

APPENDIX E.

REPORT *re* CONDITION of the MIDLAND RAILWAY.

Chief Engineer's Office (Working Railways Department),
Wellington, 27th June, 1896.

WHEN these lines were taken over by the Government the track was, on the whole, in fair running order.

The rails consist of 53lb. steel rails of standard Government pattern. Renewals will therefore be very light for some time to come. The sleepers are mostly birch, and many are already decayed. Renewals are in progress, and will be very heavy in the early future. The track had been well ballasted. The banks and cuttings are too narrow, and will therefore require considerable attention in widening and clearing out respectively. The tunnels were in good order. River protection works are extensive. Some of these were in need of immediate repair, and further works have been necessary to preserve portions of the line. The bridges and culverts are of a substantial character, the larger spans being constructed in iron. The ironwork was commencing to corrode, and a great deal of attention was immediately required. The fences were in fairly good order. The water-services are complete, and were in good order. The buildings, platforms, loading-banks, and stockyards were in very good order, with the exception of painting, which in some cases was wanted.

In accordance with your instructions, only necessary repairs have been effected, and no work in the nature of improvement or alteration has been undertaken, except where absolutely necessary.

Considerable damages were caused by floods on the Springfield line, rendering it impassable for traffic. These have been repaired, and protected from recurrence of like damage in the future. The expenditure on this work to 31st March, 1896, was £400.

J. HENRY LOWE, Chief Engineer.

The General Manager, New Zealand Railways, Wellington.

Locomotive Superintendent's Office, Wellington, 25th June, 1896.

REPORT upon LOCOMOTIVES and ROLLING-STOCK, &c., MIDLAND RAILWAY, 31st March, 1896.

THIS section of railway was taken possession of by the Government on the 25th May, 1895, and since then has been worked on the same lines as hitherto worked by the Company.

The shops at Stillwater have no machinery to speak of, so that only ordinary repairs can be done.

The following are some of the principal repairs effected during the last twelve months:—

Locomotives.—No. 1 had thirty-four copper stays in fire-box renewed and twenty-nine new tubes; also sight-feed lubricator fitted, and two new wash-out plugs in fire-plate of boiler; paint work touched up, and two coats of varnish put on. No. 2 was thoroughly overhauled and refitted and repainted, boiler stripped and covered with slag wool; Government standard metallic packing and swab-carriers fitted to piston-rods. Nos. 3, 4, and 5 had only ordinary running shed repairs, closing brasses, &c.; these engines will have the repairs ordered by the Boiler Inspector carried out at an early date. No. 6 had no repairs to speak of since Government took possession; engine had just undergone an overhaul.

Cars.—The cars are in want of repairs, and three of them want repainting. Car B 2 has been put into fair order, and painted and varnished.

Vans.—Van No. 3 has been overhauled, repainted, and varnished, and is in good order. The other two vans want repairs before being painted. This work is not so urgent as carriages.

Wagons.—The twenty-four low-side wagons have all been repaired and painted with tar. They are all now in good order. Three E wagons were thoroughly overhauled, and several others had light repairs. Ten H bolster wagons have been thoroughly overhauled and painted with tar. They are now in good order. R long wagons: Light repairs have been effected. In several of these some improvement could be made in fixing stanchions. Wagons generally are in fair order. G and I covered goods vans have had light repairs; vehicles in fair order. K sheep-wagons: One of these had a lot of repairs; the others are all in good order.

Crane.—The 5-ton crane was thoroughly overhauled and repainted; protection shields put over wheels, and chain annealed.

The rolling-stock generally is in good order, and fills the requirements of traffic well on the whole; the greatest want that is felt is in timber-wagons, and that only at busy seasons.

The locomotive buildings are in fair order, and the supply of water for wash-out and boilers good at all tanks.

T. F. ROTHERAM, Locomotive Superintendent.

The General Manager, New Zealand Railways, Wellington.

Locomotive Superintendent's Office, Wellington, 25th June, 1896.

CONDITION of LOCOMOTIVES, ROLLING-STOCK, &c., on MIDLAND RAILWAY at date Line was taken over by New Zealand Government.

Locomotives.—No. 1 engine in use about seven years. Tires in good order, so are coupling-rods, &c. Engine axle-boxes have a lot of side-play, nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ in. full, bogie $\frac{3}{4}$ in. Motion-gear in good order, and boiler clean. Fire-box shows slight bulging between stays about level of fire. There appears to be slight pitting in the bulged parts, caused by the action of the fire. Some of the stay-heads are small; most of the heads require renewing. Boiler carries 120lb. of steam. Wheels turned up July, 1893 (first turning).

No. 2 engine about seven years in use, and is now in shop for light overhaul. Tubes will not be taken out. Boiler is to be relagged with slag wool. Axle-box wedge-blocks to be lined up. Piston-rods turned up, and rings renewed, &c. The cylinders and all bearings appear in good condition. Boiler clean. Fire-box in fair order; one rivet-head off seam-joint of C fire-box. A few ferrules require renewing. Boiler carries 140lb. of steam.