

#### POST AND TELEGRAPH AMENDMENT ACT, 1920.

A short amendment to the Post and Telegraph Act was passed in 1920.

In connection with the Post Office Savings-bank, provision is made for the interest-bearing limits in respect of deposits to be increased to £500 (interest 4 per cent.) and £5,000 (interest  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.), instead of £300 and £1,000 respectively, and for the Savings-bank year to terminate on the 31st March instead of on the 31st December. Section 36 of the Finance Act, 1918 (No. 2), under which the Post Office Savings-bank Reserve Account was established, is repealed, and is re-enacted in the Post and Telegraph Act, with the limitation of the amount of the fund to £350,000 removed.

The declarations of Post officers and Telegraph officers may be taken by authorized Telegraph as well as Post officers.

The rights of the Postmaster-General with regard to exclusive authority to carry letters for hire or reward are made more definite by the term "letter" being defined to include any letter, post-card, letter-card, commercial paper, pattern, or sample packet, and any other postal packet of a class declared by the Governor-General to be letters for the purpose of the section of the Act. It is provided not to be unlawful to send or deliver, otherwise than by post, trade announcements, circulars, printed extracts from newspapers, or advertisements that are not addressed to any person, or to deliver any letter by the servant of the sender, or by a messenger specially employed for the purpose, who is not a person employed generally to deliver letters.

It is made an offence to use for hire or profit, without the consent of the Governor-General, any private telephone-line erected prior to the passing of the Post and Telegraph Amendment Act, 1919.

Provision is made for the issue of licenses in accordance with regulations to any person, association, or corporation for the installation and working of wireless telegraphic apparatus.

Power is given for regulations to be made authorizing the imposition of small fines for minor breaches of duty by officers of the Department.

Section 30 of the Post and Telegraph Amendment Act, 1919, granting every officer the right of appeal to the Appeal Board against any determination of his superior officers relative to his classification, grade, salary, or promotion, is extended to allow of appeals made against appointments made on or after the 1st April, 1919; and the Appeal Board is directed to hear and determine any appeals which by reason of the absence of that authority it had previously dismissed or not determined.

#### PREVENTION OF BETTING.

Regulations have been made as under, in order to prevent the use of the Department's services for betting purposes:—

(1.) No private box may be held for the purpose of conducting a betting business, and if any box is known to be used for such purpose, or if the holder of a box is believed to conduct any such business, the holder may be deprived of the use of the box without notice.

(2.) Any person who uses or allows to be used a telephone for the purpose of making a bet, inscribing a betting transaction, or otherwise for the purpose of gambling on the result of a horse-race or other sport or pastime, is regarded as putting the telephone to an improper use, thereby rendering the telephone liable to removal.

(3.) The regulation prohibiting the transmission of telegrams in plain language relating to betting or to investments on the totalizator, or in coded language reasonably supposed to relate to betting or to investments on the totalizator, addressed to any person on a racecourse, or to any person who had been convicted in a Court of law under the Gaming Act, 1908, or any amendments thereof, of any offence relating to betting or investments on the totalizator, has been extended to apply to such telegrams, to whomsoever or howsoever addressed.

These regulations came into force on the 8th April, 1920.

#### LOITERING IN POST OR TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

On the 26th August a regulation was gazetted providing that any person who loiters in a post-office or telegraph-office shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £5, and any person found so loitering may be ejected.

#### VISIT OF PRINCE OF WALES.

Special arrangements were made by the Department in connection with the visit to the Dominion of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

The privilege of free postal and telegraphic facilities was extended to the Prince and to the principal officers of his party. The hours of attendance were extended at many offices, and many special-telephone connections were made for use in connection with the visit.

The arrangements made for dealing with the greatly increased volume of telegraph work were entirely satisfactory. At the close of the tour the journalists from abroad who accompanied the Royal party expressed their appreciation of the facilities afforded by the Department, and the unvarying courtesy and readiness to assist shown by all officers with whom they had come in contact.

During the visit to Wellington the General Post Office building was decorated and illuminated. Post Office buildings at other places visited were also decorated and illuminated, or decorated only.

For the purpose of assisting visitors to the various centres to obtain accommodation during the Prince's visit, information bureaux were established at the post-offices. Persons having accommodation available, whether in hotels, boardinghouses, or private residences, were invited to give the bureaux full particulars. Persons accepting accommodation made payment to the bureaux, receiving a ticket in exchange, and the persons providing the accommodation obtained payment on presentation of the tickets at the bureaux.