

The revenue per mile of railway increased from £1,459 4s. 2d. to £1,681 17s. 7d., but per train-mile decreased from 16s. 3½d. to 14s. 5d.

The variations in traffic in the individual districts were approximately as under :—

Christchurch.—Revenue, £1,036,516 ; increase, £134,780. Passengers increased 411,936 and season tickets 7,664. Parcels, luggage, and mails increased £6,359. Cattle and calves increased 6,614, but sheep decreased 83,823 and pigs 2,675. Timber increased 7,769 tons, minerals 21,396 tons, and general goods 31,410 tons.

Dunedin.—Revenue, £831,915 ; increase, £118,929. Passengers increased 270,393 and season tickets 1,317. Parcels, luggage, and mails increased £5,503. Cattle and calves increased 6,964 and sheep 79,904 ; pigs decreased 331. Timber increased 9,399 tons, minerals 33,784 tons, and general goods 4,164 tons.

Invercargill.—Revenue, £514,792 ; increase, £75,310. Passengers increased 137,654 and season tickets 2,027. Parcels, luggage, and mails increased £3,611. Cattle and calves increased 3,347 and sheep 27,282. Timber increased 14,909 tons, minerals 11,719 tons, and general goods 11,671 tons.

Lake Wakatipu Steamers.

Revenue, £8,989 ; increase, £1,111. Passengers increased 2,208. Live-stock decreased 962 and goods tonnage 114 tons.

Average Late Arrival of Trains, Year ended 31st March, 1921.

Year ended	Period ended													Average for Year, in Minutes.	
	May 1.	May 30.	June 26.	July 24.	Aug. 21.	Sept. 18.	Oct. 16.	Nov. 13.	Dec. 11.	Jan. 8.	Feb. 5.	Mar. 5.	Mar. 31.		
<i>Express and Mail Trains.</i>															
March 31, 1921	..	7.86	5.69	11.36	2.72	1.84	1.98	2.72	10.09	2.39	7.62	4.79	4.41	6.18	5.35
March 31, 1920	..	4.70	5.38	5.31	..	..	..	2.41	3.25	5.23	5.04	5.98	7.85	5.02	
<i>Long-distance Mixed Trains.</i>															
March 31, 1921	..	12.43	12.17	8.59	5.30	4.50	4.07	5.29	7.42	5.84	6.85	7.54	9.59	10.85	7.72
March 31, 1920	..	6.74	8.32	8.60	..	..	..	..	4.74	5.00	6.15	7.16	10.78	11.62	7.67
<i>Suburban Trains.</i>															
March 31, 1921	..	1.75	2.04	1.38	1.18	0.92	0.57	0.91	1.08	1.01	1.09	0.88	0.89	1.49	1.1
March 31, 1920	..	0.82	1.10	1.12	..	..	..	..	0.42	0.40	0.74	0.64	0.93	1.08	0.8

MAINTENANCE.

Mr. F. W. MacLean, M.Inst.C.E., Chief Engineer, reports as follows :—

The track, buildings, structures, and appliances have been maintained in efficient order and repair.

During the year it has been possible to increase the amount of relaying over that of recent years, but the extent of this and other necessary work carried out is still much below requirements.

The difficulties referred to in former reports of obtaining labour and materials have now given place to the very urgent need at the present time to keep expenditure to the lowest possible limits.

It appears to be out of the question under existing circumstances to overtake arrears, but essential renewals must be faced, and these cannot be undertaken without increased expenditure.

Permanent-way.—The relaying during the year has been as follows :—

Main and branch lines, 53 lb., 56 lb., 65 lb., and 100 lb. steel rails relaid with new 70 lb. material	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Miles.	20
Branch lines, 40 lb., relaid with 55 lb. material	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1½
Branch lines, relaid with second-hand material	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	¾
Total relaying for the year..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	22

Sleepers.—105,579 new sleepers were placed in track during the year.

Ballasting.—89,866 cubic yards of ballast were placed on the track during the year.

Slips and Floods.—Slips and floods of a minor character which do not call for special comment occurred in various districts. In June the Kaipara Branch north of Kaipara Flats was blocked for four days owing to slips and washouts. A number of slips came down in the southern portion of the Ohakune district early in October, resulting in a blockage of traffic for one and a half days. Further slips occurred in the same locality at the end of the same month, but delay to traffic was slight. A large slip occurred at the north end of Whangamomona Tunnel, Toko Branch, on the 19th April, and traffic was blocked until the 7th May. Heavy rain on the 26th and 27th October caused slips and floods throughout the Wanganui district, the most serious delay to traffic occurring on the Foxton Branch, where traffic was suspended from the 27th October to the 1st November, 1920. On Lake