

1874.

## NEW ZEALAND.

# REPORT ON THE PRINTING DEPARTMENT, BY THE AUDITOR-GENERAL.

*Return to a Resolution of the House of Representatives, No. 56, of 15th September, 1873.*

“That the Government be requested to lay on the Table of the House, an audited Capital and Profit and Loss Account of the Government Printing Office, covering the last four years ending 30th June, 1873; also to append a Memorandum stating what system of check or control has been adopted in respect of the working and management of the Printing Office.”—(*Mr. Creighton.*)

## No. 1.

The AUDITOR-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Audit Office, 8th July, 1874.

In reference to the resolution of the House of Representatives, requesting the Government to lay on the Table of the House an audited Capital and Profit and Loss Account of the Government Printing Office covering the last four years ending 30th June, 1873; also to append a Memorandum stating what system of check or control has been adopted in respect of the working and management of the Printing Office,—I have the honor to report that I undertook, at the request of the Government, to prepare an inventory and valuation of stock in hand on the 31st December last, and obtain the information desired by the House of Representatives.

In thus undertaking the whole of the inquiry, instead of merely auditing a statement of account prepared by others, I considered that the Audit Department would be in the best position to obtain information necessary for securing an effective examination of the accounts of the Printing Office, and for drawing up instructions for a more complete system of daily accounts in future.

The Profit and Loss Account has been compiled under my directions by Mr. Anderson (the Chief Clerk in the Audit Office). It embraces a shorter period than that required by the resolution of the House.

As explained in Mr. Anderson's report (herewith), there are no means of preparing a satisfactory statement for the full period of four years. An inventory of stock must necessarily be the basis of construction of a profit and loss account. No such inventory had been taken prior to the 30th June, 1872, and that date has been taken for the foundation of the present account.

The want of more early information does not detract from the value of the account; as it may be assumed with confidence, judging from the favourable report now rendered, that the profits of the period prior to the 30th June, 1872, were at least sufficient to make good the losses arising out of depreciation in the value of the plant up to that date.

Mr. Anderson's report has been prepared with much care, and great anxiety to furnish as complete information as possible. It will be seen that much of the value of the report arises out of the valuable assistance given by Mr. McKenzie. That gentleman's letter of the 18th June shows that he was favourably impressed with the appliances and the state of the printing office, that he found it well conducted, and the work produced excellent; and I understand that impressions which he had entertained not favourable to the establishment were removed by information from the books of the office, which could not be obtained from the published statements of former years.

Nevertheless, he seems to be of opinion that private offices could contract to do the work at somewhat lower rates than those on which the value of the work done in the Government establishment has been computed. It will be seen from the Profit and Loss Account, that after allowing for the depreciation of stock, and for interest on value of buildings and plant, the profit to the colony is estimated at £5,267 16s. 8d. for the eighteen months for which the account is made up.

The word “profit” is used in its restricted sense. It means here the difference between the expense of doing the work in a Government establishment and the cost of the same work if done in a private office. Nor is it necessarily a “saving,” as it may happen—and probably it is frequently the case—that work executed in the Government Printing Office, when only one or two copies are required, could be more cheaply done by a copying clerk; and it would be well that the Government Printer should so far assert himself in these matters as to point out for the guidance of the Government the occasions when orders could be more cheaply done in manuscript than in printing. No doubt, if the printing were done by contract, any extravagance in

these cases would be brought prominently under the notice of the Minister, when the requisition was placed before him for approval, and thus a check put upon it.

I concur in the opinion that the several branches of the printing establishments—printing, stamp-printing, bookbinding, photo-lithography, and lithography—should be under one head officer. It is not advisable to arrange permanent establishments to suit personal peculiarities, or what in the papers referred to me is termed the natural antagonism between type-printers and lithographers. This antagonism has little to do with the question whether several branches should be under the control of a chief officer, instead of being split into a number of independent offices. The real difficulty in the way at present is, that the time of the Government Printer is frittered away in trifling work, which cannot economically be imposed on an officer overlooking so extensive and important an establishment. No branch should receive orders except through the Government Printer, and no order should be taken by the Government Printer except on the approval of the head of the department, if not of a Minister. No harmony can be expected under a practice which almost challenges a subordinate to assert independence.

The Government Printer should be relieved of the sale of Parliamentary and other papers; these sales might conveniently be given to the Storekeeper; and in so simple a matter as giving certificates of the correctness of the charges for advertising, &c., referred to by Mr. Anderson, it is recommended that the respective departments should be required to certify, instead of the Government Printer being called upon for his certificate.

It is necessary to call attention to the fact that no assurance against fire has been entered into on account of the Printing Offices and Public Store; and as the Public Works Offices have, by their extension, become attached to the buildings in which the printing is carried on, the insurance of £2,000 on those offices is probably vitiated, unless the Insurance Company has accepted the increased risk. It is also necessary to notice that there is no hose to attach to the water pipe in case of fire. I do not know whether Mr. Didsbury has reported this, but it is quite clear that it is his duty to bring such deficiencies prominently under the notice of the Government.

Since Mr. McKenzie's letter of the 18th June was received, alterations have been made in the buildings, that render it almost impossible for the printers of stamps to perform their work satisfactorily from the want of sufficient light. It is scarcely possible to express in too strong terms one's condemnation of the defective arrangements for this important branch of the printing establishment. The loss of time, the annoyance to the workmen, and the impossibility of doing the work creditably, are really deplorable, and, I must add, quite discreditable to any establishment, however mean. Indeed, throughout the printing offices, I noticed a most extraordinary want of attention to secure good diffused light by whitewashing the ceilings of the rooms.

No attempt, as far as I can learn, has been made to exclude from the stamp printing room persons not directly employed in the printing of postage and duty stamps. There are perforating and numbering machines in the adjoining room, and men and boys have no other access to their work but through the stamp printing office. In the Government Printing Office in Sydney the room is locked up all day, and no one is allowed either ingress or egress without the sanction of the officer in charge.

It is also found that one of the checks on the issue of watered paper—that of machine-numbering the sheets—has been omitted in a late supply of fifty reams of paper for postage stamps. In future orders for supply of watered paper, directions should be given for numbering in England each sheet consecutively.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES KNIGHT,

Commissioner of Audit.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, &c., &c.

## No. 2.

### REPORT of Mr. J. G. ANDERSON on the PRINTING DEPARTMENT.

As directed, I beg to submit the accompanying Profit and Loss Account, and report of the result of my inquiries concerning the working and management of the Government Printing Office, called for by resolution of the House of Representatives of 15th September last. I would premise that owing to the incompleteness of the accounts kept by the Government Printer till within a comparatively recent period, and especially on account of stock never having been taken till the 30th June, 1872, it has been found impossible to comply strictly with the resolution of the House by furnishing an account covering the four years to 30th June, 1873. The earliest period at which satisfactory data could be obtained for the purpose, was the 30th June, 1872, when stock was first taken. This date has therefore been adopted to start the account, which has been brought up to the 31st December last; and it therefore shows the business of the department for eighteen months only. As, however, the period is comparatively recent, it is hoped that it will be considered to give a fair idea of what is at present being done, and whether the printing office is a paying concern or not.

A preliminary inspection of the department was made by the Auditor-General; and early after receiving my instructions, I made an appointment with Mr. Didsbury, to consult as to the

best method of taking an inventory. It was at once seen that to catalogue article by article was an impossibility, as it would have led to an entire stoppage of the work of the department. The invoices of all the stock purchased since the first stock-taking were therefore had recourse to, and the inventory completed by adding them to it. The difficulty was then encountered of obtaining a fair valuation. This was, of course, entirely out of my province, and it seemed unsatisfactory to take the estimate of the Government Printer. The authority of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary was therefore obtained to procure the professional aid of an expert in making the valuation, and to afford other incidental information. Mr. McKenzie, of the *Wellington Independent*, was applied to, and consented to give his assistance. Accordingly, Mr. McKenzie, accompanied by Mr. Didsbury and myself, went with great care over the whole stock and machinery, taking notes as to its condition, and, where it could be done without inconvenience, articles were counted and weighed, and during the whole inspection, close observation was kept up, and a large amount of information obtained as to the working of the department.

After the inspection, we proceeded to the valuation of the stock, which was effected by taking the trade lists of the principal manufacturers, supplied by Mr. McKenzie and the Government Printer, and examining them to see how they agreed with the rates as shown in the inventory taken from the invoices. These rates were in the first instance adjusted according to circumstances, so as to show a fair valuation of the articles when new, and then 5, 10, 15, and in some cases as much as 20 per cent., was taken off for depreciation. In a large number of cases, particularly as regards machinery, the original invoice price was allowed to remain, the apparatus being admitted to be quite equal to new. The inventory was thus gone over item by item, and after completion was taken away by Mr. McKenzie, who again revised the whole, and on returning it stated that he considered the valuation, in his opinion, was a fair one. As regards the buildings and furniture, the valuation has been made by the Colonial Architect; and the photographic materials estimated by Mr. Deveril, and set down at their actual value.

The inventory having been completed, by computing the values at the new rates, it was fair copied, the result showing the total value of the buildings and plant to be £7,780 4s. 9d., as stated in the Stock Account.

Mr. McKenzie's report on the subject will be found herewith (marked A).

After completion of the inventory, the next step was to prepare a balance-sheet, and Profit and Loss Account, and the following explanation is given of its construction:—

1. In the first account, the Government is credited with the stock as taken on 30th June, 1872, and with all sums paid on account of the department for wages, stock, paper, &c., as shown by the Treasury Accounts and the Storekeeper's Returns, herewith; also with a share of the expense of keeping the Government Store, with interest on the amount invested in permanent plant, and with the profit on the concern as shown in the Profit and Loss Account; and on the other hand, it is debited with the value of all work done by the department, as shown in the Printing Account. These items are all debits and credits of one or other of the closed subsidiary accounts; and the balance of this account, therefore, equals that of the Stock Account, the only other left open.

2. In the Stock Account, stock is debited with the total value of the plant on the 30th June, 1872, and the cost of the additions thereto, and credited with the value as found on 31st December, 1873. The difference between these entries should show the actual depreciation; but this is qualified on account of certain considerations as explained in a note at foot of the account itself.

3 and 4. The Working Expenses and Salaries Accounts speak for themselves. They show clearly the sums disbursed by the colony under the respective heads, the total of each account being carried to the debit of profit and loss.

5. The Printing or Work Account requires fuller explanation. On the debit side it shows the actual cost of the material issued to be worked up, and is credited with the work done. Great pains have been taken to obtain satisfactory data on which to estimate the value of the work; and it is considered that the results given may be trusted to as a fair approximation, and not in excess of what would have been charged had the work been done in private establishments.

The scale adopted by the Government Printer has been examined with similar scales obtained from the Government Printing Offices in New South Wales and Victoria, and also to a considerable extent compared with charges which have been made throughout the colony for printing done for Government. A list of prices charged for printing ballot papers, taken from Treasury vouchers, is attached (marked B), from which it will be seen that the rates charged by private printers are in all cases much in excess of, and in most of them more than double, those in the Government Printer's scale. I went over each item in the scale with Mr. McKenzie, who criticised very closely. He stated that it was hardly definite enough in its details; but on the whole he considered that the rates were fair "Master's" charges, and not in his opinion excessive, although, at the same time, he was of opinion that if the printing were open to tender, contracts would be taken at somewhat lower rates.

The following is the scale adopted; and I have added columns giving, as far as could be ascertained, a comparative view of the prices charged for similar work elsewhere. A number of the rates are considerably less, but all the more important items are charged for at a rate much higher than that adopted by the Government Printer.

## COMPARATIVE SCALE OF CHARGES.

Description of Work.					Government Printer.	Victoria.	New South Wales.	Wellington.
					Price per page			
					s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Gazette	...	...	...	...	15 0	25 0	20 0	19 0
Parliamentary Papers	...	...	...	Plain, Tabular, or Table.	15 0	20 0	20 0	plain, 15/ table, 22/6
Journals and Order Paper	...	...	...		15 0	20 0	...	
Acts	...	...	...		15 0	10s.-12s.	10 6	
Statistics	...	...	...		17 6	40 0	32 0	
Kahiti (Maori Gazette)	...	...	...	...	17 6	...	...	25 0
Pamphlets, &c.								
Royal 8vo	...	...	...	Whether Plain, Tabular, Table, or Maori,	10 0	Little of this sort of work done at any of the other offices.		
" 4to	...	...	...		20 0			
Demy 8vo	...	...	...		7 6			
" 4to	...	...	...		15 0			
" 12mo	...	...	...		6 0			
Foolscap 8vo	...	...	...		5 0			
" 4to	...	...	...	10 0				
Forms and Account Books. (Brass Rule Work.)								
Foolscap 4to	...	...	...	...	6 0	7 6	4 6	21 0
" folio	...	...	...	...	12 0	11 3	7 6	
" broadside	...	...	...	...	20 0	22 6	10 6	
" "	...	...	...	...	30 0	10 6	13 6	
Demy or Medium 4to	...	...	...	...	7 6	18 9	8 0	
" folio	...	...	...	...	15 0	37 6	9 0	
" broadside	...	...	...	...	22 6	15 0	12 0	
Royal and Super-royal 4to	...	...	...	...	12 0	22 6	7 6	
" folio	...	...	...	...	20 0	45 6	10 6	
" broadside	...	...	...	...	30 0	...	13 6	
Account Book Headings—Machine Ruled.								
Foolscap	...	...	...	...	5 0	5 0	4 0	
Demy and Medium	...	...	...	...	6 0	7 6	6 0	
Royal and Double Foolscap	...	...	...	...	7 0	10 0	7 6	
Super-royal and Imperial	...	...	...	...	8 0	12 6	9 0	
Circulars.								
Post 8vo	...	...	...	...	3 6	4 0	3 0	
" 4to	...	...	...	...	5 0	7 0	4 6	
Foolscap folio	...	...	...	...	7 6	12 6	6 0	
Posting and Hand Bills.								
Foolscap 4to	...	...	...	...	3 6	5 0	...	
" folio	...	...	...	...	7 6	5 0	...	
" broadside	...	...	...	...	12 0	7 6	...	
" double	...	...	...	...	15 0	...	...	
Demy 4to	...	...	...	...	5 0	...	4 6	
" folio	...	...	...	...	10 0	7 6	6 0	
" broadside	...	...	...	...	15 0	15 0	7 6	
Royal 4to	...	...	...	...	7 6	...	4 6	
" folio	...	...	...	...	12 0	7 6	6 0	
" broadside	...	...	...	...	15 0	15 0	...	
Miscellaneous.								
Envelope and Letter Headings	...	...	...	...	2 6	...	...	
Labels and Wrappers	...	...	...	...	2 6	...	...	
Certificates to Bills	...	...	...	...	2 6	...	...	
Preparing Bills for Parchment (per sheet)	...	...	...	...	2 6	...	...	
Presswork.								
Per token of 250	...	...	...	...	2 6	1 10	1 8	4 6
If not more than 6 copies	...	...	...	...	1 0	...	...	
Parchment Forms, per 100	...	...	...	...	5 0	...	...	
Acts on Parchment, per sheet	...	...	...	...	2 6	10 0	...	
N.B.—All Jobs worked on Foolscap, Medium, Demy, Royal, or Imperial hand-made or cream-laid papers, if backed, to be charged for double working.								

The next item in the Work Account is for binding, which has been estimated at the same rates as those charged by Mr. Burrett in his last contract.

The lithographic work was more difficult to estimate, very little of a similar character having been done for the Government by private firms. The rate was fixed on consultation with Mr. Earle, the lithographic foreman, who is a very superior and intelligent workman, and, it is to be presumed, unprejudiced. Where it was possible, Wellington prices for similar work were taken.

The photographer's work was estimated by reducing the surface of glass on which negatives were taken to square feet, the result being 377½ feet; and, including transfers for the lithographer, a value was made upon it of £4 per foot, which is considered by no means an excessive rate for the exquisitely beautiful work produced by this branch of the department.

The dies produced by the electrotyper are those used in printing newspaper postage stamps, and are 270 in number. They appear to be beautifully executed, and have been valued at 5s. each. Had they been ordered, it is believed they would have cost much more. They are equally efficient with the stamp plates procured from England, which cost about £100 each.

The remaining item is for stamp printing. The number of postage stamps printed during the eighteen months reached 9,844,320, and duty stamps 2,546,600. It was at one time proposed to print these stamps in London, and two estimates were obtained, namely, two offers for postage stamps at 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d., and one for duty stamps at 6s. per 1,000. The first of these is considered a very low offer, and the other much too high. Taking the three into consideration, 2s. for postage stamps and 4s. for duty stamps seems to be a fair value to set upon the work. To all these prices is to be added the cost of the paper, which would be an extra charge, if the work were done by contract.

6. The Profit and Loss Account is debited with the current expenses of working the department, the depreciation on the stock, and interest on the money invested in permanent plant; credited with the balance of the Work Account; and closed by a transfer of the profit on the concern to the credit of the colony.

I take occasion to remark here, that, while scrutinising the scale of prices, I examined several items in the return of work, as shown in the printing reports, comparing them with the work-book. For instance, the number of Order Papers, nearly 76,000, printed during the Session, is sufficiently startling; but the work-book, which has been very carefully kept, shows it to be correct, the large number of Supplementary Order Papers and corrections having swelled the total to the above extent.

With regard to the working of the department, I have to submit the following statement of the result of my inquiries. During the investigation, I have had constant occasion to visit the printing office, and, so far as I could judge, there seemed to be every appearance of industry on the part of the employés.

The printer complains of the accommodation as barely sufficient for present requirements. The rooms are much crowded, and when the gas is lighted the air becomes very oppressive and unhealthy. The buildings have been patched from time to time, and the rooms are badly arranged for the purposes required. The machinery and hand-press rooms are separate, instead of forming one room, in which case one overseer could attend to the whole. The compositors have three separate rooms, instead of one large room. This interferes greatly with the supervision. The publishing-room or clerk's room, with two constant occupants, is so small that there is hardly room to turn in it, and is used to a great extent as a thoroughfare to the other rooms, and a short cut by strangers coming on business from other departments. The binding-room is much too small, and has a bad access to it. It is low-roofed and inconveniently crowded. There is no room available for surplus stores. Every foot of space, outside and inside, seems to be occupied—the whole block of buildings, Public Works, Government Store, and Printing Office, being crowded together; the engine-room and furnaces being dangerously situated in the centre of the block, with the additional grave objection of being entirely covered in by one of the composing rooms, which has been built above it, the occupants of which must be seriously inconvenienced by the heat from the furnace, and in a very awkward position in the event of an explosion. Of the latter, however, it is to be hoped there is little danger, as the boiler, though old, has lately had a thorough overhaul and several new plates put in, besides being worked at the low pressure of 20 lbs.

There can be no doubt, from the crowding and nature of the business carried on, that there is great danger of fire. Neither Printing Office nor Government Store are insured. There are two policies for £1,000 each on the Public Works Office; but it may be questioned whether, as that building is not now detached from the Printing Office, in the case of fire, the point might not be argued as to the validity of the insurance. Water is supplied to the premises from the Government tank, and there are two fire-plugs in close proximity to the buildings. There is no hose, but a number of fire buckets are kept ready in case of emergency. The principal reliance for safety is placed on the watchman, who comes on duty on week nights at 8 p.m., and on Sundays at 9 p.m. He remains on duty until 6 a.m.; and his orders are to make his rounds every half-hour. He has access to the engine-room and a few other rooms, with the discretionary power of bursting into any room where he may think there is danger. A watchman was lately dismissed for neglect of duty and bad conduct.

In the event of fire, the only alternative would be to get as much work done in town as possible; but the Government Printer states his conviction that the whole five private establishments in town combined could not, along with their own work, turn out more than from one-

half to two-thirds of the work done in the Government Printing Office. He urges the advisability of having at least a small stock of machinery, type, &c., in reserve. A sufficient supply, were it required, could not be obtained nearer than London. An extensive order could not be executed in Melbourne or Sydney, as the printers' brokers there do not care to keep up large stocks, and when they obtain large orders, send them to England for execution. A fire-proof detached building, containing a reserve stock, would be a valuable addition to the department. In case of pressure, the reserve might be drawn upon within certain limits for current use, and the deficiency immediately made good by fresh orders. As an instance of the inconvenience of having no reserve to fall back upon, on one occasion a donkey engine from the wharf had to be hired to prevent the business from coming to a standstill. The cost of a complete reserve of everything required is estimated at about £5,000.

The office is under the superintendence of the Government Printer, an overseer, and a sub-overseer. The salary of the Government Printer is £370 per annum, but this is supplemented to the extent of from £50 to £60 by the commission which he is allowed on the sale of *Gazettes*, Acts, &c., alluded to further on. By way of comparison, I may mention that the salary of the Government Printer, Melbourne, is £800, with house, fuel, &c.; at Sydney, £600; and in Queensland, £500 per annum.

The overseer's salary is £250, and the sub-overseer's £210.

The number of hands engaged at present is 99, and they are distributed as follows throughout the different departments:—

<i>Printers.</i>							
Permanently employed	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Time hands	..	..	..	..	..	..	24
Piece hands	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Boys	..	..	..	..	..	..	22
							— 72
<i>Binders.</i>							
Men	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Boys	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Women and girls	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
							— 15
Stamp printers	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Lithographers	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Photographers	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
							— 12
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	99

The *Hansard* staff of compositors, numbering from fourteen to sixteen hands, are taken on only during the Session. In addition to the printing of *Hansard*, they are sometimes employed on miscellaneous work during the usual press of business occurring at that time.

The "readers" receive £200; the clerk and book-keeper, £180; machinist and one pressman £3 3s., and compositors £3 each, per week. Ordinary piece work is paid for at the rate of 1s. 2d. and *Hansard* at the rate of 1s. 3d. per thousand. The wages of the printers average £203 12s. per week.

The regulation working hours are from 9 to 5, with an hour for dinner, and on Saturdays from 9 to 2, but, by arrangement, the men work an hour later on Fridays, and leave at 1 p.m. on Saturdays, the total weekly work being forty hours, the ordinary hours of the trade being forty-seven per week. The regular hands are required to work extra hours if wanted, and piece hands, when all of them are not required, by lot. Overtime is paid for at the rate of 2s. 6d. per hour to the overseer, 2s. to readers, 1s. 8d. to compositors, and 1s. to assistants.

Printed copies of the regulations will be found attached.

The permanent hands are under the superintendence of the overseer, and the piece hands and some of the time hands under the sub-overseer.

Time is kept by means of a book showing lost and credit time, which is daily entered and checked by the overseer and hands in such a manner as to prevent a dispute when a balance is struck at the end of the month.

The machines are worked by a machinist, having one machine-minder and eight boys under him.

Permanent hands are subject to a month's notice. Extra hands are taken on as required, and dismissed when work is done. At present, there is no difficulty in obtaining extra hands, there being always plenty of applicants on the list for employment. Generally before any man is taken on permanently, he is put on piece work to see what he is capable of doing; if he gives satisfaction, he is put on time work when additional time hands are required.

The duties of the Government Printer are to keep up a general superintendence of the department, to receive orders and enter them, to instruct the overseers, engage and discharge men, prepare estimates of printing, obtain supplies on requisition, pay the men's wages, keep accounts with the Treasury and of the stamp paper received from the Colonial Secretary, pay all receipts into Public Account, furnish certain returns to Audit Office, certify as to the accuracy of advertising accounts for other departments. He is also responsible for the sale of public

documents and advertisements in the *Gazette*, and has many other miscellaneous duties to perform, which it is unnecessary to enumerate.

There can be no doubt that Mr. Didsbury has more duties devolving upon him than he can properly attend to. He informs me that he feels he is overtaxed with work, and, in consequence, is prevented from keeping up such a vigilant superintendence as he would desire in the thorough working of so large an establishment. He states that the time consumed in attending to the sale of printed papers, and attending to advertisements, involving a large correspondence with all parts of the colony, and in certifying vouchers referred to him for examination and not connected with his own department, occupies at least from two to three hours a day. This latter might equally well be done by the various departments—all that is necessary being that they should be supplied with the various scales of charges, and a foot rule to measure the advertisements. It is considered that he might with great advantage be relieved of the sales and advertisements, which would leave him at greater liberty to attend to his more legitimate duties. Great inconvenience is caused at present by there being no proper saleroom, the consequence being that, as a rule, a messenger has to be sent to the Government Storekeeper while the purchaser is kept waiting.

The Government Printer speaks highly of his two overseers; but under the present inconvenient arrangements, he considers that both are over-worked, and that, in fact, the whole department would be the better for greater supervision. There is no recognized foreman in the pressroom.

The Overseer's duties are to take charge of the composing and press rooms; to see that the rules are observed; attend to the execution of orders; keep the time-book; check overtime; report irregularities; give out copy; revise proofs for press; tell off hands for overtime; and keep record of proofs, revises, &c.

The Sub-overseer assists the overseer generally; looks over copy before giving it out, to secure uniformity; attends to the make-up of *Hansard*; sends out proofs; and sees that there is no waste of material, &c.

The wages and hours are better in the Government Printing Office than in private establishments. When men are found to be slow, they are dispensed with; consequently, the staff is considered a first-class one, and contains some of the best workmen in the colony.

While inquiring as to the superintendence of the department, I made some little investigation as to the possibility of providing against a strike of the workmen, such as took place a year or two ago. It does not appear that any effectual remedy can be adopted. The men would refuse to be put under bond, and it is at the same time objectionable to bind them, as they cannot then be dispensed with, if found unsuitable. For the same reason it is undesirable to take apprentices. The grievances leading to dispute are generally connected with the wages, and the only resource is to regulate the pay by the demand for labour.

Mr. McKenzie has reported as to the state of the machinery, and it is only necessary for me to note that the engine is a horizontal one of three horse-power and seven years old. The consumption of coals in the furnace is close upon  $1\frac{1}{4}$  ton per week. The engine is severely taxed to do the work required of it. The large paper cutting machine is fitted to work by steam, but when the whole of the printing and folding machines are at work, there is barely sufficient power left for this purpose, and it is apt to bring the engine to a stand-still, thereby incurring the risk of damage to the rest of the machinery when the belt is thrown off. A new engine will be required before long, if the business of the department continues to increase as it has done lately.

The work of the printing office is conducted as follows:—When an order is received, it is first of all entered in the order-book, and then it is passed to the overseer, who gives it out to be set up, and is responsible for its execution. After it is set up an impression is taken, which goes to the reader to be read. After correction it is returned to the pressman to be printed off (if a proof is not required). All paper required is drawn as wanted by the pressman from the Government Store. A pass-book is kept with the Storekeeper, which is taken by the pressman to the Store, and the paper required is drawn, entered in the pass-book, and a receipt signed for it in the Storekeeper's book. Paper required by the lithographer is obtained in a similar manner, on a requisition signed by the Government Printer.

After being printed, the impression is taken to the publishing clerk, who writes out a receipt for it. The sheets are then counted, packed in parcels and delivered; Parliamentary papers and books being sent to the binding-room to be bound or folded, according to circumstances. As the work finally leaves the office, it is entered in the work book.

The Binding-room is in charge of a foreman, who is responsible for the completion of the work. The cutting, folding, and ruling machines are worked in this room. The whole of the work done in this branch is entered day by day in the work-book.

The Photographer, on receiving an order, enters it in the order-book which he keeps, and then proceeds to take a negative, reduced to the scale required. Much trouble and delay is frequently experienced by him, on account of the unsuitableness, or rather the antagonism, of the colours used in the drawing to the process practised. Sometimes it is found impossible to produce good work from them, and the original plans have to be altered. This might easily be remedied by a little forethought on the part of the draftsman. After a negative is taken, a print is taken on transfer paper, which is then handed to the lithographer to be put upon the stone. The Lithographer takes orders either from the photographer, Government Printer, or

any Government department; enters them in a private work-book, sends a proof to the department concerned, and, when it is returned, makes any corrections required. The copies are then lithographed, and a copy filed with the Government Printer, with the number thrown off marked on it. The work is then entered in the work-book, and the sheets delivered.

No time-books are kept by either the photographer or lithographer. Overtime in the lithographic office is paid for at the same rate as allowed to compositors. The work done by these two branches is considered to be of a first-class description, and the men are kept constantly employed.

The Stamp Printer receives his orders from the Treasury for postage stamps, and from the Government Printer for duty stamps. The duty-stamp paper is kept in numbered sheets in the Colonial Secretary's Department, and is drawn from thence as required. Duty-stamp paper is obtained by the Government Printer, and handed by him to the stamper, he accounting for the exact number of sheets he receives to the Government Printer, who makes weekly returns to the Audit Department, which are checked by corresponding returns furnished from the Colonial Secretary's Department.

Postage stamp paper is drawn by the Stamp Printer himself from the Colonial Secretary, to whom he gives a receipt. After the stamps are printed he takes them to the Treasury, when he obtains a receipt; at same time entering it in a book, which he takes to the Colonial Secretary's Office to show he has executed the order, and his book is signed to that effect.

The check on the proper number of sheets being accounted for lies between the Colonial Secretary's and Treasury Departments, who compare their books periodically; the Colonial Secretary's Department accounting for the paper issued; the Treasury for the stamps received. Accounts for audit are rendered by the Treasury.

All the stamping is under the superintendence of Mr. Davis, the foreman.

In addition to stamping, money orders, cheques, and debentures are numbered and perforated in this branch; also, the supply of money order books is in the custody of the foreman, who issues the books on the orders of the General Post Office. Satisfactory books of issue are kept. The money order books themselves are printed and bound in the printing office. No time book is kept.

The following is a list of the books kept by the Government Printer:—

- (1.) An Order Book (specimen attached), showing all orders received by him.
- (2.) Paper Pass Book.
- (3.) Work Books for the various branches (with the exceptions alluded to) in which the work is entered day by day.
- (4.) Work Ledger, showing the departments for which the work has been done.
- (5.) Salary Book.
- (6.) Cash Book for sales of public documents, *Gazette* advertisements, &c.
- (7.) Journal of Sales on Credit and Account Ledger.
- (8.) Advertisement Book.
- (9.) Time Books.

An improved system of book-keeping is in contemplation.

The waste paper of the establishment mostly consists of cancelled impressions, Order Papers not used, Bills, odd sheets, &c., which are all collected and sold to a storekeeper in town at 2d. per lb., and who, it is understood, afterwards retails it; thus accounting for the printed public papers getting into the hands of shopkeepers, so frequently the subject of remark.

I would here mention incidentally that the Government waste paper is sold by tender, but there is constantly on hand a large quantity which cannot thus be disposed of, and requires either to be stored or burned, the latter being a tedious operation. I am told that there is a "pulping machine" by which the waste can be reduced by a simple process to a form very saleable to paper-makers; but as to its cost or merits I have not been able to obtain sufficient information to be able to offer an opinion.

I made inquiry as to the working of the different departments in connection with each other, and can find no good reason why they should not be conducted in harmony. There is a fancied superiority on the part of the workmen in the photographer's and lithographic departments over their fellow-workmen in the Printing Department. The practice of both photographer and lithographer receiving orders otherwise than through the head of the establishment, it is thought, is apt to engender a feeling of independence not conducive to the welfare of the establishment.

In Sydney, both offices are attached to the Printing Department; in Melbourne, I understand they are under the Crown Lands Office.

The departments are closely connected, and unquestionably can be more economically worked under one responsible head on the spot, than if the superintendence was divided, and portion of it perhaps removed to a distance from the workmen.

A certain amount of laxity exists as to the reception of orders by the Printer. A practice has grown up with the department of acting upon orders not approved by a Minister, or even in many cases by the head of a department. This might be remedied with advantage.

Besides this (and perhaps partially consequent), there is frequently considerable extravagance in the issue of orders, which might in many cases be avoided. For instance, orders for forms are sometimes repeated at intervals of a fortnight, when the "forme," having been



J. G. ANDERSON,  
Chief Clerk, Audit Office.

2—H. 20.

PROFIT and LOSS ACCOUNT—*continued.*

## 4.—SALARIES &amp;C. ACCOUNT.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To printers' wages ... ..	6,388	13	2	By transfer to Profit and Loss ... ..	16,798	11	2
Extra assistance and overtime ... ..	5,724	12	11				
*Printing <i>Hansard</i> ... ..	2,286	12	11				
Lithographer ... ..	540	13	4				
Photo-lithographer ... ..	318	8	6				
Binders ... ..	597	15	4				
Stamp printers ... ..	610	0	0				
Stereo and electro-typer ... ..	277	0	0				
Share of watchman's salary ... ..	54	15	0				
	<u>£16,798</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>		<u>£16,798</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>

\* The actual wages paid to the *Hansard* staff amounted to £3,380 17s. 8d.; but the men having been employed on miscellaneous work during the Session, in addition to their regular duty, the difference between the above sum and the sum charged for printing *Hansard*, viz. £1,094 4s. 9d., has been charged as Extra Assistance.

## 5.—PRINTING &amp;C. ACCOUNT.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To value of paper, parchment, and ink, supplied from Government Store, and used, including 7 per cent. to cover freight and charges ... ..	5,786	3	11	By value of work done ... ..	24,674	5	7
Value of stamp paper issued by Colonial Secretary ... ..	135	5	0	Binding ... ..	976	18	8
Ink consumed in printing stamps ... ..	91	10	0	Lithography ... ..	996	15	5
Balance carried to Profit and Loss ... ..	23,841	8	5	Photo-lithography ... ..	1,509	16	8
	<u>£29,854</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	Value of postage-stamp dies, manufactured by electro-typer ... ..	67	10	0
				Stamp printing, including paper only ... ..	1,629	1	0
					<u>£29,854</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>

## 6.—PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To depreciation on stock ... ..	456	10	3	By balance of Printing Account ... ..	23,841	8	5
Salaries account ... ..	16,798	11	2				
Working expenses ... ..	628	11	8				
Ground rent of printing office ... ..	150	0	0				
Ditto, photographer's room ... ..	7	10	0				
Proportion of expenses in connection with Government Store, say ... ..	50	0	0				
Rent of one-sixth of do., occupied with printing materials, for 18 months ... ..	30	0	0				
Interest on value of buildings and stock, per inventory, 30th June, 1872 ... ..	£3,828	4	4				
And on half cost of addition ... ..	2,204	5	4				
	<u>£6,032</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>				
Eighteen months at 5 per cent. on ... ..	452	8	8				
Profit to credit of the colony ... ..	5,267	16	8				
	<u>£23,841</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>		<u>£23,841</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>

## A.

## Mr. MCKENZIE'S REPORT as to the VALUE of the STOCK, &amp;c.

SIR,—

Wellington, 18th June, 1874.

I have the honor to report that, in compliance with your request, I have inspected the plant and material at the Government Printing Office. I made a careful examination of the various founts of type to ascertain their condition, so as to be enabled to give a correct estimate of their value. I also inspected the machines, presses, and other materials used in the establishment; and after doing so, assessed the whole of the articles contained in the inventory. Five days were occupied in this work; and I have much pleasure in stating that every assistance was afforded me by Mr. Didsbury, the Government Printer, in viewing the plant and material, and also by Mr. J. G. Anderson, of the Audit Department, who was present during the whole time, and largely assisted in the work we had in hand. The value on the various articles I consider to be fair and reasonable; and although the estimate of some of them may possibly be higher than would be realized if the plant were placed in the market, and a forced sale effected, yet it is fully worth the estimate I have made for all the requirements of the Government.

I found the type to be in fair condition; the various founts to be well arranged for the convenience of the printer, and all in good order.

The composing-rooms, however, in my opinion, are too small for the number of hands occasionally employed in them.

The machine-room is commodious; the machines are well arranged, and are all worked from one shaft.

A valuable addition has recently been made to this branch of the establishment, by the introduction of several new printing machines. They are of the most approved construction; run very smoothly, and produce fair average work.

These machines will greatly increase the power of production of the office, and enable the Printer to turn out a very large amount of work.

The machines were all at work when I saw them; and the condition in which they are kept is very creditable to the workmen.

The majority of the presses were also at work. They are all well worn, but the pressmen produce very good work from them.

The Stereotyping branch which has been added to the establishment, is found to be most useful in taking stereotypes of standing matter, forms, coats-of-arms, &c., and as many copies can be taken as is desired. The process insures correctness, relieves the letter, and is a great saving to the Government.

The Bookbinding branch has also been added to the printing establishment, and the necessary machinery has been introduced for the use of the binder. The various machines (*i.e.* pressing, folding, and cutting) appeared to be all in good working order; and the facilities they afford for the production of work are very considerable.

The presses in the Lithographic branch are in good order, the stones of excellent quality, and the work produced first class.

The Stamp branch appears to have everything necessary to facilitate the workmen. The presses are made extra strong, to sustain the great pressure required to print from the plates. The perforating machines are large and powerful; and the drying closet, which is heated with gas, is all that can be desired to dry the gum on the stamps with rapidity.

Altogether, the office appeared to me to be well conducted, the several branches to have all the necessary convenience for performing their work with efficiency and despatch, and the work produced to be excellent.

The inventory gives the prices of the various articles contained in the establishment.

The total estimated value of the plant and machinery I consider to be £5,308 Os. 7d.

I have, &c.,

C. Knight, Esq., Auditor-General.

THOS. McKENZIE.

## B.

### LIST of PRICES paid for PRINTING BALLOT PAPERS in the respective Provinces.

Province or Town.	Number Printed.	Size of Page.	Number of Pages.	Amount Paid.	Government Printing Office Scale.	Voucher No.
				£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Auckland ... ..	7,050	Fcp. 4to.	10	11 3 0	8 1 6	5,805-71
Nelson ... ..	3,100	"	4	9 6 0	3 9 2	9,450-71
Hokitika ... ..	4,500	"	3	*11 5 0	3 19 9	12,875-71
Greymouth ... ..	4,200	"	1	4 10 0	3 5 11	6,764-71
Canterbury ... ..	1,500	"	2	3 5 6	1 13 4	6,494-71
" ... ..	200	"	1	0 14 0	0 9 0	6,495-71
Otago ... ..	500	"	1	1 5 0	0 13 0	12,972-71
" ... ..	500	"	1	1 0 0	0 13 0	5,701-71
" ... ..	500	"	1	1 0 0	0 13 0	71-71
" Invercargill ...	700	"	2	1 10 0	1 2 0	5,703-71
" Wakatip ... ..	1,800	"	1	5 10 0	1 13 6	July 30-73
	24,550	—	27	50 8 6	25 13 2	

\* This amount originally stood as £17, but £5 15s. was struck off the account before payment.

NOTE.—Price of paper (double foolscap), 15s. 9d. per ream.

By Authority: GEORGE DINSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1874.

Price 9d.]

