

From time to time, as a result of Police Court proceedings, comment is made in the public Press regarding the number of cases of theft of moneys by public servants. In this connection it should be pointed out that on the discovery of a theft of any kind committed by a departmental officer Police Court proceedings follow automatically, but the same conditions do not obtain in the outside business community. A fair comparison would be possible only if Police Court proceedings followed automatically in the case of thefts by other than Government employees.

#### RELIEF DATE - STAMP.

In order to overcome the inconvenience occasioned when a post-office date-stamp has to be sent away to be repaired, a special relief date-stamp, suggested by an officer of the Department, has been brought into use. The stamp is fitted with movable type which can be arranged to imprint the name of any post-office.

#### CINEMATOGRAPH-FILMS.

The new regulations regarding the transmission of cinematograph-films by post, which were referred to in the last report, continue to operate satisfactorily. The regulations provide for the films to be enclosed in special fireproof containers, and the risk of carrying films by post is thus reduced to a minimum.

During the year permission was given, with the acquiescence of the Chief Inspector of Explosives, for "trailer" films to be posted in tins measuring 6½ in. by 2 in. "Trailer" films are, comparatively speaking, only a few feet in length, and are used to give picture audiences some idea of the principal incidents in the picture which is to form the main item of the programme for the following week. To insist on these small films being enclosed in the large fireproof containers would be somewhat of a hardship so far as the film people are concerned.

#### POST-OFFICE FIRES.

On the 24th February, 1926, a fire occurred in the Haumoana (Napier Postal District) non-permanent post-office, which is conducted in a store building. Fortunately, the conflagration was extinguished before any great damage was done. About forty letters and circulars were partly burnt. The contents of the post-office safe were undamaged.

The post-office building at Lyell (Westport Postal District) was destroyed by fire at 2 a.m. on the 16th February, 1926. The circumstances surrounding the fire were inquired into by the police, who were unable to determine the cause. The building, a structure erected in 1874, was of very little value.

The building in which the Pukekawa (Auckland Postal District) non-permanent post-office was conducted was completely destroyed by fire on the 9th April, 1925. The building was the property of the Postmaster. A small quantity of mail-matter was burnt.

The store in which the Te Pohue (Napier Postal District) non-permanent post-office was conducted was totally destroyed by fire at 10.30 p.m. on the 12th September, 1925. A few unregistered letters were destroyed.

#### POST-OFFICE BURGLARY.

During the night of the 13th April, 1925, the post-office, Pukeuri Junction, which is situated in the Pukeuri Junction Railway-station buildings, was broken into. The safe was opened, and the sum of £27 10s. 6d. belonging to the Department was stolen. The culprit was apprehended and sentenced to three years' reformatory treatment. The amount stolen was recovered. The entry to the office was made possible by the thief stealing the keys from a Railway officer who had custody of them.

#### POSTAL CONVENTION.

The Universal Postal Convention of Stockholm came into operation on the 1st October, 1925. The principal changes necessitated thereby were mentioned in the report for last year.

#### REGISTRATION OF MOTOR - VEHICLES.

The new system of registration has many advantages over those systems formerly in operation under the control of the various local authorities. Prior to the 1st January, 1925, there was no comprehensive register such as now exists. Registers were then compiled by individual local authorities for their own particular districts.

The officers of the Police Department who have to investigate the ever-increasing number of motor accidents, breaches of by-laws, thefts of motor-vehicles, &c., speak in eulogistic terms of the facilities which the new register affords for tracing motor-owners. It is now possible to obtain from the Registrar of Motor-vehicles, General Post Office, Wellington, particulars of any motor-vehicle registered in the Dominion.

For every motor-vehicle a separate file is kept. This file contains a record of the life-history of the vehicle from the time of registration until the time of destruction.

The number of inquiries received from the Police Department, local authorities, motor-dealers, and the general public is rapidly increasing, and a considerable amount of time is occupied in searching the register for the information required.