

1588. How many officers accompany each train. One guard, engineer, and fireman?—Yes, one guard, engine-driver, and fireman. *Mr. Arthur.*
1589. There is never more than one guard?—Sometimes; if there is an extra pressure of work, a porter is sent to assist him, but the general rule is one guard. 11th Sept., 1877.
1590. Then I understood you to say that you consider Sunday trains would be a very great convenience to the public?—Not to all the public, but those desirous of travelling on Sundays.
1591. There is a large section down there who are rather opposed to it?—A great many are not in favour of it; I believe the majority.
1592. Would it not involve extra hands to run Sunday trains?—It would require extra labour on the part of the officials.
1593. Extra pay, or extra hands?—Extra pay.
1594. Do you think the receipts likely to be derived from it would pay for this?—I believe the receipts would be in excess of the expenditure.
1595. I understood you to say that the freight from Dunedin to the Bluff is 15s., and from Dunedin to Invercargill the same?—I am of opinion that 15s. to the Bluff is the general rate, and when there is back loading from Invercargill the rate is the same.
1596. What reduction would you require to make in the present tariff in order to secure the whole traffic from Dunedin to Invercargill?—I think the rate of freight on general merchandise should be 7s. per ton.
1597. That would make it 22s. altogether?—Yes.
1598. And you think that the saving of time by landing the goods at the Bluff would be equivalent to the difference?—I believe it is. I believe the merchants would avail themselves of the railway, even though it cost them 7s. more—*i.e.*, railway freight, 7s.; steamer freight, 15s.
1599. What proportion of the coastal traffic goes up the New River as compared with the railway?—I do not think over 70 tons a week at the present time.
1600. That does not include the back freight?—No. Their freight generally consists of timber from the bush on the other side of the bay.
1601. Could the railway not secure that timber?—No; it is on the other side of the bay.
1602. *Mr. Larnach.*] I have noticed, on the arrival of the steamers from Melbourne at the Bluff, that sometimes a steamer will arrive just as the train has started, or a steamer may arrive in the afternoon, and no train comes down. Would it not increase the traffic receipts if trains met these Melbourne steamers?—We generally run special trains for them.
1603. Not always. I have been there myself when no train came down, and when many people would have gone up to town if there had been a train to take them. Steamers have arrived in the afternoon after the last train, and sometimes between the morning and mid-day trains?—It would very seldom pay to run a train specially for the passenger traffic in connection with a steamer. The number of passengers on an occasion of that kind would not be sufficient to guarantee sending a special train.
1604. *Mr. Macandrew.*] Are vessels not signalled from the Bluff Head?—They are.
1605. How long before arrival?—Sometimes two and a half, sometimes two, and sometimes only one hour. It depends on the state of the weather.
1606. Is there not a regulation under which they are signalled to you?—They are regularly signalled.
1607. So that you have an opportunity of sending special trains if necessary?—If necessary.
1608. *Hon. Mr. Ormond.*] In reference to the audit system of accounts, you say the weekly-account system increases the cost by £550 a year?—Not at the present time, but to work it efficiently it will.
1609. Is that for the coming year you mean?—For the present year.
1610. Do you think you have had sufficient experience of the two modes to be able to give a definite opinion on that subject?—Not quite. I believe it should have a further trial—perhaps two or three months.
1611. Have subordinate officials got into the way of working this system of accounts?—Not altogether.
1612. So far it has increased the difficulties of the work?—It has increased the expenditure.
1613. You spoke of a reduction you thought desirable in the carriage of stone?—I did.
1614. From where?—From the Oreti quarries, thirty-seven miles from Invercargill.
1615. What is the rate now?—30s. per truck.
1616. You propose to reduce that by 5s.?—I do.
1617. This stone is principally for metalling the road?—It is building stone.
1618. Would the rate then be a paying rate for the railway?—I believe it would.
1619. In reference to timber which you said you would advise a reduction on. What class of timber do you mean?—Sawn timber.
1620. Is that a reduction below the present rate?—It is. I would recommend a reduction of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per 100 feet over thirty miles. Now, it is carried at $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per 100 feet per mile.
1621. Where is the principal timber trade. How far from Invercargill?—The larger mills are near Invercargill, but there is one mill sixty miles from port.
1622. How does the present rate of timber compare with the old Otago rate?—It is something similar.
1623. Would this reduction increase the timber traffic?—I believe it would.
1624. Does all the timber come by the railway?—All timber for shipment. Some mills have been obliged to close, not being able to compete with the mills nearer port.
1625. With regard to the charge between the Bluff and Invercargill, have you made any recommendation on this?—Yes, I reported on the matter to the Superintending Engineer, a copy of which I have now in my possession.
1626. Is that included in your general report on the working of the new system?—It is; on the 23rd August last.