

to 2,000 wagons per day, that those wagons are delayed on an average three hours per day on account of the lack of facilities, you will see how it would work out. At one hour a day each wagon represents 71 wagons per day, and that multiplied by 313 working-days amounts to 22,000 wagons in the year lost for one day. If you take it at two hours you get twice that, and so on.

*The Chairman.*] And you are short of rolling-stock?—Yes. Apropos of that I should like to direct the attention of the Commission to a report made on the American railways in June, 1907. It deals with the importance of terminal facilities, and the effect of delays at the terminals. The report states: "The importance of terminals to the operation of a railway as a whole is indicated by an analysis of a typical journey of a freight-car made recently by a statistician of a western railway, and based upon the statistics of the Inter-State Commerce Commission for the year ending 30th June, 1904. From these data the average trip was found to consume 17·72 days, during which time the car travelled 260·19 miles under load and 124·14 miles empty. On this trip the car spent 1·6 days in trains, two days with the shipper for loading, an equal time for unloading, and 12·12 days or 68 per cent. of the time, in yards, in interchange between roads, undergoing repairs, standing idle, &c. The largest part of the car's time is spent in yards. This is indicated by the fact that roads moving cars long distances without having to put them through and hold them in many large terminals make a much greater mileage per car per day than those as to which the opposite is true. For instance, in the fiscal year ending 30th June, 1906, the average miles per car per day on the Union Pacific reached the remarkable figure of 73·5, while on the Pennsylvania railroad, with its large eastern terminals, this figure was only 24·19, and on the New Haven only 14·20 miles. The effect of large terminals upon the car-movement and upon railway operation in general is further evidenced by the statement that there are probably at all times in the fifteen largest terminals of this country approximately one million cars, or 40 per cent. of the entire number in this country, and four times the number estimated to be in trains between terminals. The most serious need of the railways at present is more ton-miles per car per day. Because of this fact, any measures that will shorten the time required for a trip (equivalent to increasing the number of cars available) is of primary importance. As only 1·6 days, or 9 per cent. of the time is now spent in trains, it is evident that the opportunity to effect an improvement through increasing the speed of trains is limited. Also, any attempt to reduce the time now allowed shippers at the beginning and end of the journey may be expected to meet with their opposition, and only limited improvements can be expected here, at least in the near future. Therefore, improvements must be looked for chiefly in the twelve days now spent by the car in yards, where it is under the direct control of the railway. If the total time required per trip could be reduced to fifteen days by cutting down the time spent in yards and otherwise unaccounted for to 9·4 days, it would be equivalent to placing about 400,000 additional cars in the service."

The alteration proposed in Palmerston North would mean a considerable saving in the cost of your work and of your general operations in the North Island?—Yes, a quicker turnover of rolling-stock passing through the station.

Have you anything further you wish to put in?—I do not think so.

*The Chairman.*] In the event of the deviation taking place, have you considered whether you can provide siding-accommodation for the sidings now at Terrace End in use by the flour-mill and one or two other firms?—I do not think they can get accommodation at those sidings.

*Mr. Marchbanks.*] You could not leave the present track in its present position?—No. It will be far better for those people to do what the Borough Council will have to do—that is, go over to new ground where they can get proper facilities.

That is a pretty serious matter financially?—Yes, and our proposal is a pretty serious one financially for the Department.

*Mr. Luckie.*] In the case of an operating-depot two miles south of Palmerston North, that is to be a depot two miles distant from the station?—It is the point at which I understand the gentlemen who are opposing the railway scheme suggest that the goods-depot should be put.

The value of this report and the amount of money involved in it is the result of having the goods-depot about two miles from the railway-station?—To some extent it will be governed by the distance that the depot is away from the station; but if you spread your depots then you have all the additional cost of running, and to the extent that the distance run increases so the operating-cost increases.

If it is possible to provide equal railway facilities at some point south of the present railway-station so that there will be no greater difference in the distance between the various operations at your station, including passenger traffic or goods traffic, marshalling and engine-sheds, as you propose, then I take it the cost of operating, as far as you are concerned, would be the same?—Oh, no. You are taking it from the present station and putting the Department in a position where it will have to incur the expense of other overhead charges and supervision by spreading the business, whereas under the Department's scheme the whole of the station operations will be controlled by one head.

We say that if the same facilities can be provided at another point on the line between Palmerston North and Longburn as you are providing at Rangitikei Street, that the operating charges will be the same?—Not necessarily.

Why not?—You are overlooking the fact that if you put this depot down where I understand you propose to put it—namely, on the right-hand side of the line going to Longburn.

I am not assuming that. If we give you equal accommodation for Palmerston North as you propose to give yourselves at Rangitikei Street, then there is no difference at all?—You are not going to get me like that. If you tell me where you are proposing to put the railway-depot I will tell you. Speaking as a railway man, I tell you that as soon as you spread your yard into different operations, then you inevitably increase the working-cost. You cannot give us in connection with