

## SESSION II.

1918.

## NEW ZEALAND.

## HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR 1916.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

SIR,—

High Commissioner's Office, London W.C., 10th August, 1917.

I have the honour to transmit herewith a report upon the work carried out by my Department during the year 1916. I regret that the great pressure of work upon the staff, and particularly the responsible officers, has rendered it impossible to deal with this matter before, or even now to carry it out in such a manner as to do full justice to the Department. The constant succession and ever-increasing volume of important duties entrusted to the Department by all branches of the Dominion Government Service and others is rendered increasingly difficult to cope with in view of the demands of the military upon the services of the permanent and temporary staff, resulting in dislocation and constant rearrangement with new and untried officers.

I am quite confident that no single Department of the Imperial or Colonial Civil Service is confronted with or expected to carry out such a variety of important subjects as this Department, and I can speak feelingly of the great strain thrown upon this Office.

In these circumstances I feel sure that, apart from the physical difficulty of collating a report upon similar lines and to the same extent as in previous years, it will be recognized that the time of the officers is so fully occupied as to render it undesirable to attempt to supply full detailed returns of all the work, but to refer briefly to them in a general way so as to give a succinct account of the matters dealt with.

To facilitate, therefore, the preparation of the report each branch of the Department has furnished a brief statement upon the work entrusted to it, entering only into details whenever it is requisite to make a comparison or to emphasize a point.

It should be borne in mind that whereas some of the regular work of the Department has naturally suffered in volume owing to the war, the actual work involved has actually in some of these cases been greater owing to the special and novel conditions prevailing, whilst the war subjects themselves have greatly expanded the number and volume of special matters dealt with, increasing the work of the Department to a remarkable degree.

Fortunately, matters have been greatly facilitated by the removal to our present offices, which are light, commodious, and well fitted. As I have fully gone into the matter of these offices in my letter of the 4th May, 1917 (No. 3979), and previous correspondence, it will be unnecessary to enter into further details herein beyond stating that every effort is made to run them economically and at the same time make them attractive, so as to provide a permanent exhibition and advertisement of the resources of the Dominion.

This report covers the following branches of the Department with their various sections, and are dealt with herein under these headings :—

- (1.) General Branch, covering Secretarial, Diplomatic, Cables, Records, and General Sections.
- (2.) Accounts Branch, covering Finance, Insurance, Intestate Estate, Pensions and Remittances, Allotments, Transports, and Indents Sections.
- (3.) Produce Branch, covering all produce (except meat and dairy-produce), also some special war matters and exhibitions.
- (4.) Indents and Shipping Branch, covering also trade priority certificates.
- (5.) Immigration and Advertising Branch.

- (6.) Veterinary Branch.
- (7.) Dairy-produce Inspector's Branch.
- (8.) Library and Information Bureau.
- (9.) Branch for Prisoners of War and Contingent Matters.
- (10.) In addition, the Customs Agent, Mr. Spence, has handed me an account of his branch for inclusion in my report. As Mr. Spence's position is quite independent of this Office, and as no reports have been received from him of his work, I regret I am unable to express any opinion on the services rendered by that officer. I propose to refer to this matter by next mail.

I propose, however, to first give a few general details concerning the whole Department.

The permanent and temporary staff at date numbers 109, of which 19 are on active military service. Compared with 1902, when the staff comprised 19 officers, it will be seen how largely the Department has increased. This fact is further emphasized by the following figures:—

(1.) Despatches received and sent to the Dominion	1916.	1913.	1911.	1902.	1892.
..	12,792	10,830	9,536	5,084	2,586
(2.) Cablegrams received and sent to the Dominion	..	6,919	1,495	1,258	742
..	..	..	..	..	168
(3.) Foreign Imprest Account—					
Number of vouchers	..	14,613	7,342	6,489	3,609
..	..	..	..	..	2,048

The enormous increase in cables and payments is specially noteworthy.

The amount of correspondence is greatly in excess of previous years. The total number of letters received and despatched during 1916 amounted to 259,892 (being a daily average of 831), as compared with 167,014 (a daily average of 534) in 1912, and with 76,756 (a daily average of 245) the average of the eight years up to 1906.

The attached appendices contain some interesting statistical particulars showing the great increase in extent and variety of the business transacted by the Department.

### GENERAL BRANCH.

#### COVERING SECRETARIAL, DIPLOMATIC, CABLES, RECORDS, AND GENERAL SECTIONS.

This branch deals with all matters of a diplomatic nature, and generally with all subjects that do not come specially under the other branches of the Office. All correspondence immediately upon receipt is opened and distributed by this branch, and the work of the final despatch of correspondence is also undertaken. To give some idea of the great amount of work this involves I give hereunder the following figures for 1916:—

Number of letters—					
Received from Dominion and elsewhere	..	..	..	150,234	
Sent to Dominion and elsewhere	..	..	..	109,658	
					259,892
Number of book packets sent	..	..	..	..	6,070
Number of rail packets sent	..	..	..	..	516
Number of despatches, memos, and letters—					
Received from Government Departments in New Zealand	..	..	..	4,446	
Sent to Government Departments in New Zealand	..	..	..	8,346	
					12,792

This branch is also responsible for the decoding and despatching of cables, and the time taken up by this important work is emphasized by the undermentioned figures, which are also for 1916:—

Number of cablegrams to and from Dominion—					
Outward	..	..	..	..	4,340
Inward	..	..	..	..	2,579
					6,919

The Record-room, where the greater part of the correspondence of the Office is filed, forms part of the General Branch. All publications ordered from time to time by the various Government Departments in the Dominion are obtained by this branch, which also undertakes the great amount of work in connection with the mail-boxes—i.e., the regular despatch to New Zealand of all kinds of publications under Standing Orders required by the General Assembly Library, the various Railway libraries, the Defence Department, Agricultural Department, Education Department, &c. A close watch has also to be kept on the war publications that are constantly being issued, so that the New Zealand Government may be in touch with the work of the various committees and commissions appointed to deal with questions arising out of the war.

The branch has had a particularly strenuous time owing to the extra work caused since the outbreak of the war. In addition to the great number of general inquiries, both personal and by letter, and the many matters of a confidential and diplomatic nature, requiring close attention, which cannot, of course, be dealt with in a report, the following deserves special mention:—

#### NEW-ZEALANDERS DESIROUS OF OFFERING THEIR SERVICES IN CONNECTION WITH THE WAR.

Since August, 1914, this branch has assisted a very great number of New Zealand gentlemen desirous of offering their services in connection with the war. Many have brought letters of introduction to the High Commissioner, but a very great number have not been introduced in any way.

Help has, however, been extended in both cases whenever possible, and the results obtained are most encouraging, a prominent feature being the large number of commissions which have been obtained by New-Zealanders in the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service. The cases assisted may be divided into the following classes :—

- (1.) Gentlemen offering themselves for commissioned rank in the Navy and Army.
- (2.) Gentlemen offering themselves in a technical or non-technical capacity, without commissions, in the Navy and Army.
- (3.) Gentlemen offering themselves as munition workers. In a few instances lucrative and responsible positions have been obtained by New-Zealanders under the Department of the Ministry of Munitions of War.

Included in the above are cases of gentlemen who before leaving the Dominion have signed a declaration to offer their services. In such cases there is added to the efforts of the Office to help secure suitable positions for these gentlemen the responsibility of seeing that the declarations are fulfilled so far as is possible.

- (4.) Gentlemen above military age, or suffering from physical defects, who wish to obtain some form of war work, including ambulance-driving.

#### NEW ZEALAND LADIES DESIROUS OF OFFERING THEIR SERVICES IN CONNECTION WITH THE WAR.

A very large number of applications have been received from New Zealand ladies desirous of offering their services in connection with the war. These are described under the following heads :—

- (1.) Trained nurses. These are assisted with introductions to the chief officer in this country of the New Zealand Army Nursing Service, or to the Matron of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.
- (2.) Red Cross workers who are not trained nurses. To these are given introductions to the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem.
- (3.) Ladies without nursing experience of any kind. Many obtain, through the efforts made by this branch, work as V.A.D. helpers, motor-car drivers for various war societies, helpers in connection with the work of New Zealand War Contingent Association, and in various hostels and canteens for soldiers, as munition workers, and as clerical workers in offices.

Many good appointments have been obtained for New Zealand ladies, and the results on the whole have been highly satisfactory.

#### MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1916.

Since the passing of the Military Service Act a very great number of New Zealand gentlemen, called up for military service under the above Act, have sought the assistance of the Department.

The work in this connection requires the most careful consideration, and involves a large amount of correspondence and personal interviews. By arrangement with the War Office, this branch issues to persons a certificate stating that the holder comes within paragraph 1 of the exceptions set out in the First Schedule of the Military Service Act, when they can produce evidence that they are ordinarily resident in New Zealand, or resident in Great Britain for the purpose only of their education, or for some other special purpose, but such certificates are only issued after each individual case has been considered on its merits.

#### WAR CORRESPONDENT WITH THE NEW ZEALAND FORCES.

A considerable amount of work and correspondence has been entailed by the publication in the Press of the United Kingdom, through this branch of the High Commissioner's Department, of the despatches of Captain Malcolm Ross, the Official Press Correspondent to the New Zealand Forces. As soon as a censored despatch is received from Captain Ross a copy is at once sent to the Under-Secretary, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington. The article is then printed for the Press and issued to about 250 newspapers. Copies of Captain Malcolm Ross's cablegrams to "Gazette, Wellington," are also received here for publication, and a wide circulation of these messages is obtained through the Press Association.

#### OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

Under instructions from the Old-age Pensions Branch in the Dominion, hundreds of certificates and other forms of proof of age have been obtained and sent to the Dominion. Schedules of applicants' cases are received by each mail from New Zealand, and the amount of work and correspondence necessary to obtain proof is very great indeed.

#### DISTRESSED NEW-ZEALANDERS.

Many applications for assistance are received from distressed New-Zealanders to enable them to return to their homes in the Dominion. After necessary inquiries have been made, working-passages in some cases are arranged. This work, which is considerable, involves in some cases questions with which it is often difficult to deal.

#### NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT AGENT AT CAPE TOWN.

Considerable correspondence has taken place with the Hon. Major Herbert C. Pilcher, the New Zealand Government Agent at Cape Town, who is doing good work in looking after the comfort of New Zealand troops calling there on their way to this country for training, and of permanently unfit men returning to the Dominion.

## RECRUITING POSTERS AND APPEALS.

A complete set of all recruiting posters and appeals issued by the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee has been forwarded to the Government from time to time, and a number of visitors from the Dominion have sought the assistance of this branch in obtaining for them recruiting literature to take back to New Zealand. A few requests have also been received from institutions in this country for New Zealand recruiting literature.

## TRAINING OF PARTIALLY-DISABLED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS AND THE SETTLEMENT OF EX-SERVICE MEN, ON THE LAND AFTER THE WAR.

Close attention is being paid to these subjects, and reports are continually being sent to the New Zealand Government for the use of the Discharged Soldiers' Information Department as to the measures taken by the various allied Governments. Committees have been set up in this country to deal with these questions.

## VISITS TO THE FRONT.

Before the New Zealand Forces were transferred to France this branch dealt with applications from New Zealand wounded officers in this country who were desirous of visiting the western front. In a good many cases permission was granted by the War Office, and the information gained by the officers during their visits was no doubt of great service to them after they returned to duty. Applications for permits to visit the front have now to be made through the New Zealand Military Headquarters, 8 Southampton Row, W.C.

## MISSING FRIENDS.

Information is continually being sought by persons in this country as to welfare and whereabouts of their relations in the Dominion. This entails considerable correspondence.

## INVENTIONS.

Inquiries are continually being received from New Zealand soldiers and visitors from the Dominion who desire to submit to the responsible authorities inventions which they claim would be of service in connection with the war. In each case the inventors have been assisted with introductions to the Comptroller of Munitions Inventions of the Ministry of Munitions, or the Admiralty Board of Invention and Research, who in due course furnish to this Department a report as to whether or not the authorities can make use of the inventions so submitted.

## APPOINTMENTS.

The High Commissioner's Office is frequently called upon to deal with the appointment of officers of importance for the Dominion, and during the past year this branch has dealt with the following:—

*Defence Department.*—Director of Medical Services in New Zealand—Surgeon-General R. S. F. Henderson; Assistant Director of Infantry—Captain Sir Robert Walker, Bt.; Assistant Director of Military Training—Major James L. Sleeman; General Staff Officer in a district—Captain H. A. Cooper; Assistant Musketry and Machine-gun Instructor—Captain R. Neave; Warrant Officer to Surgeon-General Henderson—Sergeant-major G. A. Gibbs, R.A.M.C.

*Railway Department.*—Assistant to the Signal Engineer of the New Zealand Government Railways—Guy Wilfred Wyles, Esq.

*University of Otago.*—Professor of Clinical Pathology—Dr. A. Murray Drennan, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.P.

These appointments require the most careful consideration and involve a very large amount of correspondence, personal interviews, and consultation with experts.

## NEW ZEALAND PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATES.

The undermentioned members of the New Zealand Legislature, who came to London at the invitation of the Empire Parliamentary Association, arrived here on the 30th June last: The Hon. Sir James Carroll, K.C.M.G., M.P.; the Hon. W. C. F. Carncross, M.L.C.; Mr. C. J. Parr, C.M.G., M.P.; Mr. E. P. Lee, M.P.

Various arrangements were made so as to make the stay of the delegates in this country as interesting as possible. These arrangements included a visit to the New Zealand troops at the front, to the New Zealand training and convalescent camps in this country, and visits to the New Zealand hospitals. Personal clerical assistance was also rendered from time to time to the delegates by members of this branch.

## MEMORIAL TO FALLEN SOLDIERS AND SAILORS, MAORI WARS.

Considerable correspondence has taken place regarding the completion of the above statue, which is being executed by Mr. T. Eyre Macklin for the Victoria League of Auckland, New Zealand. Mr. Macklin has been greatly hampered in his work by the war and by his residence in Paris, but the completion of the erection of the statue has no doubt been effected this year.

## FLAG DAYS.

This branch has gone to a considerable amount of trouble to assist New Zealand ladies who desired to use these offices as a depot in connection with flag days organized to assist various war charities.

New-Zealanders and others continually seek the advice of the Department on a large number of subjects, and a great many expressions of thanks and appreciation for the information and

assistance afforded have been received. The various negotiations in connection with the New Zealand Military Hospital at Walton-on-Thames have also entailed a large amount of work, and the establishment of Peel House and other hostels for soldiers made demands on the time of the staff.

The pressure on the staff of the branch during the past year has been extremely heavy, necessitating continual calls upon their time far beyond the official working-hours.

### ACCOUNTS BRANCH.

COVERING FINANCE SECTION; INSURANCE (MARINE, FIRE, LIFE) SECTION; INTERSTATE ESTATES SECTION; PENSIONS AND REMITTANCES SECTION; ALLOTMENTS SECTION; TRANSPORTS SECTION; INDENT SECTION (since June, 1916, transferred to separate branch of INDENTS AND SHIPPING but briefly referred to in this report).

Following is a brief summary of the work of the Accounts Branch with its allied sections for the year 1916. In order to preserve as far as possible the continuity of useful information, details, and figures furnished in the reports up to 1913, occasional references and particulars are made to the years 1914 and 1915, for which years, owing to the general dislocation and great pressure caused by the war, reports have not, as hitherto, been furnished.

The primary function of the Accountant's Branch of the High Commissioner's Department—viz., the checking and payment of accounts, the receipt of moneys, and the rendering of periodical statements of accounts to the Government—is in actual practice very much exceeded. In the early days of the Department it was found convenient and necessary to combine other duties with those of accounts: hence the branch undertook in addition thereto—

- (1.) The execution of indents received from various Government Departments, local bodies, and others in New Zealand;
- (2.) Effected marine insurances thereon;
- (3.) Transacted life-insurance matters for the Government Life Insurance Department;
- (4.) Acted for the Public Trustee in connection with intestate estates, payments, &c.; and
- (5.) Carried out the detail work of finance.

The comparatively small proportion of each of these items in those days enabled the Accountant and his assistants to perform the various duties with reasonable ease. Conditions are far different now. Not only has the ordinary accounts work of the Department increased enormously (for instance, Foreign Imprest Account vouchers in 1916 numbered 14,613, representing £4,703,524, as against 1,626 in 1886, representing £277,623), but, owing to the rapid growth of the Dominion and the necessity of using the High Commissioner's Department to a greater extent, the work of nearly all sections of the Office has expanded in a remarkable degree, the war conditions greatly emphasizing this.

So far as the Accounts Branch is concerned, the pressure has been so great as to render it desirable and necessary to consider a division of the work. This, in fact, has already been commenced by making the Indents, combined with Shipping, into a separate section in June, 1916, whereby the Accountant is relieved of the responsibility for the ordinary work of that section.

The work of the branch is briefly sketched herein under three headings—viz., (1) Regular work, (2) Special work, (3) War work—as this will show with facility to what a great extent the ordinary work of the branch (which has not lessened to any appreciable extent by war conditions) has been augmented by war work.

### REGULAR WORK OF BRANCH.

The regular subjects dealt with by the Accountant and his staff comprise the following:—

1. *The preparation of the departmental accounts*, which are rendered every fortnight to the Governments, viz.:—

- (a.) *The Public Account*, covering the receipt and payments of public moneys here, and the disposal to best advantage when investment of balances is necessary. This account involves dealing with very large sums of money, amounting to many millions in each year. During 1916, including deposits matured and in some cases reinvested, £18,682,395 was credited to the Public Account, whilst payments during the same period amounted to £17,893,835.
- (b.) *The Foreign Imprest Account*, covering all the ordinary payments made by the Department in respect to supplies of goods, freights, insurances, allowances, pensions, interest, &c. These accounts entail a very large amount of careful detail work. The following will serve to illustrate how this work has increased during the past thirty years:—

1886—Total vouchers 1,626, representing £277,633.  
 1895—Total vouchers 1,772, representing £206,579.  
 1905—Total vouchers 4,158, representing £1,221,922.  
 1915—Total vouchers 13,739, representing £3,623,522.  
 1916—Total vouchers 14,613, representing £4,703,524.

The actual payments, however, far exceed the number of vouchers, many of the latter covering several separate payments.

- (c.) *The Statement of Receipts*, covering all amounts received by the Department for insurance premiums, passage moneys and deposits, and a great number of sundry amounts for various purposes. The number of amounts received in this way during 1916 totalled to 2,919, representing £848,070.

In addition to the above a very large number of amounts are received for special purposes, as comforts, prisoners of war, war distress, &c., and these are dealt with in separate accounts.

- (d.) *The Coupon Account*, being a record of amounts paid in respect to interest on Government debentures.
  - (e.) *The Balances Account*, showing total expenditure under foreign imprest and balances available.
  - (f.) *The Stock Agents Account*, covering stamp duty and other payments made in respect to Government stock.
2. *The General Financial Work of the Dominion in this Country.* This covers :—
- (a.) The preparation of particulars and information and carrying out of details and arrangements concerning the issue of public loans.
  - (b.) The preparation of Loan Accounts.
  - (c.) Sales and inscription of stock.
  - (d.) Preparation and issue of debentures.
  - (e.) Registration and payment of debentures.
  - (f.) Payment of interest on stocks and debentures.
  - (g.) Registration of Government securities held by Custodians, with collection of interest thereon.
  - (h.) Investment of public moneys in London to best advantage.
  - (i.) Arrangements for transfers to and from Public Account, New Zealand.
  - (j.) Preparation of financial cables.
  - (k.) Preparation of financial correspondence with Government and others.
  - (l.) Carrying out arrangements with Bank of New Zealand, Bank of England, J. and A. Scrimgeour (the Government brokers), and Imperial Treasury on financial matters constantly arising.
  - (m.) Reporting to Government on matters of financial interest.
  - (n.) Advising particulars of colonial loans issued.
  - (o.) Keeping in touch with new financial Acts of Dominion and amendments to old Acts.
  - (p.) Income-tax recoveries and declarations respecting securities.
  - (q.) Income-tax commission recoveries.
  - (r.) Arrangements with legal advisers on financial matters, such as issue of deed-polls, security agreements, income-tax recoveries, &c.

This brief enumeration of the financial work carried out will serve to show the great amount of responsible work thrown upon the Accounts Branch of the Department. Most of it requires considerable experience and necessitates an intimate knowledge of matters appertaining to the finance of the Dominion and its Finance Acts. A good acquaintance is essential with the conditions of the London money-markets and the methods of raising public and other loans in this country, besides of the Imperial Finance Acts bearing thereon. The preliminary work in connection with the raising of public loans is considerable.

Careful attention is given to the profitable investment of Public Account balances in this country to ensure that the best possible use is made of public moneys.

Public securities held here occasion a very great amount of work; and the market quotations are carefully examined with a view to effecting any useful exchanges. Recent transactions of a very profitable nature have been carried out in this connection; and in other ways by careful watching considerable savings have been effected.

3. *Government Life Insurance.*—The register of this Department covers 626 policies of nominal amount of £210,470, and necessitates much detail work in connection with the issue of notices and collection of premiums and interest. Considerable correspondence daily arises with policyholders covering questions concerning their policies. This work necessitates care as well as experience, covering as it does policy claims by death or maturity, loans on policies, and legal questions of all kinds arising in connection with life-insurance matters.

4. *Marine Insurance.*—The arrangements for the annual cover with Lloyd's are made. This is an open cover of £30,000 for any vessel. All Government and other goods shipped to the Dominion and forwarded through the Department are insured under this cover, the work in connection therewith being considerable. During 1916 insurances were effected covering approximately £310,500.

5. *Government Fire Insurance.*—The yearly reinsurance contract with Lloyd's is carried out in conjunction with our brokers. The negotiations in some preceding years have involved much interviewing and correspondence, especially when arrangements were in progress with a view to obtaining a more extensive cover. The enlarged cover with Lloyd's has, however, proved sufficient and given satisfaction to the Government.

All detail work in connection with reinsurance schedules and correspondence with our brokers is carried out.

6. *Estates—Public Trustee.*—Correspondence with the Public Trustee respecting claims to the estates of deceased persons and payment of beneficiaries in this country is done. Considerable care is required, as legal questions constantly arise. Nine hundred and thirty-two payments were made to beneficiaries in 1916, representing £48,685. Special matters dealt with in connection with the Public Trustee have occasioned a great deal of correspondence. To instance the most recent I might mention—

- (a.) The payment of interest under Land Finance Act, 1909.
- (b.) Deposits under Foreign Insurance Companies' Deposits Act, 1908. Several of these are held by the Custodians in London, and the issue of certificates, arrangements for payment of dividends, &c., are responsible for much detail work.

7. *Indents*.—For many years past this work has been done under the direct control of the Accountant and formed a very important section of the work. Indents were regularly received from all Departments of the Dominion, and in the aggregate made a large total, necessitating much care and experience in placing of contracts, often for very large amounts. The materials ordered comprised all classes of goods required by the Railways, Public Works, Telegraph, Marine, Defence, Survey, Printing and Stationery, Lands, and other Government Departments; whilst local bodies and others in New Zealand, with Government approval, made use of the Department for obtaining supplies of important articles such as fire-engines, tugs, steamers, &c. Shipments of pedigree cattle, pigs, sheep, horses, ova, &c., have been made from time to time, besides supplies of birds for acclimatization purposes. These shipments entailed very special work.

Since June last the Indents have been combined with Shipping and constituted a separate branch of the High Commissioner's Department, so that, under this arrangement, beyond occasional consultation upon difficult matters arising, the Accountant's Branch is relieved of all responsibility for detail work in connection with the Indents except payment of accounts for goods, &c. Indents and Shipping are separately reported upon hereinafter.

8. *Special Work*.—In addition to the foregoing it has been the practice in recent years to deal with many special subjects, either independently or in conjunction with other branches of the Department. In this connection the following might be mentioned:—

- (a.) Preparation of annual Office estimates.
- (b.) Annual Office report: For a few years prior to the outbreak of war the collation of general matters with details was undertaken, together with preparation of the report.
- (c.) The confidential financial report of the Department: The draft report has for some years past been prepared. This has been a careful record of all the financial work of the Department, but, owing to its nature, has not been made public.
- (d.) New offices: A considerable part of the work in connection therewith was carried out, including the planning of the interior, arrangements for fittings under contract, removal from old offices, &c.

Many other special subjects have been dealt with from time to time, including matters concerning the staff, such as Public Service Superannuation Fund, classification, &c.

#### WAR WORK.

There has in recent years been a steadily growing pressure of work, necessitating a good deal of overtime, but the war has greatly increased the subjects dealt with, and since August, 1914, it has been a severe struggle to prevent work getting into arrears, due not only to the increase in matters dealt with, but also in a measure to depletion of the regular staff by enlistment.

The following will give some idea of the war work undertaken. It is not an exhaustive list, as many other matters constantly arise for treatment, but are far too numerous to detail.

9. *Establishment of Pay and Allowances Office*.—This necessitated the detailing of some of the regular Accounts staff for this work, thus throwing upon the remainder the responsibility for the work hitherto performed by the former. For some considerable time the work was carried out solely by the Accounts Branch, assisted by temporary clerks. Eventually the Expeditionary Force took over the Pay Office from the 1st March, 1916.

The amount of detail work was very great. The Pay Office was almost constantly thronged with soldiers drawing pay and allowances, and it is estimated that over 18,000 payments, representing £118,000, were made whilst under the charge of the Accounts officers. In addition, the correspondence was very heavy indeed, and averaged for some months the despatch of over a hundred letters per day, whilst payments of all descriptions, such as railway warrants, hospital claims, &c., were responsible for much detail work.

10. *Expeditionary Force Allotments and Separation Allowances*.—This has developed into quite a big work, and is carried on with assistance from several temporary clerks. A special register was originally kept, but the card system has since been introduced. Great numbers of allotments and allowances are paid by special arrangements with the General Post Office, and, as an instance of the growth, 3,200 payments were so made in January, 1916, and for the month of December they had increased to 6,170. Others are paid by this Department monthly by cheque, and in December totalled approximately one hundred and fifty. Alterations and additions are frequently occurring, and the correspondence entailed has been and is very heavy indeed. The daily correspondence averaged about seventy during 1916. There are now 2,289 allotments on the London Register.

11. *Remittances for Men*.—Special arrangements for receipt of deposits payable to men of the Expeditionary Force have been made with the banks. A considerable number of cables have been despatched at the request and cost of the men. The detail work involved is very considerable in connection with these remittances. Men are constantly arriving at these offices on furlough to obtain advances from expected remittances, and many thousands of pounds have been advanced in small sums pending receipt of the cable remittances. Other men ask for advances from their private Post Office Savings-bank accounts, and their requirements are usually satisfied by a payment on account pending replies to the cables despatched.

12. *Deferred or Allotted Pay*.—Many requests are daily received and interviews given to Expeditionary Force men who require payments from deferred pay or pay allotted to their accounts in

the New Zealand Post Office Savings-bank. These require careful discrimination to carry out the wishes of the Government.

Many cables have been despatched in this connection during the past twelve months, representing approximately 2,000 withdrawals, totalling to over £30,000. Since the establishing of the Expeditionary Force Pay Office in March, 1916, this branch deals with *allotted pay* and the Pay Office with *deferred pay*.

13. *Financial Matters in connection with the New Zealand War Contingent Association, and the New Zealand Hospital, Walton*, besides other places, have caused a considerable amount of account work, correspondence, and cabling.

14. *Funds for Comforts, &c.*, received from the Government and other sources have necessitated keeping special accounts, whilst the correspondence entailed with contributors and the Government has been heavy. Grants are made to hospitals and others for distribution to New-Zealanders in small sums, and in various other ways the moneys received have been and will be spent to the best advantage, either directly by the Department or through the War Contingent Association and others, in provision of comforts for the sick and wounded, soldiers in distress, prisoners of war, &c. Up to the 31st December, 1916, £154,831 had been received from various sources for disposal.

15. *Funds for Purposes connected with War, such as Red Cross, St. John Ambulance, &c.*—Large sums have been received and dealt with, especially with regard to Red Cross purposes. Accounts are kept, and arrangements made as to disposal of moneys for special purposes. By arrangement with the Red Cross Society, any Red Cross amounts specially for New-Zealanders are dealt with by the High Commissioner. £66,988 has been paid to the British Red Cross Society, whilst other Red Cross sums received and dealt with in other ways amounted to £32,127 at the 31st December, 1916.

16. *Finance in connection with War.—Advances by Imperial Government*: This has been a very important matter dealt with. In the first case details of the arrangements with the Imperial Government for war and redemption advances were carried out, and the sums agreed upon. Subsequent advances have since been arranged under revised conditions. The details of arrangements *re* interest on advances, and capital liability of the Dominion on redemptions, were carefully gone into with the Imperial Government. To the 31st December, 1916, the net advances for war purposes amounted to £9,910,000, and for redemptions to £3,250,000.

*Advances to War Office*: The needs of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force whilst in Egypt was the subject of correspondence and arrangements with the War Office. A monthly payment is made to that Department, and goods supplied and expenses incurred are set against these advances. Subsequent arrangements with the War Office have been made as to a capitation charge per head for New Zealand men in Gallipoli, Egypt, France, &c. The Staff Paymaster, London, is kept supplied with funds required for pay, allowances, &c., and correspondence, &c., is constantly in progress on various matters requiring attention.

17. *Transport Movements—Reconditioning and Discharge, Hire, Disposal of Cargoes and Stores, &c.*—The above has involved very much labour. The correspondence and cabling has been extremely heavy with the Government, shipping companies, Admiralty, War Office, New Zealand Headquarters, Marine Surveyors, and others; whilst the arrangements for reconditioning necessitated instructing Marine Surveyors, with whom matters had to be gone into very exhaustively, considerable sums being involved. Arrangements as to delivery of cargoes, disposal of surplus stores and fittings, have also been carried through. Many payments of hire and other moneys have been made, whilst vessels have been discharged as instructed. Alterations in movements of these vessels occasion much correspondence and cabling.

Generally, this matter has caused and is still responsible for much special work. All the New Zealand transports now come here, and though reconditioning has not been required in some cases, there is a large amount of other work and accounts in connection therewith. The whole or partial reconditioning of many transports has been dealt with, whilst several vessels have required considerable attention in other ways. Much of this is of a secret nature, involving arrangements now current with the Admiralty.

18. *Hospital Ships*.—A very large share of the arrangements respecting these vessels whilst in home waters has been carried out. The supply of funds for the Officers Commanding, payment of accounts for charges of all kinds, including provisioning, coaling, pilotage, water, &c., have been very heavy, necessitating much detail work.

19. *Stores and Equipment for Expeditionary Force and British Contingent*.—These matters covered, particularly during the early part of the war, the making of contracts and obtaining supplies of all kinds, particularly clothing, boots, &c. Much careful attention and discrimination was necessary to avoid acceptance of inferior supplies and payment of exorbitant prices. Difficulty was often experienced, as the usual channels of supply were not available owing to the heavy demands from Imperial and other sources. The British Contingent received special attention, the equipment required being obtained from the War Office and other sources.

20. *War Pensions, Claims, and Payments*.—This is growing into a large undertaking. Forms, accompanied by letters with full details, are sent out to soldiers and their dependants who may be entitled to ask for a pension or allowance. These are carefully examined, further details obtained, and, if in order, transferred to the Dominion for consideration and decision. When pensions or allowances are granted arrangements for regular payments are made. The number of European war pensions and allowances granted and on the books of the Department total 216, representing approximately £10,400 per annum. Many of the claims after examination are turned down for various reasons, the claimants not coming under the terms of the Acts.

21. *Wheat (Supply of): Insurance and Disposal*.—The arrangements for shipment and insurance of the Canadian wheat bought by the Government were carried out. Payment of the accounts of



the Canadian Government were also dealt with. Subsequently, endeavours were made to dispose of some of the wheat to the British Government and others in this country, the assistance of the Produce Commissioner being enlisted in this connection. The whole entailed much correspondence, cabling, &c. The wheat was ultimately taken over by the War Office.

22. *Meat Tonnage (Provision for).*—This important matter was for some time dealt with by the Accounts Branch, and involved heavy cabling and correspondence. Eventually the pressure of work became so great that this subject was taken over and has since been dealt with by the Government Veterinarian and included hereinafter in the particulars of that branch.

23. *Meat, Cheese, Wool, Scheelite, and Milk Supplies.*—The receipt of and disposal of moneys in connection with the above has caused a great deal of detail work in accounts, cables, and correspondence. Up to the 31st December, 1916, we received in many varying amounts a total of £16,746,315 10s. 2d., whilst arrangements for transfers to the Public Account, Wellington, from London in 1915 totalled £4,990,000, and in 1916 £6,338,750.

24. *War Distress (Civil) Funds.*—The carrying-out of the arrangements as to disposal of these funds is dealt with by the Relief Commissioner. The actual payments are considerable in number, and are made by the Accounts Branch in accordance with the authorities received, whilst moneys authorized for payment and not immediately dealt with are passed to the War Distress Account, a considerable portion being on monthly deposit at 4 per cent. or over. Up to the 31st December last £761,467 had been received from Government and other sources for this purpose.

25. *War Risk Insurances.*—This has developed into almost daily cables to and from New Zealand for effecting covers with the Imperial War Risks Office and Lloyd's on shipments of all kinds to this country. In addition, insurances on outward shipments are also arranged for. The receipt and checking of policies, cabling, and correspondence has added considerably to the general work.

26. Many other war matters have received attention, either independently or in conjunction with other branches. Amongst others might be mentioned—

War enlistment of officers of Department.

Provision for prisoners of war.

Pay, allowances, &c., of New Zealand officers in training.

Pay, allowances, and other accounts in connection with New Zealand ships of war

Pensions, &c., of Imperial Reservists and others.

Disposal of Samoan coin, &c.

27. The following brief details of the many financial transactions during 1916 will no doubt prove interesting, and show not only the large number but also the magnitude of the sums dealt with :—

- (a.) During 1916 we received on account of purchases of New Zealand produce for the Imperial Government—From the Board of Trade : Meat, £7,660,000. From the War Office : Wool, £1,700,000 ; cheese, £661,104 6s. 1d. From the Ministry of Munitions : Scheelite, £50,893. From the War Office : Condensed milk, £13,018 4s. 1d. ; oats, £40,199 13s. 9d.
- (b.) The net advances made by the Imperial Government in 1916 for war purposes amounted to £3,710,000.
- (c.) The sum of £245,287 13s. 7d. was received from the War Office for purchase of Canadian wheat held by the New Zealand Government in Canada.
- (d.) For shipments of silver and bronze coin to the Dominion £213,300 was collected from the banks and paid over to the Royal Mint.
- (e.) To enable the profitable and temporary investments of Public Account balances, Imperial Treasury bills amounting to £8,400,000 have been purchased during 1916. This involved thirty-three transactions. The discount rates commenced at 5 per cent., dropped to  $4\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. for a short period, but rose again to 5 per cent., whilst for the last half of the year  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. was received. The total discount amounted to £172,117.
- (f.) £2,500,000 was transferred from the Public Account, Wellington, during 1916 for temporary investment.
- (g.) £215,000 was transferred from the Public Account, Wellington, to meet debentures maturing in London on the 1st December, 1916—viz., £205,000 under State-guaranteed Advances Acts, 1909 and 1910 (Settlers), £10,000 under Aid to Public Works and Land Settlement Act, 1901.
- (h.) The War Office refunded £19,603 10s. 1d. value of stores taken over by Imperial Government and for which advances had been made by New Zealand.
- (i.) Sums amounting to £47,628 were received in 1916 on account of oats shipped ex transports and sold in market.
- (j.) Various debentures matured and were paid off in 1916, viz. :—

£

- 8,100 under Land for Settlements Act, 1908 : 1st January.
- 1,300 under Aid to Public Works and Land Settlement Act, 1901 : 1st January.
- 499,700 under Wellington and Manawatu Railway Purchase Act, 1908 : 1st March.
- 100,000 under Government Advances to Settlers Act, 1908 : 1st March.
- 500 under Canterbury Loan Ordinance Act, 1862 : 30th June.
- 205,000 under State-guaranteed Advances Acts, 1909 and 1910 (Settlers) : 1st December.
- 10,000 under Aid to Public Works and Lands Settlement Act, 1901 : 1st December.

£824,600

- (k.) Transfers amounting to £6,338,750 were made to the Public Account, Wellington, during 1916 on account of produce-moneys, &c.
- (l.) Payments of interest on New Zealand debentures domiciled at this Office have been made at various times throughout the year. The amount totalled £38,911, representing 3,229 coupons from bonds of a nominal amount of £1,404,550.
- (m.) The amounts of stock interest paid to the Bank of England were as follows: £435,285 2s 4d. on £10,884,628, 4-per-cent. stock, 1943-63; £289,799 8s. on £9,659,980 1s. 1d., 3-per-cent. stock, 1945; £1,204,016 1s. 6d. on £30,100,402, 4-per-cent. stock, 1929; £614,812 12s. 4d. on £17,568,932, 3½-per-cent. stock, 1940: whilst for interest on outstanding debentures (£1,567,200 of October, 1913 loan, for £3,500,000) the interest paid was £62,688.
- (n.) Interest paid to the Imperial Government on outstanding war and redemption advances amounted to £504,095 9s. 7d.
- (o.) The Bank of England charges for management of stock and bonds amounted to £23,250 6s. 5d.
- (p.) Towards maintenance of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force periodical advances were made to the War Office during 1916 amounting to £585,000, and totalling with previous sums £1,305,000.
- (q.) Payments made to Staff Paymaster in London for pay of troops, &c., totalled in 1916 £712,000.
- (r.) The securities held by the Custodians in London, including Treasury bills, amounted at the 31st March, 1917, to £11,521,410, whilst £137,700 was held on behalf of the Public Trustee and £450,000 was on temporary deposit. Considerable work is involved in connection therewith, whilst during 1916 very favourable conversion operations were carried out with the Reserve Fund securities, increasing both the capital and interest.
- (s.) The amounts paid on money-order accounts in 1916 totalled £168,517.
- (t.) The receipts into the Public Account during 1916 totalled £18,682,394 12s. 4d., including repayments of sums temporarily invested, whilst the corresponding payments were £17,893,835.
- (u.) Payments made through the Foregin Imprest Account amounted to £4,703,524, representing 14,613 vouchers. This shows a tremendous increase over pre-war figures, viz.: 1913—£2,164,117 13s. 7d.; vouchers, 7,342. 1902—£718,846; vouchers, 3,609.

28. The foregoing, while not exhaustive, will give a very fair indication of the activities of the Accounts Branch and the extent and variety of subjects dealt with. For a long time past, owing to the magnitude and responsibility of the work, a very severe strain has been placed upon the Accountant and his staff, and only by working very long hours day after day for the last three years has it been at all possible to cope successfully with it. The staff employed in the Accountant's Branch thirty years ago comprised the Accountant and two clerks. At the present time, inclusive of allotments, the staff numbers twenty-seven, and with Indents and Shipping thirty-six.

A very good indication of the greatly increased amount of work thrown upon the Accounts Branch (including Indents) by the war is given in the following figures of letters and memoranda despatched to the Government covering matters dealt with by this Department:—

1914—Prior to war	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,084
1914—During war	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,511
1915	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,120
1916	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,919
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	14,634

Out of a total of 22,011 despatched from all branches of the High Commissioner's Department.

A special report upon the financial work of the Department is in course of preparation. This report it is usual to treat as confidential, and it is hoped to forward it by an early mail.

### PRODUCE BRANCH.

#### COVERING ALL PRODUCE (EXCEPT MEAT AND DAIRY) EXHIBITIONS AND SPECIAL WAR MATTERS.

The Produce Branch deals with all matters concerning the products of the agricultural and pastoral industries of the Dominion (other than meat and dairy-produce), and also with those of the forestal and mining industries generally. It is consequently responsible for all matters in regard to wool, hemp, grain, hops, fruit, honey, timber, kauri-gum, scheelite, &c.

The branch keeps in touch with brokers, merchants, and others interested in the handling and sale of the various lines imported to this country. The periodical public sales of New Zealand produce in London are attended, and cables are despatched to Wellington, and reports furnished on the prices realized and the conditions of supply and demand and the general features of the markets. As will be recognized, these lines are so numerous that it is necessary to be familiar with the several markets in order to supply reliable information.

General inquiries, both personal and by letter, are many, and of specially varied type, ranging from bees to sheep-farming, apple-growing to land-buying, ironsand to timber, &c. Information, as full as possible, on all matters is always supplied. Trade inquiries are numerous, and requests for statistical and other information are also dealt with. Particulars of produce-shipments are regularly supplied to the Press, and details of new regulations governing the grading or export of the products under notice are furnished to trade newspapers, brokers' associations, &c.

Many visitors from the Dominion avail themselves of the details concerning the distribution of New Zealand produce in this country that they are able to obtain from the Produce Branch, and many expressions of satisfaction with the assistance afforded them have been received.

An important part of the work of the branch lies in the arrangement at exhibitions, shows, &c., of displays of New Zealand products and manufactures, and demonstrations of the scenic and other attractions of the Dominion, with the view not only of fostering trade with the Mother-country and the outside world, but also of bringing to the notice of the public the advantages of New Zealand as a field for the settler, tourist, and sportsman.

The new offices in the Strand are being used for displaying samples of our products, &c., and furnishing information in respect thereto. At present, owing to the war, our range of goods is limited. The future possibilities of enlarged trade are being carefully watched and developed.

The Produce Commissioner also undertakes lectures throughout the country in connection with the Emigration Branch, and at the request of the Victoria League gives lectures under their auspices on the Dominion. By means of these lectures considerable interest is aroused which is of benefit to the Dominion.

#### EFFECT OF THE WAR.

The outbreak of war has considerably affected the work of the branch. Though certain of its normal activities have for the time become less urgent, the amount of purely "war work" added to its duties has more than made up the difference, and the whole energies of a somewhat increased staff have been required to cope with the altered situation.

In the produce-markets wool, hemp, and grain have enjoyed steadier markets on account of conditions brought about by the war, but kauri-gum has fallen into disuse for the same reason. The importation of hops is now forbidden, except under license. No shipments of apples on commercial lines have come to hand, although a few for exhibition purposes have been dealt with. The export of timber is at a standstill. No exhibitions, except of fruit, have been held since 1914.

Under the direction of the High Commissioner the Produce Branch has undertaken the following extra duties, which may generally be described as "war work":—

1. Distribution of gifts in kind and money sent from New Zealand for the relief of distress amongst the peoples of this country and of all the allied nations.

Taking the two classes of relief work separately, and dealing first of all with the gift goods, the branch has had to deal up to date with 202 separate shipments from the Dominion. These have comprised—

Mutton .. ..	10,888 carcasses.	Barley .. ..	66 sacks.
Lamb .. ..	583 "	Wheat .. ..	15 "
Beef .. ..	122 quarters.	Peas .. ..	27 "
Rabbits and hares ..	152 crates.	Clothing .. ..	2,864 cases.
Bacon .. ..	9 cases.	Blankets .. ..	57 bales.
Butter .. ..	136 boxes.	Toys .. ..	2 cases.
Cheese .. ..	92 crates.	Jam .. ..	73 "
Flour .. ..	18 sacks.	Books .. ..	1 case.
Gerstena .. ..	20 "	Hospital gifts ..	203 cases.

It is only by careful organization that the branch has been able to cope with the work involved. Considerable correspondence has been necessary with the donors and the Government in Wellington, with various agencies undertaking relief work in this country, and with dock and transport companies, &c. In every case care has been taken, by inquiries through official and other channels, that only organizations of good standing and individuals of unimpeachable character have been entrusted with gift goods from the Dominion. The majority of the cases of clothing, &c., received have been specially earmarked for distribution in certain channels—*i.e.*, British relief, Belgian relief in England and in Belgium, and so on—but in other instances the greatest discretion has had to be exercised in choosing the recipients for the distribution of the gifts.

The total sum of money remitted to the High Commissioner from New Zealand for war relief purposes amounts to £761,466 17s. 6d. This was allotted as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
For British distress .. ..	163,662	17	7
For Belgian .. ..	575,602	12	3
For Allies .. ..	22,201	7	8
	<u>£761,466</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>6</u>

In nearly every case the donors or subscribers express a desire as to the purpose for which their contributions are intended, but in many instances the distribution is left entirely in the hands of the High Commissioner. Here again many inquiries have had to be made to ensure that the money should be disbursed to the best possible advantage, and much work has been necessary in effecting satisfactory distribution of this large sum.

2. Representing to the Ministry of Munitions and the Admiralty the needs of New Zealand firms in regard to both raw material and manufactures from this country, and obtaining permits to enable their agents to purchase and their suppliers to proceed with such orders under the various Priority Classification regulations issued by the controlling authorities.

It will be recalled that for the better prosecution of the war the British Government have taken control of all works and factories capable of being employed in the manufacture of munitions, and have also built many others for the same purpose. They have also taken control of practically all

raw material, metals, textiles, dyes, &c., and of the output of such things as small tools and machine tools, certain kinds of electrical apparatus, &c. Complementary to the scheme, regulations have been issued governing the conditions on which material and labour can be employed, and all orders, whether from home or oversea, and whether for actual war purposes or ordinary civil use, have had to be classified before suppliers could proceed with their manufacture. It is in this connection that the High Commissioner's help has been sought on behalf of New Zealand firms, and the Produce Branch has rendered great assistance in obtaining all kinds of materials and manufactures, over 300 separate cases being in hand or completed up to date.

3. The branch has also, under instructions of the High Commissioner, dealt with requests on behalf of New Zealand firms for assistance in obtaining from the War Trade Department licenses to enable shipments to be made to the Dominion. The list of prohibited exports under the Defence of the Realm Regulations is a long and complicated one, and it is constantly being altered and amended, so that the work has required close attention. Over 100 cases have been dealt with, and in the majority of instances the applications have been favourably considered, and the assistance rendered has been greatly appreciated both by the firms in the Dominion and their agents on this side.

4. Inquiries as to the *bona fides* of firms acting for or suspected of being connected with enemy undertakings have also been dealt with by the branch, and questions concerning the inclusion or otherwise of certain firms in the "black lists" of the Dominion and of the Mother-country have received attention.

5. The arrangements in connection with the Imperial Government's purchase of the output of New Zealand scheelite have been dealt with by the branch. A scheme has now been settled to the satisfaction both of the Ministry of Munitions and the Imperial Government Supply Branch in Wellington in regard to financing the shipments and making advances to mine-owners, while the methods of claiming repayments from the Imperial Government and of the final settlement of accounts have also been satisfactorily adjusted during the current year.

6. Numerous other matters arising through the emergency legislation of the Mother-country and New Zealand promulgated on account of the war have also been dealt with, involving a great deal of correspondence, the chief being—

Measures for controlling trade with neutral countries in Europe, United States of America, &c.—certificates of origin and interest, agreements with the Société Surveillance Suisse, &c.

The release of New Zealand cargoes in interned vessels, and claims for damage of cargoes on commandeered steamers.

Prohibition of importation regulations, as affecting trade between New Zealand and the Mother-country.

Shortage of tonnage for exportation of New Zealand hemp and general produce to the United Kingdom.

Rendering assistance in connection with the chartering of tonnage to bring home New Zealand wool during the 1916-17 season.

Sundry other matters have come within the scope of the work of the Produce Branch under war conditions, and no doubt some time will elapse after peace is declared before they can all be satisfactorily cleared up in order to permit the resumption of the normal work of the branch.

#### INDENTS AND SHIPPING BRANCH.

Up to June of 1916 the Indents and Shipping sections of the Office had been kept quite distinct, but with the view of closer co-ordination and to eliminate circumlocution it was then decided to create a separate branch combining the two sections. Owing to the short time which has elapsed since the department was constituted it is not possible to report more than briefly of its general working, but I have every confidence in saying that it has been uniformly successful in achieving the ends desired.

Dealing first with indents, these are received from practically all the Government Departments in the Dominion, and are consequently of a very varied nature. The most numerous are on account of Working Railways, Public Works, Defence, Post and Telegraph, and Printing and Stationery. Taking these Departments in the order given,—

*Working Railways* embrace permanent-way material, pig iron, Yorkshire iron, steel plates and sections, copper plates, steel axles, tires, boiler-tubes, castings, machinery of all descriptions, and general stores, such as cotton-waste, white-lead, turpentine, sponges, chamois leather, colza-oil, carriage-fittings—i.e., blinds, net cord, lighting plant, buttons, horsehair, &c. The Department's requirements in stationery, covering books, envelopes, ink, pens, penholders, paper-fasteners, pencils, rubber erasers and bands, &c., are also dealt with from here, together with a large proportion of the drawing-office requirements.

*Public Works* embrace permanent-way material, bridge material, and general stores and electrical material. A considerable portion of the Department's drawing-office requirements are obtained in London. In connection with bridge material, I may remark that this is usually for contracts let in the Dominion. The contractor proceeds to order through an agent here, who in turn has to submit proposed manufacturers for approval. Copies of orders as let have then to be obtained and inspection arranged. Notification of all material passed has to be advised to contractor's agent, and subsequently copies of documents for all shipments made obtained from him, checked and certified, and then transmitted to the Department. The importance of keeping in close touch with these matters may be emphasized by my saying that material cannot be utilized by the contractor until the Department is assured that it has been passed by the Inspectors prior to shipment. This requirement can only be fulfilled by forwarding the documents referred to above.

*Defence.*—A great proportion of the Department's warlike stores are procured here, some by requisition from the War Office, others—i.e., equipment, &c.—from the trade. The War Office system of issue, and the fact that issue is made from so many different departments of stores, entails a vast amount of work, in which the greatest care and accuracy are required to ensure that all the items demanded are supplied.

*Post and Telegraph.*—The indents dealt with for this Department are mainly telegraph instruments, telephone material, galvanized wire, copper wire, insulator cups and spindles, tools, &c., and a variety of office requisites such as envelopes, paper, pencils, rulers, sponge-bowls, dampers, erasers, rubber bands.

*Printing and Stationery.*—Envelopes, paper of all kinds, pasteboards, parchments, &c. These supplies were formerly obtained under the three-years contract, but since the outbreak of war it has become necessary to treat practically each order as a fresh inquiry, and to obtain quotations in pretty much the same way as indents for other Departments are dealt with. This has, of course, enormously increased the work in handling these orders. I may remark that the services of Mr. Sidney Sandle are utilized as adviser in regard to quality and price. A careful check has, however, to be kept to see that no items are overlooked and that formal contracts are made with the various mills with whom Mr. Sandle may have conditionally placed orders.

*Agriculture, Education, Tourist, Marine, Customs, Public Health, Mines, Dominion Laboratory, Stamps, Lands and Survey, Justice, Police.*—Generally speaking, orders dealt with for any one of these Departments are not numerous, but the aggregate probably equals, if not exceeds, the total for one of the Departments referred to above. The requirements are of the most miscellaneous character, among the principal of which are cattle for the Live-stock Division, and various seeds, &c., for the Experimental Farm Division, of the Agricultural Department; school appliances for the Education Department; equipment for the Rotorua Sanatorium, and alpine stores for the Tourist Department; engineering stores for the Marine Department; rails, wire ropes, &c., for the Mines Department; chemical apparatus for the Dominion Laboratory; stamp dies, plates, postage-stamp and other papers for the Stamps Department; tree-seeds for the Lands Department; drawing-instruments for the Survey Department; and clothing, braids, buttons, &c., for the Police and Justice Departments.

#### PRIORITY CLASSIFICATION.

Before any work of an engineering nature, where metal is employed, can be proceeded with it is now necessary to obtain from the Ministry of Munitions priority classification. This entails much extra correspondence, as, apart from the original application, reminders are in a lot of cases required, and there have been instances where a "refresher" has elicited the fact that the application "cannot be traced," and has therefore to be repeated. In cases where a low classification is given, and which we do not consider fairly representative of the urgency and importance of the work, we have to appeal and endeavour to get the classification raised. Sometimes we are successful to the extent perhaps of securing higher classification for a portion of the job. It is, however, a matter of extreme difficulty to convince the Ministry of Munitions that anything not directly intended for the war should receive consideration.

#### GENERAL.

Amongst what may be termed the special matters dealt with I will instance two only—the Lake Coleridge power plant, and silver and bronze coin. In regard to the former the contracts were not placed here, but we have to arrange with the Ministry of Munitions for classification, arrange with the Consulting Engineers for inspection, keep the Department fully posted by letter and cable of all correspondence on any point which may arise during the currency of the various orders, and finally to take delivery of the shipping documents, check them, and, if correct, transmit them to the Department by first mail. The preparation and passing for payment of the contractors' accounts is also attended to.

Duties in connection with the shipment of bullion cover all arrangements from transmission of requisitions to the Royal Mint down to actual shipment of the coin and despatch of documents to the Dominion.

The services of the Department are often utilized by municipal bodies, Harbour Boards, acclimatization societies, Fire Boards, Hospital Boards, &c. Quite recently an X-ray apparatus was obtained for the Cook Hospital Board; while for the New Plymouth and Whangarei Fire Boards inspection, &c., of fire-engines is in hand. The engine for Hamilton was shipped some little time ago. Unfortunately a request by the Auckland Acclimatization Society for a supply of partridges, plover, &c., could not be met. Considerable correspondence with suppliers occurred, but it was quite clear that owing to the war we could not obtain the birds, and it was with regret that the inquiry had to be referred back.

#### SHIPPING.

Before shipment can be effected it is now necessary in a number of cases to obtain licenses to export. On receipt of the license, forwarding instructions are issued to the contractors, and bills of lading, &c., prepared for the loading broker's signature. On their return the complete shipping documents (i.e., bills of lading, invoices, and packing-lists) are made up and transmitted to the Department on whose behalf the goods have been procured. Each set of bills of lading has a separate memorandum advising the shipment, details of insurance, and any remarks it may be necessary to make. In the case of coinshipments the advices have to be duplicated, as, in addition to the advice which goes to the Hon. the Minister of Finance, the Collector of Customs is notified. With Defence stores we have also to arrange for collection from the several Government factories and arsenals. The handling of explosives occasions much more work than formerly. Prior to the war it was the

practice to have them collected from Woolwich by lighter and conveyed direct to steamer. None of the London companies now carry explosives to New Zealand, as two of the companies carry passengers, and the third—the Tyser Line (Limited)—calls at Australian ports, and cargo of this nature must be discharged at the first port of call. It has thus become necessary to ship from Liverpool, and we have to secure the co-operation of the South-eastern and Chatham Railway and the London and North-western Railway, the former to put at our disposal the requisite special vans, and to facilitate transport over their system until the vans pass into the custody of the London and North-western Railway, over which system they are ultimately taken to Liverpool. At the latter port we have to engage the services of an explosives lighterman, who receives the consignment from the vans into his craft and takes it alongside steamer in the river. A very careful and close estimate of the time needed for the various operations is imperative, as we otherwise incur charges for watching, &c.

*Clearance at Customs.*—This is done either on special shipping-bill previous to steamer's departure in the case of licensed goods, or in the usual way, after steamer has left, for goods not requiring license.

*Insurance, Marine and War.*—The figures necessary for taking out provisional cover are prepared by the Department, also the amounts which are finally declared. It may be pointed out that in arriving at the values for the final insurance, great care must be exercised to see that the margin allowed is sufficient to protect the Government against increased costs should a replacement become necessary. This may be instanced as one of the greatest advantages of combining the two branches, Indents and Shipping.

Accounts of shipping charges are rendered quarterly to the several Departments on whose behalf shipments are effected.

*Shipments inward.*—These are not, of course, numerous, but the Department has been of service to the Military authorities in the expeditious clearance and collection of the cases of personal files of the various reinforcements. There are also the cases of parliamentary papers arriving at intervals.

The foregoing will convey in a general way the exceedingly varied nature of the matters forming the duties of the branch, and it will be realized that a knowledge of trade terms and customs is essential. Not only is this needed in dealing with contractors, but also in the communications which are constantly passing between the Department and the Government's technical advisers, and subsequently in reporting to the Government the decisions arrived at and action taken.

The following are approximate figures relating to orders, contracts, shipments, &c., dealt with during the period under review :—

Orders received	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	324
Contracts placed	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	499
Standing orders received	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16
„ contracts placed	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	29
Shipments effected	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	514
Letters, &c., despatched—Inland	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,000
„ Colonial	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,300

The figures relative to orders, contracts, &c., are, however, somewhat misleading, as, owing to war conditions, many orders received and only partially dealt with during 1914 and 1915 entailed very considerable attention during the closing months of 1916. In addition there are the orders placed in New Zealand, with which the Office has to keep in close touch and render manufacturers such assistance and support as they may need.

#### IMMIGRATION AND ADVERTISING BRANCH.

Reduced-rate passages are now being granted to farmers, farm labourers (not eligible for military service), their wives and families, women domestic servants, persons who have been nominated in the Dominion, and those nominated here by New-Zealanders at present in the United Kingdom. There is a great deal of correspondence entailed in this connection—viz., answering questions, making exhaustive inquiries as to the applicant's *bona fides*, character, health, &c. When an application has been approved, arrangements have to be made for booking the passages, issuing the contract tickets, and advising particulars as to embarkation, &c. Considerable increase in the work of the branch has been caused as a direct result of the war—e.g., the question of passports, as every person leaving this country must have a passport; and this necessitates a large amount of correspondence. In the earlier part of the war it would often happen that, after a considerable number of persons had booked on a certain steamer, it would be commandeered by the Imperial authorities, and in this case the passages had to be cancelled and fresh arrangements made for a later steamer.

Parties of domestic servants are being sent to the Dominion regularly, and the girls are concentrated at the Hostel the evening prior to embarkation. Officers from this Department are in attendance to introduce them to the Matron, and see that they have all the necessary papers, passports, &c. Notwithstanding that full instructions are always clearly given to the girls, there are often matters which have to be urgently attended to. Sometimes, for example, a girl will leave her baggage at a railway junction where she had to change on her way to London, and inquiries have to be made and the baggage traced in time to be placed on the special boat train the next morning. Again, a girl will on arrival at the Hostel find she has left her passport at home, or will not have one at all, and unless it is obtained in time she would not be allowed to embark. In this connection it is essential that the officer in attendance should be thoroughly conversant with the procedure to be followed and the proper officials to be approached in such cases. On the day of embarkation an

officer attends at the Hostel, and proceeds with the party to the steamer, where queries often crop up which necessitates the officer having a wide knowledge of all matters to enable him to overcome the many difficulties which may arise.

On many occasions the Board of Trade or shipping companies desire to know whether a certain passenger will be permitted to land in the Dominion, and it is necessary that the official in attendance should have a knowledge of the New Zealand regulations to enable him to deal with such questions.

Applications for appointments as Matrons in charge of domestic servants are invited, and the inquiries, interviews, &c., entail a considerable amount of correspondence and time.

Passages are also arranged for those who are selected to fill certain positions in New Zealand, such as Imperial Army officers proceeding to the Dominion to take up appointments, and this entails a large amount of correspondence during the year. Also, New-Zealanders visiting this country occasionally request that their return passages may be arranged through this Office, and their requests are complied with.

When it was decided to send permanently unfit members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force back to the Dominion by the ordinary passenger-steamers all arrangements were carried out by this Department. This created a great amount of work with the War Office, Admiralty, and other Government Departments, and the shipping companies, as the accommodation had to be obtained, contract tickets issued, train arrangements made, in many instances for a special train, to port of embarkation, &c.

All accounts for the payment of passages are made out here and sent to the shipping companies for certification.

A number of cinematograph-films have from time to time been obtained, and arrangements have been made for these to be as widely shown as possible. Many of these films have been shown at the rest camps and in France.

A large stock of lantern-slides and photographs are kept in stock. Even during the war the slides are in great demand for lectures. Requests are continually being made from the various periodicals for photographs for illustrating articles in reference to New Zealand. The photographs are also largely used for illustrating the pamphlets which are published by this and other branches of the High Commissioner's Office from time to time. Applications are often being received from hospitals, depots, rest clubs, &c., for photographs of New Zealand. Enlargements have to be made and framed before the requests can be complied with. Supplies of New Zealand post-cards are prepared and widely distributed.

Persons calling at the office for information regarding the Dominion are interviewed, and requests by post for information dealt with. Supplies of pamphlets are also sent to shipping agents, and detailed information given them of the Dominion.

The selection and placing of advertisements, which requires a great deal of correspondence and many interviews, is dealt with; also designing immigration posters and having them suitably displayed throughout the United Kingdom.

In addition to the foregoing there are various other matters dealt with by the branch which require a good deal of time and attention.

#### VETERINARY OFFICER'S BRANCH.

The scope of the work carried out by this branch having widened considerably since the appointment of a Veterinary Officer was first made from New Zealand, it might be well to give a brief *résumé* of the work originally undertaken and that carried out at the present time.

When it was first decided in the Dominion to appoint a Veterinary Officer for service in this country it was intended that his duties should be almost entirely of a technical nature in connection with the imports of meat, and that his work should, in fact, form an extension of the very complete system of meat-inspection controlled by the Live-stock Division in New Zealand. Originally, therefore, his duties consisted chiefly of a general supervision of New Zealand meat on and after its arrival here, noting its condition upon discharge from the steamers, and keeping as far as possible in touch with the sanitary authorities both of the ports where it was dealt with and of the markets where it was exposed for sale, and keeping himself informed of any condemnations which took place and the reasons for the same. This supervision was, of course, followed up by reports to the Director of the Live-stock Division, and there is no doubt but that good effects have resulted from the appointment, the reports furnished having been the means of so improving conditions that condemnations of New Zealand meat from various causes have become much less numerous. In addition to the above the Veterinary Officer has attended to, and furnished reports upon, professional matters generally, such, for example, as the incidence of contagious diseases, dairy-inspection, new methods of milk-sterilization, pure-milk supply, and, in fact, all matters associated with the progress of veterinary science.

He has also carried out the examination of all live-stock shipped from London to New Zealand, and has undertaken, by arrangement between the New Zealand and Australian Governments, the examination of live-stock prior to shipment to the Commonwealth. For these services fees averaging almost £100 per annum have been received and paid to the credit of the Public Account.

Apart from the above duties, the branch has all along made a point of keeping in touch with the facilities for the handling and storage of our meat at various ports and centres, the Veterinary Officer having made numerous reports upon these matters. Such inquiries, together with the general supervision above referred to, have entailed more or less regular attendance at the London Docks, and in addition a considerable amount of travelling to the various outports. The branch has also

dealt with inquiries regarding the possibility of importing New Zealand meat into various foreign countries, these questions having been undertaken by the Veterinary Officer on account of the fact that the disabilities in the way of such importations were in almost every case closely associated with the recognition or otherwise of the New Zealand meat-inspection system.

For some considerable time after the inception of this branch matters of other than a technical nature in connection with New Zealand meat were dealt with by the Produce Department. It was found, however, that there was a certain amount of overlapping in the work, and it was therefore decided some years ago to allocate to the Veterinary Officer all matters in connection with meat, whether of a technical or commercial nature. This arrangement, which is still in existence, has been attended with excellent results. It has, of course, entailed additional duties, consisting, *inter alia*, of attention to market conditions, and to numerous inquiries of a commercial nature regarding not only meat but the numerous animal by-products; and since the alteration was made that portion of the weekly produce cablegram dealing with the meat market and prices has been prepared by the branch under review.

In addition to this, exhaustive inquiries have been conducted and reports made upon a variety of subjects, as, for instance, the comparative costs of discharge and storage, and of wholesale and retail prices, of meat at London and at Bristol; the shortage in the world's beef-supplies; the world's hide-supplies, &c.; and monthly tables are prepared for the use of the Government Statistician, showing the retail prices in London of various articles of food.

#### EFFECTS OF THE WAR.

Circumstances arising out of the war have to a very great extent added to the work of this branch, while every effort has been made to carry out the duties for which the appointment was originally made. Early in 1915 the question of the shortage of insulated tonnage was handed over to the Veterinary Officer for attention, and since March, 1915, when the New Zealand meat-supply was taken over on behalf of the Imperial authorities, all questions regarding this somewhat important subject have been dealt with by the branch under consideration. To illustrate the amount of additional work entailed it might be pointed out that since the completion of the original negotiations for purchase all communications relating to the supply of meat to the Imperial Government have passed through this office. Briefly, the work involved consists of receiving from the New Zealand Government bills of lading, disbursement accounts, balance-sheets, &c., in connection with the meat, checking and dissecting these documents, recording them, and transmitting them to the representative of the Board of Trade. In addition, the branch deals with numerous questions arising out of the Imperial Government meat-supply scheme—such, for example, as disputes as to the classification of various grades of meat, the dressing of meat, the disposal of surplus meat not required for the armies, &c.—and keeps the Board of Trade supplied with statistics as to the quantities of meat in store at various dates, and information as to the departure of, and the meat-cargoes carried by, steamers from New Zealand. In order to indicate the amount of work necessitated by the above it might be pointed out that since the inception of the Imperial Government meat-supply scheme documents covering the meat shipped by no less than 134 steamers have been dealt with, the branch having handled, checked, and recorded about 3,300 bills of lading, representing a total of approximately 10,300,000 carcasses of mutton and lamb and almost 1,100,000 quarters of beef, of a value of over £13,000,000; and many other documents and communications in connection with the meat-supply scheme have passed through the hands of the Veterinary Officer.

A great amount of work on the subject of the Imperial Government meat-supply has also been entailed during the past year in keeping New Zealand fully advised by cable of the conditions existing here; and more recently the Veterinary Officer's Branch has provided the statistics and information necessary for the negotiations which have taken place regarding the prices to be paid for this season's output of New Zealand meat, a great deal of time and attention having necessarily been devoted to this matter alone.

#### DAIRY-PRODUCE INSPECTOR'S BRANCH.

During the past year the work of inspecting dairy-produce has been carried out as in previous years. On account of the difficulties attending storage and transport the cheese shipments have suffered considerably and frequently arrived here much out of condition, the unavoidable storage of cheese at high temperatures in New Zealand before shipment having been the chief cause of the trouble. In addition to the poorer quality of the cheese, the losses in weight due to shrinkage have been very considerable, and to the usual work of inspection has been added the witnessing of check-weighing of parcels of cheese at more frequent intervals than is usual in normal times. In addition to the work of inspection in London, visits have also been paid to the leading wholesale provision-houses of the United Kingdom, and all complaints regarding quality, short weight in butter or cheese, excessive water-content in butter, &c., have received prompt attention and have been reported upon accordingly.

Although it was originally intended that the Inspector of Dairy-produce should confine his duties solely to the technical work—namely, the inspection of dairy-produce and reporting upon the quality thereof—it was found that commercial and other matters pertaining to dairying were so closely allied that it was finally decided that he should attend to all matters relating to the dairy industry. Since the readjustment of duties the work carried out has been of a much more comprehensive nature than formerly.



## SHIPMENTS.

Fifty-five steamers arrived from New Zealand carrying dairy-produce, and with few exceptions the whole of the shipments arrived at London Docks, the remainder being for Avonmouth and Liverpool. Visits have been paid to the various docks as occasion required for the purpose of inspecting cargoes at the time of discharge. Particular attention has been paid to the condition of cheese shipments, more particularly in respect to instances where the method of packing the cheese required improvement and where alterations were desirable.

## CHEESE AND CONDENSED MILK FOR IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT.

Since the outbreak of war the office-work has been increased very considerably owing to the supply of New Zealand cheese and condensed milk to the Imperial Government for the use of troops in the field. These transactions gave rise to a considerable increase in the clerical work, as did also the negotiations relating to the increased rates of freight on butter and cheese from the Dominion, as all correspondence relating thereto was dealt with by this branch.

## RENNET-SUPPLIES FOR THE DOMINION.

Owing to the disturbed state of Russia and Europe generally, the supply of rennet-extract for the Dominion has become seriously threatened, manufacturers and shippers experiencing such considerable difficulties that it became necessary to move officially in this matter so that some assistance might be given. With the object of obtaining adequate supplies correspondence passed at various intervals between the Colonial Office and the High Commissioner—firstly, in the matter of the removal of the embargo placed by the Russian Government upon the export of vells intended for Danish manufacturers; secondly, obtaining permits to ship from Denmark rennet-extract made partly from vells of enemy origin; and, thirdly, in obtaining permits to ship rennet-extract to the Dominion from Great Britain. Results have been satisfactory, and the requirements, for the coming season at least, seem to be assured.

In view of the experiments that are taking place at the Dairy School, Reading University, a close touch has been maintained between this Office and the principals carrying out the experiments.

## PEPSIN.

Owing to the shortage of and the high price asked by the manufacturers for rennet-extract Canadian experiments have been carried out in cheesemaking, pepsin being used as a substitute for rennet-extract. The results were so satisfactory that a considerable quantity of Canadian export cheese was made by this method, and in the opinion of Mr. J. A. Ruddick and his dairy experts pepsin has proved its value as a substitute. In the interests of the dairy industry of the Dominion communication has been maintained with the Food and Cold Storage Commissioner of Canada regarding this matter, and the information obtained passed on to the Director of the Dairy Division.

## EXPORT OF ENGINEERING REQUISITES FOR DAIRY MACHINERY.

In the earlier stages of the war, and owing to the prohibition of the export of all metals from the United Kingdom, New Zealand manufacturers experienced considerable difficulty in obtaining supplies of the necessary material for manufacturing dairy appliances in the Dominion, and the services of this Office were utilized in applying for permits to manufacture the necessary material and also to export same to the Dominion.

As time went on and other New Zealand engineering industries became involved these matters were then transferred to another branch to be dealt with.

## RETAILERS OF NEW ZEALAND BUTTER AND CHEESE.

Another feature of the year's work has been the preparation of a directory containing the names of cities and towns throughout the United Kingdom, and including the names of two or three of the leading grocers in each town who stock New Zealand butter and cheese. The work is nearing completion now, and should prove of practical assistance to this Office when inquiries are made by those desirous of using the butter and cheese of the Dominion.

## LIBRARY AND INFORMATION BUREAU.

It would be almost impossible to enter into every detail of the multifarious duties devolving upon the Library and Information Bureau. It is here that the majority of callers are first received, and naturally the number of inquiries to be dealt with is exceedingly large and varied.

The book in which visitors from the Dominion inscribe their names is kept here, and last year's pages contain over two thousand entries, which does not, of course, by any means represent the number of calls made during that time.

A room in which writing-material is provided and newspapers, &c., are filed is attached to the Library, and is very extensively used, providing a convenience greatly appreciated by visitors.

Advice and assistance is constantly sought in a variety of matters in which a wide knowledge of the business and other conditions obtaining in this country is indispensable.

Tickets of admission for the House of Commons, Tower of London, Royal Mews, State apartments of the Mansion House, and other places of interest applied for in 1916 numbered over

nine hundred. Letters for visitors sent care of the office and readdressed totalled nearly thirty thousand, whilst newspapers and parcels ran into many thousands.

During the past year many thousands of invitations were issued, including those for the reception given by the High Commissioner on the removal of the office from Victoria Street to the Strand, the review at Hornchurch Camp, and the service in Westminster Abbey on Anzac Day.

The Library also deals with an important section of correspondence, and innumerable personal interviews on matters relating to New Zealand, generally including trading with the enemy and Customs questions necessitating familiarity with the statutes, regulations, *Gazettes*, parliamentary papers, and the many other volumes and papers of the Dominion.

#### BRANCH FOR PRISONERS OF WAR AND CONTINGENT WAR MATTERS.

The steady increase in the volume of work which this branch has been called upon to perform in connection with the war has necessitated the establishment of a special section to deal with various matters which could be conveniently co-ordinated, and in July last I appointed an officer specially to take charge of the work.

I propose to refer to the matters dealt with by this section under their appropriate headings.

#### PRISONERS OF WAR.—MILITARY.

As a result of the Gallipoli campaign there were, on the 1st January, 1916, twenty-two members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in the hands of the Turks, three others having died shortly after they had been captured. Their number was later increased to thirty-four by the capture on the 3rd August, 1916, of an officer and eight men during operations on the Suez Canal. Six of these have since died.

A sum of £500, cabled by the New Zealand Government for the purpose, has been paid over to the Foreign Office in October, 1915, for the relief of New Zealand prisoners of war in Turkey, and it was arranged that one-fourth of this amount should be utilized for the provision of winter clothing, and that the balance should be available for the payment to each prisoner at the rate of 20 piastres per week.

I was, in the first instance, advised not to send food or clothing to Turkey, as so little evidence of the arrival of parcels could be obtained, and more especially as I was informed that the American Ambassador in Constantinople was taking a most sympathetic interest in the welfare of British prisoners of war in Turkey, and believed that it would be possible to supply all actual necessities for the winter season.

It appeared some months later, however, that the men were in many cases not receiving food and clothing suitable to their standard of living, and I therefore decided to despatch weekly supplies of food from this end to all New Zealand prisoners in Turkey and take the risk of parcels not reaching them. It is regretted that, owing partly to the difficulties of transport to the prisoners' camps in Turkey, which in many cases are far removed from railways, but mainly to the action of the Austrian postal authorities in holding up, for many months at a time, the bulk of parcels destined for British prisoners of war, very few acknowledgments of parcels or money were received for some time, but these are now coming to hand in considerable numbers, some of the men having received as many as nine parcels at a time; and by a recent mail fifty-seven receipts for money were received through the International Red Cross Society, Geneva.

During the month of August the first notifications were received of members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force having been captured by the Germans on the western front, and the Department has been notified of the following New-Zealanders interned in Germany—viz.: fifty officers, non-commissioned officers, and men attached to the New Zealand Expeditionary Force; fifteen officers, non-commissioned officers, and men attached to Imperial units, including a seaman in the Royal Navy. There is also an officer (Captain E. T. R. Carlyon) interned in Switzerland.

In the case of prisoners in Germany, it is satisfactory to note that communication with them has been on the whole well maintained, and that, with the exception of petty annoyances to which they have now and then been subjected, such as the opening of tinned foods before distribution, their parcels have reached them regularly and in most cases in good condition.

#### CIVILIAN PRISONERS OF WAR.

There are eleven civilian New-Zealanders interned in Germany who are receiving relief through this Department. Parcels have been despatched until recently through the Australasian Association at Ruhleben, but owing to the establishment of the Central Prisoners of War Committee, which has made certain regulations on the subject, parcels must now be addressed only to individuals and not to an association.

One civilian New-Zealander, Mr. Charles J. King, of Napier, a gentleman who was in delicate health and over forty-five years of age, was released from Ruhleben in March, 1916, but only after I had made most urgent and repeated representations on his behalf.

Negotiations have been opened by the British Government with the German Government in respect of the mutual release of civilian prisoners of war either by means of repatriation or by transference to a neutral country.

As a result of the Convention recently held at the Hague, at which British and German delegates met to discuss questions relating to prisoners of war, it has been announced (28th July, 1917) that the Dutch Government will provide for the accommodation of 2,000 civilian prisoners, invalids being given a preference.

#### THE NEW ZEALAND PRISONERS OF WAR DEPARTMENT.

Under the new scheme adopted by the Central Prisoners of War Committee with the approval of the Army Council, the New Zealand Prisoners of War Department became, on the 1st December, 1916, the only association authorized to despatch parcels to New Zealand prisoners of war. The entire control of the Department referred to has been placed in my hands, and, except in cases where special subscriptions are received for particular prisoners, all expenditure is met by the High Commissioner's Comforts Fund. The scheme does not at present affect officer prisoners, but all parcels despatched from Great Britain to New-Zealanders who are either civilians or non-commissioned officers and men attached to the New Zealand Expeditionary Force must now be sent through the New Zealand Prisoners of War Department.

There are several New-Zealanders serving in other units who have been captured by the enemy, but the care of such men was placed under the charge of the Prisoners' Association connected with the respective regiments or units, and such men can only be "adopted" with the consent of the appropriate association or regimental committee. As it is the wish of the New Zealand Government that I should undertake the care of all New Zealand prisoners of war, steps have been taken to "adopt" those serving in units other than the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, and with few exceptions no objection to this course has been raised by the associations concerned.

The object of the scheme of the Central Prisoners of War Committee is to prevent, as far as possible, the overlapping and waste which existed formerly as the result of the lack of co-ordination of effort, and whereby some prisoners of war received many more parcels than were necessary, whilst others received nothing at all.

The New Zealand Prisoners of War Department despatches to each prisoner of war in Germany three provision parcels per fortnight to the value of 10s. each, and to those in Turkey two provision parcels and 10s. in cash per fortnight. All prisoners receive a fortnightly supply of tobacco and cigarettes, and the full permitted supply of bread is sent to prisoners in Germany. Immediately upon notification of capture being received a complete shaving and toilet outfit is despatched, and an order is given for a complete outfit of clothing as soon as each man's measurements are ascertained. The measurements in the case of members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force are obtained from the Officer in Charge of Records, London. A small weekly money allowance is sent to prisoners of war in Germany, but in most cases the men write to say that money is of no use to them and ask that the remittances shall be discontinued.

A post-card of advice is sent as each parcel goes off, and every acknowledgment is checked and recorded. Each man's likes and dislikes regarding food, tobacco, and other comforts are carefully noted, and quite a number of letters have been received testifying to the excellence of the parcels and the satisfactory way in which the men's wants are being attended to.

The food parcel is varied from week to week in a series covering a period of four weeks, and the contents of the weekly parcels are set forth in Appendix B to this report.

All parcels addressed to New Zealand prisoners of war from overseas are delivered at this Office, where the contents are examined and full particulars of the sender and addressee are recorded. The parcels are carefully repacked if necessary, and the address checked, and the parcel is then redirected to the prisoner.

This has entailed a considerable amount of work, but has been willingly undertaken for the sake of the sentiment which is naturally attached to a "parcel from home." It is regretted, however, that in many cases it does not appear to have been realized by the senders that, as the amount of food which can be sent is strictly limited, our men need actual necessities rather than luxuries. A great deal of the food, too, has arrived in such a condition, due no doubt to the long voyage and the heat of the tropics, that it has had to be destroyed.

Advantage has been taken by the New Zealand Prisoners of War Department of the facilities for study offered to prisoners of war by the British Prisoners of War Book Scheme (Educational), of which Mr. Alfred T. Davies, of the Welsh Department of the Board of Education, is chairman, and every New Zealand prisoner of war is invited, as soon as his capture has been notified, to take up some form of study. The invitation is nearly always heartily accepted, and most of our prisoners have taken up a language or some other study.

A very considerable volume of correspondence is entailed in keeping in touch with the prisoners and with their relatives, and it is gratifying to know that the efforts of the Department in this respect have been appreciated. The work is bound to increase the longer the war lasts, and the clerical staff will doubtless have to be added to in consequence.

#### NEW-ZEALANDERS SERVING IN IMPERIAL UNITS.

A very considerable number of New-Zealanders who were in England at the outbreak of war joined Imperial units, and many more have since arrived in this country with a view of obtaining commissions in the Naval or Military Forces. It is estimated that the number of New-Zealanders holding commissioned rank in units other than the New Zealand Expeditionary Force and the Australian Imperial Force is not far short of 500, whilst there are probably between 1,200 and 1,500 serving in other capacities.

The branch is in constant correspondence with many of our officers and men in endeavouring to ascertain their next-of-kin, answering their inquiries upon a variety of subjects, forwarding their letters to them, &c.

At the request of the Government an arrangement has been made with the War Office whereby casualties and cases of serious illness among non-commissioned officers and men serving in Imperial

units are telegraphed to the Hon. the Minister of Defence when the next-of-kin of the soldier concerned resides in New Zealand. The War Office has also arranged for similar procedure with regard to officers' casualties.

#### INQUIRIES CONCERNING SOLDIERS.

A great number of inquiries are dealt with by the Department both by cable and by letter, regarding the location, condition, and whereabouts of soldiers serving in the New Zealand, Imperial, and also the Australian Forces, and the Inquiry Bureau at Wellington in particular addresses frequent cables to this Office on the subject. Every inquiry received is dealt with most carefully and the fullest and most recent information obtained, and in many cases where the subject is a sick or wounded soldier located either in this country or in France a report is obtained direct from the medical officer in charge of the hospital in which the patient is an inmate. It will be realized that these inquiries entail a very great increase in the detail work of the Department, but the consolation to relatives quite justifies this extra attention.

#### PURCHASE AND DISTRIBUTION OF GIFTS TO SOLDIERS.

The Department has from time to time been specially requested by various patriotic societies, and by private donors in the Dominion and elsewhere, to purchase or distribute gifts to soldiers, and in cases where it has been practicable this has been done.

I contemplate despatching from time to time to all New-Zealanders serving in Imperial units, below the rank of 1st Lieutenant, whose addresses are known, parcels of comforts to be provided out of Comforts Fund, so that they may feel that New Zealand has not forgotten them.

#### CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I may state that for myself the past year, like the two preceding years of war, has been a most strenuous period. I have found the work demands practically every possible moment.

During the period of which I speak there have been carried out negotiations in regard to the acquirement by the British Government of cheese and wool exported by the Dominion, and the renewal of the meat contract.

As chairman of the New Zealand War Contingent Association I have taken a great interest in its operations. I have been most ably assisted in this work by a band of devoted and self-denying men and women. It would, as they are so numerous, be invidious to single out any for special mention, but I take this opportunity of most heartily thanking them all. The association, as is well known, is concerned with the welfare of our sick and wounded in this country. It has erected recreation-rooms at Brockenhurst (canteen and club), Codford (canteen and club), New Zealand Engineers (canteen and club), Salisbury (canteen and club), Hornchurch (canteen and club), Walton (club), Oatlands (club), Russell Square (residential club), 11 Southampton Row (club and canteen), and it has an army of visitors constantly making the round of the hospitals. In August last a great want was met by the establishment of the New Zealand Soldiers' Club and Hostel in Russell Square. No institution provided for our soldiers has been more successful.

I have made a practice of visiting our hospitals and camps whenever possible, and seeing either personally or by deputy all our sick and wounded lads. I am hoping that the pressure will ease to an extent and thus allow me to pay our troops more frequent visits, a duty which I consider imperative on the representative of the Dominion during these critical times.

I may add that, whilst it is the opinion of General Richardson as well as my own that the principal and outstanding work of the New Zealand War Contingent Association is that in connection with the hostels and canteens, it would be impossible to overestimate all the other good work that has been done. In a word, we have endeavoured in every way to think out that which was best for the soldier—to try to remove temptations from his path and give him pleasant and comfortable associations, and to have him cared for in every way possible, and the return we are receiving from our men is of the most gratifying description. It is to me a great pleasure to report that the conduct of our lads in this country has been of the highest order, and that wherever they go they are welcomed, and that the kindness that has been extended to them by the people of the Old Country we can never sufficiently repay. The men have justified all this by the high standard of their conduct and living, and wherever the New-Zealander goes he is welcomed as a gentleman and as a soldier.

It is impossible in this brief account to enumerate all the good work that has been done, but it is necessary to refer to the great kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Knight in giving their Convalescent Home at Brighton free of charge to our officers.

¶ The report of the association will, it is hoped, soon be ready for the annual meeting, which takes place next month, when fuller particulars will be sent out to the Dominion.

¶ It was a great pleasure to this Office to welcome the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable W. F. Massey, and the Right Honourable Sir Joseph Ward, Bart. I desire to thank them for their many kindnesses and their unvarying courtesies. Their visit must result in good.

#### PRODUCE AND TRADE.

Beyond keeping our produce well before the public, owing to the great shortage of meat and dairy and other produce, it is futile just now to push our goods, inasmuch as it would be impossible to supply more buyers were they desirous of purchasing.

As soon, however, as the war shows signs of drawing to a close very active work must be at once taken in hand. It is expected that after the war is over extremely keen competition will take place, when it will be necessary to push our Dominion's interest with great knowledge and vigilance.

*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

## APPENDIX B.

## LIST OF CONTENTS OF WEEKLY FOOD PARCELS DESPATCHED BY THE NEW ZEALAND PRISONERS OF WAR DEPARTMENT.

## NEW ZEALAND PARCELS FOR GERMANY.

*No. 1.*

- |                                      |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 lb. tin roast beef and vegetables. | 1 tin mustard.                        |
| 1 lb. tin pork sausages.             | $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. dripping.           |
| 1 lb. tin finest Alaska salmon.      | 1 lb. carton dates.                   |
| 1 lb. tin jam.                       | $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. tin condensed milk. |
| 1 lb. packet rolled oats.            | $\frac{1}{2}$ bar Sunlight soap.      |
| 1 tin café au lait.                  | $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tea (No. 29).       |
| 1 tin cocoa, sugar, and milk.        | 1 lb. sugar.                          |
| 1 soup square (mock-turtle, &c.).    | 1 tin sardines.                       |

*No. 2.*

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 No. 1 tin corned beef.            | $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. packet tea (No. 29). |
| 1 tin French beans.                 | $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. tin condensed milk.  |
| 1 lb. tin ox-cheek and vegetables.  | $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sugar.               |
| 1 tin herrings, kippered.           | 4 oz. tin salmon-and-shrimp paste.     |
| 1 lb. butter-beans.                 | 1 tin six standard consomme.           |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. finest margarine. | $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. chocolate.           |
| 1 tin marmalade.                    | 1 cake toilet soap.                    |

*No. 3.*

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1 lb. tin roast mutton and vegetables. | 1 lb. tin condensed milk.          |
| 1 tin Scotch broth.                    | $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. dripping.        |
| 1 tin herrings in tomato sauce.        | 1 packet table salt.               |
| 1 lb. Irish sausages.                  | 1 cake toilet soap (coal-tar).     |
| 1 Mulligatawny soup square.            | $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tea (No. 29).    |
| 4 oz. tin sardine paste.               | 1 lb. sugar.                       |
| 1 lb. rice.                            | 1 lb. tin puddings, various kinds. |

*No. 4.*

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1 lb. tin roast beef and vegetables. | $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. packet tea (No. 29). |
| 1 lb. brawn.                         | 1 lb. tin condensed milk.              |
| 1 tin sardines in oil.               | $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sugar.               |
| 1 lb. medium oatmeal.                | 1 toothbrush.                          |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. finest margarine.  | 1 tin six standard consomme.           |
| 1 tin cooked spaghetti.              | 1 lb. tin carrots, &c.                 |
| 1 lb. tin jam.                       |  |

NOTE.—In the case of Turkey the parcel is slightly varied from the above, and parcels both to Germany and Turkey are reconsidered and altered from time to time.

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing (750 copies), £21.

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