

1927.
NEW ZEALAND.

STORES CONTROL BOARD

(ANNUAL REPORT OF)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Leave.

SIR,—

Stores Control Board, Wellington, 30th June, 1927.

I have the honour to submit herewith the annual report of the Stores Control Board for the period ended 31st March, 1927.

I have, &c.,

F. J. BROOKER, Secretary.

The Hon. K. S. Williams, Chairman, Stores Control Board.

REPORT.

PURCHASES.

During the year ended the 31st March, 1927, the total expenditure on stores amounted to the sum of £3,877,275 4s. 7d. With the exception of a few instances, in which the circumstances were too urgent to allow of the usual procedure being followed, tenders or quotations were invited for the whole of the stores required. For the requisitioning Departments 10,470 requisitions were dealt with, and 381 contracts were arranged for daily supplies, mostly perishable foodstuffs, &c. These figures do not include the requisitions and contracts dealt with by the three purchasing Departments (Railways, Public Works, Post and Telegraph) on account of their own Departments. General contracts covering the requirements of all Departments were arranged on favourable terms for the supply of cement, typewriters, motor-spirit, motor lubricating-oils, motor-tires, kerosene, Ford spare parts, Overland spare parts, disinfectants, soaps, candles, bricks, earthenware drainpipes, brushware, cleaning-materials, and glue and size. Contracts for the supply of coal and firewood have also been arranged at Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Invercargill, New Plymouth, and Blenheim.

STANDARDIZATION.

The Board's schedules of standardized stores have been printed, and tenders invited for periods varying from one to three years. Six of the thirty-five schedules, covering stores which are manufactured within the Dominion, have been dealt with and contracts arranged. Generally speaking the competition was keen, and, apart from the convenience of the system, it is estimated that a saving of approximately 10 per cent. will be effected. The total number of items included in these six schedules is 345; and, as delivery is required at several centres, nearly four thousand separate prices had to be considered. The estimated expenditure is in round figures £20,000, the whole of which, with the exception of less than £100, will go to New Zealand manufacturers. Prior to printing the schedules the various chambers of commerce and similar business organizations were given an opportunity of perusing the proofs and submitting suggestions that would enable firms to tender to the best advantage. The proofs met with very general approval. As a result of the representations made one specification was amended, and in a few instances the size of packages or containers was varied to comply with the usual trade practices.

TESTING STORES.

Before contracts are arranged, tests of the various stores offered are carried out. For instance, paints, motor-spirits, lubricating-oils, &c., are analysed to determine their physical properties, and tested under working-conditions for service. The data thus obtained is of great value not only to the Board but also to New Zealand manufacturers. When stores manufactured locally fail to reach the standard specified the deficiencies are on record and available to the manufacturer if he inquires. There is no doubt that some manufacturers by availing themselves of the information thus obtained have improved the quality of the goods they are producing, with benefit to themselves and consumers alike. In addition to ensuring that the Government purchases only stores of good quality, it is hoped that this policy will result in higher-grade goods being stocked by distributors for sale to the general public.