

Evidence produced at the Parliamentary Inquiry into Vaile's Stage System in 1886.

What the Government Railway Accountant proves would be the Financial Result by adopting Vaile's System of Railway Fares and Charges.

NEW ZEALAND RAILWAYS.								STATEMENTS MADE			
Summary of Passengers carried on the Auckland Section, under different Stages (Helensville to Morrinsville), for the Twelve Months ended 31st March, 1886.								As to what Mr. Vaile's Average Fare for the Distances named would be.			
Distances.	Present Percentage of Travellers at these Distances.	Percentage of Revenue they now have to pay.	Total Number of Passengers carried at Government Fares.	Total Revenue.	Number of Passengers computed to give the same Revenue at Mr Vaile's Fares.		What this Table says.	Samuel Vaile's Statement.	J. P. Maxwell's Statement.	Mr. Hannay's Statement.	
					Equal Numbers of each Class.	Two First Class to one Second.					
Not exceeding 3 miles	* Travellers of these distances are 68·8 of the whole	* 24·1	55,518½	£ 1,215	s. 12	d. 1	59,588	55,860	* 5·15d.	* Not less than 5d.	* Average for 9 miles and under not more than 5d.
Over 3 and not exceeding 5 miles			94,781	2,801	17	5	130,100	121,975			
Over 5 and not exceeding 7 miles			96,604½	3,435	2	0	157,176	147,356			
Over 7 and not exceeding 10 miles			46,045½	2,144	4	3	60,012	56,259			
Total of 10 miles and under	..	..	292,949½	9,596	15	9	406,876	381,450	5·66d.		Could not be more than 4½d.
Over 10 and not exceeding 30 miles	* These are 25·3	* 39·2	75,562½	8,324	10	10	194,445	182,292	* 1/5½d.		"In the country districts is only 4½d. for 50 miles"
Over 30 and not exceeding 50 miles			31,640	7,322	17	6	81,842	76,731			
Over 50 miles	..	..	24,762	14,665	13	1	134,291	125,900			"For all distances over 10 m. most unlikely to average 1s. 1½d."
Gross total	..	..	424 914	39,909	17	2	817,454	766,373	11½d.	1s.	"I do not think the average (for all distances) will be 1s."

All the columns marked thus * have been added by S. V.

Accountant's Office, Wellington.

A. C. FIFE, Accountant.

I tried to get this return many times before the special Committee was set up, and also during the earlier stages of the Committee, and the reply of the department was that it would take at least six months to prepare it, and that it would cost at least £1,000 to produce, and that it would not improve my position when I got it. The return in question is a return of the passenger fares taken from every station to every station on the Auckland Section of railways as they existed in 1886, and is prepared to the 31st March of that year by Mr. A. C. Fife, Accountant, and it was ordered to be prepared by the Railways Committee. Now, this return is a most important one, and it is one that I am certain, if I had had it in time to make use of while the Committee work was going on, they (the Committee) would have given an unqualified report in favour of a trial of the new system. I might mention in passing that that inquiry was a most lengthened one, and that I believe I have been blamed a good deal for its length. Anybody who will peruse the evidence will see that its length was caused by the enormous number of questions which I had to answer. I was in no way responsible for the length of that inquiry, and I am afraid that its length debarred me from being heard again until now. For the last fifteen years I have been trying to be heard before a parliamentary Committee, but have not succeeded until this occasion. Personally, I feel very grateful to this Committee for affording me the opportunity of being again heard. Now, with regard to this table, my object in getting it was to show that my finance was sound. It was brought up after the Committee's work was closed, and I would like to direct your attention to a fact here. The Committee had ordered this to be prepared, but the work of the Committee was closed—except bringing up the report—before they got it. That work closed one Friday afternoon, and I heard on the Saturday that this table had been produced, and went to the office and got a sight of it, and got in one very short memorandum about it. That was all I had a chance of doing with that return. One of the questions that arose before the Committee was, What was the relative proportion of second-class fares to first-class fares under the existing system, and what would be the relative position under the new system? I showed the relative proportion was two and a half second-class to one first-class fare, and claimed that under the new system that there would be at least an equal number of each class, and said that there would probably be a great many more first- than second-class fares. However, I only claimed an equal number of each class. Well, the first report that was brought up to the Committee is this summary of the passengers [produced], which you will find in the Parliamentary Paper I-9, page 87, 1886. This report was made on the same proportion of passengers that were then existing—that is to say, the two and a half second-class to one first-class fare. The Committee declined to receive that as sufficient, and they ordered the return on page 89 to be brought up. All this took place after I had finally left the Committee's room. I only saw the one on page 87, but I could see that even that proved that I was right. The new return ordered—that on page 89 of the minutes of evidence—showed, in the first column, equal numbers of each class of fares, and, in the next, two first-class to one second-class fare. The majority were of opinion that under the new system there would be considerably more first-class than second-class fares—most of them thought more than double—hence they ordered this report. For my purposes I have always stuck to my original