

The importation of explosives into the Dominion has again been directly controlled by the Department, as a war measure, and all shipments have been rigorously tested. No accidents have occurred in the manufacture and handling of explosives in New Zealand, and there have been no serious breaches of the regulations.

The fees collected during the year were: For analyses, £26; for licenses under the Explosive Act and for storage of explosives, £1,923.

CENSORSHIP OF CINEMATOGRAPH FILMS.

During the past year 1,739 films, amounting to 3,479,860 ft., have been examined by the Censor, and fees amounting to £1,160 have been received. The receipts were in excess of the expenditure.

REGISTRAR-GENERAL.

The revenue of this Department, though it steadily increased up to the year 1915-16, showed a drop from £16,865 in that year to £12,450 for the year 1917-18. During the last financial year, however, the revenue rose to £12,716, an improvement which should be well maintained in succeeding years.

PRISONS DEPARTMENT.

The various buildings and other works that are being carried out by prison labour progressed satisfactorily during the year. The returns from the farms and from industrial work show a substantial increase over those for the preceding year, although the totals then reached formed a record for the Department. The revenue from various sources amounted to £21,654, while the estimated value of the labour employed on the farms and on various prison industries was £19,823.

The engineers' estimates of the value of prison labour employed on public works, exclusive of work for which cash credits were received, amounted to £11,577. The value to the State of prison labour during the year 1918-19 was therefore £53,054, which is equal to 55 per cent. of the gross expenditure for the twelve months.

POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

The amount of revenue on postal matter and telegrams collected by the Department during the year was £1,964,811.

The Post Office Savings-bank business for the year was unusually large, the deposits totalling £18,101,105. The withdrawals totalled £14,938,842, leaving an excess of deposits over withdrawals for the year of £3,162,263. This is a half-million more than the excess for the previous year. The balance remaining at credit of depositors at the close of the year 1918 was £33,418,125, as compared with £17,131,413 at the end of 1913. The interest credited to depositors for the year 1918 exceeded a million sterling.

The postal-note business for the year 1918-19 shows a slight decrease; but this is more than made up by increased money-order business. The aggregate of money-orders and postal notes issued was £4,372,826, and the amount paid out £3,987,143.

Nearly half of the Department's revenue is derived from postages, the next largest items being telegrams and telephone-exchange receipts.

The Department has provided the machinery for the collection of a large portion of the money invested in the various war loans which have from time to time been placed upon the market. The sales of war-loan certificates alone, which are handled exclusively by the Post Office, have reached the sum of £4,068,597.

Full details of the Department's finances, and particulars of its many activities, will be found in its annual report.

STAMP DUTIES DEPARTMENT.

The revenue collected by the Stamp Duties Department during the year 1918-19 amounted to £2,124,773, or £232,759 in excess of the collections for the previous financial year.