The general rate for the haulage of timber on the railways for a haul of 113 miles is 4s. 8d. per 100 superficial feet. Taking this figure in conjunction with the average wholesale selling-price of O.B. rimu in the four main centres, of approximately 27s. 2d., it is readily seen that rail transport is an important factor in the timber industry in New Zealand. Further evidence of this is to be found in the fact that the revenue from the haulage of timber on the railways amounted in 1928–29 to £495,929, or just over 50 per cent. of the value of the timber at the mill—viz., £925,392.

Motor transport provides practically the sole means of transport (excluding of course, sea transport) in the distribution of timber from the railways to the consumers. Many firms in the timber industry provide their own transport facilities in the form of light or heavy lorries, according to the volume and nature of business carried on. During the month of July, 1929, motor-transport services operating over defined routes handled 6,035 tons of timber, while in January of this year 10,132 tons were hauled. On these figures these motor services would probably handle approximately 100,000 tons of timber per annum. These figures are, of course, quite exclusive of haulage effected by carriers or by firms with their own transport facilities.

Manure Industry.

The manure industry is closely related to the national prosperity of the Dominion. It represents, broadly speaking, under the present state of development in agricultural and pastoral farming, the most important economic weapon employed in meeting the tendency to diminishing returns that is ever present in a primary-producing community. Generally speaking, the more that is taken out of land, the more must be put back into it, in the form of manures and cultivation. The use of fertilizers in New Zealand has increased fairly rapidly during recent years, and promises to increase further as time goes on.

In the transport industry the manure trade is characterized by the following main points:—

(*a*) By virtue of its close relationship to the national volume of production, it has received special treatment in the way of railway freight charges.

(*b*) On account of its bulky nature and low intrinsic value in proportion to bulk, it cannot support high freight charges.

(*c*) It constitutes one of the principal items in the flow of commodities from the centres of population to the farms.

(*d*) The main movement in the fertilizers occurs in the late autumn, winter, and early spring months, when the outflow of primary products from the rural areas to the centres is at a relatively low ebb.

(*e*) By virtue of its distribution in large quantities and its low value in proportion to bulk it can be handled in the most economic way by the railways.

During the year ended 31st March, 1929, the total quantity of fertilizers produced in the Dominion (including superphosphates) was 301,622 tons; 310,797 tons were imported during the calendar year 1928, making a total of 612,419 tons for distribution throughout the rural areas of the Dominion. During the year ended 31st March, 1929, the railways handled 712,741 tons of manures, showing that apparently the whole of the fertilizer-distribution is effected as far as possible by rail.

The average haul for manures was sixty-six miles, which corresponds roughly to the average haul of primary products from the rural areas to the ports. In actual tonnage handled, the manure business constituted 9·36 per cent. of the total tonnage handled by the rail authorities, while the revenue of £326,939 received from this business amounted to 6·67 per cent. of the total revenue. The ton-miles worked aggregated 47,242,949, or approximately 10 per cent. of the grand total, while the average revenue per ton-mile was 1·66d. This latter figure compares with 4·00d. for butter, which required the same average length of haul of sixty-six miles.

Like manures, the distribution of agricultural lime is made, wherever possible, on the rail for practically the same reasons that have been outlined for manures. During 1928–29 the railways handled 142,213 tons of this commodity, for an average haul of sixty-two miles, the aggregate ton-miles amounting to 8,839,383. The revenue for this business amounted to £45,668 in the aggregate, and to 1·24d. per ton-mile, or appreciably less than the corresponding figure for manures.

Motor Industry.

The fact that too much stress is at times laid on the competitive aspect of road and rail facilities has led to a great deal of misunderstanding as to the position of both facilities in the whole transport system. There is little doubt that by its speed and mobility the motor-vehicle constitutes a very valuable aid to production, and has been a definite factor in extending the productive field in this country. By increasing the volume of production motor transport has played a part in bringing new and more business to the railways. Time has precluded a full investigation into this question, but by considering the available statistics relating to the movement of benzine, gasoline, and kerosene on the railways some light is shed on the interrelation of the two services.

The following table sets out the principal statistics relating to the haulage of benzine, gasoline, and kerosene on the railways during the years ended 31st March, 1927, 1928, and 1929:—

Year ended 31st March,	Tonnage carried.	Percentage of Gross.	Ton-miles.	Average Haul.	Revenue.			
					Total.	Percentage of Gross.	Per Ton.	Per Ton-mile.
	Tons.		Number.	Miles.	£		£ s. d.	d.
1927	61,753	0·85	5,022,954	81	118,694	2·56	1 18 5	5·67
1928	89,977	1·22	7,635,276	85	172,747	3·66	1 18 10	5·42
1929	123,937	1·63	9,030,982	73	200,239	4·09	1 12 4	5·32