

APPENDIX.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 1st August, 1898.

I beg to forward herewith copy of telegram sent by me at your request to the Agent-General on the 19th instant relative to cost of steamers, and copy of his reply thereto.

E. G. Wright, Esq., M.H.R., Chairman, Wellington-Lyttelton
Steam-service Committee.

I have, &c.,

R. J. SEDDON.

CABLEGRAM from the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL, dated the 19th July, 1898.

CABLE cost steamer 2,000 tons, twin-screws, chiefly for mails, passengers, capable running 18 knots hour; also boat less power running 16 knots hour; also cost steamer "Dresden" running from Hull.

CABLEGRAM to the PREMIER from the AGENT-GENERAL, dated London, the 30th July, 1898.

BUILDERS "Tutanekai" give carefully estimated cost steamers description indicated message of 19th—namely, 1,800 gross tonnage, 18 knots, £55,000; 16 knots, £49,500. Secondly, Great Eastern Company's "Dresden" cost £70,000.

Captain ALLMAN to the CHAIRMAN, Wellington-Lyttelton Steam-service Committee.

SIR,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 30th August, 1898.

In reply to your verbal request for information as to probable working-expenses and earnings of two steamers of about 2,000 tons each employed in the proposed Wellington-Lyttelton steamer-service, I have to state as follows:—

I have based my calculation on my own personal experience and from what I have read concerning similar modern steam-vessels in Great Britain and in America.

For convenience I propose dealing with one steamer with an average speed of 16 knots (nautical miles) per hour; to insure this speed I think it would be necessary for a vessel to do 18 knots per hour on her trial trip. The working-expenses of such a vessel would, I think, be about £2,000 per month, assuming that the steamer did not run on Sundays, and the journey occupied about twelve hours, and the fuel (coal) cost 17s. per ton. The working-expenses of a steamer averaging 18 knots per hour would be about 30 per cent. more than a 16-knot boat.

In my calculation I have not provided for provisioning passengers or maintaining a large staff of cooks and stewards. In a service of this kind I do not think it is necessary, as the passengers would come on board late in the evening and leave early in the morning. Supper and breakfast might be provided for those who wish to order it on payment of a fixed charge. Coffee, &c., in the morning might be provided gratis.

PROBABLE EARNINGS, ETC.

In estimating the earnings of a service of this kind, I have inferred that the vessels are owned or subsidised by the State, therefore it should be assumed that they will carry all the mails and Government officials and employes, the amounts to be debited to the various departments. I am not in a position to say what these earnings would amount to.

As to passengers and cargo, the former fluctuate considerably, varying according to the season of the year and other attractions, such as race-meetings, &c. It must also be taken into account that existing steamship companies participate in the trade, and issue tickets beyond either port, consequently if a service of this sort were inaugurated it would be necessary to alter the railway time-table to suit the steamers. If this were done it would be a great inducement to the travelling public to patronise the service. Assuming that a service of this description was an accomplished fact, I am of opinion that, taking an annual average, each vessel might be expected to carry from five hundred to eight hundred persons per month, including first- and second-class passengers. The passage-money, therefore, would be about £500 per month, assuming ordinary rates were charged. As the service became known and population increased, I have no doubt the number of passengers would increase also.

Regarding freight, I am of opinion that the fast steamers would command the market, as the cargo at either terminus would be landed the first thing in the morning. Each vessel might be expected to get 45 to 55 tons of cargo daily: allowing 10s. per ton as freight, would make £500 freight per month. Total earnings, passengers and cargo, £1,000 per month, to which the public service account is to be added. The figures I have quoted may double themselves in a year or two, or they may not.

If rigid economy is studied, a coal-hulk for storage of coal at Wellington would be necessary. If the present Government steamers kept the supply up, the coal would cost about 12s. per ton—that is, allowing 5s. (the present) freight per ton from the West Coast, and 7s. per ton for small coal delivered on board at Westport or Greymouth.

I have purposely refrained from mentioning anything about insurances and the percentage of depreciation usually allowed on steamships.

In conclusion, I presume that these vessels would be exempt from light-dues and docking dues at Lyttelton.

I have, &c.,

GEO. ALLMAN,

Nautical Adviser, &c.

The Chairman, Wellington-Lyttelton Steam-service Committee,
House of Representatives, Wellington.