

The goods and live-stock tonnage was 6,487,279 tons, an increase of 487,000 tons. The increases were as follows:—

Cattle	..	..	..	..	..	18,769 head.
Pigs	..	..	..	..	..	314 „
Timber?	..	..	..	..	..	106,530 tons.
Minerals	..	..	..	..	..	214,704 „
Other goods	..	..	..	..	..	166,894 „

Sheep decreased by 198,648 head. At the opening of the year there was congestion in the freezing-works, and this to a large extent accounted for the drop in the number of sheep carried. Unfortunately, as the congestion was relieved, the drop in meat-values checked freezing operations.

Favourable prices, keen demand for supplies on the local market for housing, combined with good overseas market, gave a stimulus to the timber industry. A number of new mills have been established and commenced operations, and the result is reflected in the increase of 106,530 tons of timber carried during the year.

Mineral tonnage was favourably affected by increase in phosphate, gravel and other roadmaking materials, as also by the quantity of overseas coal landed at the various ports for conveyance by rail to inland destination. This accounts for 150,000 tons of the increase; the balance, 64,000 tons, represents the increase in the coal traffic from the New Zealand mines. The quantity railed from Huntly decreased by 14,658 tons; Denniston Mine by 20,300 tons; Seddonville Co-operative (closed owing to fire), 2,000 tons; Kaitangata, 8,260 tons; Paparoa, Brunner, State No. 1, 54,600 tons; Blackball, State No. 2, and Reefton Mines increased by 84,000 tons, the local mines in Otago and Southland by 29,000 tons, Granity, Stockton, Mokihinui, and Co-operative Mines by 23,468 tons.

The total quantity of coal railed from the mines of the Westport and Westland Sections was 774,685 as against 743,127 tons for 1920, an increase of 31,500 tons.

The output of the Greymouth mines was 313,044 tons, an increase of 29,379 tons over 1920, but a decrease of 201,750 tons when compared with the output of 514,795 tons in 1915.

Under the heading "Other goods" the increase of 166,894 tons is due to general expansion of business in Auckland District, increase in ships' overseas goods, and in frozen-meat, dairy-produce, manures, and other miscellaneous traffic.

The average number of men employed for the year was 14,252, against 13,385 for the previous year.

Thirty-two members of the Second Division were promoted to the First Division, 805 members resigned, 100 retired on superannuation, 48 died, 140 were dismissed, and 1,431 engaged.

The sum of £18,638 was paid, under the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act, during the year to members who sustained injuries while in the execution of their duty.

The additions made to the rolling-stock during the year consisted of 187 wagons; 650 new tarpaulins were also made in the railway workshops.

The rolling-stock on order at the close of the year consisted of eighty-five engines, forty cars, sixteen bogie brake-vans, and 2,976 wagons.

Thirteen hundred and twenty-four car, van, and wagon axles were replaced by modern axles, this increasing the carrying-capacity of each vehicle by 2 tons.

The permanent-way, buildings, structures, and appliances have been efficiently maintained, and a considerable number of improvements have been made in the accommodation at various stations. Twenty-two miles of track were relaid, and 105,579 new sleepers and 89,866 cubic yards of ballast placed in the track during the year. Protective works were carried out on rivers in the Canterbury District, at Oamaru, and on the Westland Section.

Interlocking and signal appliances have been increased and sidings and yards improved at a number of stations. The work in connection with grade-easements in the Auckland District has been continued during the year, together with station rearrangements in connection therewith.

Fixed signals were provided at two stations, and twenty-one stations were equipped with distant signals in addition to home signals previously installed. The stations now equipped with fixed signals number 300, while at 100 other stations interlocking appliances are installed. Special switch-locks were provided at four stations. Special locking arrangements at three switch-out tablet stations, and tablet locking at a number of other stations, have also been installed during the year.

The railway telegraph and telephone systems were extended during the year, and now comprise 288 Morse sets, 1,677 telephones, 301 electric bells, 2,618 miles of poles, and 7,233 miles of wire.

Electric lighting has been installed at a number of station buildings, yards, offices, engine-sheds, and dwellings.

VISIT OF H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE DOMINION.

In April and May last His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales made a tour of New Zealand, travelling by rail from Auckland to Rotorua and back to Auckland, thence to New Plymouth, Napier, and Wellington via Wairarapa line. His railway journeys in the South Island were—Picton to Blenheim, Nelson to Glenhope, Reefton to Hokitika, thence to Otira and Arthur's Pass to Christchurch, Christchurch to Invercargill, and back to Lyttelton, from which port he sailed in the H.M.S. "Renown" on the 21st May, 1920.

The passenger traffic to the centres visited by the Royal Party was exceedingly heavy. The whole of the railway arrangements were, however, made and carried out satisfactorily. The catering for the party reflected great credit on the Controller of Railway Refreshment Services and the capable staff working under his directions.