

Table showing the Number of Engines and Vehicles sold whole, as asked for in your Letter of 10th August, accompanying the Return sent back.

Purchaser.	Description.	Value.
		£
Manawatu County Council	One locomotive, Class A	500
Gear Company	Two high-sided wagons ..	100
Nelson Brothers ..	Seven frozen-meat vans	1,750
Midland Railway Company	Ten low-sided wagons	800
Manawatu Railway Company	Twelve high-sided wagons	1 080
Stewart and Hunter	One locomotive, Class C	500
"	Two wagons	260
Longburn Company	Seven frozen-meat vans	1,750
Canterbury Meat Company ..	One locomotive, Class A ..	500
Manawatu Railway Company	Twenty high-sided wagons	1,800
Nelson Brothers	One locomotive, Class A	500
Hokonui Coal Company	" " "	500
Kaitangata Coal Company	One passenger-car and van	400
Nelson Brothers	One frozen-meat van	300
Sash and Door Company	One locomotive, Class A	500
Castlecliff Railway Company ..	One Price's car	100
"	" " wagon	50
"	" " car	100
John McLean and Son	One locomotive, Class C ..	720
Western Australian Government	Three locomotives, Class S ..	6,000
"	One hundred low-sided wagons	8,000
		26 210

The question may be asked, "Is this value sold in any way in diminution of the accommodation or value of the rolling-stock originally provided out of capital? The reply to this question is "No." The engine-power brake-power carrying-capacity of the wagon stock, and seating-capacity of the carriage stock, have all been increased from the railway vote during the three years named. The capital value of the stock has thus been increased, and not diminished.

The most complete information about the railways is given in the Commissioners' annual report. The value of the workshop cash recoveries, both for new and old work, parts and materials of all descriptions, rolling-stock or otherwise, is shown thereon. The amount for the three years was £56,600.

There is another feature in connection with such a question as has been asked which it is necessary to refer to. The work of the railways, and the transactions in connection with stock of all kinds, is continuous, and erroneous views are likely to be obtained by taking observations of particular periods. The labour of reconstructing, simplifying, and improving the rolling-stock was commenced under the previous management, some years before the Commissioners were appointed, and was going on upon a large scale when the Government Railways Act came into operation. The later transactions and improvements are mostly the result and outcome of the previous undertakings, and should be considered accordingly.

The Commissioners have gone into this question very exhaustively on account of the explanations which they gave in the return not having been accepted. They feel that this occurred because neither the question nor the explanation has been properly understood. It cannot be supposed that the Commissioners have any desire to withhold any information ordered by the House which it is in their power to give. To place particulars now given, in pursuance of your request, in the return would, in the Commissioners' opinions, be misleading and incorrect.

The last part of the portion of the question stated on the fifth sheet of the return—viz., "The account, vote, or fund to which the proceeds of the sale, or disposal of the same, have been credited," is answered on the fifth sheet of the return.

The Commissioners respectfully request that this explanation may be presented to Parliament, together with the original return.

JAMES MCKERROW,
J P MAXWELL,
W M. HANNAY,
Railway Commissioners.

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