

16. Would you consider they were on duty if your money was at stake?—Yes, for a matter of two or three hours I think I would.

17. Well, where would you draw the line—supposing it were four hours?—A fair division, I should say, would be about eight hours.

18. Would you consider that if a man was fishing off the end of the wharf for six hours that he would be on duty and you would be justified in paying him?—He must be within call. As long as he has to be at the Department's call it is fair to consider him on duty. If he leaves the station he must leave word where he is to be found. Although the interval between the trains may be two or three or six hours, he cannot go away beyond call. He must be within call of the Department in case he is wanted.

19. Now, with reference to this Sunday business, what possible chance is there of a man being called between the arrival of an incoming train and his going away, and his coming back half an hour before the outgoing train?—There is every possibility of his being called. A train may break down on the line.

20. What has an officer in charge of the Auckland Station got to do with a train breaking down on the line?—If a train is broken down he has to supply the train to take out the relief men.

21. Talking about Sunday trains, which you know are very infrequent, is it not a fact that, generally speaking, when a train has arrived at Auckland that is the last train for that particular interval?—I understand they start from both ends at the Auckland District.

22. What do you call "both ends"?—They run from both directions to and from Auckland, and although a train arrives at Auckland there may still be another to arrive from the other end.

23. Well, what do you mean by "the other end"?—Well, take Onehunga. I understand they start at both ends. Although a train arrives at Auckland there is nothing to show that no other trains are running.

24. Is it not a fact that the service as a rule is worked in such a way that it can be worked by a man at one end?—Yes.

25. In that case there could be no call on the Stationmaster for any broken service?—If a man is booked on duty he must be within call whether there are any trains or not.

26. But that is not the point. What is the necessity for him to hang round in case of a breakdown of a train?—I go further, and say that he must remain on duty if there is any likelihood of there being any train.

27. A man in a station house is on call but not on duty?—Yes.

28. If a man is on the wharf he is not on duty, and there is no necessity for him to be at call?—If you are going to say that he is tied to the station house I should say he is on duty.

29. Would you say that when I go home I am on duty?—If you are bound to remain at home I should say you were—if the Department insisted on your doing so.

30. Now, in regard to the question of accounts, is it not a fact that the Department some considerable time ago extended the time which was previously allowed for the preparation of accounts by two days?—Yes.

31. Well, do you know the reason why that was done?—Well, it was to reduce the work in the Accountant's office, I understand. I did not know the precise reason, but they saved what we call the supplementary abstracts and did away with them.

32. Do they save the supplementary abstracts?—Yes, considerably.

33. They have wiped it out altogether?—Not absolutely, but it has reduced it very much.

34. Is it not a fact that the primary reason for the alteration was to obviate what some members said was the necessity for going on Sunday duty?—I never heard of that.

35. Well, as a matter of fact, it was. At how many of the stations is it necessary to work on Sundays to prepare the accounts?—At most of the larger stations they have to, I believe.

36. Is it not possible to do without that?—Not so long as the Department insist on the men balancing their work before they bank on the Monday.

37. But is not the work balanced up every day?—The daily work is.

38. And the cash is balanced every day?—Yes.

39. And if the cash is balanced every day and the work balanced, what special reason is there for making a balance of the whole month's work before you bank on the Monday?—It is found to be necessary because, no matter what care is taken with the daily work, errors creep in which are only discovered when dealing with the monthly balance.

40. Is it necessary?—If the Department said it was not necessary it would do away with a great amount of Sunday duty.

41. If the work is done accurately as it ought to be during the period, should there be any necessity for this Sunday work?—Oh no. If you got men who were so absolutely correct that they never made a mistake, then it would not be necessary.

42. Well, has not the Department provided at these stations the necessary machinery to enable the men to check their work and so insure accuracy as they go along?—What do you mean by "machinery"?

43. Well, have you not got a proper system of accounts?—Yes.

44. Well, if the accounts are properly balanced you can check your work as you go along?—Yes.

45. And you can check your work at the end of the week?—Yes.

46. Well, if it is checked properly at the end of each week you have got down to three weeks, and you have an absolute check—you know where you are then?—No; it is still found when they come to balance at the end of the month that errors are made that are not discovered until they are dealing with the whole month's work.

47. Well, is not that an indication that the work for the preceding period or the work prior to the end of the month has been done inaccurately?—That is so—that errors have been made.