

postal service had developed to so large an extent as is disclosed by the following comparative statement for the years 1871 and 1880:—

	1871.	1880.
Estimated population	256,034	484,864
Number of inland mail services, exclusive of railway services	184	423
Number of services performed by railway	4	51
Total number of miles travelled	1,050,368	2,631,568
Annual cost	£23,000	£35,062
Average cost per mile	5½d.	3½d.
Number of chief post offices	12	16
Number of sub-post offices	483	840
Number of officers (inclusive of Sub-Postmasters)	599	1,060
Number of letters posted	3,206,990	11,861,456
Number of letters received for delivery	2,784,707	10,963,012
Number of post cards	(Nil)	334,384
Number of parcels and book-packets	(Included as news)	999,781
Number of newspapers posted	2,308,634	4,621,647
Number of newspapers received for delivery	1,871,150	5,651,260
Number of letters posted to each head of population	12·87	24·46
Number of registered letters dealt with	34,679	104,905
Number of dead letters disposed of	25,568	88,015
Revenue from sale of postage stamps	£38,629	£113,227
Total cash revenue	£47,055	£150,315
Expenditure	£89,953	£141,358
Number of money order and savings bank offices	81	178
Number of money orders issued	36,291	135,648
Amount	£157,398	£465,405
Number of money orders paid	17,976	104,107
Amount	£47,068	£350,313
Number of telegraph orders issued	2,469	14,497
Amount	£11,230	£58,334
Money order commission	£2,608	£7,944
Number of savings bank deposits	24,642	81,660
Amount deposited	£312,339	£864,442
Number of savings bank withdrawals	14,770	57,446
Amount withdrawn	£260,222	£780,504
Number of accounts remaining open at end of year	10,549	38,667
Balance to credit of depositors at end of year	£357,655	£903,766
Number of savings bank acknowledgments issued	19,959	81,660

It need only be remarked that, while the revenue for the ten years increased 219·44 per cent., the increase of expenditure was but 57·14 per cent.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

For the first time in the history of the postal service of the colony the revenue more than balanced the expenditure. Dealing with the financial year ended 31st March last, the cash receipts were £8,957 2s. in excess of the expenditure.

The revenue for the year was estimated to yield £145,000; the actual receipts, however, amounted to £150,315 8s. 7d., or £5,315 8s. 7d. more than the estimate. The sum appropriated for postal services was £151,652, while the total expenditure amounted to £141,358 16s. 7d., or £9,293 13s. 5d. less than the appropriations.

The total postal revenue, and also the expenditure on account of departmental services for the financial year just ended, are shown in the following return:—

REVENUE.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Sale of postage stamps	113,227	10 11	Salaries	43,197	7 6
Money-order commission	7,732	14 11	Conveyance of mails by sea	50,004	3 1
Private box and bag fees	3,328	10 0	" inland mails	29,882	13 6
Miscellaneous receipts	960	12 4	Payments to Railway Department	205	10 0
Postage from foreign offices	25,066	0 5	Contingencies	5,268	12 0
			Estimated liabilities	6,800	0 6
			Balance of revenue over expenditure ..	8,957	2 0
	£150,315	8 7		£150,315	8 7

The sum received on account of postage from foreign offices was increased by the fact that a balance of former years, amounting to £7,447 6s. 11d., was paid by the Imperial Post Office in February last, and treated as a receipt of the year. On the other hand, however, no portion of the Savings Bank profits, amounting to £2,359 3s. 3d., and which had accrued, was paid over.

Last year's receipts were £3,143 15s. 11d. less than the revenue collected for the twelve months ended 31st March, 1880, and which amounted to £153,459 4s. 6d. It should be explained that in 1880 no less than £27,243 13s. 3d. was received on account of foreign postage, of which £8,087 18s. 6d. was a balance of previous years, and a further sum of £6,982 15s. 5d. Savings Bank profits for the years 1878 and 1879 was also paid over, and included in the accounts of 1880. Dealing, however, with the postal revenue collected within the colony *i.e.*, receipts from the sale of postage stamps, money-order commission, private box and bag rents, &c., and which more accurately determine the normal increase, the revenue of the past year exceeded that of 1879–80 by £6,017 4s. 6d., or 5·46 per cent. The postage-stamp sales increased £5,642 8s. 4d., or 5·14 per cent.; and the money-order commission, and private box and bag fees and ordinary miscellaneous receipts by £251 10s. 2d. and £223 5s. 10d. respectively.

As previously stated, the cash receipts for the year amounted to £150,315 8s. 7d. Add to this the sum of £64,302 13s., the estimated value of the service performed by the Post Office for other departments in the free transmission of official correspondence, and £214,618 1s. 7d. is shown as the gross earnings of the department. After deducting £141,358 16s. 7d. on expenditure account, £73,259 15s. represents the apparent profit for the year.