

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The Research Council has held three meetings during the year, at which there have been full attendances, and, in addition, there have been numerous committee meetings.

The personnel of the Council is as follows:—

Mr. George Shirtcliffe, O.B.E. (Chairman).

Professor Henry George Denham, D.Sc., M.A., Ph.D., Professor of Chemistry, Canterbury College, Christchurch.

Professor John Malcolm, M.B., Ch.B., Professor of Physiology, University of Otago, Dunedin.

Mr. Theodore Rigg, M.Sc., Assistant Director, Cawthron Institute, Nelson.

Mr. Hugh Vickerman, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.Sc., M.Inst.C.E., Wellington.

Mr. George A. Pascoe, Chairman, Development of Industries Committee.

Mr. Alfred H. Cockayne, Assistant Director-General of Agriculture.

Dr. Ernest Marsden, M.C., D.Sc., F.N.Z.Inst. (Secretary).

The Development of Industries Committee held six meetings during the year. Its membership was altered by the resignation of the Chairman, Mr. J. Pearce Luke, whose place was taken by Mr. G. A. Pascoe.

The expenditure of the Department during the year was as follows:—

Permanent services—

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Dominion Laboratory (with branches)	11,306
Geological Survey	4,895
Meteorological Office	7,314
Apia Observatory	2,475
Dominion Observatory	1,534
Magnetic Observatory	1,817
Lincoln College	3,402
Research investigations (including contributions)	34,983
Head Office, publications, Research Scholarships, and miscellaneous	7,233

The grants made by the Empire Marketing Board and industries in support of research investigations amounted to a total of £10,762 for the year.

The continuance of the economic depression has meant the continuation of the uncertainty of finance which had to be faced in the previous year. Nevertheless, although this occasioned considerable anxiety, it was permitted to exert little restrictive influence upon the activities of the Department. Both in the regular services and in the research activities the amount of work covered was in excess of that done in previous years. This indicates that in times of depression scientific services are called upon in order to assist industries in the increasing difficulties which they experience in maintaining production and endeavouring to provide an output at reduced costs commensurate with the lessened spending-power of the community. There was every evidence that all those who were engaged upon scientific activities of the Department during the year felt the sense of their responsibilities in the circumstances of the depression, and were induced thereby to put forth additional zeal and effort into their work.

In order to effect as much relief as possible to various industries, the Department has investigated a very large range of proposed projects and assessed the likelihood of their success from the scientific point of view, and consequently has been able to render a good deal of valuable guidance in this respect.

DOMINION LABORATORY.

The primary function of the Laboratory is to make chemical examinations of materials for all Departments, except that of Agriculture. The work is extremely varied in character, and, while much is of a routine nature, a considerable amount of research work is carried out. In addition to these activities, various members of the staff are frequently consulted regarding subjects of which they have special knowledge.

As a result of encouragement giving to prospecting by the Unemployment Board, a greatly increased number of mineral samples from prospectors were examined during the year.

One of the most useful branches of work has been the examination of materials for Government Purchasing Departments.

A number of important investigations was carried out for the Police Department, one of these involving the recovery of veronal from bodies that were exhumed after burial for several months. This, though difficult, was successfully carried out.

In addition to the ordinary work for the Department of Health, an investigation was made regarding the significance of nitrites as affecting the purity of Hawke's Bay artesian waters.