

113. You charge less from Pukekohe to Ngaruawahia than from Pukekohe to Auckland?—That is not what I call opposite directions. When you charge more going to Auckland than coming from it, is what I call different ways.

114. I will make the question more clear. Do you object to charging less in one direction than another over the same portion of the line?—Yes, I do object to that.

115. Would you then, charge less for one direction than another when they are not in the same portion of the line?—I have clearly laid down my plan, which is to charge a less rate in those districts where the population is sparse than round the towns.

116. Then, as to charging less for a longer distance in the same direction than a shorter distance: that will also have to be divided into two portions—charging less for a longer distance in the same direction than for a shorter distance on the same part of the line, and on different parts of the line?—My propositions are the same, whichever way you work them. I charge the same for the whole or any portion of a stage.

117. I wish to show that Mr. Vaile uses the term “differential rating” in a very limited sense, and want to be clear on the points that Mr. Vaile objects to. His scheme is differential according to the views of railway people generally. He uses the word in a much more limited sense, so that it is necessary to arrive at what he does mean?—In reply to Mr. Maxwell, I would say that I have always made it a point to ask every railway man I came across; and not one of them, except Mr. Maxwell, has ever said that my mode of charging is differential rating.

*The Chairman:* I think it is quite necessary that we should know what the meaning of the word “differential” is.

118. *Mr. Maxwell.* It shows how we may misunderstand one another if we do not know this. I asked Mr. Vaile whether he objected to charging less in different directions on a line. He at once said, “I do not object, provided it is not on the same part of the line, but I do object if it is on the same part of the line”?—No; you thoroughly misapprehend what I say. I charge for the whole or any portion of a stage, no matter whether that stage may happen to run east, west, north, or south: whichever way you are going, I charge the same price for the whole or any portion of it.

119. I would point out that in America, for instance, these questions have been legislated upon, and this question of direction, whether on one portion of a line or another, has been the subject of conflict. In one State they are allowed to charge, on the same part of the line, different prices in opposite directions only. I wanted to elicit from Mr. Vaile whether he was prepared to do that. He is not; but when it is on a different portion of the line in opposite directions, then the charge may be less. Mr. Vaile has condemned differential rating in the strongest terms, and I want to show that it comprises things which he admits?—No, I do not admit it. I state distinctly that in my system there is no differential rating, and in that assertion I will be bound to produce a dozen railway men of position who will carry me out.

120. Then, to go on, I think you said that you desired to make the towns pay, as opposed to the country?—I never said so. At any rate, I never intended to say such a thing.

121. You make a man who lives in a town pay a much larger sum for his travelling than a man who lives in the country. Are there any grounds for assuming that a man living in the town is better able to pay a higher rate than the man living in the country?—Yes. As I said before, men travel for one of three things—for business, or pleasure, or health. For a business man living in a town, and travelling, say, seven miles round that town, there are far more opportunities of doing business than for a man who wants to travel seven miles in the country, where there are few inhabitants; therefore he can afford to pay more.

122. On the question of simplifying the rates and regulations, you say that your proposed scheme does simplify largely; and I think you said at the same time that you had not considered the port charges and a great many other details?—That is so.

123. How, then, do you form a conclusive opinion that your scheme is a simple one until you have investigated details; because it is the detail that makes a system perfect?—That is clearly so; and, as I have said, if you are going to apply this system, the question of its success or non-success will very largely depend upon the skill with which the details are worked out. Having to deal with the public, I have confined myself to the main general principles. The question of port charges, I admit, requires very careful consideration.

124. Is it not premature, then, to say that your scheme is simple until it is elaborated?—It is certainly simple as far as it is developed.

125. Is it not made to appear so by omitting nine-tenths of the detail?—No, I do not think so.

126. This is a case in point: You have given us a diagram with the reduced fares on it. Between Auckland and Te Awamutu there are thirty-four stations; thirty-four multiplied by thirty-four gives 1,156 different journeys that may be taken. You have only shown thirty-four fares that you would charge, and you leave out a great deal which would show your scheme to be very different from what it seems to be?—I ask the gentlemen present if Mr. Maxwell does not show very clearly that he does not know what I propose. He says there are 1,156 stages on which I have to calculate fares. What has to be done is merely this: Charge 6d. or 4d. for the whole or any portion of each stage; there is no need for showing the fares.

127. I think I said 1,156 different journeys. What I wish to point out is that your diagram, although it shows a large number of cases, is very far from exhibiting all. To take an instance: From Hamilton to Pukekohe is fifty-four miles; you do not show the New Zealand Railway charge for that fifty-four-mile stage?—I show your charge for eighty-four miles, and any one can easily make the deduction.

128. That is no comparison—it is not down. I want to point out that your diagram does not exhibit the whole case?—I maintain it does.

129. You mentioned that differential rates were only put on where lines did not pay interest?—I did not say so; I say they are put on all kinds of lines.