

Fruit.—The samples of fruit occasionally coming to hand show careful selection, packing, and carriage. The apples and pears have on the whole landed in good condition. With sympathetic attention here, and care on the part of the growers, graders, packers, and carriers, there ought to be a profitable market in this country. It has been demonstrated that we can grow the best fruit, that we can carry the fruit, and that there is a profitable market here for the fruit. All that therefore remains to be done is to exercise care, and again care, and again care.

Since last reporting to the Government Mr. C. Wray Palliser has had to retire through ill health. I desire to place on record my high appreciation of his valuable work, and my regret that his health deprived the Government of his services. Captain T. E. Donne has been appointed his successor, and he is now devoting himself most energetically to the important work of the High Commissioner's Office.

From my officers, particularly those upon whom the greatest responsibility has been placed, I have received every possible assistance. In some cases the amount of extra work placed upon them owing to the war has been very heavy indeed, and it has only been by the most ungrudging labour that they have been at all able to cope with it.

I desire to express to my entire staff my great appreciation for all they have done during these trying and arduous times: no body of men or women could have devoted themselves more unsparingly to the work.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington, N.Z.

THOS. MACKENZIE.

APPENDIX A.

HIGH COMMISSIONER'S DEPARTMENT—STATISTICS FOR 1916.

Number of letters received from Dominion and elsewhere	150,234
Number of letters sent to the Dominion and elsewhere	109,658
Number of letters received for visitors and readdressed (approximately)	30,000
Book packets sent	6,070
Rail packets sent	516
Number of despatches, memos, and letters received from Government Departments in New Zealand	4,446
Number of despatches sent to Government Departments in New Zealand	8,346
Number of cablegrams to and from the Dominion—	
Outward	4,340
Inward	2,579
Amount of receipts into Public Account in London	£18,682,395
Amount of payments therefrom	£17,893,835
Number of Treasury vouchers passed for payment on Foreign Imprest Account	14,613
Amount of payments made through Foreign Imprest Account	£4,703,524
Amount of pensions paid	£7,144
Amount of annuities paid	£2,331
Number of orders for goods and material from Government Departments in the Dominion	324
Number of contracts	528
Amount of marine insurance effected	£310,500
Number of shipments	944

NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT LIFE ASSURANCE—

Number of policies on register	626
Amount insured	£210,470

PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE—

Number of payments under trust and estates dealt with	932
Amount disbursed on account of Public Trust Office	£48,685
Number of coupons paid	3,229
Amount of coupons paid	£38,911
Amount of bonds from which coupons were paid	£1,404,550
Amount of bonds matured and paid off, exchanged, converted into stock, transferred, or cancelled and returned to New Zealand	£824,600
Amount of bonds issued for loans, advances, &c.	£12,124,141
Number of bonds	27
Number of cash remittances received	2,919
Value of cash remittances received	£848,070