

1922.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1922.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, 17th July, 1922.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit herewith the annual report of the Department for the year ended 31st March, 1922.

I have, &c.,

J. HISLOP, Under-Secretary.

The Hon. W. Downie Stewart, Minister of Internal Affairs, Wellington.

PASSPORTS AND PERMITS.

DURING the year 3,231 passports were issued, as against 4,313 for the preceding year, while renewals of passports increased from 350 to 528.

The amended visa regulations of the United States Government, dated 12th May, 1921, which permit of British passengers on vessels calling at American ports to land for the limited period of the stay of the vessel in port without obtaining a passport visa, has been much appreciated by the New Zealand travelling public. British subjects who desire to land in American territory and who do not continue their journey by the same vessel require to obtain a visa of their passport by an American consular officer.

NATIONALITY.

Prior to 1730 British nationality could only be acquired by birth within His Majesty's allegiance, but the British Nationality Act of that year conferred British nationality to the first generation born abroad, and an amending Act of 1772 extended the principle so as to confer the status of British subjects also upon the grandson born abroad. These statutes remained in force until the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1914, which became operative on the 1st January, 1915, and which once more limited British nationality to the first generation born abroad. The main considerations in favour of that limitation were—(1) that in normal circumstances the closeness of association with the British Empire of families of British descent resident in a foreign country tends to diminish with each generation born abroad, more especially if marriages with foreign women take place; (2) that the transmission of British nationality through successive generations born abroad necessarily and automatically produces many instances of dual nationality.

In many foreign countries there are strong British communities which during and since the conclusion of hostilities have shown a very marked desire to maintain their British character. The question received attention at the Conference of Prime Ministers held during June August, 1921, when it was decided to recommend that Part I of the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act be amended to allow of the acquisition of British nationality by successive generations born abroad, subject to registration at a British Consulate within one year of birth by parent or guardian, and renewed within one year after the child attains his majority. It may be necessary in cases of dual nationality to make a declaration of alienage as well as renewal of registration. The proposal of the Imperial Government to give effect to the recommendation of the Conference has been agreed to by the New Zealand Government.

NATURALIZATION.

Letters of naturalization were issued to 170 persons. The matter of the adoption in New Zealand of Part II of the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1914, is under review.