

Within the Dominion hotel and transport interests are in constant co-operation with the Department in giving satisfaction to clients. Difficulties and points of dissatisfaction certainly arise from time to time, but the Department has no general complaint to make that the facilities afforded by private interests are inadequate or unsatisfactory. The standard of accommodation and of transport provided is directly relative to the extent and nature of the business available. Private interests cannot be expected to provide accommodation continuously in advance of the demand. Any suggestions or requests to or by the Department are dealt with in the friendliest possible manner.

The Department frequently receives letters and other expressions of appreciation from satisfied clients not only in respect of the Department's service, but in respect of the service given by those whose business it is to cater for the traffic.

Overseas interest in Australia, America, and the United Kingdom are frequently in communication either with the Head Office of the Department or with branches with the object of facilitating travel and in respect of the distribution and placing of publicity for mutual advantage.

Definite plans for increased co-operation with the Australian National Travel Association, for which body the Department has for three years acted as agents in New Zealand, are under discussion with the object of increasing, so far as that is possible, the extent of our co-operative work in the publicity field. The scope may exist for further co-operation between the Department and other interests, and where this can be pointed out the Department will always be most willing to act in the general interest, always bearing in mind that the interpretation placed upon "co-operation" in certain limited circles seems to amount to a continuous suggestion for the provision of State assistance involving the lending or expenditure of money.

Co-ordination and re-organization are words which have also recently been much in prominence. The Department acknowledges freely that others have been and are doing good work in the desired direction of increasing the tourist traffic to New Zealand.

Increased activity in relation to the development of the tourist traffic is largely a matter of increased expenditure, and the Department would be pleased to see any indication that the money for these purposes provided from State funds is to have the assistance of substantial amounts provided for national publicity (as distinct from localized or privately directed publicity) from non-governmental sources.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFF.

The Department's booking organization in New Zealand has been extended during the past year by the establishment of agencies at Wanganui (Messrs. Fairburn and Falconer) and at Gisborne (Messrs. Ball and Crawshaw), while steps have recently been taken to provide for the establishment of Trade and Tourist Commissioners in Western America and Europe.

A well-qualified tourist booking officer has also been sent to the United Kingdom where, in association with the High Commissioner's Office, he is able to do valuable work in the giving of travel information and in the actual sale of tours to and through New Zealand.

These developments, together with the need for strengthening the Sydney and Melbourne staffs to cope with increased business, have resulted in a number of staff changes, in respect of which regard has been had not only to the suitability of officers to particular duties, but also to the need for enabling the staffs to acquire varied experience and knowledge of different tourist localities.

A system has been adopted of enabling booking officers in the "off season" to spend their vacations in visiting, as far as possible, tourist districts of which they might not otherwise have personal knowledge.

The growth of business in the booking offices and the need for staffing cruise ships from Australia has placed during the past year a heavy strain on the staff of that section of the Department. During the summer and autumn months long overtime hours have been worked to deal with business which can be safely and satisfactorily handled only by officers with years of experience. Extra staff has now been engaged, but cannot become fully effective for several seasons, and the prospects of still further increases in business next season will indicate another period of strain on the bureaux force.

Improvements in the lay-out of the Auckland Bureau are planned to assist in meeting the pressure at that point.

The staff of other sections of the Department, while not so directly affected by growth of tourist traffic, are also working loyally and well to provide the service necessary to a smooth working of the organization as a whole.

TOURIST TRAFFIC.

The season 1934-35 showed a marked improvement on the traffic of previous recent periods. This must, of course, be acknowledged as representing a recovery from the low figures of the years of economic depression, but there are indications that a further distinct improvement in volume of traffic may be expected in the coming season. Reports from various sources support this view.

One of the pleasing features of the past season was the satisfactory maintenance of business until the late months of autumn, and even during recent winter months overseas business has been distinctly better than in past years. "Local" traffic in 1934-35 was also well in advance of that of previous seasons, and though the increasing popularity of motor-camping holidays has adversely affected the Department's bureaux bookings the figures have nevertheless shown a very definite advance. All hotels and transport organizations are able to confirm the Department's record of increased bookings.

The outstanding importance of Australia as a source of traffic to the Dominion was again demonstrated in 1934-35 and was made especially prominent by the visits of five large cruise ships carrying, in the main, Australian visitors. These ships, which, unfortunately, were able to visit only North Island ports, carried approximately 4,500 passengers, a large proportion of whom were able to spend a few days in overland trips from Auckland to Wellington.