

The variations, exclusive of season tickets, were distributed as follow :—

	1930 Compared with 1929.		1929 Compared with 1928.	
	Journeys.	Revenue.	Journeys.	Revenue.
	Number.	£	Number.	£
Ordinary fares	—457,747	—73,979	—413,648	—148,476
Suburban fares	—163,580	—8,620	—195,186	—10,912
Holiday excursion and week-end	+84,534	+66,700	+114,476	+108,997
Other reduced fares	+125,658	+9,576	+268,744	+14,992

Passenger revenue totalled £1,995,927, a decrease of £128,819 as compared with the figures for the previous year. The figures for the year ended 31st March, 1929, included the bookings for the Easter holidays, 1928 and 1929, while owing to Easter falling in April this year the figures for 1930 include only a small proportion of the bookings for the Easter holidays.

The principal decrease for the year under review is in ordinary passengers, £73,979, and holiday excursion issues, £79,905, the latter being, as previously explained, due to the fact that very little of the Easter holiday bookings are included in this year's figures.

The decline in ordinary passengers since 1927 is as follows :—

	1927.	1928.	1929.	1930.
Revenue	£37,905	£136,994	£148,476	£73,979
Journeys (in thousands)	384	644	414	458

Taking 1927 as 100, the index numbers for the revenue from ordinary passengers and journeys from the same are as follow :—

	1927.	1928.	1929.	1930.
Journeys	100	87	79	69
Revenue	100	91	81	77

From these figures it will be observed, first, that the rapidity of the rate of decline has decreased, and second, that the revenue has not declined in the same ratio as passenger journeys, thus showing that the loss in short-distance traffic is to some extent being balanced by an increase in the number of long-distance passengers carried. This is further exemplified by the average fares over the past four years, which are as follow : 1927, 71·66d. ; 1928, 74·75d. ; 1929, 73·54d. ; 1930, 78·19d.

So far as suburban passenger traffic is concerned the decline since 1927 is as follows :—

	1927.	1928.	1929.	1930.
Revenue	£46,101	£16,036	£10,912	£8,620
Journeys (in thousands)	958	269	195	164

While these figures indicate that the decline in suburban issues has become smaller the fact remains that outside the peak morning and evening traffic—which is principally carried at very cheap rates—the drift of suburban traffic to road transport has continued.

The remainder of the passenger figures indicate that the decline in traffic at ordinary and suburban fares has been balanced to some extent at least by the increased revenue from excursions. During the past year week-end and special day excursions were developed with satisfactory results, and, in addition, the holiday-excursion issue during the school term holidays has been well patronized by the public. In my last statement I expressed the opinion that in addition to long-distance travel the railway still had a definite field in catering for bulk movement of passengers, and the figures for the current year show that the results obtained from the development of these traffics have warranted the Department in providing services to meet the demand for these classes of business.

The season-ticket traffic has increased by 414,480 passenger journeys and £5,715 revenue. The principal increase in this class of traffic being in workers' weekly tickets, the number of which increased by 10,483. The principal decline in season-ticket revenue is £2,385 in sectional annual tickets, which decrease is due to the fact that a number of firms now utilize motor-cars for their commercial travellers.

In concluding my comment on the passenger business, I would again emphasize the significance of the increase in passenger journeys by workers-ticket holders. This is an unremunerative business from the point of view of Railway Revenue and Expenditure Account, so that the more it grows the greater the loss. From the point of view of value to the community, however, the position takes on quite another aspect. Unless this is kept in mind in examining the passenger business for the year, an entirely erroneous view of the economic position of the railways in the community is obtained.

PARCELS, LUGGAGE, AND MAILS.

The revenue from the carriage of parcels, luggage, and mails totals £386,792, an increase of £8,651, or 2·29 per cent., on the revenue from this source in the previous year.

The analysis of the revenue is as follows :—

	1930.	1929.	Variation.
	£	£	£
Parcels	212,670	200,387	+12,283
Excess luggage	13,230	13,956	—726
Left luggage, checks, bicycles, and dogs	44,032	47,798	—3,766
Mails	116,860	116,000	+860