

TRAFFIC.

Mr. H. Buxton, Chief Traffic Manager, reports as follows :—

South Island Main Line and Branches.

Revenue £1,241,021 ; an increase of £22,118.

The principal items were,—

	Number.		Number.
Passengers	4,306,169 ;	increase,	140,377
Parcels, &c.	545,722 ;	„	5,595
Live-stock	2,408,611 ;	decrease,	47,310
	Tons.		Tons.
Goods tonnage	2,018,469 ;	increase,	31,960

The variations in the districts were approximately as follows :—

Christchurch District.—Revenue, £554,837 ; decrease, £4,163.

Passenger traffic shows an increase in all parts of the district. Parcels decreased slightly. Sheep and pigs decreased by 66,300 and 8,300 respectively. Last year the dry season caused a large movement of sheep. Lower prices this year have affected the carriage of pigs.

There was an improvement in wool, chaff, firewood, grain, and minerals, but large decreases in timber and merchandise, the net decrease being over 6,000 tons.

The decrease in merchandise was chiefly due to the smaller output of frozen meat.

Dunedin District.—Revenue, £412,937 ; increase, £19,107.

Passengers increased by over 85,000. About half of this increase was in the suburban area. The fine weather experienced during the principal holidays assisted the excursion traffic.

Parcels traffic also increased slightly.

Live-stock showed an improvement.

Lime, chaff, wool, timber, and grain increased ; while firewood, merchandise, coal, and other minerals decreased.

The net increase of tonnage was 13,300 tons.

The decrease (13,000 tons) in merchandise was due to diversion of shipping from Port Chalmers to Dunedin.

Invercargill District.—Revenue, £273, 247 ; increase, £7,174.

A general improvement of passenger traffic took place throughout the district.

There was a small increase in goods receipts. Wool, grain, coal, and gravel show substantial increases ; but chaff, green flax, firewood, timber, and merchandise show a considerable falling-off.

Fewer sheep by 24,000 were carried. The local business was good, but the figures of the previous year were swelled by the movement of store stock for depasturage from and to the districts further north which were suffering from want of rain.

Lake Wakatipu Steamers.—Revenue, £6,438 ; decrease, £199.

Passengers increased, but goods and live-stock traffic were not quite up to the average. A severe winter affected the sheep and rabbit traffic, and the yield of grain was less in consequence of a dry summer.

Picton, Nelson, and West Coast Sections.

Picton Section.—Revenue, £26,014 ; increase, £872.

Increases in passengers, sheep, chaff, wool, and coal.

Decreases in firewood, timber, grain, and merchandise.

Nelson Section.—Revenue, £21,111 ; increase, £355.

The improvement in revenue is due chiefly to increased traffic in timber and minerals. Live-stock, wool, and merchandise increased slightly ; but firewood and grain show a falling-off.

Westport Section.—Revenue, £102,463 ; increase, £4,483.

Coal-exports increased by 35,500 tons.

Passenger traffic also shows an improvement.

Westland Section.—Revenue, £123,589 ; increase, £2,383.

There was a considerable improvement in the passenger traffic, which accounts for the increase of revenue.

The staple products, coal and timber, decreased.

The abandonment of the Tyneside Mine at Brunner, and the idleness of the Blackball Mine consequent upon labour troubles, were the chief causes of decrease in coal. The completion of the Blackball and Paparoa lines, now in course of construction, will cause considerable expansion of business in the near future.

Slackness in the building trade was answerable for a decrease of over 4,000,000 ft. in the timber-export.

North Island Main Line and Branches.

Revenue, £1,361,019 ; increase, £135,079.

The principal items of traffic were,—

	Number.		Number.
Passengers	5,184,254 ;	increase	509,349
Parcels, &c.	432,699 ;	„	17,113
Live-stock	2,897,172 ;	„	614,606
	Tons.		Tons.
Goods	1,370,167 ;	„	7,434