

notice that these words are not mine but Mr. Ronayne's. In speaking of this system which was in vogue some years ago of allowing the local officers full control of men, Mr. Ronayne said, "Some officers inflicted severe penalties, out of all proportion to the offence." Those are the words of a man experienced in railway-work. If it were possible years ago for officers to act in this way I suppose officers would still do so. I would also request you, then, to carefully weigh the evidence on this point before you make a recommendation which would bring about some alteration in the present system. I would also ask you to carefully consider the evidence of Mr. Beattie yesterday. Mr. Beattie pointed out very clearly that whilst work might be scarce in one shop it might be plentiful in another. It might be possible for him to transfer orders from one shop to another. If you give the Workshops Manager the power to dispense with men, he might dispense with men because there was no work in hand. If he has, as is now the case, to report to Wellington, it might be possible for Mr. Beattie to send work from another part of the Dominion, and thus keep these men employed and keep their service from being broken. I ask you, therefore, to consider all these various points, and not to recommend any departure from the present system, at any rate inasmuch as it affects the discharge of the men.

And now, sir, to conclude: I may add that I think it is in the best interests of the Department, and the men, and the people of this country that any future statements of a like character to those which have been the cause of this inquiry being held should be accepted with some degree of caution, and full investigation made before they are given broadcast to the Press and the public to talk about. If this course had been followed in the present case I feel sure that this inquiry would not have been held.

I must thank the Board for the courtesy, and consideration, and latitude which it has extended to me whilst acting as the men's representative. If I have transgressed in any way I can assure you it has not been done intentionally, but from a want of knowledge and experience on my part, and I trust you will accept this as my explanation for so doing. I wish also to thank Mr. Thomson, the Secretary of the Board, for the courtesy and consideration he has extended to me. I am sure that some of us at times have rather taxed his patience, but I trust he will accept our apologies for so doing. I would also like to thank the representatives of the Press for their very fair reports which have appeared from time to time.

And now, Mr. President and gentlemen, so far as I am concerned the whole matter is in your hands. I believe you will carefully weigh the various points which you have been asked to give a decision upon, and I believe that the decisions which you will give will result in the complete vindication of the character of the men. I believe also that improved facilities will be given to the men at Addington, and that they will be enabled thereby to make Addington Workshops what they all desire it to be—the leading Workshops in the Dominion.

*Mr. A. L. Beattie, Chief Mechanical Engineer, Representative of the Officers of the Railway Workshops.*

With your permission, sirs, I propose summarising in the order of reference certain remarks on the evidence already before you.

With regard to the efficiency of the plant and appliances at Addington, I might state that since I became Chief Mechanical Engineer, in 1900, additional plant and machinery for Addington Workshops has been supplied to the value of £30,761, and building additions to the value of over £10,000, making a total of nearly £41,000 in nine years.

It has been fully recognised, however, that the Addington plant and accommodation was insufficient for the rapidly growing work, and various proposals and schemes were from time to time put before the General Manager and discussed with him. The funds available and allotted each year for additional machinery were, under the General Manager's approval, expended to the best advantage of all the Railway Workshops in the Dominion—for it should be remembered that additional plant was needed in other Workshops besides Addington.

It has been under consideration for a number of years past to rearrange certain machinery at Addington, more especially that in the machine-shop, and also to increase the accommodation. In connection with this the question of electrification generally of the motive power has been repeatedly discussed and considered, but the large outlay involved has so far precluded its adoption.

A scheme for the electrification of the Addington overhead cranes only, apart from the general machinery, was considered in 1904, but the estimated cost of that reduced installation was £5,000, which outlay had to be postponed, funds not being allotted for this work.

For the overhead gantry above the new or larger hydraulic riveter at Addington a 20,000 lb. pneumatic portable hoist is in order. This pneumatic hoist will answer all present purposes at the large riveter, and, in the event of general electrification at Addington, would come in usefully for a smaller Workshop.

Approval was obtained from the General Manager to have the necessary alterations made to Addington iron-foundry building to admit of a suitable pneumatic hoist being used for all heavy lifts, and this work is about to be carried out.

In view of the contemplated schemes, both electrical and producer-gas, for improving the motive and lifting power at Addington, probably necessitating a central power station, steam requirements have meanwhile been met by using spare locomotive-boilers as auxiliaries to the original fixed boilers.

The Hon. Mr. Jenkinson, in his evidence, stated that less than a hundred rivets per day were got out of the new hydraulic riveter, and that he was not overstating the case in saying that each rivet took over five minutes. As a matter of fact this machine puts in, in some parts of a boiler, over one rivet per minute, but in the more awkward parts the rate is necessarily much slower. Taking the riveting of the whole of an X class boiler, including placing in position, raising, lowering, &c., with the present hand-gear, the average per day is 200 rivets. With the pneumatic hoisting-gear on order