

2294. *Mr. Brown.*] It would be fair to include in the capital value of the railway the cost of the wharf from Tainui Street down?—That includes the wharf up to a certain point; but I am not certain if it includes the last addition to the wharf. It includes the greater portion of the wharf.

2295. *The Chairman.*] It includes some of the wharf, but not the last addition?—Yes.

2296. *Mr. Brown.*] The cranes and accumulators—these are all railway plant, are they not?—They are railway plant.

2297. And the rolling-stock and engines, of course?—Yes.

2298. And the quay to Tainui Street?—That is railway.

2299. You had some little trouble with your men lately, had you not?—I do not think so.

2300. *The Chairman.*] Did your wharf-labourers not strike?—None of our regular men struck.

2301. Are they members of the union?—I believe they belong to the railway union.

2302. Who did strike?—The casual labourers who work for the shipping.

2303. *Mr. Brown.*] They were not in your employ?—No. Well, many of them that we have employed would not handle the Union Company's goods.

2304. *The Chairman.*] And what did you do to them?—We did not take any notice of them.

2305. Just let them go?—Yes.

2306. Found plenty of men without them?—We just sent our own men—regular employés—men who work on the line, and platelayers—to do what there was to do.

2307. Did they make no objection?—No.

2308. *Mr. Brown.*] Was there no representation made at all to you, by the union or otherwise, on account of men being put on to supply the places of the strikers?—No.

2309. *Mr. Moody.*] On two occasions the revenue, I see, was considerably less than the expenditure?—I think you will rather find the expenditure very much over the average. It is not the revenue at fault, it is the expenditure.

SATURDAY, 25TH OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. RICHARD NANCARROW sworn and examined.

2310. *The Chairman.*] What are you, Mr. Nancarrow?—Agent for the Union Steamship Company in Greymouth.

2311. Are you also connected with insurance business at all?—Yes, I am representative of the South British Insurance Company.

2312. The Commissioners wish to obtain information as to the rates of freight and insurance. Can you give us any information on that subject, specially comparing the last few years and formerly. I mean as to the vessels entering and leaving Greymouth Harbour?—Well, I think the average rates of freight of the Union Steamship Company charged for the last few years to ports in the Middle Island are about from 7s. 6d. to 9s. 6d. per ton.

2313. Is that general?—Yes, to the ports of the Middle Island. Of course, Wellington would be the lowest rate of freight, and outports such as Timaru and Oamaru would be the highest rates.

2314. But Wellington is in the North Island?—Well, I should have said to Wellington and the South Island.

2315. Then, to other ports?—I am not very sure about the other ports. The rates of freight do not come immediately under my observation, because the Union Steamship Company have an arrangement with the Grey Valley Coal Company for carrying their freights, which is made from time to time at Dunedin.

2316. That is, as far as it affects the coal trade?—That is, as far as it affects the coal trade. I take it the freights you ask me about refer to coal from here.

2317. And generally. We want all the freights. Our object in the first instance is to see what effect the expenditure on harbour improvements has had on freights and insurance?—Just so; but, of course, the exports from here outside the coal are very small.

2318. Yes?—And a few sacks of hides and sheepskins, and a few bales of wool—skins that are dealt with by the fellmongers, of course, and hides from off cattle imported from Wanganui.

2319. The imports are considerable?—The imports of general merchandise are very considerable.

2320. I suppose you are not in a position to give us any figures; we should get them better from the shipping people?—Yes. The Railway Department could supply the whole of that, because the wharf, as you are aware, is under the control of the railway.

2321. We have got it that from 7s. 6d. to 9s. 6d. is the general freight at the present time?—Yes.

2322. Has it been that for any long period?—It has been that since the completion of the harbour-works.

2323. At what date did you put that?—I put that for the last two years.

2324. Prior to that what were the freights?—Prior to that the freights were, at any rate, not less than 50 per cent. higher.

2325. That applies to the imports and exports both? You have nothing to do with the freights paid on arrival here?—I have all to do with that.

2326. But not the exports?—Not the exports. It comes to me only in a general way. The foregoing refers exclusively to the export of coal.

2327. *Mr. Brown.*] The completion of the harbour-works about two years ago was about the same date as the amalgamation of the mines?—It was about the same time.

2328. Was the change of rate then due, in your opinion, to the amalgamation or to the completion of the works?—I think to both combined.

2329. *The Chairman.*] Both these causes led to the lowering of the rates?—Yes.