

instead of leaving Lyttelton for Wellington at 6 p.m. as at present, thereby compelling passengers to travel on the previous day, reaching Wellington on Wednesday, and necessitating a stay of forty-four hours in Wellington, viz., from 11 a.m. Wednesday, till 6.50 a.m. Friday, whereas if the Wednesday steamer from Lyttelton connected with the express at that place, passengers for Auckland would only require to stay in Wellington nineteen or twenty hours, viz., from 11 a.m. Thursday to 6.50 a.m. Friday.

Passengers from Dunedin and south thereof for Napier arriving in Wellington on Wednesday and Friday go on by train from either Government station or Wellington and Manawatu Company's station, on Thursday and Saturday mornings, reaching Napier at 7.23 p.m. same days.

*Southward Running.*—Passengers from Auckland leave Onehunga by steamer at 1.30 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays, arrive New Plymouth about 5 a.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays, leave by train at 7 a.m., arriving Wellington 9.50 p.m.; leave again by steamer for Lyttelton about 5 p.m. on following days, and in the case of Mondays, passengers reach Dunedin at 9 p.m. on the following Thursday, and Invercargill at 3.30 p.m. on the following Friday. The journey includes a break of nineteen hours in Wellington, and for Invercargill passengers a further twelve hours in Dunedin. Passengers who leave Auckland by Thursday's boats reach Dunedin on the following Monday at 9 p.m., and Invercargill on the following Tuesday at 3.30 p.m., having breaks of forty-seven and fifty-nine hours respectively.

Passengers from Wellington to Dunedin, and *vice versa*, can, as a rule, get through on at least four days per week, the steamers invariably connecting with the express at Lyttelton. Napier passengers travelling to Dunedin and south can likewise get through three times per week.

#### *No. 2 (Proposed Service from 1st December, 1898).*

*Northward Running.*—Under this arrangement the running of the trains from stations in Southland to Dunedin, and express service Dunedin to Lyttelton, will be the same as at present, and passengers from southern stations, as far as Clinton and Lawrence, will be able to make two through trips per week to Auckland, whilst passengers from south of Clinton will be enabled to make one trip per week to Auckland. The former will be accomplished by leaving Clinton at 6.5 a.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays, taking express at Dunedin same day for Christchurch or Lyttelton, stay at either of these places all night, thence by steamer to Wellington on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, arriving at Wellington on Wednesdays and Thursdays, departing for north by train on Thursdays and Fridays, reaching Auckland on Fridays and Saturdays. Passengers from south of Clinton will be able to take the train leaving Invercargill at 4.15 p.m. on Mondays, catch Tuesday night's boat at Lyttelton, and reach Auckland on the Friday morning following.

If the departure of the steamer which leaves Lyttelton for Wellington on Wednesdays were so arranged that the boat would connect with the Wednesday express from Dunedin instead of leaving at 6 p.m., it would enable persons resident in Otago and Southland to make two direct through trips per week to Auckland, with a break of about eighteen hours only at Wellington.

Apart altogether, however, from the advantages to be derived by the delaying of the Wednesday steamer at Lyttelton as above, the service as outlined is an excellent one, and will result in a saving of twenty-four hours on the one direct trip per week which can be made under the proposed altered running of the trains and steamers between Wellington and Auckland, as owing to the fact of there being a train for New Plymouth on Thursday morning, the existing break of forty-four hours at Wellington will be reduced to nineteen or twenty hours, viz., from 11 a.m. on Wednesday to 6.50 a.m. on Thursday.

*Southward Running.*—By the alterations proposed in the days of departure of steamers from Auckland and the running of steamers and trains on two additional days per week, it will be practicable for passengers desirous of proceeding from Auckland to stations south of Dunedin to make two direct trips per week, and those proceeding to Dunedin will be enabled to make three direct trips per week, as against one trip per week under existing time-table.

Under proposal No. 2, which it is intended to bring into operation on the 1st December next, the running of the trains in the Middle Island will be undisturbed, the whole of the main line and branch connections will be maintained in their entirety, whilst in the North Island the more frequent running of the through trains between Wellington and New Plymouth will afford very much greater facilities for through travel, and at the same time be the means of improving the communication between Wellington and the outlying districts. The extra train-mileage entailed by the running of the two extra trains between Wanganui and New Plymouth will be 22,256 per annum; the cost of the service, based on the average of 4s. 8d. per train-mile, for year ending 31st March last, will be £5,193 per annum.

No. 3.—Under this table the express train would require to leave Dunedin at 8.30 a.m. at the latest, and to arrive at Lyttelton at 7.10 p.m. The steamer would require to leave Lyttelton at 7.45 p.m. and reach Wellington at 6.45 a.m., the through train for New Plymouth leaving Wellington at 8 a.m. Such a service would completely demoralise the whole of the train connections south of Dunedin, destroy the utility of the present afternoon service from Invercargill to Clinton, and the morning train from Clinton to Dunedin as a means of communication with the express trains for Christchurch, thereby deprive persons resident at stations south of Abbotsford of their present facilities, and compel those who desire to travel northwards by express to spend a night in Dunedin. It will also cause considerable delay to mails from all places south of Dunedin. The inconvenience would be specially felt by persons from stations south of Mosgiel, who would practically lose a whole day each time they desired to travel by the express.

It would be impracticable to time the morning train from Clinton to reach Dunedin at so early an hour as 8.30 a.m. It would, therefore, be necessary for passengers from Invercargill and all stations south of Mosgiel to travel to Dunedin by the previous day's express, or to run night-trains between Invercargill and Dunedin, in addition to the present services, which, as previously stated, would cost over £19,000 per annum. Even if such were done, passengers and mails from Otago Central, *via* Lawrence, would still be shut off.