

33. Have any mails been lost during the time of the present arrangements?—Only one, I think—when the “Schiller” was lost in 1875.

34. *Mr. Buchanan.*] You said there were three days difference between the Frisco and Vancouver routes?—Yes.

35. Does the whole of that arise between Vancouver and London?—No, between Wellington and Vancouver. The Frisco steamers are allowed nineteen days, and the Vancouver boats are allowed twenty-one and a half—they generally take twenty-two. The distance between Wellington and Vancouver is 735 miles longer than it is from Auckland to San Francisco.

36. So that most of the delays arise between here and Vancouver?—Yes, and on the Atlantic, when the fast boats are missed. There is very little difference in the distance between Vancouver and New York and San Francisco and New York—only a few miles. Vancouver to New York is 3,154 miles, and San Francisco to New York 3,210 miles—not a great difference.

37. It is shorter from Vancouver to New York, then?—Yes.

*Mr. Buchanan.* You have to do a lot of southing from New York to San Francisco, which is not the case on the other line.

*Mr. Duthie.* Yes, I have noticed it; but these American maps are very deceptive.

38. *Mr. McLean.*] What is the train journey in this case?—About five days.

39. And across the Atlantic how long?—You might say seven days—that is, arrive on the seventh day.

40. Have you any hope of increasing cargo between San Francisco and New Zealand? Taking the class of products produced in San Francisco and New Zealand, do you anticipate any increase in cargo from Frisco to this country, and *vice versa*?—I think there always will be a fair amount from San Francisco, but I do not see what is to create a trade in the opposite direction.

41. And, as far as Vancouver is concerned, what is your view of the prospects of cargo between there and here?—Well, the trade from here to Vancouver is growing, and the prospects seem promising at present. It was thought that there was to be a trade in frozen meat, but this has been, I understand, a comparative failure so far as New Zealand is concerned. Some small shipments have been made, but the export now seems confined to sheep from New South Wales. These sheep, from their size and weight, are said to be better suited for the Canadian markets than ours.

42. *Mr. Duthie.*] With regard to the boats going between here and Auckland: During the time the “Mahinapua” was in the trade things were more satisfactory. The “Rotoiti,” however, seems to meet with trouble because of the tides; but the “Mahinapua” was very much smaller and could get in and out of the Manukau at nearly any state of the tide?—The “Rotoiti” last Thursday was late on the ebb-tide, and had to face a pretty heavy sou’wester. The real trouble in July was in the engine-room; and that probably caused the long passage and prevented the steamer arriving at and leaving New Plymouth on the same tide. The “Rotoiti” is able to arrive and leave the Manukau at an earlier and later state of the tide than the “Takapuna,” which cannot leave the Manukau before two or two hours and a half of high water, and cannot safely leave half an hour after the tide has begun to ebb. The “Mahinapua” could get away at almost any state of the tide.

43. Has the “Rotoiti” been improved?—I understand she has, and on a recent voyage to Nelson, steamed  $12\frac{1}{2}$  knots against wind and tide.

44. During the time the “Mahinapua” was running the mails were on the whole regular, with the exception of when there was bad weather?—Well, the deliveries were much longer. Instead of coming down in about twelve or thirteen hours from New Plymouth to Wellington, she used to take about seventeen hours, and about fourteen hours from the Manukau to New Plymouth. She was much more easily handled at the Manukau and New Plymouth than either the “Takapuna” or the “Rotoiti.”

45. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Would it occur often that, although there were eight days between the arrival and the departure of the Frisco mail-steamer in Auckland, mishaps from wind and tide would still prevent the people of Dunedin and Invercargill from replying? Would it often occur, do you think?—No, I think not.

46. It would not prevent them replying?—Certainly not Dunedin. You are now referring to a 15-knot service?

47. No, the fortnightly service?—Well, I have not considered the Frisco service under a fortnightly condition.

48. The interval would be the same in both cases, whether there is a fortnightly service of 15-knot speed or a monthly service? The interval would be the same in both cases?—Yes, probably that would be so. But this should be considered: the probability of a very fast Atlantic service between Great Britain and Halifax or Quebec. Though Messrs. Peterson have dropped it, I understand the proprietors of the Allan line are inclined to take it up. When you have that fast service and better boats on the Pacific the Vancouver mail-service time will be much improved.

49. Where is this new line to run to?—Halifax or Quebec.

50. And what will be the subsidy?—£154,500 a year, of which the Home Government will contribute a third—£51,500—the Canadian Government the balance.

51. *Mr. McLean.*] What does the colony pay to the San Francisco service?—Last year about £8,500, and about £6,000 more for transit across America and the Atlantic.

52. *Mr. Duthie.*] What is the amount the American Government contribute towards the San Francisco mail?—About £28,000 a year.

53. What do they get in return?—They get no direct return.

54. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Not postage or anything?—Of course, they have their postages.

55. *Mr. Duthie.*] Against £28,000 a year what does New Zealand contribute?—New Zealand about £8,500, and New South Wales £4,000.

56. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Recouped by postage, I suppose?—Not in the case of New South Wales.