

MONDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 1917.

The Commission met in the Opposition Whips' Room, Parliamentary Buildings, Wellington, at 10 a.m.

The Chairman opened proceedings, and the secretary read warrant.

The Chairman asked for the following returns, which Mr. Myers, on behalf of the Railway Department, agreed to supply:—

Years 1911-12 to 1915-16: List of all derailments of vehicles on running trains, together with the cause as found by the Board of Inquiry.

List of broken axles, 1911-12 to 1915-16.

List of broken tires, 1911-12 to 1915-16.

Issue of all draw-bar springs used in maintenance each year, 1911-12 to 1915-16.

Issue of all bearing-springs used in maintenance each year, 1911-12 to 1915-16.

Issue of all axles used in maintenance each year, 1911-12 to 1915-16.

Issue of all tires used in maintenance each year, 1911-12 to 1915-16.

Stock on date of stocktaking in each year, and also the number of springs on order at that time, 1911-12 to 1915-16.

Stock of cars, vans, and wagons on the North Island main line and branches and the South Island main line and branches, 1911-12 to 1915-16.

Mr. T. M. Wilford, M.P., attended the Commission, and made a statement. He was also examined on oath by Mr. Myers and by the Commission.

Mr. Wilford handed in telegram received from the Minister of Railways and letter from the Minister of Railways *re* setting-up of Commission, also copies of *Railway Review*, dated 7th May, 1915, and 27th August, 1915, containing remits passed by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants relating to the use of draw-bar springs in pieces. He asked that the remit as placed before the Department be handed in to the Commission, also the General Manager's letter of reply to the Railway Society, dated 14th September, 1915. Mr. Myers, on behalf of the Railway Department, agreed to have the same before the Commission on resuming after the luncheon adjournment.

The following witnesses were called by the Railway Department, and examined on oath: Ernest Edwin Gillon, Locomotive Engineer, Chief Mechanical Engineer's Office; George Arthur Pearson, Assistant Chief Mechanical Engineer, Wellington.

On resuming at 2.30 p.m. Mr. T. M. Wilford, M.P., attended, and the remit from the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants was read and handed in, also letter from the General Manager of Railways to the Society, dated 14th September, 1915.

The following witnesses were called by the Railway Department, and examined on oath: George Arthur Pearson, Assistant Chief Mechanical Engineer, Wellington (continued); Richard Edward Robertson, Engineer and Brake Expert, Wellington; William Henry Johnston, Workshop Foreman, Napier; Sidney Percival Evans, Locomotive Engineer, Petone; Charles Thomas Bargh, Workshop Manager, Petone; James Henry Sherwin, Foreman, Car-shop, Petone; Charles Thomas Bargh, Workshop Manager, Petone (recalled); Charles George Kelly, Car and Wagon Inspector, Wellington.

The Commission adjourned at 5 p.m. until 10 a.m. the next day.

TUESDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1917.

The Commission resumed at 10 a.m.

The Chairman intimated that the Commission would sit at Dunedin on the 7th March and at Christchurch on the 9th March, and asked for list of witnesses the Department proposed to call at Dunedin and Christchurch, also a list of the train-examining and lifting staff, South Island.

The Chairman stated that a test would be made with pieced springs in the Engineering Laboratory, Canterbury College, and intimated that representatives from the Railway Department would be welcome at the test.

The Chairman requested that the carriage in which the Commission travel in the South Island be fitted with trap-doors over the springs, and pieced and whole springs fitted with simple sliding indicators attached to draw-bar so that the Commission could ascertain at any time the compression of the springs.

Mr. Myers, on behalf of the Railway Department, handed in the following returns:—

List of cars, brake-vans. and wagons on North Island and South Island main line and branches, 1911-16.

List of broken axles under cars and wagons, 1907-16.

List of broken tires under cars and wagons, 1907-16.

List of draw-bar failures on trains, 1913-16.

The following witnesses were called by the Railway Department, and examined on oath: John Cleland Cherrie, Locomotive Foreman, Whangarei (late Depot Chargeman, Nelson); Henry Archibald, Depot Chargeman, Palmerston North (late Depot Chargeman, Picton); Frederick Arthur Laurie, Workshop Foreman, Petone (late Workshop Foreman, Greymouth).

The Commission adjourned 11 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. out of respect to the memory of the Hon. Sir George McLean.

The following witnesses were called by the Commission, and examined on oath: Henry Sharman, train-examiner, Palmerston North; Albert John Earney, train-examiner, Napier;