

would it not cost a great deal more to work it?—No doubt it would: we might get the traffic in the morning and evening, when our trains are now well filled; if so, we should have to double out accommodation.

350. Then, again, supposing the suburban traffic were extended to fifteen miles, should we not have to extend our suburban service to meet the traffic?—Yes; and, as I have said, the element of time would beat us in that direction.

351. Assuming, again, for the sake of argument, that the suburban traffic did extend to over fifteen miles, should we not have to reconsider the time-tables, and go to a very large extra cost for rolling-stock and daily expenses?—Yes: we should have to double our staff beyond the eight-mile radius.

352. Would you not find it very difficult to estimate the expense unless you had the conditions before you?—Yes; that is so: we should have to consider the time-table before we could speak about the cost.

353. Have you had experience of racecourse-fares in Auckland at any time?—Yes: they were 1s. return, irrespective of class.

354. How many miles is that?—About four miles from Auckland.

355. Has that fare been altered?—Yes: it has been altered to 1s. 6d.

356. What was the effect on the traffic?—It did not have any effect at all. There was more traffic on the first day; the second was wet.

357. Is there any other means of communication to the racecourse than by rail?—Yes: there were special services put on the tramway from Auckland to Newmarket, and a ten-minutes omnibus-service was also put on to the course.

358. What was the charge by the 'bus-service?—Two shillings.

359. Is there any other way, except by cabs and by foot?—I believe cabs charge £2.

360. Where does the tramway start from?—Queen Street.

361. How far is it by tram to Newmarket?—It must be considerably further than by rail, because they go round by the Kyber Pass.

362. What do they charge?—Threepence.

363. How long do they take?—From thirty-five to forty minutes.

364. And how long does it take by rail?—Nine minutes.

365. Do you recognize the fact that a tramway running omnibus-speed, and taking thirty to forty minutes to do this distance, should be very much cheaper than a train-service running the distance as we do?—Yes; the weight of the stock and the speed would rule the cost to a very great extent.

366. Has the opening of the tramway made any difference in our traffic?—No.

367. Not even the threepenny fare?—I do not notice any difference.

368. How long have you been in New Zealand?—About six years.

369. And you have been all over the railways, and know them thoroughly?—Yes; no one knows them better.

369a. How long were you at railway-work at Home?—I was for nine years on the Great Western line, in the Liverpool, Birkenhead, Chester, Shrewsbury, North Wales, Wolverhampton, and Manchester districts. I used to pay wages all over that district for some time.

370. Do you know London at all?—Yes: I lived there for sixteen years.

371. From your knowledge of these places, do you not recognize a very vast difference between suburban traffic and long-distance traffic?—Yes; I think I have stated my views with regard to that: there is a great difference.

372. Do you know the Metropolitan Railway?—I do, very well.

373. Is not that what you might call a regular omnibus-line?—Yes: it stops about every half-mile.

374. And the traffic on that line differs essentially from traffic such as we should get, say, in the Waikato?—Yes: the probability is that the person living in the Waikato has as far to walk to get to the railway as another person would have to go by train on the Metropolitan Railway.

375. Do you think that Mr. Vaile's system, as far as it has been set forth, is susceptible of being worked out to something very much simpler than the system we have now?—It would be necessary to consider the classification of goods, the manner in which we are to deal with small lots of goods, the loading and unloading, storing, and many other things connected with the common carrier's business, before I could give an opinion. I should require to know the details of working.

376. *Hon. Mr. Richardson.*] Is there sufficient information given in this scheme to enable you to form an opinion as to how the proposals with regard to passengers would work out in practice?—With regard to passengers, I think it would be necessary to make a rate-book for every station. We cannot ask the ticket-clerks to count up the number of stages to arrive at the fare: it would be necessary to give them a rate-book stating the rate from their station to every station they were allowed to book to.

377. Would that be a great simplification of the present system?—No; it would not be so simple.

378. *Hon. Major Atkinson.*] But the passengers would understand it more easily—would they not?—I do not think so, because we publish a mileage-fare, and they have only got to refer to the time-table for the number of miles to calculate the fare to any station they wish to go to. Then, in addition, we post up in our stations a clear table giving the passenger-, parcels-, and other rates to each point from that station. There would be no difference so far as the public is concerned.

379. *Mr. Maxwell.*] How long do you suppose it would be before the rate-books could be got in order?—I do not think, on serious consideration, you could start in less than a year.

380. And a very large outlay would have to be incurred all over the system?—Yes, undoubtedly.