

A penalty is provided for offences by Telegraph officers in respect of which no penalty is provided elsewhere in the Act.

Electric lines liable to interfere with lines forming part of submarine telegraph-cable systems may be ordered to be removed or altered.

Power is given for regulations to be made extending the control of wireless-telegraph apparatus used by any person, association, or corporation, or on board any ship registered in New Zealand.

Section 8 (2) (a) of the Post and Telegraph Amendment Act, 1913, making it an offence to personate a person on a telephone under the control or management of the Minister is repealed; and it is made an offence for any person to wilfully make on such telephone a false statement with intent that some other person shall act on such false statement to his substantial detriment.

The constitution of the Promotion Board is altered by substituting the First and Second Assistant Secretaries (officers of the Administrative Division) for the Chief Inspector and the Superintendent of Staff (officers of the Clerical Division).

General power is given to make regulations for the purposes of the principal Act.

OFFICIAL INQUIRIES, CONDUCT OF.

Charges in respect of the conduct of official inquiries, made against certain principal officers of the Department by Mr. O. C. Mazengarb, solicitor, Wellington, and adopted by the Post and Telegraph Officers' Association, were investigated by Mr. F. K. Hunt, Stipendiary Magistrate, under the Commissions of Inquiry Act. At the conclusion of the evidence Mr. Mazengarb unreservedly withdrew the charges. Mr. Hunt, in the course of his report, stated that no evidence was called to prove any of the charges, and that the slightest inquiry on the part of Mr. Mazengarb would have shown that they were without foundation.

REPRESENTATION OF DEPARTMENT ON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

The Chief Postmasters at New Plymouth and Wanganui, and the Postmasters at Dannevirke, Feilding, Palmerston North, and Waipukurau, have been admitted in their official capacity to membership of the Chambers of Commerce in their respective towns.

PREPARATION OF ELECTORAL ROLLS.

In June and July a number of officers were detached from their postal duties in order to thoroughly canvass the larger towns for the purpose of enrolling electors. In other places lists of residents eligible to vote were prepared by Postmasters. The names thus obtained formed the new main rolls for the parliamentary elections.

ATTENDANCE AT MONEY-ORDER OFFICES AND SAVINGS-BANKS.

Owing to shortage of staff, brought about by war conditions, the attendance in the money-order and savings-bank branches at chief offices on days other than Saturday had been reduced from the 1st July, 1918, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. to 10 a.m.-3 p.m. A step towards resuming normal attendance was made on the 20th January, 1919, when the closing-hour of 4 p.m. was reverted to. The full ordinary attendance has now been resumed, the opening-time having been made 9 a.m. from the 18th December, 1922.

The Saturday attendance is from 9 a.m. to noon. It was not disturbed when the attendance on other days was curtailed in 1918.

GRAY MEMORIAL PRIZE.

The Gray Memorial Medals for 1920, 1921, and 1922 were awarded as under:—

- 1920—A. R. Turner (Auckland): Improved method of addressing telephone directories.
- 1921—J. A. Murray (Auckland): Improved knot for tying bundles of letters.
- 1922—W. McNickle (Taihape): Improved form for parcel receipt and record.

STORES BRANCH.

The following figures show the value of supplies purchased, issued, and remaining in stock for the year ended 31st March, 1923, while those for the previous year are stated for the purpose of comparison:—

					1922-23.	1921-22.
					£	£
Stock on hand, 31st March	..	..	..	..	330,577	384,716
Purchases	..	..	..	..	501,389	682,692
Issues	..	..	..	..	555,528	555,351

Material for the maintenance and extension of the work of the Department has been supplied within reasonable time, except in the case of poles and timber for telegraph-arms. The exception is set out fully elsewhere in this report.

The number of indents placed during 1922, compared with each of the two previous years, is—1920, 368; 1921, 177; 1922, 362. Indents are now normal. Purchases were restricted in 1921, as at that time prices were steadily falling.

The total inward consignments for the year, compared with 1921, are: 1922—Shipments, 1,013; packages, 118,980. 1921—Shipments, 1,037; packages, 83,687.

Prices for most lines have become firmer during the year, this being particularly noticeable in the case of metal.

The standard of work in the manufacture and repair of parcel-post hampers is much improved, the employees (returned soldiers) having increased in efficiency.

During the year there was established a Stores Control Board, whose function it is to supervise the purchase of all materials required by Government Departments. The Post and Telegraph Department is one of the three Departments appointed to act as purchasing agents, the two others being the