

STAFF AND ORGANIZATION.

It will be gathered from the foregoing that the work entrusted to the Department has continued to increase, and, in addition to undertaking the arrangements necessary in connection with the requisition of produce on behalf of the Imperial Government, the Department has at different times been called upon to institute general inquiries regarding other matters, and has endeavoured to constitute itself a Department for the collection and distribution of information of general interest to the commercial community.

In this connection the organization of the Department has been freely consulted by business people in matters of commercial interest, and its endeavour has always been to render the fullest assistance possible.

The policy has all along been to conduct its business on commercial lines, with the free utilization of modern methods and mechanical appliances essential to systematically and commercially handling business of such large dimensions so that the fullest measure of efficiency might be obtained.

The special telegraphic code devised by the departmental officers has been revised and large additions made; and the Department now possesses a very comprehensive code, comprising some twenty-five thousand ciphers, which will have the effect of saving some thousands of pounds in the exchange of cablegrams with the High Commissioner and the Imperial Government Departments concerned in the various requisitioning schemes.

The regular issue of the printed bulletin showing its operations, which has been prepared and furnished for the information of Ministers, the High Commissioner, all Departments of the Dominion Government concerned, the New Zealand Overseas Shipowners' Committee, representatives of the associated banks in New Zealand, the Board of Agriculture, and others, has been continued by the Department, which has also kept the Imperial Government fully informed regarding the quantities of produce available for shipment from time to time.

I have pleasure in again placing on record the indebtedness of the Department to wool-brokers, freezing companies, and others with whom it is in close touch, for the co-operation and willingness at all times to assist the Department in its administration, and I am also glad to acknowledge the thoroughness of the continuous audit conducted by the Controller and Auditor-General through a special staff attached to the Department for the purpose.

When the Department was originally constituted in March, 1915, to handle the arrangements in connection with the purchase of frozen meat the staff consisted of five officers, including an officer in charge, two clerks, a typiste, and a messenger.

On the 31st March last there were sixty-one officers employed, including executive officers and clerks (49), typistes (9), Burroughs adding-machinists (2), and a messenger.

The staff suffered seriously as a result of the recent influenza epidemic, and this rendered the work of the administration staff particularly severe and arduous, and I consider it was largely due to the special efforts and co-operation displayed by all officers in the discharge of the duties entrusted to them that the work of the Department was successfully carried on during a very trying period.

I have, &c.,
ROBERT TRIGGS, Controller.

The Right Hon. Minister in Charge,
Department of Imperial Government Supplies, Wellington.
