

CASH-ON-DELIVERY SERVICE.

The provisions which exists for the conveyance of parcels under a "Cash-on-delivery" system was instituted to facilitate the transport and delivery of special consignments on a cash basis. Under the arrangement the Department undertakes to collect from the consignee at the time of delivery and refund to the consignor the value of the parcels carried. The publicity which has been given to a recent lowering of the charge previously made for this service has created a feeling of apprehension in some quarters that the operation of the system may prejudicially affect the business of tradespeople outside the main cities. The almost complete absence of any complaint that such a position has arisen during the lengthy period the arrangement has been in force may, however, be taken as evidence that it has not operated to the detriment of any particular section of the business community and that it meets a general demand on the part of traders for this type of service.

THROUGH-BOOKING OF PASSENGERS, PARCELS, AND GOODS.

Further progress has been made during the year in extending the established services for the conveyance of traffic between points not served by a continuous line of railway, and the Department is now in a position to undertake the carriage of passengers and all classes of goods and parcels between practically any two points in the Dominion. This service is one which is being increasingly availed of by the public, more particularly in the case of goods requiring transport over combined journeys by rail and sea. Its development has reached the stage where it has been possible to make reductions in the rates for tonnage lines, and this will still further enhance the attractiveness of the service.

The following figures serve to indicate the marked growth in through-booked traffic in parcels and goods :—

Year ended 31st March,			Tons.	Gross Revenue. £
1929	..	..	..	13,792
1934	..	..	..	16,914
1935	..	..	..	20,271
				27,341
				34,858
				41,877

The institution of an air service connecting with the express-train service between Christchurch and the West Coast for the conveyance of passengers to and from the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers led to the Department's association with the operators for the purpose of a combined booking arrangement for the complete journeys, and considerable success has attended the venture. There are indications that this innovation in the matter of combined rail and air travel will prove very popular.

ADVERTISING SERVICE.

	1935.	1934.	Variation.	Per Cent.
	£	£	£	
Revenue	30,030	32,707	—2,677	8·18
Expenditure	27,942	30,159	—2,217	7·35
Net revenue	£2,088	£2,548	— £460	18·05

An analysis of the revenue is as under :—	1935. £	1934. £	Variation. £
Outdoor advertising	25,253	28,268	— 3,015
Publications	2,915	3,006	— 91
Miscellaneous	1,720	1,272	+ 448
Advertising in buses	142	161	— 19
	£30,030	£32,707	—£2,677

New business written up during the last five years is as under :—	1935. £	1934. £	1933. £	1932. £	1931. £
Outdoor advertising ..	30,539	17,235	24,069	26,415	47,948
Publications ..	3,144	2,915	1,295	1,859	3,338
Printing ..	..	..	..	..	1,442
Miscellaneous ..	..	613	621	767	904
Buses ..	47	13	127	749	151
	£33,730	£20,776	£26,112	£29,790	£53,783

There was a substantial improvement in the amount of new business written up during the year compared with the previous year, and, having regard to the set-back experienced by advertising as a result of the depression, the increase is very satisfactory.