

During the last Christmas and New Year holidays, what with the heavy race and excursion traffic and the extra Thames passenger trade, I found my stock of passenger-carriages utterly inadequate for requirements. More are now being built, and I trust by next Christmas to be in a better position to cope with the traffic. The supply of trucks on the section has also been found insufficient for the necessities of the goods traffic. Additions are, however, gradually being made to the stock, and we are in consequence getting into a more satisfactory state in that respect.

During the past year railway-, telegraph-, and telephone-lines have been extended from Morrinsville to the Thames, Putaruru to Rotorua, and from Helensville to Waitakerei. These extensions are of great assistance in aiding the effective manipulation of the trains. A telephone connection has also been made between Auckland, Newmarket, Remuera, Green Lane, and Ellerslie Stations, in order to insure the prompt handling of the heavy race trains run in connection with Ellerslie meetings.

Business throughout the Auckland Province is generally in a good condition. In the city itself the local traders are feeling the result of the closing of the Exhibition, but I am of opinion this is only a temporary dulness. I anticipate that our traffic for the current year will show a fair increase on that of last year.

I have, &c.,

A. GRANT,

District Traffic Manager.

The General Manager, New Zealand Railways, Wellington.

SIR,—

District Traffic Manager's Office, Wanganui, 29th April, 1899.

I have the honour to report that the revenue from traffic forwarded from stations in this district for the year ended the 31st March, 1899, amounted to £138,677 8s. 3d. In comparison with the previous year this shows an increase of £10,921 6s. 1d.

The following table gives the increases under the various headings:—

	Number.	Tons.	Value.	
			£ s. d.	
Passengers	37,348	...	6,404 12 10	
Parcels, &c.	6,198	...	561 3 10	
Luggage	114 14 4	
Cattle	5,585	...	} 3,318 3 6	
Sheep and pigs	22,487	...		
Firewood ... ..	...	309	
Timber ... ..	...	823	
Grain ... ..	...	1,302	
Merchandise ... ..	...	4,127	
Coal ... ..	...	1,203	
Other minerals ... ..	...	3,554	
Rents and miscellaneous		522 11 7

There were decreases of 248 tons of chaff, &c., and 824 tons of wool.

The cash banked shows an increase of £16,280 12s. 4d. as compared with the previous year.

The numbers of passengers, exclusive of season-ticket holders, booked at stations in this district were:—

	Number.	Value of Fares.
		£ s. d.
At ordinary fares	448,234	49,156 2 2
At holiday excursion fares	46,548	9,569 12 1
At school and factory fares	7,072	400 6 0
Total	501,854	£59,126 0 3

The total of parcels handled was 50,088 forwarded and 56,495 received.

An unfavourable season caused a falling-off in the live-stock traffic and a shortage in the wool-clip at the southern end of the district.

The total tonnage of goods forwarded from all stations was 143,020 tons. The tonnage received was 158,607 tons. There were also 80,155 tons dealt with at the wharves.

The dairying industry still shows rapid expansion; 3,956 tons of butter and cheese were shipped at New Plymouth and Waitara during the year.

Commencing on the 1st December, an addition of two mail trains per week was made to the train service between New Plymouth and Wanganui, and steamer connections arranged between New Plymouth and Onehunga. This gives a through service on four days a week between Wellington and Auckland, instead of bi-weekly as previously. The results of this additional service have so far been satisfactory.

The revenue prospects for the ensuing year are good, but the expansion of business will not be so rapid as in the last two years.

Taking into consideration the recent reductions in rates, an increase of 5 per cent. upon last year's revenue would be a fair estimate.

I have, &c.,

H. Buxton,

District Traffic Manager.

The General Manager, New Zealand Railways, Wellington.

SIR,—

District Traffic Manager's Office, Wellington, 24th May, 1899.

I have the honour to report that the traffic operations in the Wellington-Napier district for the year ended 31st March, 1899, produced a revenue amounting to £224,451, as against £196,793 for the previous year, giving an increase of £27,658.

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