

Greater emphasis is being placed on staff training. During the past year this section has been reorganized and several new correspondence courses have been introduced, the principal course of instruction being one for locomotive-running men, commencing with the junior cleaner and continuing through to the first-grade driver. A further course for assistant locomotive foremen is about to be introduced. A comprehensive course in English has also been introduced and is meeting with marked success.

During the past year the enrolments for the nineteen correspondence courses conducted by the Staff Training Section reached the figure of 3,600.

Special eight-day courses in inter-branch co-operation mark a new departure in staff-training methods. Two such courses have already been held, one at Burnham Military Camp in October of last year for South Island members, and a similar course at Linton Military Camp in March of this year for North Island members. At both courses sixty members of all branches were assembled without regard to rank or designation, and the operations of the Department as a whole were placed before them through a series of lectures delivered by the heads of branches or other senior officers. Free discussion was invited, and the students availed themselves of this opportunity to offer a great deal of highly constructive criticism.

Other subjects of a more cultural nature such as industrial psychology, public relations, and economics were also introduced. The first camp at Burnham was of an experimental nature, but its success was so marked by the spirit of co-operation shown by all members that the second course for North Island members was proceeded with, and this proved at least equally successful. All students spoke enthusiastically of the benefit they had derived from the courses through a wider understanding of railway problems.

MILEAGE OF LINES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNT

The mileage of lines open for traffic has not changed during the year and remains at 3,525 miles 44 chains.

The Capital Account on 31st March, 1949, was £78,796,320, an increase of £1,707,289. Of the increase, £1,048,426 is attributed to the cost of new rolling-stock and the remainder to the new Mamaku Sawmill and miscellaneous yard and station rearrangements, buildings, and other works.

CONCLUSION

I desire to place on record my sincere appreciation of the loyal co-operation of the staff, whose efficiency and ready response enabled the Department to handle the greatest volume of traffic in the history of the organization, despite difficulties associated with the aftermath of the war.

E. H. LANGFORD,
Acting General Manager.