

*Mr. Maxwell*: The man who does the least important and least onerous duties will be getting the best pay.

*Mr. Elvines*: We expect that you would put a first-class driver on the Oamaru line, and a third-class one on the other.

*Mr. McKerrow*: That is an aggravation of the inequality.

*Mr. Maxwell*: The second-class man would get the highest pay.

*Mr. Winter*: But can we not keep to the point that we do not want any increase of pay, but simply to reduce the hours of labour? Mr. Maxwell will make a point against us if he can prove that we have asked that inferior drivers at country stations or branch-lines should receive higher pay than first-class men. We are not asking that.

*Mr. McKerrow*: Well, I will not say higher pay. Supposing we apply the eight hours a day and no overtime: the man on this run to Oamaru will be running six days in the week, but the country man that does a little run, and stands a large portion of the time, would work out his forty-eight hours in three days; the other three days he would be at liberty. This would occur: that if he was an active man he would not go about doing nothing, but go into some other employment.

*Mr. Winter*: But you have provided in the rules against that.

*Mr. McKerrow*: Well, suppose he just sauntered about his home—the effect on the public mind, what would it be? The settlers seeing a man going about at his leisure three days in the week, and paid for those days 12s., I do not think the settlers in the country would stand that. The public would not apprehend the things you are speaking of, and no doubt the Commissioners would be very speedily censured for making arrangements which brought such a state of things about. Would that not happen?

*Mr. Winter*: No; it does not happen at the present time. You would keep the man these hours extra, and pay him for that.

*Mr. McKerrow*: But we have already stated to you that we have no employment for him. Bear that in mind. Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Hannay have stated—and I can corroborate it—that there are places where you cannot find work for an engine-man, unless you make him go and ballast, &c., up the line, which would be absurd.

*Mr. Owen*: I have made no proposition of that sort.

*Mr. McKerrow*: Did you not say we were to find him work?

*Mr. Owen*: No. Mr. Maxwell's case was where a man worked fifty-four hours in four days, or forty-eight and six extra. That would bring in a three-legged service, where the man runs four days and is off two.

*Mr. Maxwell*: But please observe the duty in that case. The man is really not working. You are going to pay him for thirty hours' running in the week and twenty-four booked off. The other case—of the three-legged service—is where we are really running the man, working long hours, and a long service and not standing.

*Mr. Winter*: Mr. McKerrow thought it would seem ridiculous to see a man walking about while others were at work every day. Probably it would; but if the settlers observed these things and made remarks through the Press, or by communication with you, the thing could be easily explained, that they are called upon to do their week's work in four days and six hours.

*Mr. McKerrow*: I hardly think the settlers would be satisfied with the explanation.

*Mr. Winter*: It is just probable that some of them would not be satisfied with anything.

*Mr. McKerrow*: Their own case as regards work is so different. In what may be called the domestic work, they work more than eight hours—ploughing, for instance.

*Mr. Owen*: Only eight hours.

*Mr. McKerrow*: Well, they do more in Scotland, where I come from.

*Mr. Maxwell*: And in England also.

*Mr. Owen*: Where I come from (in England) I know that ploughmen were done at two o'clock in the afternoon. A man would have his four horses, and a mate to assist him, and they would be through their day's work at two o'clock.

*Mr. Maxwell*: I happened to be brought up on a farm, and I never saw that that was the practice, though the work was much more arduous than in this country. Of course, I am not pleading that these hours are justifiable.

*Mr. Edwards*: So far as public opinion is concerned, I do not think it would be worse than is the case now, because at all our fair-sized towns and stations, where men are booked off during the day, they are strolling about the town, and there is a great temptation to get into places where they should not be. I know the public have an opinion that railway-men have nothing to do because they are strolling about so much.

*Mr. McKerrow*: That would be aggravated.

*Mr. Edwards*: I do not think so, if the men could be at their homes.

*Mr. McKerrow*: But their homes are in the town.

*Mr. Winter*: A great deal is made of this booking off, but it must be borne in mind that a man booked off has got to get permission to go away for an hour. A man is not actually on duty, but he is at call, and if his foreman wants him he is there, and is compelled to stay.

*Mr. Hoban*: Supposing he gets an hour, what can the man do? His clothes are not the cleanest, where can he go? Sit on a stool and smoke, that is all he can do. You must take the one-hour man as well as the five-hour man, and adopt the broad principle.

*Mr. McKerrow*: I will just ask Mr. Rotheram if they are very particular in striking twenty minutes or half an hour off, or if the practice is not rather the other way.

*Mr. Rotheram*: Every day's work is thoroughly considered, and a fair allowance is made for it.

*Mr. McKerrow*: Half an hour, say, would not be booked off against the man?

*Mr. Rotheram*: No.