

The capital cost of lines open for traffic, including plant and steamers on Lake Wakatipu, has increased from £29,606,546 to £30,506,089.

The net revenue (£1,210,613) is equal to a return of 3·98 per cent. on the capital invested in the open lines and 3·70 per cent. on the capital (£32,689,179) invested in opened and unopened lines.

The number of train-miles run during the year was 8,371,687, being an increase of 230,612 over the previous year. The increased train-mileage represents additional train facilities to meet the requirements of the increasing business and to meet the public convenience, and has cost over £67,000.

The following figures, which give the record of the late arrivals of the principal trains during the year, indicate that notwithstanding the alterations made in the trains services, the trains as a whole have maintained punctuality.

		AVERAGE LATE ARRIVAL.	
		Min.	Min.
For long-distance passenger trains	...	2·23	against 1·88 last year.
For suburban trains	...	0·52	„ 0·54 „
For long-distance mixed trains	...	2·99	„ 2·80 „

These figures include delays arising from all causes, and embrace accidents, slips, floods, &c.

The passenger traffic increased very materially, the number actually carried being 11,891,134, an increase of 690,521 over the previous year. Season tickets issued numbered 236,957, an increase of 14,853. The number of workers' twelve-trip tickets issued was 49,076, and of workers' weekly tickets available on suburban lines 129,524, an increase of 2,698 twelve-trip and 7,800 workers' weekly over the previous year. 840,473 passengers travelled at holiday-excursion fares, an increase of 157,014 when compared with last year, and 134,825 passengers travelled at the school and factory rates.

The coaching traffic shows increases under each of the headings under which the traffic is grouped. The increases have been—Parcels, 72,546; horses, 373; carriages, 50; dogs, 3,394.

In goods traffic, firewood shows an increase of 1,036 tons; timber, 91,306 tons; merchandise, 2,723 tons; minerals, 21,533 tons. There were decreases in the live-stock traffic as follows: Cattle and calves, 3,302 head; sheep, 456,848 head; pigs, 13,111 head. Chaff, lime, &c. [decreased by 6,752 tons; wool, 1,640 tons; and grain, 63,743 tons.

The decrease in the live-stock traffic is mainly due to the unfavourable weather preventing the stock coming forward, and a further delay was caused in the Wellington and Wanganui districts owing to a temporary stoppage of the operations at the freezing-works caused by labour troubles. In previous years there was also considerable movements of stock in the South Island on account of shortness of feed.

The decrease in the grain traffic is owing to the partial failure of the grain crop in portions of the South Island last season and to the lateness of the current season. It is, however, expected that traffic under this heading will show better results this coming year.

The average number of men employed on the railways during the year was 13,523, against 12,881 for the previous year.

Twelve members of the Second Division were promoted to the First Division.

504 members of the permanent staff resigned, 67 retired on superannuation, 33 died, 72 were dismissed, and 916 engaged.

The sum of £8,822 was paid during the year under the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act.

The rolling-stock was increased by 14 locomotives, 46 carriages, 8 bogie brake-vans, 477 trucks, and 723 tarpaulins. Of the locomotives, 8 were built in the railway workshops—viz., 4 Class BA tender engines for goods traffic, and 4 Class WG tank engines. The remaining 6 were Class AD 72-ton four-cylinder balanced-compound, built under contract by Messrs. A. and G. Price (Limited), Thames.