

- (11.) Whether the Department used its organization in co-operation with such Committees or authorities for the purpose of obtaining coal and maintaining stocks for railway purposes ;
- (12.) Whether all the coal obtained for and allocated to the Railway Department under the Coal Trade Regulations was delivered to the Department, and whether and to what extent coal allocated for railway purposes was diverted to other industries ;
- (13.) Whether the diversion of coal from the railways to other industries detrimentally affected the position of the railway coal reserves ;
- (14.) Whether the Railway Department kept closely in touch with the overseas coal-suppliers with a view to supplementing supplies obtained through the Coal Trade Committees ;
- (15.) Whether the staff of the Department was of sufficient strength on the 2nd July, 1919, to have enabled the ordinary time-table in operation on that date to be maintained had other conditions been satisfactory ;
- (16.) Whether the restrictions imposed on the carriage of passengers and goods were essential ;
- (17.) Whether the curtailment made in the train services was due to causes other than shortage of coal ;

We have the honour to report that we have duly inquired and have taken evidence at Wellington and Christchurch, after advertising in the daily papers at the main centres throughout the Dominion inviting persons desirous of giving evidence to attend. No person, however, responded to the invitation.

The following witnesses were examined: The General Manager of the New Zealand Railways; the Chief Engineer of the New Zealand Railways; the Chief Mechanical Engineer of the New Zealand Railways; the Assistant Chief Mechanical Engineer of the New Zealand Railways; the Locomotive Engineers for the Auckland, Wellington, South Island Main Line and Branches, and the Westland and Westport Sections; the Chief Clerks of the Locomotive and the Stores Branches of the New Zealand Railways; the Workshops Managers at Newmarket, East Town, Petone, Addington, and Hillside; the Workshops Foremen at Napier and Invercargill; the Brake Inspectors for the North and South Islands; the Assistant Locomotive Foreman at Christchurch.

The following witnesses connected with the Coal Control Department were also examined: Mr. A. H. Miles, formerly Chairman of the Coal Trade Committee; Mr. A. MacIntosh, formerly a member of the Coal Trade Committee; Mr. A. M. Adams, formerly Chief Executive Officer of the Munitions and Supplies Department; Mr. F. J. Gunn, Officer in charge of the Coal Control Department. Mr. Jas. Findlay, Chairman of the Overseas' Shipping Committee, was also examined.

Counsel appeared before us representing the Railway and Coal Trade Departments.

We forward with our report a note of the evidence taken, and letters, documents, and returns put in and received by us.

ROLLING-STOCK AND ENGINES.

An exhaustive inquiry and report on the condition of the rolling-stock on the New Zealand railways in July, 1916, recorded in parliamentary paper D.—4, 1917, show that it had been maintained in good and efficient order and condition.

It has been found advantageous in making the present inquiry to adopt this as the starting-point for further inquiries as to the condition of the rolling-stock and engines on 2nd July, 1919.

Reference to the official data given in Return No. 15 adopted from the annual Railway Statements presented to Parliament shows that during the past four years the train-mileage run each year was—

In the year ending 31st March, 1916	..	..	9,356,522
In the year ending 31st March, 1917	..	..	9,146,331
In the year ending 31st March, 1918	..	..	7,468,646
In the year ending 31st March, 1919	..	..	7,477,583

(See Appendix A.)