

SCHOOL SAVINGS BRANCH.

At the end of the year the school savings-bank scheme, the object of which is to encourage thrift among children, was in operation in 940 schools, an increase for the year of 35. The deposits amounted to £37,811 13s. 7d. and the withdrawals to £29,037 15s. 1d., an excess of deposits of £8,773 18s. 6d. The total number of operative accounts at the 31st March was 77,906, the amount at credit being £89,902 4s. 8d. Interest to the amount of £1,820 16s. 10d. was credited to depositors.

On leaving school, 3,763 depositors transferred their accounts to the Post Office Savings-bank.

SAVINGS-BANK LETTERS OF CREDIT.

Letters of credit numbering 4,986 were issued during the year for an aggregate amount of £92,973 14s.

POST OFFICE INVESTMENT CERTIFICATES.

The total sales of Post Office investment certificates for the year amounted to £16,911. The sale of these certificates was discontinued in July, 1940. National Savings Bonds, a similar form of investment, are now being issued.

NATIONAL SAVINGS BONDS.

Sales of National Savings Bonds began in October, 1940. The bonds, which have a currency of five years, are issued at the nominal values of £1, £10, and £100, the selling-prices being 17s. 6d., £8 15s., and £87 10s., respectively.

The total sales up to the 31st March, 1941, amounted to £611,709.

WORK PERFORMED FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

There was a further substantial increase in the work performed by the Department on behalf of other Government Departments. The total sum handled in this respect during the year was approximately £95,000,000 an increase of about £20,000,000 on the previous year's total.

SOCIAL SECURITY ACT, 1938 : WORK PERFORMED BY POST OFFICE.

The Post Office receives on behalf of Treasury a large proportion of the moneys due under the Social Security Act, the receipts for the year amounting to £12,461,519, made up as follows :—

	£
(a) Registration fee	614,986
(b) Social security charge on income other than salary or wages	3,878,205
(c) Social security charge on salary or wages collected in cash	4,085,721
(d) Sales of social security stamps	3,882,607
	£12,461,519

In addition to receiving moneys due, the Post Office disburses the amounts payable to approximately two-thirds of the persons receiving benefits under the Act, the remaining one-third being paid by officers of the Social Security Department.

MILITARY ALLOTMENT WARRANTS.

Military allotment and dependants' allowance warrants to the number of 613,820 were paid by the Department during the year. Post Office Savings-bank accounts have been opened to receive the allotments of pay of those soldiers who have not made next-of-kin allotments.

REGISTRATION OF MOTOR-VEHICLES, AND ASSOCIATED WORK.

Motor-vehicles licensed at the 31st March last numbered 311,641, a decrease of 3,879, or 1·22 per cent., compared with the number licensed at the corresponding date in 1940.

Registrations of motor-vehicles during the year totalled 15,551, a decrease of 14,219 compared with the number effected during the preceding twelve months.

Notifications of change of ownership totalled 97,890, compared with 125,795 during the previous year—a decrease of 27,905, or 22·18 per cent. Approximately 12,000 duplicate certificates of the registration of motor-vehicles were dealt with.

The total amount of motor-registration fees collected was £572,489, a decrease of £30,470 compared with the figure for the previous year.

More detailed statistics concerning the work undertaken by the Post and Telegraph Department in connection with the registration and licensing of motor-vehicles appear in the report of the Transport Department.

Premiums collected on behalf of the forty insurance companies authorized to underwrite business in terms of the Motor-vehicles Insurance (Third-party Risks) Act, 1928, totalled £452,531, a decrease of £6,189 compared with the amount collected during the preceding twelve months.

A total of 60,102 claims for refunds of duty on motor-spirits were approved for payment during the year. The total amount refunded was £314,542 1s. 9d. Compared with the figures for the previous year, the claims increased in number by 8,613 and in amount by £108,198 15s. 4d.

Mileage tax was collected in respect of 493 vehicles, as compared with 471 vehicles during the preceding year. The gross amount of mileage tax collected was £30,025, compared with £22,507 for the preceding twelve months.