

Having regard to the persistently adverse weather conditions experienced over the 1938-39 Christmas holiday period, the revenue from passenger traffic, which shows a small decrease of £31, may be regarded as satisfactory. There has been evidence of a declining tendency in both goods and parcels traffic during the year, these lines of traffic being diverted to road services now controlled by the Department.

REFRESHMENT SERVICE.

| —           |    |    |    | 1939.   | 1938.   | Variation. |           |
|-------------|----|----|----|---------|---------|------------|-----------|
|             |    |    |    | £       | £       | £          | Per Cent. |
| Revenue     | .. | .. | .. | 167,710 | 142,786 | +24,924    | 17·46     |
| Expenditure | .. | .. | .. | 163,189 | 140,937 | +22,252    | 15·79     |
| Net revenue | .. | .. | .. | 4,521   | 1,849   | + 2,672    | 144·51    |

An analysis of receipts discloses the following position :—

| —                        |    |    |    | 1939.   | 1938.   | Variation. |           |
|--------------------------|----|----|----|---------|---------|------------|-----------|
|                          |    |    |    | £       | £       | £          | Per Cent. |
| Dining-room              | .. | .. | .. | 36,378  | 27,882  | + 8,496    | 30·47     |
| Counter                  | .. | .. | .. | 127,767 | 111,757 | + 16,010   | 14·33     |
| Miscellaneous            | .. | .. | .. | 3,565   | 3,147   | + 418      | 13·28     |
| Total                    | .. | .. | .. | 167,710 | 142,786 | + 24,924   | 17·46     |
|                          |    |    |    | Number. | Number. | Number.    | Per Cent. |
| Total meals sold         | .. | .. | .. | 407,549 | 307,826 | + 99,723   | 32·40     |
| Meals sold at Wellington | .. | .. | .. | 253,618 | 171,231 | + 82,387   | 48·11     |

The increased turnover for the year (£24,924) was due to a number of factors, the chief of which were the adding, as from 1st April, 1938, of the Milton refreshment rooms to those under departmental control, the additional revenue arising from the increase of 1d. in the price per cup of tea and coffee, and the inclusion of the receipts from Wellington Station services for the whole of the financial year under review as compared with approximately a nine-month period in the previous year.

A highly satisfactory position is revealed in respect to the receipts from services provided at Wellington Station, the turnover for the year representing 21 per cent. of the total turnover from all rooms. The Wellington new station was opened for business on 19th June, 1937, and, after making appropriate allowance for the shorter period in which the services were available in 1938 as compared with the present year, the receipts show an increase of £4,948 (22·08 per cent.).

The expenditure for the year increased by £22,252 (15·79 per cent.), this being due mainly to increased wages-costs owing to the operation of improved wages schedule and to increased consumption of stores and provisions consequent upon the greater turnover of business.

As a subsidiary service the Refreshment Branch continues to play an increasingly important part in the general activities of the Department, and the steadily increasing revenue earned each year is an indication of the high esteem in which the services provided by this Branch are held by the public generally.

The actual return to the Department from the operation of the Refreshment Branch for selected years since 1930 is as under :—

| —                              | 1930.  | 1932.  | 1934.  | 1935.  | 1936.  | 1937.  | 1938.  | 1939.  |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                | £      | £      | £      | £      | £      | £      | £      | £      |
| Rent                           | 11,170 | 9,100  | 9,230  | 9,230  | 9,230  | 9,219  | 9,817  | 10,309 |
| Commission on cash collections | 970    | 715    | 620    | 667    | 742    | 842    | 1,130  | 1,327  |
| Rail fares                     | 1,287  | 1,066  | 1,066  | 1,066  | 1,066  | 1,066  | 1,066  | 1,066  |
| Rail freights                  | 3,234  | 2,349  | 1,818  | 1,825  | 1,790  | 2,084  | 2,443  | 2,423  |
| Interest                       | 1,099  | 1,291  | 1,124  | 1,102  | 1,108  | 1,111  | 1,230  | 1,465  |
| Net profit                     | 6,981  | 1,681  | 785    | 2,132  | 4,156  | 2,226  | 1,849  | 4,520  |
| Total                          | 24,741 | 16,202 | 14,643 | 16,022 | 18,092 | 16,548 | 17,535 | 21,110 |