

SESS. II.—1891.
NEW ZEALAND.

ANNUAL REPORT ON WORKING RAILWAYS

BY THE NEW ZEALAND RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS.

Presented to Parliament in pursuance of "The Government Railways Act, 1887."

To the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

N.Z. Railways, Head Office,
Wellington, 1st June, 1891.

SIR,—

We have the honour, in compliance with the direction in section 61 of "The Government Railways Act, 1887," to submit the annual report on the working railways of New Zealand for the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1891, for presentation to Parliament.

REVENUE, EXPENSES, AND TRAFFIC.

The returns of traffic, revenue, and expenditure of the various sections of railways are presented in the same tabular form as in the annual reports of previous years.

The outcome of the year's work is as follows:

	£	s.	d.
Gross earnings	1,121,701	0	0
Working-expenses	700,703	0	0
Net profit	£420,998	0	0

The net profit of £420,998 on a capital cost of £14,278,586 on 1,842 miles of railway gives a return of £2 18s. 11d. per cent., as against £412,782, giving £2 19s. 5d. per cent. on £13,899,955 and 1,809 miles in the previous year. The net profit has been the largest yet realised, and the cost of working the traffic has been lower than in any previous year.

There is an increase in the total traffic. The live-stock traffic has increased very largely.

There has been an increase in passenger-traffic, which must be considered satisfactory having regard to the very large special traffic created by the Dunedin Exhibition in the previous year. The result points to the success of the newly-introduced return-ticket system, and to the progressive prosperity of the colony, notwithstanding the stationary state of the population in some parts.

The extensions of railway from Wyndham to Glenham and from Palmerston North to Woodville have been opened during the year. The former does not add materially to the revenue, and is like many of the extensions made of late years, which, while adding largely to the capital cost of the railways, do not produce any interest on the outlay. The Palmerston North to Woodville line, which was opened on the 9th March, is likely to be productive of good financial results on the two systems which it connects.