

observatories at Wagga and Newcastle, and made careful inquiries and inspection, and these were very helpful and instructive. Much more display is made of meteorological results throughout Australia than is possible in this country, but a large staff enable the work to be done very effectively. The daily weather forecast for Australia is made by consultation of four Chief Meteorologists with the Commonwealth Meteorologist, who issues the general forecast to the Divisional Officer of each State, who in turn has authority to publish, revise, and amplify the same when necessary.

During my three weeks' absence the work of the office was carried on very satisfactorily by my assistant, Mr. B. V. Pemberton, and since my return I have been able to make more advantageous use of his abilities and experience, and the result has been that we have expedited the issue of the morning forecasts.

There has been a greater demand for the daily weather forecast from towns both coastal and inland, and, at the suggestion of the Agricultural Department, it is proposed to add another hundred stations to the list of places receiving the same. By a system of grouping, the work of writing and transmitting these forecasts will be somewhat reduced, and the Telegraph Department will take the extra hundred stations at half the former rates. This proposal will cost £400 extra, and will be submitted in the forthcoming estimates. The total cost for telegraphing all these reports will be £1,200 per annum. Further additions to the list which may be made in the future will cost £4 each per annum.

The evening reports and general forecasts are published through the Press Association of the Dominion at the cost of the receivers, but, at the request of the master mariners, the reports are exhibited at the General Post Office, Wellington, at 5 p.m., or as soon as possible afterwards; but there are often delays, and corrections have to be made, so that these reports and forecasts always mean extra labour after office hours. During the past years these general summaries and forecasts have met with such appreciation that the work has been gladly and voluntarily undertaken even on ordinary Government holidays.

The rainfall map published in the Official Year-book is now being exhibited at two thousand post-offices in the Dominion. It has also been republished in the *Agricultural Journal*, the *Auckland Graphic*, &c.

Several additions have been made to the number of rainfall or third-class stations. The observers at all these places perform public service voluntarily and regularly for their districts, and are only supplied with the necessary forms and monthly extracts containing the results for all parts of the Dominion. These efforts are deserving of the thanks and recognition of their own district and the community at large. At least ninety thousand observations of rainfall were made during last year alone, and for sixty years previously this work has been performed by voluntary observers *pro bono publico*. Our records are each year becoming more and more valuable, and the foundations have been laid for still greater usefulness. Ten times the number of stations could well be established with advantage and with small cost to the country. The cost of a gauge complete to the Department is only about 10s., and invaluable results could be obtained. A large number of schools have made application for meteorological instruments, but these have had to be declined, for school observations have been found to be very unreliable. The removal of teachers, entrusting the observations to different pupils, interference of children, and, above all, frequent holidays, militate against continuity, regularity, and accuracy in the results.

The publication of the statistics of the chief stations is made each year in the blue-book issued by the Registrar-General, and monthly rainfall and climatological returns in the *Government Gazette*. Articles, reports, and statistics upon the climate and weather are prepared for the Year-book. Monthly reports were prepared for a time in the *Agricultural Journal*, but were discontinued because the reports from the observers, with the statistics, could not be in hand in time for publication; but the notes upon the weather of the month have been resumed by this office, and now supplement valuable reports by officers and inspectors of the Agricultural Department in all parts of the Dominion.

Mr. F. W. Simms has attained rank as a permanent Civil servant by five years' work as a temporary clerk. He has proved a diligent, painstaking, and regular observer.

The Secretary, Marine Department:

D. C. BATES, Director.

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The CHIEF INSPECTOR OF FISHERIES to the SECRETARY, Marine Department.

SIR,—

Wellington, 7th May, 1912.

I have the honour to supply the following report on the condition of the fisheries throughout the Dominion during the year ended 31st March.

Commencing with the Wellington District, I have to say that the market on the whole has been much better supplied with fish than during the previous twelve months. The small boats working on the local fishing-grounds are reported as having done much better than for the last two or three years, and there has been a decided improvement in the supply obtained from the Napier trawling-grounds. This improvement applies to round fish, as I have again to report a shortage in the supply of flat fish both from the Napier and the local fishing-grounds. For a short time during the early part of the summer a fair supply was brought in by the trawlers, but it only lasted for a few weeks, and, on the whole, the supply coming forward has been far short of market requirements. With regard to warehou, there was a fair run of fish in January, but the supply so far this season has been below the average for these fish.

The supply of fish obtained from the various fishing-grounds off the Canterbury coast is reported as being better than for several years past. During the spring and summer there has