

CARRIAGES.

The number of carriages built during the year was 19, while the number in service at 31st March, 1936, was 1,485. There were 37 carriages under construction in the workshops at 31st March, 1936. Nine of the new carriages were fitted with roller-bearing bogies, making a total of 78 carriages in service fitted with these bearings.

Ninety-four carriages had their lavatories improved (water-sealed hoppers being fitted), thirteen had new lavatories added, sixty-one were fitted with steam-heating equipment, while thirty-five had centre partitions and doors added. The centre partitions and doors were removed from four carriages.

One hundred and thirty-five carriages had the seating rearranged, chair seats being installed in all cases. These changes eliminated longitudinal seats in fifty-one carriages.

The number of carriages that passed through the workshops was 1,582, 1,254 of these receiving heavy repairs.

RAIL-CARS.

There were two rail-cars in service as at 31st March, 1936, on which date ten other rail-cars were under construction. It is proposed in the first place to use these units between Wellington and Palmerston North, via the Wairarapa route. There will be six purely passenger vehicles each with seating-capacity for forty-nine passengers and space for approximately 1 ton of small parcels and luggage. They will be fitted with 130-horse-power petrol-engines and torque converters, and will be capable of adequate speed on flat country and of negotiating the stiff grade of 1 in 15 on the Rimutaka Incline, when fully loaded, at a speed of from fifteen to seventeen miles per hour. The total loaded weight of each car will be approximately 16 tons. A dual-purpose passenger-goods Diesel unit will also be provided for the transport of school-children and milk and cream traffic.

A night service between Wellington and New Plymouth, leaving the respective terminal points daily from Sunday to Friday of each week, will also be provided.

The results attained by these experimental services will largely determine the Department's policy in the extension of such services. It is confidently anticipated that they will prove attractive and efficient units for the comfortable and expeditious transport of passengers, while at the same time effecting considerable economies by replacing certain types of steam services.

BRAKE-VANS.

There were 482 brake-vans in service at 31st March, 1936, on which date nine others were under construction.

WAGONS.

During the year 201 wagons were constructed in the workshops. The number of wagons in service at the end of the financial year was 26,832.

TRANSPORTATION.

The train-mileage for the year (exclusive of shunting and departmental mileage) was 11,050,376, compared with 10,626,400 for the previous year, an increase of 423,976 train-miles. The passenger-miles run were 4,747,525, compared with 4,653,708, an increase of 93,817; the goods-miles were 6,302,851, compared with 5,972,692 for the previous year, an increase of 330,159.

Particulars of the revenue train-mileage run in the various sections are as under:—

Section.	1935-36.	1934-35.	Variation.
Kaihu	13,446	13,488	— 42
Gisborne	42,614	43,288	— 674
North Island Main Line and Branches	6,797,905	6,493,591	+304,314
South Island Main Line and Branches	4,049,706	3,932,213	+117,493
Westport	63,305	61,879	+ 1,426
Nelson	40,394	39,512	+ 882
Picton	43,006	42,429	+ 577
	11,050,376	10,626,400	+423,976

TRAIN SERVICES.

During the year a review of the goods and mixed train services throughout the North Island was undertaken with a view to providing more expeditious transport for goods generally, more particularly long-distance traffic. On the 9th February, 1936, a reorganized goods service was brought into operation in the Frankton Junction—Palmerston North, Stratford—Okahukura, and Marton—New Plymouth areas. In framing the schedules for the altered timing of the trains the best possible use was made of the "K" class engines, runs being arranged over longer distances, thereby reducing the frequency of engine changes *en route*.

The through goods services previously in operation have been retained, and the other trains in the Main Trunk area, which were more or less local trains, have been rescheduled to provide through connections and eliminate delays to goods at sub-terminal stations. The new services provide that continuity of movement necessary to facilitate the transport of goods traffic and also the prompt turnover of the wagon stock. As a result a substantial saving of time in the transport of goods has been effected between stations on the Main Trunk line and also to and from stations on the connecting lines.