35. But we have had it stated that it is much better than on the British coast?—I have found that it is sometimes very much worse. I have seen it in Cook Strait as bad as anywhere.

36. But we are not going to run through Cook Strait?—Well, entering Wellington Heads. I have seen it so bad here that the Union Company's boat could not get out, and we had to take the mails for her.

37. We have had evidence that the weather on the coast of this colony is better than the weather on the British coast?—I grant you that it does not last so long.

38. *Mr. J. Hutcheson.*] You have already told the Committee the cost per indicated horse-power per hour to drive a boat a certain speed. You have, no doubt, made computations as to the difference between driving a vessel at the same speed in fine weather and in bad weather. It is the purpose of this Committee to ascertain all the facts concerning boats that will make passages in a certain time in all variations of weather. Can you give us a guide towards the difference in cost in your department in driving a boat in fine weather and in bad weather? Have you any data, so that we might take an average of what is the cost in the engine-room department?—The only basis I have is the consumption of coal in the twenty-four hours. If you find out what delay there would be in the passage, then you can find out the cost of keeping up the speed.

39. What would be of service to the Committee would be to know what it would cost in the engine-room department to make so many miles in so many hours in all weathers. You have given us the consumption of coal at 3½ tons per hour for sixteen knots; could you not give us the cost per mile, which would be of more use to us?—It would take an elaborate calculation. As soon as you reduce the speed you economize; if you reduce it to nine knots you economize very considerably. The rule says that the power required to drive a vessel increases as the cube of the speed.

40. Supposing we had a few horse-power to spare, what would be the increased cost in the engine-room to utilise those additional horse-power in order to keep up the speed, and run the vessel between the two ports in the stipulated time in case of bad weather?—I have taken boats of from sixteen to eighteen knots an hour, and I reckon that to drive a boat the two knots more would cost an extra £1,000 monthly in the engine-room.

41. *Mr. Lewis.*] Assuming that you had a steamer of sixteen knots and another of twenty knots, and that you had to keep up a speed of sixteen knots an hour, in the one case you would have to run at full speed, and in the other you would not have to do so; which would cost more?—The sixteen-knot boat would cost more. I mean in coal, and not taking into consideration the additional staff. You would practically be running at three-quarter speed in the twenty-knot boat.

42. *Mr. McNab.*] You know the general amount of traffic between Lyttelton and Wellington?—Yes.

43. And the amount of accommodation we have to meet it?—I have a general knowledge of it, the same as the general public.

44. And a general knowledge of passenger traffic in other parts of the world?—Yes.

45. Are we behindhand in that respect?—By no means.

46. You think we are fairly up to date?—Yes, except in the matter of twin-screw vessels.

47. But so far as getting from point to point is concerned?—Well, you are scarcely up to the Channel boats.

48. But the circumstances are different; they have large subsidies and a large passenger traffic?—Yes.

49. I mean comparing all the circumstances. If we had such a connection between these two ports as has been suggested to you, do you think we should be far ahead of places generally under those circumstances?—I understand you to mean with regard to catering for the public, and not as to mails. I will give you an instance: Two years ago the Holyhead-Kingston Company had vessels of twenty knots, and they have got rid of them and replaced them with twenty-two-knot boats.

50. You are drawing a distinction between mail-steamers and ordinary passenger-steamers?—Yes.

51. I am speaking of a service including the carriage of mails?—I cannot speak on that point as regards comparing your service with others. There are steamers running on the English coast running at the rate of only twelve knots, and sometimes as low as nine knots.

52. You think, as far as the conveyance of mails by steamer is concerned, we are not up to them?—No, but the vessels I have in my mind are those running to connect England and America, and those between England and Ireland.

53. I would ask, from your knowledge of other parts of the world, whether you consider there is a demand for the suggested class of boats between these two ports?—Not for eighteen-knot time-table vessels.

54. You think it is a luxury?—Certainly, I think it is.

55. Taking into consideration the traffic and the mails?—What I mean is that the vessel would not earn enough on her cost. In England they would not do it under the same circumstances unless they had a subsidy.

56. Is it usual to give subsidies in cases similar to this?—In the case of delivering mails in the South, I think they would be entitled to a subsidy if they delivered them on time under a penalty for delay.

57. *The Chairman.*] The question the Committee has to consider is the connection between Lyttelton and Wellington, and not anything beyond by sea?—Then it does not call for a subsidy.

58. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Supposing there were a regular time-table of sixteen knots, and taking the weather one day with another, how many knots do you think the steamer ought to be able to steam so as to keep that up unless in very exceptional weather?—I should say eighteen knots. Unless under very exceptional circumstances you would not have to push her at eighteen knots.