

## WORK PERFORMED FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

The scope of the Department's usefulness to the State is constantly being widened, and there are very few services under State control for which the Post Office is not in some measure the agent dealing directly with the public.

Among the many branches of work undertaken during the year those deserving of particular mention are the Customs duties collected of a total amount of £185,797, and for the same Department £19,414 for beer duty.

The agencies for the State Advances, Public Trust, and Government Insurance Departments lead to a very large amount of business. The amount received for the State Advances reached a total of £1,366,858, for the Public Trustee £1,389,158, and for the Government Insurance £262,941; while the amounts paid were £1,342,820 for the State Advances and £1,339,116 for the Public Trustee.

Land and income taxes may be paid at any money-order office, and the total amount of these taxes received during the year was £4,415,860. For the Valuation Department fees amounting to £7,162 were collected.

A very large number of claims chargeable to the appropriations made by Parliament are paid through the medium of the Post Office on behalf of the Treasury. Last year the amount so paid in cash was £7,342,587.

For the Pensions Department £736,853 was paid on account of old-age pensions, £51,285 on account of military pensions, £72,712 on account of widows' pensions, £1,017,313 on account of war pensions, and £13,672 on account of miners' pensions.

Contributions to the National Provident Fund collected by Postmasters amounted to £28,470. £183,305 was paid out on behalf of the Public Service Superannuation Fund, and £59,837 on behalf of the Teachers' Superannuation Fund.

Among the items which do not bulk largely with regard to amount but involve numerous transactions may be mentioned the sale of fishing licenses to the value of £1,164, and game licenses £3,943; machinery- and boiler-certificate fees collected, £10,868; mining licenses, £172; and sanatorium receipts, £2,186.

On behalf of the British Government £36,659 was paid to Imperial pensioners resident in New Zealand.

For the registration of births, deaths, and marriages and the performance of the marriage ceremony Postmasters collected £2,852.

Discount-stamps valued at £580 and numbering 556,800 were sold, but the popularity of these stamps seems to be steadily diminishing, the sales being practically confined to Wellington.

The work performed in connection with the payment of allotments made by members of the New Zealand Military Forces has assumed very large proportions, the number of payments made reaching the large total of 855,148, of an amount of £4,495,715.

Some idea of the other services performed may be obtained from the balance-sheet of the Post Office Account.

## TELEGRAPHS.

Owing to the continuance of the war only small supplies of material were obtainable for construction purposes. The result was that labour became available for the overhaul and reconstruction where necessary of existing lines. The length of the line dealt with in each Engineer's district was as follows: Auckland, 445 miles; Wellington, 2,246 miles; Canterbury, 186 miles; Otago, 519 miles; Nelson, 352 miles.

The telegraph revenue shows a marked increase, which is due principally to two causes—(1) the increased telegraph rates which are in force, and (2) payments received from the Defence Department on account of the immense amount of work performed for that Department. The grand total of the telegraph revenue, including telephone exchanges and miscellaneous receipts, amounted to £988,955, equivalent to an increase of almost 14·82 per cent. If to this be added the value of "free" Government telegrams the total amounts to £993,991. The payments made on account of these services amounted to £879,497, an increase equal to about 9·43 per cent. The expenditure for salaries is below normal on account of the large number of officers at the war who are replaced by temporary and other lower-paid officers.

There is a steadily increasing number of bureau communications, the number having increased from 5,040,672 to 5,520,768, an increase of 480,096. The number of telegrams decreased from 5,828,198 to 5,549,107, a decrease of 279,091.

The total number of offices open on the 31st March was 2,354. Of these, 330 are Morse telegraph-offices and 2,024 telephone-offices.

From the 607 private wires and subsidized lines the amount of rent and maintenance received was £4,015.

The various telegraph tables give full particulars with reference to telegrams handled. The total number of all codes dealt with was 12,091,017, an increase of 466,297 over the previous year. The proportion of paid telegrams per unit of population was 10·35.

While ordinary telegrams show the decrease in number already referred to, the revenue therefrom decreased by £8,339. Urgent ordinary telegrams show an increase of 243,293, the increase of revenue being £17,441. The decrease in the ordinary and the increase in the urgent telegrams are no doubt partly due to the restrictions imposed during the influenza epidemic.

The number of Press telegrams increased from 270,352 to 305,226, and the revenue derived therefrom rose from £24,092 to £27,433.

The bureau business, in addition to showing an increase in number, gave a greater revenue by £18,987. At the same time the average value of each bureau message increased from 7·16d. to 7·37d.