

SALE OF OBSOLETE AND UNSERVICEABLE MATERIAL.

A number of auction sales of obsolete and unserviceable material, including worn-out motor-vehicles from various Departments, was held during the year. The total value of property disposed of was £2,299 7s. 1d. This sum includes the value of scrap lead and other metals.

MARINE INSURANCE FUND.

The insurable value of stores from countries within the Empire and from the United States of America covered under the New Zealand Government Marine Insurance Fund was £97,109.

WORKSHOPS.

The efficiency of the various departmental workshops throughout the Dominion was well maintained during the year. General workshops are established at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, and motor workshops only at Whangarei, Hamilton, Napier, Gisborne, Wanganui, Palmerston North, Masterton, Nelson, Timaru, Greymouth, and Invercargill. These workshops are essential for the efficient maintenance of the Department's plant and equipment including transport, and for the proper carrying-on of the Department's activities.

The total value of the work performed in the various workshops during the year amounted to £93,928, of which £9,434 represents the value of services rendered to other Government Departments.

BUILDINGS AND LAND.

A new post-office building was erected at Karori, and the new post-office buildings at Taumarunui and Waitakaruru, the erection of which was commenced last year, were completed. At Dunedin good progress has been made with the new chief post-office building. Small garages were erected at Morrinsville and Waihi, and the garage at Te Aroha was extended.

Extensive alterations have been made in the General Post Office building at Wellington. The main public space has been modernized, the lighting has been improved, and additional writing-desks have been provided in the space formerly occupied by the stamp rotunda.

Areas of land no longer required at the following places were disposed of: Foxhill, Glen Oroua, Palmerston, Rangataua, Waitekauri, Woodgrove.

The disposal was effected also of old post-office buildings at Koputaroa, Queensberry, Reidston, and Whakataki, the old post-office building and site at Tophouse, and the temporary post-office building at Port Ahuriri, which was erected after the earthquake in 1931.

Areas of land were acquired as follows: Kaitaia (for drainage purposes), Patea (for extension of post-office site), St Heliers (for automatic-exchange building), Te Puke (for garage, &c.), Waimate (for improved access to post-office site), Wanganui (for store, garage, and workshops).

Fire was responsible for damage to the combined railway and post-office building at Heriot in September, 1934, and for the destruction of the post-office building at Toko in March, 1935.

DEPARTMENTAL MOTOR - VEHICLES.

Twenty-eight new motor-vehicles of various kinds were purchased during the year, some as additions to the fleet, and others in replacement of vehicles that were no longer serviceable. A number of these were cars for use in connection with the tour of His Royal Highness, the Duke of Gloucester. At the conclusion of the tour the cars were placed in service at the departmental garages at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin for general hiring purposes, and enabled a number of second-hand cars to be released for use by radio inspectors and other departmental officers. The remaining vehicles purchased were trucks of varying capacities up to 30 cwt. for use by the Engineering Branch in the maintenance of telegraph and toll lines. All the vehicles purchased were of English manufacture.

Vehicles in commission at the end of the year numbered 571, comprising 433 lorries, trucks, and vans, 137 motor-cars, and one motor-cycle. Forty-six vehicles were withdrawn from service. The fleet, including several vehicles held for sale, shows a net increase of nineteen.

The number of miles travelled by the fleet during the year was 4,261,770, an increase of 407,145 miles.

BICYCLES.

Bicycles are still used extensively in the Department's service, mainly by postmen and message-boys. The machines are in three classes—namely, those owned by individual officers, for the use of which an allowance is paid; those purchased by the Department and supplied free of cost to officers, who are required under agreement to maintain the machines and to utilize them in the Department's service for three, four, or five years, according to the average daily riding-time; and those owned by the Department and held for use by officers as required. The number of bicycles in use under these headings is 622, 87, and 500, respectively.