

Particulars of the purchases made for other Departments under the Stores Control Board Regulations are set out hereunder. The figures for the previous year also are shown :—

Year ended	Requisitions.	Items.	Value of Items purchased.		Total.
			On Indent.	Locally.	
			£	£	£
31st March, 1926 ..	1,548	5,946	32,451	74,154	106,605
31st March, 1927 ..	3,263	13,854	18,095	92,981	111,076

The large increase in the number of requisitions and in the number of purchases is due to the fact that Departments are keeping their stocks at a lower level than has been the practice in the past.

As directed by Government, full preference to New Zealand and British manufacturers has been extended, with the result that the value of the articles purchased locally and in Great Britain has increased.

Motor-vehicles purchased for other Departments numbered 240—an increase of eighteen over the number purchased during the preceding year.

General contracts for the supply of motor-spirit, kerosene, lubricating-oil, and motor-tires let through the Stores Control Board, resulted in a considerable saving both to the Post Office and to other Departments concerned. In view of the amount of motor-spirit used by Government Departments, it has been found economical to install petrol-pumps at various points. Pumps controlled by the Post and Telegraph Department have already been brought into use in twenty-two cities and towns. The system of purchasing petrol in bulk will be extended from time to time, and it is proposed to install pumps during the year 1927–28 in seven more towns. The saving to the Government as a result of the purchase of motor-spirit in bulk is considerable.

MARINE INSURANCE FUND.

The value of the stores from countries within the Empire, and from the United States of America, imported under cover of the Marine Insurance Fund, was £238,400. Since the establishment of the Fund on the 1st July, 1925, an unusually large number of claims have been made by the Department. The claims were due to fires that occurred on the s.s. “Kent” and the s.s. “Remuera,” a collision between the s.s. “Surrey” and another vessel on the River Thames, the wreck of the s.s. “Port Kembla” at San Salvador, and the striking of a submerged rock on the New Zealand coast by the s.s. “Northumberland.”

POST OFFICE.

ARTICLES DELIVERED.

The number of articles delivered in the Dominion, including those received from places overseas, during the year 1926, compared with the number in 1925, was as under :—

	1926.	1925.	Increase Per Cent.
Letters	149,881,324	148,160,011	1·16
Post-cards	4,557,568	4,677,034	0·39*
Parcels	3,698,400	3,645,057	1·46
All other articles	86,224,573	80,134,655	7·60
	244,361,865	236,616,757	*Decrease.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF LETTERS POSTED PER UNIT OF POPULATION.

1926, 109·95 1925, 110·14.

NUMBER OF POST-OFFICES IN DOMINION.

Offices opened during year, 20; offices closed during year, 41; offices remaining open on 31st December, 1926, 1,999.

UNDELIVERABLE POSTAL PACKETS.

The following is a comparison of letters and other articles dealt with as undeliverable during the year 1926, compared with those so dealt with during 1925 :—

Year.	Returned direct to Senders from Chief Offices (“Special Request”).	Returned direct to Senders from Dead Letter Office.	Returned to other Administrations from Chief Offices (“Special Request”).	Returned to other Administrations from Dead Letter Office.	Destroyed (Senders unknown and Contents of no Value).	Total.
<i>Letters.</i>						
1926..	316,578	302,307	52,856	38,011	31,496	741,248
1925..	247,934	291,598	54,556	39,091	26,308	659,487
<i>Other Articles.</i>						
1926..	201,193	10,142	87,987	25,156	..	324,478
1925..	157,543	9,211	75,377	24,532	..	266,663

The proportion of undeliverable letters to the total number of letters delivered was 0·49 per cent. In 1925 the proportion was 0·45 per cent.