

1893.
NEW ZEALAND.

POST OFFICE AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT

(REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR 1892.

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

MY LORD,—
I have the honour to submit to your Excellency the report on the Postal and Telegraph Department for the year 1892, with the customary statement of revenue and expenditure to the 31st March last.
I have the honour to be
Your Lordship's most obedient servant,
J. G. WARD,
Postmaster-General and Electric Telegraph Commissioner.
His Excellency the Governor of New Zealand.

REPORT.

THERE has been a large increase of business in nearly every branch of the department. The returns of the correspondence transmitted by post cover the first complete year's results under the regulations of the Postal Union, and they disclose a very decided increase of all classes of mail-matter, except that of parcels post. The increase in the number of books and packets posted and delivered is unprecedented, being no less than 85·24 per cent.—from 7,170,761 in 1891, to 13,283,387 in 1892. This is mainly to be attributed to the reduction of the book-postage from 8d. to 4d. per pound, and to the introduction of a halfpenny town paper post for trade accounts and general commercial papers, which were formerly subjected to letter rates of postage. The postage reductions, and the more liberal conditions of transmission conceded to the public, have been the means of attracting to the Post Office an entirely new class of business, without appreciably adding to the expense of the department. The revenue returns, notwithstanding the reductions of postage rates and of other charges, have been well maintained. The postal conveniences which followed the entry of the colony into the Postal Union have been fully appreciated by the public.

The revenue and expenditure for the financial year ended the 31st March, 1893, are given in the following statement:—

REVENUE.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Stamps used for postage (estimated) ..	187,000	0 0	Salaries ..	167,633	10 5
Money-order and postal-note commission collected in the colony ..	11,180	10 8	Conveyance of mails by sea ..	33,370	19 0
Money-order commission received from foreign offices ..	496	19 1	Conveyance of inland mails ..	26,020	18 1
Private box and bag fees ..	4,703	10 0	Conveyance of mails by railway ..	187	17 6
Postages from foreign offices ..	2,000	0 0	Money-order commission credited to foreign offices ..	1,170	4 5
Miscellaneous receipts (Postal) ..	8,621	4 3	Telegraph extension (Consolidated Fund) ..	1,073	4 0
Ordinary and Press telegrams ..	81,751	7 7	Maintenance and repairs to telegraph-lines, and miscellaneous ..	48,629	9 0
Telephone exchanges ..	19,155	11 5	Cable subsidies ..	308	6 8
Miscellaneous receipts (Telegraph) ..	3,849	7 4			
				278,394	9 1
			Balance of revenue over expenditure ..	40,364	1 3
	£318,758	10 4		£318,758	10 4

The revenue was £1,299 10s. 11d. less than the previous year's receipts. The item "Postages from Foreign Offices" (which was a balance of former years) was £1,949 16s. 9d. under the amount brought to charge in 1891-92. This item will disappear altogether as revenue, as the recoveries are now applied in reduction of the vote for conveyance of mails by sea. Receipts from telegrams fell off £3,490 16s. compared with the 1891-92 receipts, probably due to one of two causes. For several years past it was the practice to base the revenue from telegrams on the results of periodical countings. As the figures for 1892-93 represent actual amounts, it is probable that the previous year's receipts were overstated. And the change made last year, by which a telegram of eighteen words, including address and signature, is accepted at the initial rate, in lieu of ten words in the text and free address and signature up to ten words, has had the effect of decreasing the receipts from telegrams by about £4,200 for a year. Under the present tariff as many as fourteen and fifteen words are frequently written in the text of telegrams—four, and even three, words sufficing for address and signature. The effect of this has been to bring down the average value of a telegram (ordinary or delayed) by about 1·30d.

The expenditure was £10,051 8s., or 3·75 per cent. more than the expenditure of the previous year.