

1892.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# PRINTING AND STATIONERY DEPARTMENT

(ANNUAL REPORT ON THE).

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

SIR,—

Printing and Stationery Department, Wellington, 25th July, 1892.

In submitting my report on the department for the year ended the 31st December, 1891, I have the honour to state that the results as disclosed in the balance-sheet appended hereto may be regarded as satisfactory, and exhibit a marked improvement as compared with that of last year in several important particulars. An accurate record is kept of all data necessary for ascertaining the value of the work turned out and the material consumed in its production. After making due allowances for interest on building and plant, depreciation, cost of stores, wages, &c., the Profit and Loss Account shows a credit balance of £7,851 8s. for the year.

The printing required for the Railways, the Insurance Department, and the Public Trust Office is now executed in this department, for which accounts are rendered and payment made to the credit of the Printing Office Vote. Stationery is also imported and supplied on payment to the departments named. The printing and binding of telegraph pads and forms, which used to be done in England, is now performed here, the cost being paid by the Telegraph Department. The "Law Reports" (published monthly), and the volume of "Transactions of the New Zealand Institute," complete the list of work executed by the department under contract.

The value of work done during 1891 (£34,966 3s. 1d.) exceeded the total for 1890 by £2,479 5s., and was larger than that of any previous year since the establishment of the office. The increase in bulk of both the Parliamentary Papers and *Hansard* for last year is a noticeable feature, each making one volume more than they did during the previous year. Among the works of a non-recurring character issued from the Government Press may be mentioned the volume of papers read before the Australasian Science Association, which met at Christchurch; the printing of which has been commented upon very favourably by members of the Association, while the moderate cost of producing it in the colony showed a marked contrast compared with that of other places where the Association held its meetings.

With regard to the publication of *Hansard*, I may state that the series for 1891 completed the twenty-fifth year of its publication, the first being issued in 1867. During the quarter of a century that has elapsed since then seventy-five volumes have been published, comprising a total of 53,079 pages, the columns of which measure 66,349ft., or a little over twelve and a half miles in length, being an average of half a mile per session. The average number of pages for each year was 2,133, and the number of volumes per session three. The number of copies printed in 1867 was 1,000, which has now been increased to 4,700. The number of free copies issued to members of the House has been increased from five copies to thirty. Though the free circulation shows a considerable increase, the number of subscribers—notwithstanding the reduction of the subscription to one-half what it was formerly—has not progressed in the same ratio, the number last year being 478, as compared with 162 in the year 1868. Increased facilities are now afforded to those wishing to subscribe, by authorising the local Postmasters to act as agents and receive subscriptions.

With regard to the storage of Government publications, I beg to draw attention to the unsuitable accommodation provided for this purpose in the cellars under the Government Buildings. They are always more or less damp, and have several times been flooded by storm-waters. As many of the publications stored there are of considerable value, and will in a few years be unobtainable, it is desirable that steps should be taken to provide a more suitable place for their custody, otherwise, owing to the damp and the ravages made by rats, they will become valueless.

The number of entries in the order-book during the past year was 3,747, comprising 29,424 pages, of which 30,678,080 copies were printed, the total value of the work amounting to £34,966 3s. 1d. The expenditure for wages and overtime was £21,569 8s. 6d.

During the month of April last year the minimum number of employes engaged in the department was 152, of whom 39 were compositors; while the maximum was reached last September, when 193 were employed, of whom 72 were compositors.

The number of printing accounts examined and passed was 2,788, being 359 less than during the previous year. The amount of deductions made therefrom was £109 9s. 6d.