

TRAVEL PROMOTION

(a) ORGANIZATION

THE passenger-booking organization of the Department now consists of eleven active Bureaux at Auckland, Te Aroha, Rotorua, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Queens-town, Invercargill, Sydney, Melbourne, and London. In addition, there are in New Zealand twenty-one selling Agencies which provide an extension of the services of the main Bureaux.

In Australia, agreements are in operation with private travel agencies in the principal cities and towns whereby visitors to New Zealand are afforded complete travel service. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, United States of America, and Canada commercial travel firms are associated with the Department's regional representatives. Honorary Representatives, equipped by the Department to provide travel information, are located in North America, South Africa, India, the Far East, and Fiji.

(b) SALES

During the year under review all offices and Agencies of the Department were provided with up-to-date selling-material, and despite transportation shortages and the alteration in the exchange-rate results have been most encouraging. Actual sales reported reached a record total of £1,451,341—an increase over 1947-48 of £228,630. This figure relates only to clients who actually booked with the Department after inquiry. There is, of course, a great volume of persons who make use of the Department's advice and then book elsewhere. Value of sales quoted covers journeys by air, rail, steamer, and motor, plus hotel accommodation and sightseeing.

The major portion of this business consisted of transactions for specially planned independent travel, but increased popularity was evidenced in respect of the Department's programme of conducted tours and special party movements. A feature of the year's operations was the number of groups that visited New Zealand from Australia, a phase of departmental activities that commenced in 1929 and appears to have prospects of further development in the immediate future.

(c) OVERSEAS BUREAUX

Australia

Sales of tours at Sydney Bureau increased by £19,588 and the turnover at Melbourne Bureau showed an increase of £21,000 for the year.

Prospects for the coming year are bright and tourist business in sight includes special party tours from Western Australia, South Australia, and Victoria.

During the year Melbourne office arranged the South Australian farmers' party tour to New Zealand in March. Sydney office arranged parties for New South Wales farmers and for Australian bowlers. Both offices, in conjunction, also operated several other conducted parties of tourists to the Dominion. Considerable numbers of pre-planned individual tours for the coming season have also been arranged.

The most significant development of the year was the improvement in surface transport between Australia and New Zealand, and *vice versa*.