

42. Do I understand that you do not know what the transfer expenses are in other Government Departments?—I have already told you on more than one occasion, and I am now going to repeat for the last time, that I am not going to discuss the policy or practices in other Departments. That is not my business.

43. That is, you shut your eyes to what is paid by other Departments for transfer expenses?—I do not know what is paid by other Departments, and I am not going to discuss the matter.

44. You do not want to know, do you?—I am not going to discuss the matter.

45. Can you say, roughly, Mr. McVilly, how many men there are in the First Division in Wellington?—No.

46. If I were to say there are two hundred, I suppose you would not say I was very far out?—I should say so—there are more than two hundred in our building.

47. So that there are more than two hundred in Wellington?—There might be.

48. What about Dunedin?—I do not know about Dunedin.

49. If I were to say there are one hundred and fifty, would you say that is about right?—If you are trying now, Mr. Ramsay, to make a mental calculation with a view to picking out certain stations and then suddenly going to say there is the bulk of the officers stationed here and somewhere else, you are not going to get me to admit those things without I look into them.

50. How many departmental houses are there in Wellington?—That I cannot tell you at the moment.

51. Roughly speaking, how many?—I have not an accurate idea just now.

52. If I were to tell you that in Wellington there are only three departmental houses, occupied by the Locomotive Foreman, Goods Foreman, and Coaching Foreman, would you deny it?—I do not know the correct number. I am not prepared to admit your statement.

53. You are not prepared to deny it?—Well, I absolutely deny that there are only three departmental houses in Wellington.

54. Are there more?—I know there are more, but I cannot say exactly how many more.

55. Are there five?—I cannot say. I am not going to state the exact number there are.

56. How many are there in Dunedin?—I do not know. It is years since I was in Dunedin.

57. If I were to say there are only two?—I would deny that, because I should want to know how many there are in Pelichet Bay and in Greater Dunedin.

58. Then you said in your report that in a considerable proportion of the cases of the men transferred they have obtained departmental houses at the places they proceeded to?—Yes.

59. Do you not think that is exaggerated?—No.

60. Well, it is so far as Wellington and Dunedin are concerned?—We are not discussing Wellington and Dunedin; we are discussing the general question of transfer.

61. Are there not several stations where there is no departmental residence?—If that is so, the man who goes there has the house-allowance included in his salary.

62. *The Chairman.*] While the actual expenses of the family are paid, the officer, if he incurs expense at a hotel, pays that out of the 10s.?—Yes, where he gets 10s. a day for himself, if he is paying board at £1 5s. a week, and he gets 10s. a day for seven days, and then in addition he gets the actual expenses incurred by his wife and family. It is all governed by Regulations 42 and 48.

ANDREW GRAHAM further examined. (No. 30.)

*The Chairman:* I understand, Mr. McVilly, that you desire to cross-examine Mr. Graham in regard to clause 17.

*Mr. McVilly:* Yes

1. *Mr. McVilly.*] In connection with the statements in clause 17, Regulation 48 deals with the men who are transferred by way of punishment?—Yes.

2. And the practice in such a case is to require those men to pay their own expenses?—That is so.

3. And they lose their pay during suspension?—Yes.

4. How long has it been the practice for those men to lose their pay during suspension?—Since the last regulations came in, I think.

5. I would like to take your own personal knowledge in regard to this matter. You joined the service somewhere about 1874?—Yes.

6. Well, do you not know that the old Rule 74 provided that where a member was suspended he was to lose his pay during suspension unless exonerated?—Yes, that has always been so.

7. Then this loss of pay during suspension is not a new-fangled idea: it has been in operation since the inauguration of the railway—or, at all events, you can go back to 1874?—Yes, that is correct.

8. Now, in a case where a man is transferred as a result of punishment and he makes a rail journey, what is the practice?—The Government give him free carriage for his furniture and effects.

9. Then the only out-of-pocket expenses he incurs are in respect of cartage of furniture and packing?—Yes.

10. Now, is there any particular reason why the Railway Department should bear the expense of those transfers where they are necessitated by the misconduct of the man?—There is no necessity for the Department to do anything it does not like to do. They still have power to do as they please; but you have already stated that it is equivalent to dismissal in those cases. Many changes have been made in the Railway Department, and there was no talk of dismissal from the Department's point of view, nor yet from the officer's, we will say, and he suffers the punishment I have enumerated as a whole, and what we wish to contend is that it is an enormous punishment to place on any one individual. In fact, if you placed a man in a Court of law and fined him equal to £100 for the offence that took place in the Railway Department. I think you would have the country up in arms.