

105. Technically there is?—Practically there is.

106. *The Chairman.*] Because they have moved part of their rolling-stock a certain distance on to the wharf, which they need not move, and there is a good deal involved in it?—When trucks are placed at one fixed delivery-point probably it is possible to do this with the train-engine without delay or much expense. The engine then can continue its train-working, the haulage service being completed; but if it is necessary to keep an engine for the purpose of shifting trucks about, whether it is 20 yards or 100 yards, it costs money.

107. *Mr. Weston.*] If the cargo is put direct into your trucks you have not the trouble of taking it out of your shed and putting it into the trucks?—We should have to send talliers down to take delivery of the goods there.

108. When the goods go into your shed do you not tally them?—Yes, but we do not want to tally or load in two places. The distribution of staff to different loading-points is an expensive matter.

109. At all events, I may take it this way: that as far as all cargo taken direct to your shed is concerned there will be no charge for it?—Not if it is offered to us directly on the bench.

110. Now, with regard to the shed at Foxton, the complaint is that your shed is too small, and that instead of the cargo being able to be taken into the shed you have to use the trucks. You unload into the trucks and into the shed as well, and when the shed is emptied again the trucks have to be moved on to the shed and unloaded into the shed, instead of the goods being taken in straight away. You make no charge for that?—We do not charge for it.

111. You would not expect to charge in a case like that?—We do not expect to.

112. So that if the shed is made bigger, so that the whole of the goods from the ship can go straight into the shed without any trucks, you make no charge?—At no port in the world are the facilities adequate for a maximum demand. If they were, the people who built them would be unbusinesslike. There are times when no accommodation will stand the strain, and this may have been one of the times when you saw it.

113. *Mr. McVilly* made that point; but I think if you look at the list I have here of the number of vessels coming to the port, you will see that there is about one in every two days?—Yes.

114. It is not a case of a boat coming in once a week, and I think if you look into the matter yourself you will find that that is so?—I am very glad of the hint, and I will look into the matter.

115. I have been asked to put this to you: how many tons of goods can you take in the shed?—I could not say. It is not a very easy question to answer, because it all depends on the nature of the cargo.

116. My friend, *Mr. Luckie*, desires me to point that out, and I should like you to look into the matter, because I do not think that you, as General Manager, would agree to any injustice being done in any part of the district. What they tell us is that the shed can only take half the general cargo of the "Queen of the South" at a time?—I shall be only too glad to look into that, and your question encourages me, because you evidently do not hope to get control of the shed or the wharf.

117. *Mr. Skerrett.*] We have heard that many railway companies in England have been obliged to shorten their lines by means of loops?—Yes.

118. Do you know of many instances of that kind?—I could give you an instance of a loop line on the London and Brighton line, where a loop was made to deal with the traffic, but I would like to preface it with the remark that London has a population of over seven millions, and Brighton is London's most popular seaside resort.

119. What advantage do the English railway companies find in shortening their lines?—When they have to face duplication for relief purposes it is clearly good policy to look for some deviated route through new territory, so that with the deviation they can have available two or more lines to the same towns; but we have not got to that state of congestion here yet.

120. Sometimes, I suppose, those deviations are made in places where there is a possibility of a competitive line?—Yes, but there is not much of that now.

121. Are the English companies able to charge higher fares in proportion upon the shorter line?—No, the mileage charged is governed by the shorter route.

122. So that the cost of the deviation is made up by the increase of operative facilities for working the lines, and, I suppose, wear-and-tear?—Yes, and therefore only justified when the state of the congestion on the existing lines makes it imperative.

123. *Mr. Myers.*] You told *Mr. Weston* that if the Harbour Board had the wharf and took the goods into your shed there would be no service, and therefore no charge. In that case how would the goods be sorted?—I presume they are going to do their own sorting. They, I understood, were going to undertake those duties, which come under the charge of 1s. 6d. for handling and hauling.

124. But where could they do the sorting?—I do not know.

125. *The Chairman.*] I understand *Mr. Hiley* to mean that you could not expect a person to have two cases of benzine, five cases of kerosene, and so-much sugar: you must separate them?—Exactly.

126. *Mr. Myers.*] Are there any facilities there for sorting?—No; there is no room.

127. Would not the Harbour Board then require a shed of its own?—Certainly. I think I made it clear that *Mr. Weston* must discriminate between our shed and their shed.

128. So that they would require a shed or sheds for the purpose of sorting?—Yes.

129. *The Chairman.*] In the case of a cargo of oil there is nothing to sort?—No. There are certain cargoes which will not require sorting, but they could not perform the service generally without a shed.

130. *Mr. Myers.*] And if they did perform the service, they would first have to take the goods by barrow or otherwise to their own shed; they would have to sort them and deliver them in separate sorted lots to you at the railway-station?—Yes.