

1929.

NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE

(TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency the Governor-General.

THIS report deals with the work of the Department of Industries and Commerce since the last report was placed before Parliament, and covers the period ending 30th April, 1929.

STAFF CHANGES.

To a greater extent than usual there have been staff changes in the Department during the year—changes which affected executive officers and disorganized for a time the progress of the work of the Department. Mr. G. W. Clinkard, M.Com., Advisory Officer, was promoted at the end of March last to the important position of Secretary to the Samoan Administration, and Mr. L. J. Schmitt, Advisory Accountant, left the service of the Department to take the responsible post of employers' representative on the Court of Arbitration. Both were experienced officers with high qualifications, and during their association with the Department—eleven and eight years respectively—gained the confidence and good will of the commercial and industrial community of New Zealand. Mr. G. W. Clinkard, whose transfer is of a temporary nature—two years' contract—is on loan from the Department, and may probably rejoin on completion of his service. Whilst it is satisfactory to know that both officers have received well-earned promotion, it is at the same time a grievous loss to the Department's personnel, and unfortunate that they should both leave the Head Office at the same time. The vacancies were filled by the promotion of Messrs. D. Colquhoun and F. Johnson, officers in charge of the branches at Christchurch and Dunedin respectively. Both these officers have had valuable experience in the Department's work. The position vacated at Christchurch has been filled by the appointment of Mr. A. G. Cannons, who has had a long experience in commercial matters and is a qualified accountant. Mr. E. Sheed, Accounts Clerk of the Head Office, has been transferred from Wellington to Dunedin. His place at headquarters has been filled by the appointment of Mr. H. L. Wise, under the designation of "District Officer." Mr. Wise, in addition to being a qualified accountant, possesses the useful degree of Master of Commerce. His knowledge of economics and his practical experience as a commercial accountant should specially fit him for his duties at Wellington. Other minor changes were made; but it is confidently felt that with the transfers effected and the new appointments made the general efficiency of the Department will be maintained.

GENERAL TRADE REVIEW.

It is pleasing to report that for the year ending 31st March last trade has shown a distinct improvement, and the value received for our products in overseas markets exceeds the returns received for any previous year. This result has had a marked effect upon the economic conditions within the Dominion, especially as the value of imports has been kept down to such an extent that a balance of £11,302,215 can be claimed. For the past ten years this is the highest surplus shown, and it has given rise to general satisfaction throughout the Dominion. It was emphasized last year that the overseas trade of New Zealand is probably greater in proportion to total production than in the case of any other country in the world which has passed its initial stage of colonization and primary development. The surplus referred to is regarded as an economic barometer. This comparison of exports and imports from year to year is therefore most closely watched, and the margin between the value of exports and the cost of imports is followed with the greatest interest. Given a range above £7,000,000, which is usually calculated as required to meet interest and other commitments outside the Dominion, spells prosperity and stability. Other figures which will be quoted in this report will demonstrate that future prospects are most promising, and the success of 1928-29 should be repeated in the year ending 31st December next.