

The number of meals served in the dining-rooms totalled 77,762, an increase of 2,838 (3·79 per cent.) over the previous year.

As mentioned in the last report, the tariff for tea, coffee, cocoa, and sandwiches was reduced by 25 per cent. as from 13th August, 1933. The early periods of the past two years are not therefore strictly comparable. A comparison allowing for this influence, and the influence of seasonal fluctuations, discloses an increase in revenue of no less than 13·10 per cent., maintaining to a very marked degree the upward tendency in receipts recorded last year. The reduced charges have contributed in no small measure to the improved figures, but the receipts were increased considerably by the fine summer and the large number of excursionists carried.

The increased expenditure amounted to £4,813 (6·60 per cent.) and was largely the result of the increased turnover. Every effort has been made to conduct the refreshment-rooms on the most economical basis whilst maintaining the highest possible standard of service to the public.

The total return to the Department in respect of the operations of the Refreshment Branch for the past five years is as under :—

	1935.	1934.	1933.	1932.	1931.
	£	£	£	£	£
Rent	9,230	9,230	9,100	9,100	9,100
Commission	667	620	584	715	996
Rail fares	1,066	1,066	1,066	1,066	1,287
Rail freights	1,825	1,818	1,851	2,349	2,991
Interest	1,102	1,124	1,129	1,291	1,184
Net profit	2,132	786	2,928	1,681	3,341
	£16,022	£14,644	£16,658	£16,202	£18,899

BOOKSTALL SERVICE.

The Department now controls, through the Refreshment Branch, eighteen railway bookstalls, an increase of ten over the number shown last year. The following bookstalls were taken over by the Department in June, 1934: Frankton Junction, Marton, Palmerston North, Woodville, Hastings, Napier, Greymouth, Timaru, Oamaru, and Invercargill.

The revenue for the year was £36,846, and the expenditure £34,564. Net revenue was £2,282, an increase compared with the previous year of £598.

The total return to the Department in respect of the operation of bookstalls over the last three years is as follows :—

	1935.	1934.	1933.
	£	£	£
Net profit	2,282	1,684	1,070
Rent	3,685	2,079	1,238
Railages	157	40	..
Commission	257	145	87
	£6,381	£3,948	£2,395

The policy of the Board in operating railway bookstalls, as expressed in the report for last year, has been fully justified by the results of a further year's operation. By the adoption of standardized methods savings have been effected which have made possible a higher standard of service generally. The business is functioning well as an integral part of the service provided by the railway, and the improved figures are indicative of the satisfaction it gives to the travelling public.

ROAD MOTOR SERVICES.

The year's operations resulted in a profit of £5,672, as compared with £2,368 for the previous year, an improvement of £3,304.

A comparison of the revenue and expenditure is afforded below :—

	1935.	1934.	Variation.	Per
	£	£	£	Cent.
Revenue	90,278	79,184	+11,094	14·01
Expenditure	84,606	76,816	+ 7,790	10·14
Net Revenue	£5,672	£2,368	+£3,304	139·53

In the expenditure provision has been made for interest on capital, depreciation on vehicles and plant, and the establishment of necessary reserve funds.