

In the latter months of the year that has passed a few people travelling for pleasure have found their way by various means from the United Kingdom to New Zealand. This number has been small, but it is significant and encouraging. From now on, as the shipping position eases, there should be a gradual revival of the tourist traffic from Britain to New Zealand. In all probability the beginnings of this revival may be seen during the 1947-48 season; our London Bureau feels that New Zealand may look forward to seeing this traffic grow to substantial proportions in 1948-49.

Travel Agents in the British Isles are stated to be doing good business in all departments. Many offices have reopened, and new agencies—some specializing in air travel—have appeared. It is noticeable that there is a growing demand for New Zealand tourist information.

Some continental countries, notably Switzerland, France, Belgium, and the Scandinavian countries, are encouraging tourist traffic across their borders. Travel conditions are reported as becoming progressively better, and various restrictions on international travel, including the need for visas, are disappearing. The number of tourist inquiries received by New Zealand from European countries is very small.

The Department's London Travel Manager represented New Zealand at the International Conference of National Tourist Organizations held in London in October, 1946.

*Australia.*—The year just ended was the first complete post-war period, and, considering the difficulties experienced, a total of 883 comprehensive tours planned and booked in Sydney and Melbourne is a reasonable start. Transport facilities between the Commonwealth and New Zealand, apart from air travel, have been irregular for most of the period and were disrupted by the mishap to the "Wanganella." As a result, many inquirers had to be turned away, but it is considered that a large number can be regarded as certain of retaining their interest in a New Zealand holiday and that they will return to finalize bookings when transport becomes more normal.

The position regarding the vessels which were on the trans-Tasman run in pre-war years, as near as it can be judged at present, is as follows: Union Line ships "Monowai" and "Aorangi," being refitted at Sydney, will not be ready until early 1948; Matson Line ships "Lurline," "Monterey," and "Mariposa," being refitted in America, will not be in service until late in 1947, and Huddart Parker's "Wanganella," although salvaged successfully after her grounding, does not appear likely to become available for an indefinite period. The service maintained by the Union Line's "Wahine" has been helpful, but mainly for "non-tourist" traffic.

The capacity of Tasman Empire Airways aircraft has been taxed to the fullest possible extent throughout the year. The placing of new Tasman class planes in service did not reduce the waiting-lists appreciably, and at most times it has not been possible to secure non-priority bookings at less than two months' notice.

Most returning tourists have expressed grateful appreciation for the service and facilities provided for them by the Department's organization during their visits to New Zealand.

Liaison has been maintained with the various Agents of the New Zealand Government Travel Service in Australia, and no opportunity has been lost to afford New Zealand's tourist attractions publicity.

*South Africa.*—Work in South Africa has been in the hands of the Honorary Representatives of the Department, and they have rendered valuable assistance in stimulating interest in New Zealand. A result of these activities is the large number of inquiries dealt with from the Union and from the Rhodesias, and a few tourists from South Africa have visited the Dominion.