1914.
NEW ZEALAND.

# RAILWAYS STATEMENT

## BY THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, THE HON. W. H. HERRIES.

Mr. Speaker,—

In presenting the Railways Statement for the year ending 31st March, 1914. I have pleasure in announcing that, notwithstanding the smallpox epidemic in the north and the industrial upheaval caused through the unfortunate strike, the earnings exceeded those of the preceding year by £72,326. The results are as follows:—

| | Year 1914. | Year 1913. |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Total earnings ... ... ... ... | 4,043,328 | 3,971,002 |
| Total expenditure ... ... ... ... | 2,880,323 | 2,705,609 |
| Net profit on working ... ... ... | £1,163,005 | £1,265,393 |

The mileage of line open for traffic on the 31st March, 1914, was 2,863 miles, and the average miles operated during the year 2,861 miles. The only line opened during the year was the Dunollie–Rewanui Section of the State Collieries line, 3 miles 6 chains in length.

The capital cost of the lines opened for traffic, including plant and steamers on Lake Wakatipu, advanced from £31,611,220 to £32,355,087.

The net revenue, £1,163,005, is equal to a return of 3·61 per cent. on the capital invested in the open lines, and 3·33 per cent. on the capital (£34,980,576) invested in opened and unopened lines.

Although the gross revenue exceeded that of the previous year, it fell short of the estimate by £156,672, as a result of the abnormal conditions prevailing.

The net revenue per train-mile declined by 2·46d. in the North Island and by 4·75d. in the South Island.

The net earnings per average miles of railway open was £408. The failure of the revenue to meet the estimates was due to a falling-off of the goods traffic, the restriction of travel by smallpox epidemic, and the loss of the Easter holiday excursion traffic.

The railway workshops were kept fully employed building locomotives, cars, and wagons to provide for expansion of business. A large programme for rolling-stock construction is now in hand. This will serve the dual purpose of providing increased capacity for dealing with the traffic offering and keep the workshops staff fully employed on the remunerative work.

The expenditure absorbed 71·24 per cent. of the revenue, an increase of 3·11 per cent. over the previous year. The increase is directly traceable to advances in wages, employment of extra staff, and additional train services.

A considerable amount was spent in carrying out improvements to lines and providing increased accommodation at stations, and extending provision of safety appliances.