

40. *Mr. Skerrett.*] In 1915 the quantity of manure hauled was 557 tons?—Yes, and that would have been larger last year only for the shortage.

41. Is there any other remark you desire to make before we pass away from this subject?—No. I think that is the chief traffic as far as dairying is concerned.

42. We are still discussing the question as to the probable increase of traffic by junctioning with the Main Trunk line. You have spoken of firewood, fencing-timber, stock, and dairy-produce?—In addition there would be grain and chaff going north.

43. I should like you to give me an approximate estimate of the new district that will be added to the service of the tram—that is, the lower part of the Rangitikei County?—I should estimate it at between 40,000 and 50,000 acres.

44. Consisting of, I think, parts of the Rangiotu and Porewa Ridings of the Rangitikei County?—Yes.

45. I presume you have not estimated, nor is it possible to make an estimate of, the extent of the increased traffic by the junctioning of the tram at Marton?—No.

46. Is the profit earned by the tramway likely to be increased if it be extended and junctioned with the Government line at Marton?—Yes.

47. Have you formed a definite opinion upon that subject?—Yes. I should certainly say it would pay.

48. Will you tell the Commission your opinion as to the probability of diversion of traffic from Marton to Wellington or north of Marton to Wellington via Foxton if the junction is made with the Government line?—Well, I do not see how the tramway, with respect to through traffic, could enter into competition with the railways to the Port of Foxton. In the first place, goods for Wanganui would not go to the Port of Foxton, because they have their own port. Goods going down the Main Trunk line would not go on to the tramway because of the new charge starting as soon as they get on to the tramway. They would go naturally to the Port of Wanganui.

49. *The Chairman.*] It would mean splitting the rates in two instead of having one rate?—Yes. It would pay them to go to Wanganui.

50. *Mr. Skerrett.*] Is there not one item of produce carried through Foxton which would probably be increased?—Yes, wool. It would tap the southern portion of the Rangitikei County, and we might get more wool down by the tram. That is the only commodity I know of that would increase.

51. *Mr. Dalrymple* already sends his wool to Foxton?—Yes.

52. Do you know of any other settlers who do?—All the settlers in the bottom end of the district, right down to the bottom end of the Rangitikei, send to Pukenui and down by tram at the present time.

53. *Mr. Hannay.*] You get that now?—We get all from the bottom end at the present time.

54. *Mr. Skerrett.*] Do you think that the increase in wool would be considerable?—I think it would be considerable. It would be negligible from the point of view of the Railway Department.

55. What was the date of the first application for connection with Greatford?—1902. That was before my time.

56. I think there was a petition to Parliament in 1904 for the permanent deviation from Marton to Levin?—Yes.

57. And then there was a petition in 1910: what did that relate to?—That related to the extension of the tramway and connection at Greatford or Marton.

58. What does the country pay for cartage?—For an ordinary three-horse team we pay from 30s. to 35s. per day. That would carry 2 tons, possibly.

59. Have you made inquiry from the leading carter as to his charges for cartage?—Yes.

60. Who is the leading carter?—The leading carter in the Bull's district is Mr. J. E. Walker. I have made inquiries from him, and he states that for the cartage of goods from Sandon to Greatford—for grain and chaff—he would want 15s. per ton. He would not do it under.

61. In regard to motor-lorries, what have you to say?—I have also made inquiries about them. I put the same case to the local man, who has a 3-ton motor-wagon, and he says he would want from 12s. to 14s. a ton to cart it, providing he could keep on solid ground the whole time.

62. Considerable discussion has already taken place as to the competition of motor-lorries with the railway. In the carriage of what class of article alone is the motor-lorry able to compete with the railway?—Class A—benzine and kerosene, &c. They do enter into competition in those lines from Foxton to Palmerston.

63. All high-freighted goods?—Yes.

64. The freight on benzine to Sandon, via Foxton, is 16s. 8d.?—Yes.

65. The freight on benzine to Feilding, ex Foxton, via Palmerston, is 39s. 7d.?—Yes, taking the distance as thirty-six miles.

66. The freight on benzine to Palmerston, ex Foxton, is 26s. 5d.?—Yes.

67. What is the price of benzine at the present moment?—Unless it has gone up again it is 19s. 8d. per case of 8 gallons.

68. What was the pre-war price?—13s. 4d. a case—about 1s. 8d. a gallon.

69. That is 1s. 8d. a gallon—where?—At Wellington.

70. What would the cost per gallon be approximately in carriage from Wellington to Sanson?—About 2½d. per gallon.

71. Is there any other statement you would like to make?—No, I think that is all.

72. *Mr. Myers.*] You say that the pre-war price of benzine was 13s. 4d. a case?—Well, that is what I have purchased it at.

73. Are you speaking of the Wellington price?—Yes, the price paid at Wellington.