

Mr. Grant.
1st Sept., 1877.

1323. What would be the period you would recommend?—For distances up to twenty-five miles the second day, and distances over fifty miles the third day.

1324. Are you aware whether in England and America, or both, tickets are issued available for a month, six months, or as long as the party wishes, when he applies for them?—Yes.

1325. Are you aware, of your own knowledge, whether that system has worked well or not?—I am not aware. They are principally tourist tickets. I do not think they are given in ordinary cases.

1326. You are not aware that, if any person applies, he can get a ticket for four months or six months at the same price?—At Home you can get excursion tickets by a prescribed route for three months and longer. By paying a certain amount you get it extended, but I do not think ordinary return tickets will extend beyond a week.

1327. What is the condition of our country railways or management that prevents us adopting the same rule as regards tickets that is adopted in other countries?—I do not see any objection to it.

1328. There is no more likelihood of fraud or forgery of these tickets here than in England or America?—No.

1329. Then, with regard to the vending of tickets, do you think it would be advisable in the interest of the public that railway tickets should be sold at hotels or other places in addition to railway stations? Would it be advantageous to the public?—With certain restrictions.

1330. What restrictions would you impose?—That they should be sold consecutively for the sake of check.

1331. Is it not possible that tickets not sold consecutively would never go back, and would confuse your accounts?—These tickets could be sold to responsible persons, and, to prevent any fraud, once a week or once a month they could be examined.

1332. Do you not think that if you were to have the tickets numbered consecutively, it simply means that the thing is unworkable?—No, I do not think so.

1333. You would not allow parties to get tickets on credit?—I would allow dealers to have them on credit.

1334. You have a system of town delivery in Dunedin, have you not?—Yes.

1335. Has that worked satisfactorily?—Yes.

1336. Do you think that is calculated to assist the railway authorities in keeping the stores clear?—Very much so.

1337. Do you think a system of loading and unloading trucks by contract would answer?—No.

1338. In case of stores being purchased in Dunedin, where would the accounts have to go before payment could be made?—In most cases to Wellington.

1339. How long, as a rule, would the seller have to wait for his money?—In most cases about a month.

1340. Under the provincial system how long a time would have elapsed before such accounts were paid?—About a week or ten days.

1341. Do you know whether merchants have charged a higher price in consequence of having to wait a longer time for payment?—I cannot say.

1342. Do you consider, aside from the Port Chalmers line, that the new regulations that have been issued have been productive of a decrease in the number of passengers?—The new passenger tariff has not affected the matter much; it is very similar to the old tariff. It has made very little difference indeed.

1343. If it has made any difference, on which side is the difference?—Decrease on goods traffic; but, as a whole, the receipts have not decreased. There was an increase in July, as compared with the corresponding period of last year. The passenger receipts in July last were £3,014 19s. 10d.; in July, 1876, the receipts were £2,563 18s., so that there is thus shown an increase of £451 1s. 10d.

1344. Has there been an increase of mileage?—Yes; 22 miles on the Tokomairiro line.

1345. Can you give us the difference between the returns for June, 1877, and June, 1876?—On the Dunedin section the receipts for the months of June and July, 1877, and corresponding period of 1876, were:—

	June, 1876.				June, 1877.				July, 1876.				July, 1877.		
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Passengers, &c. ...	2,758	18	10	...	3,188	6	0	...	2,563	19	0	...	3,014	19	10
Goods, &c. ...	3,367	0	9	...	4,229	0	10	...	4,423	15	0	...	3,683	4	4
	£6,125 19 7				£7,417 6 10				£6,987 14 0				£6,698 4 2		

1346. May not the £451 be regarded as the result of the natural increase of travelling on the railways?—It is the natural increase.

1347. Mr. Macandrew.] In that case the additional mileage from Tokomairiro to Lawrence has produced nothing?—The passenger traffic on the Lawrence branch is very light.

1348. How many men are there engaged permanently in loading and unloading trucks at the Dunedin Goods Station?—Twelve or fourteen.

1349. At what wages?—£9 to £10 per month.

1350. And the Government has a contractor to deliver all goods in Dunedin?—Yes.

1351. Could he not load his own trucks at a lower rate than you could? Would it not be profitable to the Government to dispense with the services of some of these men, and arrange with the contractor to load goods himself?—No, I think not.

1352. You say that almost all payments are made from Wellington? What are the exceptions?—Accounts are paid out of imprest in cases of urgency.

1353. Hon. Mr. Richardson.] I understand you to be in favour of a more elaborate classification—you think it would make the work of Stationmasters lighter?—Yes; I am in favour of a more extended classification embracing all the principal products of the country.

1354. Is it not the case that in England or Scotland, where I believe you have had some experience, they bring into force a much more detailed classification than we have here, and are daily adding to the list as experience suggests?—Yes.