UNEMPLOYMENT.

Standard rates of pay for relief workers increased from 9s. and 12s. per day to 14s.

Additional labour employed by Public Works, Post and Telegraph, and Forestry Departments.

Total cost to State of unemployment relief during year amounted to £879,618.

EARTHQUAKE DISASTER.

Government provided transport and other facilities for refugees. Special committee administering the Central Relief Fund.

Restoration of roads, bridges, railways, public buildings, &c., is being carried out.

Legislation to be introduced validating grants to Fund by local authorities, including Harbour Boards and private savings-banks, &c.

STATE SUPERANNUATION FUNDS.

Total cash shortage, not covered by subsidies in past, amounts to over £2,000,000. Whole position to be investigated.

BANKING AND CURRENCY.

Amendments to banking legislation necessary.

Existing position to be maintained in the meantime.

POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

Net profit for year approximately £39,000.

Excess of withdrawals over savings-bank deposits for year £859,559.

Sales of Post Office Investment Certificates for year approximately £550,000.

PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE.

Estates under administration increased by over £4,000,000.

Net profit for year £29,467.

STATE INSURANCE OFFICES.

Government Life Insurance Department issued reversionary bonuses totalling £324,871. Life insurances in force at end of year £22,084,471.

State Fire Insurance Office earned surplus of £75,600 after allowing for rebate of 12½ per cent. to policyholders.

Accident Branch shows surplus of £17,592.

TAXATION.

Analysis of expenditure shows that charges on taxation largely of a rigid nature, and that Budget cannot be balanced wholly by administrative economy.

Government has no practicable option but to increase taxation until causes of economic difficulties can be dealt with.

Burden to be placed in such a manner as to assist the Government's land-settlement policy, and with a view to disturbing business and trade as little as possible.

Proposals :—

Land-tax : Super-tax to be imposed on all farming-lands of an unimproved value in excess of £12,500. Also mortgage exemption to be reduced.

Income-tax : Income from farms of an unimproved value of £12,500 or over to be subject to income-tax, but amount paid in land-tax will be allowed as deduction from income-tax otherwise payable. In effect this means payment of land-tax or income-tax, whichever is the greater.

Income-tax exemption for children to be adjusted. Present age-limit of eighteen not to apply where child, on account of mental or physical permanent incapacity, unable to earn his or her own living. Also present exemption apportionable over whole income-tax year.

Primage duty on imports increased from 1 per cent. to 2 per cent.