

The total casualties suffered by the permanent officers of the Department since the outbreak of war are as follows: Died of wounds, 10; died of sickness, 2; wounded, 30; gassed, 1.

In place of permanent officers and employees who have joined the Forces, the Department has taken on forty-eight officers, most of whom are employed in a temporary capacity.

#### CONCLUSION.

Let me state how greatly I appreciate the patriotism of those local bodies and settlers throughout the Dominion who have refrained from pressing their demands for expenditure during the war, on works which in normal times would be considered very important.

I regret exceedingly that I have not been able to do more to relieve many cases of hardship, especially in the blackblocks; but as soon as the war is over and our boys return, ample means will be then available to provide employment for all who need it. The construction of roads, bridges, and railways will be pushed ahead, and thus facilities will be afforded for increased settlement and for increased production.

It is on these two factors that New Zealand has to depend to enable it to bear the heavy burden it has so readily assumed in aiding the Empire to win this appalling war.

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