

67. It would be a considerable convenience?—Certainly, a great convenience to the public.

68. And to the Railway Department also?—Yes.

69. *The Chairman.*] And the saving to the public would be the saving of cabs and portage?—Yes.

(The witness was requested by the Committee to furnish them with a table showing the advantages to the public by the train-service.)

Through-train and Steamer Service, Auckland-Invercargill, and vice versa.

In compliance with the request of the Committee, I have to report on the advantages to be derived by the adoption of a through-train and steamer service, such as outlined on Sketch No. 3 of diagram herewith, as follows:—

By altering the departure time of the express from Dunedin to Christchurch from 11 a.m. to, say, 8.30 a.m., and running steamers to leave Lyttelton after the arrival of express passengers, capable of making the journey between Lyttelton and Wellington in eleven hours in all weathers, and so connecting with the through trains from Wellington to New Plymouth and Napier, it will be possible for a resident of Dunedin to leave at 8.30 a.m. on Monday and reach Auckland about 2 p.m. on Wednesday (allowing, say, fifteen hours for the journey New Plymouth to Onehunga), have twenty-seven hours in Auckland, leave again by boat at, say, 5 p.m. on Thursday, reach Dunedin again at 9 p.m. on Saturday, having done the double trip in six days. Similarly, a person leaving Auckland on Sunday could reach Dunedin on Tuesday, return on Thursday morning, and reach Auckland again on Saturday, at 2 p.m. Under the existing time-table, owing to the break of two days in Wellington, a person leaving Dunedin at 11 a.m. on Tuesday cannot reach Auckland until about 2 p.m. on following Saturday; and a person leaving Auckland on Monday cannot reach Dunedin until following Thursday, at 9 p.m., or Invercargill until Friday, at 3.30 p.m.

Under time-table which it is proposed to bring into operation on 1st December next (Sketch No. 2), it will be possible to make the trip from Auckland to Dunedin three times in a week, and to go from Auckland to Invercargill twice in the week; but persons desiring to travel from Invercargill or Dunedin to Auckland can only get through on one occasion in the week, owing to the fact of the Union Steamship Company's boat leaving Lyttelton before arrival of express on Mondays and Wednesdays.

The advantages, therefore, of a through connection such as outlined in Sketch No. 3 are that three trips can be made in a week from Auckland to Invercargill, two trips from Invercargill to Auckland, four trips Auckland to Dunedin, and four trips Dunedin to Auckland.

The same number of through trips can be made under Sketch No. 4, which is based on same lines as No. 3.

FRIDAY, 19TH AUGUST, 1898.

MR. FREDERICK HENRY BARNS, sworn and examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] Your name is?—Frederick Henry Barns.

2. You are the representative of Messrs. Huddart, Parker, and Co. in Christchurch?—Yes; my firm is the company's local agents.

3. Will you state to the Committee how many vessels there are running on the New Zealand coast belonging to Messrs. Huddart, Parker, and Co.?—Two—the "Westralia" and the "Elingamite."

3A. Give the tonnage and the indicated horse-power?—I cannot give the indicated horse-power from memory. You can get that from Lloyd's. The gross tonnage of the "Westralia" is 2,884 tons, and that of the "Elingamite" 2,585 tons.

4. Can you give the speed of those steamers?—The "Westralia" is $13\frac{1}{2}$ knots speed.

5. Do you mean she runs $13\frac{1}{2}$ knots?—Her passage from Auckland to Sydney is generally 13.8 knots. The "Elingamite" is about $12\frac{1}{2}$ knots.

6. Can you give the Committee the number of passengers carried by your boats for a period of twelve months between Wellington and Lyttelton?—I can do it—I have taken it out; but it is rather revealing the business of the company. The manager is away in Melbourne. I called in to the Wellington office; and the officer in charge (Mr. Ryan) did not say anything when I told him I had taken out the passenger traffic. I have taken in out for twelve months, month for month.

The Chairman: We do not want you to disclose anything which you think might injure the company.

Witness: I have taken it for the two steamers prior to the "Elingamite." Taking November as the first summer month, we carried in the "Westralia" from the 1st November, 1897, to the 30th April, 1898, the following number of passengers:—Saloon—November, 14; December, $22\frac{1}{2}$; January, $48\frac{1}{2}$; February, $48\frac{1}{2}$; March (two trips), $72\frac{1}{2}$; April, $26\frac{1}{2}$: total, 233. Steerage—November, $3\frac{1}{2}$; December, 5; January, 9; February, 7; March (two trips), 15; April, 15: total, 54. In the "Anglian" and "Elingamite" during the summer months the traffic was:—Saloon—November, 23; December, $78\frac{1}{2}$; January, 48; February, $45\frac{1}{2}$; March, 17; April, $48\frac{1}{2}$: total, 240. Steerage—November, 3; December, 11; January, 3; February, $11\frac{1}{2}$; March, 3; April, $14\frac{1}{2}$: total, 47. In the winter months the "Westralia" carried:—Saloon—May, 22; June, $35\frac{1}{2}$; July, 24; August, $32\frac{1}{2}$; September, 7; October, 22: total, 143. In the winter months the "Anglian" and "Elingamite" carried:—Saloon—May, $17\frac{1}{2}$; June, $35\frac{1}{2}$; September, 8; October, 2: total, 63. The number of steerage passengers carried by the "Westralia" during the same months was as under:—May, 4; June, 6; July, 6; August, 5; September, 6; October, $5\frac{1}{2}$: total, 33. The steerage passengers by the "Anglian" and "Elingamite" during the winter months were:—May, 7; June, 11; September, 2; October, 3: total, 23.