the Department has paid up to the time they were installed in their houses; in other cases they were paid only the actual out-of-pocket allowance: it has varied.

12. I am talking about before the alteration was made?—Yes, I am speaking of that.

13. Under the regulation before the alteration was made, when the man arrived at the other end was he not entitled to 10s. a night?—Until he was finally in his house. That was the recognized principle at that time.

14. Well, in addition to that, if he was a married man what happened with his wife and family?—Their hotel bill was paid.

15. What happened in connection with the cartage of his furniture here and the packing?—That is always paid for by the Department. The Department supplies the carriage in accordance with the regulation.