

WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL MILK SCHEME : ASSISTANCE OF POST OFFICE.

The Wellington City Council, in connection with its scheme for the supply of milk under the "block" system, sent a card to each residence in the city and suburbs in August, 1918, asking for particulars of householders' milk requirements. The Department delivered the cards to householders, and, after the filling-in of particulars, collected the cards and returned them to the Town Clerk's office. The number of cards delivered was 16,839. The main portion of the work was done by a special staff of fourteen men, and occupied a little over three weeks.

PROHIBITED CORRESPONDENCE.

During the year 159 letters addressed to persons or firms for whom the transmission of correspondence is prohibited under section 28 of the Post and Telegraph Act, 1908, were withheld from transmission.

REGISTER OF NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES.

Eleven newspapers were registered for transmission by post, and 10 were removed from the register. Six magazines were registered, and 6 were removed from the register.

POSTAGE-STAMPS.

New Zealand stamps of the current series have been overprinted with the word "Rarotonga" and the value in native language, for use in the Cook Islands, except Aitutaki, Niue, and Penrhyn Islands. The new series consists of the denominations $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d., $1\frac{1}{2}$ d., 2d., $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., 3d., 4d., $4\frac{1}{2}$ d., 6d., $7\frac{1}{2}$ d., 9d., and 1s.

The current 3d. stamp is now printed by the surface instead of the recess process.

The colour of the $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. "Official" stamp and of the $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamp of the special series of the Government Insurance Department has been altered from slate to cadmium brown, to conform to that of the ordinary $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamp. The colour of the stamp imprinted on the $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. letter-card has been similarly changed for the same reason.

It is proposed to issue a special series of stamps to commemorate peace.

ENVELOPES EMBOSSED WITH POSTAGE.

As a consequence of war conditions the cost of manufacture of envelopes embossed with postage-stamps has increased to such an extent that it was found necessary to increase the selling-price of envelopes embossed with postage at $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. from 14 for 2s. to 14 for 2s. 2d.

OCEAN MAIL-SERVICES.

During his visit to England at the beginning of 1919 the Postmaster-General arranged with the Imperial Post Office for mails for the Dominion to be despatched by ships conveying soldiers back to New Zealand, in cases in which a better despatch could be made than by the San Francisco or Vancouver route.

The influenza epidemic at the end of 1918 was responsible for the disorganization of the inter-colonial mail-services.

The mail on the "Wairuna," sunk by a German raider early in June, 1917, when on a voyage from Auckland to San Francisco, was lost. It consisted of fourteen bags for the United States of America.

San Francisco Service.

This service has been performed during the year by the "Moana" and "Paloona," and a fairly satisfactory time-table has been maintained.

Vancouver Service.

This service has been carried on during the year by the "Niagara" and "Makura," and a satisfactory time-table has been maintained. The influenza epidemic during the two last months of 1918 made it impossible for the vessels to keep to a fixed time-table, owing to the necessity for a period of quarantine at the termination of each trip.

INLAND MAIL-SERVICES.

Tenders were invited for inland mail-services, the contracts for which expired on the 31st December, 1918. Owing to the absence of men with the Expeditionary Force competition was not keen. This fact, together with the high prices ruling for benzine, fodder, &c., resulted in the Department having to pay, in many instances, greatly increased subsidies. With a few unimportant exceptions contractors were found for all services in operation during 1918.

The Department has now contracts expiring at the end of 1919, of 1920, and of 1921. Tenders will be invited for the performance for two years from the 1st January, 1920, of those contracts expiring at the end of 1919.

Owing to heavy snowstorms during July, 1918, a large number of services in Canterbury were disorganized for a short time. The fall was very heavy in the Waimakariri Valley, and trains were unable to reach Arthur's Pass for some days, the mails for the West Coast being consequently delayed.

The mail-service between Rautahi and Pipiriki was interrupted in September owing to three miles of road being completely blocked by slips. Mails for Pipiriki were forwarded by steamer from Wanganui.