

in rates asked, have been estimated roughly to amount to £160,000, or more than one-third of the net revenue of the railways.

The petition therefore seems to demand more than the consideration of the individual interests of a small section of the employes. Obviously a point which has to be kept in view while endeavouring to deal justly with the employes and the public is, in what way does the colony propose to pay interest on the cost of its railways, whether by general taxation or by remunerative working?

The employes may be divided into two classes: First, the eight-hour men; second, intermittent workmen. To the latter class belong Stationmasters, Station Clerks, Guards, Porters, Signalmen, Drivers, Firemen, Cleaners, numbering over 1,000 men. Of these, the Drivers and Firemen only, according to usage, get paid for overtime. Though their hours of work may nominally be mapped out with regularity, the nature of the service, which is affected by various contingencies, makes the work somewhat irregular.

I attach a compilation of four weeks' work during a busy time of the year, run out to show the average time worked by the gangs. Enclosure 2.

The labour of engine-driving is not of the same arduous nature as most mechanics or labourers work. The intermittent nature of the work is inconvenient; but, as a rule, I do not think these hands are physically or mentally harder worked than nine-tenths of the settlers in the colony, or than carriers or cab-drivers, shipping hands, and a host of others. They are probably not harder worked on the whole than the balance of the intermittent workers, and they are undoubtedly better paid.

#### TIME.

3. That your humble petitioners' hours on duty are frequently excessive, and they are not paid in proportion, the exceptions to this proving the rule. It rests chiefly on the Locomotive Foreman how much (if any) overtime is allowed for excessive hours. One hour's overtime may be allowed for a day of thirteen, fourteen, or fifteen hours. No matter how long the day is, no overtime is allowed when shunting or ballasting. Petitioners' statement.

If, in the interest of the department, overtime is imperative, they ask a reasonable amount of rest before resuming duty, and a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, *i.e.*, the whole time on duty to be considered.

In order to show clearly that their hours are excessive, they quote twenty-three cases from the time-table.

Train Runs.	Time on Duty.	Train's Time of Departure.	Time of Arrival, Last Trip.	Time on Duty after Arrival.	Total Time on Duty.	Remarks.
	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.		h. m.	
Lyttelton and Christchurch ...	...	...	9.5	50 minutes	...	} Worked by two shifts of men, running late trains two nights per week.
Passengers ...	6.25	6.55	10.55	30 minutes	...	
Passengers ...	...	...	12.10	"	...	
Lyttelton Goods ...	7.45	8.15	6.0	"	10.15	Or later if required.
North Goods ...	5.30	6.0	4.30	1 hour	12.0	Engine to turn, coal, and water after arrival, and do anything that may be necessary.
South Goods ...	4.30	5.0	2.20	"	11.0	Engine to turn, coal, and water.
South Goods, old time-table, changed in April ...	p.m. 4.10	p.m. 4.40	a.m. 4.0	"	12.50	"
	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.			
Christchurch-Timaru ...	7.45	8.15	7.50	"	13.5	"
Christchurch-Springfield ...	6.55	7.25	7.35	"	13.40	Engine to shunt trains, coal, and water.
Springfield-Christchurch ...	6.0	6.30	7.45	30 minutes*	14.15	*Engine to shunt. Small engine.
Ashburton-Christchurch ...	6.40	7.10	7.50	1 hour	14.10	Engine to turn, coal, and water.
Ashburton-Timaru ...	6.20	6.50	8.10	"	14.50	"
Timaru-Ashburton ...	7.0	7.30	8.10	"	14.10	"
Oamaru-Timaru ...	6.50	7.20	8.13	"	9.20	"
Oamaru-Timaru ...	12.20	12.53	8.0	"	9.20	"
Timaru-Oamaru ...	6.50	7.20	7.55	"	14.5	Engine to turn, coal, and water, or be done in the morning.
Dunedin-Oamaru ...	7.45	8.15	7.35	"	12.50	Engine to turn, coal, and water, or be done in the morning.
Dunedin-Clinton ...	7.30	8.0	7.0	"	12.30	Engine to turn, coal, and water, or be done in the morning.
Clinton-Dunedin ...	5.40	6.10	9.15	"	16.35	Engine to turn, coal, and water, or be done in the morning.
Clinton-Invercargill ...	5.30	6.0	8.35	"	15.5	Engine to turn, coal, and water, or be done in the morning.
Invercargill-Clinton ...	5.30	6.0	9.35	"	16.5	On Saturdays.
Invercargill-Clinton ...	6.40	7.10	4.55	"	11.15	Engine to turn, coal, and water, or be done in the morning.
Invercargill-Clinton ...	9.45	10.15	8.5	"	11.20	This train is often late.
Invercargill-Kingston ...	6.15	6.45	7.30	"	14.15	Engine to turn, coal, and water.
Lawrence Branch ...	5.40	6.10	9.0	30 minutes	15.20	

The twenty cases cited above do not include special trains that have to be run for different purposes in many instances after the day's duty is performed. These specials often take the greater portion, or all night, to run them, and the men have to resume their ordinary runs on the following day without any time being allowed for rest, thus making the total amount of time on duty from thirty to thirty-six hours; and it is on record of drivers and firemen working forty-five hours, with scarcely sufficient intermission to get their food.

3. It is not competent to make an absolute rule about computing time. If a gang comes on duty for four or five hours in the morning and is then not worked for a similar number, and comes on again for another run in the evening, the men are not as a rule paid time and a quarter for the idle time. Mr. Maxwell's remarks.

The man who runs forty or fifty miles into the country, waits a few hours, and runs back with a return train, may be thus on duty twelve or fourteen hours. It is inconvenient, no doubt; but, bearing in mind the work done by his fellows in other departments and by the great majority of workers in the colony, he is not unduly worked, and he is a better paid man than the majority of workers.