

*Railway Tickets.*—The number of tickets printed was 7,179,206, the largest number printed in one month being 703,476 in May, 1948.

*Photo-litho and Process Engraving Branch.*—The output from this branch during the last six years is shown in the table set out below :—

| Year.         | Number of<br>Maps, Plans,<br>and Diagrams. | Number of<br>Process<br>Blocks. | Number of<br>Multex<br>Plates. |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1943-44 .. .. | 416                                        | 2,701                           | ..                             |
| 1944-45 .. .. | 237                                        | 3,111                           | ..                             |
| 1945-46 .. .. | 372                                        | 2,649                           | ..                             |
| 1946-47 .. .. | 453                                        | 2,433                           | ..                             |
| 1947-48 .. .. | 405                                        | 2,903                           | 289                            |
| 1948-49 .. .. | 349                                        | 4,692                           | 536                            |

A new service undertaken by this branch during the past two years is the preparation of multex plates for use on multilith and similar machines operated by other Departments. Several of these machines are now installed throughout the Public Service and this aspect of the work of the branch is assuming increased importance. The facilities for speedy reproduction by the photo-lithographic process are being availed of to the greatest possible extent and during the year a number of reprint orders of jobs which would normally have been reprinted by the letterpress process were executed.

*Stationery Office.*—This branch of the Department continues to suffer from lack of sufficient and suitable accommodation, which accentuates the difficulty of retaining staff in the branch. The output continues to grow and the need for further and more congenial accommodation is becoming more pressing. Measures taken during the year have produced some temporary relief, and efforts are now being directed towards the acquisition of a suitable site with a view to the complete removal of this branch from the Department's building. Details of the operations for the year as compared with those of previous years are appended :—

| Year.         | Number of<br>Requisitions. | Number of<br>Items. | Number of<br>Typewriters<br>Supplied. | Value of<br>Stationery<br>and<br>Publications<br>Supplied. | Value of<br>Typewriters<br>supplied. | Total<br>Value. |
|---------------|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
|               |                            |                     |                                       | £                                                          | £                                    | £               |
| 1943-44 .. .. | 18,311                     | 133,236             | 435                                   | 122,751                                                    | 11,157                               | 133,908         |
| 1944-45 .. .. | 17,542                     | 154,674             | 361                                   | 121,795                                                    | 9,332                                | 131,127         |
| 1945-46 .. .. | 17,733                     | 175,105             | 419                                   | 136,059                                                    | 10,621                               | 146,680         |
| 1946-47 .. .. | 17,843                     | 180,652             | 330                                   | 143,990                                                    | 9,190                                | 153,180         |
| 1947-48 .. .. | 18,332                     | 208,241             | 538                                   | 168,345                                                    | 17,071                               | 185,416         |
| 1948-49 .. .. | 20,015                     | 220,706             | 379                                   | 209,472                                                    | 10,748                               | 220,219         |

*Paper.*—Prices of paper overseas reached their peak in the early part of 1948, and after a few months of relative stability began to show a slight downward trend in 1949, which is still continuing. The supply position has also eased considerably, and although certain of the finer classes are still difficult to procure, most of the commoner lines of paper are now available for shipment from the United Kingdom within two or three months of ordering. The Department has now reverted to the pre-war practice of calling tenders through the New Zealand representatives of overseas manufacturers for its paper supplies. This enables samples to be inspected and tested before orders are placed and will allow the Department to maintain a stricter control over the quality of stock.