

(No. 60.)



1895.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

RAILWAY MANAGEMENT:

REPORT FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE, WITH MINUTES
OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE.

Brought up by Mr. Hartnoll, and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed,
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SELECT COMMITTEE appointed, on the 30th August, 1895, to enquire into the Railway Freights and Concessions, Locomotive Department, Hours of Labour of Employees, and all other matters relating to the general management and working of the Government Railways of the Colony.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE :

MR. MINISTER OF LANDS AND WORKS.
MR. REIBEY.
MR. BARRETT.
MR. DUMARESQ.
MR. BURKE.
MR. MCWILLIAMS.

MR. LEWIS.
MR. MILES.
MR. URQUHART.
MR. CRISP.
MR. HARTNOLL. (*Mover.*)

DAYS OF MEETING.

Thursday, 5th September; Friday, 6th September; Wednesday, 11th September; Thursday, 12th September; Friday, 13th September; Wednesday, 18th September; Thursday, 19th September; Friday, 20th September; Wednesday, 25th September; Thursday, 26th September; Wednesday, 2nd October; Friday, 4th October.

WITNESSES EXAMINED.

William West, Engine-driver; George Charles Stanley, Engine-driver; Samuel Mann, Traffic Inspector; William Eastgate Batchelor, Locomotive Superintendent; Frederick Back, General Manager Railways.

EXPENSES OF WITNESSES.

Nil.

R E P O R T.

THE Members of the Committee appointed to consider the general management of the Government Railways desire to present an *interim* Report dealing with the state of the Locomotives and Rolling-stock and the alleged overworking of certain employees.

The following witnesses have been called:—William West, G. C. Stanley, Engine-drivers; Samuel Mann, Traffic Inspector, together with the General Manager and Locomotive Superintendent.

Although printed and attached to this Report, the Committee do not consider that the evidence of William West is worthy of credence, as he appeared to be very anxious to alter his testimony in several material points. From the examination of the other witnesses, and the perusal of a very large amount of correspondence in the Department, we are enabled to unanimously arrive at the conclusion that sufficient locomotives to meet present requirements are in first-class order, but that, through a well-intentioned desire to effect economies in these times of necessary retrenchment,

repairs to the spare engines have been allowed to accumulate; but, as the estimates for 1895 and 1896 amply provide for immediate attention in this respect, and in the hope that the passenger carriages and general rolling stock will be maintained in their hitherto efficient state, we recommend that fuller time be resorted to in the fitting shops and other repairing branches.

Regarding the complaint of the engine-drivers and firemen that they have been worked for unreasonably long hours, we are of opinion that, although there have been grounds for complaint in several instances, the position of affairs has been exaggerated. It appears that there is quite sufficient of this class of labour to properly carry out the requirements of the ordinary traffic, but that five additional cleaners are wanted—three to take the place of men who have resigned, and two extra hands, who would be available from the sheds and shops, to perform the extra duties when special trains are run. It is shown that through the reduction of the staff, men have not been able to receive “time off” for “overtime” worked. We think this should in future be met by a settlement on the first of every month as between “overtime” and “time off,” and that the “overtime” due to each man should be paid for; this would effectually prevent complaints being made in the future.

We are pleased to announce that our labours so far as they have gone have been attended with the most satisfactory results, the Honorable the Minister of Railways having assured the Committee that these recommendations would be given immediate effect to, and that the Locomotive Superintendent would be restored to the position which he has had for so many years in the Locomotive Department.

We find with much regret that the time at our disposal is too limited to commence an enquiry into the alleged anomalies in the freight rates and many other matters of deep concern to the public. It is earnestly trusted that the General Manager will speedily make any alterations which may be found necessary, and thereby prevent the necessity for any further investigation in the next Session of Parliament.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

THURSDAY, 5TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11.40 A.M.

Present.—Mr. Reibey, Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Dunaesq, Mr. Lewis, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Crisp, Mr. Milcs, and Mr. Hartnoll.

Mr. Hartnoll was voted to the Chair.

Resolved, That the Working Locomotive Department be first investigated by the Committee, with the object of bringing up an *interim* Report during the present Session of Parliament. (Mr. Lewis.)

Ordered, That all evidence be given in accordance with the provisions of the Parliamentary Declarations Act, (35 Victoria, No. 11).

Resolved, That the Manager of Government Railways, Mr. F. Back, and the Locomotive Superintendent, Mr. Batchelor, be admitted during the examination of witnesses.

The Clerk was directed to procure the following documentary information :—

- (a.) 12 copies of Manual of Rates and Charges on the Tasmanian Government Railways.
- (b.) Correspondence *re* Overtime of Engine-drivers.
- (c.) Evidence taken by a Special Committee of Investigation of Overtime of Engine-drivers.
- (d.) Correspondence between Locomotive Superintendent and General Manager, having reference to retrenchment in the Railway Department since the purchase of the Main Line Railway to the present time.
- (e.) Report of General Manager of Railways to Minister *re* retrenchment in the Railway Department from the purchase of the Main Line Railway to the present time.
- (f.) Reports from General Manager *re* sale of the rails, rolling stock, and locomotives taken over from the Launceston and Western Railway, and on the steamship *Papua*, with a statement showing the proceeds of such sales and to what accounts they were credited.
- (g.) Report of the General Manager as to the purchase of the Main Line Railway from the English Company, and a return of Expenditure since purchase.
- (h.) Copy of General Regulations adopted in the Railway Service, so far as they apply to Station Masters and Employees.
- (j.) Copy of correspondence between General Manager and Postmaster-General or Secretary to Post Office, showing the terms upon which the Railway Department manages the Post Offices at certain Railway Stations.
- (k.) Return showing the number of employees in the Railway Department, their classification, rate of wages, and hours employed.
- (l.) Rules and Regulations and Schedule of freights on Australian Railways.
- (m.) Rates of wages and duration of hours of labour of employees on Australian Railways.
- (n.) Last Reports of the Commissioners of Railways in the Australian Colonies.
- (o.) Commissioner Eddie's Report on Tasmanian Railways.

The Committee adjourned at 12.50 P.M. until 2.30 P.M. on Friday, the 6th September.

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FRIDAY, 6TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 2:35 p.m.

Present.—Mr. Reibey, Mr. Dumaresq, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Crisp, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Miles, Mr. Urquhart, Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, and Mr. Hartnoll (Chairman).

The Chairman, Mr. Hartnoll, took the Chair.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman tabled:—

(a.) Rules and Regulations of Tasmanian Railways.

(b.) Report of Special Committee of Railway officials *re* overtime of engine-drivers.

Ordered, That the following witnesses be summoned to attend and give evidence before the Committee at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, the 11th instant:—W. West, driver; G. C. Stanley, driver; S. Mann, traffic inspector; and J. E. Hughes, stationmaster, Hobart.

The Committee adjourned at 3 p.m. until 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, the 11th September.

WEDNESDAY, 11TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11:30 a.m.

Present.—Mr. Lewis, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, Mr. Miles, Mr. Burke, Mr. Reibey, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Dumaresq, Mr. Urquhart, Mr. Crisp, and Mr. Hartnoll (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Clerk laid the following Papers upon the Table:—

Ministerial Statement *re* condition of Locomotives. (Appendix 1.)

Manual of Rules and Regulations for Passenger, Parcel, and Goods Traffic.

Correspondence *re* overtime of Engine-drivers.

Correspondence from Locomotive Superintendent and General Manager *re* retrenchment.

Reports from General Manager on sale of old rails, rolling-stock, and locomotives taken over from the L. & W. Railway, and on the s.s. *Papua*, showing amount realised by sales.

Report of General Manager as to the purchase of Main Line Railway and Statement of Expenditure.

Copy of correspondence with Postal Department as to postal duties performed by railway servants.

Return of employees in the Department, with classification, rate of wages, and hours of employment.

Manual of Rates of Freight current in Victoria and New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, and Queensland.

William West, engine-driver, was called in, and having made the Parliamentary declaration, was examined.

W. West withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 1:5 p.m. until Thursday, the 12th instant, at 11 a.m.

THURSDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

Present.—Mr. Lewis, Mr. Reibey, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Dumaresq, Mr. Crisp, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Miles, Mr. Urquhart, and Mr. Hartnoll (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The examination of William West, engine-driver, was resumed.

W. West withdrew.

George Charles Stanley, engine-driver, was called in, and having made the Parliamentary declaration, was examined.

Ordered, That D. B. Davies, engine driver, be summoned to attend and give evidence before the Committee, at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, the 18th instant.

The Committee adjourned at 12:50 p.m. until 11:30 a.m. on Friday, the 13th instant.

FRIDAY, 13TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11:30 a.m.

Present.—Mr. Barrett, Mr. Burke, Mr. Crisp, Mr. Dumaresq, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, Mr. Hartnoll, and Mr. Miles.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Ordered, That F. Back, Manager Government Railways, and W. E. Batchelor, Locomotive Superintendent, be ordered to attend and give evidence before the Committee on Wednesday, the 18th instant, at 11 a.m.

Samuel Mann, Traffic Inspector, having made the Parliamentary declaration, was examined.

S. Mann withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 12:30 p.m. until 11 a.m. on Wednesday, the 18th instant.

WEDNESDAY, 18TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

All Members present.

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The revised evidence of W. West, engine-driver, was tabled.

Ordered, That William West, engine-driver, be summoned for re-examination at 11 A.M. on Thursday, the 19th instant.

Samuel Mann, Traffic Inspector, was called in and further examined, and tabled the following paper :—

Suggested re-arrangement of engine-drivers' hours. (Appendix 2.)

Ordered, That the paper be handed to Mr. Batchelor for perusal, and to enable him to furnish a written reply thereto.

S. Mann withdrew.

W. E. Batchelor, Locomotive Superintendent, was called in, and having made the Parliamentary declaration, was examined, and tabled the following paper :—

Return showing actual working hours of engine-men, from 1st April to 20th January, 1895.

Ordered, That the said paper be handed to Mr. Back for perusal.

The Committee adjourned at 12:55 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Thursday, the 19th instant.

THURSDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

Present.—Mr. Burke, Mr. Miles, Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Crisp, Mr. Dumaresq, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Urquhart, and Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Hartnoll (Chairman).

Ordered, That the Manager of Government Railways be directed to produce any further correspondence between himself and the Locomotive Superintendent since the commencement of the inquiry.

William West, engine-driver, was called in, and having again made the Parliamentary declaration, was re-examined as to alterations made to his evidence.

W. West withdrew.

W. E. Batchelor, Locomotive Superintendent, was called in and further examined, and laid the following documents upon the Table :—

Written statement of the manner in which he had been treated by the General Manager.

Explanation of charge preferred against Mr. Batchelor, that he had given the men reasonable grounds for complaint. (Appendix 4.)

The Committee adjourned at 1:15 P.M. until 11:30 A.M. on Friday, the 20th instant.

FRIDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11:30 A.M.

Present.—Mr. Burke, Mr. Miles, Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Crisp, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Urquhart (Chairman), and Mr. Hartnoll.

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

Samuel Mann, Traffic Inspector, was called in, and having had his evidence read over to him, signed the same, and withdrew.

W. E. Batchelor, Locomotive Superintendent, was called in and further examined.

W. E. Batchelor withdrew.

Ordered, That the Chairman be instructed to report to the House the fact that an Hon. Member of the House of Assembly had, in his handwriting, altered the evidence given by W. West, engine-driver, on the 11th instant, under the provisions of "The Parliamentary Act" (35 Vict. No. 11), and that the terms of the Report be submitted at the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee adjourned at 11:36 A.M. until 11 A.M. on Wednesday, the 25th instant.

WEDNESDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

Present.—Mr. Burke, Mr. Reibey, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Dumaresq, Mr. Crisp, Mr. Lewis, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, Mr. Miles, and Mr. Hartnoll (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman laid the following documents on the Table :—

South Australia.

1. Railway Report, 1893-94.
2. Workshops Rule Book.
3. Regulations in force.
4. General Goods Classification and Tariff.
5. Circular Rule Book.
6. Public and Working Tables.

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New South Wales.

1. Copy of Annual Report of the Railway Commissioners for year ending 30th June, 1895.
2. Merchandise and Live Stock Rates.
3. Passenger Fares and Coaching Rates.
4. Rules, Regulations, and By-laws.
5. Condition of employment of the Staff, and classification of Wages.
6. Statement of Hours of Labour worked.

W. E. Batchelor, Locomotive Superintendent, was called in and further examined, and laid the following papers upon the Table :—

Reply to Mr. Mann's suggested re-arrangement of engine-drivers' hours, tabled on the 18th instant. (Appendix 3.)

Letter from Mr. J. McCarthy, Clerk in the Locomotive Department, with explanations *re* Return of actual time worked by drivers and firemen.

W. E. Batchelor withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 12.50 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Thursday, the 26th instant.

THURSDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

Present.—Mr. Burke, Mr. Miles, Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Dumaresq, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Reibey, Mr. Crisp, and Mr. Hartnoll (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman tabled a letter from W. West, Driver, requesting that he be allowed to sign his evidence as altered, as his original evidence was given under a misapprehension of the questions put to him.

The Chairman tabled the following Papers :—

Victoria.

Merchandise Rates, including Live Stock, Wool, &c.

By-laws.

Report of the Victorian Railways Commissioners for the year ending 30th June, 1895.

Frederick Back, General Manager of Railways, having made the Parliamentary declaration, was examined.

F. Back withdrew.

The Chairman tabled a copy of Train Working posted in Running Shed.

The Committee adjourned at 1 P.M. until Wednesday, 2nd October, 1895.

WEDNESDAY, 2ND OCTOBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

Present.—Mr. Burke, Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, Mr. Lewis, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Urquhart, Mr. Crisp, Mr. Dumaresq, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Reibey, and Mr. Hartnoll (Chairman.)

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Interim Report was tabled and read.

The Committee deliberated.

The Chairman laid the following papers upon the Table :—

Queensland.

1. Railway Report, 1894.

2. Workshops Rule Book.

3. Regulations in force.

4. General Goods Classification and Tariff.

5. General Coaching Rates.

The Committee adjourned at 12.30 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Friday, the 4th instant.

FRIDAY, 4TH OCTOBER, 1895.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

Present.—Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, Mr. Burke, Mr. Crisp, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Dumaresq, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Hartnoll (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman tabled a letter from Mr. F. W. Hales enclosing a memorial from certain residents of Launceston and its vicinity, praying for additional suburban train service.

Ordered, That the memorial be forwarded to the Hon. the Minister of Railways.

The draft *interim* Report was considered and agreed to.

The Committee adjourned *sine die*.

APPENDIX 1.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT *RE* CONDITION OF LOCOMOTIVES.

WITH reference to the remarks made on the motion of adjournment on the 23rd instant, in respect of the alleged unsatisfactory condition of our locomotives, and the exceedingly long hours during which engine-drivers were employed, I desire to state as follows :—

1. There is no reason to believe that our locomotives are in other than excellent order (except such as are put aside for repairs).

The Locomotive Superintendent in his yearly Report for 1894 writes as follows :—

Exhibit A. "All the locomotives, rolling-stock, machinery, buildings, pumps, &c. have been well maintained during the past 12 months, and are now in fair order."

As this Report was not sent in by Mr. Batchelor until June last, it may be taken that this Report holds good up to June.

It appears that in July there were 31 locomotives available to run 21·20 trains a day (20 regular and 1·20 special), the maximum number of trains run on any holiday or extraordinary occasion having been 27. The 24 locomotives laid up (many only requiring trivial repairs, and 4 having been repaired and placed in traffic since the Return marked "B" was compiled in July) will be put in thorough order during the ensuing 12 months, it being deemed more economical and expedient as regards finding continuous employment to extend this work over a lengthened period.

Ministerial enquiry is being directed into this matter, and if occasion arise for it, independent and expert opinion will be consulted.

With regard to the statement as to excessive length of hours worked, so far it can only be traced to two or three instances of special goods trains when the men have been employed with their trains between 17 and 18 hours. These men, however, had a day off work before going out, and a day off on returning.

The General Manager has already given instructions by which it will be arranged that the work of these trains will be more evenly distributed in future, and excessive hours abolished.

The apportionment of hours of work of all locomotive men has been left in the hands of the Locomotive Superintendent, but the General Manager has more than once informed the Minister for Railways that such apportionment was unsatisfactory, and that a re-apportionment could be made ensuring an easier and more fair distribution of the work, besides effecting a saving in expenses.

It has been the intention of the Minister for Railways to go thoroughly into this matter as soon as the press of Parliamentary business will permit.

APPENDIX 2.

TASMANIAN RAILWAYS.

Hobart, 16th September, 1895.

SIR,

IN accordance with your instructions, I beg to give you particulars of the different working I referred to when replying to a question *re* driver West's hours on the occasion he ran the special coal train to Fingal line on 8th ultimo. I contended that West had no occasion to be told off to run this train, as the work could have been better apportioned, viz., a driver working lesser hours than West did for two weeks previously, and on week referred to should have been told off to run the special referred to, and West work a shift, when lesser hours would have resulted; or arrangements might have been made so that West need not have been asked to do more than his usual week's work, as I think the following proposal will show :—

No. 1, August 8th.—Davies and his mate could have taken up shunting at Launceston from 6 A.M. to 2 P.M., and then go off and come on again to run regular trip to Mole Creek at 5 P.M. Wilkinson and his mate arriving at 2·45 P.M., could have taken up the shunting from that hour.

August 9th.—Lovett and his mate could have taken up shunting from 6 A.M. to 2 P.M. as above; Davies and his mate arriving at 2·45 P.M. could have taken up the shunting from that hour. Had this arrangement been made driver Smith and his fireman would have been available to run special coal train to Fingal line on 8th, and in consideration of long hours would have been off duty the following day. Had this arrangement been made West and his mate would have been relieved from running the special, and would not have been required to do more than usual week's running.

No. 2 proposal.—De Belin could have driven the coal special instead of firing, and cleaner S. Harvey could have fired to De Belin, having had previously fired to De Belin on such occasions.

No. 3 proposal.—Daniels could have proceeded to Conara Junction as a passenger, and relieved West at that station at 3·5 P.M.

No. 4 proposal.—Lovett could have ran the coal special and West taken up Lovett's run on 8th, viz., the 8 A.M. to Ulverstone and back. Lovett had a very easy run on the 7th, viz., 8 A.M., Mole Creek to Launceston. West finished up on morning of 7th and rested the day and night of that date; West to have continued Lovett's running up to and including the following Monday, and then they would have come in their places. Had this arrangement been made Lovett would have worked 62 hours and West 63 hours; whereas, as the work was apportioned, Lovett worked 56 hours and West 70 hours.

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No. 5 proposal.—Fireman Monkhouse, who has had charge of an engine as a driver, arrived at Launceston at 11:20 A.M. on 7th August. His next trip out was by 3:15 P.M. on 9th. In the meanwhile all Monkhouse had to do was to assist washing out engine on the 8th. Monkhouse could have taken charge of shunting engine on morning of 8th, thus relieving Smith to work the coal special. West could have rested all day and night of 7th, washed out morning of 8th, and relieved Monkhouse as soon as possible afterwards. West could have been relieved shortly after 4 P.M., and then been off duty until 7 A.M. on 10th August. The shunting on the 9th to be performed by drivers Lovett and Davies, who were working a very short day on Mole Creek service.

In conclusion I beg to say that proposals Nos. 1, 2, and 3 commend themselves, as there is not the least complication in the working.

I have, &c.

S. MANN, *Traffic Inspector.*

The Hon. W. HARTNOLL, M.H.A., Chairman of Railway Committee.

APPENDIX 3.

TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

Launceston, 23rd September, 1895.

SIR,

IN accordance with your request that I should be allowed to reply to Mr. Mann's statements, I thank you, and beg to do so, as follows:—

No. 1 proposal.—Davies and his mate had a very heavy day's work on the 7th August, *i.e.*, from Launceston to Ulverstone and back, 187½ miles without the shunting on the road, occupying 13 hours, and to send them shunting from 6 A.M. to 2 P.M., and then to run the Mole Creek train at 5 P.M. until 9:10 P.M., would be merely transferring the grievance from one set of men to another.

Wilkinson and mate would at 2:45 P.M. have been on duty 8½ hours, and were booked for a long trip next day, *i.e.*, from Launceston to Ulverstone and back, 187½ miles, 13 hours' duty.

August 9th.—Lovett and mate worked the heavy day, *i.e.*, Launceston to Ulverstone and back on the 8th, and as they were booked to run the Scottsdale train out at 4:30 P.M. on the 9th, to have put them on shunting from 6:0 A.M. to 2:0 P.M. would have been too much to expect.

De Belin had already been out on the mail firing for West for four nights, and as firing is the hardest manual labour of the two, he certainly required rest, more, if anything, than the driver.

No. 3 proposal.—Daniels lives in Hobart, and as the special left Launceston at 6 A.M., he would have had to come up the day previous and return the following day, incurring three days' expenses for being absent from home.

No. 4 proposal.—Lovett on the 8th ran the long trip, Launceston to Ulverstone and back, and as West's regular run on the 9th would have been from Launceston to Parattah and back, 156 miles, occupying over 14 hours, another driver had to take this run, making this man one extra trip, which was done to allow West to wash out and attend to his engine. Lovett worked 61 hours that week, not 56, as stated.

No. 5 proposal.—Fireman Monkhouse had been out firing for 15 hours on Monday, Tuesday, and 8 hours on Wednesday, and his home being at Ulverstone, this proposal would have incurred extra expense; even if I had wished to do this, I had no fireman that could take his place.

In conclusion, I positively state that I did the best under the circumstances that could be done in taking two sets of men on their shed-days; whereas if I had adopted any of the proposals made by Mr. Mann, the Traffic Inspector, the regular working of no less than five or six sets of men would have been upset, and considerable expense incurred.

Allow me respectfully to ask the opinion of yourself and colleagues, whether Mr. Mann in his capacity as Inspector of traffic, knowing nothing of the reasons for my arrangements, could be expected to be in a position to dictate improvement upon my working.

I have, &c.

W. E. BATCHELOR.

The Hon. W. HARTNOLL, M.H.A., Chairman of Railway Committee.

APPENDIX 4.

WITH reference to the proposals made by the Conference upon Enginemen's hours, and the statement made by the General Manager in his report upon the same to the Hon. the Minister of Railways, I have had no opportunity given me to reply to, or explain the charge then made, that I had given the men reasonable grounds for complaint, and that the matter had not been brought before the General Manager before.

In justice to myself, I must point out that it will be impossible for the men to work 54 hours per week as proposed with the same number, and under present time table and traffic requirements.

No. 1.—Signing on and off duty cannot be done under our system; a day and night foreman would be required to check men signing; again, at Ulverstone, St. Mary's, Macquarie Plains, &c., where there is no one but themselves, it is not practicable. It is incorrect to state that there are no lists prepared showing men's duties, and I now table copies of the same.

No. 2.—It has been the custom to allow time off when the opportunity offered; but lately, owing purely to excessive retrenchment, I have not been in a position to let them have it quite as soon as I could have wished. The correspondence now tabled will confirm this statement.

No. 3.—Washing out boilers is done more satisfactorily by the men working them, as they know exactly how their engines are working, and what requires attending to on their shed-days. To wash out two engines properly would occupy two men eight hours, without packing glands, &c. I do not, of course, mean merely changing the water, but carefully and satisfactorily cleaning the boiler, and other duties.

No. 6.—The Scottsdale is a heavy line to work, and requires an experienced driver and all his attention to work it safely.

Nos. 9 and 10.—The service of the Western Line, with the exception of the Ulverstone to Launceston train, is now worked to the satisfaction of the men, and those working the latter would be also satisfied if I had men to relieve them about two days a month.

No. 11.—Main Line trains would be more satisfactorily worked if the engines ran through as formerly; but I am not aware that there was any complaint if the men were not called out on their shed-days.

Nos. 14 & 15.—Locals and Hobart Shunting.—These men have long hours—about 150 a fortnight—and should be relieved in the same proportion as proposed for the others.

Nos. 16 and 17.—Oatlands and Derwent Valley men would be satisfied if relieved as proposed for the Ulverstone men, viz., two days a month.

No. 18.—Holiday leave.—We have now about 30 sets of men who receive one week's leave a year, and occasionally an extra day or two; this, with sickness and other causes, is equal to the loss of one set on full time for the year. However much I might desire to carry out all these proposals, I cannot do so with the present number of men.

I also wish to state that I do not think I have been fairly treated lately by the General Manager, whilst doing my utmost to reduce the expense of the Department. I have felt it my duty to protest against the excessive proposed and enforced retrenchment, as my reputation was not only at stake, but efficiency was threatened.

On the last two occasions that I was in the General Manager's Office, his clerk was present to take down what I said in shorthand; he has also had several of the men in, putting all sorts of leading questions to them, and, in my opinion, intimidating them. I am not aware that I have done anything to be ashamed of, and to be treated in this manner after 25 years' service is certainly not very encouraging.

If you compare the expenses per train and engine mile of my department with similar departments on other railways, I think it will be seen that the expenses have been kept down.

I may state that the position I have been placed in is a very awkward one, as I have not only had the efficiency of the rolling stock, and the safety of the men and the travelling public to protect on the one side, but worried and ordered to still further retrenchment, and to be then charged with direct opposition and mismanagement, giving reasonable grounds to the men for complaint, on the other.

W. E. BATCHELOR.

EVIDENCE.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1895.

WILLIAM WEST, *called and examined.*

1. *By the Chairman.*—This Committee of Enquiry has been called for the purpose of considering charges that have been made into the railway management of this Colony, and I will point out to you at the outset that you will be properly protected, in common with other witnesses, in any questions you answer. What the Committee requires is that you should give a full statement to any questions that you might be asked, and all the evidence you can give concerning the charges. I will now ask you your name? William West.

2. You are an engine-driver employed on the Tasmanian Government Railways? Yes.

3. You are, I dare say, aware that complaints have been made by engine-drivers and employees in the Government Railway Department that they have been compelled, at different times, to work longer hours than they should do? Yes.

4. You were one of a committee appointed to draw up a Report on the question of working overtime, were you not? Yes.

5. Well, will you tell the Committee how personally this question of overtime has affected you—I mean any special instances where you feel you have been employed a longer time than you should have been? Yes; I cannot recollect the date of the month, Sir. On one occasion I was on the ordinary train, and she ran for six days, during which time I worked ten hours per day, that is, running. Then I was on for four hours washing and cleaning the engine to see that she was in proper order to send her out next morning with the train, and on two different occasions I have had to run an extra one—that is 14 hours a day's work. I worked 14 hours on another occasion; on another occasion I did 13 hours for the usual trip of ten hours a day. That was on three different occasions.

6. Did you get any extra pay for that work? No, Sir, I received no extra pay whatever.

7. Did you get instructions to work these lengths of hours? Yes.

8. What is your regular run? The mail and ordinary.

9. From Launceston? Yes, from Launceston to Conara, and on the mail on Friday nights from Launceston to Antill Ponds.

10. You got your instructions from the Launceston Foreman? Yes. Mind you it is thoroughly understood that if anything should go wrong with you where you are on the road you should telegraph to the Locomotive Superintendent and tell him what is the matter.

11. Were you and some others deputed by the engine-drivers to take into consideration the question of working longer hours than they deemed desirable? Yes; I believe a note came from the General Manager to Launceston asking that a ballot should be taken amongst the engine-drivers to see who should represent them on a Board of Enquiry to be held in Hobart, and report to him.

12. And you were appointed? Yes. I knew nothing about it. I was elected by ballot, but I had no instructions to represent the drivers, at least the whole of them. I came to Hobart to represent myself only. Although I was elected to attend the meeting by ballot I did not know anything myself about it. I know there was a ballot taken, or at least I understood there was. When I went to Launceston I was told that I had been selected to represent the men, but I went to the meeting to represent myself. A message, I believe, was sent by Mr. Back that one of the drivers was to represent the whole of the drivers.

13. And you were sent? I had no instructions to represent the whole of the drivers.

14. Although you represented them in fact, you had no cognisance of that? Well, of course, I had to a certain extent. Of course three other drivers gave their idea of how the thing could be worked better.

15. You were there also for the men in the matter? I don't think so.

16. It was a representative meeting, was it not? I came entirely to represent myself in the matter.

17. Were there any other cases that aggrieved you? There were a couple of other extra trips that lengthened my hours of duty.

18. Do you think it is necessary that you should work these long hours? Well, I think it is, because there is not a sufficient staff to run the trains without working the extra time.

19. Do you mean, then, that there are not enough engine-drivers? I do not think there are enough. When there are extra goods to be carried, the engine-drivers do extra work.

20. *By Mr. Barrett.*—You had to work long hours on the Launceston-Ulverstone Line on one occasion? Yes.

21. Tell the Committee how that occurred, and what it was? On the occasion to which Mr. Barrett is making reference I was on the 6.30 train from Ulverstone to Launceston and back to Ulverstone the same day; leaving Launceston again at 3.15 p.m., arriving at Ulverstone at 8.15 o'clock at night; that is according to our time-table. I received orders at Devonport from the station-master that I had to run a goods train back from Ulverstone when I arrived at Devonport, bringing on what I could from Ulverstone to Lillico. What I had over my load I had to put in Lillico Siding, and run on with the remainder to Devonport. When I arrived at Devonport, and finishing what shunting I had to do, I had to run back to Lillico and fetch the remainder of the train to Devonport again; and, when I had finished shunting there again, run on back to Ulverstone. That night, if I am not mistaken, it was

12 or 12.30 o'clock when I got finished, and I had to be on the engine next morning again at 5 o'clock to be ready to go on my usual trip again. We started from Ulverstone again the next morning at the usual hour. If I am not mistaken, I worked until 12 or 12.30 o'clock that night.

22. *By the Chairman.*—You got up in the morning for the 6.30 train? Yes; but I had to get up about 5 o'clock, Sir.

23. *By Mr. Barrett.*—Did you get orders from the Locomotive Superintendent to do this? No, not at all, Sir; from the stationmaster at Devonport.

24. Did you get any extra pay for it? I had some overtime allowed me for that.

25. What wages? I got paid extra for that trip. I do not know exactly what I got. I was satisfied with the pay that was allowed me. I got half a day's extra pay: that was the pay I received.

26. You worked on several occasions excessive trips? Yes. The trips I have mentioned, taking the ordinary mail train from Launceston, I worked longer hours, and, of course, there was one train I rode to St. Mary's and back. On that morning I was on duty with my engine at 4.30 o'clock, and I did not leave it till one o'clock.

27. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Do you mean until one o'clock the next morning? Yes.

28. *By the Minister of Lands.*—Where did the orders come from? The foreman came and gave me the time-table. We always take our orders from the time-table.

29. *By the Chairman.*—What time-table? The time-table I got, Sir, is signed by Mr. Back; all the time-tables I have received have been so signed.

30. *By Mr. Barrett.*—Did the Conference of Drivers recommend that a foreman should be appointed at Launceston? Yes, we did.

31. Do you still adhere to that recommendation? I believe we should have a foreman. I think myself one should be appointed, and that he should be an old driver who understands the wants of others, and understands the working of the engines—a man who could get them out and see they were properly equipped, and so forth. If I did not think that a foreman was not wanted I would not recommend it, nor do I think any man would recommend that which was not wanted.

32. *By the Minister of Lands.*—Why, indeed? For instance, in looking round the engines and seeing that everything is correct. If a spare engine is needed it should be the duty of the foreman to see that it is ready, and, if necessary, to go out with it. He should see to the engine fires, spanners, water, and so forth; he should also see that everything was in its place. You might go out with an engine not properly looked after, and find that it would stick you up with your train.

33. *By Mr. Barrett.*—You have made a statement here about the inefficiency of the staff: can you say whether it is rendered inefficient from any other cause than that which you state? No.

34. *By the Chairman.*—Will you read the report signed by yourself here. It states—"We consider that in some cases the work has not been fairly apportioned of late, and would refer to the case of a driver attached to a Launceston staff, whose week's work had been 74, 76, and 73 hours of consecutive weeks. We are aware that there are ample drivers to run all trains, and that there is no necessity to call on any member of the staff to do more than a fair week's work." Did you sign that report? No; I never signed anything to that effect.

35. This paragraph, stating "there is no necessity to call on any member of the staff to do more than a fair day's work?" I say I did not sign that, although it bears my signature.

36. *By the Minister of Lands.*—The report was read over to you, then? I beg your pardon, it was not read over to me. That paragraph is not what I believe, even.

37. *By the Chairman.*—You say, then, that you did not see that report. Will you repeat your statement regarding this overtime. Is it your opinion that there are not sufficient drivers to do the work? Yes; I repeat the statement. As a rule our Locomotive Superintendent sees that everything is in its proper place—that is the rule of the Locomotive Superintendent.

38. *By Mr. Urquhart.*—If everything has been found in its proper place up to the present time, where is the necessity for a foreman? He is required to see that the engines are properly cleaned.

39. They are being seen to at the present time? Yes, to a certain extent.

40. Are they seen to every day? Yes, as far as I know.

41. You say you do not blame the Locomotive Superintendent? No blame at all, Sir.

42. Do you blame anybody? The only objection I have is, that the drivers of goods trains have to work so long. The goods are on the line and they must be carried.

43. When you did that extra work did you object? No; if I had done so I might have been suspended or taken off my engine, and that would not do these times.

44. Is it not a fact that the men in these times are only too glad to do extra work? I am very glad to get off my legs after my day's work is done. As a rule after a man has been on an engine for a few years he goes in the legs. I have had a good few years of it, and I am gone in the legs.

45. Did you get extra pay? Yes, once.

46. Did you send in a claim for the other times? No; it is the duty of those in charge to see that you get paid for extra services; they know how much work you perform, and can say whether you are entitled to extra pay or not.

47. How long ago are you referring to? A month or five weeks ago.

48. *By Mr. Crisp.*—Have you made any complaints to the General Manager? To the Locomotive Superintendent.

49. Are you aware whether he received them? I believe so.

50. Did you receive any reply from the Locomotive Superintendent? Yes, I received a reply to the effect that he could not keep it—that he was short-handed, and the power was taken out of his hands. That is the reply I received.

51. *By Mr. Lewis.*—Are you in possession of a copy of the Regulations? Yes.

52. Are you acquainted with their conditions? Yes.

53. There is a rule here to the effect that any servant feeling he has a grievance shall forward his complaint on to the Minister of the Department: are you aware of that? Yes.

54. Have you sent anything to the Minister? Nothing.
55. Have you made any report to him on any subject on which you were aggrieved? None.
56. Did you receive any extra leave for the extra days you put in? No.
57. No extra? They were all within the last two months.
58. How long have you been in the Government employ? I was taken over from the Tasmanian Main Line Railway when the Government made the purchase. I had been for a large number of years in the employ of the Main Line Company.
59. Up to the last two months have you had to work overtime? Yes, but when it has been convenient I have always had time off.
60. When it has been convenient? Yes, when there has not been too much doing I have always had time off.
61. On any trips that you were called away what hours had you off? I can hardly tell you. From the time I went away with my engine until I came back I never left the engine. I got no time at all. I did not arrive in Launceston until 11.55 A.M. That was from 6 o'clock in the morning.
62. When did you leave Launceston? At 6 A.M.
63. No, that was when you left Ulverstone? Oh, you mean Ulverstone?
64. You started from Ulverstone at 6.30. What time did you get to Launceston? At 11.55 A.M. I think.
65. And you left again? At 3.15 P.M. out of the time between I arrived in Launceston and left again I had to coal my engine, take in water, pack the engine, see that the lamps were right, and get my dinner. By this time I had to start out again.
66. You say you want a foreman of the fitting shops. Why is that? The present system cannot work satisfactorily. The system does not work as satisfactorily as when we had a foreman that understood the wants of the drivers.
67. Who is responsible for the stores? The drivers are responsible. They are supposed to see that everything is ready for starting. Before a driver leaves with his train he is supposed to take in every thing that he wants.
68. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Who regulates your hours? We are regulated by the time tables. The General Manager signs the time tables and they are issued to us.
69. I mean who apportions you your duties? As far as I understand we have had to work twelve hours per day.
70. Who regulates the hours you should work? We work by the timetables. A driver has to be up an hour and a half before his train starts to see that she is ready.
71. Who apportions the time to the drivers? The foreman should tell us what to do.
72. I mean, if you are ordered to do certain work, who apportions it? The foreman comes and tells us what we are to do. The hours in the shops are eight per day; that is supposed to be a fair day's work.
73. *By the Chairman.*—In fact, you do not know who instructs you? We work by the time-tables. I would like you to understand that in the shops we are not given any extra time. When we work in the shops we work the same hours as shopmen.
74. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Are you not a shopman? No, I am an engine-driver. I have been a relieving man.
75. When you are running an engine, is there any time allotted you, and who apportions it? The only thing is the time-table. There is a board in the shop which tells you what your hours are, and it shows what train you are on; this board also shows your off-day.
76. Then the extra work should be overtime? Yes.
77. Is that posted up? No.
78. Are you given any instructions? No, only the time-tables. If you are on the ordinary, the foreman comes and tells you you have got to do an extra trip.
79. Is there any record of the hours you work kept? I am not sure, but it could be easily found out.
80. Do you think the special work is evenly divided? I do not know. If you take a man off a special train and put him on another you are short-handed.
81. Do you think it is evenly divided? I do not think you can divide it in any other way—we are short-handed.
82. *By Mr. Burke.*—Does one driver have to do more work than another? That depends on the trains.
83. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Do you think the allotment of the work has been fair? I consider I have done work that I should not have been called upon to do if there were enough drivers.
84. That is your ordinary work? Yes.
85. I don't mean special work, I mean ordinary work—is it equally divided amongst the drivers? I don't understand you.
86. Well, do you think that any favouritism has been shown? No, not to my knowledge. I cannot answer for that.
87. Do you know whether any formal complaint has been made to be forwarded on to the Minister—of course, we know that some have been made to Mr. Batchelor? Yes, complaints have been made to Mr. Batchelor.
88. Did you ever send any complaint to the Minister? There has been no complaint that I am aware of made to him.
89. How do you account for the lengthy hours you say you work? Some people say it is retrenchment.
90. Have there been many extra trips this year? No, not many.
91. Do you know of any statement being made that it is monstrous that you should work long hours? No.
92. Would you have heard of it if it had been so? Yes, I think so.
93. So far as you are aware no complaints have been made? No.

94. You are speaking only for yourself? Yes.
95. What complaint did you make? I went to Mr. Batchelor and complained to him, but I do not know whether other drivers did the same thing or not.
96. You never spoke to Mr. Back? No, not at all.
97. *By the Minister of Lands.*—How long is it since you were dissatisfied with the present arrangements? Only the last four months. The reason I went to Mr. Batchelor was, because the drivers said that they had referred to the General Manager and he had not replied to them. The names of the drivers were Maher, Dower, and Barnard; and they came to the conclusion that it was no use going to the General Manager because they would not get justice.
98. What about? The long hours. As far as I remember Dower was reduced 6d. per day for leaving a truck behind.
99. And Barnard? For turning his engine over to another driver without instructions from the Locomotive Superintendent.
100. No complaint has been made to the General Manager? No.
101. You only brought it before the Locomotive Superintendent? Yes, that is what I have already told you. It was about a month or five weeks ago.
102. And what was the reply? He said they were short-handed, and he could not help it.
103. You would not know if they sent their complaint on to the General Manager or not? No, I know nothing at all about it.
104. Do you know whether or not the drivers are satisfied with the present arrangements? Yes. They are all satisfied as far as I know. I never went round to ask, but I am satisfied.
105. Then you believe they are satisfied? The greater number of them seem to agree that the time is about fifty-four hours a week. They think there is very little getting away. I don't say so. It was said that all over fifty-four hours should go for overtime.
106. Were you the man running the coal train on the Fingal line? Yes.
107. Do you know how long you ran on Thursday, 8th August? No; I can't tell.
108. Now, did you not get paid for overtime on these trains? Not until I came down last week and got it from the General Manager. He gave me an order to get it when I came down.
109. Did you ever ask for it? No, I did not.
110. Were you told why you did not get it? No, Sir.
111. Could you tell the dates of running these long hours on the Ulverstone line? No; I had taken the run to Longford. I could not tell you the hours.
112. Could you tell the month? It was within the last four or five months.
113. And can't you go nearer than that? No, I did not keep an account of those things.
114. *By Captain Miles.*—How long have the present running arrangements been in force? I have never been called on till within the last month or so to run extra trains. I have been relief man for the last three years.
115. Has the staff been reduced lately? Yes.
116. Since when? It has been reduced more or less during the last six or eight months.
117. When did the reductions commence? Well, that I don't remember.
118. Can you say within a few months? No, Sir.
119. Has there been a running foreman since you were driving? Yes, up to within a short time back.
120. How long is it since his services were suspended? About the beginning of the year.
121. What extra work have you had to do since then? I have told you, running the extra trains.
122. But that has nothing to do with the running foreman's work? No, that does not interfere with the running foreman.
123. Then, what extra work have you had to do? Well, the only thing would be when I have been stabling the engine at nights or on Sunday morning. I have had sometimes to pull an engine or two out of the shed to get at my own.
124. And how long has that taken? Oh! not a great while. It all depends where it was, say twenty minutes.
125. And how often has this occurred? Oh! pretty often.
126. What do you call often, once a week or once a day? It might occur once or twice a week.
127. Then, in consequence of the running foreman not being there, you have had to do this work? Yes. When there was a running foreman the engines used to be placed so that they would come out in rotation.
128. Now, how much work have you to do in consequence of there being no running foreman? Well, no extra work at all in regard to that; the only extra work is when I come in with my engine, and of a Sunday morning, I might then have to shift two or three other engines till I could get at my own.
129. And the other engine-drivers would have to do the same? Yes, exactly the same.
130. And if there were a running foreman that work would be done by him? Yes.
131. And that would be saved to you in time. You would run straight into the shed and straight out? Yes.
132. I understood you to say it was compulsory upon you to sign the recommendations contained in the Parliamentary Paper—what did you mean by that? That was, when I was fetched down here. I told them that I came to represent myself. I did not quite know what I came for. It was understood when we got together that it was compulsory that we had all to sign for the alterations in the time of working.
133. Then, you said you were appointed by ballot? Yes, but I never had any conversation with anyone about it. I was called over by the Stationmaster in the afternoon, and he told me it was to be vote by ballot. I got that from the Stationmaster, not from the Locomotive Superintendent. I don't know how it was done, whether by the ballot-box or not.
134. Then, you got information from the Stationmaster that a ballot was to be taken to appoint one to represent the grievance about the foreman? Yes, that is correct.

135. And was a ballot taken? I don't know myself whether it was taken or not. I believe there was a ballot.

136. And you were selected? Yes.

137. To represent the drivers? I did not know at the time. I did not know till I got down here.

138. But you said it was compulsory that you should make these representations? When I got down here I was given to understand that it was compulsory. I stated that I had no instructions from the other drivers to represent them. I was given to understand in the room that all were called for the purpose of altering the trains to make it better for all concerned; that I was to represent the drivers, and that we would discuss the matter so as to make things better if possible. The trains could be worked with the present staff. The Stationmaster and Traffic Manager were present when we started to make the alterations.

139. Who framed the recommendations? Mr. Winterson was there and took it down to, but the alterations were made after I left. Mr. Winterson did not have it correct. The other three drivers were there in the evening and never let me know about it, and they went in the afternoon and made other arrangements.

140. Then, Mr. Winterson made the recommendations and you signed them? Yes, I believe I did.

141. And it was compulsory to sign them? Yes, in order to make the alterations. I was there to represent the drivers of the north, and was given to understand when I arrived that I was balloted for, and that we came there to make alterations to see if it could be made better for all concerned with the present staff—to make the work easier for everybody.

142. Then, I understand you that it was compulsory that there should be an alteration in the running, but not compulsory that you should sign the recommendations? Yes.

143. It was compulsory that certain alterations should be made? In the working, yes: that was compulsory. That was what we came for.

144. How was it compulsory on you to sign? You understand that when I came down I came to represent all the drivers.

145. Yes; you came to represent the drivers, but when you came you said it was to represent yourself.—I don't understand the statement that it was compulsory, that you had to make these recommendations? We were supposed to agree to make the alterations that would benefit the working of the trains with the present staff we have.

146. Did you vote by ballot in Launceston? Yes, I did, but I told the Stationmaster that I voted for Driver Hardy to come. I did not want to take part in the matter.

147. *By the Chairman.*—I would ask if in your opinion you consider that at any time the engines you have had charge of have been working beyond their capacity? I have had some engines very rough to ride on.

148. On account of retrenchment, have the engines had more haulage pressed upon them at any particular time? Of late I have found some of the engines more rough to ride on than they were twelve months back. They shake about more; there is much more side-play, and they knock about a bit.

149. Is that particularly the case where an engine has done more work, or not? Yes. There is too much lateral play on the boxes, which causes the engine to knock about. There is too much side-play.

150. There have been many little stoppages along the line. Is that the result of the engines having to do too much haulage, is it natural decay, or through the engines not being well looked after, or what? No, Sir. A valve is often likely to bend, and then from my knowledge it is apt to go, if only out of shape. It all depends on the metal, which may be wrong. Perhaps it may be a flaw in the mould which might be invisible to the eye altogether. When we come to put steam on to the back of the valve it might give a bit of a clip and snap it.

151. Then you don't think the engines have had too much haulage pressed on them? I can't say that they have. I think, with the side-play I mention they are not so comfortable to ride on, nor so safe for fast speed, as they would be if the brasses were kept up better.

The Committee adjourned until 11 o'clock next day.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1895.

WILLIAM WEST, *recalled, made the declaration.*

152. *By the Chairman.*—Have you anything to say? Before we go any further I wish to clear myself a little bit. I saw a paragraph in the paper in reference to what I was speaking about—not signing that document. To the best of my knowledge, as near as I can tell the five minutes' bell had rung when Mr. Mann read that document over. I did not understand that there was anything in it in reference to there being sufficient drivers. When we were in the room arranging for the working of the trains, which you will find out from the other drivers, there was nothing mentioned about there being a sufficient staff to work the trains. It was mentioned that there would be several drivers wanted, and that there were several fireman competent to act as engine-drivers. When I signed that document I must have misunderstood Mr. Mann. I will not say it was not in the document, although I do not recollect Mr. Mann mentioning it. I hope you will thoroughly understand that there has been a misunderstanding.

153. I understand you now to say that, although you deliberated over that document, it was not signed after the deliberation, but a few minutes before you left by the evening train? Yes, on the train which left at 10 minutes past 8.

154. At what time did you meet in the morning? We met in the morning between 9 and 10.

155. Did Mr. Mann read the whole document over to you? Yes, he started to read it over, but as far as any reference to there being sufficient men to work the trains is concerned, I do not recollect that. It was not mentioned when we met to arrange the working of the trains. It was understood there were

drivers and firemen competent to take charge of an engine, and that there would have to be more drivers made. Messrs. Mann and Hughes and the Launceston Station-master thoroughly understood that.

156. If you had known that paragraph was in the document would you have signed it? No; because I would be signing what I consider is not right and just.

157. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Do you mean to say that with the competent firemen there are sufficient drivers? No, Sir. Where trains have to be worked extra there would have to be more firemen and more drivers.

158. Do they use firemen as drivers? I suppose they would if they were called on to do so.

159. *By the Chairman.*—How was this investigation held?—were the statements of the different men taken down by anyone at the time? Yes.

160. Who took them down? Mr. Winterson.

161. In pencil, ink, or type-writing? He took them down in pencil.

162. Was a general report written out by Mr. Winterson? Everything was taken down as each driver spoke in reference to the working of the trains.

163. Was anything of that report, which I dare say you have seen in the papers, written out at the time? What was not written out while I was there was arranged afterwards by the other three drivers, and there were some alterations made while I was not there. While I was there we arranged that firemen and drivers should have twelve clear days' leave of absence a year, but an alteration was made afterwards, giving the firemen ten days' leave and the drivers twelve days' leave.

164. I will read the report to you. (Report read.) Was that report I have just read brought up shortly after you were deliberating, or had you no opportunity of seeing it until five or ten minutes before you left for the night? I had no opportunity of seeing it till then. I should not have signed it if I had known that it stated there were sufficient drivers to run the trains.

165. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—With that exception, the rest of the report is what you agreed to? All the rest of the report is correct, to the best of my knowledge.

166. *By the Chairman.*—Your statement is that the evidence as you gave it was all taken down by Mr. Winterson in pencil, and before the train left at night this report was brought up, and you signed it? Yes, that is the truth.

167. *By Mr. Burke.*—When you signed that document did you understand that it contained this:—“We are aware there are ample drivers to run all trains, and there is no necessity to call on any member of the staff to do more than a fair week's work”? No, Sir, I did not. I was not really aware of there being sufficient drivers to run all trains.

168. You were not a party to that part of the report? I was not. I would not have signed it if I had known that was in it.

169. *By Mr. Reibey.*—You really did not understand the nature of that paragraph when you were signing it? No, Sir, I did not, or I would not have signed it.

170. *By Mr. Dumaesq.*—Was this report read to you before you signed it? It was read, but I do not recollect hearing that particular paragraph.

171. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—You saw this document published in the newspapers? I never took notice of it until this morning.

172. *By Mr. Miles.*—The witness stated positively on a previous occasion that he did not sign that document with a certain statement in it. Now this morning he says he did sign it, but did not understand its purport. I want to know how this change of front is brought about by his having seen that report in the press? When that report was read here yesterday, I objected to a certain part of it, saying that I did not see it.

173. Since then you have seen it in the press, and this morning you say that, although it was read over to you, you did not understand it? I did not hear that part read.

174. *By Mr. Bach.*—You said yesterday that long hours were worked because there were not sufficient engine-men? Yes, Sir, I did.

175. Do you know how many drivers and firemen there are? I have not counted them up.

176. Have you any idea? I have not.

177. Are the regular train hours altered from what they were in 1891, 1892, and 1893 in reference to making the hours longer? Not that I am aware of.

178. You said the long hours commenced shortly after the discharge of Foreman Saunders, who left in February last? Yes, I do say so.

179. Can you tell me how many engine-men there are now as compared with the date on which Saunders left the service? Well, there are two drivers who have left the service to my knowledge.

180. Can you tell me the names of the men who have taken their places? None have taken their places that I am aware of.

181. Do you know Daniels? Yes.

182. What has he been doing lately? He was an engine-driver before Saunders left the service. He was an engine-driver a good while at this end.

183. He was an engine-driver retrenched to fireman? Yes.

184. Is it not a fact that Daniels and Smith have been driving since then? Smith was a driver in the old Main Line days.

185. You know two men left? Yes.

186. Do you again say that these two other men have been driving in their stead? I cannot say.

187. I think you said yesterday that you had run a coal train, but could not fix the day? No, Sir, I cannot.

188. I produce a running sheet to which the witness's name is signed. (To witness) Will you examine that and say what it is? Yes, I made that out.

189. What does it represent? It represents a trip on the St. Mary's Line.

190. That, in fact, is your running sheet for the coal special, which you said had run such long hours? Yes.

191. What is the date? It is the 8th August.
192. Are you satisfied you ran that train on 8th August? Yes.
193. How many times have you run this coal train? Only once.
194. I understood you to say that you had so much more work lately on these particular trains because there were not sufficient engine-men? Well, to the best of my knowledge that is so. I don't know the arrangements of the Locomotive Superintendent.
195. What I understood you to say was that since Saunders left you and others had to work longer hours because there were not sufficient engine-men? I have already stated what I think upon that point.
196. Will you confine yourself to this—whether or not you said that long hours had been run on these occasions because there were not sufficient engine-men? I cannot say for certain.
197. What did you say? I don't know whether I did say so or not.
198. Can you tell me how many engines were in steam on the day you ran this coal train? I have not counted them up: it is not my place to interfere.
199. What is the largest number of trains we have run on one day? I cannot say.
200. If you cannot answer that question, in what position are you to make the statement to this Committee that there are not sufficient engine-drivers? It is where specials are called out that there are not enough engine-men.
201. I cannot follow you. Think well over this question. You have told the Committee that you don't know how many engine-men there are? That is correct.
202. You have said you don't know how many engine-men there were at the time Foreman Saunders left, and how many engine-men there are now. You have also said you don't know how many schedule trains there are, or the greatest number of engines required to run a holiday. In the face of those statements, how are you in a position to say that there are not sufficient engine-men? Because there are no spare drivers about, to my knowledge.
203. What do you mean by being short? I mean you have to make firemen into drivers.
204. Do you know how many engine-men there are in the service? I have told you I do not.
205. You mentioned two occasions during the last four months when you ran extra hours; one was when you ran to Devonport? Yes.
206. Do you know the circumstances under which you ran? I believe there were extra goods on the road, and a boat was waiting to take them. I had to run back to Devonport.
207. It is twelve or thirteen miles between Ulverstone and Devonport? Yes.
208. How many times in the course of your life have you been asked to do that? Twice.
209. And this last case was a special emergency, when you had to run goods back for a steamer waiting? Yes.
210. With regard to the coal train you ran on August 8th—what were you doing the day before? That was my day of rest after coming off the mail; I was asleep that day. Next day was to have been my shed day. I was asleep, and the foreman sent over to tell me that I would have to go and get coal and oil to take a special out to St. Mary's next morning, to leave at six o'clock. I got up about twelve, and went over and drew the coal and oil, which took about an hour and a half, and went home again.
211. On the 6th you arrived at Launceston, at seven o'clock, with the mail train? Yes.
212. Then you put the engine away and went off? Yes.
213. About 12 A.M. you were told you would have to run a train on 17th? Yes.
214. How long did it take you to get the engine ready? About an hour and a half.
215. You came into Launceston at 7 o'clock on the 6th and put your engine away, which would take you about an hour? I came in on the 17th, and was called up on 17th.
216. It was during the day of 17th you were called up, then? That is correct.
217. Was there any other man who could have taken that train besides you. Could it have been arranged to send another man out and not disturb you? I do not know that there was another driver, unless a fireman was put on driving.
218. Could Daniels have done it? He was not there.
219. Or Debellin? He was firing for me.
220. Could he have taken the train? I suppose he could have done so if he had been made a driver.
221. If he had been put on the locomotive you might have had your day in? I believe I would.
222. On the day that you came down to that conference you called in at my office in the afternoon? Yes.
223. And we had a conversation? Yes, I believe we had.
224. And I told you I was having it taken down in shorthand? Yes.
225. Do you recollect what we said? I don't know that I could recollect it.
226. I will read the document to you (document read)? There are some things there I do not recollect.
227. Do you recollect saying, "I was informed no overtime was allowed. I applied to Mr. Batchelor, and he said he was not allowed to give overtime; the power was taken out of his hands?" I don't recollect making use of those words. Still I may have done so. I won't say I did not.
228. If Mr. Winterson were to come forward and say on oath that you did say them, you are not in a position to contradict him? No, I am not.
229. I told you your words were being taken down, so that you were not trapped in any way? Yes, that is so.
230. I suppose you are aware that I have before me the running of every train, and truck, and carriage, and everything that the train does on the road? Yes.
231. And that therefore I am in a position to know the working of every train for the last five years? Yes.
232. The Chairman asked you if you had not found the engines running more roughly on account of overloading? Yes.
233. You said you thought you noticed more oscillation? I did not say it was through overloading.

234. Is it not a fact that when you are driving an engine there is a steadily increasing side-play as the load increases, that is to say, an engine running the same speed will not oscillate so much with a half load as with a full load? An engine will run more steadily with a load behind.

235. The oscillation increases with the load? As the speed increases.

236. Can you tell me how often during the last two months you have had more than the load allowed by Mr. Batchelor to the locomotive? I don't believe I have had anything extra. I might have taken an extra truck lightly loaded.

237. You cannot recollect any instances during the last two months? No.

238. And yet you think from the extra work given the engines, they are running roughly? I do not. I did not say so.

239. *By Mr. Batchelor.*—Up to the present have you heard any complaints amongst the men as to the work being too heavy? I have heard no complaints from any of my fellow workmen. Everyone, until just lately, has been satisfied with the way in which they have been worked. In fact, every driver that I have spoken to has told me that I could use their names to say that they were satisfied with the way you were treating them.

240. Are you aware that a number of hands were discharged, and firemen and engine-men put back? Yes.

241. That is the cause of our being short-handed? Yes, that is the reason, I believe.

242. If the fireman had had to run that coal train he would have had to run long hours? Yes.

243. And there was no one else to do the work but you? There was no one but the fireman who could have taken charge of the engine.

244. Has there been any complaint amongst the men on the Western Line as to the hours? Drivers have come to the conclusion that as the busy time is coming on they will be called on to run during their shed days, and work a lot over hours. When Mr. Saunders was foreman, when I worked long hours he always allowed me the time off, and I was always satisfied.

245. Since these extra hours there are no men in the shed to relieve you? I know of none you could put on unless they were firemen, as I have already mentioned.

246. *By Mr. Miles.*—You said yesterday that the report of the conference was not read to you; to-day you say it was read to you and you did not understand it? I have explained that already this morning.

247. *By Mr. Burke.*—The impression you left on my mind yesterday was that it was read over to you and you signed it, but you were not aware that a certain paragraph was in it? That is correct.

248. *By Mr. Crisp.*—Did Mr. Winterson read his report to you from his shorthand notes? No, Sir.

249. *By Mr. Pilling.*—How many drivers were at the conference? Four, three besides myself.

250. Did the trains run as usual? You will find by the books of the Locomotive Superintendent and General Manager more information than I can give you.

251. How many drivers are there here now? There is another driver here now, but I think he is working part of his time in the morning.

252. You say there are not enough drivers, but when I ask you a question as to how the work is going on you know nothing about it. The inference is that you know nothing about what you stated? Oh, yes, I do. I think if there are drivers enough we should not have to work any extra time. I consider there are not drivers enough to relieve us without making firemen into drivers.

253. *By Mr. Barrett.*—You believe, now, for the ordinary train service that there are enough drivers? I believe so.

254. But there is not a sufficiency of drivers to look after the specials? Yes, that is my meaning.

GEORGE CHARLES STANLEY, *called and examined.*

255. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? George Charles Stanley.

256. You are an engine-driver in the service of the Government? Yes.

257. How long have you been in service? I was in the service of the Main Line Company for twelve years before the Government took it over.

258. How long have you been driving? About ten years.

259. Do you know what this enquiry is about? It is in reference to the apportionment of hours.

260. We want any information you can give us as to how the apportionment of time has affected yourself? Well, Sir, speaking for myself, I have always been running permanent steady trains,—the mail train and the ordinary train. There is only one instance I can give of when I thought the work rather much, and that was running a special train from Hobart to Launceston and back next morning, coupled on to the mail train—about twenty-one hours altogether: that was the day previous to the Launceston Races.

261. Have you heard any complaints in the service as to the apportionment of time, or is it considered that the service is inadequately manned? Of course retrenchment has affected the railway service as well as other departments, and consequently we have been called on to do extra work, especially running extra goods trains. We have less men now than we have had for some time past.

262. How long is it since this extra work has been thrust on the men? For some time past. Just now the goods traffic has fallen off considerably, and we are of course eased a bit.

263. You attended the conference at Mr. Back's office? Yes.

264. There was one paragraph in the Report as follows:—"We consider in some cases the work has not been fairly apportioned of late . . . there is no necessity to call on any member of the staff to do more than a fair week's work." Do you remember that subject being discussed? I was under the impression that that thing had never been brought up. I remember now the thing was threshed out. I am not very conversant with the traffic at the north end of the Island, because I do not run there.

265. Do you remember a discussion taking place in regard to this: "We are aware there are ample drivers, and there is no necessity to call on any member of the staff to do more than a fair week's work"? That was discussed as far as the southern end of the Island was concerned; I do not remember it being spoken of by the Northern delegates. It was remarked at the meeting that if we were to have a week of 54 hours the Department would have to make more engine-drivers to do it. One of the delegates then said, "We have Driscoll and Maher and a driver put back, that is three."

266. And was it agreed that if these men were made drivers it would meet the difficulty? Yes; but that only refers to this end. In the busy season we would be short of men if anyone fell sick.

267. But you thought by firemen being made into engine-drivers the requirements of the Service would be met? At this end.

268. Who took the report down? Mr. Winterson.

269. And when was it brought up? That night.

270. And before you signed it was it read over to you? Yes.

271. And you agreed to it? At the time that it was read over to me I should have been getting my engine ready for the 10:30 ordinary. I requested Mr. Hughes to push through it, and did not take any particular notice of the paragraph you have read.

272. Still you remember signing it? Yes.

273. Do you think that paragraph expressed the wishes of those that formed the conference? Yes, I do.

274. *By Mr. Dumaresq.*—During that discussion all the members were present? Yes.

275. And you discussed the question as to the number of drivers? Yes.

276. And it was decided there were sufficient drivers and engine-men? Yes.

277. *By Mr. Crisp.*—What have you to say about the complaints of drivers working overtime? Speaking for myself, I have no complaints. I have had nothing to complain about. It is admitted that the mail train that is run at present has been a little bit too much for us. I run it four nights a week, which is fourteen hours' continuous work every night.

278. Do you consider that you are overworked? I consider that the way the mail train is run that it is a bit too much.

279. Have you made any complaints to the Locomotive Superintendent? I believe I told him on one occasion he was working us a bit too heavy.

280. Did you put anything in writing? No, I did not.

281. What did the Locomotive Superintendent say? He said, "It is a bit heavy, but you have very good times on the ordinary train."

282. In working these long hours, do you think there is any risk or danger to the passenger traffic? I think if you come to work a man eighteen to twenty hours on the foot-plate of an engine, there is a very big risk.

283. Have you represented that to the Locomotive Superintendent? No.

284. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—What hours do you work? My hours run into something like 56 or 57 hours per week at the present time.

285. That is one week with another? Yes; I have one week on the ordinary, which is an easy week, and then one week on the mail, which is a hard week.

286. Do you consider you get a fair week's work or too much? I consider I would if I did three nights a week on the mail instead of four. There is no night work on the ordinary, and it is the night work I complain of. An engine-driver is always on the alert expecting something. In the day-time you can see ahead through the windows of the cab, but in the night-time you have to keep your head outside.

287. Have you been in the Government service since the purchase of the Main Line? Yes.

288. And you have only run one special? That is all I have reason to complain of.

289. Were you allowed any overtime for that? I could not answer that question. I am not positive on the point.

290. Are you positive that the question of the number of engine-drivers was discussed at your conference? Yes.

291. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—For how long has this dissatisfaction existed amongst the men? Only some few weeks to my knowledge.

292. Did you hear about it amongst them? No.

293. Have you made any complaints to the General Manager? None whatever.

294. Have you had any complaints of the engines recently? No, the engines that I have worked are in good order. The rolling-stock at this end is in very good condition.

295. Is it as good as usual? It is in perfect order. It is a pleasure to work it now compared with what it was in the old Main Line days—that is, at this end of the Island.

296. *By Mr. Burke.*—Have you had to work longer hours than usual this year as compared with last year? I cannot say. I don't know that I have worked any longer or any shorter.

297. Do you consider that you are worked beyond what ought to be expected of you? We consider that 54 hours ought to constitute a week's work.

298. Are you working as a rule longer than that? I do 54 hours a week on the four nights I am on the mail train, without washing out at all; but then, on the ordinary train, I get the benefit of it again.

299. Did you perform the same extra work last year? Yes; but then we did not go so far, only running the mail to Parattah and back, 26 miles less each night.

300. *By Mr. Miles.*—Was West present when that report was agreed to? Yes.

301. He heard all that was said? We had a discussion on it in the evening. West was not present at that.

302. Was it a formal discussion? We went through the whole of the proposal submitted, and of course we objected to what we did not think was a fair thing.

303. And then after that did you have another meeting? No, Sir, the paper was not ready to be signed. It was signed the next morning about 9:30.

304. Of course you knew what you were signing? It was read through rather hurriedly, but I was quite satisfied with the contents of it.

305. *By Mr. Dumaresq.*—Were all the drivers present during the conference? We were satisfied with it then, and we were all to meet together that afternoon to sign it. We all went down with the exception of West.

306. Was this matter discussed when you all met together? In the morning it was.

307. *By the Chairman.*—Are you quite sure the question of the engine-drivers, and putting on firemen to take the place of certain enginemen, was fully discussed in the morning at the conference? It was discussed in the morning, because Mr. Hughes, the Station Master, mentioned Driscoll's name.

308. Did you discuss it again in the afternoon, or make any alterations? None whatever.

309. *By Mr. Back.*—What was the date when you drove that special to Launceston and brought it back coupled with the mail train—was it in February? It was the day before the Launceston races.

310. And in the thick of the Exhibition? Yes.

311. We may fairly assume it was an emergency day? Yes.

312. When there was great pressure, owing to the Launceston Races, the Hobart Exhibition, and the general holiday? Yes.

313. In the Main Line time the drivers used to run that trip every day? The express drivers used to run there and back every other day.

314. You don't lay much stress on that? No, Sir.

315. I suppose you know we have less train mileage? Yes.

316. If we adopted the plan submitted by the conference the hours at night would be easier? Yes.

317. I may take it what applies to you will apply to the whole service? Yes.

318. And as regards the North driver, Davis, will he be able to give us information? Yes.

319. That information is in writing? Yes.

320. Do you know how many times the staff have run these long hours? I cannot say.

321. If I said three times would it be near the mark? I cannot say.

322. You know it is very few? Yes.

323. If the men had been paid overtime to run the coal trains would there have been a word of this? I think if I had a week's work without any overtime I would feel satisfied.

324. This discussion on the apportionment of time is the outcome of those three specials run on the Fingal line? Yes, I believe so, and the extra goods trains. The whole grievance has arisen out of these coal specials that have been run together with the goods trains. I have heard no complaints whatever in regard to our permanent running.

325. 1891 was a busy time? Yes.

326. No retrenchment had begun then? No.

327. How did the hours in July, 1891 compare with those in July, 1895? I think we had a larger number of engine-men then, and the work did not come so heavy.

328. If I were to tell you that the men worked less hours on an average per man in July, 1895, than in July, 1891, you would not know? I cannot say.

329. You leave Hobart at 10 minutes past 8, and get to Launceston at 7 o'clock—10 hours and 50 minutes? Yes.

330. You have booked to you $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours for getting out and putting back your engine? Yes.

331. So, out of the $13\frac{1}{2}$ hours, $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours you are not running? Yes.

332. With regard to washing out, I think we have all agreed that the present mail hours are rather severe, and we will be able to adopt a system to make them easier. At the same time you have one day off entirely and one day shed-day, and one day to wash out? That is half a day, 6 hours.

333. I think you are aware that in the other colonies the wash out is done at the principal stations by wash-out men, and not by the drivers? Yes.

334. *By Mr. Batchelor.*—You say there are plenty of men to do the running at present? Of course, including Maher and others.

335. Are you aware some of the firemen put back are now driving? I believe so.

336. If those two that were mentioned were put back, would there be enough? Not if there were any special trains.

337. How long does it take to wash out a boiler? About an hour and a quarter.

338. How many boilers could you wash out and fill in a day? Not more than two, to do it properly.

339. Do you think you could do two in a day properly? I reckon you could do two a day properly, with the pressure of water there is there.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1895.

SAMUEL MANN, *called and examined.*

340. *By the Chairman.*—Your name is Samuel Mann, and you are Traffic Inspector of the Government Railways of this Colony? Yes.

341. How long have you been in the service? Nearly ten years.

342. You are aware that the object of this investigation is to get at the complaints of the employees of the various branches of the service as to overwork, who say they work for longer periods than they think they should? Yes.

343. In your position you are conversant with the working of the lines, and know the employees at the different stations? Yes.

344. Give us your experience, as far as you can, of any cases where you think there were just grounds for considering that the men were over-employed. What Departments do you refer to, Sir?

345. Well, say, the various stations, or the Locomotive Department. I take it we want to know whether the stationmasters, porters, and others are also satisfied. Confine yourself, first, to the Locomotive Department—say the firemen and engine-drivers? Yes, Sir, I understand.

346. Well, first, as to the over-employment of firemen and drivers? Yes. I only know of the case referred to recently, the case of Driver West.

347. And you can't say more about that case than is in the report of the recent investigation at the Railway? No, I can't say more than that.

348. Has your experience shown you that the stationmasters, the porters, or any other employees should have diminished hours of labour? I don't think any of them have good grounds of complaint. You might find it at an isolated station where, perhaps, only one man is employed, but take any station where there is a staff of men and you will not find any overwork.

349. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—I suppose you have a knowledge of the work of the drivers? Well, yes. I am conversant with the whole of the work of the drivers.

350. Had you any railway experience before you came here? Oh, yes, but no other colonial experience than in Tasmania.

351. And you have been here how long? Nearly ten years.

352. Had you experience in England? Yes, eleven years on the Great Western Railway.

353. Then you have a knowledge of the work the drivers should perform? Yes.

354. What is your opinion as to the number of drivers employed on the lines: is it sufficient to do the work without over-straining? Yes, Sir.

355. For instance, when the drivers were off the other day here at the conference, were there sufficient drivers to do the work? Yes, ample.

356. Well, there were four men engaged at the conference, and still there were ample? Yes, Sir, and there were other men away besides.

357. Now, in travelling have you heard of any dissatisfaction amongst the men. No, Sir; and I have spoken to several, but I never heard of it.

358. Do you know of any particular occasion when a man has been on for very long hours? I only know of the particular case of Driver West. That was a case of emergency, on a coal train.

359. And did he get a day off in consequence? Yes. I can't speak positively. I can speak as to an entry in the time-book against the man's name. He was running a coal train. He had a day off before this, and the day after running the coal train he was down for six hours.

360. You have control in these matters, and would know if a man had to do long hours except in cases of emergency. No. I have no control of the hours worked on locomotives.

361. Would not instructions come from you if the traffic was stopped? Yes. I would report as to the state of the traffic on the line, and the special trains would be arranged accordingly.

362. Then it is really only in cases of emergency where long hours are required? Yes. This was a case of emergency. If you will allow me, I contend that there was no necessity for this driver to have worked those long hours on this particular day. The Locomotive Department could easily have made arrangements for this run so that Driver West need not have taken it. He could have taken another man's run.

363. Then you think this was an error of judgment? Yes, I think the man was called on to do the work without a thought.

364. Do you hear of any complaints from any other workmen of the Department? No; if I had I should have brought it under the General Manager's notice. It would be my duty to do so.

365. Then, any complaints you hear of you have to report? Yes. No driver has ever complained to me. I was speaking to Driver West after the long hours and he never complained to me in that respect. We talked about many other matters, but he never spoke to me about the long hours. I cannot call to mind the date; I was on the mail at the time.

366. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Have you observed any friction at all in the working of the Department? Yes, there is universal friction.

The Chairman here pointed out that the evidence just given was likely seriously to affect Mr. Batchelor, who was not present. He, the Chairman, had informed that gentleman that his attendance would not be required that day, not knowing that any evidence to be given would tend in this direction. If they were to take such evidence he thought Mr. Batchelor should be present.

Mr. Back, by permission, said he had no idea yesterday, or indeed until this moment, that the evidence would be led in this direction, and as it was so he should certainly like to see Mr. Batchelor present. He should also like, if allowed, to express the opinion that if evidence was to be taken on the working of the Locomotive Department Mr. Batchelor should be here to listen to it.

After discussion, it was resolved, on the motion of Mr. McWilliams, seconded by Mr. Crisp, that the enquiry be adjourned until Wednesday next at 11 A.M.

The Committee adjourned accordingly.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1895.

SAMUEL MANN, *re-called and examined.*

367. *By the Chairman.*—Mr. Mann, when we left off our enquiry on Friday last, Mr. McWilliams was putting some questions to you relative to the apportionment of the hours of labour, and you were requested to prepare a report on the matter. Have you done so, and if so, will you produce the report? Yes. (Report produced and read.)

368. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Were you one of the officials at the conference on the subject, and did you draw up a report? Yes.

369. Was Mr. West at the conference when you discussed the paragraph that states "there is no necessity to call upon any member of the staff to do more than a fair day's work"? I think so, Sir.

370. Did Driver West take part in the discussion? No, I don't think he did.

371. Was he present? Yes, I am sure he was.
372. Did you read over the report to West? Yes, and he was present.
373. Do you think West practically understood the report? I think so. I read over the paragraphs as plainly as I could speak, and the only thing on which he stopped me was the matter of leave. In the discussion the majority thought a driver should have 14 days; afterwards it was altered to 12 days, with two days for Sundays.
374. If West says he did not hear the paper read, that is, that he did not hear it at the conference, and that at the conference you did not read it to him, would that be correct? I am correct in my statements.
375. If William West states that it would not be correct? Certainly not.
376. Have you heard any complaints from the men of overwork? None whatever.
377. Had you opportunities of ascertaining what hours of work they do? No, I have not, no more than what comes before me officially.
378. Then you are not in a position to say whether the men are overworked or not? I am not in a position to say in regard to the locomotive department men.
379. Do you know about any application for overtime from locomotive men? No, I do not.
380. Have you heard any complaints of the time the men are at work? No.
381. *By Mr. Lewis.*—Are there as many goods trains running now as at this time last year? No, I do not fancy so.
382. Has the goods traffic fallen off to any appreciable extent? No, Sir.
383. Are there more special goods trains than before? At the present time, no, Sir. I cannot speak positively, but I should say this year's traffic compares favourably with last year's.
384. Are there as many engine-drivers now as there were? I cannot say positively. With the exception of some men who left the service recently.
385. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Can you supply the original notes of the conference? No, they were taken in shorthand by Mr. Winterson.
386. *By the Chairman.*—You say you have never heard of any complaints about the men being overworked: now you practically act as a departmental detective over the men, do you think they would be likely to take you into their confidence in a matter of this kind? I think they would.
387. You think they would? I really do.
388. *By Mr. Back.*—You said just now, as far as you knew, the drivers now are equal to the numbers of last year, except some who left: can you tell who they were that left, and within how many weeks? One in July, and two in August.
389. That is three men? Yes.
390. The difference between now and then would be the three men who have left? Yes, Sir.
391. Can you tell how their places were filled? No, they have not been filled, Sir; special men have taken up the work; no drivers have been appointed to fill the three drivers' places. The places have been filled by the appointment of spare men.
392. No appointment of drivers? No, Sir.
393. Then you went on to state that, as far as you knew, the drivers were the same as those of last year, with the exception of the three who have left during the last three months? Yes.
394. One in July? Yes.
395. Two in August? Yes. No drivers have practically been appointed in their places, but they have been filled up by spare drivers or firemen who can drive and draw a driver's pay? Yes.
396. Do you know if any of these men had leave? I cannot say that I do.
397. *By the Chairman.*—I would like this point cleared up: you say three engine-drivers were short to what there were before? Three firemen took the drivers' places. These men are spare men, not regular men at all. They can either fire or drive.
398. Spare men, practically not in the service? Yes, they have been in the service for some years.
399. Are they men who have been moved up to be engine-drivers?—if these men were moved up to be engine-drivers would you not have to put firemen in their places? No, not actually. These men are not regular train-drivers; they are not on any particular line. On the Western Line there are two spare drivers. They are men to relieve others or take up special work. They do the work of the men who are moved. No one has been appointed to take up the spare men's places.
400. Well, then, you keep a stock of emergency men on hand who can act either as firemen or drivers, when necessary? Yes, Sir.
401. *By Mr. Batchelor.*—Who were the men who left? Griffiths, a driver, for one.
402. What do you mean by left? Well, I cannot quite say.
403. Well, who else? Paton.
404. Well, Paton resigned last week, and he was for a long time in Overell's place: who took his place? I don't know now all the men who are running; Barnard is running in Paton's place.
405. Were any firemen brought forward to take their places? Not the drivers that I know of.
406. How about cleaning? I don't know about that.
407. *By Mr. Urquhart.*—As a matter of fact there are the same number of firemen now as before? I think so, about the same. Three spare men have taken the places of the others.
408. Then the work was carried on by the remainder of the men when the three left? No, Sir.
409. *By Mr. Back.*—Are there any spare men in the shops now? I don't know, Sir.
410. You receive a report of every train that arrives? Yes.
411. That gives the number of the engine, class, name of driver, and so on? Yes, Sir.
412. Is that your writing (showing letter)? Yes, Sir.
413. Will that give the information you want to enable you to answer Mr. Batchelor's question? I think so.
414. *By the Chairman.*—What is the paper? It gives the names of drivers who have been recently appointed: they are Daniels, Smith, Couch, and De Billon. These men have taken drivers' and firemen appointments since Paton, Barnard, and Griffiths resigned. (Paper put in.)

WILLIAM E. BATCHELOR, *called and examined.*

415. *By the Chairman.*—Your name is William E. Batchelor, and you are Locomotive Superintendent of Government Railways? Yes.

416. How long have you been in the service? Twenty-six years next February: since the commencement of the Launceston and Western Railway.

417. We want to ascertain as accurately as possible if there have been complaints made for some time past as to men in the Locomotive Department not getting overtime? There have been no complaints lately, as there have always been men in the shed to relieve them. Lately there has been so much work that we have been put back considerably, and there have been no spare men to take up the running. We have taken men on their shed days to do it with the idea that, as opportunity offered, they would get time off, but we have been very short-handed, and with specials coming on so fast we have never had the opportunity to give them time off.

418. So far as you know, then, is the complaint a justifiable one—are enginemen expected to work longer hours than the men in the sheds? In certain instances. Generally the ordinary traffic is all right, and it is only in specials we have to do it. We want certain men to take the place of others in case of sickness and special trains, and, not having them, we have to take them from the sheds.

419. When special trains are running, have you to exact greater time from the engine-drivers than should be fairly apportioned to them? Certainly.

420. You tabled, for the information of the Committee, a tabulated statement showing the number of hours worked by the firemen and engine-drivers in the Locomotive Department during the last eight months, also showing the working time paid for. Are there special cases in which you think the extra time should have been obviated? It was only in the case of the "specials."

421. You have no provision in the Department for taking up the work when special trains are on? Exactly so.

422. Could you point out on this list where the special trains came on? No, not on that list, but I could bring up a special list showing where the "specials" came in.

423. Can you show how it disorganises the system so that the men have to work overtime? Yes. Each man has a regular run, which brings him up to sixty hours a week as near as practicable. If we had spare men we should not be strained so much; but, having no available men in the shed, then the regular men have to take up the work.

424. Are the "specials" shown in this return? The whole are shown there, but not the special trains particularly.

425. Are these extra hours' men on account of the "specials" coming in to work inordinately long days—it imposes more labour on them than should be pressed upon them, does it not? No doubt they have to work unusually long hours.

426. What are the usual hours they should work? Well, 60 hours a week as nearly as practicable, that is taking one week with another.

427. Does that operate in regard to length of distance? No.

428. Then, it is all a question of 60 hours? Yes, or near about that. It is a give-and-take system.

429. This return shows that some men work up to considerably more? Yes, it runs to 170 hours in the fortnight, 150 hours, 160 hours, and so on.

430. That would show up to 25 hours a week overtime in some cases? Yes, we always paid overtime when we could not give time off. On the Fingal line, when they work overtime, we pay, because there is no possibility of giving time off. In the sheds if we can give them time off we always do it, but lately we have not been able to do it.

431. I see you have a man down here for 9 hours 56 minutes, but he only got paid for 8 hours, when he was within 4 minutes of 10 hours: does he not get paid at all for this 2 hours? This man was paid on the shop basis.

432. Is not that a fictitious basis for a traffic return? I do not know.

433. *By Captain Miles.*—Then, this is on a fictitious basis this statement we have here? It is on the shop basis.

434. *By the Chairman.*—What is the daily pay of the engine men? From 9s. to 10s., and up to 11s. per day for drivers, and for firemen, 7s. 6d. and 7s. 3d. per day.

435. Are they all paid as for 10 hours? Yes. We always calculate a driver's day as 10 hours.

436. Although put down as paid for eight hours—would not that be misleading as far as this Committee is concerned, without explanation? Yes, probably.

437. The man will get paid 9s. a day, that is, he will get paid for 10 hours at 9s.? Yes, practically thereabouts. There has never been a standard fixed for drivers; at one time shop hours were nine hours a day, and engine-drivers', ten hours.

438. That is, shop hands and drivers both get 9s. a day, although one man works eight hours and another ten hours? Yes, Sir.

439. *By Mr. Burke.*—A man who gets 9s. per day—how many hours is he supposed to work? As nearly as possible ten hours.

440. Then if he worked eleven hours would he get extra pay or time off? Yes, exactly.

441. *By the Chairman.*—Now, in regard to the pay department—suppose an express comes in, can a man come in and get payment for overtime, or demand time off? Up to the present nothing of the kind has occurred. If a man is on the express and does extra time, as in the case of a breakdown, he does not get paid extra for it.

442. In cases where an express comes in late, and incidentally a man is doing more work than he would be called on to do in the ordinary way of business—does that man get time off, or can he demand payment? He can demand payment; but lately we have had so many letters about retrenchment that we have tried to give them time off instead, but we are so pinched by retrenchment that we have no spare men, and cannot do it.

443. Have they been getting pay for it, then? They have till recently.

444. Then in some instances they get payment? In some instances, yes. We always pay when we cannot give time off. On the Fingal line we cannot give time off. Where we can give time off we don't pay.

445. Are they all satisfied? All the regular drivers. I believe the men are satisfied.

446. Are there really cases where men who have worked overtime neither got time off nor extra pay? Yes, there have been cases.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1895.

W. WEST, *recalled and examined.*

447. *By the Chairman.*—We have requested you to be present before the Committee again to-day, Mr. West, because we find that the report of your evidence taken by the shorthand writers, and forwarded to you for correction if necessary, has been so materially and seriously altered that we want to know by whom it was so altered, and whether the report as taken was a fair one of your evidence. The first question that I will ask you is, Are the alterations on the proof (produced) in your own handwriting? No, Sir.

448. In whose handwriting are they? In Mr. Macdonald's, Sir.

449. That is, you got someone else to make these alterations? That is so.

450. Who made these alterations? Well, Sir, there were three railway men besides myself—two drivers and one fireman—and when we looked over the statement of mine to the questions that I had been asked, I and the other men naturally thought that I had not answered them straight. Taking into consideration that I had not given straight answers, and not wishing that my statements should go before Members in the words that were sent to me, I altered the statements. I altered the evidence to what I considered my opinions were, although I knew I had stated differently at the Committee meeting.

451. Who were the other three men? Driver Parker, Fireman Field, and Driver Hardy.

452. You say there were three drivers and one fireman? Yes.

453. Well, then, you made the alterations in the proof to suit yourself? I considered that I did not answer the questions straight before the Committee; that I did not thoroughly understand the way the questions were put to me, and not being before a Committee or anything of the kind before, I seemed a little nervous when the questions were put to me, and the way I answered them. I thought it was my duty not to sign these papers until I had them corrected, because when I came down here I did so to the best of my knowledge and ability to represent the men who had a grievance like my own.

454. Have you any doubt in your own mind after reading this that it does not properly describe the evidence you gave to the Committee—all the evidence has been taken down in shorthand, and the shorthand notes correspond identically with what has been printed here? You will find there has been one or two little mistakes in the words I used as put down here; for instance, there is one place where I am made to use the word "vanners," whereas it should be "spanners."

455. That's nothing. Do you consider the transcript of the shorthand notes as taken to be a fair one, and does it represent what you said? Yes. It contains all that I said.

456. Well, in places in the proof you have returned to us corrected, you have put in new and entirely different answers in to what you gave when under examination. For instance, you now reply "Yes" to a question that, when under examination, you replied "No." Do you regard that as a very material alteration? Yes, of course it is.

457. Did you reply "No" when under examination? Yes.

458. And now you want to say "Yes." That is so.

459. Do you think that, with the exception of the word "vanners" instead of "spanners," in the report of your evidence, that that evidence is correct? The first one, Sir?

460. The printed one that you altered? I believe the printed report of my evidence is as nearly correct as possible.

461. Excepting in one instance, a misprint of "vanners" for "spanners," are there any other errors? No.

462. With that exception, you believe this to be the evidence you gave? Yes, but I would like to say I did not thoroughly understand some of the questions. Some of them were unintelligible to me.

463. Why did you make these corrections if this was really a fair transcript of your evidence?—why did you want to make them? Because I did not think the evidence would be thoroughly understood. I did not think the answers were straight enough for one to understand them.

464. In one place you answered "Yes" to the Committee—surely you do not now want to answer "No"? It was like this: I did not answer quite straight to the Committee; I did not understand the question.

465. Is there any other explanation you can give for altering this? No, Sir, no other.

466. *By Mr. Dumaresq.*—Did you understand the evidence was strictly confidential? No, I did not.

467. Did you know you should have kept it to yourself? No, I did not know that, or I would not have shown it to my fellow-workmen.

468. Why did you consider it necessary to get three men to assist you in correcting this evidence? We just read it over between ourselves, and when we read it over we thought there were several things that I did not answer as correctly as I ought to have done, and that was exactly my reason for altering them. I wanted the altered evidence to agree with my views.

469. Was it that you considered the answers not as they ought to have been? Yes, that is so.

470. The other men did not suggest alterations to you? No, they did not.

471. Still, they concurred in your making the changes? Yes, they agreed it was more correct, Sir.

472. *By the Chairman.*—There were five of you? Yes, there was a friend.

473. Who was he? Mr. Macdonald.

474. Who is Mr. Macdonald? A Member of Parliament.

475. *By Capt. Miles.*—Was Mr. Macdonald requested by the conference of firemen to make the alterations? I asked him if he would be kind enough to write them down.

476. To make some alterations for you? No, I didn't ask him to make the alterations. I told him what alterations should be made, and he didn't suggest the writing of them.

477. You said a little while ago that you altered the evidence because the Members would not understand the answers—they were not straight enough? Yes.

478. What Members do you refer to—the Members of the House? Yes, the Members of the House.

479. You thought they had not intelligence enough to understand, and you wanted to put it more clearly? Yes, I wanted to put it more clearly: when I came down I did so to get justice.

480. Then when you answer "Yes" to a plain question you thought they would not understand it? I thought that where I ought to have said "No" I said "Yes," and where I said "Yes" I ought to have said "No."

481. If it was "No," then, you thought the Members would not understand it? It was that I didn't understand the questions properly.

482. I suppose the conference thought "No" would be a better answer than "Yes"? No, they didn't.

483. Then why have them there at all? I thought it better to have them there to assist in the alterations, especially as they were interested.

484. But then, these men could have come and given evidence? Yes, if called on; they will not come without.

485. You did not think it was improper? No, I did not.

486. *By Mr. Burke.*—Kindly explain how it was that yourself, the other two drivers, the fireman, and Mr. Macdonald all came together? Well, the fact was we were out for a drive, and I went to see Mr. Macdonald. When we looked over the papers in the morning, and I saw that I did not thoroughly understand the questions, we thought that we would ask Mr. Macdonald if he would kindly alter them for me, as he understood writing better than we did.

487. You saw Mr. Macdonald—what was the result? Did you arrange to meet Mr. Macdonald? We met at 2 o'clock.

488. To go to him? Yes.

489. Was it after you went to him the evidence was taken into consideration and altered in his presence? No, he took the alterations down that I suggested to him.

490. As you suggested? Yes, Sir.

491. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Did Mr. Macdonald know that he was altering evidence taken on oath? No, I do not think he did.

492. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Are you a good scholar, Mr. West? No, I am not.

493. I don't want to put leading questions, but did you think you could write the alterations sufficiently well to put before the Committee? No, I did not. I did not think I could have put them before the Committee.

494. Now, you thought you were doing no wrong to get a Member of Parliament, who was allowed to attend the Committee, to make the alterations for you? No, I thought he would be the safest to take it down.

495. When you got your fellow workmen to go through the evidence, did you make these alterations because you thought the men with yourself would rather see the evidence, or was it because you were a little bit nervous and did not understand the questions put to you? Because I was nervous, and did not understand the questions put to me.

496. I understand you think the evidence is correct as given, but that it was not the evidence you ought to have given? Yes, that is correct; I did not consider it was the evidence that I should have given.

497. *By Mr. Lewis.*—Were any suggestions made to you by Mr. Macdonald or others as to what should be corrected? Nothing from Mr. Macdonald. There were several places written over, and when read some of my fellow workmen said "yes, that sounds better."

498. *By Mr. Crisp.*—You said you consulted four others, then put on a fifth—Mr. Macdonald: anyone else consulted? No one else, none but ourselves.

499. The conclusion in my mind is that after consulting the others, the answers as altered are the answers of the body of those men and not your own answers? Yes, of the body of them.

500. Then these are not your own alterations? Yes, they are mine.

W. E. BATCHELOR, *recalled and examined.*

501. *By the Chairman.*—In continuation of the evidence of yesterday, I would like to ask you with regard to the rate of wages and the hours of labour in this colony, how they compare from your knowledge with the rates in the adjacent colonies? About ten per cent. lower in wages; in hours an hour longer per day than in the other colonies. The drivers work 9 hours; from 12s. to 14s.

502. Firemen and drivers are better paid in the other colonies than here? Yes.

503. Have you seen the report that Mr. Back sent down and was made a Parliamentary Paper, and termed a Ministerial Statement in regard to the condition of the Locomotives, &c.? In that statement this appears:—"The proposals as a whole recommend themselves for adoption, because they are fair and equitable, will give the men easier hours, and cost the department little or no more than is at present paid. With regard to increased holiday leave, I think we might fairly give drivers and firemen 10 days' continuous leave, as is the practice with guards and porters, and similarly in return call upon them for extra work if necessary on public holidays and excursions. I should like to add, that the apportionment of the men's time has been

entirely in the hands of the Locomotive Superintendent, but that lately he seems to have departed from the established custom as to time-off and overtime, which has given the men reasonable grounds for complaint. I very much regret that when the men expressed dissatisfaction the matter was not brought under my notice." Have you seen that? The other day, as reported in the press.

504. You saw it in the papers? Yes.

505. Is the paper a correct one? I cannot say whether the paper is correct, but we have not sufficient men to do the work, and we had to do it in the best way we could.

506. Mr. Back says:—"I would like to add that the apportionment of the men's time has been in the hands of the Locomotive Superintendent, but that lately he seems to have departed from the established custom as to time-off and overtime, which has given the men reasonable grounds for complaint." Well, the General Manager has referred this matter to the Minister of Lands: were you apprised of it? I got a letter asking me to make changes, but I could not see my way clear to alter them.

507. What do you say to that? We have not the men to enable us to give time off. Certain trains come in and they have to be attended to. We have not the men to do the work, and we have to take them out of the sheds.

508. I understood you to say you wanted to make a reply to some evidence? Yes, I have a few notes which I would like to read if you will kindly allow me to get them. (Mr. Batchelor secured his notes.—*Vide Appendix.*)

509. You were to give us some written statement as to Mr. Back's Report about your departure from the usual custom as to time off and so on, giving the men reasonable grounds for complaint? Yes. With your permission I will read my notes. (The witness read an explanatory paper, which, together with a tabulated sheet showing the time worked by the men, were put in. See Appendix.)

510. Now you have had an opportunity to reply to the charge made about you having given grounds of complaint to the men: were you not summoned to the conference of the men? No, Sir.

511. Although you are Locomotive Superintendent, you were not consulted as far as the conference was concerned, and had nothing to do with it? Nothing whatever, Sir.

512. Perhaps you had better explain to the Committee the meaning of the signing on and off duty, and why it can't be done here. What is signing on and off duty? It is a system used in sheds where there are a large number of men. When they come or go they sign a book showing when they come on and off.

513. And the number of men and your system is too small to allow this to be done? Exactly.

514. You mean it would not do for one or two individuals? No. They would put down what they liked if there was no check.

515. It is said no lists are prepared showing the men's duties. You say that there is a table kept? Yes, for the regular men. A table is kept showing the lists of duty.

516. Would the correspondence tabled show what was done about retrenchment? Yes, Mr. Back has tabled correspondence.

517. And that will confirm your statement? Just so.

518. You say the washing out is better done by the engine-driver and the firemen who know the engine? Yes.

519. And when these men met in consultation they said somebody else should wash out the engines? Yes.

520. And you say they should wash out their own engines? Just so.

521. You say the Scottsdale is a heavy line to work, and requires an experienced driver to work it safely? Yes.

522. And you say if two days off per month were given to the men of the Western service it could be managed satisfactorily? Yes, that is it.

523. Why was the alteration made in the engines running the trains—they now run from Hobart to Antill Ponds and back and from Launceston to Antill Ponds and back? To save expense.

524. And why in the face of a saving of expense do you now say they should again run through? The men now have to put their own coal in at Parattah.

525. You say all the men should be put on an equal footing as regards hours? Yes; the men working the local trains were not represented at the conference.

526. I thought they were all represented by ballot at the conference? I know nothing as to how the men were fixed.

527. The men from the Oatlands and Derwent Valley Lines would be satisfied if relieved as proposed for the Ulverstone line, that is, two days a month? Yes.

528. They do propose it should be the same as for the Ulverstone service? Yes, they want a day a week.

529. And you think two days a month sufficient? Yes.

530. As against this proposal of the men, you say you could not carry out the recommendations with the staff at your disposal at present? Just so.

531. Now, it is known throughout the Colony that lately there have been men in your own department dismissed, at Strahan one man, and that within the last few days a man has been suspended in Hobart, and that both cases have been brought before Magistrates to enquire into the rights of the cases: why should you not enquire into those matters instead of Messrs. Belstead and Seager? why should you not do it instead of the Magistrates? I don't know anything about what has been done?

532. You don't know what has been done? I know it has been done, but I don't know what the man did at Strahan.

533. But Mr. Back told you? Yes, that he had disgraced that man.

534. Was he a good man? Yes, they are both good men.

535. You know no reason why he should be dismissed? No.

536. You don't know of yourself; you, the head of the Locomotive Department, don't know why one of your men should be dismissed and another be under suspension? I know the reason why it was done, but I was not consulted.

537. Do you approve of it? I think a fine in both instances would have met the case. They were both, as I stated, first-class men.

538. What was the man disrated for? For swearing, I believe.

539. Nothing else? Not that I know of.

540. Under what circumstances? I only know from what the man told me. As I understand it, the driver left part of his engine on the road and did not report it when the engine was on the pit; consequently the fitter had to crawl in when the engine was on the road. I believe this had been done once or twice before, and the man lost his temper and swore at him. The driver reported the matter to Mr. Back, and he took notice of it and disrated him.

541. What was the case in Hobart? Intimidating a man—tampering with the men in some way.

542. In what way tampering with them—they all have to do an honest day's work? Yes; I don't quite understand. (The case being *sub judice*, the examination on that point was discontinued.)

543. Is there anything else you want to bring before the Committee? I have a few notes I should like to read if you will allow me.

(Witness read a statement which he put in. Appendix.)

544. You say your reputation is at stake in these matters: is there not something more than your reputation at stake? I might get a couple of years if anything happened.

545. You are responsible for the safety of the locomotives: do you fear that excessive retrenchment is impairing the efficiency of the rolling-stock? Not as yet; but if I have to retrench as they want to, it will, certainly.

546. *By Captain Miles.*—You consider yourself personally responsible for the lives and property under your charge in consequence of being Locomotive Superintendent. Do you think you would be held personally liable and put on your trial if any accident happened to these men in consequence of an accident to one of the locomotives? If it was my fault.

547. But who is the man who would be primarily on trial,—who is in charge, you or the General Manager? I suppose the Manager.

548. Don't you think they would go for him and not for you? Oh! they would shift it on to my shoulders if they could, and say it was the Locomotive Superintendent.

549. If you did it by his instructions they would come on him? If he wrote me a letter, and so relieved me of responsibility, I would not care. If I know I am retrenching too far I must protest.

550. Then, by protest, you are relieved of responsibility? Even in working the men, you see, Mr. Back turns round and says it is my fault. I could not help working the men.

551. When you sent in a tabulated statement of work, why did you put down eight hours instead of ten hours per day. I see you put down here a man paid for at eight hours per day? It is shown on the receipt eight hours.

552. But you say ten hours is the time for a driver. You show one man working nine hours fifty-six minutes, and you paid for only eight hours? He was paid for his day's work, but eight hours is the basis of his day's work.

553. They have sometimes to go in the shop, and that is the shop basis? Yes.

554. Eight hours is a day's work in the shop? Yes.

555. You say you apportion the hours, and not having sufficient men, you do the best you can? Yes, under the circumstances.

556. Do you mean to say there are not enough men to do the work properly? Yes, that is right.

557. Have you endeavoured to comply with the instructions in the letters you received asking you to reduce expenditure? Yes, in every possible way.

558. You are aware that expenditure has to be reduced now in all the Departments, being the wish of Parliament. Can you say you have tried to meet the General Manager's wishes? Yes, I have.

559. Do the men running the trains to Antill Ponds and back say they were not represented at the conference?—were none of these four present? I don't know how it was; only Driver West was present.

560. I understood you that they are not satisfied because they have to load their own coal? Yes, that is so.

561. In reference to the case at Strahan, you think a fine would meet the case. Is there any rule about fines under which they could be fined for a breach of regulations? There is the Rule Book.

562. Is there a regulation about fines? Yes, Sir.

563. Is there any regulation covering this particular case? I am not in possession of the facts of the case.

564. Then, how do you know that a fine would meet the case? From what I have heard, I think so.

565. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—When were the wages of the Locomotive Department reduced? They have been reduced on two occasions.

566. When was the last occasion? About six months from the beginning of last year.

567. Could you find the dates? Yes, I can find out. It was at the time of the general election.

568. Is it since that time that you say the rates paid in the other colonies are 10 per cent. higher than here? Yes, but they have been reduced in all the colonies.

569. How do they compare now? There is about 10 per cent difference.

570. That is, in all the colonies. Have you examined their pay-sheets? Yes, I have. I have letters from the other colonies which I can put in if you would like to see them.

571. Do you state that there has been larger comparative retrenchment in the Locomotive Department than in other branches of the service? I am not aware what was done in other branches.

572. You received letters from the General Manager asking you to reduce expenditure in your department? Yes.

573. You understand that the General Manager receives his instructions from the Government. Now, what retrenchment have you suggested? The first lot of men I took off there was a terrible row about, and then I got a letter from the General Manager telling me to work short time instead of putting the men off.

574. You say, then, that you suggested retrenchment, but were prevented from carrying it out? Not prevented from carrying it out, but not allowed to carry it out in my own way. The men I wanted to keep on were better men than others, but were not married men. I had to let the better men go, and keep on the married men.

575. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Are you referring to the case that the Parliamentary Committee sat on? I am now referring to the cleaners.

576. You think, then, that when you received instructions from the General Manager to assist in making reductions, you have loyally tried to carry out those instructions? Yes, to the best of my ability.

577. From a tabulated form we have, it shows that the men are not working longer hours than in 1893—how do you account for that if you have not sufficient men? In 1893 we let men off for two or three days at a time if they wanted it. We can't do that in 1895, because there are not men to enable us to do so.

578. Then the men do not have the same time off in 1895 as in 1893? No.

579. You have said the engines are now in good order. Do you anticipate deterioration with the present staff of men? The engines are getting the best of us now.

580. *By the Chairman.*—What do you mean by that? We can't keep them up; there are more coming in for repair than are going out; there are more in for repair than ever before.

581. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Has the train mileage been reduced? Oh, certainly.

582. Is the reduction in staff more than the reduction of the train mileage? I think so, but I am not certain.

583. Is the rumour that you stated that the General Manager told you that he was going to reduce the wages to 6s. a day correct? No.

584. It is not correct that you stated so? No.

585. Will you state what you said? Three or four weeks ago I received a letter from the General Manager to put more hands on; I wanted some men for half a day a week. The General Manager said he would rather put more hands on, and said he could get me good men for 8s. a day if I could not get them. I told him there was not room for more engines in the shop. I asked Mr. Back to meet me on the next Wednesday and I would explain it to him, and show him there was only room for one engine. He said they had done more, and thought they could put another in the end of the shop. I saw the senior fitter, and told him about it, and asked if he knew any engine-men about Hobart, and I made the remark that we should no doubt have the unemployed here at from 5s. to 6s. per day. The remark was made merely to him, and I suppose he circulated it amongst the men.

586. Oh! that was how it came to be circulated about amongst the men? I suppose so. It was a private conversation.

587. *By the Chairman.*—In reading the rules and regulations, have you entire control of the Locomotive Department? I had till last year. I used to have the entire control, but in May last year I received a letter from Mr. Back received from the Minister, telling me I was not to put on or discharge men without the approval of the General Manager. Since then I have always submitted the names of the men I intend to put on or off.

588. Was that after the enquiry into the dismissal of four of the shop men? About that time.

589. That included the apportionment of the hours of labour for firemen and drivers? Yes.

590. Have you reported to the General Manager for over a month? Yes.

591. Has there been a difference of opinion between yourself and the General Manager over the work of retrenchment? Yes; he said he could point out where I could save £700 or £1000 a year, and at another time from £400 to £500. I could not see it, and don't know where I could do it.

592. Has there been any interference with your work? Not directly.

593. Did you not consider the men having to sign the book "on" or "off" an important fact? It is of great importance if it could be carried out.

594. Is it not of very great importance? Not so very great; practically it is done now; the men go to the timekeeper and tell him they are going "on," and the same at night when they go "off," and the timekeeper enters in the book "on" or "off" for them.

595. Then the system does exist? Not by the men themselves; the timekeeper takes it down for them.

596. Is not that practically the same? Yes, it is practically the same.

597. Has it ever been necessary for the men to sign "on" or "off"? Never more than that they go to the timekeeper and tell him.

598. That has not been stopped on account of retrenchment? No.

599. What is the condition of the rolling stock? Some of it is in very good condition. There are a number of engines off for repair, and not running.

600. I understand you to say that the engines were getting the better of you; what did you mean by that? Why, that they were coming in for repair faster than I could get them out. We have twenty-one engines now waiting to get into the shop; we never had so many at a time before.

601. It has been stated that the rolling-stock is not in good condition? The engines running are all in good condition; I would not let them go out if they were not.

602. Are the engines running now in a safe condition? I would not allow them to go out if they were not.

603. Are the engines running in as good condition as formerly? Yes.

604. If there was any deterioration at all in the engines would you allow them to go out? No.

605. Then you consider the rolling-stock now running is as good as ever it has been? Yes.

606. Then the statement made outside that the engines now running are not in safe condition is incorrect? Yes; they are in a perfectly safe condition.

607. *By Mr. Lewis.*—Can you tell me how many drivers you had this time last year? No, from memory I could not.

608. You could get the return? Yes.

609. Could you not relieve yourself of the responsibility which you say is cast upon you by retrenchment by entering a protest? I have entered a protest.

610. On more than one occasion? Yes.

611. How often? On one or two occasions.

612. Have the wages of engine-drivers been decreased since 1894? I don't know from memory. It was done at the time the general reduction all round was made.

613. Was any complaint made about the reductions until recently? There has never been any complaints as to the reduction of wages.

614. What have been the complaints? Long hours.

615. Now, on an average, how many more hours a week do the drivers work now than they did six months ago? The regular engine-drivers do not work more; it is only on special trains. We have no men to run them, and we have to take men out of the sheds on their shed days to do it.

616. How many special trains a week do you run? I cannot say. About 220 have been run in this year.

617. Are they all long trains? Some are long and some are short. There are a great number of long trains.

618. When was the dissatisfaction as to long hours first expressed? When we could not give the time off.

619. When was that? Three or four months ago.

620. Were the complaints made to you brought under the notice of the General Manager? There were never any complaints made to me. I only heard of them through the press.

621. Then no formal complaints were made to you? No other than that of Driver West. He came to me after running a long special, and said it was enough to kill an elephant. I said we could not give more payment, but would give him time off; but we have never been able to do it.

622. Who has to see that the men get overtime due to them? I have.

623. Have the men been paid for overtime? Not the men who have set trains. There have been complaints from them because they have been in the habit of getting days off so as to keep down expenses; because we can't relieve them has caused the complaints.

624. I do not quite understand? Take the Fingal line. At present the men have to work every day in the week. They are running six days, and on Sundays have to wash their engines. There is no chance to allow them time off, and when they run extra trains we pay them overtime; but if the men on the Hobart and Launceston line run extra trains we don't pay them, but as soon as we can we allow them time off.

625. Have you not seen that all the men receive pay for overtime? All but the outside men, and they get time off.

626. Are all not entitled to get pay? Certainly not; some are entitled to time off.

627. Do you see that all get it? As far as possible. Some have a lot of time to get yet to give them their fair dues, but if I don't get more men they can't get it.

628. If you can't give them time off will you pay them? I was in hopes of getting more men as the summer came on and the traffic increases.

629. Were there not more trains last summer than in the previous years, owing to extra specials and the Exhibition trains? There might have been.

630. Is it not a fact that at the end of the summer traffic you have more engines put in the shops for repair? We generally do, but this time I have not been able to get them all in hand.

631. Do you expect to in time for this year's traffic? I can get enough engines ready if I can get the men to work them. We can't repair all that are being brought in.

632. Have you room in the sheds? We can repair one in Hobart and three or four in Launceston.

633. How many have you under repair now? One in Hobart and three in Launceston.

634. Then, you have in the sheds in the two places as many engines as you have room for? Yes, as many as we can have under repair.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1895.

WILLIAM EASTGATE BATCHELOR, *recalled and examined.*

635. *By Mr. Crisp.*—The General Manager sent in a document stating that the apportionment of the men's time was entirely in your hands: is that correct? Yes.

636. But that lately you had departed from the established custom as to time off. Will you tell me why? I have not had sufficient men to do the work.

637. Have you received any communication, verbal or written, asking you to reduce the engine-drivers or any men? We have been reducing all the year.

638. You are aware that complaints have been made in Parliament of the overtime made by the engine-drivers? No, I was not aware of it.

639. Did you not know that attention had been called to the fact that the men were doing overwork? Yes, that they had been overworked.

640. Do you approve of overworking the men? Certainly not.

641. If the men's time was in your hands, why did you not carry out the custom as to leave? I could not get the men.

642. You could not get the men—why? They were put off.

643. Could you not put on more men without consulting the General Manager? No.

644. You had not the power? No.

645. You referred to friction between yourself and the General Manager: would that interfere with you in asking that more men should be put on—was there any delicacy on that account? No.

646. This coolness, how long has it existed? There is no coolness at all—merely that I protest against so much retrenchment.

647. You stated that when you went into the General Manager's office, all you said was taken down by a clerk in shorthand, and that the General Manager was talking at you, though apparently giving instructions to a clerk: that left the impression on my mind that there was a coolness. Is there any ill-feeling existing? None whatever.

648. I am glad to hear that. About the engine-drivers working overtime—do you think that through that the safety of the travelling public is in any way endangered? Well, if a man is on his legs for twenty hours it is too long for anyone.

649. Then you think that if these men work so many hours the travelling public's lives are endangered? Well, a man can't have his wits about him and work such long hours.

650. After working so long, does a man have a holiday on leave? Yes, we give time off if we have a man to put in his place.

651. Do you give them the holiday that they are entitled to after working such long hours? We have done so up to lately. Now we have no men to do it with.

652. Do they get paid for overtime? No, not these men.

653. Why not? Because we wait till we can give them time off so as to save expense.

654. Why, when you knew you had not the men to give time off, did you not pay overtime? We waited for the holidays to be done, and then we would have the men, and they would get time off.

655. Retrenchment is all very well in its way, but not primarily in the case of railways, where the lives of the public are concerned. Do you consider you have sufficient engine-drivers at the present time? Yes, to do the regular work, but not for specials, or to meet cases of sickness, or for loss of time.

656. If you had the entire control would you have more men on? Yes; I want more cleaners.

657. Do you think there is risk to the travelling public? Not on the regular trains.

658. On passenger trains is there any risk? None whatever.

659. *By Mr. Barrett.*—Do you think a working foreman should be appointed at Launceston? Yes; there is plenty of work for him.

660. But being without, are the duties of the foreman and other working parties increased? Yes; my duties and the shop foreman's are increased about thirty per cent. for want of a running foreman.

661. What would the duties of a running foreman consist of? The duty of a running foreman is to see to the engines. To see that they are washed out properly; to see that there are spare fire-bars and all necessary tools on the engine; see to the packing of glands; look after all details; take the engines out of the sheds; attend all trial trips; and numerous other duties.

662. One special and important matter you have mentioned. As the gentlemen of the Committee are mostly non-professional men, and might not understand about washing out an engine, would you explain what washing out means? It means the washing out of the boilers. After running a certain number of days a sediment forms in the boilers, and if not cleared away another sediment forms on the top of that, and the boiler gets full of dirt. The consequence is that the fire-boxes would get burnt, or other portions of the boiler be seriously injured.

663. Is it your opinion that only an experienced person should be responsible for the special duty of washing out boilers? Certainly.

664. That this essential and important duty should be done only by properly qualified and experienced men? Yes.

665. Have they done away with the Launceston foreman? Yes.

666. A responsible driver is required to act as foreman in Hobart. Is there any one in that post now? Yes.

667. Who is it? Charles Saunders.

668. Is he an experienced driver? Yes.

669. How long? Since the Launceston and Western Railway started, about 24 years ago.

670. Does he do anything in addition here besides the duties of foreman? Yes, he runs trains the same as the other drivers.

671. What hours is he employed? He runs the local train one week from here to Brighton; then he does shunting in the yard. He does about 150 hours a fortnight.

672. Does that necessitate his being here late to see to the last train after arrival? Yes, he comes down of a night to see to the engines, and in the morning to see that the men are all in their places.

673. Do you think that is excessive hours, with his other duties in addition? Yes, very long hours.

674. It is said the men should be appointed to wash out the engines in rotation assisted by two cleaners: is that a commendable way to put strangers to the engines to wash out? No, it should always be done by the men working the engine.

675. Why? Because he knows the engine and is likely to look after it better.

676. Then it would not naturally be as well done as by the man who is responsible for the engine? No; a stranger would not take so much pains as the man himself.

677. And the consequence? Well, the fire-boxes might get burnt.

678. Then you would object to boys or any one else doing this duty, as has been proposed? Certainly.

679. As likely to result in disaster? Yes.

680. You have been a long time in the employment of the Government, and before that in the Launceston and Western Railway Company's service. Your services are dated from the time you first came into the employ of the Launceston and Western Company? I don't know about that. I was in the company's service when the Government took the line over.

681. What position do you hold? The same position as I held with the late company.

682. Are your duties the same as they were in the Launceston and Western Railway Company? Yes.

683. Were you allowed to employ and discharge your own men under the company? Yes.

684. Then you must be in a different position now that Mr. Back employs the men? There have been no men put on since that arrangement.

685. Were not men discharged? Oh, yes, a lot have been discharged.
686. Have you been consulted as to the men whom you could discharge? Yes.
687. You forwarded lists of the men that you thought could be dispensed with? Yes.
688. Have those lists been acted on: have the good men been retired, or have the good ones been weeded out? No; the young and active have been weeded out, and the married men have been kept on.
689. Which is best for the Department in your experience, to have the old married men or the young men? I should have kept on the best men.
690. Then they have not been kept on as a rule? No; the smart young fellows have gone, and we have the men in middle life that can't take their places.
691. I notice that three drivers have left. In Mr. Mann's evidence he states the time they left, and states that only three have gone; practically, you have been deprived for the last few months of the services of four drivers, have you not? No; two drivers and one fireman. One resigned last week, and another left about a fortnight ago, at the end of August some time.
692. As regards Paton, he has been off duty for how many months—how long? For four or five months.
693. His was a case of sickness. Does the Department make any allowance to a man off duty in this way—is there any sick pay? Not unless a man is injured.
694. In other cases where a man is incapacitated from duty he does not get any allowance excepting in cases of injury? None.
695. Have any representations ever been made as to an allowance to Paton? Yes, Paton wrote to me, and I sent the letter on with a recommendation.
696. With what result? Mr. Back said he could not form a precedent.
697. Since then what has become of Paton? The Stationmaster, I believe, went to him and asked him to resign.
698. Oh! you know nothing about it—you learned it from second-hand only? No; I did not know about it until I got Paton's resignation.
699. What remuneration does he get now he has resigned? I do not know, not up to the present.
700. Are you not acquainted with the circumstances and informed as to the resignation? No; up to the present I have not been.
701. *By the Chairman.*—With regard to your statement that several men have been discharged, and that you have had to keep on men who are not so efficient as those who were discharged. You have a great many branches under your control: now might it happen that you might have to keep men on in one branch who would be useless to you when another branch of more importance wanted efficient hands. For instance, there is the fitting branch, the upholstering branch, the painters, the waggon makers, the carpenters, and all these, might it happen that you are overmanned through this controlling influence—overmanned where you could do without men, and yet be undermanned in other departments? We are not over-manned in any department, but where we are most behind is in the running work, in the fitting department connected with the running gear. We could allow the men in the wood-working branches to lose more time, and increase the hours in the fitting shop.
702. Then, if you could control the whole affair as you thought proper without other influence—if you could do as you liked—could you dispense with work, or make short time, in the carpentering and upholstery branches for instance, and make it up afterwards? Yes?
703. Your answer is, you would prefer to do that, but are compelled to do as you are doing now? Yes.
704. *By Mr. Barrett.*—In reading the correspondence I see the Minister of Lands has taken away from you the power to put men on and dismiss them—you have now to refer to the General Manager of Railways: practically and in effect would that not be making the General Manager the Locomotive Superintendent and you his foreman? Yes?
705. Then, although you are the Locomotive Superintendent, you have to refer all appointments and dismissals to the General Manager? Yes; if you will look at my reply to that letter you will find it stated there.
706. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Are you aware of the circumstances that led to that instruction being forwarded to you? No.
707. Was it not after the Parliamentary enquiry? About that time, but I don't know if that had to do with it.
708. Was it not in consequence of complaints from the men as to why you dismissed them? Yes, from four working men.
709. You remember the result of the enquiry? Yes.
710. Did that not lead to the request that you should refer in matters such as dispensing with the services of the men for the approval of the General Manager? I don't know.
711. Are you not aware that in putting fresh officers on the General Manager has to refer to the Minister for his approval? Yes.
712. Then by the rules, when your Chairman was asking the question he knew that the approval must be given—everything done is subject to approval? I understood that to refer to officers, not to working men.
713. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Have you, until lately, been in the past allowed to employ and discharge men on your own responsibility? Yes.
714. Would that include firemen and engine-drivers? Yes.
715. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—All grades up to yourself? Yes.
716. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Without consulting the General Manager? Yes.
717. Up to the time you got the instruction referred to? Yes, up to last year.
718. And now how would you engage men? We have not engaged any men since the instruction was issued. It has been all the other way.
719. Was that instruction given about the time after the enquiry into the discharge of the shop men? It was about that time. I can't exactly say the date.

720. In the event of increased work necessitating the employment of more men, what would you do? I would write to the General Manager, and tell him I was short of men.

721. Would you recommend men? When men come round seeking work I have to see if they are fit.

722. You would recommend men? Yes, if I knew of any men.

723. Then, if you were short-handed and there was a necessity for more men, you would recommend men to the General Manager? Yes, if I knew of any.

724. Then, instead of appointing, you would refer them to the General Manager? Yes. Before, when men came along I would put them on, and then put them off in an hour if they did not suit me. Every man who comes along is not good enough. Many a man will say he knows all about the work, and it is soon found out that he knows nothing.

725. Would that apply to dispensing with his services too? Yes.

726. What would you do now if a man did not suit? I would suspend him.

727. You would suspend him and apply for approval of your action? Yes, I would suspend him and recommend his removal.

728. *By the Chairman.*—Then, if you had an incompetent man on when the General Manager was in Melbourne lately at the Railway enquiry, you say you would keep him on till the General Manager returned? No, I would suspend him.

729. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—What would you do in such a case if you found an incompetent man? I would keep him on as long as I fairly could, or until the General Manager came back.

730. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Would you not report to the office? Yes. It would be hard for a man to be suspended for a week.

(*Mr. Back*, by permission, stated that through the kindness of the Manager of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company he was free on the cable between Melbourne and Tasmania, and had never been more than twenty-four hours out of touch with the office since he had held the position he now occupied. He was enabled to communicate without cost to the Government, and when absent his chief clerk sent him a daily report, and anything could be communicated to him within twenty-four hours. This was entirely a hypothetical matter, and such a case had never happened; of course what might happen in the future he could not foresee at present.)

731. *By Mr. Barrett.*—Is Mr. Mann ever in the Locomotive Department? No, not that I know of.

732. He has a lot of information and knows all that is done every day; he can tell you all about it and just what you should do: how is it that the Traffic Manager knows more about the Locomotive Department than any other man in the service—does he ever visit the Department? Not that I know of.

733. Has he any authority to go round? He could do so; nobody would stop him.

734. Then you can't say how he got his information as to how engine-drivers are to be posted; he could not report as to how the service could be altered without information from somewhere. You can't say where he derived that experience that gives him authority to speak on such matters: he has not got it in your department? No.

735. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—What is Mr. Mann's position? He is Traffic Inspector.

736. You know that as controller of the traffic on the railway a list of the engines out, showing the numbers, the drivers, and every detail is every day forwarded to him? Just so.

737. Yes—he knows what drivers are out? Yes, he knows what drivers are out, but he does not know what we are doing in the shop.

738. He gets a list of duties every day, does he not? Yes.

739. Well, there is no man in the service with a greater amount of information about the Department than the Traffic Manager? No.

740. If the traffic is blocked, who is responsible—is it not the Traffic Inspector? If the traffic is blocked they order a special train.

741. Yes, of course; but is it not the Traffic Inspector who must order the train? I have nothing to do with the traffic.

742. *By Mr. Lewis.*—You have been twenty-five years in the service—how many weeks holidays have you had in that time? One fortnight.

743. What, in twenty-five years? Yes.

744. What are your ideas as to the leave that should be granted to the men in a year? In the other colonies they get a fortnight; we allow six days, but the men are graded in the other Colonies; the men who have been longest in the service are the top grade. There are so many in the top grade, so many in the second, and so on; and they get different holidays according to the different grades.

745. What do you think would be a fair thing here? I think a maximum of a fortnight.

746. For the engine-drivers? Well, for the higher grades I would give a fortnight, for the lower grades a week.

747. Do you think they can do the work without holidays? They all get holidays.

748. Do you approve of holidays? Decidedly so.

749. Why, then, have you not yourself applied for more than a fortnight's holiday in twenty-five years? I have been too busy; besides, it is no good taking a holiday in the Colony—if I want to take a holiday I like to go away.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1895.

W. E. BATCHELOR, *recalled and examined.*

750. *By Mr. Back.*—That return (showing document) is the return you sent in to the Committee? Yes.

751. And that is a return of the actual time, &c.—I take that to mean overtime work by the drivers from 1st January to 24th August, 1895? Yes, that is correct.

752. You state that this is a fair return of the hours worked by the drivers, but your clerk has written a letter which has just been put in and read, which states that Sundays have been included in the return and distributed over the other days of the week (*vide* Appendix). I will take a typical case. Turn to Driver Jones. He is shown to have made an average during the four months of 10 hours 21 minutes. Now, this man is one of the express drivers who runs to Launceston one day and back from Launceston the next. He has an actual running-time on the train of six hours, but he washes out on Sunday, for which he gets a day's pay? Yes, six hours' pay.

753. Yes, and by some process in making out the return your chief clerk states that he has returned him an extra hour in every day in the week, that is, if he works six hours on Sunday it is put down as an extra hour for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and so on. In other words, if a fortnightly period of 14 days is added together and divided by 12, it would give one hour a day additional. That would reduce the time to 9 hours 21 minutes. But these drivers are allowed 3 hours on up-trains, and 3½ hours on down-trains to clean out their engines, come on and go off, and so on. It is well known the men don't occupy that time. Our Rule Book, Rule 305, provides that every driver must be with his engine one hour before he starts? Yes, that is shunting time. For instance, this man Jones came on duty every day at Launceston at one o'clock, and had to take his engine out and get coal and water ready to start.

754. Yes, a man has to be with his engine one hour or one hour and a half before he starts, that is the rule, but you allow three hours. In the other Colonies the practice is to allow an hour and a quarter, and I can prove this.

(The Chairman suggested that Mr. Back should confine himself to asking questions, and could make his statements afterwards.)

Are you acquainted with the systems in the other Colonies? Yes.

755. Are you aware of the rule in South Australia? Yes; they have men to get their engines ready for them there.

756. Suppose there is only one engine at a small station in a country place, do you know what time is allowed? No, not in that instance. I only know the time in the big sheds.

757. Do you know the regulations in South Australia, and do you know this clause: "Men are allowed three-quarters of an hour for preparing engines and half an hour for stabling them"—that is the new rule, dated 4th September, 1895? That is after they are coaled and all ready for them. They have not to coal the engines themselves.

758. Don't they coal when they come in? No; there are men to take the engines from them when they get off at the platform. Others take the engines from them.

759. I think you said you had only been once out of Tasmania since 1875? I have only once had a holiday out of Tasmania in twenty-five years.

760. Well, I have travelled a great deal in the last twenty-five years, and I can assure you that the old practices have been very much altered in that time. Let us take the Sorell line—Driver Burge. This man is shown as having 13 hours a day.

The Chairman.—Had we not better first clear up about Driver Jones.

(After discussion Mr. Back continued).

761. Well, Driver Jones, of the express, is a typical case. He runs six hours a day, and he is credited with 10 hours 21 minutes. One hour out of that for each day seems to be for work that he does on Sundays, although I fail to see how that can affect his work on other days of the week. No matter, Driver Jones is credited with 10 hours 21 minutes, and I should like to know how the time is made up? He comes on duty every day at 1 p.m., and has to get the coal on his engine—2 tons 10 cwt.—and having done that he has to be on the train before half-past two every day. Then he has to run the train and shunt when he comes up, and afterwards he has to clean his smoke-boxes out and to put the engine in the shed. At Hobart he has to shunt in the yard every morning up to half-past seven, and to work an extra hour over what it is in Launceston.

762. You said he has to coal the engine at Launceston; are not men employed to coal the engines there? Yes, but he has to bring it there.

763. Then he does not coal it for himself? Certainly not.

764. Then, I understand you admit there is an error in this return? No, I don't admit an error.

765. *By the Chairman.*—Do I understand you that the man is paid specially for Sunday work, and then is paid separately on the pay sheet? Yes, that is a mistake, but that only affects five or six men in the return, that is all.

766. *By Mr. Back.*—I understood you to say, according to this return, that it is 10 hours 21 minutes that this driver gets credit for his work—you now say that this should be reduced to 9 hours 21 minutes—is that so? Just so.

767. And that this driver gets 3½ hours for coming on and going off? No, there is the shunting to do, add to that that he has to be on the train half an hour before it leaves, and that in Launceston he has to be on the train half an hour before it leaves.

768. Take Driver Burge, 6th line of return; he is shown at 13 hours? Yes, he has to clean his engine of a night, and has to get up in the morning, light up, and get steam up, besides his running, as he has no cleaner.

769. Well, I have had this man's time taken, and can read it to you. He lives at Sorell, and his actual time on the engine for a number of days is this:—He makes the run in the morning from 7.50 to 8.50, and he runs back from Bellerive at 10 o'clock, getting to Sorell at 11 o'clock. He leaves Sorell at

3.20, and gets to Bellerive at 4.20, that is three runs of one hour each. Then he leaves Bellerive at 5.30 and reaches Sorell at 6.30. He is absolutely away from the station from 11.30 until 2.10 every day of his life, and yet I find that time included in his working hours? Yes, he is standing by his engine. When you have an engine with steam up you must stand by it.

770. Then this is it: this man goes to his home at 11.30, and does not come on again until after 2 o'clock, yet I find that time is entered here—is that so? Well, he tells me different. You had better get him here and ask him.

771. If I bring the stationmaster here and ask him, will you doubt his word? I don't know.

772. Take the Deloraine driver and firemen. There is a set of men who leave Deloraine every day at 12 o'clock for Launceston? They come from Mole Creek in the morning.

773. Yes, they leave Mole Creek and get to Deloraine at 8.55. That engine is in the shed, and does not come out again until 12 o'clock: is that so? Yes, but the men must stand by their engine.

774. But there is no work? No, but according to the rules the man must be there standing by his engine.

775. The man might smoke his pipe or play euchre with his mates if he liked. There is no work to do. You see I want to show that when you talk of men being overworked it is not that they are occupied so much, it is regulation work and not actual work: is it not so? Not such a great deal; he is not standing so many hours, and besides the time is of no use to him, he is obliged to be there.

776. Yes, but when you talk of the hard work of the men just give credit on the other side. When they can stand for several hours at a time smoking their pipes you can't call it hard work. Now, take the Derwent Valley line—Driver Crisp—he is credited with 15 hours 20 minutes' work: is that right? Yes, he is on duty that time.

777. Would you say a stationmaster was on duty 24 hours if he was on the premises? A stationmaster lives on the premises; a stationmaster can go home, an engine-driver can't.

778. Well, this Derwent Valley Driver Crisp, there would be one hour to come off his time—that would make it 14 hours 20 minutes? Just so.

779. Now, for four days in the week does not that man stand from 11 till 4? No, he does not stand, he has to go to Glenora to do shunting.

780. Well, with the exception of half-an-hour, which is problematical, when he is sent to Glenora to do shunting, would not that man be standing still from 11 till 4? Yes, he would be standing by his engine; he can't go away.

781. Then he has no work to do, but merely to stand by? Yes, for three days in the week or four days in the week; on Wednesdays and Saturdays he has to run an extra train, and to run to time.

782. Then, for four days in the week he is standing for five hours with no work? Yes.

783. Is it not the case that when he is on holiday he is shown on the return for a day on? No; he gets six days a week.

784. When he gets a day off it is shown in his time, is it not? It is not shown in the actual time.

785. Then if he takes to-morrow off he is entered up in the book? Yes.

786. If a driver runs a long train, entered in the book for 18 hours, if he gets a day off for to-day, 8 hours would be entered up in his time? Yes.

787. And although he is entered up here he is away for two days? Yes.

788. And if he works 18 hours a day from to-morrow and he is allowed a day off he is put down 8 hours? Not if he applies to get time off.

789. Would you mind looking at this time-book (hands book)? Yes, he is entered up for 8 hours, but there is a note at the bottom of the column "six days' holidays not allowed for."

790. Suppose that man is driving on Monday and working long hours, and you find you can give him a day off on Tuesday, then you enter him up 8 hours on Tuesday? Yes, in one column, but he is only paid for 8 hours.

791. I want to show that the hours apportioned in this return are incorrect—if I find an engine-driver is allowed for long work, and that, in addition, when a man is off for a day he is shown as having worked 8 hours—is such the case? No, not if he applies to get time off.

792. Has such a thing been done, or has it not? I could not say; you had better call the clerk.

793. There is one matter I would like to get cleared up before going on with the time question. You were asked by the Chairman (I am speaking from memory) whether you knew it was known all over the colony that a magistrate had been called on to decide a matter of complaint against one of the officials on the West Coast, and you said you knew nothing about it excepting what the man told you; that you knew that the man had been reduced by me, and you believed it was for swearing, and that you thought a fine would have been sufficient—you said you were not aware of that: now, do you recollect having received a letter from me dated 11th July, explaining the whole of the circumstances? Yes, but that was after the case was done with.

794. Did you get that letter? Yes.

795. I now come to the washing out. In your report to hand you say the washing out of the boilers is done more satisfactorily by the men who work the engines, that they do it better than others, and that they occupy two hours in washing out and packing glands, &c.—are you aware what the practice is in the other colonies? In some colonies they keep washers out.

796. Can you tell us what it costs to wash an engine out on the Scottsdale Line? About 13s. 4d. a week.

797. Then, if the Accountant says it costs £3 0s. 2d. a week he would be wrong? Yes.

798. Will you tell me the process, please? A man works Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and on Friday he comes back from Scottsdale; he lets his engine cool, and then washes out and goes back to Scottsdale on Saturday night, another man runs one trip for him, and it is estimated it costs 13s. 4d. to wash out.

799. The Accountant says there would be an estimated saving of £2 per week if men were employed to wash out

The Chairman.—You had better give Mr. Batchelor the paper, and then let him contradict it.

(Mr. Back hands witness the paper.)

Witness—This is for a fortnight Mr. Back, not for a week.

Mr. Back.—I beg pardon, it is my mistake. What do you say to that return? The expense comes to 12s. a week. There would be two men at 3s. each, and two men in Launceston washing out at 6s. a man. The wages men would be running on all the time. The relieving men I spoke of are men on the Western Line; there are no extra men required to relieve the men who run out the train; they come in from Formby, and run from Mole Creek.

800. Then you take the driver and engine arriving in Launceston at 11.30? Yes, from Formby.

801. Have they no more duty on arrival? No, the engine is hot.

802. Then at 4.30 they have to go on to Scottsdale? Yes.

803. Then you appoint another set of men to do that? Yes.

804. That is, a special set of men are employed to relieve these men who have to wash out the engine? If I did not do that they would have to be employed in another way. I don't see where it comes in.

805. Can you tell me how many sets of engine men you have available? Yes, 29 sets.

806. And can you tell me the percentage of ballast and special trains that have been run during the last three months? Not from memory I can't.

807. Can you tell me the percentage of regular drivers you have in excess of the total train requirements of the railway at this time—I mean every day? We have twenty engines to steam every day without specials. The others are washing out.

808. You can't give the percentage? No.

809. You stated in evidence that the train mileage had been reduced, but that the staff had been reduced in greater proportion than that? Yes.

810. Have you any idea as to the reduction in the train mileage and staff? There are only two trains taken off the Main Line.

811. Oh, but what is the percentage of train-mileage and staff. I have a return here which shows that the train mileage has been reduced by 16.7 per cent. and the staff only by 14.7 per cent. Is that right? I can't say from memory; I only know I am five men short now.

812. Yes, we have heard you are short-handed. Now, can you take one day's work—a day well known to the Committee, the 3rd September, when the men were attending the conference—can you take the time-book and let me know what certain men were doing on that day? Yes.

813. I will read this, and then you can look at it and state what you please. On the 3rd September the following men were off duty:—Paton, Fraser, Davis, West, Harvey, Dunbar, Coote, Allen, Roberts, Stanley, Swift, Morrisby, and Maher. All these men were off on the 3rd September? Yes; but West run his train down, and Roberts had his train down the night before.

814. They were off duty? That is their shed-day.

815. All shed-days? Yes.

816. Your return does not show it.

817. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Have you no books, Mr. Batchelor, that would enable you to answer the question? No, I have not, because they have been all taken away from me for this enquiry.

818. *By Mr. Back.*—I have them here—are these your time-books? Yes.

819. Turn to 3rd September, page 23, book A. What was Paton doing? Off, ill—he had been ill for a month.

820. Turn to page 25. What was Fraser doing? Ill—he had been injured.

821. Page 28. What was Davis doing? He washed out that day and came on to Hobart by the express.

822. Why, he was here on the morning of the 3rd September—I saw him myself? That was on the Tuesday.

823. No, on the 3rd? He came from Mole Creek that morning, and then came on by express to Hobart.

824. What was he doing on the 3rd September? He was at Hobart attending the Conference.

825. Now, Driver West: what was he doing? He brought down the mail train from Launceston.

826. On the 3rd September what was he doing? In Hobart attending the Conference: he would have been in bed but for that.

827. Now as to Harvey? He was off duty: it was his shed-day.

828. He was off duty on 3rd September? Yes.

829. Go to page 55, Stanley and others? They were men off duty. These men were taking other men's places, and had to make extra time; four came to the conference, and one was taken out of bed to do work for another man. We had only five men to work the trains.

830. Give me an answer as to Stanley? Stanley was off duty.

831. Page 57, as to Coote? I am not aware. He is a fireman.

832. Well, it seems there were 14 men absent on 3rd September; will you take that as correct. Will you admit there were 14 drivers and firemen off duty on 3rd September? Yes, I admit that.

833. Can you tell the average hours of work for 1893 as compared with 1895 for drivers and firemen? No, it is not taken out.

834. Will you accept the accountant's figures as right? He would know the average for the number of men we had then.

835. Can you tell me the number of drivers of engines, and the miles per day, for a comparison of the years 1893, 1894, and 1895? No, it is not taken out.

836. Then, in making your statements you have not gone into detail when you state what you did with your enginemen? I had no occasion to do so; until lately I always had plenty of men to do the work.

837. Would you mind looking at that paper. Have you any figures like that I now hand in? No; I have had no clerical assistance to do such work.

838. How many special trains were run during the month of September? I cannot say, not from memory. I can get a return for you if you give me time.

839. Do you consider that the time has been always fairly apportioned to the men? Yes.

840. Take the month of September, when you have some men working long hours, what did Driver Barnard do?—I want to get at the statement that you had no men to enable you to give time off. I want you to take up the time-book; you will find that you had men, and that you could have given time off, but that you did not take advantage of it? I gave time off last week.

841. I want to show that for September you have had drivers available for six or seven days, and you have not made use of them. Take Barnard's time for September? On the 9th September he was out for all day, long hours; 10th, the same; 11th, working in shop; 12th, working at shunting and in the shop; and to the 20th in the shop; he had a long day the day before.

842. On the 21st September? On the 21st he was off, not out that day—but all this has happened since I gave my evidence.

843. Then you find you can relieve the men? I have always done so when opportunity offered.

844. You said in regard to three coal trains, of which we have heard so much, that you had no opportunity to give the men time off, and did not pay them overtime—now, up to a certain time you would give them overtime? Just so.

845. You will not be doing justice if you don't pay them overtime? I have your letters urging me to keep down expenses.

846. The men were justly entitled to their overtime and you did not give it? I wanted to keep down expenses, and intended to give them their time off.

847. Have I ever told you not to pay overtime that was justly due? No, not in so many words.

848. Don't you think it is through this injustice these complaints have arisen? I was waiting the opportunity to give them time off—it was through scarcity of men I was unable to give it.

849. Do you think you would ever have heard of it if you had paid the men? I don't know.

850. What is your experience? I know that twenty hours is too long for any man to be on at a time.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1895.

W. E. BATCHELOR, *recalled and examined.*

851. *By the Chairman.*—Mr. Back, the Committee would like you to, as far as possible, confine your questions to Mr. Batchelor to the apportionment of work and the question of overtime, as they wish to bring up their Report as quickly as possible on these points. You will have an opportunity of asking questions relating to other matters at a subsequent period? *Mr. Back.*—Do I understand, in the event of other matters coming up, I shall have the privilege of asking about them?

852. That is the position? Thank you.

853. *By Mr. Back.*—I would like to ask Mr. Batchelor if he knows the maximum number of trains we have ever required on our biggest day? About thirty-two, I think, including those on the West Coast and Sorell.

854. I know as a fact, leaving out the West Coast and Sorell, there are twenty-eight. Are you prepared to accept my statement? Yes.

855. On our poorest day have we ever required twenty-eight trains? No; but there is an engine required as a stand-by to assist, which requires an extra set of men.

856. We had twenty-one trains and an engine to assist,—that is what is required? Yes.

857. The question now is—supposing we are fortunate enough to be required to meet extra traffic at Christmas-time, are you prepared to do it? Not without more men: three more cleaners to take the place of those discharged, and two to take the place of those who have left.

858. As to engines—you would be able to find engines? Yes.

859. *By the Chairman.*—From your point of view you think that justice would be done to the men who are complaining that they have been worked unfairly, and have worked extra hours, if five extra men were provided: the cause of complaint would thus be met? That is so.

860. *By Captain Miles.*—Five men on the biggest day? (No answer.)

861. *By the Chairman.*—Do you mean that five more men would enable you to carry out what you think would be a proper apportionment of the hours over the whole of the Railway system, or do you mean five men in the case of emergency? Five men permanently and continually.

862. *By Captain Miles.*—You have plenty of drivers, I understand? Drivers have been put back to be firemen; and I should want more men to advance these back to their proper places.

863. Would that dispense altogether with the question of overtime? That depends upon the state of the traffic. Some days I might work the traffic so as to give the men a day off.

864. Would these five men then dispense with the overtime question altogether? No.

865. You would still have to give men time off, even though you had an extra five men? Exactly so. For special days we have to have twenty-eight locomotives and a stand-by engine to make special arrangements to meet extra traffic; and it has always been an understood thing to take the men in the sheds in an emergency like that.

866. Would the average hours the drivers and firemen now work be reduced if you had the five extra men you have spoken of?—if so, how much would it reduce the hours worked? It would not reduce them at all.

867. But it must reduce them if you have five other men on? We take the men out of the shed to run specials at present. If we had the five men it would not be necessary to take the men out of the sheds.

868. These five men would be kept in the shed for the purpose of running specials when required? Yes.

869. That would not affect the ordinary running at all? No, there is no complaint about ordinary running. These five additional men would enable us to run specials without taking the men out of the sheds. Those who are working would still work the same hours.

870. Have you had any instructions from the Manager or anyone else not to pay overtime to these men who have worked additional time? Not lately. I have had instructions to keep expenses down.

871. If you found you could not give time off could not you have given them an order to get paid for overtime? I could have done so.

872. There was nobody responsible but yourself? And the position I was placed in.

873. You were doing it with a desire to keep down expenses and reduce as much as possible? Just so.

874. You could have given an order for the overtime, so that there was nobody responsible but yourself? Yes.

875. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Have you examined the Estimates for 1896? No.

876. You are not aware that both the workshops and locomotive department are provided for on the Estimates? You see I have had three men leave lately.

877. Did you not notice there was an increase in the Estimates to provide for an increase of wages, very largely to provide for these changes you have been anticipating? I have sent an estimate in of what I require.

878. You have not seen the Estimates? No.

879. You said the work in the workshops had been going on all right up to the present? The engines are getting back.

880. I asked you if you saw on the Estimates for 1896 the contingencies provided for an increase of wages? I have not seen it.

881. *By the Chairman.*—If you had seen the Estimates provided for it you would never have raised any objection? Certainly not.

882. *By Mr. Lewis.*—In the case of emergency or pressure of business would you have any difficulty in putting your hand upon suitable men to fill the places of the five cleaners required for the department? We generally try to get the men who have been on, they are more used to the work; I do not know whether I could put my hands on them or not.

883. Have you found any difficulty in filling up the vacancies that have occurred, and to provide for the work required? No, I have had no difficulty. There are plenty of applications, but they do not all suit.

884. Can you carry on the business of your department in case of emergency? Of course I can always get men if paid for overtime or if they have time off.

885. *By Mr. Dumaresq.*—Mr. West said there was more oscillation of his engine than usual—have you any reason to offer for that? I do not think there would be any oscillation to cause apprehension. We are obliged to keep them out a certain time, and we have to run them down. He might have had an engine that is just run down.

886. That may be now and again—it is not usual? No, it is certainly not a usual thing.

887. That oscillation would not go so far as to endanger the engine, or to be dangerous? No, certainly not.

888. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—You do not allow any engine to come out if it is seen there is the slightest danger? I do not allow one to leave the shed if there is the slightest danger. An engine after a certain time gets rough, and I use my judgment before taking them in.

889. *By Mr. Hartnoll.*—Would the heavy loading of a train affect the oscillation?—in the way in which West put it would it increase it? The more he had behind him the more it would steady him.

890. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Does this overloading of trains delay them at all? Of course they do not get along so fast.

891. Has there been any trouble on the Fingal line as to the delaying of trains through overloading? Not that I am aware of.

892. Do you know they have not been able to keep the time-table regularly on the Fingal line? That depends upon the shunting and weather. Some days they may get up to time, other days they may be delayed, although only with the same weight of load.

893. Do you know as a fact there have been frequent delays—they have failed frequently to make the running to time on the Fingal line? I do know that trains have been running late on the Fingal line.

894. Is that due to overloading, do you think? No, in some cases it is due to the weather.

895. *By Mr. Barrett.*—I would like to explain to the Committee about this expression “oscillation.” What is complained of is not absolutely oscillation: when an engine oscillates one side of the wheels first lift clear of the rails and then goes back again, and so on. What the driver complains of is not oscillation, but simply lateral play? Yes that is it, lateral play.

896. *By the Chairman.*—Then oscillation is the wrong term to use? Yes.

897. *By Mr. Reibey.*—I should like this matter to be put clearly, because it would put the public mind at rest. There has been a doubt whether it is safe to travel on the railway in consequence of the statements that have been made as to the men being overworked and therefore unable to do their work. In consequence of this I should like Mr. Batchelor to tell us if more men were placed on whether he would be able to give the drivers and firemen their necessary rest? Yes.

898. And remove the complaint of being overworked? Yes.

899. And also that five more men would enable you to keep your engines in order and work your Department satisfactorily? These men would have nothing to do with repairs, they would be running men simply.

900. You could relieve men from overwork? Just so, Sir.

901. *By the Chairman.*—Out of Mr. Back's cross-examination the matter arose as to whether men could be fairly considered on duty when they were standing by their engines. I have looked through this Manual of Regulations and I notice No. 5, attendance, says:—“Every officer and servant shall devote himself exclusively with zeal and fidelity for the service specified, and shall attend at such hours as

prescribed, and shall consider himself on duty either on the line or at stations, although it may not be in the regular times of attendance." Under that rule I suppose you must consider men on duty from the time that they take charge of their engine in the morning till they bring it back at night? The moment a man takes charge of an engine in steam he is on duty till he delivers it up.

FREDERICK BACK, *called and examined.*

902. *By the Chairman.*—Your name is Frederick Back? Yes.

903. And you are the General Manager of the Tasmanian Government Railways? Yes.

904. You remember, Mr. Back, a Report read in Parliament in which you stated the apportionment of the hours of labour was entirely in the hands of the Locomotive Superintendent? Yes.

905. If you had known earlier you could have met the difficulty? Yes.

906. Does not the correspondence between yourself and Mr. Batchelor show that he tried by every means to apportion this time, and does not the correspondence show he failed in doing so because his department was shorthanded? That hardly comes within the scope of my meaning in the matter. If I could tell you what was in my mind when I wrote those words it would be easier. I could not answer that question without going into a long explanation.

907. The Committee would not mind how long the explanation was so long as they got to know whether from your own point of view you regard the traffic as being in the hands of the Locomotive Superintendent, and you were not therefore apprised of these difficulties? What I mean to say is this, that the first information I had as to the men not getting their time off was from the newspaper one morning that certain statements had been made in Parliament with regard to it. If Mr. Batchelor had advised me of the men complaining I should have said let them have their time off, or if that cannot be arranged let them have their pay in coin, and had this been done I think there would have been no complaint.

908. You have heard Mr. Batchelor say he would know of any complaint personally? If I recollect rightly, Mr. Batchelor said the men were grumbling about being overworked, and I said if I had been aware of it I should have taken the matter up and should have suggested that where time off could not be given, then the men should be paid overtime.

909. Does not the correspondence with Mr. Batchelor show that you had been anxious for a long time to make certain retrenchments, and that you expostulated with him on certain subjects, showing where you thought expenditure was too much, and that he wrote shortly afterwards a full explanation, and urged that the whole of his Department was undermanned and that he could not keep the work up to that efficiency that he liked, so far as the locomotives and rolling stock were concerned, and also that he wanted more cleaners in order that the men might be put upon a right footing? Something of that sort in general terms. I had been receiving instructions from the Minister to retrench and to keep expenses down as much as possible, and if Mr. Batchelor could make retrenchment he was to do so. I have saved this year something like ten thousand pounds, and it was decided in conference with the Minister we should keep things going on and try to keep up such an average of economy. During the present time of depression no additional expenditure more than possible should be made whilst we were not earning any revenue, and as this depression would pass over and things improve we should be better able to afford to spend money. With that view we have had estimates prepared, and as you have heard, we have not run any risks. We have managed everything satisfactorily with the exception of this one matter, which never really came before my notice, which is that some men were dissatisfied that they did not get time off or were paid for overtime. I feel certain if these men had been paid overtime we should not have heard anything of this complaint or any complaint. Had I been aware the men had made a complaint I would at once have said, as I have said before, "Pay the men for overtime." The correspondence between Mr. Batchelor and myself travels over a large area, and had very little to do with cutting down the engine staff.

910. Having heard the whole of this enquiry, and knowing it has been set forth that if they had more cleaners it would add to the efficiency and obviate this difficulty, would you in your official capacity be ready to recommend that they have some additional cleaners put on, thus rendering the whole staff more efficient and better than now? If Mr. Batchelor, instead of writing in general terms had come and said this, in my position I should have probably said, "I agree with you in that proposition;" but he has never put it before me in that way. The whole correspondence was more or less of a general character, and, looking at the matter broadly, I say I have achieved the object of retrenchment that Ministers have requested me to do by making a saving of over £10,000 to the Locomotive Department. No doubt with the increase of traffic we shall be able to put on more men. We have done what ordinary business men do. There has been a large decrease in the train mileage, and we have not spent more money than we could possibly help; we have kept everything safe and in going order, and there has been a great saving to the taxpayers of the Colony. We have saved during the twelve months money that would otherwise have been raised by taxation, and in saving £10,000 I have simply carried out the wishes of the Government.

911. You mean to say you have been forced by the Minister of Railways to carry out excessive retrenchment? No.

912. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Not excessive retrenchment? Certainly not excessive.

913. An additional sum is placed on the Estimates for 1896, according to your recommendations? I may say I don't take the view of the matter expressed by Mr. Hartnoll (the Chairman), because if an engine requires repairs and is greased and put on one side it does not increase expenditure; it makes no difference whether you make the repairs to-morrow or the day after or six months' hence, you simply defer expenditure, you do not increase it.

914. Your opinion is that it is better to work a locomotive out and have done with it? Most undoubtedly. They have got to this pitch in England that when they find an engine has worked out its boilers they throw it on one side. Suppose a locomotive cost £2000, with very great care you might make it last 20 years; I say then it is economy to work that engine out in 15 years, because all you do is this:

you shorten the life of the engine by 25 per cent., which means you have an expenditure of £500 in 15 years instead of 20 years. That £500 is £33 a year, which is not the cost of the employment of two or three special trains; so that if you work the life out of an engine in 15 years it is true economy.

915. The correspondence shows that Mr. Batchelor holds?—I do not care what Mr. Batchelor holds; I can only say that my opinion is shared by all railway men in the world, and it is an opinion that is growing a great deal in England. There has been during the past few months a great amount of correspondence on the matter in various quarters, and the opinion seems to be that it is often better to throw the engine on one side than to have new boilers.

916. Do I understand the Estimates now provide for all requirements and for working the staff under the wages schedule and maintaining the efficiency of the rolling-stock and the Locomotive Department? Undoubtedly.

917. Has Mr. Batchelor ever been apprised that the Estimates provide for that being carried on? It has been the practice for a number of years I believe for Mr. Batchelor and the Accountant to go into these things together. I do not know what has been done.

918. Is it not a fact that Mr. Batchelor did not have a knowledge of how you were going to apportion the wages? I think Mr. Batchelor must have known, because he sent in his estimate, and there has been no departure from the custom of previous years in dealing with the matter. In fact, the same custom of dealing with them has been in force from the day I landed here till the present time.

919. When Mr. Batchelor sends in his estimates to be provided for by Parliament, would it not be in the ordinary way of business to tell your subordinate that his estimates for such and such a year were amply provided for? I do not think so, unless you wanted to tell him that his estimates were too much. I have made estimates out as an executive officer before I came to this country, and I never had them sent back.

920. Would it not be better, in Mr. Batchelor's position as the head of a department, to let him know really what in future—having regard to numerous complaints that are constantly being made—to let him know really how much is wanted to be done under these estimates? That is a matter of detail. Our system is a very small one, and the Accountant's work is concentrated. I have always understood that the Accountant and Mr. Batchelor were in touch on these matters, and in all matters of detail consult together, and advise accordingly. It is hardly my business, as chief executive officer, to go into these matters. The estimates are sent me from each officer who has to provide them, and the Accountant and myself then prepare the estimate for the Minister. I consult with the Minister, and provide him with a schedule of the estimates for the year. The Accountant gets the printed Estimates from the Treasurer or some one, and sends me a copy, and I think Mr. Batchelor, Mr. M'Cormick, and various other officers get copies. This has been the practice since I came to the Colony, and was the practice I believe before I came; there has been no departure from it. Our business being so small, the accountant, I believe, has always been in touch with the heads of departments, who can get any information they require.

921. This is the point I want to get at: there has been voluminous correspondence, and in it some apparently small matters have been referred to with the greatest minuteness, whilst other matters of great importance have not been referred to at all? It never occurred to me to send the information without being asked for it, nor am I aware it is the custom in other railway systems, and I have had a pretty long experience of them. I have been through the position of Chief Accountant, Chief Clerk, Assistant Traffic Manager, and in 1878 I was General Manager of the Canterbury Railways in New Zealand, and right through these I dealt with all kinds of railway matters, assisting with accounts, &c., and never recollect having sent to any of the officers any more information when once the estimates were accepted. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that Mr. Batchelor would get any information he would ask for or wish to receive. I would like to ask Mr. Batchelor whether he has not always received every information required? *Mr. Batchelor*—I have never asked for any estimates; the estimates were sent in some time ago, and I asked for a day a week for each man.

922. *By Mr. Back*.—Did not the accountant advise you to put full time on? *Mr. Batchelor*.—No. *Mr. Back*.—I did not know that.

923. *By Mr. Back*.—You have never failed to obtain information? Not when I have asked for it.

924. *By Mr. McWilliams*.—Has there been any alteration in the Estimates? *Mr. Batchelor*.—Under the short-time system it has been considerable.

925. *By Mr. Back*.—The system of dealing with that, as between myself and yourself, has not varied during the last ten years? *Mr. Batchelor*.—No.

926. *By Mr. Back*.—It was the same system before I came here? *Mr. Batchelor*.—Yes.

927. *By the Chairman*.—Am I right in supposing, from what you have said, that under the present Estimates there is sufficient provision for carrying on our system of railways, and for keeping locomotives and rolling stock up to a proper standard of efficiency? Not only that, there will be a surplus.

928. It may fairly be accepted, then, that the few additional men required will be put on, and that the complaints—certainly only complaints in a few instances—will be fully provided for in future? Yes; if Mr. Batchelor shows what men he wants, there is no difficulty in getting men. I have given no instructions; these things are matters of detail. I do not suppose there will be any trouble. I can only say, that when you announced you were going over the whole system for five years, we have come out of it very creditably. I do not suppose there is a man in any service in the world that does not make some errors of judgment. I have had the control of a large concern. The Committee may not perhaps realize I have charge of nearly half your Loan. I collect nearly one-fourth of the revenue. I can honestly claim, and I believe Ministers will bear me out, that during ten years I have had charge we have never had an accident, claim, or complaint; I use the word complaint in its proper sense, for I do not consider that complaints of rates are such in the proper sense of the word at all. I appeal to you as a Minister, and Mr. Nicholas Brown, and the Premier, that during the whole of that time there has never been a well-grounded complaint against the management, accident to passenger, or a claim that is worth anything, and considering that the enquiry covers a period of five years, I am very pleased that the enquiry is being held.

Mr. Hartnoll here stated that he would like to place on record his testimony of the efficient manner in which the railway service was carried on during his administration as Minister for Railways.

929. *By the Chairman.*—I would like to say that with regard to the dismissal of the men at Launceston, that the Memorandum going forward to Mr. Batchelor placed him in an inferior position not to allow him to put on or take off men. Do you think that is really a right position for a Locomotive Superintendent to occupy? You are asking me to criticise an action taken by my Ministers, and I think that is hardly fair.

930. Have you at any time when considering the matters in connection with these things, advised Ministers that it was time such a state of things was remedied? I don't think I have expressed an opinion one way or the other. I am speaking from memory; of course Ministers will tell you if I have or not.

931. That is very satisfactory, and we appreciate your loyalty to Ministers. Will you express your own opinion with regard to it? I would like to say something, but I would rather it was not reported.

Mr. McWilliams here objected to Mr. Back withholding anything. If he had any information to give to the Committee he should give it all, and make any explanation he desired, which should be reported.

932. *By the Chairman.*—The fact is you would like to make some explanations? Yes, Sir, and some suggestions too. The fact is there are two sides—the official and the human side. I want to adopt the official side; but if the Committee do not wish it, I do not want to do it.

933. *By Mr. Burke.*—You have stated that during the number of years you have had charge of the Railways you have worked them to the general satisfaction, and under the Chairman when he was Minister of Lands. During the whole of that time had Mr. Batchelor charge of the Locomotive Department? Undoubtedly.

934. Had you any occasion during that time to find fault with him, or did he carry out his duties with efficiency? I consider Mr. Batchelor one of the most efficient officers I could procure. The only trouble has been the retrenchment. I may say Mr. Batchelor is not responsible for the financial position of the railways. If the railways do not pay, not only my Minister but the House pitches into me. The management is always jibbed whether the officers are responsible or not. I can quite understand that Mr. Batchelor likes to see the stock in first-class order; and, when I consider the retrenchment to which I have been compelled to subject Mr. Batchelor, I say I do not suppose it would be possible to find a more energetic and competent officer.

935. Having performed those duties so satisfactorily, do not you think a certain amount of power has been taken from him? If that is so, it was not at my doing or recommendation, and I do not know anything about it.

936. *By the Chairman.*—If he has stated that he thinks it necessary that five more men should be employed, do you agree with him in that opinion? I think he is probably right. Three men have recently resigned,—that makes a vacancy for three more; and if it requires two or three more we must put them on. It is not a question of one man or two men, it is a question of economy generally.

937. *By Mr. Burke.*—The question I want to know is that, having regard to his position as Superintendent, if he states it is his opinion five more men are required to bring the Department up to its proper state of efficiency and get everything in working order, do you think he is right? I think it is very probable. It is necessary if he says so. I know three men are required; and if they are required he will have them.

938. *By Captain Miles.*—In your correspondence with Mr. Batchelor on retrenchment, you refer not merely to the hours of the men but to retrenchment generally? Yes, in every way, the whole Department had to be retrenched.

939. A large saving made? Yes, in every Department.

940. As to the time that is allowed for coming on and going off with the engines, and the question of washing out engines, that appears to me important if more time is allowed for it than is thought necessary. Do you know the time allowed in the other colonies? Yes, $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours in South Australia and $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours in Victoria. That is the total—I have the rules here.

941. If you have the rules you may as well let the Committee have the benefit of them? Yes, I can produce them. (Victorian Rules produced and read.)

942. *By the Chairman.*—But does that apply to our case, if the service is different? The service would not be different for large sheds, it would be different for small places where there is only one man. In South Australia three quarters of an hour is allowed the engine-man and driver for preparing the engines and half an hour for stabling them. There are always a variety of opinions on this subject. This rule is repeating the regulation of 1891. (Rules put in.)

943. *By Captain Miles.*—Can you give us any reason why you should allow $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours in Tasmania for this work that takes $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours in South Australia and $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours in Victoria. Any reason for it? No, only in big sheds they have more hands for getting engines ready for the men than they have in small sheds.

944. *By the Chairman.*—Then that rule refers to large sheds? No, to the whole system. I made enquiry while in Victoria and found it applied to the whole system as far as the hours are concerned.

945. *The Chairman.*—I will ask Mr. Batchelor. You have heard the question and the reply. Do you know what makes the difference here and in South Australia? Well, we have to be out half an hour for shunting before the train leaves. Then in the other colonies they have special men for coaling the engines and looking after them. In England when an express man reaches the platform he gets off his engine and is done with it.

946. *By Captain Miles.*—Then I understand that this time is for shunting and getting the engine ready? Yes, and they have special men for that in the other colonies.

[Mr. Back's examination continued.]

947. Is there any condition in the Regulations as to washing out engines? No. I went into the matter when I was in the other colonies, and I have correspondence upon the subject, but I have not gone into the matter here since my return.

948. Well, if it is not private correspondence perhaps we might have it? There are some letters here addressed to myself on the subject; one from Brisbane, dated 7th May, 1895, from the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners:—"Sir,—In reply to your letter of 10th ult. relative to the washing out of engines, I am desired to inform you that the washing out of engines was formerly done by drivers and firemen, who were allowed half a day, *i.e.*, 4½ hours, but some two years ago arrangements were made for it to be done by one man, with an assistant lad, at each important locomotive station; and experience shows that this is undoubtedly the most economical plan, both from a monetary point of view and also as regards the greater amount of care bestowed on the washing out, inasmuch as the responsibility is not divided, as is the case when drivers and firemen perform the work. It has been found that a smart practised hand can, with the aid of a lad cleaner to assist, wash out at least three and, more often, four engines a day, in addition to packing any glands that may require it. This rule does not of course apply to isolated stations where there are not a sufficient number of engines to wash out to warrant the appointment of a man specially for the purpose, and in such cases it is still done by drivers and firemen. As regards the wages paid to wash-out men, the ruling rate is 8s. a day with a cleaner at 6s. a day to assist." A letter from New South Wales, dated 27th April, says: "In reply to your letter of 10th instant relative to arrangements for washing out locomotives, I am directed to inform you that most of this work is done in the sheds by special hands, who are classed as washers and gland-packers, and who are paid at rates varying from 8s. to 10s. per day, the higher rate being paid to men who have been disrated from the position of driver. Some of the washing out is done by drivers and firemen on shed days, for which four hours is usually allowed, and during that time the men are required to wash out the boiler, clean the tubes, and do the necessary packing to the engine." From Adelaide, dated 2nd May, I have a letter:—"Dear Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 10th ult., I have to inform you that in nearly every instance the washing out of engines is done by special men who are employed in the running-sheds at the rate of 8s. per day. In the two or three isolated cases where this arrangement does not exist—for instance, in small sheds where only one engine is stabled—the washing-out is done by the engine-man and fireman on Sunday, and they each receive half-a-day's pay at their respective rates. We endeavour, however, to avoid this as far as possible, by changing the engine once a week, so that it can be attended to by the regular washers-out at a larger shed." Then from Adelaide on May 31st:—"I beg to inform you that it is the practice in this Department to employ two men to wash out an engine. The number of engines which two men can deal with during the day depends entirely on the condition of the boiler and the amount of packing to be done. With the ordinary quantity of packing to be done two men should wash out four engines per day, and without packing they should be able to deal with six per day." From New South Wales a letter dated 20th May states:—"I have to inform you that two men are usually employed in washing out each engine, and when regularly employed at this work deal with, on an average, three engines per day of eight hours." A letter from Victoria, 16th May, 1895, says:—"In reply to your letter of 10th ult. as to arrangements made by this Department for washing out engines, I am directed by the Acting-Commissioners to say that at the principal depôts the work is done by special hands who are paid at rates varying from 6s. to 9s. per day. At out-stations where the engines do not run into a depôt on Sundays, the washing out is done by the driver and fireman on alternate Sundays for half-a-day's pay, or by the cleaner for half-a-day's pay."

949. Then there is a consensus of opinion that the washing out is better done by special men than by the drivers and firemen—at least in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and Adelaide? That appears to be the opinion there.

950. The practice there is that it is done by special men? Yes.

951. I understood Mr. Batchelor to say it would be better done by the drivers and firemen. Have you any opinion on the matter yourself? What do you think? Well, I can only form a layman's opinion. It is quite evident there is more economy in the other colonies than we practice here.

952. It is done by men who are not getting full driver's wages, say from 6s. to 10s. per day? A driver gets more.

953. Is it not so? I think it right to say that during the last few years a great change has come over men's ideas as to most classes of railway work. Opinions are quite changed on such matters as the life of engines, and among other things, on this matter of washing out. A few years ago I perhaps held the same view as Mr. Batchelor, but when I see a large number of men with the best brains of the world adopting the other practice after large experience, a layman must think something of it.

954. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—You were instructed by the Government to carry out retrenchment, I believe? That is correct. Yes.

955. Were you forced by the Government into any retrenchment in matters of efficiency? Certainly not. In fact I may say in my conversations with you I was told to economise as far as I could, consistently with safety and efficiency.

956. Just so. In fact your advice was adopted by the Government? Quite right.

957. In carrying out retrenchment, has greater retrenchment been made in the locomotive department than in other branches of the service? Certainly not, other branches were retrenched first.

958. And to a similar extent? Yes, quite as much, comparatively.

959. In carrying out retrenchment, was a portion of it affected by the mileage,—I mean the train mileage? Yes, very much.

960. How does the reduction in mileage compare with the reductions in staff? The reductions in the staff represent 14·7 per cent., the reductions in train mileage 16·7 per cent., so that the reductions in train mileage are 2 per cent. more than in staff.

961. Do you remember when the Estimates were under consideration what advice you gave to me with regard to wages? I said we would require to spend a larger amount of money as we earned it, and that it would be necessary to provide for sufficient men. I said we could put on more men or work them longer hours as experience might dictate to be wisest, but it would be necessary to put a full sum on the Estimates.

962. Do you remember that a sum was put on to pay men on full time, even if we reduced them to half? Yes, that was provided for.

963. Then, in consequence of the increased amount of the estimate there is enough to give payment for full time? Yes, we can provide for full time straight off, and leave a surplus.

964. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Are the men working longer hours now than formerly? I have a Return, prepared by the Accountant, showing the fact that the average hours in July, 1895, are slightly less than the average for July, 1893.

965. Could that Return be produced? Yes. I will put it in now. (Return put in.) It is for a fortnight ending July, 1893, and a fortnight ending July, 1895. The average hours in 1893 were 10 hours 43 minutes for drivers, and for July, 1895, the average was 10 hours 38 minutes. For firemen in 1893, 10 hours 38 minutes; and for firemen in 1895, 10 hours 26 minutes. There was some trouble in getting these comparisons, as up to a short time back the time-books were not kept so as to give such Returns with exactitude, and they had to take the time-sheets for it. It had taken a long time. The Accountant had also prepared other evidence which would corroborate this, but this was a fairly typical case.

966. It is a fair average—that is, an ordinary average? Yes. I took July, as it was nearer the point for which I wanted the information.

967. When did retrenchment in your Department commence? Oh, goodness knows. We have been retrenching for a long time.

968. That first Return then would be before the retrenchment that has commenced lately? Oh yes, before that retrenchment.

969. Are the engine-drivers not working longer hours now than in 1893? Yes, on one or two coal trains. That is the whole grievance. As a matter of fact, the number of hours worked is almost identical year by year—that is, the average hours worked per man. It is the case of a few coal trains or specials that really have made the trouble.

970. When the men work on specials, do you not think it would be better policy to settle fortnightly for overtime, and give them the money they have earned, rather than hold over till a slack time and make them take it out in time? Yes, it would be much fairer; although in Victoria some of the men are owing from a hundred to a hundred and twenty days. It would be much better to settle up fortnightly as earned.

971. And better for the Department? Yes; it would not come to much.

972. Not much to the Department, but a great deal to the individual? Yes; as a matter of fact I thought this was going on. It would come to about 10 per cent. on the pay, or less.

973. Do you approve of the system? I think it is fair, and I think the men would be satisfied. It would cost a little more, but not very much.

974. The guards are not under the Locomotive Department: how do their hours compare with engine-drivers and firemen? They are about on all-fours; they are relieved by the station-masters; they average about nine and a half hours a man. A man may get a long day on, but he has a short day the next, and they have their time off as far as practicable; some prefer their time off all at once, some like it occasionally. It is not a matter of any hardship.

975. Is it a fact that some of the guards work longer hours than engine-drivers or firemen? Not that I know of. There might be a case where they may work more hours a week, but they get time off to suit themselves and the department.

976. In his evidence Mr. Batchelor said it was not possible to have the book system signing "on and off." Why is that system of signing "on and off" not carried out in Hobart? I don't see why it cannot be done. If it could be worked it is very necessary. You can't have a proper check on the men unless they do sign "on and off."

977. Do I understand that the fact of the men working long hours was not brought under your notice? Individual men's hours. No. The first I heard of it was when I took up the paper in the morning.

978. Don't you think you should have been made acquainted with the fact? I said I regretted that. If it had been brought under my notice I should have enquired into it.

979. Was there any reason why it should not have been brought under your notice? Not that I know of.

980. Allow me to ask one question—Are the relations subsisting between yourself and the Locomotive Superintendent such as might make free intercourse between you difficult? No; excepting in regard to retrenchment, we have been pretty much on all-fours. Mr. Batchelor thinks one system of washing out is better than the other, and I have my opinion from the information I have received from others.

981. Are the relations between yourself and Mr. Batchelor such as to make free intercourse between you impossible? No. There is a little stiffness about retrenchment, and that is all.

The Committee adjourned until 11 o'clock on Wednesday next.