

Letters—	1898.	1897.	Increase.
Posted in the colony	32,465,875	30,260,204	
Received from places outside the colony ..	2,271,441	2,012,719	
	<u>34,737,316</u>	<u>32,272,923</u>	2,464,393
Letter-cards—			
Posted in the colony	917,681	757,172	160,459
Post-cards—			
Posted in the colony	1,399,450	1,325,272	
Received from places outside the colony ..	80,514	16,549	
	<u>1,479,964</u>	<u>1,341,821</u>	138,143
Books and pattern-packets—			
Posted in the colony	14,840,131	12,351,443	
Received from places outside the colony ..	2,277,970	2,276,389	
	<u>16,618,101</u>	<u>14,627,832</u>	1,990,269
Newspapers—			
Posted in the colony	10,872,459	10,177,089	
Received from places outside the colony ..	4,223,023	4,084,256	
	<u>15,095,487</u>	<u>14,261,345</u>	834,142
Parcels—			
Posted in the colony	177,559	173,856	
Received from places outside the colony ..	27,044	23,698	
	<u>204,603</u>	<u>197,554</u>	7,049

The letters increased 7·64; books and pattern-packets, 13·61; newspapers, 5·85; parcels, 3·57; letter-cards, 21·19; post-cards, 10·30 per cent.

The increase in 1897 was: Letters, 8·34; books, &c., 15·66; newspapers, 7·91; parcels, 5·86; letter-cards, 15·72; post-cards, 8·93 per cent.

The average number of letters posted per head of population was estimated to be 44·10, or 45·34 including letter-cards. The averages in 1897 were 41·93 and 42·98 respectively.

The Post Office receipts for the year amounted to £300,475 13s. 6d.—an increase of £28,312 13s. 9d., or 10·4 per cent.

The expenditure was £215,616 12s. 1d., as against £197,355 6s. 11d. for the previous year—an increase of £18,261 5s. 2d., or 9·25 per cent.

There was therefore a balance of revenue over expenditure of £84,859 1s. 5d.

The estimated value of official (free) correspondence was £70,730. The gross earnings of the Post Office for the year were £371,205, and the credit balance £155,589.

WORK PERFORMED FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

Customs duties amounting to £13,302 11s. 4d. were collected on articles received through the post from places beyond the colony, and £1,184 9s. 7d. on account of ordinary Customs work.

The sum of £2,234 8s. was collected from the sale of game-licenses.

Premiums amounting to £30,412 0s. 2d. were collected from policyholders on behalf of the Government Life Insurance Department.

£451 8s. 5d. was collected for the Government Printer on the sale of Government publications.

Income-tax amounting to £71,964 11s. 1d., and land-tax for £207,154 9s., were received at post-offices.

Fees under the Live-stock Acts amounting to £20,244 6s. were collected.

The sum of £3,684 12s. 6d. was received for machinery-fees.

The receipts from the sale of miners' licenses amounted to £1,265 3s.

£20,415 was lodged at post-offices for investment in New Zealand Consols.

Receipts on behalf of the Public Trust Office amounted to £264,378 18s. 7d., and payments to £263,587 5s. 7d., as compared with £302,358 6s. 7d. and £301,872 10s. 4d. the previous year.

Railway receipts amounting to £11,919 11s. 11d. were also accounted for through the Post Office Account.

The fees collected in respect of the registration of births, deaths, and marriages amounted to £2,143 18s.

The Advances to Settlers Office receipts amounted to £345,645 14s., and payments to £344,987 5s.

Fees, &c., were also collected on account of the Audit Office, Hospitals and Charitable Aid, County Councils, Harbourmasters, Alcoholic Liquors Act, Arms Act, fishing licenses, Lunacy Department, Miners' Guides, public baths, Factories Act, Education Department, Justice Department, and the Treasury.

The payments made by the Post Office on behalf of the Treasury were £474,440 16s. 7d.

GROSS RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS.

The gross receipts dealt with during the year were—Departmental, £11,949,906 12s. 7d.; on account of other departments, £1,525,968 17s. 11d.: total, £13,475,875 10s. 6d., as compared with £10,512,411 11s. for the previous year.

The payments were—Departmental, £11,983,900 13s. 7d.; on behalf of other departments—to individuals, £1,083,015 7s. 2d.; to Government accounts, £392,408 0s. 3d.: a total of £13,459,324 1s., as against £10,458,886 8s. 5d. dealt with the former year.

The gross receipts and payments were therefore £26,935,199 11s. 6d., as compared with £20,971,297 19s. 6d. for 1897.

LETTER-CARRIERS' DELIVERIES.

Deliveries by letter-carriers were established at: New Plymouth—Fitzroy, lying between Henui and Wawaikaho Bridges; Wanganui—Patea, at 9 a.m. over whole borough, at 2.30 p.m. in principal business streets.