

ruling by the direct steamers for rabbits to Liverpool *via* London before the new service was in operation?—Those items amount to £2 per ton.

14. What saving does that represent to the producers?—About £5,500.

15. Have you advices from the Agent-General giving the extra rate per pound charged for railage on frozen mutton and beef from London to Liverpool?—We have advices from the Agent-General which state that the rate of railage for frozen meat from London to Cardiff and other places is a little over $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pound.

16. What quantity of frozen meat has been shipped by these contract steamers up to date?—147,555 carcasses of mutton and lamb, and 2,033 quarters of beef.

17. How long has the steamer contract been running?—Since March last. But the foregoing quantity does not include shipments by this month's steamer. That quantity represents six months.

18. How long has the contract been running?—Seven months.

19. Approximately, what saving on the shipment of frozen mutton and lamb has been effected to the producers of New Zealand by the establishment of the west-coast service?—If you work it out on the basis of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. the sum saved is £4,000; but the Agent-General says that the amount saved exceeds $\frac{1}{4}$ d.

20. Have you any idea of the amount that shippers of frozen meat look upon as the loss by deterioration caused by a second handling and landing of a perishable article such as frozen meat is?—I cannot state an amount, but it is looked upon as a very serious matter, and it is an operation fraught with a great deal of danger to the condition of frozen meat.

21. Frozen meat for Liverpool, before this service was established, required to be landed at London, carted to the railway-station, and railed to Liverpool, and there carted to frozen-meat depots?—Yes.

22. And after its arrival at Liverpool it would have to be carted from the depots to each distributing-place for retail sale?—Yes, that is so.

23. That is, excepting in the few cases where a retailer in England purchased New Zealand meat, it would be carted not directly to his own shop, but to a freezing-depot first?—Yes.

24. In ordinary practice, is it not the case that the bulk of the frozen meat which goes from London to Liverpool has to go to depots before it can be distributed?—Yes; even if a retailer imported a considerable quantity of meat it would go into a freezing-depot, and he would require to draw it out day by day as he wanted it.

25. Should I not be correct in stating that by a direct shipment to Liverpool cartage from the docks to the railway-station in London, and cartage at Liverpool to the frozen-meat depot, would in many cases be saved, and in any case one cartage would be saved?—Yes.

26. And in some instances two?—Yes.

27. Now, in reference to another point on which you were questioned by Mr. Duthie: Will you turn up the tender of the New Zealand Shipping Company for this service?—Yes; I have it.

28. Will you give me the names of the steamers which that company offered to use for the service to the west-coast ports of England?—The "Kaikoura," "Kaipara," "Wakanui," "Whakatane," and "Waimate."

29. How many of those steamers have carried butter from New Zealand to London during the past two years?—Only one in each year.

30. Do you know what steamers they were?—The "Whakatane" in 1903, and "Kaikoura" in 1904.

31. What was the maximum passage of the two steamers you have mentioned?—In 1903 the "Whakatane" made the maximum passage for the year for butter-steamers—namely, forty-seven days, and the "Kaikoura's" passage in 1904 was forty-eight days.

32. What steamers did the New Zealand Shipping Company use for carrying butter from New Zealand which they did not include in their offer for this contract?—The "Turakina," "Rimutaka," "Paparua," "Tongariro," and "Papanui."

33. Are the steamers they did not offer for the contract what are known as their fast passenger-steamers?—Yes.

34. They withheld five of their fast passenger-steamers from the contract, and offered the other steamers you have named?—Yes.

35. What time do the better class of these fast passenger-steamers occupy on the voyage from Wellington to London?—Last year the times were forty-one days, forty-four, forty-one, forty-seven, and forty-six days.

36. Will you turn to the tender of the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company for this west-coast service?—Yes.

37. Will you give the Committee the list of the steamers attached to their tender?—The "Corinthic," "Ionic," "Athenic," "Gothic," "Matatua," "Delphic," "Kumara," "Karamea," "Waiwera," "Tokomaru," "Maori," "Pakeha," and "Rangatira."

38. Which of those steamers you have named are what is known as their fast passenger-steamers, and the ones they have employed for carrying butter from New Zealand during the last two years?—The "Ionic," "Athenic," "Corinthic," and "Gothic"; but during the past two years the "Delphic" has been employed once, and the "Karamea" and "Kumara" twice.

39. What was the time occupied by the "Corinthic," "Ionic," "Athenic," and "Gothic"?—The "Gothic," forty-two and forty-three days; the "Ionic," forty-four and forty-five days; the "Athenic," forty-two, forty-three, and forty-five days; and the "Corinthic," forty-four days.

40. What was the time occupied by the "Delphic," "Kumara," and "Karamea" during the past two years when carrying butter?—"Delphic," forty-seven days; "Kumara," forty-one and forty-five days; "Karamea," forty-six and fifty-one days.