men, &c.—showing each item as a percentage of the total and dividing the figures into first and second class.

Parcels and Miscellaneous Traffic charged at Passenger-train Rates.—Number of parcels; receipts, and average receipt per parcel.

Goods-train Traffic.—Tonnage of goods-train traffic (excluding free haul), separated into—general merchandise; live-stock; coal, coke, and patent fuel; other minerals; receipts therefrom; the average receipt per ton; the net ton-miles and the average receipt per net ton-mile. Selected commodities are specially ton-miled each month, taking same two years to get through the list of seventy-two commodities.

Engine-mileage.—Train-miles; assisting-required miles; assisting-not-required miles; light-miles and shunting-miles are compiled in respect of both passenger and goods, to which are added the departmental miles, which represent the total engine-miles run.

Engine-hours in Traffic.—Train-hours; shunting-hours and other hours are compiled for both passenger and goods, to which are added the departmental hours, making the total of engine-hours in traffic.

Train-miles per Hour.—Passenger and goods-train miles per passenger and goods train-hour are compiled to show the average speed of trains. Passenger and goods train-miles per passenger and goods engine hour are also compiled, this statistic showing in comparison with previous periods whether there has been any increase in time taken in connection with unproductive running.

Average Train-load.—This shows average net load of freight trains, irrespective of the number of wagons attached, and is obtained by dividing the net ton-miles by the goods train-miles.

Wagon-miles.—These figures are compiled separately in respect of loaded and empty wagon miles.

Wagons per Train.—This is obtained by dividing the loaded and empty wagon miles by the freight train-miles.

Average Wagon-load.—Obtained by dividing the average freight train-load by the loaded wagons per train.

The following are also prepared, being compiled from the statistics enumerated above: Shunting-miles per 100 train-miles; assisting required; assisting not required and light miles per 100 train-miles; wagon-miles per train and engine hour; net ton-miles per engine-hour and per route-mile.

Average Length of Haul.—This figure is obtained by dividing the net ton-miles for the several classes of traffic by the tonnage of those classes.

Locomotive Working.—The following statistics are compiled: The consumption of coal by steam locomotives per engine-mile, and of lubricating-oil per 100 engine-miles; the number of engines in stock; the average number in stock, shown also as a percentage of stock; the average number in use on week-days and the maximum number in use on any one week-day, these figures being also shown as percentages of the average number of engines available.

The practice which is now being generally adopted, both in Great Britain and America, is to appoint a Statistical Officer, whose duty it is to arrange for the proper compilation of statistics required in connection with railway working, and to prepare them in a concise form for the information of the principal officers. In Great Britain the Statistical Officer is, as a rule, attached to the General Manager, and we consider that such an appointment on the New Zealand Railways would be a great advantage.

V. MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS.

Railway Refreshment-rooms.

Up to the end of 1917 dining-cars were run on the New Zealand railways between Dunedin and Christchurch, Wellington and Napier, Wellington and Auckland, and also on the Auckland–Rotorua express. At the end of 1917, however, owing, it is stated, to the heavy cost of running the dining-cars, and to the fact that they did not give satisfaction to travellers, the dining-cars were stopped, and refreshment-rooms were provided at Frankton Junction, Marton, and Oamaru.