

## THE TRADE AND TOURIST COMMISSIONER IN WESTERN AMERICA.

The Trade and Tourist Commissioner for New Zealand in Western America reports that from the commencement of the year under review it was evident that the initial work which had been performed in the western States amongst the various travel interests in the preceding year was showing results and, despite various unfavourable factors, definite progress was being achieved. From April efforts were directed toward the development of the American summer travel to the South Seas, and a limited amount of advertising in educational journals was undertaken with this objective in view.

An increased number of independent bookings resulted from the co-operation of the travel agencies, and reports subsequently received indicated that the traffic during the period June to August exceeded that of the previous year.

The spring of 1937 produced a greater number of inquiries than in the previous year, and the preparation of itineraries for submission by travel agents to their clients increased.

Coincident with the planning of the national advertising campaign a more intensive development of our contacts with travel agents took place, and the Department utilized the pending advertising campaign to stimulate the interests of those who retail travel.

The appearance of the Department's first advertisement of the national series which took place in November excited comment amongst travel interests, and immediately there were requests for new literature supplies and window-display units.

The selling of tours by travel agencies was given every encouragement, and it is pleasing to be able to record that several of the agencies concerned stated their intention to develop more stop-over business in the Dominion.

There has been a tendency to sell round-trip travel to Australia with the inclusion of New Zealand merely as a port of call *en route*—allowing for only one or two days' break of journey in the Dominion. The greater knowledge acquired by the travel agencies concerning the attractions and the service in our country has had the effect of obtaining greater consideration for New Zealand inland travel.

The inclusion of New Zealand in the itineraries of luxury liners was a pleasing feature of the year. It was extremely unfortunate that the itineraries of two of these ships were cancelled, but the successful conclusion of the tours of the "Empress of Britain" and the "Reliance" should have an inestimable effect on the traffic in the future. Considerable work was undertaken in connection with the visit to New Zealand of the Hamburg-American cruise ship "Reliance." Shore excursions were planned and contact established between the steamship company and the Head Office of the Department.

The work accomplished by the Department's advertising agents received high praise by every one engaged in the travel industry, and the effect achieved by the strategic placing of coloured advertising exceeded expectations.

In an independent analysis of the Department's advertising conducted by the Milline Data, our "readers' appeal" was given very high rating, and, in addition, one of the full-page advertisements was considered to be amongst the most outstanding of the year.

Supplementing the advertising campaign, the Department was very fortunate in obtaining much valuable free publicity in the way of newspaper and magazine articles. Newspaper clippings, &c., have been forwarded regularly to Head Office and would give some indication of the extent to which New Zealand has received "news" notice and of the value of "New Zealand in the News."

Most noteworthy among the special articles appearing during the year have been the series written by Mr. Rob Wagner of *Script Magazine*. In view of *Script's* appeal to, and circulation amongst, the motion-picture industry, this publicity would undoubtedly create great interest in this high-salaried class and would be very valuable publicity for New Zealand.

In connection with the advertising campaign, approximately one thousand individual inquiries were received for literature, fares, &c. That the Department truly obtained a national coverage by the advertising is indicated by the fact that inquiries have been received from each of the forty-eight States and from Canada and Mexico. In addition, requests have been received from Alaska, Canal Zone, Ceylon, Cuba, Jugoslavia, Philippine Islands, Poland, Brazil, Ecuador, and Switzerland.

Naturally, in so far as this office is concerned, the largest response has come from the Pacific Coast States, and ranking next in the number of inquiries received are the middle western States, followed by the State of New York.

An interesting point is that in actual numbers of inquiries received at this office New York State ranks next to California.

*Literature.*—Regular supplies of literature have been received from Head Office, and this has been utilized for distribution to agents and local inquirers. In addition, a special light-weight folder was produced by the Department's advertising agents in connection with the current advertising campaign. This folder contained suggested itineraries, and because of its light-weight nature proved of great value not only to the office for individual distribution, but also to the travel agencies, who have demanded supplies in increasing numbers.

Despite the regular servicing of travel agents with literature, many requests for larger supplies have been received from individual agents, and this would appear to indicate a further interest aroused by the advertising effort.

*Films and Slides.*—The stock of 16 mm. film and coloured lantern slides have been greatly in demand throughout the year and have been utilized by travel agencies for tour-party promotion and also by individual lecturers and New Zealanders residing in or *en route* through the United States. However, it may be mentioned that good colour films are urgently in demand to compete with the excellent films produced by other advertising organizations.

*Window Displays.*—During the year an arrangement was made with the local contractor to produce and distribute effective window displays throughout the territory. Where larger space has been available, window displays comprising model Maori villages, complete with cardboard figures, have been supplied, and for smaller windows electrically-lit reproductions of scenes have been utilized.