

A system of scheduling or routing work has been established so that rolling-stock is out of service the minimum time, and for the prevention of unnecessary delays.

These production departments co-ordinate with a similar Head Office staff who similarly act in co-operation with all other Head Office departments concerned.

Accounting Methods.—Shop accounting methods have been introduced so that daily costs are now obtained for the benefit of the management during progress of the work. A system of estimating in conjunction with this work, now in operation, enables supervision to check any excess charges and costs.

Timekeeping.—Shop timekeeping has been changed from a fortnightly to a daily basis, and time-clocks have been installed to separate pay-roll from distribution, in order to keep a closer check on men.

Shops Committees.—At each workshop shops committees have been instituted to co-operate with the management on matters that are of mutual interest at that workshop. The result of the working of these committees for the past year has been very gratifying.

Sub-foremen.—An important change brought about by the regrading of supervising staff at workshops has been the changing of leading hands into sub-foremen. These leading hands becoming officers is having a much needed effect.

Floating Gangs.—Instead of maintaining staffs at small sections for heavy overhauls of rolling-stock, a floating gang has been established at Petone which is sent where required to do major work. This keeps the small sections staff down to a minimum.

Reorganization of Workshops.—Under the scheme of reorganization of workshops the following items may be noted as parts of the whole problem that has been, or is, in progress :—

- (1) Rearrangement of machinery in existing shops into groups according to output.
- (2) Electrification of existing workshops.
- (3) New workshops.
- (4) Replacement of obsolete machinery.
- (5) Machinery provided for modern production methods.
- (6) Transportation of machinery at workshops and machinery required for same.
- (7) Concentration of all tarpaulin-work for North Island at East Town shops.
- (8) Establishment of points- and crossings-manufacturing department for all New Zealand at East Town.
- (9) Concentration of all locomotive work in each Island into one shop in each Island ; similarly, all car and wagon work into one shop in each Island.
- (10) Establishment of manufacturing departments for particular work at one concentrated point—foundries, tinshop, &c.
- (11) Transfers of men involved.
- (12) Housing scheme.

ARCHITECTURAL BRANCH OPERATIONS, 1925–28.

The house-factory attached to the Architectural Branch was completed and commenced cutting operations in 1923, but the main operations were not commenced until the year 1924–25. During this year 300 houses were cut, and, of these, 258 were issued for erection, 252 being completed in that year. By the year ending 31st March, 1925, 477 houses had been built by the Architectural Branch in five years, and, of these, 258, as stated above, were factory-cut.

During the period from 1st April, 1925, to 3rd March, 1928, 836 factory-cut houses and 39 non-factory-cut houses have been completed, and, in addition, 73 factory-cut and 12 non-factory-cut houses are in course of erection. Of these houses, 619 factory-cut and 3 non-factory-cut houses have been erected for the Department, and 217 factory-cut and 36 non-factory-cut have been built at the workers' settlement, Lower Hutt.

The departmental houses have been erected at about 170 different localities, and vary in number from one to the limits of such settlements at Frankton Junction, Otahuhu, and the like. These houses have all the usual modern conveniences, such as electric lighting, hot- and cold-water service, sewerage, high-pressure water, &c., where such are available. In the case of the larger settlements attention has been paid to the provision of reasonable reservations for recreation purposes, and the Department has aided tenants of such settlements in providing well-equipped sports-grounds.

At the workers' settlement at Lower Hutt 300 houses have been erected or are approaching completion. These houses were erected by the Department under special authority for the purpose of relieving housing-shortage in Wellington City. In addition, a properly-equipped children's playing-area and a social hall are being provided. 245 of these houses were provided from the Frankton Junction House-factory, and experience has gone to prove that these houses are the most in demand by prospective house-owners in this settlement. Also, the factory-cut house can be erected much more expeditiously and at a more economical cost than the ordinary non-factory-cut house.

STORES REORGANIZATION, 1925–28.

The reorganization of the Stores Branch was commenced in 1925, and the stores system has now been brought into line with modern methods. The system of card control and daily issues has been extended to include all main stores and districts.

The main stores at Newmarket, Petone, Addington, Hillside, and Invercargill have been completely equipped with standard racks and bin-cards.

At East Town a new main store has been opened and equipped for service as a combined main store and shops sub-store.