

## POSTAL NOTES.

The following were created postal-note offices during the year 1905-6:—

Athol	Henderson	Ohutu	Tarras
Awanga	Huiroa	Okato	Taupiri
Awarua Plains	Islington	Ongarue	Te Araroa
Barewood	Kaipara Flats	Puponga	Te Rauamoa
Beaumont	Kinohaku	Rangitata	Tuatapere
Brookside	Kohatu	Raupo	Upper Matakaitaki
Buckland	Kopu	Raurimu	Waiouru
Elsthorpe	Leigh	Ruahine	Whangapara
Glen Murray	Moana	Tangowahine	Whatatutu.
Glenorchy	Ohau		

—a total of 38. Four offices were closed—namely, Motupiko Railway, Oio, Omapere, and Whangapara.

The number of offices at which postal notes were sold at the end of the year was 654, as compared with 620 on the 31st March, 1905.

875,324 notes of the value of £276,279 7s. 6d. were sold, as against 785,347 for £250,123 7s. 6d. sold during the previous year.

The postal notes paid numbered 869,392, of the value of £274,678 16s. 6d., as compared with 775,417, of the value of £247,320 15s. 6d., paid during 1904-5.

The postal-note commission amounted to £5,979 4s. 1½d., as against £5,404.

The steadily continued growth of the postal-note business is one of the most notable features of the Department's work.

Provision has been made for the issue of a duplicate of a lost or destroyed postal note upon proof of ownership and particulars as to number and amount accompanied by an indemnity should the original at any time be paid.

## BRITISH POSTAL ORDERS.

The Imperial postal-order scheme has during the past year proved both its usefulness and the fact that it has met a public want.

It has been extended to include Transvaal, Natal, and Orange River Colony. So far Australia, Canada, and Cape Colony have not seen fit to take advantage of the system. In the case of Australia at least, the necessity has been made manifest, and correspondence is proceeding upon the question of the adoption of some system of interchange of British or colonial orders.

27,369 orders have been sold, valued at £13,581 18s., and 7,364 paid for £5,052 7s. 6d. An extended table of the transactions is printed elsewhere.

The 20s. order is the most popular, sales having reached 26 per cent. of the total. Following in order of popularity are the 10s., 5s., 1s., 2s. 6d., with a percentage of 12, 9, 6, and 6 respectively. At the bottom of the list stands the order issued at 16s. 6d.

## INLAND MAILS.

The Westport-Reefton coach-service was interrupted for ten days owing to landslips in the Buller Gorge. The Westport-Karamea sea service was interrupted during September, 1905, in consequence of the mail contract steamer being barbound at Okarito. A substitute steamer performed the service for one or two trips, and the mails were in addition carried overland.

A bag of mail while being carried from Waipiro Bay to Port Awanui was lost on the beach by the mailman. It was subsequently found, the contents being intact but somewhat damaged by salt water.

The contractor for the Milton-Glenledi mail-service, while on his homeward journey on the 3rd April, 1906, was accidentally killed through his horse bolting.

While being transhipped at sea a bag of mail from Totaranui to Takaka was lost.

A mail-carrier lost a bag of mail from Collingwood to Mangarakau.

There was a gratifying absence of floods in the Otago and Southland Districts during the year.

The general contracts for inland services expire at the end of this year. Tenders for the services will be called for about September next, when the whole of the inland mail contracts will be reviewed.

Among alterations effected in mail-services during the year were the following:—

The coach-service between Paeroa and Waihi was terminated owing to the opening of the section of railway between those places. The coach-service between Waiouru and Taihape was increased in frequency, from once weekly in winter and twice weekly in summer to twice weekly throughout the year.

The number of contracts for inland mails in operation in 1905 was 654.

There were in addition 530 services not under bond.

The length of inland postal routes by road (counted one way only) was 11,513 miles, and the total number of miles travelled 2,960,501, at an average cost of 3'63d. per mile. In 1904 the respective mileages were 11,613 miles and 2,891,245, at an average cost of 3'54d. per mile.

Ordinary railway-trains with mails travelled 3,633,187 miles.

The estimated sum payable to the Railway Department for the conveyance of mails by ordinary trains was £44,000.

## OCEAN MAIL-SERVICES.

*San Francisco Service.*

The total amount paid at poundage rates to the contractors for the contract year ended November, 1905, was £19,173 18s. 5d. The maximum payable amount for any year under the contract is £20,000. The present contract expires in November next. Proposals for a renewal of the service will be brought down for the consideration of Parliament.

The dispute between the Commonwealth and the contractors relative to the rate of poundage to be paid as from the 1st December, 1900, for the conveyance of Australian postal matter has not so far been settled.