

North or South lines. I do not think I have seen a hogshead go out since the classification has been in force. *Mr. Tippetts.*

1458. *Mr. Larnach.*] If I sent out a pipe of wine, how would you charge for it?—Under Class A. 10th Sept., 1877.

1459. Supposing I sent it out in bottles?—It would not then be a pipe. It would go at single rates under Class A. At any rate the one would go at double rates and the other at single rates. And it would come to about the same, because if sent out in bottles the weight would be more and the measurement larger.

1460. Has the present tariff resulted in goods being sent by water or by other conveyance than the railway?—Very slightly, if at all. I do not think there can be any competition with the railway. I only speak of my knowledge of the Christchurch and Lyttelton line.

1461. *Mr. Ormond.*] You said just now, speaking of mixed consignments, that there was a discretion with the officers as to the amount that should be charged?—Perhaps I was wrong in using the word "discretion."

1462. There are definite instructions, are there not, to do as you have said—charge for the whole on the scale the largest package would come under?—Yes. "Discretion" is not exactly what I meant.

1463. As to the extra four men you said were required in consequence of the weekly system of accounts being introduced, would not some of those have been required in consequence of the increasing traffic?—The traffic is steadily increasing month by month, but I think the weekly system of accounts would necessitate the employment of four men.

1464. Have you any knowledge of what the increase of traffic was on the Canterbury railways as compared with that of the same month of the previous year?—No.

1465. Referring to the newspaper paragraph headed "Railway Vagaries," what class would the drain pipes come under?—Class F. I am not in a position to give evidence about that occurrence, but I have heard from the outside department that it is correct.

1466. The minimum is 6d?—Yes.

Are you aware that accounts have been sent back from the Audit Office with memoranda that such charges as this were against the regulations?—No.

1467. *The Chairman.*] Do you consider the Government ought to charge the public for weighing wool?—It has been done for years, ever since the line was opened.

1468. Do you think the Government ought to guarantee the weight?—Yes, if they make a charge. We used to guarantee the weights, but that system came to an end in July.

1469. Did the Government have many claims made against them in respect of the weights they guaranteed?—I do not think there were any claims. I know there were complaints often made.

1470. Do you think it would be well for the Government to continue to furnish weights?—I do not, because some up-country Stationmasters are not accustomed to the work; and if we guaranteed weights there would be endless confusion in adjusting weights at the up-country stations with those of Christchurch.

1471. And there would be loss of time?—Yes.

1472. *Mr. Larnach.*] Are there any other goods besides wines, &c., which are charged differential rates?—I think it would apply to other goods besides wines.

1473. *Mr. Stevens.*] Is there any more risk in carrying wine in pipes than in bulk?—I should think the risk was equal in each case, although there is a distinction made.

1474. Now, as to spirits. I see spirits carried in cases or jars are carried under Class A at owners' risk, while when carried in bulk under Class B it is not so. Do you think there is any less risk in carrying a cask of spirits than a pipe of wine?—No; I think the risk is greater. Many men would be tempted to broach spirits, while they would not be tempted to broach wine.

1475. Beer is now carried to Timaru at 10s. instead of 6s. What has been the effect of that?—It has almost been a prohibitory rate to the Christchurch brewers.

TUESDAY, 11TH SEPTEMBER, 1877.

*Mr. Arthur.*

11th Sept., 1877.

Mr. ARTHUR examined.

1476. *The Chairman.*] Will you please give the Committee your name and position in the railways?—Thomas Arthur, General Manager.

1477. Where are you General Manager?—On the Invercargill section, Southern division.

1478. Have you been long in the railway employment there?—I joined the service in 1865.

1479. I want to ask you, Mr. Arthur, whether the new system, called the weekly system of accounts, entails any more work and expense than the monthly system?—Certainly it does.

1480. Are you prepared to say to what extent in your department it entails more cost and work?—One clerk at £250, and another clerk at £150; and in all probability I shall require another one, unless the system of monthly accounts is reverted to.

1481. Do you consider that there is any greater security against error, and any greater facility for remedying errors, in the weekly system than in the monthly system?—More so in the monthly.

1482. That is to say, that if an error occurs you would be more likely to discover and remedy it sooner under the monthly system?—More so than under the weekly system. Should errors occur in the monthly returns, there is more time to rectify them, and they are more likely to be correctly furnished.

1483. How many more returns are involved in this weekly system than in the monthly? What are all the returns that have to be made now?—I could not, at the present time, give them in detail; they are very numerous. I refer to the documents in connection with the weekly accounts. I could not go over them all. They are not mentioned in these papers [handed to witness by the Chairman].

1484. Can you say whether the present classification of charges is any improvement upon the