

AGENCIES AND PASSENGER-BOOKINGS.

The business done in booking passengers again shows a substantial increase, which is gratifying considering the adverse happenings during the early part of the season, which involved a practical cessation of all travelling for a period of nearly two months. The business done during the four years that the system has been in operation is shown below, and it will be seen that in that time it has almost doubled. The booking system is now so complete that passengers can be booked from and to any place in the Dominion, or from Sydney or Melbourne to any part of New Zealand.

That the convenience to passengers has been appreciated is amply evidenced by the number of persons who each time they travel call at the Department's agencies to take out the tickets for their journey, and to obtain expert advice as to the best way to spend their time. In this connection the public have realized that the Department has as much, if not more, to offer the passengers whose means are limited as to the tourist, to whom neither time nor money is of primary importance, and the advice of the agents has resulted in many persons with limited means and vacations being able to make the best possible use of their opportunities for travelling in search of health and pleasure.

The total business done during the past four years is:—

Year.	£
1910-11	24,062
1911-12	32,245
1912-13	37,622
1913-14	44,251

SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE AGENCIES.

Owing to the smallpox epidemic these two agencies have suffered considerably, but I am confident that much of their work will bring good results during the coming season. The total bookings at the Sydney Agency were £3,015, compared with £2,146 for 1912-13; Melbourne, £2,491, as against £2,192. The commissions on passenger-booking amounted to £133 and £110 respectively. During the year the total expenditure by the Department for Sydney Agency amounted to £1,368, and Melbourne £777, made up as follows:—

	Sydney.	Melbourne.
	£	£
Rent	800	257
Salaries	301	369
Miscellaneous	267	151
	<u>£1,368</u>	<u>£777</u>

In appraising the value of the work of these officers, it must be borne in mind that they are practically the representatives in New South Wales and Victoria of the whole of the Government departments of New Zealand. Their energies are not confined to tourist matters only, and their services are very largely availed of by the Customs, Agriculture, and Immigration Departments. The honorary agencies of the Department in Brisbane, Adelaide, and Vancouver have all been fairly busy, and have been kept thoroughly equipped with our latest pamphlets and photographic matter.

ADVERTISING.

The booking system and the various tourist and health resorts in the Dominion have been well advertised by the medium of newspapers, magazines, picture-theatre programmes, and various other suitable means both in the Dominion and overseas. The total amount expended by the Department in this direction last year was £1,382. In addition to this, advantage was taken of the Auckland Exhibition to make a display advertising the tourist resorts of the Dominion, and an expenditure of £685 was incurred there. For its display at the Exhibition the Department was awarded a first-class certificate, and the authorities have expressed themselves as eminently satisfied with the display and the assistance rendered by the officers of the Department. The main steamship lines have been kept supplied with numerous publications, and in the case of the San Francisco and Vancouver lines the demand for literature among the passengers has been very heavy. There has been a continued demand for lantern-slides from all parts of the world, and this in itself is a good indication of the interest taken in the Dominion by residents of other countries. During the year 3,000 copies of the Baeyertz Guide to New Zealand, published by Mr. C. N. Baeyertz, have been distributed in all parts of the world, and all the other publications of the Department have been widely circulated. The Department's Itinerary of Travel has been printed and circulated to the number of 11,000. Several other publications are now in course of preparation for use at the San Francisco Exhibition, and it is proposed to ask for an increased vote during the coming session in order to pursue a vigorous policy of advertising the scenic attractions of the Dominion in Australia and other parts of the world.

ACCLIMATIZATION AND SPORT.

During the year the Department of Internal Affairs assumed control of all fresh-water fisheries, and in conjunction with this it took over the curing and sale of trout at Rotorua and Taupo. The Conservator of Fish and Game was also transferred to the Department of Internal Affairs, and the control of acclimatization matters was vested in the Tourist Agent from 1st July, 1913.