

SESSION II.
1906.
NEW ZEALAND.

INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY CONGRESS.

(REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER OF NEW ZEALAND RAILWAYS ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY CONGRESS, HELD AT WASHINGTON, D.C., U.S.A., ON 4TH TO 13TH MAY, 1905.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

THE International Railway Congress, 7th session, was formally opened by the Hon. Chas. W. Fairbanks, Vice-President of the United States, at Washington on Thursday, 4th May, 1905.

Before dealing with the business I consider it desirable to define the constitution of the International Railway Congress, its object and scope.

1. The International Railway Congress is a permanent association established to promote the progress and development of railways.

2. It is composed of railway administrations which have formally joined, whether State or private, and either owning or working lines for public traffic.

3. The Congress is represented by a permanent Commission which it elects. The headquarters of the Commission is at Brussels and its members give their services gratuitously.

4. The duties of the Commission are to—(a) Organize the Congress meetings; (b) prepare a programme of questions for discussion; (c) publish reports of the discussions; (d) set on foot any investigations; and (e) issue reports and publications which may further the objects of the Congress.

5. The Commission is composed of ex-Presidents of the sessions of Congress, who are members *ex officio*, and forty-eight elective members. The elective members are as far as possible chosen to represent the different nations.

6. At its first sitting after a session of Congress the Commission appoints five of its members to form an executive committee.

7. The executive committee is responsible for superintending and managing investigations, reports, and publications, the editing of the "Bulletin," and for furnishing the members of the Congress such special information as they may require.

8. The cost of the meetings of the permanent Commission and the executive committee is defrayed by a fund formed of (a) the annual subscriptions of members, and (b) subsidies and other miscellaneous receipts. Railway administrations pay a subscription of £4 per annum, plus a sum proportionate to the system. This variable sum necessary to meet the expense of the Congress may not exceed 4d. per mile of railway.

9. The subscriptions entitle each member to receive reports of the proceedings—plus one.

A schedule of the members and their official designations is attached from which it will be seen that all parts of the world were represented at the Congress.

The following are the transactions of the Congress :—

SECTION 1. WAY AND WORKS.

Wooden sleepers or cross-ties. Selection of species of timber used and processes of preservation.

Reporters.—Mr. J. W. Kendrick, third Vice-President, Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway, America; Mr. Haaser, Engineer-in-Chief, Midland Railway, France; Mr. J. E. Spring, late Chief Engineer in the Railway Department of the Government of India.

The proper seasoning of sleepers in the open air was generally advocated. On the Paris-Lyons and Mediterranean Railway Company's line, France, creosoted sleepers have been used for many years with excellent results. Creosote (oil of tar) containing from 10 to 15 per cent. of naphthaline and 67 per cent. of phenol is used. The cost per sleeper is about 5s. 4d. Gauge of tracks 4 ft. 8½ in.