

From 1st April to 11th October the parcels revenue had decreased by £3,668, while for the remaining five periods to 28th February the decrease totalled £18,257. For the last four-weekly period of the financial year the traffic decreased by £1,263. The substantial decrease of £18,257 is principally due to the prevailing depression.

In March, 1931, the rates charged by the Postal Department for parcels were increased and the limit of weight of postal parcels was reduced, and these alterations are having the effect of increasing the volume of parcel business received by the railway.

The decline in luggage receipts is a reflection of the decreased passenger traffic during the past year.

GOODS AND LIVE-STOCK.

The revenue from goods and live-stock was £4,487,357, as compared with £4,904,324 for the previous year, a decrease of £416,967, or 8·50 per cent. A comparison of the total revenue and tonnage of this year's traffic with that of the previous year is as follows :—

	1931.	1930.	Variation.	Per Cent.
Revenue	£4,487,357	£4,904,324	—£416,967	8·50
Tonnage	6,957,709	7,788,973	— 831,264	10·67

A comparison of the tonnage of goods and live-stock carried, together with the revenue from the same for the past six years, is as follows :—

Year.	Tonnage.				Variation as compared with Previous Year in each Case.	
	Tons.				Tons.	Per Cent.
1926	7,256,142	+222,683 3·17
1927	7,308,449	+ 52,307 0·72
1928	7,358,388	+ 49,939 0·68
1929	7,613,445	+255,057 3·47
1930	7,788,973	+175,528 2·31
1931	6,957,709	—831,264 10·67

	Revenue.				Per Cent.	
	£				£	
1926	4,499,160	+381,414 9·28
1927	4,596,166	+ 97,006 2·15
1928	4,680,135	+ 83,969 1·83
1929	4,846,125	+165,990 3·55
1930	4,904,324	+ 58,199 1·20
1931	4,487,357	—416,967 8·50

A comparison with 1930 of the tonnage of commodities under the six main headings is as follows :—

	1931. Tons.	1930. Tons.	Variation.	
			Tons.	Per Cent.
Agricultural products	592,853	686,594	— 93,741	13·6
Animals and their products	1,170,036	1,138,835	+ 31,201	2·7
Products of mines	2,623,123	2,879,231	—256,108	8·8
Products of forests	526,239	724,785	—198,546	27·39
Benzine, cement, and manures	791,109	908,420	—117,311	12·9
General goods and miscellaneous	1,254,349	1,451,108	—196,759	13·5
Totals	6,957,709	7,788,973	—831,264	10·67

In agricultural products the principal decreases are in grain (51,000 tons) and root crops and fodder (24,000 tons) due to a fall in production.

Animals and their products increased by 31,201 tons. The principal decreases are in wool (6,000 tons), due to clips being held on account of low prices and also to road competition, which is particularly severe for that commodity. Frozen meat increased by 18,000 tons, and butter and cheese by 10,000 and 15,000 tons respectively, due to increased production. The increase in butter and cheese was in the North Island, the tonnage carried in the South Island being normal.

In products of mines the principal variations are as follow :—

Agricultural lime decreased 14,000 tons. The tonnage of this commodity has increased of recent years, and the figure (171,777 tons) for 1930 was the highest recorded. The average tonnage for the five years ended 1929 was 115,000 tons, and the tonnage carried during the past year is well above the average, despite the depression existing in the farming industry.

During 1929–30 New Zealand bituminous coal was in demand owing to the strike in New South Wales mines, and the tonnage was in excess of normal. Supplies of Australian coal now being available, the New Zealand coal is not in the same demand. The decrease for the whole Dominion was 146,000 tons, of which tonnage 122,000 was on the Westport Section.

Road-metal decreased by 179,000 tons. The traffic in this commodity has also increased considerably of recent years, due to the extensive roadmaking works in progress throughout the Dominion, and the tonnage for 1929–30 (413,551 tons) was the highest to date. The financial depression during the past year has had the effect of restricting the money available for roadmaking, and with a number of large contracts completed the tonnage of this commodity has decreased correspondingly.