

From the 5th January, 1936, the charge for meals in the dining-rooms was reduced from 2s. 6d. to 2s., a reduction of 20 per cent. As shown above, the number of meals sold during the current year increased by 32·02 per cent. This increase was no doubt due to the improvement in economic conditions and to the greater volume of passenger traffic handled associated with the reduction in price. The substantial increase in counter sales is mainly due to the improved economic conditions. The decrease shown against miscellaneous is principally attributable to the fact that meals are not now supplied to the staff engaged on the Lake Wakatipu steamers.

The expenditure for the year increased by £16,149 (19·00 per cent.), this being mainly due to the restoration of salaries and wages to the 1931 level, to the introduction of the forty-hour week, and to increased purchases of stores and provisions consequent upon the greater volume of catering necessary to meet the increase in business.

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

	1937.	1936.	1935.	1934.	1933.
	£	£	£	£	£
Rent	9,219	9,230	9,230	9,230	9,100
Commission	842	742	667	620	584
Rail fares	1,066	1,066	1,066	1,066	1,066
Rail freights	2,084	1,790	1,825	1,818	1,851
Interest	1,111	1,108	1,102	1,124	1,129
Net profit	2,226	4,156	2,132	786	2,928
	£16,548	£18,092	£16,022	£14,644	£16,658

BOOKSTALL SERVICE.

	1937.	1936.	Variation.	Per Cent.
	£	£	£	
Revenue	54,417	45,798	+8,619	18·82
Expenditure	51,245	43,042	+8,203	19·06
Net revenue	£3,172	£2,756	+ £416	15·09

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

	1937.	1936.
	£	£
Net profit	3,172	2,756
Rent	5,442	4,580
Railages	191	167
Commission	381	320
	£9,186	£7,823

The Department controls, through its Refreshment Branch, eighteen railway bookstalls. Increased passenger-traffic and the improvement in the economic conditions accounts for the improved showing as the result of the year's operations.

ROAD MOTOR SERVICES.

The year's operations resulted in a profit of £21,698, as compared with £8,598 for the previous year, an improvement of £13,100.

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

	1937.	1936.	Variation.	Per Cent.
	£	£	£	
Revenue	198,751	103,280	+ 95,471	92·44
Expenditure	177,053	94,682	+ 82,371	87·00
Net Revenue	£21,698	£8,598	+£13,100	152·36