

THE GENERAL POSITION AND OUTLOOK

(a) THE OVERSEAS FIELD

It is impossible to forecast with accuracy when regular overseas passenger services to New Zealand will be available, but it is generally conceded that there appears to be little prospect of sea passages being at the disposal of tourists from Britain in time for the 1946-47 season. Some travellers with outstanding applications may be fortunate in obtaining accommodation in time for the latter part of the season, but, even so, it is unlikely that their numbers will be great. On the other hand, businessmen sponsored by the British Board of Trade will not be prevented from travelling, and will probably be going abroad in increasing numbers from now on, and combining pleasure with their business. A proportion will include New Zealand in their commercial surveys.

The prospects of resumption of shipping time-tables between Australia and New Zealand are now brighter, and it is reasonable to assume that because of this, and the improved and accelerated trans-Tasman Air service, visitors from the Commonwealth will constitute the vanguard of the external traffic.

North America is the other major field whence tourist visitors may be expected. Restrictions on external pleasure travel are understood to obtain at present in the United States of America, and these, together with the absence of transport, may affect a large influx from that quarter for some little time. Nevertheless, the inauguration of a new Pan American Airways Clipper service scheduled to operate in June, 1946, will (as the numbers of nationally important, official, and priority types of passengers diminish) make it possible for increasing numbers of sportsmen and ordinary civilian visitors to make use of this air-line.

It is significant that the volume of inquiries from the United States of America dealt with in Head Office and at Washington has been, and continues to be, large. Several of these inquiries emanate from members of the United States of America Armed Forces who have already visited or passed through New Zealand.

The position is similar with regard to Canada, but it is considered that that country will offer a better field than ever before for prospective tourists. The travel habits of the Canadians are stated to be less developed than those of citizens of the United States of America, but nevertheless, ample provision must be made in future plans for a worthwhile campaign of travel promotion in Canada.

There is every reason to believe that the transport situation will improve more rapidly in 1947, and in travel circles generally the opinion is vouchsafed that the early part of 1947 should see a return to normal transport conditions.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the Department will be in a position to handle the post-war traffic that is expected, and all the necessary machinery has been, or is being, provided.

The Department has kept abreast as far as possible with all travel developments in countries overseas, and it is appropriate here to note some of these briefly:—

North America.—Full reports have been received of the plans of other countries interested in traffic from North America, and the future prospects of New Zealand in this connection. Inquiries were made regarding the possibility of New Zealand exhibits at sportsman shows in the United States. A special campaign to influence anglers to visit New Zealand in the immediate post-war period was considered, but, owing to short notice and lack of transport, was deferred for attention in the following North American season.