

### MILFORD SOUND: PROVISION OF RADIO-TELEGRAPH FACILITIES.

Consequent upon the opening on the 29th September of a radio-telegraph office at Milford Sound, direct radio communication from that station is now possible with Awarua-Radio. On the same date a telephone office was established at Glade House, the Lake Te Anau terminal of the Milford Track. Telegraph traffic for Glade House circulates via Awarua-Radio to Milford Sound, and from the latter station to Glade House over the Tourist Department's telephone circuit.

The charge for telegrams for both Milford Sound and Glade House is at the rate of 2½d. per word, with a minimum of 1s. 3d. for each message.

### SHIP-TO-SHORE RADIO-TELEPHONE SERVICE.

Improvements in the technique of radio-telephony have now made it possible, provided that economic conditions justify the provision of the necessary equipment and operating personnel, for many services previously provided exclusively by radio-telegraphy to be conducted telephonically, and even connected to the main telephone-exchange system. As regards ship-to-shore radio communication, future developments may be conveniently considered under three headings, namely :—

- (a) Service to passenger liners when between about 500 and 2,000 miles from the New Zealand coast ;
- (b) Service to coastal vessels and to passenger ships approaching the coast ; and
- (c) Service to vessels lying in the roadstead at provincial ports during loading operations.

As regards (a) : This service, which has been developed to a small extent in other parts of the world, will doubtless be demanded by the travelling public when economic conditions improve. The Department is already equipped to provide such a service, and as soon as the installation of equipment on the liners concerned is justified the Department is prepared to initiate a developmental service on a schedule basis, utilizing the same equipment as is used in the overseas radio-telephone service.

The service referred to under (b) would require special equipment, as it would necessarily have to be conducted on quite a different wave from that required for communication with distant liners. There are, however, no technical difficulties involved, and the Department is in a position to offer such a service at short notice. Undoubtedly developments of this class of service can be expected in connection with such vessels as the inter-Island express steamers.

The expeditious handling of cargo at ports at which loading is still carried out by means of lighters demands radio communication with the shore, and preferably with the telephone system of the mainland, and these facilities are provided for by the service referred to under (c) above. The Department is willing to co-operate with Harbour Boards in providing such services at a minimum cost. Already one installation of this type is in existence, and is operating as a means of connection with the telephone system of the mainland with satisfaction to all parties concerned.

Developments in ship-to-shore radio-telephone services are so closely linked with the economic conditions of the country that it is impossible to hope for more than slow progress along the lines indicated. In inaugurating such services a commercial organization, such as the Department, has of necessity to preserve a wise balance between progressive development and economic expenditure ; and, while it is realized that, without the development of the service it is impossible to build up traffic, it is unwise to unduly anticipate the demand.

### EMERGENCY RADIO-STATIONS.

The departmental emergency radio-stations which are installed at various points throughout the Dominion have been maintained in constant readiness for use during the year, and periodical tests have been carried out to ensure that reliable communication is available with other towns in the event of the failure of the land-line telegraph and telephone service. Although there has fortunately been no occasion for the extended use of the emergency service during the year, in a few instances the stations have been manned when the lines were threatened by storms, &c.

### CABLE-RADIO MESSAGES ADDRESSED TO SHIPS AT SEA: CHARGES.

Payment of the radio portion of the charges levied on cable-radio messages—i.e., messages transmitted from one country to another by cable and thence by radio to a ship at sea—requires to be settled on a gold basis. Due to the depressed state of New Zealand currency in international exchange, this means that the payments due to other Administrations, as expressed in New Zealand currency, require to be increased by 80 per cent. ; and it has been necessary to impose an equivalent surcharge on the radio charges (coast-station and ship-station charges) on such messages.

### SECOND BYRD ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION: RADIO TRANSMISSION.

As was the case with the first Byrd Antarctic Expedition, permission was granted for the vessels attached to the 1933 Expedition to operate their wireless-telegraph apparatus while in New Zealand waters.

### CALL-SIGNS FOR VESSELS REGISTERED IN NEW ZEALAND.

By international agreement the call-signs for all vessels, whether signs used for visual- or radio-signalling purposes, have been assigned from the call-sign letter blocks allotted to the various countries under the International Telecommunication Convention Regulations. Previously, call-signs for visual signalling purposes were issued by the Marine Department, while the Post and Telegraph Department allotted separate call-signs for radio-signalling.