

and I said, "Yes, there is always plenty of work at Petone." He made the remark, "I have just been down South." Mr. Forbes asked him how things were down there, and Mr. Jenkinson replied that things were in a very bad way. He said, "They appear to be taking things very easy, and it is not the shop it was when you and I were there about fifteen years ago." We went on talking on general topics, and with that he simply said, "Well, I must be getting along," and shook hands with Mr. Forbes and myself and left.

4. Did Mr. Jenkinson make any remark, either jocular or otherwise, about his intention of shaking up Addington, or anything of that sort, in your hearing?—No.

5. *Mr. Hampton.*] When you saw Mr. Ronayne's letter in the newspaper the next day, did it occur to you who the "expert engineer" might be?—Yes.

6. Who?—The Hon. Mr. Jenkinson.

7. What led you to that conclusion?—By the manner in which he took stock of the shop.

8. The sentiments which were contained in Mr. Ronayne's communication and put down to an "expert engineer" were identical practically with the remarks made to you by Mr. Jenkinson?—Yes, that is so.

GEORGE SCOTT examined. (No. 9.)

1. *Mr. Beattie.*] You are an engineer in practice in Christchurch as a foundry-proprietor?—Yes.

2. You, of course, are a gentleman of very large experience in engineering matters?—Yes.

3. You have some knowledge of the Addington Workshops and the plant there, and the class of work turned out at the Addington Workshops, including what you would see at the Exhibition?—That is so.

4. With regard to the workmanship of the work turned out at Addington, what is your opinion of it?—I may say, in reference to the boiler-work turned out at Addington, that I think it is of the very highest quality. I have examined quite a number of the boilers turned out there—I have not examined them in the shops themselves, but in the railway-trucks when ready for sending away to Wellington—and I have always remarked that the quality of the work turned out at Addington Workshops was far better than what is turned out at Home. I may say that I know what is turned out in the Midland Railway Workshops. I have been through that establishment, and know a great deal of the work that is carried on there. I have also been through the Baldwin Locomotive Works, and I must say that I do not think the work turned out by the Baldwin Locomotive people, or the firms at Home, would equal the quality of the work turned out at Addington Railway Workshops. Of course, we know that the Addington people are handicapped to a certain extent with the machinery and appliances that they have, and, if I may be allowed to state my opinion, I think the time has now arrived when complete new shops should be erected. I do not think it is so much the fault of the men or the plant they have there as of the workshops themselves. I think both new shops and fresh appliances are required. These shops have now been in existence for thirty years or more, and, as we all know, in the colonial shops it is a matter of additions from year to year. One machine is put down in one corner, where room is made for it; and next year another machine is got in, and it has to be crammed into another corner. These shops have been there long enough, and in the interests of the Dominion it is time that new shops were erected. I may say that we ourselves have experienced that necessity. We had very good shops built thirty-odd years ago, but of late years we found those old shops quite inadequate and quite out of date; and within the last two years, to bring our shops up to date, we spent between £20,000 and £30,000, and I think the time has now arrived when the Government should do the same. A great deal has been said about modern machines, but I think it would be a great mistake for the Government to go in for a large expenditure in putting down a modern plant in these buildings. Buildings of a more secure and fireproof nature should be erected. In reference to Mr. Henderson, I do not know him personally, but I may say I have always heard him spoken of in the very highest terms as being a man who uses tact in managing his men, and as a first-class tradesman.

5. On any of your visits to Addington has it occurred to you that the men were doing what has been termed by some one "a Government stroke," or, in other words, were working below their normal speed?—No, such never occurred to me; but I have thought, in going through the shops, that you could not get the maximum of work out of the men because the works were unsuitable for it.

6. For that you would not blame the men?—Not at all. I think they are doing all they possibly can with the shops they have.

7. *The Chairman.*] What would you say with regard to the system of appointment in the Government works, whereby neither the foreman nor the Locomotive Engineer has direct power to appoint or dismiss men?—I certainly think that the man in charge should have power to suspend a man, but I do not know that it would be safe to give him power to dismiss the man. I think, though, they should have some power other than they have. You always find, when you get a number of young fellows in the shop, and they realise that the foreman has no power to discharge or suspend them, that they take advantage of it.

8. Do you not think that the Railway Appeal Board which is constituted by Act of Parliament is a sufficient tribunal to insure justice being done?—That method is too cumbersome. It takes too long to get at it. You should be able to deal with a man who is suspended within a week. The foreman should have power to suspend, and then, I think, the Mechanical Superintendent should have power straight away to discharge that man.

9. *Mr. Roberts.*] In making up the cost of your work, what would you consider a fair allowance to make for the expenses of management and upkeep of the shop generally before you added on your profit? What do you consider a fair percentage to add on to the actual cost of labour and material to cover the fixed charges of management, power, depreciation, &c.?—That is an item that varies very much in the different shops, but I should say that at the Addington Shop it would possibly be 28 per cent.