

The suggestions and inventions dealt with cover an extremely wide range, and include suggestions advanced by members of the general public in addition to those forwarded by railway employees. Matters referred to the committee have embraced suggested alterations to books and forms, improved workshop facilities, labour-aiding devices, safe working-appliances, improved mechanical and electrical apparatus for power-house and overhead gear, alterations to the lay out of station premises and yards, improved signal apparatus, devices for prevention of accidents at level crossings and accidents due to slips, improved traffic-working, reclamation of scrap material, improved methods in connection with refreshment services, and many other matters.

The majority of the suggestions and inventions have emanated from employees associated with the branches concerned in the respective remits; and, although no considerable financial advantage has yet resulted, it is pleasing to record that the setting-up of the committee has encouraged a spirit of co-operation and interest in the Department's affairs.

STATEMENT OF THE SUGGESTIONS AND INVENTIONS RECEIVED FROM THE STAFF AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE SUGGESTIONS AND INVENTIONS COMMITTEE SINCE IT COMMENCED OPERATIONS ON THE 15TH JUNE, 1925, UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1926.

The suggestions and inventions are classified according to the nature of the suggestion or invention and not according to the branch of the service to which the person who submitted the proposal belongs.

The term "General" applies to items which are of miscellaneous character or which refer to more than one branch.

Branch.	Number of Suggestions received.	Recommended for Adoption.	Number on Trial.	Number in Course of Investigation.	Not recommended for Adoption.
Rolling-stock (including engines)	189	14	3	46	126
Locomotive shops	111	12	1	29	69
Way and works	78	1	1	3	73
Signal and telegraph* ..	86	1	..	33	52
Electrical	18	2	..	1	15
Transportation	22	..	..	2	20
Traffic	143	18	1	19	105
Stores	20	1	..	5	14
Audit	2	..	..	..	2
Commercial and advertising ..	56	1	..	3	52
Refreshment	8	..	..	..	8
Accounting	51	9	..	13	29
General	74	3	..	11	60
Total	858	62	6	165	625

* Including devices for prevention of accidents at level crossings and accidents due to slips on line.

Letters of thanks to those who submitted suggestions	634
Commendations noted on official record	39
Monetary awards granted	14
Still under trial or investigation	171
	858
Aggregate amount of awards granted	£92

TRAINING APPRENTICES.

In addition to the arrangements above outlined for the improvement of the qualifications of our railwaymen, careful attention is being given to the training of our apprentices. The policy in this connection is not only to make the apprentices first-class tradesmen so far as craftsmanship is concerned, but also to develop in them those qualifications of leadership which will fit them to take controlling positions. I think it must be admitted that our tradesmen are as efficient from the point of view of manual skill as any tradesmen who have served their apprenticeship outside the railway workshops. But in training our young men in our organization