

116. The Harbour Board manages on its port dues and any other revenue it has?—Yes. The Board has some endowments and gets £500 a year from the Government.

117. The Nelson Harbour Board is asking for the wharf, is it not?—Yes. The £500 is to recoup the Board for the loss of revenue in respect of rents that it received for land along the old wharf front.

118. The Railway Department required the land, and acquired it?—Yes.

119. If the Foxton Wharf is handed over, do you expect an agitation from Nelson in the same direction?—I should say we certainly would have it. As a matter of fact, the Nelson Harbour Board has already asked for the wharf there.

120. *The Chairman.*] What does it offer to pay?—Nothing, your Honour.

121. *Mr. Myers.*] Would it pay the Department to let the Board have the wharf for the mere cost of the structure?—Certainly not. The Nelson Harbour Board was told that the Department did not want to dispose of the wharf, but as an offer had been made to Foxton some time previously the Board would be given an option based on the same principle of purchase.

122. *Mr. Williams.*] What would that be?—About £101,000. It would be more now, because the net revenue has gone up considerably.

123. *The Chairman.*] Was there an expenditure beyond the £65,000 in the old provincial days?—The total capital expenditure is £65,000—that is the whole lot, including the expenditure in the old provincial days.

124. *Mr. Myers.*] The position is different in Foxton from what it is in Nelson. I think you said that in Foxton 95 per cent. of the goods came over the railway, at all events as far as Himatangi?—Yes, approximately 95 per cent.

125. And I suppose a considerable percentage of that 95 per cent. would go to Palmerston and farther north?—The bulk of it would go to Palmerston and stations up to Dannevirke and Feilding.

126. So that only a small proportion is taken over the Sanson Tramway at present?—Yes, at the present time.

127. Have you any other wharves where the position is pretty well similar to what it is in Foxton—I mean, wharves where practically everything goes over the railway; I do not mean a port like Lyttelton?—In New Plymouth pretty well the whole of the traffic goes over the railway from the port to New Plymouth Station and stations beyond.

128. But a great deal of it is distributed in New Plymouth?—Yes, a considerable quantity is for local delivery.

129. The New Plymouth Wharf does not belong to the Railway Department?—No, it is a Harbour Board wharf.

130. In Wanganui, I think you told us, the wharf was constructed by the Department or by the Government, but it belongs now to the Harbour Board?—The present wharf was constructed by the Government, but in the early days of the province the Provincial Government built a number of jetties, which the Wanganui Corporation purchased from them for £20,000. The Wanganui Corporation subsequently, by Act of Parliament, was relieved of its responsibility. When the Wanganui Harbour Board was constituted the Board took over the responsibility of the Corporation to the extent of £20,000 in respect of those wharves and a bridge. When the railway-station was built it included a wharf built right along the waterfront. This destroyed the old wharves and amounted practically to confiscation of the Harbour Board's property. Representations were subsequently made to the Department, and on the facts of the position being made clear the Government rightly said, "Very well, we have deprived you of the use of your property and the revenue derived from the wharves you had, so will give you the new wharf in place of the old wharves which have been destroyed." This placed the Wanganui Board in substantially the same position as they were in before, except that they had a new wharf instead of some old structures.

131. His Honour wanted some information in regard to the Wellington Wharf?—The Wellington Wharf was built by the Government but passed over to the Harbour Board by Act of Parliament, which contains a provision that the Government Railways shall not pay the Harbour Board any compensation in respect to certain of the reclamations that the Department may use or acquire at a future time.

132. *The Chairman.*] Were the railways not to pay the cost of the reclaiming?—No, your Honour, nothing whatever in the way of compensation.

133. My impression is that the old reclamation was done by the city?—The reclamation near where our station stands now, was, I believe, carried out by the Provincial Government. How far it extended towards the Railway Wharf I cannot say at present, but I will look the matter up in order to give your Honour the exact information.

134. *Mr. Myers.*] There was some reclamation done by the Harbour Board, you say?—Yes.

135. When was it that they got the wharf?—In 1880, I think; but I could not tell you for certain at the moment.

136. *The Chairman.*] The wharf was only erected in 1879?—Yes.

137. *Mr. Myers.*] At Onehunga I think the Government disposed of the wharf?—Yes.

138. Why was that?—When the Main Trunk Railway was opened the value of the wharf to the Railway Department as a going concern and as part of the railway ceased to exist, because the bulk of the through traffic which had previously gone by rail to New Plymouth, then by sea from New Plymouth to Onehunga, went by rail via the Main Trunk Railway. Then the Auckland Harbour Board intimated that they wished to acquire the Onehunga Wharf, which had never been a profitable thing to the Railway Department. It had always been a source of expense and was no longer necessary to the Department, so it was agreed for a consideration of about £8,000, which included some land, to hand it over. It was a very good bargain from our point of view, and the Harbour Board was quite satisfied. It was a fair deal, satisfactory to both parties.