

The total traffic in goods and live stock for the same year has been—

GOODS TRAFFIC.

Year.	Wool.	Timber.	Firewood.	Grain.	Minerals.	Merchandise.	Chaff, &c.	Total Goods.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
1883-84 ...	62,066	183,449	81,255	432,223	574,313	350,263	16,470	1,700,039
1884-85 ...	68,523	178,909	86,670	414,590	618,511	365,623	17,030	1,749,856
1885-86 ...	74,778	202,572	80,280	413,846	669,081	368,225	14,985	1,823,767

LIVE STOCK.

Year.	Horses.	Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep.	Pigs.
1883-84 ...	9,555	26,393	3,282	627,090	29,522
1884-85 ...	10,358	29,963	2,775	666,522	30,268
1885-86 ...	9,518	34,107	2,527	781,470	40,558

These figures show—and a reference to the tables will make it more clear—that there is a substantial increase in the total quantity carried, and also in all of the important items, except grain, and that has remained almost stationary.

Now, a few words on the subject of the workshops. Much has been said during the past year as to the way in which they have been conducted. As far as I am able to judge, after again going very closely into the expenditure in three workshops, I can repeat the opinion I then expressed to the effect that the colony is getting very fair value for the money expended in them.

The largely-increasing mileage now being worked is bringing with it larger repairs and, consequently, the necessity for further accommodation; and it must also be remembered that many of the locomotives have been running for a long time, and therefore are requiring heavier repairs. Provision is being made for all this, and the shops at Petone and Hillside are now being largely increased, with a view of our being able to keep up the stock in a state of first-class efficiency. In Auckland, also, additions are being made, and both there and at Hillside much greater additions will very soon be forced upon the Government; also at Wanganui to a smaller extent. Already additional machinery has been ordered for these shops, and provision to meet the necessary expenditure has accordingly been made by the Government.

No additions are likely to be required at Addington, except an enlargement of the erecting-shed, which now hardly accommodates the engines working on the lines running through the Hurunui-Waitaki district, which are constantly coming in for large repairs.

Nearly everything in the shape of rolling-stock is now being made in the colony, the orders sent to Great Britain being confined in most cases to the raw materials and some few articles which cannot at present be manufactured in the colony.

By carefully arranging the work put in hand at the various shops we have been able to bring about much economy in many directions, and we have endeavoured to bring into useful operation the valuable machinery which had been provided by previous Governments.

In the item of tarpaulins alone a saving of fully £3,000 per annum has been effected during the year by improved arrangements and the use of improved appliances.

Fair progress is being made by the contractors who undertook the manufacture of the ten locomotives last year, and, judging from the work they are doing, the engines ought to prove to be of a very serviceable nature. The contractors imported some portions of the material required for these engines partially worked up, but sooner than altogether condemn these articles a valuation was made, and a reduction has been agreed upon equal to the amount of work so executed in England outside the terms of the contract.

Honourable members will see, on reference to the tables which will be attached to this Statement, that the amount of work which has been done during last year in the workshops throughout the colony has been very extensive both as to repairs and renewals.

On the Foxton-New Plymouth line very heavy expenditure has occurred by way of repairs to the bridges, and a still larger expenditure will probably be required during the current year. This has been caused by the mistake made in using rimu timber when constructing the line, and it is only fair to the Engineer-