

## WORK CARRIED OUT ON BEHALF OF OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

The office has been kept exceedingly busy during the year in connection with arranging for the transportation of New Zealand returned soldiers to the Dominion; advancing money to same, and paying accounts, &c., for the Defence Department; obtaining quotations for goods, placing orders and arranging payment for same, wanted by the Departments of Munitions and Supplies, and Public Works; sending special reports to the Customs Department and Board of Trade; performing particular duties for the Departments of Internal Affairs, and Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce, and generally carrying out minor duties for practically all the other Government Departments in New Zealand.

## GENERAL.

As in the past, many people called or wrote for information dealing with New Zealand's War Regulations, legislation, settlement in the Dominion, Customs duties, mining, education, and other matters, and in each case the fullest particulars were supplied. Parcels of literature were distributed to the prospective tourist and settler, and advantage was taken of every opportunity of advertising the Department and generally keeping the Dominion before the Australian public.

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## REPORT OF THE NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT AGENT, MELBOURNE.

Melbourne, 2nd April, 1918.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith my annual report on the working of these offices for the year ended 31st March, 1918.

The work carried on at Melbourne has been of an extensive and varied character. The staff's united efforts in the interests of the Dominion have been reflected in the growing popularity of the offices, and in order to keep abreast with the abnormal times it has been necessary to engage the services of a typist. As a result of the war New Zealand's representation in this city becomes doubly important, the Government placing its seal upon our usefulness by the free utilization of the services provided. Defence matters have loomed large on the list of duties performed, and the presence of New Zealand troops has at times taxed our capacity to the utmost. To soldiers passing to and from the front a cordial welcome is always given; in fact, the Melbourne offices have proved a convenient centre from which New Zealand and Commonwealth Defence matters can be handled, our soldiers and their relatives, as well as our own and the Federal Defence Departments, receiving full advantage of the facilities offered. A useful link, therefore, between the two Departments has been established, and the information supplied to us from both military headquarters, including a regular supply of New Zealand casualty lists, has enabled us to disseminate to anxious inquirers the particulars they desired to obtain. It may not be out of place to express here a word of appreciation to the Federal Defence authorities for their sympathetic co-operation and unfailing courtesy, at all times, when dealing with military affairs of mutual interest.

The bringing into existence of the Department of Imperial Government Supplies and the Board of Trade has also further stimulated the activities of these offices. The purchase of wheat and its distribution by the latter Board, and the purchase of calf-skins by the Australian Leather Industries Board from the former Department, involved considerable work and a good deal of negotiation.

Whilst the above Departments have absorbed a great deal of our time, other Departments apart from our own, such as the Internal Affairs, Public Works, Customs, and Agriculture, have received our undivided attention. The instructions received from the Department of Internal Affairs to issue certificates to desirable shearers and slaughtermen were carried out, and as a result a good many men following these occupations were sent to the Dominion to meet the shortage which existed there.

The question of permits and passports has been a source of much concern to those desiring to visit the Dominion, and we succeeded in many instances in minimizing the trouble.

For the Public Works quotations for supplies have been submitted, and goods purchased and shipped on their behalf, the shortage of tonnage being a difficult position to contend with.

Many merchants' books and invoices have been examined on behalf of the Customs Department, in order to see that their regulations regarding the fair market value have been complied with.

Trading matters controlled by the Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce have been attended to, with a result that an interchange of trade in certain commodities has been established between the Commonwealth and the Dominion, business houses at this end being put in touch with merchants in New Zealand and *vice versa*. Assistance was given in connection with the exchange of stud cattle between the Victorian and New Zealand Departments of Agriculture, and it is hoped that the experiment will bring satisfactory results to both countries.

In so far as the tourist traffic is concerned I can with every confidence say that it is, under the prevailing conditions, distinctly satisfactory. The disjointed direct-steamer service, from Melbourne has naturally militated against the traffic from this port, but the steamers leaving Sydney have carried a full complement of visitors both to Auckland and Wellington, and I think I am safe in saying that the people from Australia have been the prime supporters of our tourist resorts this year. I think there is every reason for congratulation on the results achieved, and I attribute our success mainly to our active propaganda work. New Zealand and its attractions are kept continually before