

There has been a growing tendency in Australia to recognize the importance of the tourist industry, and Federal and State Governments and local authorities are evincing considerable interest in the advancement of travel promotion. Up to the end of the year no important positive action had been taken, doubtless because of the pressing needs of housing and of rehabilitation of ex-members of the Services. Preliminary consideration has, however, been given to ways and means of re-establishing the tourist industry as far as possible under the present conditions. Developments in Australia have been watched with interest, and conferences of tourist bureaux and travel organizations, legislative measures, and the recommendations of affected bodies have been reported fully to, and have been examined by, the Department.

Steps were taken in January, 1946, to reopen the travel sections of Sydney and Melbourne offices. It was recognized that a token service only could be offered at that stage, but by the end of that month both establishments were in a position to provide a service to passengers who were successful in obtaining transportation to New Zealand.

A feature of travel work in the immediate post-war period in Australia has been the registration of travel inquiries received from prospective tourist visitors, with a view to maintaining contact with an assured clientele, so that, immediately the time is propitious, a complete service to these and other intending passengers can be extended.

The opinion is expressed by the Australian Representatives that the volume of people desiring to travel will be heavy immediately regular transportation between Australia and New Zealand becomes available, and it is hoped that then conditions within New Zealand will have eased to the extent that overseas visitors can be accommodated.

Many ex-services personnel are now travel-minded as a result of their movements during service, and these and others who earned abnormally high incomes during the past several years are now financially in a position to undertake overseas travel. The prospects for record business from Australia have never before been brighter, and if trans-Tasman transport becomes available and the requisite accommodation can be provided for visitors within a reasonable time, there is no doubt that the Commonwealth must become a more important source of tourist revenue than ever in the past.

*South Africa.*—There are strong indications that the Union of South Africa is a potential source of tourist traffic that warrants more intensive exploration. During the year inquiries received directly and by the Honorary Representatives in Johannesburg and Durban show an upward tendency.

It will be recollected that prior to the war, when a direct passenger service was instituted by the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Line with the vessel "Dominion Monarch," there was a steady growth of traffic from South Africa.

New Zealand has had honorary representation in the Union for many years, and was a participant in the Empire Exhibition at Johannesburg some time ago. Thus the interest in New Zealand has been stimulated continuously for a fairly lengthy period, and the results up to the outbreak of war, in terms of tourist traffic, had been progressively good.

The Department has under consideration proposals to appoint representatives in South Africa immediately it is convenient to do so.