

567 registered letters were dealt with.
 35 letters were posted without addresses.
 427 letters were detained for postage; only 22 were subsequently prepaid and forwarded to their respective addresses.
 649 newspapers and 421 books and other articles without addresses reached the Dead Letter Office during the year, only 63 of which it was found practicable to deliver.
 2 letters were detained for having obscene and libellous addresses.
 76 letters were received imperfectly and wrongly addressed.
 396 refused letters were received in the Dead Letter Office.
 7 letters were posted with previously-used postage stamps.

REGISTERED LETTERS.

68,978 letters were registered during the year, being an increase of 8,391 on the number registered in 1877.

BUILDINGS.

The new offices at Christchurch not having been completed within the time fixed by the contract, and the construction of the necessary fittings having produced a further delay, it was not practicable to remove the post office to the new buildings until the 14th instant. The change is one which cannot but be appreciated alike by the public and the officers of the department.

Suitable offices for the joint accommodation of post office and telegraph have been erected at Newton, Auckland, and will be shortly open to the public.

The new offices at North Dunedin were occupied on the 4th January last.

Plans have been prepared for new offices at Wellington. Beyond this nothing has been done. Additional accommodation to meet the increased business of both the post office and telegraph is urgently required.

The erection of new offices at Timaru has been commenced, and the building should be completed in July next.

Offices have been erected at Rakaia, Waiholo, Duntroon, Kingston, Takapau, Featherston, and Halcombe.

The offices at Ashburton and Masterton have been enlarged.

New offices are being built at Patea, Gore, Catlin's River, Duvauchelle's Bay, Pahi, Wyndham, Ohaupo, and Woodville; and the offices at Hawera, Waipawa, Waipukurau, and Foxton are being enlarged.

It is proposed to build offices at Oamaru, Rangiora, Mercer, Greatford, Lower Hutt, Westport, Normanby, Nuggets, Balclutha, Ahaura, Lake Wanaka, Alexandra, Waitahuna, Albury, Te Kopuru, Port Albert, Dargaville, Aratapu, Paparoa, and Waitara, and to enlarge the office at Wanganui.

INLAND MAIL SERVICES.

The following are some of the more important Inland Mail Service alterations during 1878 :—

Ngaruawahia and Whatawhata service made thrice weekly instead of twice weekly.
 Weekly service established between Ngunguru and Whangarei.
 Weekly service established between Waipu and Maungaturoto.
 Maungatawhiri and Pokeno service increased from twice weekly to thrice weekly.
 Service between Napier and Petane increased from weekly to four times weekly.
 Services between Wellington, Foxton, and Wanganui, and Wanganui and Hawera, made daily.
 Twice-weekly service established between Norsewood and Ormondville.
 Second daily service established between Wellington and Masterton.
 Second daily service established between Greymouth, Kumara, and Hokitika.
 Thrice-weekly service established between Reefton and Boatman's.
 Weekly service established between Ahaura and Orwell Creek.
 Thrice-weekly service established between Leeston and Lakeside.
 Twice-weekly service established between Rakaia and Kyle.
 Daily service established between post office, Albany Street, and North-East Valley.
 Oamaru and Duntroon service made twice daily instead of daily.
 Daily service established between Dunedin and the Glen.
 Queenstown and Kingston service increased from twice to thrice weekly.
 Weekly service established between Tapanui and Crookston.
 Weekly service established between Skipper's and the Reefs.
 Four-weekly service established between Long Bush and Waihopai.
 Daily service established between Invercargill and Sylvan Bank.

The following statement shows the number and description of the inland services for the year compared with that of 1877 :—

Performed by coach and mail-cart	...	...	1878.	1877.
„ horseback	...	...	113	82
„ foot	...	...	207	187
„ water	...	...	52	43
„ railway	...	...	45	46
			48	31
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			465	389
Aggregate mileage	...	...	8,355	7,314
Total number of miles travelled	...	...	2,308,872	2,071,219
Cost to the department	...	...	£28,435 10s. 8d.	£28,797 8s. 6d.
Average cost per mile	...	...	3d.	3½d.