Owing to the cessation of hostilities and the demobilization of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force the Y.M.C.A. coupons, which had been on sale at all money-order offices in the Dominion, were withdrawn on the 28th February, 1919.

The Department has since the beginning of the war rendered valuable service to the Minister of Finance in receiving from the public amounts for investment in the war loans placed on the market. The amount collected through the medium of the Post Office up to the 31st March, 1919, totalled £11,923,592 4s., of which sum £4,017,608 14s. represents sale of war-loan certificates, and the balance Treasury bonds. The public has lodged in custody of the General Post Office certificates to the value of £1,556,436. Many persons have taken advantage of the Department's newly established safe-deposit system to lodge Treasury bonds.

CENSORSHIP.

Following upon the signing of the armistice with Germany, the advertising of particulars of despatch of mails by all overseas steamers was resumed on the 4th December, 1918. Likewise were removed the restrictions upon cable messages dealing with the movements of shipping and on the publication in the Press of similar information.

On the 10th January, 1919, the wireless censorship was relaxed to permit of the communication by wireless between the master and the owners or agents of a ship of plain-language messages relative to the safety and working of the vessel.

On the 3rd February the censorship of wireless messages, except of those to warships, ceased.

STORES.

Hitherto no mention has been made in the annual report of the Stores Branch of the Department. The growth of the branch has, however, been such that some reference to its functions and activities is now due.

The functions of the Stores Branch concern the purchase, receipt, inspection, custody, issue, and disposal of all stores and supplies required for the construction and maintenance of the Department's services. The articles handled may be said to range from needles to anchors, and comprise over twenty thousand different lines.

The following figures give some idea of the value of stores dealt with :--

ain Store, Wellington-							£
Purchases for year ended 31st March, 1910							119,398
"	31st March, 1					225,372	
22	31st March, 1	919					185,941
Purchases, 1st April, 1914, to 31st March, 1918 Issues, 1st April, 1914, to 31st March, 1918							1,110,211
							1,123,922
Stocks on hand on the At Main Store, W				ns, value	approxin	nately	
£30,000)							259,749
At District Store,	Christchurch				• • •		37,093
At sub-stores			• •		• •	. • •	166,102
							f462 944

During the period of the war in only a few instances was it necessary to use substitutes for standard lines, and therefore very little difficulty was experienced in reasonably meeting all maintenance requirements for post and telegraph offices during that period.

Having regard to the necessity for providing the Service and the public with the means of transacting business conducted through the Department, it was anticipated years ago that dock strikes and other labour troubles would cause delays in getting supplies forward, and therefore arrangements were made whereby it was possible to hold reserve stocks of many lines that were obtained from overseas. The wisdom of this arrangement has been amply proved.

As far as possible support is given to New Zealand manufacturers of supplies required by the Department. A trial order has recently been placed for locally manufactured insulators.

In addition to purchasing and issuing stores for its own use the Department purchases largely for other Departments.

A motor-supplies section has been established as part of the Stores Branch, and this section purchases and stocks motor-supplies for distribution throughout the Dominion, not only for the Department, but also for other Government Departments.

Maimed soldiers are employed in the hamper section of the Stores Branch, and it is found that they take kindly to and interest themselves in the work. In course of time they will no doubt become efficient workers.

During the year a fire at the Addington Store yard destroyed a large quantity of lead-covered cable.

DEPARTMENTAL WORKSHOPS.

The Department has at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin well-equipped workshops in which are repaired departmental motor-lorries, motor-cars, motor-cycles, and bicycles. During the war spare parts were unprocurable from abroad. These were made in the machine-shop at Wellington and proved satisfactory.

In the Wellington workshops is undertaken the manufacture of telegraph and telephone instruments and apparatus.