

## II. REPORT OF REGISTRAR-GENERAL.

Registrar-General's Office, Wellington, 15th May, 1917.

I GIVE hereunder a statement of the business transacted by this Department during the last five years. This shows an increase except with regard to marriages, which during the last year have fallen much below the average :—

| Year.        | Births. | Deaths. | Marriage Notices received and Certificates issued. | Marriages solemnized.  |
|--------------|---------|---------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1912 .. .. . | 27,508  | 9,214   | 9,504                                              | 9,189                  |
| 1913 .. .. . | 27,935  | 10,119  | 9,132                                              | 8,846                  |
| 1914 .. .. . | 28,338  | 10,148  | 9,589                                              | 9,326                  |
| 1915 .. .. . | 27,865  | 9,965   | 10,483                                             | 10,064                 |
| 1916 .. .. . | 28,509  | 10,596  | 8,450                                              | 8,213<br>(approximate) |

I also give a statement showing the number of marriages of Natives solemnized during the last five years under section 191 (1) (b) of the Native Land Act, 1909, and the number of Maori registrations effected under the regulations relating to the registration of births and deaths of Maoris which came into force on the 1st March, 1913 :—

| Year.        | Maori Births.      | Maori Deaths.      | Maori Marriages.     |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1912 .. .. . | ..                 | ..                 | 240                  |
| 1913 .. .. . | 586<br>(10 months) | 412<br>(10 months) | 220                  |
| 1914 .. .. . | 857                | 723                | 219                  |
| 1915 .. .. . | 968                | 786                | 190                  |
| 1916 .. .. . | 1,020              | 761                | 172<br>(approximate) |

I wish to lay stress upon the fact that this Department has no check on marriages solemnized under the Native Land Act as it has on those solemnized under the Marriage Act. It is therefore impossible to guarantee that the numbers of Maori marriages shown in the above table are complete.

In securing the registration of births and deaths of Maoris there have been many difficulties to contend with, as from the inception of the requirement for registration many Natives have shown reluctance to comply with the law. Nevertheless every effort is being made to secure records of all Maori births and deaths that occur in New Zealand.

In addition to the business referred to above the registration of medical practitioners, dentists, and officiating ministers is undertaken by the Department, and a considerable amount of searching is done free of charge for the Pensions, National Provident Fund, Labour, Police, Education, and Defence Departments. The number of searches for the last twelve months made by the Head Office alone, under various headings, is as follows: Pensions Department, 4,246; National Provident Fund, 3,573; Labour Department, 1,537; Education Department, 1,306; Defence Department, 5,000; other searches (for public, &c.), 2,025. Certificates issued, 5,063. Total searches made, 22,750.

The war has added a considerable amount of work to this office in the way of searches for births and marriages for war-pension purposes, and also for claiming separation and children's allowances from the Defence Department. The number of children's allowance searches made for the last-named Department from April, 1916, to date amounts to close on eight thousand, and the number of searches for war-pension purposes is assuming very large proportions, comprising nearly half of the searches now undertaken for the Pensions Department.

In addition to this work the Department has undertaken the compilation of a Register of Deaths of members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Forces and others which occurred while out of New Zealand on service in some capacity in connection with the present war.

The revenue of the Department, though steady for several years, shows a decided advance for 1915-16, and a severe drop for 1916-17, due entirely to fluctuations in the marriages as shown above.

The total revenue of the Department for the last five financial years was as follows :—

| 1912-13. | 1913-14. | 1914-15. | 1915-16. | 1916-17. |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| £14,240  | £14,355  | £14,163  | £16,865  | £13,684  |

With regard to expenditure, it is impossible to show this item for the Registration Department alone, as it was not until the last financial year that the expenditure of the Registration Branch was kept separate from that of the Statistical Branch. The expenditure for the year ended 31st March, 1917, was £9,175.

W. W. Cook, Registrar-General.

The Under-Secretary, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington.