

Westinghouse Brake.—The work of equipping engines and rolling-stock on Gisborne Section with the automatic quick-acting Westinghouse air-brake was completed during the year; the work on Whangarei Section is in hand and will follow on. Efficient arrangements are in force for the examination and upkeep of the Westinghouse brake. All new engines and rolling-stock built for sections on which the brake is in operation are equipped with it before being put into service.

Car-lighting.—The oil-gas manufactured at the five separate Pintsch-gas works amounted to 11,188,020 cubic feet, costing 2s. 2·92d. per 100 cubic feet. The increase in cost was due to having to rebuild the Palmerston North gasworks, which had been destroyed by fire.

On sections not provided with Pintsch gas all cars are now lighted with acetylene gas.

Motor-cars.—The motor-cars in use on the Culverden-Hammer service have been kept in good and efficient working-order. One Westinghouse petrol-electric rail motor-car for use on suburban services was under construction in the Railway workshops at the close of the year. This car will be completed at an early date and put into service.

Steamers.—The Railway Department's steamers on Lake Wakatipu service have been maintained in good working-order.

Renewals and Replacements.—During the year one small tank engine, five cars, two brake-vans, seven wagons, and fourteen tarpaulins, all second-hand stock, were sold; also four old cars and one damaged car, seven wagons, and 1,147 worn-out tarpaulins were written off. To replace rolling-stock sold or written off during the year under review, also the previous year, nine new bogie cars, one bogie brake-van, and eighteen wagons were built and 1,161 new tarpaulins were made. New stock to replace the engine, cars, brake-van, and wagons sold is under construction. In accordance with the practice of the Department the cost of replacing engines and rolling-stock sold or worn-out and written-off is debited to working-expenses.

Train Running and Mileage.—There has again been an increase in train-mileage. Compared with 1912-13 the increase in 1913-14 is 303,044 train-miles, or equal to 3·36 per cent., and 514,648 engine-miles, or equal to 4·26 per cent.

The following table shows particulars of the expenditure per train-mile:—

Year.	Train-mileage.	Engine-mileage.	Cost, in Pence, per Train-mile.		
			Locomotive Branch.	Car and Wagon Branch.	Total.
1913-14 	9,319,268	12,604,573	23·73	5·99	29·72
1912-13 	9,016,224	12,089,925	22·18	6·02	28·20

The increase in the Locomotive Branch is due to the extra cost of fuel, wages, and heavy repairs to engines.

STORES.

Mr. H. Baxter, Comptroller of Stores, reports as follows:—

The value of stores, plant, and material (purchased under the Railway vote) on hand on the 31st March, 1914, at the various stores depots and sawmills amounted to £450,207 3s. 1d., as against £328,754 18s. 2d. on the 31st March, 1913, an increase of £121,452 4s. 11d.

The value of stores on hand on account of additions to open lines amounted to £38,204 19s. 1d., as against £37,801 16s. 6d. on the 31st March, 1913, an increase of £403 2s. 7d.

The total stock on hand has, therefore, increased during the year by £121,855 7s. 6d.

The whole stock is in good order, has been carefully and systematically inspected, and is value for the amounts stated.