

SHIPMENTS.

During the year 1,314 separate shipments were made, comprising 22,232 tons dead-weight, representing 123,799 bundles, pieces, casks, or cases, and 27,501 packages of measurement goods, as compared with 18,000 tons dead-weight and 29,000 packages of measurement goods in 1910. In addition, one million salmon-ova were supplied and shipped to New Zealand, besides shipments of pheasants, little owls, one bull and six heifers; the arrangements for these entailing considerable work and careful attention to ensure their arriving in New Zealand in a satisfactory condition.

MARINE INSURANCE.

The number of marine insurances effected on these goods and material amount to 1,708, representing £471,404, as compared with 1,561 and £398,081 in 1910 and 1,121 and £266,467 in 1899.

PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE.

The number of payments made on account of intestate and trust estates dealt with by this office during 1911 on behalf of the Public Trustee was 622, and the amount disbursed on account thereof was £17,893, as compared with 552 and £18,510 in 1910, showing a considerable increase in the number of payments.

I have referred in the attached financial part of this report to the number and value of the deposits by insurance companies under the Foreign Insurance Companies Deposits Act, 1908, and held here on behalf of the Public Trustee.

GOVERNMENT LIFE INSURANCE.

The number of policies registered at this office amounted in the past year to 582, representing £188,419, the amount insured, as compared with 584 and £183,339 in 1910.

The number of premiums received in 1911 was 836, amounting to £5,237 11s., as compared with 834 amounting to £5,233 in 1910, and the amount of annuities paid was £2,432, as compared with £2,170 in 1910.

In addition to the receipt of premiums and payment of annuities, transactions connected with loans and surrender of policies have been completed by this office, as well as the procuring of birth and other certificates from various parts of the United Kingdom.

STATE FIRE INSURANCE.

The number of reinsurances effected with the underwriters through this Department in 1911 was 3,220, representing an amount of £823,436 and premiums of £4,517, as compared with 2,423 and £818,020 and £4,366 respectively in 1910. In addition to these, 3,404 renewals, representing £1,050,223, were effected in 1911, as compared with 2,953 and £901,463 in 1910, and the amount of renewal premiums in 1911 was £6,373, as compared with £5,490 in 1910. The arranging of the annual reinsurance cover with Lloyd's underwriters is effected through this Department, together with any variations therefrom from time to time.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

This office also obtains, under instructions from the Old-age Pensions Branch in the Dominion, the necessary proofs of age in cases where applicants apparently have been unable to furnish proof. Schedules of such cases are received regularly from the Dominion, and the amount of correspondence with all parts of the United Kingdom necessary to obtain proof is very great, and several hundred certificates and other forms of proof were obtained and sent to the Dominion last year. The proofs obtained, however, do not give any idea of the amount of work, as the correspondence in cases where no proof is obtainable is always heavier than in successful cases.

INFORMATION BUREAU.

I attach list [not printed] of the publications, &c., relating to the Dominion which can be seen or obtained at the Information Bureau.

The number of persons calling personally at the Bureau for information respecting New Zealand and the prospects it holds out to those who desire to settle in one of the colonies has been great, and the number of visitors from the Dominion has been even larger than usual during the past year, owing, of course, to the Coronation. These visitors naturally look for considerable attention from this Department, and I make a point of doing all that I can to assist them in seeing as much of interest in this country as possible. This, of course, involves a very great amount of work and correspondence in obtaining special permits for places of interest, and in the furnishing of very many letters of introduction. Many thousands of such permits were secured for visitors last year.

The extent to which this office is utilized by visitors from New Zealand is shown by the fact that 21,436 letters, &c., addressed to them "care of the High Commissioner" were received for the purpose of their being forwarded to addresses entered in the visitors' book. The figures for 1910 were 14,700. There is a steady and constant increase in this item.

I am glad to be able to again report that a large number of letters were received during 1911 containing expressions of thanks and appreciation for the information and assistance afforded by the High Commissioner's Department to the writers. I attach copies of a few such letters [not printed].

The reading-room attached to the Bureau, where files of the New Zealand papers and parliamentary and other publications can be seen, has been resorted to by a large number of visitors and others seeking information.