

POSTAGE-STAMPS.

The last "Health" stamp issue was marked by the most intensive campaign yet undertaken for funds in aid of children's health camps in the Dominion, the campaign being inaugurated by His Excellency the Governor-General by an address from the National broadcasting stations on the evening of Sunday, the 29th September. The stamp, which was as usual sold at 2d. (1d. postage value and 1d. for health camps), was on sale from the 30th September until the 11th January, and during that period an organized effort in which officers of the Department took a prominent part was made on behalf of the Health Camp Fund. The sum raised for this purpose, £11,794, indicates the success achieved.

To commemorate the twenty-first anniversary of the landing of New Zealand troops, together with other allied forces, on Gallipoli Peninsula, a special postage-stamp in two denominations was issued on the 27th April last. The design of the stamp—a New Zealand soldier in the foreground of a side view of Anzac Cove—was adopted as the result of collaboration between the Department and the New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association. Of a postage value of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and 1d., the stamps were sold at 1d. and 2d., respectively, and half of the proceeds of their sale was set aside for payment to the Returned Soldiers' Association for the relief of distress among ex-soldiers and their dependants. The appeal made by the stamps met with an immediate and generous response from the public. During the eight weeks the stamps were on issue the total sales exceeded £17,000, approximately half of which was made available to the Returned Soldiers' Association. From every point of view the Anzac stamp issue must be regarded as very satisfactory.

The Conference of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire, to be held in New Zealand for the first time in October next, will be commemorated in the postage-stamps of the Dominion by the issue of a special series of stamps in five denominations— $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d., $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., 4d., and 6d.—in which will be represented various phases of the Dominion's industrial and commercial activities.

BOOKLET OF RATES AND CHARGES.

For the convenience of the public and as a means of disseminating departmental information, my Department published recently for free distribution from post-offices and to rural box-holders a booklet containing the principal rates and charges and other brief information regarding departmental services. The booklet has been well received, particularly by persons who are not within easy reach of a post-office, and there is no doubt that it will do much to make the facilities of the Department better known among all sections of the community.

LITERATURE FOR THE BLIND: FREE TRANSMISSION BY POST OF TALKING-BOOK RECORDS.

For many years literature in Braille or other special characters for the use of the blind has been conveyed by post free of charge within New Zealand. In May last I approved of the extension of this concession to talking-book records. The talking-book machine—a recent development to bring literature more readily within the reach of the blind—is a specially adapted slow-revolving gramophone which plays records of complete books. It is estimated that, when the machines and records have been distributed by the New Zealand Institute for the Blind and the scheme is in full operation, the value of the concession to the blind people of the Dominion will approach £200 per annum.

INLAND PARCELS: REDUCTION IN RATES.

To encourage greater use of post-office facilities for the distribution of parcels within the Dominion parcel rates were reduced substantially from the 16th March. It was felt that with the general expansion of business a reduction in rates was opportune, and the results to date show that this action was fully justified.

OCEAN MAIL-SERVICES.

With the exceptions that on one outward trip on the Vancouver service the call at Auckland was omitted, and, due to a collision at Victoria in which the "Niagara" was involved, one inward trip on the same service was delayed, the Wellington-San Francisco and the Auckland-Vancouver ocean mail services were performed regularly throughout the year.