

railways, and experience shows that at least twice as much mileage should be done by the locomotives on the New Zealand railways before they enter the shops. Information has been furnished showing that repairs to engines in New Zealand average a little more than one per engine per annum, while on the North Eastern Railway of England the engines, including heavy and light repairs, did not average through the shops more than once in two years, and this without taking into consideration the difference in the character of the traffic working required. If this practice had been carried out in New Zealand it would mean that not more than 328 engines should have passed through the shops during the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1924, whereas in actual fact 677 engines were dealt with.

Petone and Addington Locomotive Shops sufficient to meet Requirements of both Islands.

Carrying this still further, it would appear that the shops at Petone and Addington could deal with the whole of the necessary repairs in the two Islands, and, assuming this to be so, it would be possible to dispense with the services of some 900 men, representing a saving of about £200,000 per annum. This is borne out also by comparing the repair staff employed per 100,000 engine-miles in New Zealand with one of the large railway groups of Great Britain, as it will be observed from the following table that if the Great Britain basis applied in the Dominion the staff could be reduced by 899 men :—

Railway.	Locomotive Repair Staff.	Stock of Engines.	Number of Engines repaired.	Number of Staff employed per Engine in Stock.	Total Engine-miles.	Average Engine-miles per Engine repaired.	Number of Staff employed per 100,000 Engine-miles.
New Zealand ..	1,921	655	677	2.93	12,450,796	18,391	15.43
A Great Britain railway group	18,628	10,292	5,165	1.90	226,868,021	43,924	8.21

Further Savings in Staff Costs.

This clearly indicates that a great saving is possible in the locomotive workshops in New Zealand, even without expenditure on new machinery and reorganization of the existing shops, but if such were carried out a further saving should be effected. It is obvious that the arrangement outlined would have to take place by degrees to avoid hardship to those displaced. In our opinion, reorganization of the existing methods should be put in force at an early date, and modern machinery procured.

Machinery in Workshops.

It is generally held that machinery in locomotive workshops possesses a utility life of twenty years. On this basis £162,607 should have been expended on renewals during the period 1915 to 1924, but, as will be seen from the following table, only £1,106 was so spent, leaving a balance of £161,501 which should have been set aside in a renewals fund and be available for use.

Twelve Months ended 31st March.			Capital Value.	Value of Machinery renewed during Year.	Amount which should have been renewed on Life Basis during Year.	Balance which should have been set aside in a Fund.
			£	£	£	£
1915			301,539	..	14,522	14,522
1916			309,366	..	15,077	15,077
1917			318,049	..	15,468	15,468
1918			324,178	..	15,902	15,902
1919			330,823	..	16,209	16,209
1920			336,380	570	16,541	15,971
1921			340,520	..	16,819	16,819
1922			348,676	50	17,026	16,976
1923			352,183	..	17,434	17,434
1924			357,140	486	17,609	17,123
Totals ..			..	1,106	162,607	161,501