

41. Then the question is reduced to one affecting the branch lines and the diversion?—Yes.
42. Well, the line along the beach would simply connect Hokitika and Greymouth. It does not go through any centres of population?—No.
43. By the diversion it goes through Kumara, Goldsborough, Stafford Town, and Waimea; they are all centres of population?—Yes.
44. And it goes through thickly-timbered country as well?—Yes.
45. Have you any means of showing the probable traffic along the beach compared with that on the line through Kumara and Goldsborough?—No.
46. I suppose Mr. O'Connor could tell us that?—Yes, I think so.
47. And he is coming up?—Yes.
48. When?—On Monday.
49. Is it your opinion, then, that the diversion would be more productive than the line along the beach?—I really do not know. I should be afraid to give an opinion on it, because I am quite sure that this diversion would almost spoil the through traffic from Hokitika to Greymouth.
50. Why?—Because you could go to Hokitika by coach from the Teremakau as fast as you could go by rail by the diversion.
51. *Mr. Seddon.*] Is there a road there?—No; but suppose a road was made.
52. *Hon. Mr. Gisborne.*] Do you know how many trams run every day between Greymouth and Kumara?—Three, I believe.
53. And from Kumara to Hokitika coaches go twice a day?—Yes.
- Mr. Bunny:* The trams are not a very delightful way of travelling. I have been round that country myself.
54. *Hon. Mr. Gisborne.*] If the diversion were executed, articles of consumption intended for conveyance between Greymouth and Hokitika would be taken by railway?—Most probably.
55. How would they reach Hokitika?—They would be taken from Greymouth to Kumara by tramway, and then go on through Goldsborough.
56. *Mr. Seddon.*] Is there much direct through traffic?—Comparatively little.
57. Really, then, the traffic is from Greymouth to Kumara, and from Hokitika to Kumara?—Yes, that is practically the case. And the railway line would take all that traffic.
58. Then the line along the beach would take very little of that traffic.
- 58a. *Mr. Bunny.*] It would take only the through traffic from Greymouth to Hokitika?—That is all, and it is very little.
59. *Mr. Seddon.*] Do you think there is sufficient trade to warrant the expenditure of constructing a line from Greymouth to Hokitika alone?—I have not been asked the question before, and at present I hardly know how to answer it positively.
60. Which would be the most likely to become reproductive? Which would be the most payable or most likely to pay from a commercial point of view?—It would all depend on the question of traffic.

*Mr. Bunny:* You must bear in mind that we have not to discuss whether it is advisable to connect Greymouth and Hokitika by rail. The money is already authorized. The question we are considering is whether it would be better, by spending £30,000 or £100,000 more, to take in all this country inland a little.

*Hon. Mr. Gisborne:* And it is possible that on a closer survey this excess of £100,000 may be considerably reduced.

*Witness:* I do not think we can reduce it.

61. *The Chairman.*] When was this rough survey made?—Just recently; within the last month. It is a rough survey made for the whole of the deviation.

62. *Mr. Seddon.*] Has it been taken from surveys already made?—Yes.

I thought so. Well, I do not think we can do anything more till Mr. O'Connor comes. He will be here on Monday.

TUESDAY, 2ND DECEMBER, 1879.

Mr. W. R. E. BROWN, Registrar-General, examined.

*Mr. Brown.*

2nd Dec., 1879.

63. *The Chairman.*] You produce this plan?—Yes; it shows all the localities where there is a population.

64. *Mr. Seddon.*] The first question, Mr. Brown, is, what is the population between Whitcombe Town and Arahura, on the beach following this railway line?—I shall have to total up the numbers.

65. Take from the River Teremakau?—There are 3,177 persons in the Arahura Riding. There are about 239 persons in the beach localities in the Arahura Riding.

66. Will you name the localities?—The divisions on the map marked 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 comprise the Arahura Riding. The population is contained in the first five named.

67. What are the names of the localities on the beach?—There is Whitcombe, 12 persons; Waimea Creek, 135 persons.

68. But that is not on the beach?—Waimea Creek comes out on the beach; and as the returns do not show on what part of the creek the population reside, I gave them as beach population.

69. I want to get what is along the railway line?—I can only give you what are shown in the returns published. I can state approximately what are on the coast.

70. Well, take the sea-coast?—On the sea-coast, otherwise undescribed, there are five—Chesterfield, 30; Auckland Beach, 27; Arahura Sea-beach, 23; Arahura River, 7; Whitcombe, 12.

71. One hundred and four; that is right. Now, what are there between the Arahura River and Teremakau River?

*The Chairman:* There is a large population between that and Greymouth.

72. *Mr. Seddon.*] Well, what is the total population of the Arahura Riding?—3,177.

73. *Hon. Mr. Gisborne.*] Does that include boroughs?—There are no boroughs in that riding.

74. There is Kumara?—The boroughs are not included in ridings.