

5th. New Zealand railways, when first initiated, were bound by Act of Parliament to cost not more than £5,000 per mile; lightness of material was a necessary consequence, and 40-lb. rails was one consequence. And I think that these rails, with light engines and rolling-stock, was a move in the right direction, in a new country developing itself, with railways run at the speed as at present; but it would not be politic to run faster.

When these have to be renewed, put in a 52-lb. rail. Too much inspection can hardly be given at Home to secure rails being properly rolled, and of iron, in quality and mixture, of the best description and proportion.

There is one matter, however, I would call your attention to—viz., your joints (*i.e.*, Ibbetson's clips). During the time I had the supervision of this portion of the New Zealand railways I saw that they were weak and inefficient as a joint, not rendering accidents a necessary consequence, but tending to destroy the ends of your rails far sooner than with well-designed fish-plates. Three years ago I recommended that under each joint a sleeper should be inserted. My recommendation had no effect; but I still hold the same opinion, and can point out one mile of line which has been thus treated, and though for eighteen months I have not seen the effect, as compared with the general method in use, would refer you to the persons to whom the maintenance of such portion is intrusted.

I have, &c.,

E. C. J. Stevens, Esq., M.H.R.,

W. BRUNTON, M.I.C.E.

Acting-Chairman, Railway Management Committee, Wellington.

APPENDIX K.

Mr. F. G. CLAYTON to Mr. J. A. TOLE, M.H.R.

DEAR SIR,—

Newmarket, 21st September, 1877.

This afternoon I was at the railway station here on a little business, and while there the 3.15 train from Onehunga came in, and not a single passenger, either first or second. Since the fares have been revised the traffic has lessened, whilst the 'busses are crowded that ply between Auckland and Onehunga with passengers inside and out.

If you think you can make any use of this in the House do so. My suggestion would be, make the fares so as to compete with the road traffic.

I have, &c.,

F. G. CLAYTON,

Chairman, Newmarket Highway District, Auckland.

J. A. Tole, Esq., M.H.R., Wellington.

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