

1909.
NEW ZEALAND.

ADDINGTON RAILWAY WORKSHOPS

(REPORT OF THE BOARD OF INQUIRY ON); TOGETHER WITH MEMORANDUM BY THE GENERAL MANAGER OF RAILWAYS.

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

REPORT.

SIR,—

The members of the Board of Inquiry, Addington Railway Workshops, have the honour to report that, as directed by the Warrant of the Hon. the Minister of Railways, dated the 6th day of March, 1909, they have conducted an inquiry to ascertain if the work at the Addington Shops is being done as expeditiously and economically as it should be, and that, as instructed, the scope of their inquiry has included,—

Scope of inquiry.

- (1.) The efficiency of plant and appliances.
- (2.) The system of work adopted.
- (3.) The discipline maintained.
- (4.) The cost of production as compared with the cost in other establishments, whether Government or private.
- (5.) The output, whether it is reasonable in quantity and quality, having regard to all the circumstances.
- (6.) Generally, matters calling for alteration or improvement in the interests of efficiency, economy, or discipline.

The Board sat for thirty-one days in Christchurch, took voluntary evidence, called for certain evidence and returns, and paid visits of inspection to the Addington Workshops and the principal Christchurch foundries. Visits were also paid to the works of Messrs. Price Bros., at the Thames, and the Newmarket, Petone, and Hillside Railway Workshops.

Evidence considered, together with observations of Board.

The Board have carefully considered the evidence given at the inquiry, together with the results of observations and investigations made by themselves.

Standard for new and repair work very different.

The work done at Addington is partially repair and partially new work, and under existing conditions the Board have found it difficult to separate the results obtained, though the standard for comparison in the two cases is widely different. For instance, machines may be profitably employed on repairs, the use of which on new work would entail loss. Systems of working may be tolerated in connection with repairs which would be altogether out of place in a repetition shop. The rate of working of the men must and can be very different on repetition-work from that which can be maintained in the renewal and repairing of parts.

Manufacturing-work at Addington compared with modern practice.

The Board have thought it best to compare the conduct of new work at Addington with modern manufacturing practice, but, whilst doing so, would draw attention to the fact that at Addington (which was primarily a repair-shop) the new work has gradually increased in amount, and has up to the present, probably from force of circumstances, been conducted very much on repair lines. In this respect the history of Addington appears to be the common history of similar undertakings, in which the new work usually grows to such proportions that what is in reality a makeshift method of carrying on becomes intolerable. In such cases separation and reorganization have almost invariably followed.