

The particulars of the mileage run in the various sections of railway are as follows :—

Section.						1928-29.	1927-28.	Increase.
								Miles.
Kaihu	..	..	..	..	..	17,393	17,738	Dec. 345
Gisborne	..	..	..	..	..	76,586	82,211	Dec. 5,625
North Island Main Line and Branches						6,705,512	6,479,921	225,591
South Island Main Line and Branches						4,095,546	4,049,450	46,096
Westport	..	..	..	..	..	92,311	94,140	Dec. 1,829
Nelson	..	..	..	..	..	59,725	63,292	Dec. 3,567
Picton	..	..	..	..	..	66,409	51,842	14,567
						11,113,482	10,838,594	274,888

During the past year fast passenger-trains have been provided between Wanganui and New Plymouth, and between Napier and Palmerston North. The Wanganui - New Plymouth train has a connection from Marton with the Limited express from Auckland, while the Napier - Palmerston North train connects at Palmerston North with the Limited express for Auckland and with a fast train for Wellington. The provision of these services has therefore opened a good connecting-link with the Auckland-Wellington Limited expresses. The Auckland-Whangarei-Opua expresses which terminated at Whangarei on three days of the week during a portion of the year were made through trains from September, thus giving the northern district facilities for daily communication with Auckland.

The suburban services radiating from the main centres received close attention during the year. Additional trains were provided, and a number of adjustments were made to better meet the convenience of passengers. In the Wellington suburban area it was possible by co-ordination of the Department's road and rail services to effect substantial economies, certain of the trains during the slack portion of the day being eliminated and the passenger traffic transferred to the Department's buses.

PUNCTUALITY OF TRAINS.

The record of train punctuality, while not up to last year's standard, is satisfactory, considering the many and varied adverse circumstances contended with. Certain seasonal commodities have been heavy this year, and, instead of producing a steady flow of traffic over a period, weather conditions have caused peak rushes to form. An extraordinary peak tends to congestion, from which initial delays expand and have far-reaching effects. The sheep traffic this year, for instance, was somewhat later than usual in moving, and the unusual movement is reflected in the time-keeping of trains towards the close of the year.

The Easter traffic for 1929 was handled in March, and the consequential delays which arise out of heavy holiday traffic have caused an inflation of the figures for the 1928-29 year.

A number of mishaps (engine-failures, derailments, and other line-interruptions) have occurred at a time of the day which caused a maximum of interference with passenger services. Severe damage caused in August by a storm to the sea-wall protecting the Hutt line has been responsible for much late running of the suburban trains. The unpunctuality is not confined to the suburban area only, and its effect is far-reaching. The checks received in the suburban area are often reflected on trains passing through the Wairarapa, and even affect express and other trains connecting at Woodville.

AVERAGE LATE ARRIVALS OF TRAINS, YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1929.

Year ended	Period ended														Average for Year in Minutes
	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March 2.	March 31.		
Express and Mail Trains.															
31st March, 1929	8.48	7.20	6.62	5.06	4.32	4.84	3.19	3.97	3.75	9.95	6.25	9.09	13.76	6.65	
31st March, 1928	10.15	5.50	6.25	3.77	10.34	10.98	2.40	3.06	3.11	9.10	6.46	5.65	4.05	6.22	
Long-distance Mixed Trains.															
31st March, 1929	11.43	8.64	6.28	4.67	4.33	4.70	4.73	4.85	5.64	8.35	7.68	11.47	13.39	7.40	
31st March, 1928	11.87	7.81	6.26	4.35	5.96	4.23	3.27	3.95	3.84	6.37	6.79	6.26	7.96	6.07	
Suburban Trains.															
31st March, 1929	0.62	0.50	0.58	0.61	1.69	2.90	0.93	1.13	0.79	1.33	1.18	1.36	1.67	1.17	
31st March, 1928	1.47	0.77	0.76	0.62	0.71	0.55	0.46	0.55	0.58	0.76	0.78	0.93	0.69	0.79	

These figures include delays arising from all causes, including floods, slips, washouts, engine and other mechanical failures, and traffic delays at stations.