

	31st March, 1895.	31st March, 1905.	Increase.	Per Cent. of Increase.
Minerals (tons) ...	857,917	1,806,360	948,443	111
Total tonnage ...	2,048,391	4,011,511	1,963,120	96
Total revenue ...	£1,150,851	£2,209,231	£1,058,380	92
Locomotives (number) ...	269	389	120	45
" tractive power (lb.)	1,756,178	3,776,914	2,020,736	115
Passenger-cars (number) ...	498	864	366	73
Passenger - cars, seating accommodation ...	17,455	34,643	17,188	98
Brake-vans (number) ...	204	307	103	50
Sheep-trucks " ...	390	848	458	117
Total trucks, all classes (number) ...	8,264	13,578	5,314	64
Truck carrying-capacity (tons) ...	50,861	97,549	46,688	92
Train mileage run ...	3,221,620	6,107,079	2,885,459	90

This table shows in a concise form the enormous growth of the railway business during the past ten years. It will be observed that the ordinary passengers have increased by 118 per cent., season tickets by 391 per cent., cattle by 171 per cent., sheep by 124 per cent., pigs by 79 per cent., total goods tonnage by 96 per cent., and total revenue by 92 per cent. During the same period the number of locomotives has increased by 45 per cent., the locomotive tractive power by 115 per cent., passenger-cars by 73 per cent., passenger-seating accommodation by 98 per cent., sheep-trucks by 117 per cent., trucks of all classes by 64 per cent., carrying-capacity of trucks by 92 per cent., while the train mileage has increased by 90 per cent. During the same period the mileage of line open for traffic has been increased by 381 miles, equal to 19 per cent., and the capital cost of the lines by £6,348,959, 41 per cent.

During the ten years ending 31st March last the following work was turned out of the railway workshops of the colony :—

Locomotives built new ...	39	Converted and rebuilt, 25	Erected, 57.
Locomotive-boilers built new ...	115		
Crane-boilers built new ...	19		
Carriages built new ...	319	Converted and rebuilt, 96	Erected, 63.
Brake-vans built new ...	115	" 31	
Wagons built new ...	4,280	" 1,032	Erected, 1,000.
Tarpaulins ...	11,436		
Points and crossings ...	1,442		
Cranes ...	2	Erected, 8.	

When the control of the railways was resumed by the Government in 1895 the rolling-stock was only barely sufficient to meet the requirements of the traffic at that time, and the enormous expansion of business which occurred during the first three years after the resumption of control of the railways by the Government rendered it imperatively necessary to largely augment the rolling-stock, which had proved to be totally inadequate to cope with the business of the Department. After fully investigating the matter, the Government determined to deal comprehensively with the question of the rebuilding and strengthening of bridges, improving lines and curves, relaying, respacing sleepers, enlarging and equipping the workshops with up-to-date machinery, improving station accommodation, equipping railway-lines with safety appliances such as tablet, interlocking of points and signals, installation of Pintsch gas system of car-lighting, cushioning second-class cars, provision of footwarmers, augmenting the supply of rolling-stock, and equipping the same with the Westinghouse brake. In accordance with this determination I prepared and submitted to Parliament, embodied in the Railways Statement for year ending the 31st March, 1900, a schedule of the works proposed to be carried out, at an estimated cost of £2,500,000, spread over a period of five years. This programme has since been vigorously prosecuted, and as a result of the policy followed the railways are to-day in a more efficient state than at any other period of their history.

It was also decided to adopt a comprehensive and progressive scheme for dealing with the conversion of the old four- and six-wheeled cars into up-to-date bogie vehicles. This, besides adding largely to the capacity of the cars, rendered available for use for many years to come a considerable number of cars that would otherwise have been obsolete and useless for service at the