

The long carriages obtained from England are most uncomfortable to travel in: the provision made by the designer for passing easily round curves leaves a very unstable connection between the body and the frames carrying the end wheels, the result being violent lateral motion when running on the straight line, especially so if the speed is at all excessive. It will be necessary to fit all the carriages for through traffic either with double bogies or Cleminson's patent radiating axles. One carriage already altered on the former principle has given every satisfaction. On the arrival of the locomotives shortly expected from America, it is intended to run one mail train each way daily between Dunedin and Christchurch, running the distance, 236 miles, in about ten hours. It is also contemplated to run similar trains between Dunedin and Invercargill, running the distance of 139 miles in about six hours. These trains will stop at the principal stations only, and will be timed to leave sufficiently late in the day to allow passengers from intermediate stations to travel by the ordinary early morning train to any of the stopping-places.

The amount expended out of capital in the construction of all the railways in the Middle Island, inclusive of the sections in course of construction, is, approximately, to 30th June, 1878, £5,462,000; while the excess of earnings over expenditure on the various sections for the financial year just ended is £145,345 18s. 5d., which is equivalent to 2½ per cent. interest on the capital.

It affords me much pleasure to bring under your notice the valuable and cordial assistance I have received from general managers, resident and locomotive engineers, and other officers, and employés generally.

Attached herewith you will please find the following tables:—

Statement showing dates of opening the several lengths of line ...	TABLE	A.
Statement of classified expenditure	"	B.
Statement of passenger traffic	"	C.
Statement of wages paid	"	D.
Statement of revenue and expenditure for wharves	"	E.
Statement of accounts	"	F.
Return of accidents	"	G.
Detailed statement of cost of maintenance, Christchurch Section	"	H.
Report of encroachments of the Rangitata River	"	I.
Report of trial of native coal in locomotives, Dunedin Section ...	"	J.
Report of trial of native coal in locomotives, Christchurch Section	"	K.
Return of locomotives	"	L.
Return of rolling-stock (carriages and brakes)	"	M.
Return of rolling-stock (wagons and tarpaulins)	"	N.
Return of miscellaneous stock	"	O.
Return of turntables, weighbridges and machines	"	P.
Return of cranes	"	Q.

I have, &c.,
W. CONYERS,

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works. Commissioner of Railways, Middle Island.

Enclosures in Appendix I.

TABLE A.

NEW ZEALAND RAILWAYS.—MIDDLE ISLAND.

STATEMENT showing the NUMBER of MILES of ROAD OPENED for TRAFFIC during the Year ending 30th June, 1878.

Designation of Line or Branch.	Date Opened for Traffic.	Length.				Remarks.
		M.	CH.	M.	CH.	
CHRISTCHURCH SECTION—						
West Eyreton to Bennett's	1st Feb., 1878 ...	5	59			
Hillgrove to Palmerston	22nd May, 1878...	12	65			
				18	44	
DUNEDIN SECTION—						
Mosgiel to Outram	1st Oct., 1877 ...	9	1			
Glendermid to Blueskin	20th Dec., 1877 ...	9	78			
Balclutha Terminus to Balclutha Township	22nd Jan., 1878...	0	70			
Blueskin to Waikouaiti	7th May, 1878 ...	14	37			
				34	26	
INVERCARGILL SECTION—						
Gore to Waipahi	1st Sept., 1877 ...	15	74			
Waipahi to Clinton	1 Nov., 1877 ...	9	68			
Lowther to Athol	28th Jan., 1878 ...	13	46			
Athol to Fairlight	29th April, 1878...	9	20			
				48	48	
WESTPORT SECTION—						
Westport to Ngakawau	20th Sept., 1877...	8	29			
				8	29	
Total opened	...			109	67	