

be granted to the Otago Medical School in connection with bursaries, and provision for the examination free of Public Health specimens with a view to facilitating the effectual coping with epidemics.

#### DOMINION LABORATORY.

In addition to the usual chemical work for various Government Departments, numerous consignments of scheelite, and several of condensed milk and glycerine, have been analysed for the Imperial Supplies Purchase Board during the year.

The quality of foods for military camps and transports has been checked at frequent intervals. The work under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act shows a decided increase.

The results of a preliminary investigation of the inflammability of New Zealand coaldusts have been published and circulated by the Mines Department.

Owing to the war, more stringent regulations have been adopted for the importation and sale of explosives.

The fees received during the year were,		£
For analysis	.. .. .	23
For licenses under the Explosives Act, and for storage of explosives	.. .. .	1,784

#### CENSORSHIP OF CINEMATOGRAPH-FILMS.

During the past year 2,825 films, amounting to 5,761,570 ft., have been examined by the Censor, and fees amounting to £1,958 have been received.

#### REGISTRAR-GENERAL.

The revenue of this Department, though steady up to the year 1915–16, shows a decided drop from £16,865 in that year to £12,450 for the last financial year. This decrease is due entirely to fluctuations in the number of marriages solemnized, which shows a decline of about four thousand for last year compared with the number solemnized in the year 1915.

#### PRISONS DEPARTMENT.

During the year ended 31st March last the activities of the Prisons Department have grown considerably. Buildings have been erected, several miles of road constructed, afforestation pushed on, reclamation-works proceeded with, farming-lands developed, dairying engaged in, and manufactures carried on. Every class of work has been carried out by prison labour under the supervision and direction of prison officers. So far as the revenue of the Department is concerned, the year was a record one. The cash credits received from other Departments and from outside sources for stock, wool, farm-products, &c., amounted to £15,083. The estimated value of prison labour employed on various works over and above the cash returns was £18,239, and the value of the labour employed in carrying on prison industries, farming, &c., amounted to a further £9,939. The actual value to the State of prison labour in 1917–18 was therefore £43,261, a very fair percentage of the total expenditure (£81,362) on prisons and prisoners during the period covered by the Budget.

#### POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

The amount of revenue collected by the Department during the year was £1,836,256. This includes the war-tax on postal matter and telegrams.

The Post Office Savings-bank business has easily exceeded the record for any previous year. The total deposits amounted to £17,106,529, and the withdrawals to £14,461,169. The excess of deposits was thus £2,645,360, a result which unquestionably shows the confidence of the public in the institution. This satisfactory result has been achieved notwithstanding the fact that an amount approximating £2,000,000 was withdrawn for investment in the war loan issued in 1917. The balance remaining at credit of depositors at the close of 1917 was £29,196,390.