

WORKSHOPS.

The activities of this branch have been confined chiefly to maintenance of the motor vehicles and general mechanical apparatus of the service. In addition the manufacture of unprocurable parts of motor vehicles has been successfully undertaken. The new arrangement, under which Government vehicles are controlled by the Post and Telegraph Department, has increased the importance and quantity of work in the motor-repair section. In the electrical section important work has been efficiently executed in connection with installations of automatic printing-telegraph and the extension of the telephone-exchange systems. Other Departments continue to take advantage of the facilities afforded for efficient and economical manufacture and repairs of mechanical appliances.

The value of the work carried out during the year amounted to £54,087.

GOVERNMENT MOTOR SERVICE.

With a view to effecting economy, Government decided towards the end of 1921 that all motor vehicles in use by Government Departments in the chief centres, with the exception of Police cars, were to be controlled by the Post and Telegraph Department, which would issue them, as required, on application by Permanent Heads of Departments. The scheme, which involves much rearrangement, is gradually being brought about, and at present is working very satisfactorily. The concentration of vehicles under one control is already showing a distinct economy, and this will be more noticeable as the scheme progresses. In the past, different Government Departments have procured different makes of cars, lorries, and cycles, with the obvious result that spare parts had to be stocked for the various types. Now that vehicles are to be under the control of the Post and Telegraph Department, every effort will be made towards standardization of type, with a view to a reduction in the variety of spare parts and fittings. It will, however, be realized that this will be possible only when the great variety of vehicles recently taken over have reached the end of their usefulness.

The garages will be kept open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, but arrangements can be made, when necessary, for attendance outside that time.

POST OFFICE.

During 1921 Inspectors visited 2,471 offices.

The number of post-offices opened was 31, and the number closed 60. The number of post-offices open on the 31st December, 1921, was 2,178.

The number of articles delivered in the Dominion, including those received from places beyond New Zealand, during the year 1921, compared with the number in 1920, was as under:—

	1921.	1920.	Increase.	Decrease.
Letters and letter-cards..	132,038,162	131,053,351	984,811	..
Post-cards	3,679,519	3,845,075	..	165,556
Other articles	46,136,266	44,905,224	1,231,042	..
Totals	181,853,947	179,803,650	2,215,853	..
Parcels	3,325,121	3,443,658	..	118,537

The letters and letter-cards increased 0·75 per cent., post-cards decreased 4·31 per cent., other articles increased 2·74 per cent., and parcels decreased 3·44 per cent.

In 1920, compared with 1919, letters and letter-cards increased 8·64 per cent., post-cards decreased 1·15 per cent., other articles increased 16·29 per cent., and parcels increased 8·27 per cent.

The average number of letters and letter-cards posted per unit of the population during 1921 is estimated at 99·5. The average in 1920 was 107·7.

The declared value of parcels received from places outside the Dominion in 1921 was £1,318,733, against £2,250,828 in 1920. The Customs duty amounted to £244,683 14s. 2d. The declared value of parcels despatched to places beyond the Dominion in 1921 was £86,184, against £100,008 in 1920.

DEAD AND MISSING LETTERS.

The proportion of dead or unclaimed letters, letter-cards, and post-cards to the total number delivered within the Dominion was 0·44 per cent. 226,076 letters (including registered letters) were opened and returned to writers through the Dead Letter Office; 38,385 were returned unopened to other countries: 80 were reissued; 37,009 were destroyed; 253,776 were returned by Chief Postmasters to senders within New Zealand; 40,528 were returned by Chief Postmasters to other countries: a total of 595,854, compared with 700,454 in 1920. 8,021 other articles were returned to foreign countries; 2,525 were returned to the senders through the Dead Letter Office, and 103,552 by Chief Postmasters; 27,813 were returned by Chief Postmasters to other countries: a total of 141,911 articles, compared with 153,328 in 1920.

There were 5,413 letters and 3,294 letter-cards posted without addresses; 17,400 letters were wrongly addressed; 114 letters bore libellous addresses, and were intercepted; 32 letters were discovered to bear previously used stamps; and 9,204 registered letters were unclaimed. 3,612 newspapers and 3,408 books and other articles were received without addresses: many of these were subsequently applied for and delivered. 24,950 newspapers were returned to publishers.