

Accidents in filling Tanks of Motor-cars.—A number of fires of this class were recorded. The cause of these fires may be roughly classified as follows: (a) The overflowing of fuel-tanks during filling with subsequent ignition due either to electric spark on restarting the engine, or to back-fire or other cause connected with the exhaust; (b) the filling of fuel-tanks, particularly of motor-cycles, with acetylene-lamps lighted; (c) the filling of fuel-tanks with the engine of the car running; (d) smoking while tanks were being filled (in one case a lighted cigarette was dropped on to the top of a tank on which a little petrol had been spilled); (e) examining open fuel-tank with a lighted match to estimate contents; (f) ignition from cause not directly ascertainable, but from the circumstances probably due to static electricity.

Only two accidents were reported involving serious injury to persons, and both these occurred in filling of fuel-tanks from pumps situated inside buildings. The circumstances were similar in both cases—the hose containing petrol being removed from the burning tank and the burning petrol scattered over the persons in the vicinity.

Most of the accidents reported occurred in connection with kerb-side pumps or in open service stations, and no structural damage resulted. In only one case of an accident inside a building was the damage in any way serious, and it is worthy of record that a one-quart tetrachloride chemical extinguisher was sufficient to extinguish the fire in every case where it was used.

Accidents with Cinematograph Film.—The number of fires (10) which occurred in the screening of cinematograph film during the year shows a considerable decrease as compared with previous years, and a decrease is also shown in the quantity of film involved in individual fires. With the exception of one which occurred in rewinding, all the fires were caused by stoppage of film in the gate of the machine. In two cases no damage was done other than to a small quantity of film bunched outside the spool-magazines owing to the stoppage, and in two cases the spool-magazine door was open and the fire involved a full spool. Defective fire-traps on the spool-magazine permitted the fire to carry through in two cases, and in one instance fire communicated to a spool of film on the floor of the projecting-room. In another case the programme-container was accidentally overturned while the operator was attempting to extinguish the fire at the film-gate, and the whole programme was destroyed.

It is satisfactory to record that, except in one case where no projection-room had been erected and the fire destroyed the hall, the type of projecting-room which has been erected in accordance with the regulations was adequate to prevent the spread of fire to the theatre building, and only minor damage was done. It must also be noted that in most of the fires chemical fire-extinguishers were used with satisfactory retardant results.

PUBLICITY OFFICE.

The policy of the Office in the past has been to advance carefully along clearly defined lines, with a constant improvement in the quality of the output of all classes of advertising-material, and this policy has been carried out during the past year.

It is still contended that the film supplies the best preliminary advertising medium of scenic and sporting attractions, reaching as it does vast numbers of people throughout the whole world, and efforts are being made to increase the interest of the films, and eventually their commercial value.

Weekly releases have been continued in Australia, England, and New Zealand, with periodical releases in America and the East. Several cases have come to the direct notice of the Office where parties of visitors have come to our shores as a direct result of the films seen in Australian theatres.

Arrangements are now in train for the building of a feature picture for release in Australia and Great Britain similar to that shown two or three years ago throughout New Zealand.

A contract has been let for the printing and developing of film for a five-years period, and as a result of this contract a most up-to-date laboratory is now in course of erection at Miramar. In order to assist in the improving of our films, the contractor has erected a very fine studio in connection with the laboratory, in which interior scenes will be taken where necessary to add interest to the pictures.

The daily screenings of films for the benefit of visitors have been well attended and have proved quite popular.

Arrangements were made during the year to have New Zealand films shown on the boats of various companies trading to Australia and New Zealand, and also across the Atlantic.

Photographic Branch.—The Department was unfortunate in losing the services of its still photographer, and the vacancy has not yet been filled. The activities of this branch were much the same as in previous years, and steady improvement in colour work is being maintained, as it is realized that the coloured photographs will attract attention and be more compelling than the ordinary black-and-white variety. Enlargements were distributed through various parts of the world amongst the places calculated to give the best results to the Dominion. Small albums of photographs were given to various visiting sporting teams and to New-Zealanders going abroad. New pictures were secured of most of the principal parts of the Dominion, including a very fine set of photographs depicting the Maoris at their various ceremonies and occupations.

Publications.—In view of the need for economy during the year, several new publications were held over until the following year, and at the close of the year under review there were no less than twelve new publications under way. A new means of distribution of one of the best booklets was tried out and proved an undoubted success. Business houses were asked to submit names and addresses of clients and principals overseas and to these a copy of the publication "Paradise of the Pacific" was sent. From the hundreds of appreciative replies received it is evident that the book was well received. On the recommendation of numerous visitors to the United States and of the Government Agent at San Francisco, the service of an American information service was engaged for