

The system of transfer of accounts between the Dominion and the United Kingdom resulted in £24,160 being transferred to the United Kingdom and £4,292 to New Zealand. A similar arrangement with the Australian Savings-banks resulted in £45,656 being transferred to Australia and £34,213 to New Zealand.

Fixed deposits, if part of a war fund within the War Funds Act, 1915, and exceeding £50 in amount, are accepted for a period of five years at 4 per cent. per annum.

WORK PERFORMED FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

The scope of the Department's usefulness to the State is constantly being widened, and there are very few services under State control for which the Post Office is not in some measure the agent dealing directly with the public.

Among the many branches of work undertaken during the year those deserving of particular mention are Customs duties collected for a total amount of £119,176, and for the same Department £12,610 for beer duty.

The agencies for the State Advances, Public Trust, and Government Insurance Departments lead to a very large amount of business. The amount received on account of State Advances reached a total of £1,714,763, for the Public Trustee £1,054,169, and for the Government Insurance £258,387; while the amounts paid were £1,680,194 for the State Advances and £1,046,950 for the Public Trustee.

Land and income tax may be paid at any money-order office, and the total amount of these taxes received during the year was £1,324,027. For the Valuation Department fees amounting to £4,862 were collected.

A very large number of claims chargeable to the appropriations made by Parliament are paid through the medium of the Post Office on behalf of the Treasury. Last year the amount so paid in cash was £4,472,544.

For the Pensions Department £481,300 was paid on account of old-age pensions, £46,431 on account of military pensions, £37,559 on account of widows' pensions, £134,906 on account of war pensions, and £6,969 on account of miners' pensions.

Contributions to the National Provident Fund collected by Postmasters amounted to £23,259, and £128,002 was paid out on behalf of the Public Service Superannuation Fund.

Among the items which do not bulk largely with regard to amount but involve numerous transactions may be mentioned the sale of fishing licenses, to the value of £1,548, and game licenses, £3,433; machinery- and boiler-certificate fees collected, £11,594; mining licenses, £240; and sanatorium receipts, £1,611.

On behalf of the British Government £28,262 was paid to Imperial pensioners resident in New Zealand.

For the registration of births, deaths, and marriages and the performance of the marriage ceremony Postmasters collected £3,225.

Discount stamps valued at £798 and numbering 766,080 were sold, but the popularity of these stamps seems to be steadily diminishing, the sales being practically confined to Wellington.

The work performed in connection with the payment of allotments made by members of the New Zealand military forces has assumed very large proportions, the number of payments made amounting to the large total of 405,255 for £2,164,780.

Some idea of the other services performed may be obtained from the balance-sheet of the Post Office Account.

TELEGRAPHS.

The telegraph revenue shows a marked increase, which is principally due to two causes—(1) the increased telegraph rates which are in force, and (2) to payments received from the Defence Department on account of the immense amount of work performed for that Department. The grand total of the telegraph revenue, including telephone exchanges and miscellaneous receipts, amounted to £844,524, equivalent to an increase of almost '88 per cent. If to this be added the value of "free" Government telegrams, the total amounts to £855,298. The payments made on account of these services amounted to £681,217, an increase equal to about 3'44 per cent. The expenditure for salaries is below normal on account of the large number of officers at the front who are replaced by temporary and other lower-paid officers.

There is still a steadily increasing number of bureau communications, which are to some extent taking the place of telegrams, for, while the number of ordinary telegrams decreased from 6,062,131 to 5,742,739, the number of bureau messages increased from 3,963,801 to 4,382,823. Thus, while the number of telegrams fell off by 319,392, the bureau communications increased by 419,022.

The extension of the telegraph and telephone lines was steadily proceeded with during the year. Forty new offices were opened, bringing the total number up to 2,409 on the 31st March. Of these, 337 are Morse telegraph-offices and 2,072 telephone-offices.

From the 544 private wires and subsidized lines the amount of rent and maintenance received was £4,202.

The various telegraph tables give full particulars with reference to telegrams handled. The total number of all codes dealt with was 10,875,120, an increase of 38,369 over the previous year. The proportion of paid telegrams per unit of population was 9'3.

While ordinary telegrams show the decrease in number already referred to, the increased rates produced an increased revenue therefrom of £8,644. Urgent ordinary telegrams show an increase of 4,591, the increase of revenue being £1,260.

The number of Press telegrams fell from 383,155 to 304,192, but the revenue derived therefrom on account of the increased rates was £25,373, as against £24,417.