

Public Works and the Railway. Under the new scheme the Post and Telegraph Department continues to purchase all of its own requirements, and arranges also for the purchase of certain classes of articles for other Departments.

WORKSHOPS.

This branch is increasing in importance, and to cope with the work successfully several modern machines have been installed. New work undertaken includes the retreading of motor-tires, the manufacture of motor-parts, and the fitting of motor-vehicles with hydraulic tips. The work done for other Departments has been extended to include the manufacture and repair of keys and rubber stamps and the repair of typewriters.

GOVERNMENT MOTOR SERVICE.

The transfer at the four centres of motor-vehicles from other Government Departments to the control of the Post and Telegraph Department has now been completed. The system is working satisfactorily, and should, when the vehicles have been standardized, result in economy to the Government. The scale of charges generally, and more particularly at Christchurch, has been reduced. It may be possible to effect further reductions when the various types of cars taken over from other Departments have become unserviceable and the standardization of vehicles is completed.

The repairs to the Department's vehicles are carried out in the Department's own workshops. Where convenient, motor-vehicles belonging to other Government Departments and stationed outside the four centres also receive attention at our own workshops.

BICYCLES.

In an endeavour to reduce to some extent the Department's expenditure in connection with the upkeep of departmental bicycles, and allowances for the use of private machines, a scheme was brought into operation during the year under which bicycles are issued by the Department, free of cost, to postmen, message-boys, and other officers whose work necessitates the use of them, the machines to be used in the Department's service for a period, in the case of country offices, of six years, and in the case of other offices of four years, at the expiration of which they become the property of the users. The bicycles may at any time be used for private purposes, but the officers concerned are responsible for their upkeep and for any replacement necessary in the event of loss or theft.

POST OFFICE.

Inspection of Post-offices.

During the year Inspectors visited 2,294 offices.

Articles delivered.

The number of articles delivered in the Dominion, including those received from places beyond New Zealand, during the year 1922, compared with the number in 1921, was as under :—

	1922.	1921.	Increase.	Decrease.
Letters	122,949,819	132,038,162	..	9,088,343 (6·88 %)
Post-cards	3,435,489	3,679,519	..	244,030 (6·63 %)
Parcels	3,480,127	3,325,121	155,006 (4·66 %)	..
All other articles	52,192,220	46,136,266	6,055,954 (13·13 %)	..
	182,057,655	185,179,068	..	3,121,413

Average Number of Letters posted per Unit of Population.

1922, 93·5 ; 1921, 99·5.

Number of Post-offices in Dominion.

Offices opened during year, 32 ; offices closed during year, 67 ; offices remaining open on 31st December, 1922, 2,143.

UNDELIVERABLE POSTAL PACKETS.

The following is a comparison of letters and other articles dealt with as undeliverable during the year, compared with those dealt with during 1921 :—

Year.	Returned direct to Senders through Chief Offices.	Returned direct to Senders through Dead Letter Office.	Returned to other Administrations through Chief Offices.	Returned to other Administrations through Dead Letter Office.	Destroyed (Senders unknown and Contents of no Value).	Total.
<i>Letters.</i>						
1922 ..	275,553	201,465	46,061	32,272	25,664	581,015
1921 ..	253,776	226,076	40,528	38,385	37,009	595,774
<i>Other Articles.</i>						
1922 ..	108,101	3,266	34,467	6,996	..	152,830
1921 ..	103,552	2,525	27,813	8,021	..	141,911

The proportion of undeliverable letters to the total number of letters delivered was 0·46 per cent., as against 0·44 per cent. in 1921.