

That, as the House has this session expressed a definite opinion that, as far as possible, railway material should be obtained in the colony by public tender, the Committee consider it unnecessary to do more than express its concurrence in that decision.

The Committee recommend the distribution of the schedules for railway supplies, where practicable, in preference to their being obtained from one contractor.

The Committee recommend that the Government should take steps, where practicable, to insure the use of New Zealand coals, instead of Newcastle or other foreign coals, upon the Government railways.

That with reference to the classification of goods, &c., the Committee consider classification necessary, subject to revision from time to time—absolute uniformity of tariff charges being impossible—but a discriminating charge, having regard to distance and other local circumstances, should be made.

The Committee recommend the block system on all lines where there are long tunnels, and that all stations should be connected by telegraph, with offices open to the public, where practicable.

The Committee recommend that increased facilities should be given, at reduced rates, for the use of special trains, the Railway Managers of the different sections to have discretionary power.

The Committee recommend that the Government should only weigh goods for their own purposes, and that the issue of weigh-notes to the public be discontinued.

That it is inexpedient at present to lease the railways of the colony; but, with a view of ascertaining how such a system would work, the Committee is of opinion it is desirable to lease the Auckland-Waikato line for a term not exceeding five years.

The Committee consider it expedient that a scale of allowances for the railway employés, in cases of fatal accidents and accidents resulting in permanent incapacity for work, be adopted independently of Railway Benefit Societies; the allowance to be arranged according to pay in the service.

The Committee consider it desirable, where the traffic is heavy and the curves and gradients severe, that puddled steel rails should be used; the evidence generally being in favour of that course.

The Committee recommend that, wherever the Government consider it necessary for the effectual working of the traffic to adopt a system of town delivery, power shall be taken by the Government to put on a delivery rate on all goods, and charge the same to the consignee.

The Committee consider that it is not the duty of the Government to provide storage for grain, wool, or merchandise; and that such a rate for storage, where forced upon the railway, be adopted as will act as a prohibitory one.

The Committee consider that every facility should be granted for the erection of private stores with sidings to the railway, at the sole expense of the applicants, or upon such other terms as may be agreed upon.

The Committee consider that sufficient trains should be run on Sundays to meet the requirements of the public. The evidence submitted to the Committee goes to show that Sunday trains are required as much on the Invercargill and Bluff line as on other port lines in the colony.

The Committee consider that, however desirable it may be to have a uniform mileage rate for passenger fares, absolute uniformity cannot be adopted, and a discretionary power must be left in the hands of the Minister to alter the rates in regard to distance, competition, and other local circumstances.

The Committee are of opinion that it would be conducive to the public convenience if tickets could be obtained at any time outside the railway stations, from persons who may be disposed to keep such tickets for sale, as is now done in the case of postage or revenue stamps; they therefore recommend that provision be made accordingly.

The Committee consider that greater facilities should be given at the principal railway stations for sale of tickets, by having them procurable at any time during office hours; and would further strongly recommend that all tickets, excepting return and excursion, should be available until used, irrespective of the date of their issue.

5th November, 1877.

J. EVANS BROWN,
Chairman.