

The following table will show in a concise form the comparisons of traffic as between the last two years :—

COMPARATIVE RETURN of OUTWARD TRAFFIC for the FINANCIAL YEARS 1899-1900 and 1898-99.

Description.	Year 1899-1900.		Year 1898-99.		Increase.	
	Number.	Tons.	Number.	Tons.	Number.	Tons.
Passengers ... ..	898,462	...	827,877	...	70,585	...
Season tickets ... ..	16,742	...	14,981	...	1,761	...
Parcels ... ..	122,211	...	114,938	...	7,273	...
Horses ... ..	2,533	...	2,064	...	469	...
Carriages ... ..	196	...	189	...	7	...
Dogs ... ..	5,362	...	4,883	...	479	...
Cattle ... ..	6,239	...	5,745	...	494	...
Calves ... ..	593	...	384	...	209	...
Sheep ... ..	594,486	...	555,434	...	39,002	...
Pigs ... ..	2,552	...	2,274	...	278	...
Chaff, lime, &c. ... ..	...	8,729	...	7,605	...	1,124
Wool ... ..	...	16,527	...	12,566	...	3,961
Firewood ... ..	...	27,536	...	23,490	...	4,046
Timber ... ..	...	89,606	...	70,979	...	18,627
Grain, &c. ... ..	...	25,571	...	14,986	...	10,585
Merchandise ... ..	...	55,574	...	47,899	...	7,675
Coal ... ..	...	17,684	...	12,590	...	5,094
Other minerals ... ..	...	23,472	...	12,020	...	11,452

REVENUE.

	1899-1900.			1898-99.			Increase.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Passengers ... ..	83,644	10	0	80,587	14	5	3,056	15	7
Parcels and luggage ... ..	11,771	5	4	10,877	2	10	894	2	6
Goods ... ..	144,032	9	0	128,468	3	1	15,564	5	11
Rents and miscellaneous ... ..	6,795	6	3	4,518	7	8	2,276	18	7
Net total ... ..	246,243	10	7	224,451	8	0	21,792	2	7

The total net revenue amounted to £246,243, the net increase of tonnage being 64,679 tons, and the net increase of revenue £21,792 2s. 7d. During the last three years the net revenue has increased by £74,538.

The above figures show only the traffic and revenue originating on the lines between Te Aro and Spit, and do not include any traffic from the Ashhurst-Foxton-New Plymouth lines.

Following table shows the proportional increase in traffic and revenue for year ending the 31st March, 1900, as compared with year ending the 31st March, 1897 :—

	Increase.	Per Cent.
Ordinary tickets (number) ... ..	183,131	25·6
Season tickets " ... ..	5,747	52·2
Parcels " ... ..	32,451	36·1
Horses " ... ..	698	38·03
Carriages " ... ..	77	64·7
Dogs " ... ..	1,034	23·8
Live-stock " ... ..	189,824	48·1
Goods (tons) ... ..	112,869	74·3
Revenue { Coaching ... ..	£24,576 7 0	33·8
{ Goods ... ..	£53,139 2 6	53·6

The only falling-off in traffic has occurred in connection with school excursions, due, no doubt, to the novelty having worn off.

The general prosperity which exists throughout this colony, the closer settlement of land, the cheapness of money, the stimulating influence of largely reduced fares and freights, and the steady improvement of the dairying industry are the principal factors which have led to such a phenomenal increase of business on this line of railway.

On some portions of the line the passenger-services are attaining such dimensions as to necessitate the extension of the principle of running passenger-trains entirely separate from goods traffic, and provision in this direction should be made as early as possible.

During the year the mileage run by passenger-coaches amounted to 1,554,527 miles; this comparatively heavy coaching traffic has been worked without injury to any passenger.

The movement of goods-wagons has totalled 7,549,046 miles, and, with the exception of a porter being fatally injured at Napier when shunting, personal accidents to members of the staff have been of a trivial nature.