

about £3,600. For that class of steamer, having a dead-weight capacity of 5,000 tons, the cost of the charter would be about £1 per ton per month: that would be for a steamer capable of travelling at about 8 knots. The cost of chartering such a steamer would be about £17,500. That would be for a period of practically three months and a half. Possibly that is a bit outside of the mark—the time required might only be about three months; but, at any rate, it would cost £17,500, approximately, for three months and a half. I may tell you that this is allowing for the time occupied in coming from Newcastle to Wellington, and that also the ship would bring a cargo of coal from there at the Union Company's current rate of freight to assist the charterer in keeping his expenses down in paying for the voyage. The pilotage, light dues, and berthage, &c., would not run into less than £600—that is to say, between Newcastle, Wellington, and London. The Panama Canal dues would run into £700 also. Now, as to the expenses in connection with the wool itself: there would be 10,500 bales of wool, for which the charterer would have to pay 1s. 6d. per bale for loading: that would amount to £787 10s. He would have to use the Harbour Board cranes, &c., which would cost him £84 for seven days. Dunnage of wood and mats would cost £300 5s. Then, dumping would be a charge which would have to be paid. Ten thousand five hundred bales would mean 5,250 double-dumped, and these at a cost of 4s. 6d. would amount to £1,181. Transshipping 10,500 bales from the Harbour Board's stores to the ship at 3d. each would cost £132. Landing from the railway-trucks to the Harbour Board's stores would also cost £153. Assuming that the wool would be in store for one week, it would cost, at an average charge of 3½d. per bale, £154 for storage; but probably it would be kept in store for two or three days longer, which would amount to another £77. Discharging in London would cost about £525. Well, as a set-off against these charges he will get a credit payment for the cargo of coal from Newcastle to Wellington, at the Union Company's current rate of £1 5s. per ton.

5. What are the local charges here?—You mean the wool charges?

6. Yes?—The total wool charges, including £525 discharging in London, amount to about £3,400.

7. Does that include stevedoring?—Yes. Now, what he would get for bringing the coal from Newcastle to Wellington would be about £5,000. That would be 4,000 tons at £1 5s. per ton. Then there would be the freight he would receive on the wool from Wellington to London. At the shipping companies' rate this would be 1½d. per pound, and would amount to £27,870, which, less a loading brokerage of 5 per cent., amounting to £1,644, would give a total amount of £31,226. His total ship expenses (coal and wool) would be about £22,414, and his total cargo expenses (coal and wool) would be £4,769, making the total charges £28,231.

8. *Mr. Hawken.*] Total charges of what?—Total disbursements, £27,183. His total disbursements under the headings of ship expenses and cargo expenses would amount to £27,183. Now, you can quite understand that there may be many contingent expenses which may be quite unforeseen by the most experienced ship-brokers in connection with a time-chartered steamer, so I have allowed 5 per cent. for contingencies, amounting to £1,359. This, with the £25 agency fee, makes a total of £28,567. The freights would amount to £31,226, and the expenses would amount to £28,567, leaving an approximate profit of £2,659 for the ship-broker for the voyage.

9. *The Chairman.*] Not very much to come and go upon, is there?—No, there is not. I have based these figures on the smallest type of ship that could make that voyage. With a larger steamer—say, a twenty-thousand-bale steamer, the cost could be reduced by about 25 per cent. I wish you to understand that these figures I have given you are only approximate figures.

10. We are very much indebted to you, Captain Hull, for the information you have given us. Is there anything further you would like to say?—I would like to say something about unforeseen delays in connection with getting coal from Newcastle. We have chartered several vessels to come here with coal from Newcastle, but sometimes these ships will lay alongside the wharf for ten days before they can get loaded. This is a serious matter in connection with a time-chartered steamer. The ship-broker would have to pay that. The same thing also happens at Newport News. The ship has to wait sometimes five days before we can get bunker coal.

11. *Hon. Mr. Nosworthy.*] Does your statement refer to greasy wool or slipe wool?—It refers to greasy wool—not slipe or scoured.

12. Would it make any difference?—I have not gone into the figures exactly. Greasy wool will take up 91 cubic feet to the ton weight, whereas scoured or slipe wool will take up 136 feet to the ton weight.

13. *The Chairman.*] You have had experience in connection with these coal charges. You know what the cost of coal is at the present time right throughout the voyage?—Yes, I have made it my business to inquire as to what are the rates at the various ports. The cost is £2 17s. 6d. to £3 a ton at Panama. At Newport News the cost might be £1 5s. to £1 15s. a ton. At Newcastle it is only about 17s.

14. Would there be any difference going Home the other way?—Via the Cape?

15. Yes, via the Cape: would it be cheaper?—I am not quite certain, but I take it the extra time would hardly compensate the cost that would be saved. It is a longer voyage from New Zealand via the Cape than it is via Panama. The steamer would be able to call at Durban and get cheaper coal there. The steamer could get sufficient coal here to take her to Durban, and at Durban she could get sufficient to take her to the United Kingdom.

16. That would, of course, make a very considerable difference in the cost?—That is so; but against that you have the considerable extra steaming distance. It is a question of pounds, shillings, and pence which is the cheaper.

17. *Mr. Jennings.*] You have based your estimate on a vessel carrying 10,500 bales: would not the proportion of expenses be less on a larger vessel—say, one carrying 20,000 bales?—The cost of the charter would be so much less in proportion.

18. On the charter alone?—Yes, on the charter alone. But the class of boat I have referred to is the only boat we can charter at the present time. There are a great many things to be considered in connection with chartering steamers. The great shipping companies have practically all the large, fast, and reliable ships, and they have many advantages. They can guarantee to land the producers' wool in London on a certain date for a certain wool-sale. Probably a small, slow ship such as I have based my estimate upon would only do about 8 knots for the voyage. It would be a sixty-days voyage from here to the United Kingdom.