

It was unfortunate that when the heavy rush of visitors set in the arrangement made for the opening of Mrs. Sutherland's house, and the use of her launches at Milford Sound, was unable to be kept. This resulted in a certain amount of congestion at Christmas-time, and disappointment to some who were unable to see the Sound. The Department has completed arrangements for the supply of a large launch from the Bluff, which will be in commission next season and will accommodate all comers. Arrangements will, it is hoped, also be made for accommodation at Milford Sound.

The steamers on Te Anau and Manapouri have been overhauled and repaired, and are in good running-order.

OVERSEAS AGENCIES.

The usual annual reports have been received from the officers in charge of Melbourne and Sydney Agencies, and show that a large amount of work has been satisfactorily dealt with, and that the offices have been of great use to other Government Departments. The expenditure at these places has been :—

| | Sydney. | Melbourne. |
|--|---------|------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Rent | 612 | 275 |
| Salaries (including clerical assistance).. | 757 | 846 |
| Miscellaneous | 369 | 212 |

REPORT OF THE RESIDENT OFFICER, ROTORUA.

I beg to submit my annual report for the year ended 31st March, 1921.

During the year the maintenance of work on the streets and roads has been given as much attention as funds would permit. About 94 chains of pumice roads and streets have been re-formed and coated with fresh pumice; in most cases this has necessitated the use of the plough and the grader. The long spell of dry weather, coupled with the friable nature of the roading-material, has prevented surface consolidation, a result best obtained when there has been occasional wet weather.

The metalled streets in the inner area have been patched; and various sections, totalling about 30 chains, have been sheeted with blue metal, blinded with a mixture of local obsidian gravel and metal chips. This gives a very satisfactory result, but, of course, requires regular maintenance, principally in the form of additional supply of metal, in order to get the best results. Unfortunately, lack of funds prevents such supplies being systematically procured. Patching of metalled streets, a method of repair imposed on us by limitation of funds, is most unsatisfactory, as it causes inequalities in the road-surfaces. They should be periodically scarified or ploughed, then harrowed to properly distribute the existing metal, and a sheeting of new metal added. During the year about 304 cubic yards of metal and metal chips have been brought from Te Aroha, and 120 yards of local metal, and put on the streets. About $4\frac{1}{2}$ chains of tarred metal has been laid on footpaths, and the middle section of Arawa Street has been retarred and sanded. The street trees have received the usual attention in the matter of pruning.

During the year a special grant of £250 was given by the Government for the repair of the southern portion of Fenton Street. As the money was not available until the close of the year no action was possible, but the work will be undertaken early in the ensuing year, when the whole of the money will be expended in the purchase of blue metal, the labour in formation of roadway and spreading being a charge on the General Account.

The financial stringency as detailed in my last annual report has been accentuated this year by a further award giving the roadmen an additional increase in wages. It has therefore not been possible to undertake any new work.

The levy on the Town Account made by the Waikato Hospital and Charitable Aid Board for the current financial year is £318 11s. 7d., as compared with £237 6s. 8d. of the previous year. To meet this a rate of $\frac{1}{8}$ d. in the pound was levied on the capital value.

The levy for fire-prevention purposes made by the Fire Board was £412 10s., as compared with £720 5s. of the previous year. This was met by a rate of $\frac{3}{8}$ d. in the pound on the value of buildings within the town area. The library rate was $\frac{1}{80}$ d. in the pound.

Seventy-four building permits were issued during the year for new buildings and alterations to existing ones, the total value of such being £21,510. The rateable (capital) value of the town is £540,557.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (600 copies), £3 17s. 6d.

By Authority : MARCUS F. MARKS, Government Printer, Wellington.—1921.

Price 6d.]