

## OVERSEAS TOURIST TRAFFIC.

The decision of the P. and O. and Orient shipping lines to organize a series of summer cruises from Australia to New Zealand ports during the past summer season was one of considerable importance to the development of the Railway's tourist traffic. The original programme provided for six tours to be undertaken by the companies' vessels during the period November, 1934, to April, 1935.

These vessels were the largest and most palatial ever to visit the Dominion. Up to February, 1935, four of the tours provided for were successfully organized, the total number of passengers arriving by the "Strathaird," "Strathnaver," "Oronsay," and "Otranto" being 3,270. Special facilities were afforded by the Board, in conjunction with the Tourist Department, to enable the tourists to visit the principal scenic resorts during the limited time at their disposal. A total of 1,326 passengers were conveyed by special train from Auckland to Rotorua, and of these, 465 continued their journey to Wellington, a portion travelling by each of the routes via the Chateau, Napier, and New Plymouth. Special travel arrangements were also made in connection with the visit of the s.s. "Franconia," which arrived at Auckland in February with 225 passengers during the course of a world cruise.

With the object of facilitating the movement of overseas passengers disembarking at Wellington provision has been made for a railway staff, housed in a portable booking-office, to be in attendance at the Wellington wharves to undertake the sale of rail tickets, reservation of seats and sleeping-berths, and checking and storage of passengers' luggage. Initially these services were restricted to vessels engaged on the inter-colonial run, but, in view of the complete measure of success attendant on their provision, as evidenced by the volume of business transacted, arrangements have been finalized for the extension of the facilities to all overseas passenger-vessels arriving at Wellington. These facilities meet an urgent need and greatly add to the pleasure of travelling by eliminating vexatious delays in the transhipment and forwarding of personal luggage and effects, and removing the anxiety previously attendant upon such arrangements. The Board is fully alive to the value of this traffic and all possible will be done to cultivate it.

## PARCELS, LUGGAGE, AND MAILS.

The revenue from this source amounted to £292,096, an increase of £10,207 (3·62 per cent.). An analysis of the revenue is as follows :—

	1935. £	1934. £	Variation.	
			£	Per Cent.
Parcels .. .. .	166,500	164,452	+ 2,048	1·37
Excess luggage .. .. .	7,610	6,810	+ 800	11·75
Left luggage, luggage-checks, bicycles, dogs, newspapers, &c. .. .. .	38,554	33,992	+ 4,562	12·76
Mails .. .. .	79,432	76,635	+ 2,797	3·65
Total .. .. .	<u>292,096</u>	<u>281,889</u>	<u>+10,207</u>	<u>3·62</u>

Parcels revenue was adversely affected by the falling-off in the cream traffic, due to the exceptionally dry season and, to a less degree, to road competition. A slight upward trend in revenue commenced at the beginning of 1934, and continued up to the end of the year, from when revenue began to decline, and continued so to the end of the financial year.

Revenue from luggage, &c., amounted to £38,554, an increase of £4,362 (12·76 per cent.), due to greater quantities of newspapers being railed.

The following table shows the variations under the heading of "Mails" :—

	1935. £	1934. £	Variation.	
			£	Per Cent.
Mails in guards' vans at half parcels rates .. .. .	45,355	43,588	+1,767	4·05
Railway travelling post-office service .. .. .	27,596	27,596	..	..
Mails carried in wagons .. .. .	6,481	5,451	+1,030	18·90
Total .. .. .	<u>79,432</u>	<u>76,635</u>	<u>+2,797</u>	<u>3·65</u>

The travelling post-office service is paid for on a mileage basis.

## GOODS AND LIVE-STOCK.

The revenue and tonnage of goods and live-stock for 1935 compare with the previous year as follows :—

	1935.	1934.	Increase.	Per Cent.
Revenue ..	£4,138,434	£3,911,245	£227,189	5·81
Tonnage ..	6,023,960	5,642,199	381,761	6·77