

to prove such an intention to defraud as would bring the consignor within the provisions of the 154th clause of the Act. We think that to enforce accuracy in the consignment notes a by-law should provide that, where any such error was discovered, the Minister should have the power to charge an additional rate, not exceeding double rate, upon so much of the consignment as had been omitted from the note.

Claims for loss.

68. Claims against the railway for loss or damage are at present paid in the South out of the current receipts of the line. In the North, such claims are paid by the Manager out of his imprests. It is very undesirable that any revenue should be stopped on its way into the Public Account; and it cannot be so stopped without a violation of the law. On the other hand, it is equally inconvenient that any unnecessary delay should occur in the settlement of such claims, especially in cases of small amount, and which are undisputed. These claims are only paid at present on the approval of the General Manager, and we think that they should be paid out of the moneys which will have to be imprested to the Manager or the Cashier monthly, for the expenses of working the lines.

Authority to pay claims.

69. It will probably be advisable that a general authority be given to the Manager to pay all such claims up to a fixed amount, and that for higher demands the special authority of the Minister should be necessary. In the latter case, the claim could be most readily settled by a final payment by the Treasury. Payments for loss and damage will, under the plan now proposed, appear in the accounts as an item in the cost of working the lines, instead of as a deduction from the receipts, which latter course is clearly incorrect.

Passenger luggage.

70. Passenger luggage should be allowed to a weight of 112 lbs., and excess luggage charged at one shilling for every half-hundredweight or fractional part of a half-hundredweight in addition, for every fifty miles or part of fifty miles travelled.

Cloak-rooms.

71. For goods left at the station, we would charge twopence for the first day, and one penny for each day after, per package. We recommend the use of cloak-room adhesive labels of the value of one penny, which may be sold to the public, and used for sending parcels to be left at the station.

Clearing platform.

72. The platforms should be cleared after the last train has left, and all packages found on it should be treated as lost luggage.

Lost luggage.

73. Lost luggage should be charged at sixpence a package for booking. All such goods may be sold under the Public Works Act, after one month's notice. We think the time should in future be extended, and that a sale should be made of all lost luggage once a year, of which a month's notice should be given.

Parcels.

74. We recommend the adoption of the Canterbury rates for parcels, with some alterations which we have made in the scale. And we think that adhesive labels of the values of threepence, sixpence, and one shilling should be sold to the public, and used as postage stamps for the parcels traffic.

Dogs.

75. Dogs we propose to charge at sixpence for every twenty-five miles or fractional part of twenty-five miles, half-a-crown being the maximum charge.

Cattle.

76. The charges for horses, cattle, and sheep are nearly the same on all the lines. We have adopted the scale with some slight alterations.

Fowls.

77. Fowls may be charged at one penny each for every twenty-five miles or fractional part, with a minimum charge of sixpence on any one consignment.

OF SALARIES AND WAGES.

Wages to be uniform.

78. The question of the wages and salaries of persons employed on railways has occupied our attention. We are decidedly of opinion that a uniformity should prevail throughout the railway service of the whole colony.

Engine-drivers.

79. For Engine-drivers, we recommend a salary of eleven shillings a day, with an increase of sixpence a day after each year up to a maximum of thirteen shillings. Such increase, however, to depend on good conduct. The past service of Engine-drivers should count under the new scale, and the wages at present paid to any Driver should not be reduced owing to the new rule.

Firemen.

80. For Firemen, a salary of eight shillings a day, with an increase of sixpence a day after each year, up to a maximum of ten shillings, depending on good conduct.