

can remain in the house with his wife and family with any convenience while the packing is under way.

10. Is it not a fact that the Department supplies packing-cases and packers in a large number of cases?—Yes, they do.

11. Well, in such cases as that, what is there to prevent the packing being done in two days?—Well, I do not know what does prevent it—either it is the workmen are not sufficiently active or the departmental servants are to blame in packing the furniture; but in my own cases four days is about the average that they have taken.

12. Well, outside of journeys in which a sea trip has to be undertaken, to what extent is it necessary to pack for railway transfers?—I think I have already mentioned that we are not alluding to short transfers, but more particularly to long transfers. We do not wish to take advantage of the Department.

13. The claim in the petition seems to be a general one?—Yes, and the regulation is a general one also; it provides two days for all kinds of transfers.

14. Well, when a man arrives at his destination in a large number of cases he has to go into a station house, as a considerable proportion of the transfers are among Stationmasters?—I think in a number of instances that is so.

15. What is the difficulty of a man getting into a station house within a week?—The difficulty of getting the other man out.

16. But the other man, generally speaking, is packed up, or ought to be packed up?—Well, it is not so. I may mention that when I relieved Mr. Marcus in Timaru he was three weeks in the house, and I had to appeal to the Department to insist on his leaving.

17. And what did the Department do?—Replied to me saying the matter would be taken up, but they did not remove the officer out of the house.

18. What was done in that case?—I got the usual three weeks' expenses. You will understand that there were different conditions then; three weeks were allowed at that time, but that is not allowed at the present time.

19. Well, why was that arrangement altered?—That I cannot say—that is for the Department to say.

20. You are aware from your own personal experience that at one time the Department paid expenses up to three weeks?—Yes, which was a fair and reasonable thing to do.

21. When that arrangement was in operation did the Department require the officers to do anything?—In what way?

22. Was it the practice to ask the officers to make any deductions in their vouchers?—In the earlier stages of that regulation, no; but later on I believe a departmental instruction came out stating that living-expenses were to be deducted from the vouchers.

23. You know that there was an instruction of that kind issued?—Yes.

24. Who fixed the amount that was to be deducted from those vouchers—the Department or the men?—Well, the Department always had the deducting of that finally. A man might make deductions himself, and if not satisfactory the Department still had it in their power to correct it.

25. The fixing of the deduction was left in the hands of the officers, who were expected to do the fair thing?—In the first place.

26. Now, is it within your knowledge that the fair thing was not done?—No, I cannot say it is—not from my own personal knowledge.

27. Is it within your knowledge that in respect to this particular matter the institute brought the unsatisfactory position with regard to deductions under the notice of the Minister at one interview?—It is within my knowledge that the institute moved in the matter, because they considered the deductions were unreasonable and should be abolished, and they appealed for their abolition.

28. And the reason for doing that was that the institute considered the deductions were unreasonable?—Yes, they did.

29. Is it not rather the fact that the ground put forward by the institute for making the request was that they recognized that the deductions that were made were ridiculous?—No, sir, I do not think so. The vouchers were never submitted to the institute at all.

30. Will you say that the institute did not put that ground forward when interviewing the Minister—that the institute recognized that the deductions were ridiculous, and on that ground urged that the Department should do something?—I could not say from personal knowledge that the statement was made.

31. You know that the institute brought the matter under the notice of the Department?—Yes. I know the reason why they brought it under the notice of the Minister. When the Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones, who was Minister of Railways, introduced this system it was with a view of arriving at a certain stated sum, and to bring us into line with the Post and Telegraph Department, that he instituted the practice of making deductions for the cost of living from the vouchers. It was his intention—I know this of my own personal knowledge from conversations with him—to give a lump sum for transfer expenses to each member after he had discovered what the cost of transfer would run into. That was the reason that instruction was sent out.

32. Can you state any instance in which the Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones gave utterance to such a sentiment?—Yes. He stated it at a conference where I had an interview with him.

33. That he intended to give a lump sum?—He intended to see if it could not be done in the same manner as in the Post and Telegraph Department, by giving a lump sum for transfer expenses.