

of this character should be introduced in New Zealand. Classes might advantageously be arranged in conjunction with the educational authorities at the various centres—Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Invercargill. The Railway Department should co-operate in such classes, both by providing the men qualified to teach railway subjects, by donations towards the cost, and by providing free travelling facilities for their employees to attend such classes. Advantage would also accrue from the publication, by the Railway Department, of an official journal, as is customary on most railways.

Theoretical training is, of course, of little avail unless it is allied to practical experience in the various departments, but it affords the ground-work for the building-up of a comprehensive railway education, signs of which are wanting in New Zealand.

Closely associated with this question is the need for experience on other railways. Practical education can only be fostered by this means, and we consider that those who indicate the possession of suitable qualifications should be induced to study the railway problems of Australia, Great Britain, and America, in order to obtain the wider vision necessary in the future officers of the Railway Department; alternatively, tours on the railways of South Africa and the Argentine, which are developing their railways rapidly, would be advantageous. Apparently no recognized system has been followed in the selection of officers to visit other countries. Now and again an individual officer has been to Australia, but visits to more distant countries have apparently been very infrequent. We recommend that three or four officers be selected annually to visit the railways of other countries, and upon their return to report upon their experience. In 1925 the Railway Centenary celebrations are to be held in England, and delegates from the world's railways will be present. This would be a most opportune time for selected officers to visit the Old Country, and we think that consideration might well be given to this.

“ Safety First ” Education.

In connection with railway education it is noticed that there is no system of inculcating “ Safety First ” principles among the railway staff. This is a scheme inaugurated in England and followed in America, Australia, and elsewhere with marked success. We think it advisable that steps should be taken to interest Railway employees and the public to protect themselves from danger by means of suitable posters, cinema films, and through the medium of a Railway journal, the development of which is proposed elsewhere in this report.

VI. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

We give below a summary of our principal recommendations.

FINANCE.

(1.) That railway finance be taken out of the control of the Treasury, and the Railway Department be given full control of its own funds.

(2.) That reserve funds be established to provide for obsolescence and wasting assets of permanent-way and rolling-stock.

(3.) That the Railway Department be recouped by consolidated revenue for losses incurred upon development lines, less the net value of traffic contributed by such lines to main lines.

(4.) That the Railway Department pay the actual rate of interest upon loans raised for railway purposes.

(5.) That the railways be so worked and managed that the gross receipts shall be sufficient to cover working-expenses, reserves, and interest on capital, including sinking funds. In the event of any surplus, this to be devoted to reductions of rates and fares, and in the case of a deficit rates and fares be increased.

(6.) That a yearly balance-sheet, showing capital, revenue, and net revenue, followed by departmental accounts in the usual company form and a forecast of capital commitments for the following year, be rendered to the House of Representatives.