

year ended 31st March, 1914, were £23,471,246, but for the year ended 31st March, 1924, they were no less than £51,652,606—an increase of £28,181,360, or 120 per cent.

These figures are a tribute to the productivity of New Zealand, and also an indication of the increasing prosperity of its people. The solicitude of the Government is borne out by the greatly increased social services afforded, as evidenced by the expenditure for education and public health, and in free pensions. The salaries and wages of public employees have increased from an average of £162·40 to £245·744.

New Zealand has led in the reintroduction of the penny post, and increased facilities are being provided for every section through the Post and Telegraph Department. There are now 4,174 more miles of telegraph and telephone lines than in 1914, being an increase of 27 per cent. during the period, and telegraph and telephone wire used increased by 156,990 miles, or 127 per cent. In 1914 there were 37,486 telephone subscribers, as compared with 85,031 in 1924—an increase of 47,545, or 127 per cent.

The progressive policy pursued in opening up the country and improving the means of communication is confirmed by the expenditure on roads and bridges, which in 1914 was £353,836, while in 1924 it was £749,737, being an increase of £395,901, or 112 per cent.

During the decade 229 miles of water-races for irrigation purposes have been constructed, representing an increase of 276 per cent. on that in existence in 1914. The area of swamp land drained through the Government drainage operations was increased from 42,220 to 180,335 acres, representing an addition during the period of 138,115 acres, or 327 per cent.

BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION.

The British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, which was opened in May last by His Majesty the King, affords striking proof of the Empire's capacity to become self-supporting without recourse to foreign countries. Some disappointment has been expressed with the exhibits in the New Zealand Court—apparently the Exhibition was opened before the buildings were completed, and before all the Dominion exhibits had arrived. Great improvements have since been effected in our court, and recent visitors have expressed themselves very favourably, especially with regard to the excellence of the display of refrigerated products. The New Zealand Court is now thoroughly representative of our most important industries, and honourable members can rest assured that no effort is being spared to see that New Zealand's display is worthy of the Dominion.

ESTIMATES OF REVENUE, 1924-25.

I estimate the revenue under the main headings of each of the principal Departments at—

	£
Customs	7,350,000
Beer Duty	630,000
Stamp and Death Duties	3,310,800
Post and Telegraph	2,805,000
Land-tax	1,400,000
Income-tax	3,700,000
Railways	7,100,000
Registration and other fees	200,000
Marine	90,920
Interest on public moneys	1,234,000
Local Bodies' Loans Act, 1908, section 76	23,000
Rents of buildings	26,000
Tourist and Health Resorts	45,000
Miscellaneous	215,000
Territorial	197,900
Departmental and other receipts	530,000
	<hr/>
	28,857,620
Less proposed taxation remissions	1,000,000
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Net revenue	<u>£27,857,620</u>