

ANNUAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

From the viewpoint of cash receipts the activities of the Department over the past financial year must be regarded as very satisfactory. The gross turnover amounted to £1,423,000.

Maintenance and developmental works at major resorts under the Department's control have proceeded in pace with the availability of labour and materials. Progress made has been conditioned by certain factors in current national economy, such as various important public works and the pressing urgency of housing that necessarily call for preferential treatment.

As in the past, every effort has been made to implement the Department's plans and functions in the best interest of all concerned and to render the best possible public service within its sphere.

THE GENERAL POSITION AND OUTLOOK

(1) THE OVERSEAS FIELD

The operation of additional steamship passenger services from Australia and North America is in prospect. Reconditioning or reconversion of the "Wanganella," "Monowai," and "Aorangi," when completed, will mean an influx of overseas tourists to this country. It is possible that the existing pressure on New Zealand internal transport and accommodation services will be relieved simultaneously by the movement of residents on long-deferred tours abroad.

The United Kingdom.—There is ample evidence that a profitable tourist traffic from the United Kingdom to New Zealand is held in check by insufficient steamship facilities to meet all the demands for passages to the Dominion. Inquiries received in the Department's London Tourist Bureau are sufficient in themselves to indicate that this "tourist flow" will commence just as soon as the steamship companies are in a position to cope with it.

There is every likelihood that for several years to come the choice of British tourists in search of extended holidays abroad will be restricted to the sterling area. Dollar funds must necessarily be conserved, and New Zealand, possibly the most attractive of the Southern Hemisphere countries to prospective visitors from Britain, will undoubtedly receive consideration.

The greatest single factor pressing upon the resources of the shipping companies is the provision of accommodation for migrants. It must also be remembered that by pre-war standards the companies are still operating with diminished fleets, and some time must elapse before normal conditions return.

The capacity of the airlines continues to expand, they are well patronized, and to a certain extent they have eased the pressure on the shipping companies.

Australia.—The year in review has been a difficult period for the Department's Bureaux in the Commonwealth. The tourist traffic from this territory has not yet reached pre-war proportions, but those who have travelled have used the services of the Department's Bureaux in Australia to the extent that tour sales exceed in value any pre-war figure. Present-day travel difficulties make it essential for tours to be pre-planned before departure for New Zealand.

Chief restriction on the increase of tourist travel has been the inadequacy of trans-Tasman transport facilities. Uncertainty of transport between both countries was such that frequently visitors found it necessary to travel at short notice, and consequently it was often difficult for the Bureaux to finalize suitable arrangements for extensive tours.