

being worked at the same moment. Every railway station in the Island should be supplied with a telegraph instrument, not only for the use of the railway station but for the public, who would often find it a convenience. I am quite willing to pay half the salary at every railway station in the country, the amount to be charged against railway expenses.

The witness then withdrew.

The Hon. WILLIAM HUGH NURSE examined.

Mr. Nurse.

2215. *The Chairman.*] You are a member of the Legislative Council?—Yes.

2216. I believe, Mr. Nurse, you wish to give some information to the Committee with regard to railway management?—Yes. It is with reference to the trains not running on the Bluff and Invercargill line on Sunday.

2217. Will you be kind enough to state what is the nature of your information?—I only wish to inform the Committee that the fact of the trains not running on Sundays is a serious inconvenience to the travelling public, not only of Southland, but of people coming from Australia. I myself on one occasion suffered inconvenience by being detained at the Bluff the whole of Sunday. I have been requested by many people in Southland to endeavour to have this restriction removed.

2218. Do you mean it is not only in your opinion desirable, but also in the opinion of the majority of the people there, that the trains should run every Sunday, or only run to meet steamers?—Many people wish them to run every Sunday to the Bluff. Many of the labouring classes would avail themselves of a Sunday train to go to the seaside with their families.

2219. And in your opinion it would pay to do it, leaving out the Sabbatarian question. Do you think it would pay the Government?—That is a question I could not answer positively. It is my own private opinion it would—certainly in summer.

2220. Do you think the great majority of the people would be willing the Government should run trains there on the Sundays—I mean irrespective of cases of emergency, meeting a mail steamer, and so forth?—Well, if they are mail steamers there is usually a train sent, but it is not a rule to run to meet other steamers. I think it is hardly fair to make it a question of what the Invercargill people wish; it is a thing which concerns the whole colony. The travellers arriving from any other place may wish to go inland.

2221. I am speaking of running constantly on Sundays, as against running simply to meet the steamers?—I could scarcely answer that question. There is, I am aware, an expression of opinion against it that is got up by what may be called the Sabbatarian party.

2222. *Mr. Macandrew.*] Is it not a fact that trains do invariably run to meet mails either out or in?—Yes, to take mails.

2223. And all the Melbourne steamers, of course, have a mail both ways. I understand that the only steamers calling at the Bluff are mail steamers, or the "Wanganui," from Dunedin?—Yes. It was in the "Wanganui" that I had the misfortune to be delayed; but there are steamers calling other than mail steamers.

2224. Mr. Nurse is not prepared to say whether it would pay or not?—It would in summer, certainly; but whether all the year round, Mr. Arthur or Mr. Conyers, who are now in Wellington, would be able to inform the Committee better than I could.

2225. *Mr. Lumsden.*] Then you think that trains should leave irrespective of arrival or departure of steamers?—Yes. The Bluff and Invercargill Railway is an exception to the general rule existing on the other railways—between Lyttelton and Christchurch, Picton and Blenheim, Wellington and the Hutt, and Port Chalmers and Dunedin. It seems an extraordinary anomaly that the Bluff should be excepted.

2226. Your complaint has no reference to the Bluff and general Otago lines. You would not extend the privilege beyond that section?—No. I do not think they desire it on the other lines—at least, I believe not.

The witness then withdrew.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

[Furnished at the request of the Committee.]

Number of Passengers booked at Lyttelton, Christchurch, Ashburton, Malvern, Eyreton, Oxford, Amberley, and Intermediate Stations on the under-mentioned Saturdays of June and July, 1876 and 1877, respectively.

1876.				1877.			
Saturday.	Number.	Saturday.	Number.	Saturday.	Number.	Saturday.	Number.
June 3 ...	2,055	July 8 ...	1,824	June 9 ...	2,296	July 7 ...	1,701
" 10 ...	1,656	" 15 ...	1,688	" 16 ...	1,588	" 14 ...	1,634
" 17 ...	1,756	" 22 ...	1,675	" 23 ...	2,005	" 21 ...	1,587
" 24 ...	1,511	" 29 ...	1,703	" 30 ...	1,824	" 28 ...	1,725
Total ...	6,978	Total ...	6,890	Total ...	7,713	Total ...	6,647