

four days in getting to Hokitika, and then he would get to Christchurch in one day, whereas it now takes five days to get there after he has arrived in the colony. That is all. It is the convenience and quickness of traffic that attracts the tourist.

169. Would it bring five hundred extra tourists annually to the colony?—My opinion is that we should have five hundred more each year.

170. That would give us ten thousand more?—Yes.

171. How many tourists do you assume are coming now?—I have not gone into the calculation, but I think the number is increasing, and with facility of travelling it would increase more.

172. But as you have fixed the number of extra tourists who would come, could you not tell us how many are coming now? Is it five hundred?—More.

173. Is it seven hundred?—More.

174. You do not know whether you have doubled the number of tourists who come to New Zealand or not?—I should say I have not anything like doubled it. Many more come now.

175. And we are to make a profit of £20 a head out of them?—I know that if you look at some of those old places on the Continent—in Italy and France, and elsewhere—you will see that some of them have been absolutely rebuilt and made modern towns by the money which has been made out of the expenditure by the tourists who go there.

176. Do you consider that you are not exceeding the mark in putting the profit from this tourist traffic at £10,000 a year?—From my experience of travelling about the country I think it is very reasonable.

177. On the West Coast?—There and in Canterbury.

178. And you say that £10 is the actual profit that they would make out of you when you came from Christchurch to Wellington?—It would depend on how long I stayed.

179. This you notice is profit—not cost, but profit?—In my calculation I have the cost to the tourist at considerably more.

180. At what?—£40.

181. Then, we are making 50 per cent. out of every tourist?—We are very bad managers if we cannot.

182. We will now pass to the lands on the West Coast. Do you know anything of them?—I was there for six years.

183. Are these lands suitable for close settlement?—I have not gone very much over them. I have been along the roads, and seen the lands where the roads run, but I have not been into the bush. I think there is some very good land there.

184. For agricultural purposes?—Some are suitable for agriculture, but for pastoral purposes there are some of the best in the colony.

185. An eminent man in this colony, Mr. James McKerrow, in giving his evidence in 1892, was asked, "Do you regard the country as being pastoral, mineral, or agricultural?" to which he replied, "Well, most decidedly, it is not agricultural. It is partly pastoral and partly for saw-milling. The railway passes through good timber land; but, as to the mineral character of the country, that is purely conjecture. Coal is the basis of the success of the West Coast. It is not adapted for grain-growing. It is very well for raising cattle. I think in time they will come to supply themselves with animal food. They have never done so yet, but in time they may, at some remote period. When gold-mining is shrunk, and the forests are cleared away, it may be a dairying district, but that is a long way in the future." Do you agree with that?—Up to a certain point. There is not much land fit for agriculture, but there is plenty fit for dairying and wool-growing; but I do not agree with him that it is in so very remote a future. Of course, the non-construction of the railway has made it more remote.

186. You tell us that the greatest loss has been in regard to the decrease in population, and that population has actually left the colony because there was this blue patch on the West Coast land?—Partly from that, and partly from want of employment.

187. You do not suggest that population left the colony during the *régime* of the present Government?—I am not prepared to give an opinion about that; my opinion is only with respect to the construction of the railway.

188. Do you suggest that during the last five or six years people have left the colony because of this blue patch?—I think a great many have, and a great many have left because they could not get occupation.

189. Gone where?—Gone to the other colonies.

190. To Victoria and New South Wales?—Yes, and a very large number went to Western Australia.

191. Canterbury has a special grievance, and Canterbury men have to see that Canterbury is not thrust out of its proper position through the non-construction of this railway, and you think that the bulk of the West Coast traffic would be by this railway. Canterbury would be the distributing centre of the West Coast?—A great deal so.

192. From what centre does the West Coast get its produce now?—I presume, from Wellington, and from Melbourne and Sydney.

193. I am dealing with New Zealand?—Probably also from Dunedin. You see it is even more difficult for Canterbury to send goods to the West Coast than it is to send them from Dunedin.

194. Then, they are closer in touch with those places?—Yes; and improperly so.

195. And if this West Coast railway were constructed you would get your proper share?—Yes.

196. And Wellington and Dunedin would have to suffer?—Yes.

197. Would it be a loss to the colony?—We are probably robbed by Sydney and Melbourne more than by Wellington or Dunedin.