

119. The Union Company does not go into competition?—No.

120. Could you give us the freights from Westport to Wanganui and the other places?—To Wanganui and New Plymouth, 10s. per ton; to Foxton, 11s. for gas and railways, 12s. for other coals.

121. About the haulage-rates of coal at Westport: does your company consider the haulage-rates reasonable?—I may say that the haulage-rate is double what it is at Newcastle for the same distance. We will have to pay the Government this year £37,000.

122. You know the revenue is for the Westport Harbour Board, and that it goes to improve the harbour. Do you think that if there was a substantial reduction in the haulage-rates any loss of revenue would result to the Westport Harbour Board? And do you think the coal trade would be so increased that any loss of revenue would be made up?—I should think a reduction in the haulage-rate would certainly stimulate coal-mining generally. No doubt the haulage-rate is very stiff. We have applied year after year for a reduction, and I think we got from 1d. to $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

123. Would the effect of reducing the haulage-rate be to diminish the price of coal?—That would depend upon other circumstances. The Westport Coal Company have a very long road to pull up yet.

124. *Mr. Morrison.*] What is the haulage-rate?—2s. 4d. is the average.

125. What is the distance?—About twelve miles from Waimangaroa.

126. *The Chairman.*] From Granity it is about twenty miles?—Yes; and the average is 2s. 4d.

APPENDIX.

EXHIBIT A.

NEW ZEALAND RAILWAYS.—LOCOMOTIVE DEPARTMENT.

Details of Information for Coal Committee.

WESTPORT SECTION.

Locomotives.

					Lb.	Lb.
2 Class C	...	...	...	...	Traction power, 4,833 × 2 =	9,666
3 " F	...	...	...	...	4,893 × 3 =	14,679
1 " FA	...	...	...	...	8,521 × 1 =	8,521
1 " FB	...	...	...	...	8,521 × 1 =	8,521
2 " WA	...	...	...	...	11,833 × 2 =	23,666

Total 65,053

Load of WA engine between Waimangaroa and Westport is about 625 tons.

Wagons available for carrying Coal.

					Carrying-capacity.
					Tons.
Iron hoppers (movable)	...	...	...	48 at 6 tons =	288
" (fixed)	...	...	...	159 " 6 " =	954
" " "	...	...	...	112 " 8 " =	896
" (movable)	...	...	...	109 " 8 " =	872

Total carrying-capacity 3,010

An order was issued to convert 167 6-ton coal-wagons with fixed hoppers to 8-ton movable hoppers; eight have been completed, and fifty-four others are expected to be completed by 31st March, 1900, and will increase the carrying-capacity by 108 tons, making total carrying-capacity 3,118 tons. When the conversion of the whole of the 167 wagons is completed it will further increase the carrying-capacity by 210 tons, and give a total carrying-capacity of 3,328 tons.

A large amount of work has been done on an additional thirty-one sets, but work has been stopped.

Material for fifty additional new 8-ton wagons was ordered on 27th February, 1899, and a small portion of it has arrived in the colony.

GREYMOUTH SECTION.

Locomotives.

					Lb.	Lb.
1 Class D	...	...	...	...	Traction power, 4,006 × 1 =	4,006
*5 " F	...	...	...	...	4,893 × 5 =	24,465

Total 28,471

A load of a Class F engine between Brunner and Greymouth is 270 tons.