

The repair of telegraph and telephone instruments has been continued, whilst the manufacture of new apparatus has been considerably extended during the year, the principal new manufactures being telegraph machine-printing apparatus and automatic slot telephones. Considerable quantities of telegraph arms and arm-combiners have also been produced.

The organization of the branch has been extended to include a staff of basketmakers for the manufacture and repair of parcel-post receptacles. One of the basket-makers is a returned soldier who is blind.

#### MOTOR-VEHICLES.

At the 31st March, 1925, the following vehicles were in use: Motor-cars, 100; motor-cycles, 136; motor-lorries, vans, &c., 225: total, 461.

The Department has adopted the policy of replacing vehicles as soon as their economical life is finished. The old vehicles are disposed of by auction sale.

Bodies for new vehicles (except motor-cars) are mostly built in the departmental workshops at Wellington. As a general rule, a body lasts the lifetime of two chassis.

The additions to the fleet during the year were arranged principally by calling for tenders, this policy being adopted with very satisfactory results in buying cars, 10 cwt. chassis for parcel and clearance vans and "utility" trucks, ton-truck chassis, and heavy-truck chassis.

Wherever possible the Department does its own repairs. At Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Wellington, Napier, Palmerston North, and Wanganui all kinds of repairs are undertaken. At Hamilton, Invercargill, Blenheim, Gisborne, Masterton, and Nelson repairs of a general nature are undertaken, while at most other stations at which vehicles are stationed running repairs are effected by the chauffeurs. Repairs to vehicles owned by other Government Departments also are undertaken.

Accurate records are kept in a form which readily facilitates the checking of petrol and oil consumption, number of tires used, cost of repairs, cost per mile, &c., and the preparation of statistics in connection with any or all of the vehicles in use.

#### MISSING POSTAL PACKETS.

During 1924 the Department investigated 5,156 inquiries for postal packets alleged to have been posted and not delivered. In 3,325 cases, or considerably more than half the total number, the investigations made by the Post Office resulted in the missing articles being traced or accounted for. These cases may be summarized as follows: Sender responsible for delay, 1,038; addressee responsible for delay, 1,042; Post Office responsible for delay, 424; no delay, or responsibility not fixed, 821; leaving the disposal of 1,831 postal packets undetermined. On comparing this number with the total number of articles handled, the losses are found to work out at .00001 per cent. The losses include packets inadvertently mislaid before posting or lost after delivery, and packets misappropriated both inside and outside the service.

POSTAL PACKETS, 1924.—RATIO OF UNDELIVERABLE TO DELIVERED.

