

1927.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1927.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

SIR,—

Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, 5th July, 1927.

I have the honour to submit herewith the annual report of the Department for the year ended 31st March, 1927.

I have, &c.,

J. HISLOP, Under-Secretary.

The Hon. R. F. Bollard, Minister of Internal Affairs.

REPORT.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

THE year was one of considerable activity in connection with local government. Many new problems presented themselves, and, combined with the usual activities incidental to local government, made the period one of the most strenuous for several years.

Counties.—No new counties were constituted, but the boundaries were altered between the Counties of Waimea and Sounds, Otorohanga and Waitomo, Oroua and Kiwitea, Pahiatua and Woodville, and Taumarunui and Ohura; whilst the boundaries of the Eden, Featherston, Ohinemuri, Tauranga, Waitomo, Waitotara, and Wanganui Counties were affected by the alteration of borough boundaries.

The Counties Act has been suspended in the Peninsula County for many years. An important move was the issue of a Proclamation bringing the Act into force in that county. Action was subsequently taken to re-divide the county into ridings and elect a County Council. There have been for some years past four Road Boards operating in the county, but through the bringing of the Act into force it is probable that these Road Boards will no longer be needed, and at the close of the year consideration was being given to the question of their merger.

Following on the legislation passed making better provision for the union of counties, petitions were received for the union of the Taumarunui, Kaitieke, and Ohura Counties, in the North Island, and the Waikouaiti and Waihemo Counties, in the South Island. A Commission was set up in each case; but in regard to the first-mentioned counties the Commission was of opinion that the time was not yet ripe for union, and the matter was not proceeded with. Certain necessary adjustments between the boundaries of the counties were, however, made. In regard to the Waikouaiti and Waihemo Counties, at the time the Commission sat both County Councils were in favour of the union, and in consequence the Commission did not conduct an inquiry into the merits of union. It was subsequently decided not to proceed further in the matter meantime.

As required by law, the triennial general election of County Councils throughout the Dominion was held on the 12th May, 1926.

Two sets of regulations under the Counties Act were issued. One related to the provisions of the Act authorizing County Councils to assist workers in the erection of dwellings, and fixed the amount of principal and interest payable in respect of advances for the erection of workers' dwellings. The other related to the balance-sheets of County Councils, and simplified the printing of the rate statements, and required the printing only of the total amounts, instead of detailed statements, in respect of each class of rate. These regulations also provide for the deposit of balance-sheets for public inspection at public places in a riding where there is no post-office in that riding.

The Counties Conference met in Wellington during the year, and passed a number of resolutions asking for amendment of the law relating to county government. These resolutions are under consideration.

The Dannevirke, Hauraki Plains, Kaitieke, Kowai, Ohura, Patea, Stewart Island, Waitemata, and Waitomo County Councils passed special orders altering riding boundaries and adjusting representation. The Patangata and Cook Counties adopted the system of rating on the unimproved value.

Boroughs.—No new boroughs were constituted; but the boundaries of the City of Wanganui and the Boroughs of Onehunga, Otaki, Waihi, and Waipawa were altered, necessitating the setting-up of Commissions of inquiry in several cases. The costs of conducting the inquiries by these Commissions were subsequently allocated among the local authorities concerned. The Te Awamutu Borough adopted the system of rating on the unimproved value. The incidence of rating has considerable bearing on the question of borough boundaries, and it is found that where the system of rating is changed in a borough it is invariably followed by petitions from ratepayers whose rates are increased thereby for the exclusion of their lands from the borough.

The Masterton Borough Council passed a special order abolishing the wards in the Masterton Borough.

The Brunner Borough Abolition Act, 1925, made provision for the abolition of the Borough of Brunner. Following on the passing of that Act, a petition was received for the abolition of the borough, and a Commission was set up to inquire into the proposed abolition. That Commission, as a result of its inquiry, found that the Borough of Brunner had passed through its lean years and was distinctly on the up grade. It was estimated that the revenue of the borough would increase greatly within the next few years, and the Commission accordingly reported against taking any further steps towards abolition. The matter was therefore not proceeded with.

Several regulations were issued under the Municipal Corporations Act. One set dealt with the repayment of principal and interest in respect of loans for the erection of workers' dwellings, similar to that referred to under the heading "Counties"; others made better provision for the investment of renewal funds and reserve funds held in connection with trading undertakings of City and Borough Councils, by providing a wider range of investment for these funds.

The Municipal Conference met in Palmerston North during the year, and passed a number of resolutions asking for amendment of the law relating to boroughs and town districts. These resolutions are under consideration.

Town Districts.—There were no alterations of boundaries of town districts. One town district—namely, Putaruru—was constituted; the Amberley Town District was merged in the County of Kowai; and the Kaikohe and Kamo Town Districts were declared not to form part of the counties of Bay of Islands and Whangarei respectively. The Putaruru Town District adopted the system of rating on the unimproved value.

The triennial election of members of Town Boards was held during the year in accordance with the Act, and the time for closing polling in connection with this election was extended in the case of four town districts.

Road Districts.—No Road Boards were merged during the year, although questions relating to the merging of several of them came before the Department from various aspects. It has for long been generally recognized that there is no longer any necessity for the continuation of Road Boards in districts where there is existing County Council control, and it is possible that in the near future opportunity will be taken by those concerned to merge most of the remaining Road Boards.

River Districts.—Only one new district—namely, Elephant Hill—was constituted, and the Upper Dipton and Waikato River Districts were abolished. The triennial election of members of River Boards was held during the year.

The most important matter in connection with river-district control during the year was in relation to the Manawatu-Oroua River District. Arising out of the Manawatu-Oroua River District Amendment Act, 1925, three Commissions were set up to inquire into matters relating to a comprehensive scheme of river-control proposed by the Manawatu-Oroua River Board in respect of the Manawatu and Oroua Rivers. It was found that the cost of the scheme was more than the district could bear, and the object of the Commissions' inquiries was to find other sources from which assistance could be obtained. One Commission was set up under the provisions of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1908, and related to the question whether the Government should contribute towards the cost of carrying out the scheme. This aspect of the matter was dealt with primarily by the Public Works Department. The second Commission related to the question whether the local authorities in the River Board's district should bear a proportion of the cost of the scheme. The third Commission related to the question whether any of the works of the Makerua Drainage Board would be of benefit to the River Board, and, if the Board took them over, what it

should pay. The personnel of the three Commissions was the same—namely, R. M. Watson, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Feilding; A. C. Koch, Esq., civil engineer, Auckland; and H. E. Leighton, Esq., auctioneer and estate agent, Wellington. The sittings of the Commissions commenced on the 28th August, 1926, and the final report was presented on the 27th October, 1926. In view of the fact that the three issues involved were so closely related to one another, the Public Works Department and this Department acted in close co-operation throughout the whole of the proceedings.

The estimated cost of the River Board's scheme is £500,000. In addition, the value of the Makerua Drainage Board's works to the River Board is assessed at £71,975, making a total cost of £571,975. This amount the Commissions recommended should be found as follows: (a) By the ratepayers in Manawatu-Oroua River District, £311,130; (b) by the local authorities in the district (other than the River Board), £59,804; (c) by the Government, £201,041.

The reports were made public, and, in view of the important and far-reaching effect of the recommendations both in regard to the control of the Manawatu and Oroua Rivers and of other rivers in the Dominion, the whole question is receiving very careful consideration.

The Kaituna River Board promoted a local Bill giving it very wide powers, and this Bill subsequently became law under the name of the Kaituna River District Act. The Department co-operated with the Local Bills Committee and with the River Board in considering the various provisions contained in this Bill.

Land Drainage Districts.—Only one new district—namely, Kuku—in the Horowhenua County, was constituted. The boundaries of the Auckland and Suburban, Buckley, Kirikiriroa, Oroua, and Sluggish River Drainage Districts were altered. In particular the alteration of boundaries of the Buckley District necessitated considerable correspondence.

The Hauraki and Horahia Drainage Districts were united under the name of the Hauraki United Drainage District, and arrangements made for the election of a Board for this district.

The general election of trustees for several drainage districts was held during the year. It was found necessary to extend the time for holding the election in some cases, and also to validate irregularities. The powers of the Governor-General to appoint trustees were exercised in the case of the Judea and Kuku Drainage Districts. The power to appoint is exercised very sparingly, and only after every opportunity has been given to ratepayers to elect their representatives.

An important provision in the Land Drainage Act, 1908, gives power to the Governor-General to direct that any drains or drainage-works shall be under the control of any local authority, and that other local authorities shall contribute towards the cost thereof. There is also power for a Commission to be set up with a view to reporting to the Governor-General concerning such matters. This provision was exercised during the year in two cases, and in pursuance thereof the control of a portion of the Hokio Stream, in the Horowhenua County, was dealt with, and also two drains, known as Jones' drain and the Hamilton-Eureka drain, in the Waikato County. In the case of the Hokio Stream legislation was necessary in view of the fact that certain Native fishing rights and the rights of user of the Horowhenua Lake as a recreation-ground were involved.

A conference of representatives of several Drainage Boards throughout the Dominion was held at Wellington during the year, and a number of resolutions passed asking for amendment of the law relating to land-drainage. These resolutions are receiving careful consideration.

Local Bodies' Finance Act.—In view of a number of floods occurring throughout the Dominion during the year, the provisions of section 7 of this Act were again availed of in a number of cases, and certain newly-constituted local authorities had their overdraft for the year fixed under section 3 (5) of the Act. This Act was affected by the Local Government Loans Board Act passed last session, and in consequence of that Act local authorities require to obtain the consent of the Local Government Loans Board, as well as your consent, before they may borrow for the purposes mentioned in section 7.

War Memorials.—The Wellington City Council, Wellington Harbour Board, and the Rotorua and Woodville Borough Councils were authorized to erect and maintain war memorials under the powers given by section 15 of the Finance Act, 1919.

By-laws of Local Bodies.—As usual, a number of by-laws of local bodies were under consideration from various aspects. The by-laws of the Collingwood, Hokianga, Makara, Waikohu, and Waitomo County Councils, and joint by-laws made by several Hawke's Bay County Councils, were approved by the Governor-General under section 109, Counties Act, 1920. Two sets of by-laws made by the Hastings Borough Council and one by the Whakatane Borough Council were confirmed by the Minister under the By-laws Act, 1910.

Public Bodies' Leases Act.—The Hawera County Council was declared a leasing authority under this Act.

Designation of Districts Act.—The name of the locality known as Maxwelltown was changed to Maxwell.

LEGISLATION.

A number of important Acts affecting the administration of this Department were passed last session. The Local Legislation Act, the Town-planning Act, the Maori Arts and Crafts Act, and section 14 of the Native Land Amendment and Native Land Claims Adjustment Act, will be referred to separately later. In addition, a Cemeteries Amendment was promoted by the Health Department, which transferred the administration of cemeteries matters from this Department to the Health Department. A Cinematograph-film Censorship Amendment made provision for the making of regulations for the censorship of film posters. The Fire Brigades Acts were consolidated and amended. An Industrial Societies Amendment was promoted by the Industries and Commerce Department, which transferred the administration of the Industrial Societies

Act from this Department to the Industries and Commerce Department. There was a Lights on Vehicles Amendment, which made provision for bicycles to be equipped with rear reflectors, and exempted vehicles from the lighting provisions of the Lights on Vehicles Act, 1915, whilst those vehicles are subject to regulations as to lighting made under the Motor-vehicles Act, 1924. An important measure was the Local Elections and Polls Amendment, designed with the object of local elections being conducted as far as possible along the same lines as parliamentary elections. One of the principal alterations made was the adoption of the system of voting by striking out the names of the candidates not required, in lieu of the previous system of indicating the candidates desired by means of a cross. This provision has given rise to some criticism, primarily on account of the large number of candidates who offer themselves for election in the cities and larger towns. It is recognized, however, that, generally speaking, the adoption of the system is in the interests of the country as a whole, as it provides a uniform method of voting. Another important provision following the principle of parliamentary elections provided for voting by declaration under certain circumstances. A short Marriage Amendment was passed.

As usual, a number of local Bills were considered by the Department and reports furnished to the Local Bills Committee. In communicating with members of Parliament and with local authorities concerning the Local Legislation Bill advantage was taken of the opportunity to urge—firstly, that more use be made during the recess of the provisions of subsection (2) of section 4 of the Statutes Drafting and Compilation Act, 1920, which imposes on the Law Draftsman the duty, where so directed either by the Prime Minister or by the Attorney-General, of revising local Bills proposed to be promoted by any local authority; and, secondly, that local Bills be forwarded by local authorities to any Government Department which might be concerned in the provisions contained therein in ample time to allow the Department to consider the proposals before the Bill comes before Parliament.

LOCAL LEGISLATION.

The first Local Legislation Act was passed last session, and the system brought about by the adoption of the Standing Orders referred to in my last report proved beneficial. With a view to making the system more perfect and arranging for clauses for the Local Legislation Bill to be promoted earlier than has been the case, all members of Parliament and local authorities were communicated with during the recess and advised of the policy you propose to adopt in regard to these matters in future. A strict scrutiny is made of all proposals which come forward for the Local Legislation Bill, and it may be mentioned here that, among other things, the policy is not to agree to the inclusion of any clause which is of a continuing nature or confers continuing powers on any local authority or public body. Matters of that nature should be dealt with by way of local Bill.

TOWN-PLANNING ACT.

The last reports in which I mentioned the subject of town-planning were those of 1918-19 and 1919-20. In those reports I referred to the various reasons which led up to town-planning being the prominent subject of the day in local-government matters, but public opinion was not then sufficiently aroused to the necessity of localities being developed along town-planning lines.

The increase in the population of the Dominion, the cutting-up of large areas in the suburbs, the enormous increase in building, and the extension of towns generally, brought home the fact that the subject was one affecting the practical problems of the every-day life of the community. Public opinion thus became more developed, and in due course a Town-planning Bill was prepared and introduced into Parliament last session. The measure, with certain alterations, was finally passed and became law.

A Director of Town-planning (Mr. R. B. Hammond), was appointed, and later on the Town-planning Board provided for in the Act, representative of the organizations primarily affected, was set up and held its first meeting. One of the first matters dealt with by the Board was the consideration of regulations defining generally the procedure to be adopted in having town-planning schemes prepared and adopted. These regulations were circulated to local authorities and others interested throughout the Dominion. They were accompanied by a statement prepared by the Director of Town-planning, explaining briefly the general purposes of a town-planning scheme, and at the same time elaborating some of the matters dealt with in the regulations.

During the year the Director of Town-planning commenced a tour of the whole of the Dominion, with the object of meeting local authorities and explaining to them more fully the general purposes of the Act and regulations. It may be mentioned that numerous requests have been received from local authorities and others for fuller particulars concerning the subject of town-planning, and the Department is co-operating with them in every possible way.

Generally speaking, the objects of the Act are as follows:—

- (1) The preparation by the Council of every city and of every borough having a population of one thousand and upwards, and by the Boards of certain road districts in the Eden County, where the Counties Act is suspended, of a town-planning scheme for its district, within three years from the 1st January, 1927. The scheme will be considered by the Town-planning Board, which may provisionally approve the same, and provisions are made for the lodging and hearing of objections. The final decision rests with the Town-planning Board.
- (2) The preparation by the responsible authority, when so required by the Governor-General in Council, of a regional-planning scheme for a rural area. A rural area is generally a county or a small borough or town district. The procedure to be adopted in the preparation of a regional-planning scheme is generally along the same lines as that of a town-planning scheme.

- (3) Other important provisions in the Act include the payment of compensation to persons injuriously affected by a town-planning or a regional-planning scheme; the payment by property-owners to local authorities in respect of the betterment increase in the value of property caused through the operation of a town-planning scheme, and the application of moneys received by a local authority by way of betterment; and a provision whereby all plans for the subdivision of any land to which section 16 or section 17 of the Land Act, 1924, relates shall be submitted for the consideration of the Director of Town-planning before submission to the Minister of Lands for his approval.

As the main provisions of the Act did not come into operation until the 1st January, 1927, it is not possible to give in this report a statement as to how the provisions are working. This will be more fully explained in my next report.

MAORI ARTS AND CRAFTS ACT.

The object of the Maori Arts and Crafts Act, 1926, is to encourage the dissemination of knowledge of Maori arts and crafts. It provides for the setting-up of a Board of Maori Art and the establishment under the control of the Board of one or more schools for the study and practice of these arts and crafts. The Board was set up on the 2nd December, 1926, and held its first meeting in Rotorua on the 5th January, 1927.

At this meeting the Board decided that its primary function was to collect together all the materials which would be useful for teaching purposes when the School of Art was definitely established. With this end in view Mr. H. Hamilton, late of the Dominion Museum staff, was appointed Director of the School of Art, and given instructions to assemble this necessary material. Temporary accommodation at Ohinemutu was secured by the Board, and the Director established there in connection with his duties. The Board considered that this preliminary work would occupy at least one year, and no active teaching would be contemplated until the foundations of the School of Art were laid by this assembly of the teaching-materials. Much information and some material has been collected by the Director up to the 31st March.

TAUPO FISHERIES.

Section 14 of the Native Land Amendment and Native Land Claims Adjustment Act, 1926, gave effect to an agreement entered into with the Maoris under the provisions of the legislation passed in 1924. The primary object of the new legislation is to facilitate the use of a license to fish for trout in the Taupo waters. Regulations were subsequently passed, entitled "The Taupo Trout-fishing Regulations, 1926." These regulations were framed with a view to meeting, as far as possible, all classes of the community. It is at the same time fully realized that, with so many conflicting interests, it will take more than one season to make adequate provision for regulating fishing without imposing any undue hardship on anglers.

LAND AGENTS ACT.

During the year 1,085 licenses were issued and 16 transfers granted, as compared with 1,136 licenses and 13 transfers last year. There were again cases of defalcation under consideration.

ANIMALS PROTECTION AND GAME ACT.

As usual, open seasons for game-shooting and deer-stalking were provided in a number of acclimatization districts. The Government continued to assist, by way of bonus for each deer-tail submitted, in the thinning-out of deer in the South Island, bonuses being paid in respect of 7,302 deer killed. Protection on deer was removed in additional areas, both in the North Island and South Island.

An open season was again fixed for opossums in a number of districts. 1,051 licenses were issued to trappers, and 157,480 skins were taken. Additional regulations were made respecting opossums, and the whole question continues to receive very close attention by the Department.

MOTOR-VEHICLES ACT.

The following report has been received from the Secretary of the General Post Office, as Registrar of Motor-vehicles :—

"The relicensing of motor-vehicles for the year 1927-28 was commenced on the 1st February, 1927. The number of owners who took advantage of the opportunity to relicense their vehicles prior to the rush towards the end of March was, however, disappointing.

"The registration-plates were received from the manufacturers within the time specified in the contract, and were on sale by Deputy Registrars during the months of February and March, but the appeal to register early did not meet with the response anticipated by the Registrar.

"During the motor-registration year, which ended on the 31st March, 1927, the Registrar collected from owners of motor-vehicles the sum of £497,163. This amount, less working-expenses, has been credited to the funds of the Main Highways Board. It is pointed out that the amount

includes the whole of the fees payable for the year 1926-27 (the 1926-27 relicensing was not commenced until the 6th April, 1926) and the greater portion of the relicensing fees for the year 1927-28.

"The increase in the number of motor-vehicles registered between the 31st March, 1925 (99,233), and 31st March, 1926 (132,811), was 33,578. The total number of motor-vehicles registered on the 31st March, 1927, was 162,341, an increase of 29,530 over the previous year.

"The number-plates issued for the year 1927-28 (orange numerals on a black background) were manufactured by the Precision Engineering Co., Ltd., of Wellington. The plates bear a good appearance, and, in view of the absence of complaints, it may be assumed that the standard of workmanship meets with the approval of motor-vehicle owners.

"The following figures show the distribution of motor-cars, commercial vehicles, and cycles, respectively, registered as on the 31st March, 1927: North Island—Cars, 65,470; commercial vehicles, 15,774; cycles, 19,186; a total of 100,430 vehicles: South Island—Cars, 40,443; commercial vehicles, 7,072; cycles, 14,396; a total of 61,911 vehicles: making a grand total of 162,341 vehicles registered in the Dominion."

NATURALIZATION.

Certificates of naturalization were granted to 148 persons during the year, including seven Samoans. In addition, certificates were issued to one person previously naturalized and to two persons concerning whose nationality a doubt had existed.

THERMAL FISHERIES.

Trout-hatchery.—Hatchery operations for the year commenced on the 9th June, 1926, when the first ova were collected, and daily collections were made until the 16th September. Of the ova thus obtained 1,402,000 were disposed of in the eyed stage, the State Fisheries, Sydney, took 570,000, and the balance was distributed throughout the Dominion. 150,000 ova and 250,000 fry were delivered to the Tourist Department for the purpose of restocking the local waters of the thermal district. The Auckland Acclimatization Society was supplied with 580,000 fry for liberation in that society's waters. An effort was also made to supply a number of fry from ova collected at Taupo, but, owing to the rough nature of the journey from Tokaanu to National Park, the "green" ova were not strong enough to successfully withstand transport. The result was that only some 100,000 ova were reared as fry, and these were liberated in Lake Rotorua.

In continuation of the policy of improving the fishing in the lake waters, a consignment of 250,000 Lake Hawea ova were reared to the fry stage and liberated in Lakes Taupo and Rotoiti.

A trout-hatchery has been constructed in the vicinity of Tokaanu, and will be in full operation during the next spawning season. This hatchery, it is believed, will be of very considerable benefit not only to the fisheries in the thermal district, but to fisheries generally throughout the Dominion, as the fish from which the ova will be taken cannot be surpassed in any part of New Zealand.

Fish-curing.—The curing of fish for anglers at Taupo has again been the means of saving a considerable number of fish that would not otherwise have been available as a food-supply. During the season 290 separate lots were cured, totalling 1,316 fish. On the representation of anglers at Tokaanu, similar arrangements have now been made there also to cure trout for anglers and others.

Shags.—The increase of the bonus for shags' heads from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. resulted in an increased number of these birds being destroyed. During the past season 935 were accounted for.

Lake Taupo.—During the year the Department took control of the fishing on Lake Taupo, and many improvements for the convenience of anglers have already been made. Tracks have been cut along the sides of various rivers, clearings made for camping-sites, and notice-boards erected, and a ranger has been appointed to control the district.

In order to enable the Department to maintain and improve the fisheries, periodical reports are being obtained from the Department's ranger relative to the waters in the district, giving particulars regarding the fish therein, the food-supply, the condition of fish, and other matters in connection therewith. There is little need of fear for the future of the district as a fishing resort. Every effort will be made not only to keep up the fisheries, but to improve them, and in this connection the Department will consult from time to time with the experts of the Marine Department.

CINEMATOGRAPH-FILM CENSORSHIP.

During the year 2,751 films, of a total length of 5,415,370 ft., were censored. Of this number, thirty-two were wholly rejected and 202 were passed subject to excisions. There was only one appeal against the decision of the Censor, and the Board of Appeal upheld the Censor's decision.

Commencing on the 1st August, 1926, a record has been kept of British-made films submitted for censoring. Between that date and the 31st March, 1927, 356 British films, of a total length of 427,250 ft., were examined, out of 1,978 films of all makes, of a total length of 3,649,490 ft. The average length of British-made films examined was 1,200 ft., as against an average of 1,987 ft. for all other makes, showing that the majority of the British films were short in length; in fact, they were mostly "topicals" and "scenics."

It is with the deepest regret that I have to record the death of Mr. W. Jolliffe, the Censor of Cinematograph-films, which took place on the 22nd April, 1927. The late Mr. Jolliffe was first appointed Censor in September, 1916, on the coming into force of the Cinematograph-film Censorship Act of that year, and he filled the position with conspicuous ability. Few of his decisions were questioned, and the majority of those appealed against were upheld by the Board of Appeal. Due steps are being taken to appoint a successor.

FIRE BRIGADES ACT.

I have already mentioned that the Fire Brigades Acts were consolidated and amended.

During the year three new fire districts were constituted—viz., Wellington, Te Awamutu, and Mount Roskill—making in all forty-eight Fire Boards now operating.

Further large quantities of fire-hose, fire-escape ladders, and other equipment not manufactured in the Dominion were indented, through the High Commissioner's Office, to the order of the various Fire Boards and the United Fire Brigades Association.

Assistance was rendered by the Department in the carrying-out of the annual demonstration of the United Fire Brigades Association held in Dunedin.

The usual inspections of fire brigades have been held by the Inspector of Fire Brigades, and the routine work required by the Act performed. In accordance with requests received from various Government Departments and local bodies, numerous special inspections and reports in the matter of protection of buildings, water-installations, purchase of fire-appliance machinery, &c., have been made.

PASSPORTS.

An increase is shown in the number of passports issued during the year—viz., 4,048, as compared with 3,863 last year. Renewals were granted in 1,335 cases. In addition, a number of travel documents were issued to nationals of countries not having consular representatives in the Dominion.

RAFFLES.

As foreshadowed in my last annual report, the question of alluvial-gold raffles has occupied close attention during the year. It was found that the requirement that full particulars should be shown on the tickets was insufficient, and the additional condition was imposed that all advertisements, circulars, and propaganda must first be submitted to the Department for approval. With these two safeguards it was possible to see that a fair statement of the position was placed before the public. Experience has shown that raffles of this nature are difficult to control, and endeavours were made in some instances to either evade the conditions laid down or to openly defy them. A number of successful prosecutions were undertaken, both for the sale of tickets after the authorized date and for breach of conditions of the license, and in two instances where agents had broadcasted tickets the controlling authorities were called upon to dispense with their services. The balance-sheets of the later gold raffles indicated a very different position from that pertaining to earlier ones. In cases where a profit was shown the amount was small in comparison with the gross takings, and in several instances a substantial loss resulted. All the licenses for alluvial-gold raffles have now been issued, and for the future licenses will be confined to paintings, drawings, sculpture, or other works of art or literature.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.

At the end of February, 1927, the Dominion was honoured by a visit from Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York. Their Royal Highnesses arrived at Auckland on H.M.S. "Renown" on Tuesday, the 22nd February, and a few days later commenced a comprehensive tour through the North and South Islands. Unfortunately, owing to indisposition, Her Royal Highness was unable to accompany the Duke on the latter portion of the journey through the South Island from Nelson onwards, and returned to Wellington to rest, rejoining later His Royal Highness at the Bluff, whence they departed for Sydney by the "Renown" on the afternoon of the 22nd March. In all, some forty-four centres were visited. As on the occasion of previous Royal visits, a special reception was accorded the Royal guests by the assembled Maori tribes at Rotorua. The tour also included a short visit to Russell for deep-sea-fishing purposes, and a brief stay of two days at a specially arranged trout-fishing camp at Kowhai Flat, on the banks of the Tongariro River, near Tokaanu. The visit was marked from beginning to end by most unbounded enthusiasm on the part of the people, the welcomes tendered Their Royal Highnesses at every centre once again emphasizing the deep-seated loyalty and devotion to the Royal Family that has always characterized the people of these Islands. Excepting the indisposition of Her Royal Highness, the visit was in every respect an unqualified success. The supervision of the whole of the arrangements for the Royal tour was in the hands of this Department, and I desire to take this opportunity of expressing to the other Departments of State that assisted my cordial thanks for their able and willing co-operation throughout. The thanks of the Department are also due to the Mayors, to the local authorities, and to all those concerned in the various places visited, for the loyal and whole-hearted manner in which they undertook the framing and carrying-out of the reception arrangements, and assisted the Government to the utmost of their ability to ensure a warm welcome everywhere.

SOLDIERS AND HISTORICAL GRAVES.

Veterans' Graves.—In conjunction with work carried out on war graves in the various districts, improvements were effected in cemeteries containing graves of the Maori and other wars.

Auckland District: Work was completed on the old soldiers' graves in Symonds Street Cemetery, Auckland; in Lower Mauku and Rangiriri Cemeteries. In the last-named cemetery the majority of those who fell in the Battle of Rangiriri were buried, and the cemetery, which is on the main road to Auckland, has been greatly improved by the provision of a stone wall, arched entrance-gate, and concrete overtops for all graves.

Taranaki District: The graves of old soldiers in Te Henui Cemetery and St. Mary's Churchyards were thoroughly renovated, in addition to which all work, including the erection of a stone wall, was carried out at Ohawe Cemetery, near Hawera. The tablet in this cemetery was unveiled by the Minister on the 13th January, 1926, in the presence of a large number of local residents and veterans of the Maori War.

Canterbury District: The contract entered into for the provision of a surrounding wall and a central monument in the old French Mission burial-ground at Akaroa was completed, and an unveiling ceremony held on the 25th September, 1926, the Government being represented by the Hon. G. J. Anderson.

Annual Grants.—The usual arrangements for annual grants were made.

Great-War Graves in New Zealand.—During the year an additional 110 war graves were accepted, bringing the total war graves to date up to 2,108, which includes eleven men of the Samoan Relief Force buried in Apia Cemetery, Samoa. The number of headstones ordered was 144. The headstone contractors have completed to date 1,478 headstones, all of which have been erected. Temporary crosses to mark the graves until such time as permanent work can be undertaken were placed on 116 war graves. Arrangements were completed for the provision of Soldiers' Cemeteries at Blenheim, Palmerston North, and Christchurch, while the Wellington City Council agreed to set aside an additional area at Karori as an extension to the existing soldiers' block.

Boer War, 1899-1902.—An agreement was entered into with the South African Veterans' Association for the acceptance of all graves of ex-contingents as war graves, where death took place on or before the end of 1902. It was also agreed that if found possible the scattered graves in South Africa should be concentrated into a special New Zealand Cemetery in that country, and permanent work carried out much on the lines of the Great-War cemeteries. This matter is now in the hands of the Imperial War Graves Commission for report.

Great-War Graves abroad.—Progress reports received from the Imperial War Graves Commission show that excellent progress has been made in completing permanent work, including the erection of military headstones on war graves in the various theatres of war and at the bases. Cemetery registers containing regimental and family particulars of those buried in the various cemeteries, which are sold at wholesale cost, were distributed to 1,746 next-of-kin. With respect to the free distribution of photographs of overseas war graves, 1,961 were dealt with.

PUBLICITY OFFICE.

The past year has been notable for a very large increase in the usual activities of the office. In addition many important events have occurred, the principal of these being the visit of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York, during which opportunity was taken to obtain a film and photographic record of the tour. The film was released in six sections throughout New Zealand, Australia, and England. A complete copy was also sent to the "Renown," and it is anticipated that a special copy will be sent to England for presentation to His Majesty the King. A further copy is being stored in the vault of the Publicity Office for future reference. Photographs of the tour were distributed in album form and for reproduction purposes. The office also produced and issued a souvenir book of the Royal visit. A plentiful supply of booklets and photographs was placed on board H.M.S. "Renown" (the warship that conveyed the Royal visitors) for the information of the officers and men.

From a publicity point of view the visits of the cruise-ships R.M.S. "Carinthia" and R.M.S. "Franconia" in January and March, 1927, respectively were taken full advantage of. Photographs and booklets were placed on board, and were greatly appreciated by the passengers. An officer of the Department met the latter ship in Auckland and travelled to Wellington, showing films and lecturing to the passengers. Several smaller conducted-tour parties of American tourists also visited New Zealand during the year.

It is pleasing to note that as a result of the overseas publicity campaign the tourists visiting New Zealand have increased in numbers from seven thousand in 1925 to ten thousand in 1927.

Cinematograph Branch.—This branch has concentrated mainly on the production of the weekly programmes of film for release in New Zealand, Australia, and England. To date some seven hundred pictures have been released, comprising approximately half a million feet of film. These weekly programmes comprise films of scenic, fishing, and industrial (both primary and secondary) subjects, and cover the Dominion from the North Cape to Stewart Island. Apart from the weekly releases, the office issued a special film depicting swordfishing in New Zealand. This film was sold for the New Zealand circuit at a remunerative price. During the year negotiations were completed for the showing of New Zealand films in America and Canada, and the first picture is now in course of preparation. This picture will include brief scenes depicting the variety of New Zealand's natural attractions, but concentrating mainly on the southern fiords and the native bush of the Dominion.

Unfortunately a fire occurred during the year in the laboratory where the Department's film work is carried on, and a small amount of Government property was destroyed. The continuity of the work was not interfered with to any great extent, but it was found necessary to make arrangements for the business to be carried on in other premises. At the close of the year tenders were being called for the execution of the work of this branch, under a five-years contract.

Photographic Branch.—Special attention in this branch has been paid to the development of the colour department, and excellent work is now being produced both in whole-plate prints and enlargements. Experiments have been made in colour albums which have proved entirely satisfactory. An extensive campaign was made in the distribution of coloured enlargements in hotels, clubs, &c., in Australia, and some five hundred photographs were thus treated. In addition there was the usual distribution through shipping and railway companies and throughout the rest of the world. The office is continuing to send enlargements to the High Commissioner for distribution throughout the schools in Great Britain. A highly decorative photographic album was prepared for presentation to Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York. Lantern-slides and whole-plate photographs continue to be sent overseas by every mail.

Publications.—During the year the following publications were issued : Three folders (each 100,000), 300,000 ; “Paradise of the Pacific,” 30,000 ; “New Zealand, Brighter Britain,” 30,000 ; “Summary of Sport,” 25,000 ; “Alpine Paradise,” 30,000 ; “Itinerary of Travel,” 50,000 ; “News and Views,” 60,000 : total, 525,000.

The booklet “Paradise of the Pacific” was the first to include any great amount of colour work, and, judging by comments received through the press and elsewhere, the results appear to have been satisfactory. Several issues of “News and Views” were published, the distribution having now increased to 10,000 copies. This publication is being received overseas with increasing popularity. During the year an advertising campaign was commenced to help defray the cost of production.

Exhibitions.—New Zealand was represented at the Canadian National Exhibition held at Toronto in August–September, 1926, and the occasion was taken full advantage of as a tourist and sporting advertising medium, as well as industrial. Arrangements were also made for representation at a sportsmen’s show to be held in San Francisco.

London Publicity Representative.—From reports received the London representative is continuing the policy of advertising New Zealand by means of films, lectures, window displays, shows, booklets, and newspaper articles. An important advance was made during the Prime Minister’s visit in securing the co-operation of the various control boards operating in England.

General.—In addition to the means of advertising New Zealand already referred to, various other methods were adopted : such as the issue of calendars, a fine series of cigarette cards, newspaper articles, and by arranging for the issue of a special New Zealand number of a New York travel magazine. Six pages of advertising were taken in the special New Zealand supplement of the London *Times* published on the occasion of the visit to New Zealand of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York.

The Publicity Board held frequent meetings during the year, at which a great variety of matters were discussed.

WAR FUNDS.

At the present time there are seventy-five War Fund Societies operating in the Dominion. From the information available the assets held by these societies total approximately £1,200,000, but it should be pointed out that this amount includes buildings, loans to returned soldiers, and outstanding advances. This means that considerably less than that amount is available for future relief, as it is apparent that a considerable amount of the outstanding loans will finally require to be written off as irrecoverable.

During the year a conference of War Fund Societies was held in Wellington, at which forty-one delegates were present. Delegates from the various Patriotic Societies were thereby enabled to discuss the policy followed by their societies in connection with the administration of their funds, thus assisting in bringing about a greater measure of uniformity. The principal question considered by the conference was that of the amalgamation of funds with a view to uniformity in the disbursement of relief, the reduction of overhead expenses, and better investment of funds. The general opinion of delegates was decidedly against any amalgamation at the present time, their preference being to have the management and disbursement of their own funds. From the volume of work performed by the various societies it appeared that the disbursement of relief could not be carried out from a central office successfully, and that it would be necessary to retain the present organization and staffs, and therefore no saving would result from amalgamation, especially in so far as the larger societies were concerned. Other questions considered concerned reconstituting the National War Funds Council and making some definite provision for Veterans’ Homes, the latter question being deferred.

DOMINION LABORATORY AND DOMINION OBSERVATORY.

During the year the Dominion Laboratory and the Dominion Observatory were transferred to the control of the newly formed Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. The usual references to the work of these sub-departments during the period under review are therefore omitted from this report. The Explosives Branch of the Dominion Laboratory, however, remains attached to the Department of Internal Affairs, and will be referred to further on.

ALEXANDER TURNBULL LIBRARY.

Cataloguing.—The number of volumes classified, numbered, and on the shelves now amounts to thirty thousand. The greater part of these deal with Pacific literature. About six hundred volumes were sent for binding, and two hundred water-colours and eight hundred pencil sketches for mounting and putting in Solander cases.

Additions.—Including about one hundred and seventy donated volumes, over seven hundred books were added to the library during the year. The additions embrace works in classic tongues (Latin and Greek), German, Dutch, French, Italian, and Japanese. Noteworthy purchases were fourteen water-colours, thirty monochromes, and about eight hundred pencil sketches by the late S. H. Moreton ; an Index of the *Sydney Gazette*, 1803–42 ; forty original sketches, colour and pencil, by G. F. Angas, writer of “The New Zealanders,” published in 1847 ; and a copy of journal of W. J. Barnicoat, who was present at the Wairau Massacre.

Donations.—During the year there were donations by forty-four individual donors, some of whom made donations at two or three different times, and of many volumes. Pamphlets are not included in the number of additions above. The principal donations were as follows : The late W. F. Barraud and Miss Barraud, Wellington—196 water-colour sketches by C. D. Barraud. Mary

Anderson, Christchurch—volumes of English literature, including works of Burns, Cowper, Keats, Milton, Spenser, Wordsworth, and others. Miss Bender, Wellington—"Arts and Industry of All Nations," two finely illustrated volumes. Sir Frederick R. Chapman—"Thiers Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire" (twenty-one volumes), "Thiers Histoire de la Revolution française" (ten volumes), and other volumes. Messrs. Maggs Bros.—six morocco-bound volumes of their illustrated catalogues. M. Crompton Smith and other members of the family of the late S. Percy Smith—150 volumes of topographical history and antiquities of Lincolnshire, and many volumes relating to New Zealand and the Pacific. Mrs. E. M. Story—"Our Fathers Have Told Us," being a volume of seven hundred pages of typed interviews with early settlers, detailing their early reminiscences. R. W. de Montalk—"Œuvres de Voltaire, Theatre" (seven volumes), Capefigue, "L'Europe pendant le Consulat et l'Empire de Napoleon" (twelve volumes), Dante, "La Vita Nuova," and others. Clyde Carr—"History of English Wallpaper," finely illustrated in colour, &c. Miss U. Tewsley—collected works of P. H. Pearse; Synge, "Poems and Translations," &c. New Zealand Federation of Painters—"The Decorator" (five volumes). New Zealand University—"Bihar Peasant Life," by Sir George A. Grierson, and "Ku Chou Pien" (thirteen volumes). Rev. C. E. Fox—Grammar, Dictionary, &c., of Arosi Dialect, San Cristoval (MS.).

Besides these were J. W. Dafoe, "Under Southern Skies"; Dr. W. Little, "Les Fables de Pilpay"; Professor J. Park, "Maori and Early European Exploration," &c.; A. Philpott, water-colour of ship off Terawhiti, by W. Foster; H. Baillie, "Life of Captain James Cook" (two volumes); J. H. Haslam, "Scenes in Southland"; Professor R. Lawson, "Poems," &c.; L. O. H. Tripp, "Lecture by the Late C. G. Tripp, 1862"; H. R. Butcher, "Biographical Anecdotes of the Founders of the French Republic"; E. W. Kane, "New Zealand Parliamentary Record"; J. H. L. Waterhouse, "Roviana Phrase Book"; and others.

Special attention should be drawn to the donation of the Barraud water-colour drawings, which are of all parts of New Zealand, and are historically very valuable, as they include drawings of towns and country districts in the sixties, seventies, and eighties. Barraud was one of the leading water-colour artists of New Zealand, and in 1877 published a large volume of views of New Zealand in colour; the originals of some of the pictures included are in this number donated.

The donation by the family of the late S. Percy Smith is also very good, forming a fine nucleus for a topographical collection of English county history should such ever be contemplated.

Mrs. Story presented one copy of "Our Fathers Have Told Us" to the British Museum, and she has a copy herself; these, with the copy presented to the Alexander Turnbull Library, are the only known records of the reminiscences included.

The MS. donation by the Rev. C. E. Fox, which runs to nearly one thousand pages foolscap, is good, and is a valuable contribution to anthropology. Mr. Fox is the author of one of the recent interesting books on the Pacific region, "The Threshold of the Pacific," 1924.

The historically valuable Mantell collection, which was received after the 31st March, 1927, will be referred to in next year's report.

A few donations to the War Section of the library still come to hand. There were received during the year, "History of the Black Watch" (three volumes), by Major-General A. G. Wauchope; "V.C.s of the Air," by Lieutenant G. Barnett; "Work of the Royal Engineers, 1914-18," compiled by Colonel G. H. Addison.

Thanks are due to the above donors, whose liberality is doing much to further enrich the library.

Incunabula.—The printing of the great list of the world's incunabula (books printed before the year 1500) was begun last year, and the second volume, "Gesamkatalon der Wiegendrucke," a large quarto of 786 pages (authors Al to Ar), printed in Leipzig, has been received.

Library Conference.—A conference of public libraries, at which the Librarian of the Alexander Turnbull Library attended, was held in Wanganui on the 9th and 10th February, 1927, when matters concerning the general working of public libraries were discussed.

Readers and Students.—Forty-five new readers' permits were issued during the year, and students have been working in the library regularly through the year, day and evening. The principal subjects studied were journalism in New Zealand, Maori land laws, Maori religion before contact with the European, history of particular districts and particular people, &c. Visits were paid to the library by classes from public primary and secondary schools, and Kelburn Training College.

Visitors.—There were about nine hundred visitors during the year, in addition to the classes from various schools, primary and secondary.

Bulletins Nos. 1 and 2.—As noted in last year's report, the library possesses a copy of the rare Zimmermann's account of Cook's third voyage, published in Germany in 1791, and during the year a translation of the book was made in the library, and published by the Government Printer as Alexander Turnbull Library, Bulletin No. 2. A thousand copies were printed, of which about three hundred and fifty have already been sold. It is also satisfactory to note that Bulletin No. 1, a list of one hundred representative New Zealand books, is still in demand. About six hundred were distributed, free, to the chief libraries of Great Britain, Australia, and America, and requests are continually being received from various libraries for copies.

Correspondence.—A great many letters are received regarding books and their values, historical inquiries, and so on, and during the year over two thousand letters were received and despatched.

CENSUS AND STATISTICS OFFICE.

Census of 1926.—The principal activities of the Census and Statistics Office during the past twelve months have been associated with the quinquennial population census, which was successfully

carried out for the night of Tuesday, 20th April, 1926. This is the first occasion since 1871 on which the census has been taken other than on a Sunday night. Other important innovations on this occasion were—(1) the enumeration of the Maori population of the North Island by the same organization as the European population and, wherever possible, on the European schedule; (2) the division of the Householder's Schedule into two forms—the Dwelling Schedule and the Family Schedule; (3) the enumeration of all persons other than actual members of the family on Personal Schedules; and (4) the inclusion of questions relating to income categories and to working-days lost during the last twelve months from sickness, accident, and lack of employment.

Of the seventeen volumes of census statistics which it is intended to publish, four have so far appeared. These four, however, are distinct from the remainder in that they are capable of direct compilation from schedules and returns without recourse to machine operations, in preparation for which a huge amount of coding-work requires to be done. The work of coding is now nearing completion, and the machine-work will soon be commenced. It will, however, be some considerable time before the remaining volumes are available.

Building Statistics.—In spite of the volume of work occasioned by the census, it has been found possible to extend the activities of the Office in various directions. An important addition to the list of statistical investigations is represented by the inauguration during the year of an annual collection of returns from builders giving particulars of buildings constructed and of capital and labour employed, and wages paid, in the building industry. The tabulation of the statistics for the initial year of collection is fairly well advanced.

Accident Insurance.—For many years past a table has annually been published by the Census and Statistics Office giving certain principal items of revenue and expenditure of companies engaged in the business of accident insurance. These figures have been taken from the annual returns of the various companies, which are required to be furnished under the Accident Insurance Act. They were, however, deficient in that they were not accompanied by statistics of assets and liabilities, nor did they distinguish between workers' compensation insurance and other forms of accident insurance. These deficiencies have at last been remedied, returns giving the necessary particulars being now obtained under regulations made under the Census and Statistics Act in 1926.

Rabbit and Fire Boards.—Hitherto the statistics of local bodies collected and tabulated by the Census and Statistics Office have not covered two classes of local authorities—viz., Fire Boards and Rabbit Boards. By regulations made during the year the statistics of local bodies have now been extended to include these two classes.

Hospital Statistics.—The statistics of patients treated in the public hospitals of the Dominion have been substantially improved during the year by the tabulation of information as to operations performed, in conjunction with the disease, &c., from which the patient was suffering. This branch of work was undertaken at the suggestion of the Department of Health, and the figures will throw useful light on a matter which is frequently a subject of much discussion and concern.

Divorce Statistics.—Through the co-operation of the Justice Department, the Census and Statistics Office has been enabled to add to its statistics of divorce a useful series of tables relating to the age of the wife, and the relative ages of husband and wife at marriage and at time of filing petition in divorce. The statistics for the year 1926, which were recently published, plainly showed the influence which youthful marriages have on the divorce rate.

Butter and Cheese Exports.—The Dairy-produce Export Control Amendment Act, 1926, places on the Government Statistician the duty of certifying as to the quantity of butter and cheese, the manufacture of each dairy company in the ward or wards in which an election is being held, that has been exported during the twelve months ended the 31st March preceding the date of the election. To enable the certificate to be given in conformity with these requirements, arrangements have been made for the necessary particulars to be supplied to and recorded in the Census and Statistics Office. Advantage has been taken of the opportunity to compile and publish monthly statements of exports of butter and cheese according to district of production, and the material collected thus serves a useful double purpose.

Wholesale Prices.—During the year the list of commodities the prices of which were utilized in the computation of the index number of wholesale prices was overhauled and revised to bring it into line with present-day standards of consumption. At the same time the number of groups for which separate index numbers are compiled was considerably extended, an entirely new set of groups and subgroups being devised, classified according to the nature and source of the commodities. A second and separate classification was also made according to whether the commodities were consumers' goods (divided into foodstuffs and non-foodstuffs) or producers' materials (for the farming industry, for building and construction, or for other purposes). In addition a separate index of wholesale price of imported items included in the general index number was instituted.

Wages.—A defect of the system of compiling wages index numbers in the past has been that, while the various industrial groups have been weighted according to the numbers comprising the respective groups, no weighting has been employed as between the individual occupations taken count of within the groups. This defect is being remedied in the compilation of a new series of index numbers of wages, now in hand.

In the new scheme separate general index numbers are being prepared for male and for female workers. This is very desirable, partly to enable the relative movement in wages as between the two sexes to be seen, and partly because the index number of male workers' wage-rates gives for some purposes a better indication of the movement in wage-rates than does one covering the two sexes in conjunction.

Industrial Accidents.—The system of statistics of industrial accidents, inaugurated in 1925, with an analysis of factory accidents, was extended in 1926 to cover scaffolding accidents, and accidents to employees of the Public Works, Railways, and Post and Telegraph Departments. So far it has not been found possible to arrange for returns of mining accidents to be furnished.

Publications.—The systematic improvement of the New Zealand Official Year-book, which was taken in hand in 1921, was continued with the latest issue, which may claim to be the best of the whole series. With the yearly addition of new matter, which largely reflects the expansion of the activities of the Office and its investigation into new branches of statistical inquiry, the book has grown from 616 pages in the 1921–22 issue to 1,056 pages in the 1927 number. The inclusion of new matter in the future will in the main be made at the expense of existing matter, where this can reasonably be condensed without affecting the value of the information.

During the year a new publication was instituted by the Office—viz, the “Local Authorities’ Handbook of New Zealand.” This publication, which combines the former Municipal Handbook and Annual Statistical Report on Local Government, eliminating a certain amount of duplication which formerly occurred between the two volumes, has met with a warm welcome from local authorities and persons interested in local government, and the whole of the 1,500 copies of the first number were disposed of almost as soon as the book appeared.

In response to demands for a volume in handy form containing the principal essential statistics of the Dominion, the Office during the year added to its list of publications a Pocket Compendium of Statistics, the first issue of which met with a ready sale at 1s. per copy.

The system of introductory notes which was inaugurated in the case of the *Monthly Abstract of Statistics* some years ago, has been greatly extended during the last year. The letterpress is now probably the most important part of the *Monthly Abstract*, and is certainly its most attractive feature.

Census and Statistics Act, 1926.—Experience having shown the Census and Statistics Act of 1910 to be unsatisfactory in certain respects, it was replaced during last session of Parliament by the Census and Statistics Act, 1926. While not extending the powers of the Statistician in any way, the new Act simplifies procedure and enables circumlocution to be avoided. By treating “refusal” and “neglect” to supply returns as being identical offences, it removes a very serious defect of the 1910 Act. The new Act increases the general penalty for default in supplying returns from £20 to £50, and also provides for further penalties if default continues after conviction has been recorded.

Statistical Conference at Perth.—A conference of the Commonwealth and State Statisticians of Australia was convened for August, 1926, and was held at Perth. In keeping with the policy of co-operation in statistical matters between Australia and New Zealand, an invitation for this country to be represented was extended by the Premier of Western Australia, and Mr. Malcolm Fraser, Government Statistician, duly attended on behalf of the Dominion. A full report on the Conference was furnished by Mr. Fraser on his return.

Canadian National Exhibition.—At the conclusion of the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition, part of the exhibit of the Census and Statistics Office was loaned to the Department of Industries and Commerce for display at the Canadian National Exhibition, held at Toronto in August–September, 1926. The exhibit received very favourable comment, and was awarded a gold medal by the Exhibition authorities.

DOMINION MUSEUM.

Board of Science and Art.—No meetings were held during the year. Owing to the establishment of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, some of the functions of the Board of Science and Art were taken over by the new Council. The publication of the *New Zealand Journal of Science and Technology* has been transferred to the new Department. The manuals of the Board of Science and Art which were under way are being completed.

Museum Building and Accommodation.—Owing to the lack of suitable accommodation for the purpose it has been found necessary to take a further room in the Dominion Farmers’ Institute for the storage of the collection of bird-skins. The old Museum building has been repainted.

Ethnology.—During the year a large part of the Maori collection held in store has been worked over and card-indexed, and further additions to the exhibited collection made. No important additions have been made to the Maori collection. The principal accessions in foreign ethnology have been a number of objects from the Santa Cruz Islands (received by exchange), two Chinese court robes (purchased), and a number of small Egyptian objects (received from the Egyptian Exploration Society). An English brocaded gown about a hundred years old has been bequeathed by Mrs. W. J. Birch, together with an old silver spoon.

An ethnographical expedition to the Kaingaroa rock carvings and to Taupo had been planned, but, owing to the resignation of Mr. J. McDonald, Assistant Director, and the appointment of Mr. H. Hamilton, Museum Assistant, as Director of the Maori Arts and Crafts Board, it had to be abandoned.

Mr. Best has continued his researches on the old-time life of the Maori and has completed a bulletin on fishing, and made considerable progress with a second section of “Maori Religion and Mythology,” the first section of which was published as Bulletin No. 10.

Herbarium.—The principal additions to the herbarium have been the collections made during Museum expeditions in the East Cape district, at Lake Kanieri, Arthur’s Pass, Doubtful Sound, and the Southern Islands. There has also been added to the herbarium a collection from various parts of New Zealand made by Mr. Oliver prior to his appointment to the Museum. A fairly extensive collection of fossil leaves of Pliocene age was made at Dunedin. Research work has been carried out in both the taxonomy and ecology of the native flora, and some part of the time has been spent on investigating the nomenclature of introduced plants. A short paper describing new native species has been published. A report on fossil plants from the Gisborne district has been prepared for publication.

The herbarium has been utilized by various New Zealand botanists, while specimens of both native and introduced plants have been submitted for identification by officers of other Government Departments and the public. Dr. Du Rietz, of Sweden, has, during his stay in New Zealand, made full use of the herbarium for reference and for dealing with his own New Zealand collections.

Birds.—A long-felt want has been remedied by the appointment of a taxidermist, and the collections of mounted birds and skins are being overhauled. Additions include some skins donated by Messrs. Malcolm and Alexander Holmes, and some sea-birds secured from the Southern Islands.

Fishes.—Extensive collections, chiefly of fresh-water fish, were made in the East Cape district, Hawke's Bay, Masterton, Lake Rotoaira, and Wellington, resulting in 300 specimens being added to the reference collections. Approximately 150 eels were collected and dispatched to Dr. Schmidt, of Denmark, for his study of Pacific eels. Mr. L. S. Mackie, Otakeho, Taranaki, presented a number of interesting fish. In addition to other taxonomic work on both fresh-water and marine species, an index and reference list of New Zealand fishes has been prepared by the staff and is being published by the Marine Department.

Insects.—A very large and important accession was made to the insect collections by the bequest of the collection of the late Mr. Charles Lewis Cuthbert Fenwick, of Dunedin, who was one of the most assiduous and enthusiastic collectors New Zealand has known. This collection numbers some eight thousand mounted specimens, including several types, and is particularly rich in the Lepidoptera of the Otago Province. Further additions to the collections were made by staff expeditions to Ohakune, and to Waiho Gorge and other localities in Westland. The transference of the collections to dry quarters in the Dominion Farmers' Institute building has considerably minimized routine work, and has allowed more time to be devoted to more specialized work, particularly the systematic arrangement of the New Zealand Coleoptera. During the year over five hundred visitors have been shown the collections, and lectettes have been given to two hundred and fifty children. As in past years, Messrs. G. V. Hudson and A. Philpott have given much assistance to the determination of species.

Conchology.—The most important accessions have been some dredgings from the Hen and Chicken Islands, presented by Captain Bollons; land mollusca from the Waitakere Ranges, presented by Mr. A. Suter; a parcel of fresh-water mollusca with pearls from Lake Horowhenua, from Mr. R. R. Harris; and a number of rare species for the reference collection, presented by Messrs. A. B. Powell, E. Ashby, Dr. Bucknill, and Miss M. K. Mestayer. A parcel of North American molluscs was received in exchange. During the year the extensive fossil collections formerly made from Clifden, in Southland, have been cleared and sorted for determination by specialists.

Library.—During the year the usual exchanges have been received, and a number of books purchased. A considerable part of the authorized expenditure has been devoted to the binding of volumes, which had been postponed during the war and subsequent years.

International Exchange Service.—Sixteen boxes of publications have been received from the Smithsonian Institution, International Exchange Service, and have been distributed to addressees in New Zealand. Similar action has been taken with postal packets received from the International Exchange Services of Belgium (three packets), Hungary (four), Poland (two), and Roumania (two).

Publications.—No further museum publications have been issued during the year, but Bulletin No. 6, "The Maori Canoe," by E. Best, is now ready for issue. Besides the *Journal of Science and Technology*, the Board of Science and Art has issued a reprint of Manual No. 3, "Geomorphology of New Zealand, Part I, Systematic," by C. A. Cotton. Manuals No. 5, "Wild Life in New Zealand, Part II," by G. M. Thomson, and No. 6, "New Zealand Plants and Their Story," (third edition), by L. Cockayne, are now ready for issue.

REGISTRAR-GENERAL'S OFFICE.

Registrations.—The past year has been a normal one, though showing a slight increase in the registration of births, deaths, and marriages.

Births.—The total birth registrations were 30,093, an increase of some 400 on the previous year's figures. Included in this number are correcting and legitimation entries, registrations under section 27 (after adoption), and under section 24 (special provision for unregistered births). There were 411 adoptions recorded and 345 legitimations, necessitating in every case a new birth registration. There were also 104 registrations under section 24, involving in most cases a great amount of work in assisting parents to obtain corroborative evidence such as baptismal certificates, &c. Maori births registered totalled 1,593, an increase of over 200 on the 1925 figures.

Deaths.—There were 11,886 death registrations (including correcting entries). Maori death registrations numbered 902.

Marriages.—10,824 marriage notices were received by Registrars, on which certificates authorizing marriage were issued, and 10,774 marriages were solemnized. Of this number 2,149 (or about 20 per cent.) were solemnized by Registrars of Marriages. There were 527 dissolutions of marriage recorded, and 257 marriages of Maoris solemnized under the provisions of the Native Land Act.

Officiating Ministers.—On the 31st December last there were 2,014 names on the list of officiating ministers authorized to solemnize marriage, of the following religious denominations: Church of England, 478; Presbyterian Church, 405; Roman Catholic Church, 303; Methodist Church, 279; Congregational Independents, 37; Baptists, 70; Church of Christ, 30; Salvation Army, 158; Ratana Church, 123; Ringatu Church, 45; other religious bodies, 86.

Dentists Register.—During the year 21 dentists were registered and 6 names removed on account of death. Of those registered the qualifications were—Bachelor of Dental Surgery, University of New Zealand, 9; and Certificate of Proficiency in Dental Surgery, University of New Zealand, 11. One dentist was registered under the special provisions of section 3 of the Dentists Amendment Act, 1926.

Searches and Certificates.—The total number of searches made and certificates issued in the Head Office increased from 28,648 in 1925 to 31,719 in 1926, the latter being made up as follows: For Pensions Department, 5,311; for National Provident Fund, 3,518; for Labour Department, 1,918; for Education Department, 844; miscellaneous, 18; other searches (for public), 10,883; certificates issued, 9,227. The District Offices in the main centres made about 2,000 searches for other Departments of the State. As will be seen, a great amount of work is done for other Departments.

Revenue.—The revenue for the year 1926–27 amounted to £18,180 net. This is practically the same as the revenue for the previous year.

Expenditure.—The expenditure for the year 1926–27 amounted to £17,196, which is a slight increase on that for the previous year, due principally to increases in payments to the Postal Department for services rendered (Postmaster-Registrars) and to the Printing and Stationery Department (printing, binding, registers, forms, &c.).

Registrars.—There are now 281 Registrars of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, and 244 Registrars of Births and Deaths of Maoris throughout the Dominion. The policy of the Department is to increase the number of Registrars where the necessary facilities are required by the public and the prospective business to be transacted justifies the opening of new registration offices.

Thanks.—The thanks of the Office are accorded to other Government Departments, particularly to the Postal, Health, and Police, for assistance rendered during the year.

OFFICE OF CHIEF INSPECTOR OF EXPLOSIVES.

Importation of Explosives.—Importation licenses for the following explosives were issued during the license year ending 30th June, 1926: Gelignite, 1,076,000 lb.; blasting-gelatine, 35,000 lb.; A 2 Monobel, 325,300 lb.; Samsonite No. 3, 172,000 lb.; blasting-powder, 96,250 lb.; sporting-powder, 7,871 lb.; pellets, 109,750 lb.; detonators, 1,690,000; E.D. fuses, 334,000; fireworks (packages), 2,361. Other licenses were issued during the same period as follows (corresponding figures for the previous year being given in brackets): Conveyance, 271 (287); storage, 371 (339); sales, 672 (667).

Government Magazines.—Government magazines are available at Wellington, Westport, Greymouth, Dunedin, and Invercargill. The arrangement under which the Department takes over the explosives at the ship's side and arranges for delivery to consumers has worked very satisfactorily during the year. The combined magazine accounts show a small credit balance after allowing for depreciation of plant and buildings, and interest at the rate of 5 per cent. The new magazine at Wingatui was taken over at the beginning of the year, and has considerably simplified the arrangements for handling explosives at this point.

Dangerous Goods.—The regulations under the Explosive and Dangerous Goods Amendment Act, 1920, gazetted in April, 1921, control the storage of petroleum and other inflammable liquids, also calcium carbide and phosphorus. The license year ends on the 31st March, and the following report covers the administration of the regulations for the years ending 31st March, 1926 and 1927.

When the regulations were first gazetted all petrol was imported into New Zealand in cans and cases, and the regulations were therefore prepared with the object of providing for safe storage of these packages. The only petrol stored in bulk was a small quantity decanted from cans for the convenience of garage services in the larger towns, and it was therefore considered inadvisable meantime to issue more than skeleton regulations regarding bulk storage. Late in 1925 one of the oil companies erected petrol-storage tanks in Wellington. It was at first the intention of the company to use the petrol stored in these tanks for filling cans, and to distribute round New Zealand in these packages. Later, however, it was decided to distribute in bulk, and the tanks were first filled in January, 1926. At the beginning of February, 1926, the practice of sale and distribution in bulk was commenced in all the main towns in New Zealand, although at the time, outside of the one installation at Wellington, no provision existed for the storage or handling of petrol under conditions normal and adequate for bulk distribution. To meet the occasion the petrol in most cases was "dumped" from tins into drums or tank wagons, or direct to the underground tanks—a very temporary and objectionable expedient.

Without any opportunity of studying the problem in order to prepare amended regulations under the Act, the Department was thus suddenly faced with the extremely difficult task of organizing the control on proper lines of a method of petrol-distribution concerning which only very few even of the oil companies' representatives had had any practical experience. The situation was further complicated by the temporary nature of the arrangements for both storage and handling. Under the circumstances adequate control for the time being, with the staff available, was an exceedingly difficult matter, and in the exercise of its authority the Department has had to rely more or less upon the courtesy of the oil companies and the local authorities. This is a most unsatisfactory method of working, and in consequence a certain amount of friction in the administration of the Act by local authorities has been unavoidable. It is anticipated that the amended regulations will be issued during the coming year.

Main distributing installations for bulk storage of petrol have now been erected or are nearing completion at Auckland, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Napier, Wellington, Lyttelton, Timaru, Dunedin, and Bluff. From these plants petrol is distributed by rail tank-cars to subsidiary tank-depots (mostly having underground storage tanks) situated on areas adjoining the railway-stations in the main inland towns. From these subsidiary depots the petrol is conveyed to the underground tanks attached to the petrol-pumps by tank-wagons, or, in the case of some of the country districts, by steel drums. The transition period between the case and the bulk distribution is nearly over, and, despite the difficulties experienced, the change has been carried out without any serious accidents.

The storage in bulk will ultimately result in much safer conditions, particularly in town areas, than those existing under the old method of distribution, and a number of fires on premises where pumps have been erected have proved the safety of the pump installation.

Local authority administration: The Act and regulations are administered by all the boroughs in New Zealand except South Invercargill, Kumara, West Harbour, and Winton. They are also administered by twenty-eight independent town districts and twelve town districts forming part of counties. The change over to bulk petrol, as explained above, caused some difficulty in the administration of the Act during the past year, but with a few minor exceptions the administration by the local authorities is very satisfactory.

Departmental administration: The Department administers the Act in all districts other than those controlled by licensing authorities. During the year ended 31st March, 1926, 1,161 licenses were issued, as compared with 1,235 licenses issued during the year ended 31st March, 1927.

Inspection: Practically all boroughs and town districts where the Act is administered by the local authority are inspected at least once each license year. The introduction of petrol in bulk has involved a considerable number of special inspection visits to different parts of the country, both in connection with the erection of tank depots and to explain to the local authorities the conditions required by the new method of distribution.

Cinematograph-film: The regulations regarding cinematograph-film came into force on the 30th September, 1925, and during the license year ended 30th September, 1926, 326 theatre licenses were issued. The inspection work for the year covers practically only the theatres in the larger towns. It was not possible to do more than this, as the inspection staff was engaged practically altogether in controlling the change over from cased to bulk petrol. The conditions found, however, in many of the theatres amply proved the necessity for the regulations, and occasional inspections of country districts have shown that the conditions existing are also very far from satisfactory. It is hoped during the coming year to complete the country-theatre inspection and to have projection-rooms erected in all the country halls.

DOMINION ARCHIVES.

The establishment of a Dominion Archive or Record Office for the proper custody of important historical documents dating back to the foundation of New Zealand as a colony has been decided on, and I am pleased to record the appointment of Dr. G. H. Scholefield, Chief Librarian of the General Assembly Library, as Controller of Dominion Archives. The first action has been to locate and investigate the storage conditions of valuable records held by the various Departments of State. It is too early yet to indicate what has happened to the many historical documents of the early stages of colonization or to verify their existence, but it has been established that a considerable bulk of official papers of the highest historical value has been preserved, including some which were thought to have been lost in the wreck of the "White Swan" on the occasion of the transfer of the seat of Government from Auckland to Wellington. With a view to the preservation of local records, a circular has been transmitted to the municipalities of New Zealand suggesting that they might make an appreciable contribution to the history of their localities by binding and preserving files of local papers. This suggestion has already been adopted by several Borough Councils. It is hoped to arrange for a suitable repository, and commence the examination, sorting, and indexing of the records at an early date.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion I desire to place on record my appreciation of the valuable services rendered during the past year by the heads of sub-departments, sectional officers and departmental officers of all grades. Their hearty co-operation has made possible the successful carrying-out of the many and varied activities of the Department, and ensured the smooth running that has characterized the work throughout.

I desire also to thank other Government Departments for the willing assistance afforded by them at all times.

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The storage in bulk will ultimately result in much water condensation, particularly in lower strata, than those existing under the old method of distribution, and a number of these on occasions where pumps have been erected have proved the utility of the pump installation.

Local authority administration: The Act and regulations are administered by all the boroughs in New Zealand except South Canterbury, West Harbour, and Winton. The Act is also administered by local authorities in independent town districts and twelve town districts forming part of counties. The Act is administered in bulk, as explained above, and some difficulty in the administration of the Act in the past year, but with a few minor exceptions the administration by the local authorities is very satisfactory.

Departmental administration: The Department administered the Act in all districts other than those mentioned in the preceding paragraph. During the year ended 31st March 1932, 1,181 licences were issued, as compared with 1,232 licences issued during the year ended 31st March 1931.

Inspection: Practically all boroughs and town districts where the Act is administered by the local authority are inspected at least once each year. The inspection of pumps in bulk has involved a considerable number of special inspectors to be detailed to the various parts of the country, both in connection with the erection of tank depots and in relation to the local authorities the conditions required by the new method of distribution.

Chemical analysis: The results of the analysis of water samples taken from the various town districts during the year ended 31st March 1932, and during the year ended 31st March 1931, are given in the following table. The analysis was carried out by the various town districts, and the results are given in the following table. It was not possible to obtain samples from the various town districts, and the results are given in the following table. In connection with the analysis of water samples, it is noted that the results of the analysis of water samples taken from the various town districts during the year ended 31st March 1932, and during the year ended 31st March 1931, are given in the following table. It is noted that the results of the analysis of water samples taken from the various town districts during the year ended 31st March 1932, and during the year ended 31st March 1931, are given in the following table.

Departmental Administration

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CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion I desire to place on record my appreciation of the valuable services rendered during the past year by the heads of the various departments, and departmental officers of all grades. Their hearty co-operation has made possible the successful carrying-out of the many and varied activities of the Department, and secured the smooth running that has characterized work throughout the year. I desire also to thank other Government departments for the willing assistance afforded by them at all times.