

1874.

NEW ZEALAND.

TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

(TENTH ANNUAL REPORT.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.

SIR,—

Office of the Commissioner of Telegraphs,
Wellington, 24th July, 1874.

I have the honor to submit to Your Excellency a Report as to the operations of the Telegraph Department of New Zealand during the year ended the 30th June, 1874, being the Tenth Annual Report of the Department.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL,
Commissioner of Telegraphs.

His Excellency the Right Hon. Sir James Fergusson, Bart.,
Governor of New Zealand.

REPORT.

THE progress of the department during the year 1873-74 has been highly satisfactory.

The revenue was estimated at £45,000, but it has exceeded that amount by nearly £2,000.

On the 1st November, 1873, the tariff for private messages was reduced to 1s. for 10 words, and 1d. for every additional word,—address and signature, up to 10 words, being transmitted free of charge. At the same time, the Press rates between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. were made one-half the private rate, the charge after 5 p.m. being reduced to 6d. for the first 25 words, and 3d. for every additional 25. As the alterations in the Press rates involved an advance on the former day rates, provision was made in the new tariff to enable evening papers to receive during the day 200 words of interprovincial news at evening rates; and also to receive, on the arrival of an English or Australian mail, an additional 200 words of either or both at the same rates.

As a consequence of this great reduction, the number of Press telegrams sent during the year exceeded that of the previous year by some 17,000, or an increase of over 50 per cent.; while the cash receipts for them were nearly £600 less than the corresponding receipts of the previous year. In other words, during 1872-73, 32,323 Press telegrams were forwarded at a cost of £4,601 11s. 6d.; while in 1873-74 49,125 Press telegrams were forwarded at a cost of £4,066 1s. 1d.

During the year, 752,899 telegrams of all codes were transmitted, being an increase of 183,939, or more than 24 per cent. over 1872-73.

The number of Money Order telegrams sent during the year was 8,001, representing a value of £38,052 14s. 9d., or an increase of 2,210 messages, and of £9,945 18s. 1d. as compared with the previous year. The commission collected by the Post Office was £1,035; and after deducting £400 1s. due to the Telegraph Department as fees on the telegrams, there remained to the credit of the Post Office, as commission on exchange, £634 19s. or more than 1½ per cent. on the amount transmitted. Dunedin, Wellington, and Christchurch, and their respective sub-offices issued the largest number of orders; and the same offices paid the largest number, except that Auckland and its sub-offices stand second in that respect.

The length of line maintained was 2,530 miles, at a cost of £6 3s. 11d. per mile. During the year, twelve new offices were opened.

The total earnings of the department for the year were £59,875 0s. 11d. which, deducting the cost of the Signals Department and maintenance of lines, leaves £6,026 6s. as interest upon the capital expended, £249,594 12s. 9d. This result is highly satisfactory, when it is remembered that it has been secured after reductions in the tariff, as before stated.

The number of telegrams transmitted during the year (752,899), compared with the number of interprovincial letters posted during the year, shows that 23·45 telegrams were sent for every 100 letters posted. In some provinces, 28 telegrams have been sent for every 100 letters posted. The population on the 30th June amounted in round numbers to 300,000, so that the total number of telegrams during the year is somewhat in excess of an average of 2½ per head.

At the close of the year, 2,530 miles of line, carrying 5,182 miles of wire, were in circuit. It is contemplated to make during the present year large additions to this mileage, which is rendered necessary by the still increasing business of the department.