

*Mr. Carruthers.* sections at present open for traffic, and it is not fair to put these into the hands of a Traffic Manager, who is very seldom a civil engineer.

20th Aug., 1877.

255. *Mr. Macandrew.*] Supposing all these railways were your own property, and you had sole control and management to make the most of them, is there anything which occurs to you as being the best course to be adopted in order to make them pay?—I should raise the rates all round.

256. Do you not think it would pay to run late and early trains to the Hutt at low rates, so as to induce working men to reside out there?—It has been tried, but without success; late trains run even now occasionally, but no one uses them.

257. A large township has sprung up on the Port Chalmers line, owing to the experiment being tried. I mean Ravensbourne?—Yes; but I do not think the Ravensbourne traffic pays.

258. The traffic must pay, and I thought a similar plan might have been tried with reference to the Hutt?—It has not been lost sight of. Mr. Smith, who was Manager, made several recommendations on the subject. Once he recommended that we should give a free pass for three years to every man who would build a house at the Hutt and go and live there. If I wanted to get all the money I could out of the railways I would raise the rates, except where there was a fear of competition.

259. *Hon. Mr. Richardson.*] In Mr. Wood's examination reference was made to the Auckland line, and to money having been made upon it by the Brogdens. I want to bring this out: Was not the line at that time new, so that the passenger traffic might be attributed, to a certain extent, to the novelty of the thing?—Yes, that is so.

260. Were not the passenger rates and charges on that line, when the report of the Auckland Commissioners was drawn up, the same as those which had prevailed when Brogdens were running the line?—Yes; I think they were.

261. When the rolling-stock was handed over, did it not require a large amount of money to be spent upon it to put it in order again?—Yes; you cannot supervise an engine; if you want to find anything out about it, you must take it to pieces.

262. Is it usual to run a lot of empty carriages when one would be sufficient?—It is a matter that is left to the discretion of Stationmasters; and I think that both here and in every other part of the world there might be a great deal more economy practised by running less carriages. It is a serious thing; but Stationmasters are fearful lest by a sudden rush of passengers the train should not be sufficient, so that very often more carriages are run than are necessary.

263. *Mr. Lumsden.*] Would it not be well to reduce the fares so as to increase the traffic. If you must run a certain number of carriages, would it not be as well to encourage people to travel in them?—I do not think so; for instance, you have a hundred passengers, from whom you are making £1 per head, if you halve the fares you would make only £50, so that you would have to carry twice the number of passengers you originally carried in order to get any profit on the reduction; and I doubt whether you would double the traffic.

264. But the public would be getting the advantage of the railway?—No doubt; but the question was whether it would pay the railway better.

265. *The Chairman.*] About leasing railways, can you explain how it is that the railway companies which in England lease their lines to one another manage to get the lines taken care of?—I do not know whether they take over rolling-stock or not. I do not believe we should be able to get contractors to take care of the rolling-stock.

266. I understood you to say, in answer to one question, that if you had the railways in your own charge you would make them pay by raising the rates?—Yes.

267. Do you not know that, as a fact, last month's work has shown a great falling off, which is owing to the increase in rates and fares?—No, I do not.

268. Have you seen this, the last *Gazette* (handing it to witness)?—This certainly shows a reduction as compared with last month; but the proper test would be to compare the month with the corresponding month of last year. The decrease may be owing to other causes than the increase in rates.

369. The traffic returns do not come through you?—No.

270. Very well, I will ask no more on the point. The recommendation in this report (E. 2, clause 62) as to increased mileage on heavy lines has not been carried out?—No.

271. The rates have been lowered on the Christchurch and Lyttelton line?—Yes.

272. And increased on the narrow-gauge lines?—Yes.

273. In reference to the sale of tickets at places other than the railway stations, I believe you stated that a shopkeeper who wished to sell would have to invest £600 if he had to pay for his tickets beforehand?—Yes.

274. He would not require tickets for every station?—If he were selling in Christchurch, I should think he would have to keep tickets for every station running out of Christchurch.

275. Do you not know that the system has worked very well in America?—I know it has worked most unsatisfactorily, and that many companies have abandoned it. I know as a reputed fact that hundreds of thousands of pounds have been lost by it.

276. Do you not think that a greater traffic could be brought about by giving increased facilities for obtaining tickets?—The trouble of going to the ticket office is scarcely worth talking about.

277. Then you think women and children may as well be crushed about as men are?—No; I think steps should be adopted for enabling people to get tickets more easily at the stations.

278. I think you said the cattle traffic in Canterbury had been carried on at a loss?—Yes, I think so.

279. Are you aware whether there is any traffic at all now?—I know it is much smaller, but that may be owing in some degree to the time of year.

280. According to a letter I have received, it seems that there is a good deal of dissatisfaction regarding the charges for carrying horses on the Canterbury lines. It seems if a person engages a horse-box, and pays so much for the first horse, exactly the same has to be paid for a second horse?—The charge is less for the second horse than for the first.