

The following is a statement of motor-vehicles registered in the Dominion up to and including the 31st March, 1926 :—

NORTH ISLAND.					
Cars	..	..	..	..	54,054
Trucks, &c.	..	..	..	..	12,227
Cycles	..	..	..	..	15,276
					81,557
SOUTH ISLAND.					
Cars	..	..	..	..	33,951
Trucks, &c.	..	..	..	..	5,418
Cycles	..	..	..	..	11,885
					51,254
Total					132,811

These figures do not include the vehicles for which 3,102 demonstration-plates were issued to dealers.

In 1925-26 the number of registrations of new vehicles averaged 2,400 a month, while an average of 150 notifications of change of ownership and 30 notifications of change of garage were received daily.

The contract for the manufacture of motor-registration plates for the year 1926-27 was let to the Precision Engineering Company, of Wellington. Certain difficulties which, owing to the nature of the undertaking could not be foreseen, were the cause of some delay in fulfilling the contract. However, for a new venture the plates present a creditable appearance.

The volume of work in the Motor Registration Branch is rapidly increasing. Several economies have been effected without impairing the efficiency of the system. The requirements of the Motor-vehicles Act are gradually becoming better known to motor-owners, and it is hoped that failures to comply with the Act will shortly be reduced to a minimum.

At present the most common breach, and one which has been responsible for a number of prosecutions, is failure to notify promptly change in the ownership of a vehicle. Failure or delay in notifying change of ownership frequently necessitates a great deal of investigation, and is often responsible for inconvenience to the owner for the time being, who sometimes cannot make use of his vehicle until the various transactions have been verified.

#### DEPARTMENTAL MOTOR-VEHICLES.

At the 31st March, 1926, the following vehicles were in use : Motor-cars, 89 ; motor-cycles, 125 ; motor-lorries and vans, &c., 274 ; total, 488—an increase of 27 compared with the number of vehicles in use at the 31st March, 1925.

The number of new vehicles purchased during the year was 81. The policy of replacing vehicles as soon as they have outlived their period of usefulness is being maintained, and in consequence approximately 50 vehicles were withdrawn from service and disposed of by public auction.

The British Imperial Oil Company, the present contractor for the supply to Government of motor-spirit, provided for the Department at Auckland, Dunedin, Invercargill, New Plymouth, and Timaru tanks and pumps for handling motor-spirit in bulk, the Department being required to pay only an annual rental and a small contribution towards the cost of installing the plants. The question is now under consideration of installing suitable tanks and pumps at several other stations at which bulk supply of motor-spirit is available. As the cost of spirit supplied in bulk is less than that of spirit supplied in cases economy will result from the installing of tanks and pumps.

#### WORKSHOPS.

The maintenance of departmental equipment, which is the chief function of the workshops, was successfully continued. A special feature of the year's work was the renovation of a large number of manual telephones which had been replaced by telephones of the automatic type. The condition of the departmental motor-fleet was maintained at a satisfactory standard.

The principal manufacturing-work executed during the year was the making of equipment for telegraph-line construction and of apparatus for telephone-exchange construction. Further supplies of automatic slot telephones were made. The demand for motor-vehicle bodies for both the Postal and the Engineering Branches required constant production. The manufacture of parcel-post hampers was expedited, and it is anticipated that in the near future the Workshops will be in a position to supply fully the hamper requirements of the service. In addition to hampers, boxes of an improved type were made to meet the demands of parcel-post traffic.

A growing volume of work, both in the way of repairing and in the way of manufacturing, requires to be done for other Government Departments. The value of the services rendered in this connection during 1925-26 was £5,047, an increase of £802 on the figures for the previous year.

The value of all work undertaken during the year was £50,835.

#### STORES BRANCH.

The following figures indicate the value of stores purchased, issued, and remaining in stock for the year ended 31st March, 1926. For the purposes of comparison the figures for the previous year are shown also.

				1925-26.	1924-25.
				£	£
Balance, 1st April..	..	..	..	243,590	289,758
Purchases	..	..	..	701,301	1,018,107
Issues	..	..	..	737,391	1,064,275
Balance, 31st March	..	..	..	207,500	243,590