

No; but I would have certainly taken into consideration the question of a probable rise in the price of labour if no immigration had been going on.

167. Would you have done so for the Brogdens more than you would have done for any one else?—No; certainly not.

168. Did you consider that the contracts entered into with the Government had relation to any other purpose, especially with regard to the introduction of immigrants by the Messrs. Brogden?—No; I expected that whatever arrangement Messrs. Brogden might make would rest upon its own bottom. I knew Government intended to import labour, either through the Messrs. Brogden or in some other way.

169. *The Chairman.*] Was your estimate not made for the guidance and information of Ministers, and in all cases was it not left with Ministers to decide upon the final price to be paid for the contracts?—Yes.

170. Were not the prices given to Brogden in all or nearly all cases in excess of the prices estimated by you?—No, they were not. There was very seldom any difference between the two. They were nearly the same; and, practically speaking, my prices were adopted in all cases. In arranging the Mataura line an error was made by Mr. Brogden, but eventually his amount was brought down so much that the price given came near my figures.

171. In that case there was a very wide difference?—Yes; but in all the others there was no material difference between my figures and the prices accepted.

172. *Mr. Macandrew.*] In other lines pretty much of the same character as that of the Invercargill and Mataura line (the Kingston line, for example), were the prices similar?—Yes.

173. Are you aware of the relative prices of the section of the Winton and Kingston line about to be commenced and the prices given for the Mataura line?—These will be shown by the table appended.

174. *Hon. Mr. Richardson.*] Are you not aware that in every case where the Brogdens have tendered for work an allowance was made, in dealing with their estimate, of 15 per cent. above your estimate, as the cost of the work if let by public competition?—In making up the estimate I always took out what I imagined to be the cost if let in small contracts, and to that sum I added an amount for management, profits, and the risk incurred if taken by sub-contractors. I do not remember whether the amount was 15 per cent.; I think it was more.

175. *Mr. White.*] Do you think it is desirable to let these works in small contracts?—In my opinion, small contracts are far better than large ones. As an engineer, my opinion in that respect is the opinion of a small minority. The majority of engineers, I know, are strongly of the opinion that either a Government or a company should employ nothing but the large contractor; but I am not of that opinion.

176. *The Chairman.*] The great saving would be in the 15 per cent. ?—Yes.

177. *Mr. T. B. Gillies.*] This 15 per cent. that was given to Brogden was the same allowance that would have been made to any other large contractor?—Exactly. The amount, 15 per cent., is not larger than usual under similar circumstances.

178. *Mr. White.*] Presuming that the works had been let in contracts of less magnitude, and that they had been opened to public tender, would this 15 per cent. have been saved?—It depends upon whether the contractors in the country would have been enabled to combine if so large a proportion of the works had not been let to Messrs. Brogden.

TABLE of WORK on the INVERCARGILL and MATAURA, and WINTON and KINGSTON RAILWAYS, with Corresponding Prices. Only such Works are given as are common to both Lines.

Description.	Unit.	Price.		Remarks.
		Invercargill and Mataura.	Winton and Kingston.	
Cuttings, ordinary	£ yards	0 1 5	0 1 6	} Includes an expensive bridge over the Mataura, the bridges on the Winton line being very unimportant.
Side cuttings	"	...	0 1 2	
Stream diversions	"	0 1 5	0 1 3	
Ditching	"	0 0 9	0 0 9	
Forming line	chain	0 8 5	0 5 0	
Felling	acre	2 8 6	8 0 0	
Clearing	"	5 12 6	4 0 0	
Grubbing	chain	1 2 6	1 10 0	
Level crossing, 2nd class ... ..	...	24 12 2	12 6 6
" " 3rd class ... ..	...	8 12 8	10 2 6
Timber	C.B.M.	37 10 0	0 15 0	
Piling	lin. feet	0 4 0	0 2 0	
Ironwork	lb.	0 0 6 $\frac{3}{4}$	0 0 7	
Concrete	£ yards	2 5 0	3 0 0	
Coping ... ..	...	...	...
Puddle	£ yards	0 6 9	0 2 0	
Fencing	chain	1 8 2	1 5 0	
Cattle stops ... ..	...	18 0 0	5 10 0
Ballast	£ yards	0 2 3	0 2 3	