

606. I take it for granted that is on the main line, and has nothing to do with the branches?—No, it is for the whole section, 978 miles. I might say, for the information of the Committee, that no system can be arranged so as to get full loads for our carriages, and perhaps the very fact of giving an average is misleading. It is only by practical experience one can understand how impossible it is to have your carriages always full. For instance, the Committee will realize that in distributing stock for a holiday-excursion or race-meeting the empty carriages have to be sent to the places where they are required; there are many journeys of that kind. On this large section carriages have frequently to be sent from one end to the other for the purpose of assisting at large meetings, such as the Christchurch Spring Meeting, and they run hundreds of miles empty. Then there are ladies' carriages, travelling long distances with, perhaps, one or two ladies, and also invalid carriages. There are also some of the branch lines which convey very few passengers per carriage; and there are goods-trains in which a small carriage is placed for the convenience of any odd passengers between local stations.

607. If we had sufficient passengers to separate our passenger- from our goods-traffic, could we not work our lines more cheaply than we do now? Would not the percentage of working-expenses be much less?—Probably it would; assuming that you also do a larger business for goods as well as passengers.

Hon. Mr. Richardson: That is, of course, supposing that the fares remain the same.

Mr. Vaile: I was speaking of working expenses, without reference to fares.

608. *Hon. Mr. Richardson* (to *Mr. Hannay*).] Comparing this stage-system with the present mileage-system, which do you think would be more easily understood by the general public?—I do not think the stage-system would be any more intelligible. As a matter of fact, passenger-fares are now posted up outside every booking-office, and the passenger has only to refer to it.

609. *Mr. Grant* stated that it would be absolutely necessary to have rate-books at every station?—That is so. Each station would require to be supplied, because the rates from every station would be different.

610. *Mr. Macandrew*.] Would not the rates have to be posted up under the stage-system?—Yes; to be intelligible to the public.

611. *Hon. Mr. Richardson*.] Then, under the present system, one scale of rates answers the purpose all over, and in the other case a special list would be required for each station.

612. *Mr. Walker*.] Do you not think that under *Mr. Vaile's* system the public would not mind a little inconvenience in consideration of the reduced rates?—I think that is very probable.

613. *Mr. Maxwell*.] Is not the question of reduction of rates and fares entirely independent of the question of system?—Certainly; there is no connection at all.

614. It would be very much simpler to reduce the rates and fares as they are now, than to introduce *Mr. Vaile's* system?—Yes, far.

615. How long do you think it would take to introduce such a system?—It certainly would take many months, and a large staff.

616. *Mr. Macandrew*.] Assuming that *Mr. Vaile's* system were given effect to, how long do you think it would take to ascertain the results of it?—I think that is hardly a fair question to ask me. I understand *Mr. Vaile* himself states that it would take some years.

Mr. Vaile: I say that, for the full success of my system, I should rely on the settlement of the country; and the full advantages of it could only be revealed as the settlement went on.

EXAMPLES of Method of computing Charges under *Mr. Vaile's* System, as explained in his Memorandum of 9th June, 1886, to the Committee.

Hurunui-Bluff Section.

From	Miles.	No. of Stages.	From	Miles.	No. of Stages.
Gore to Bluff	57	7	Fairlie Creek to Washdyke Sale-yards	36	2
Gore to Dunedin	100	6	Makikihi to Washdyke Sale-yards ..	22	3
Kingston to Dunedin <i>via</i> Plains ..	175	7	Dunsandel to Washdyke Sale-yards ..	72	4
Kingston to Bluff	104	7	Dunsandel to Addington	24	4
Palmerston to Oamaru	38	3	Rakaia to Washdyke Sale-yards ..	61	3
Palmerston to Port Chalmers ..	35	4	Rakaia to Addington	34	5
Palmerston to Dunedin	41	5	Chertsey to Lyttelton	48	6
Ashburton to Timaru	48	3	Chertsey to Timaru	59	3
Ashburton to Lyttelton	59	6	Waihao to Timaru	51	2
Waikouaiti to Burnside Sale-yards ..	35	6	Waihao to Oamaru	22	3
Waikouaiti to Oamaru	47	3	Waimate to Timaru	29	2
Dipton to Wallacetown	32	5	Waimate to Oamaru	33	3
Dipton to Gore <i>via</i> Plains	50	3			

Wanganui Section.

Nukumarū to Patea	20	1	Inglewood to Patea	50	2
Nukumarū to Wanganui	21	3	Inglewood to New Plymouth ..	17	2

Population, from Census of 1886.

Over 6,000: Christchurch, Dunedin, Invercargill.
 Over 4,000 and under 6,000: Oamaru, Wanganui.
 Over 2,000 and under 4,000: Timaru, New Plymouth.