

been most carefully watched, and the experience gained indicates that we can confidently proceed along the lines of the policy laid down, and thus eventually obtain full decentralization and a continuity of self-reliant and able administrative officers.

#### *Operations.*

A full outline of the system adopted for the divisional control of operations has been given in previous statements, and I need not refer to the matter further, beyond saying that, as opportunity offers, I propose to follow the Canadian system, and ultimately, in order to reduce administrative expenses to a minimum, amalgamate into one organization all sections coming under the operations side.

#### *Commercial.*

On the commercial side, too, I feel sure that many of the methods in use on the Canadian and American railroads can be inaugurated here, and will be welcomed by the travelling public and business community. Passenger and freight work will be separated. Officers especially selected to attend to all passenger requirements will be appointed at the main centres, and it will be their duty to meet tourists on arrival and see that opportunity is given them to utilize to the best advantage the time at their disposal. An arrangement has been entered into with the Postal Department whereby the Mail Agents on the mail-boats between Australia, New Zealand, Vancouver, and San Francisco can act as representatives of the Railway Department in assisting passengers bound for the Dominion to frame itineraries including a maximum amount of rail travel. The Agents will communicate by radio with the Railway Passenger Agents at the port of arrival. The latter will take the tourists in hand and see them safely on their way (giving particular attention to the checking of luggage and train-accommodation reservations), ensuring at the same time that every other courtesy and facility available to the travelling public is extended to them. The Passenger Agents will also keep in close personal touch with all public activities, and generally occupy their time in influencing people to travel by rail.

Visitors to North America are generally very much impressed with the high standard of service rendered by these Passenger Agents, and, seeing that we are now doing so much to attract tourists from other parts of the world, I feel sure that the innovation is along sound lines and will be very successful in New Zealand.

Steps are being taken also to increase the number of Freight Agents in order that more attention may be given to motor competition and the securing of new business. Freight Agents, each of whom will be allotted a special phase of the work of securing business, some in the main centres and others for the country districts, will be thoroughly coached in the work of business-getting, and fully charged with the latest ideas and information to enable them to secure the attention and respect of the Department's clients. Their duties will include the preparation of detailed reports regarding the freight possibilities of their respective areas, the best method of transport to cope therewith, and the reasons for existing competition. Generally they will be expected to possess full information as to the transport potentialities of the districts in which they are stationed.

#### *Railway Publicity.*

Closely associated with, but distinct from, the activities of the Commercial Branch is the question of efficient publicity and propaganda work covering railway operations within the Dominion. This will be co-ordinated with the Government Publicity Board, the functions of which are principally for the propagation in other countries of publicity regarding the Dominion. Publicity is now recognized as a very essential part of every progressive railway organization, and I was very much impressed by the highly efficient methods in operation in the larger countries. The following extract from the *Railway*