

As you will observe from the correspondence, this information was declined by Mr. Vaile. You will no doubt concur that it is necessary that the Railway Commissioners should be furnished with the details of your scheme before expressing an opinion on its suitability. The Commissioners will be glad to receive from you these details; the scheme will then have their most careful attention.

As, however, the expression of unwillingness of the League to recommend any local body to give an indemnity against possible loss is calculated to cause serious mistrust as to the financial prospects of the scheme, I am directed to ask you to intimate to the Commissioners, when supplying the information alluded to, whether the members of the League propose to offer any guarantee at all against loss.

I have, &c.,

E. G. PILCHER, Secretary.

No. 3.

The RAILWAY REFORM LEAGUE to the RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS.

GENTLEMEN,—

Auckland, 31st October, 1889.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th October instant.

As to the correspondence in the *Herald* of the 11th February last, to which you allude, and to the fact of Mr. Vaile's declining to give details of a proposed scheme to the Minister when requested, the League say that Mr. Vaile then referred the Minister to the scheme as contained in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee, and gave what the League consider substantial and valid reasons why no further details could then be given.

With respect to your request that the League should furnish you with the details of the scheme proposed by the League, I have to state that in a previous letter (12th October, with enclosure) the League intimated that the general features and certain details of their scheme were contained in the evidence taken before a Parliamentary Committee which sat from the 2nd day of June, 1886, to the 11th day of August of the same year (I.—6, 1886). The League again refer you to the evidence given before that Committee, which fully discloses the general features and, to a great extent, the details of the proposed scheme.

The Commissioners must know that to give minute details respecting all contingencies of an untried scheme would be an impossibility without access to the records of the department; and, further, with reference to this request that the League should supply you with the details of the scheme proposed by the League, I beg to state that the League are of opinion that it is not their duty to provide the Commissioners with minute details of the scheme proposed. It cannot be maintained that the proceedings before this Parliamentary Committee do not disclose sufficient details of the design or scheme which the League wish to be tried, for the Committee themselves, during an exhaustive inquiry, never complained of want of detail of the scheme under consideration, and they reported that a trial should be given to the system. The League venture to say that this Parliamentary Committee would never have made such a report if any necessary details of the system had been wanting. The League therefore respectfully refer the Commissioners to the evidence so taken as containing full particulars and details of the system which they are desirous should be carried out on the Auckland system of railways. It may be objected that in the evidence referred to there is little or no reference to goods-traffic and the details connected therewith; and, in answer to this, the League say that so far as goods-traffic is concerned such may be the case, but as far as passenger-traffic is concerned there are ample details, and that therefore the system as it affects passenger-traffic, passengers' luggage, and parcels, at the least, should have a fair trial. As to the details of the system in respect of the goods-traffic, the League would be prepared to give every necessary information after a trial of the proposed new system upon passenger-traffic had proved successful.

The Hungarian Government having adopted the system proposed by this League, are trying with marked success its effects upon passenger-traffic alone; and the League desire, in this respect, to follow their example, and, upon proof of the success of the system upon passenger-traffic, to include goods-traffic in the scheme.

As to providing a guarantee against any possible loss which may arise upon a trial of the proposed system, the League beg leave to dissent from your views on this point when you say that, because the League decline any guarantee, mistrust as to the financial success of the system is implied. The League do not anticipate any loss; on the contrary, they are confident a large profit will result from the proposed trial. The evidence received in respect of a partial trial of this system shows it to be an unqualified success. The League submit that they represent a very large section of the colonists of New Zealand, for whose benefit, and at whose expense, the railways exist, and who are very decided in their wishes to see some reform in the administration of the railways. They further submit that such reforms, where carried out, would be for the public good, and would not benefit the League or any member of it, or any particular section of the community; and they therefore say it would be manifestly unjust to ask them to provide any such guarantee as suggested in your letter.

In conclusion, the League will be prepared to answer any questions submitted by the Commissioners.

By order of, and on behalf of, the Railway Reform League,

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM C. DALDY,

Chairman, General Committee, Railway Reform League.