

The correspondence of 83 persons or firms has been prohibited transmission under section 28 of "The Post and Telegraph Act, 1908." Money-orders may not be issued in favour of such persons or firms.

In future, all "unclaimed" articles which have no intrinsic value, such as tracts, circulars, &c., will be destroyed on receipt at the Dead Letter Office. Experience has shown that, if articles of no value are not claimed within one month, they are never applied for.

Lead seals are now used on the travelling post-offices, instead of wax.

There are eight motor-power, six foot-power, and twenty hand-power postmarking-machines in use in the Dominion.

The visit of the U.S.A. fleet to Auckland from the 9th to the 15th August, 1908, entailed a considerable increase of work on the Department, especially at Auckland and Rotorua. Additional officers were drafted to Auckland from other centres, and a quadruplex telegraph-set was installed at Rotorua. A post-office, a money-order office, and a telephone-office open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily were established at Quay Street, Auckland. The Pacific cable shared in the increased traffic, the number of Press words transmitted on the day of the fleet's arrival being 13,726. Mails for the war-ships were delivered free to the various vessels three times daily by steam-launch.

From the 1st January, 1909, "call-boxes" were instituted. These are fitted with glass fronts through which the holder may see whether any letters are within. By renting a call-box a person within a letter-carrier's delivery may, by calling at the post-office, obtain mail-matter addressed to him which may arrive between two deliveries. Should he not call between the period of one letter-carrier's delivery and another, the letters are taken from the call-box and delivered by carrier in the ordinary way. The rent for a call-box is 2s. 6d. per annum. The system is proving a success. At one office alone 38 boxes are in use, and it is expected that the number will soon be increased.

From the 1st January, 1909, the charge for private letter-boxes where no letter-carrier's delivery exists was reduced from £1 to 10s. per annum.

Departmental offices are regularly disinfected. Dry dusting and dry sweeping have been forbidden.

From the 1st May, 1908, first- and second-grade post-offices have issued their own receipts for delivered registered correspondence, as is done at chief post-offices.

A motor-van of 18-horse power and a maximum speed of twenty miles an hour, made to the order of the Department, was brought into use in Wellington on the 6th July, 1908. The car is specially designed for the delivery of parcels, the collection of mail-matter from posting-boxes, and the carriage of hampers. The car is the first to be used by the Department for the purpose. A second van was purchased in February, 1909. This car, which is fitted with a 24-horse-power double-cylinder engine, will be able to take with ease the steepest grades in the city and suburbs.

A magazine (registered) post was established with Fiji from the 27th July, 1908.

On the 1st September, 1908, the hours of public postal attendance at the four principal centres were extended from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. During the extended hours all post-office business, except money-order and savings-bank and the delivery of correspondence to persons whose letters are usually delivered by letter-carrier, is transacted.

In order to prevent the posting of large newspapers and packets in posting-boxes, in many cases blocking the entrance, instructions were given that in future the apertures were to be limited to 1 in. in depth.

Twenty-three newspapers were registered for transmission by post, and 19 were removed from the register.

The declared value of parcels received from places outside the Dominion in 1908 was £323,481, as against £310,219 in 1907. The Customs duty collected amounted to £62,194 7s. 3d.

The declared value of parcels despatched to places beyond the Dominion was £37,109, as against £27,395 in 1907.

The post-office opened at King Edward VII Land on the 2nd January, 1908, by Lieutenant E. H. Shackleton, of the Antarctic Expedition, was closed on the 4th March, 1909.

Nineteen new letter-carrier deliveries were established. Deliveries were extended in 23, and increased in frequency in 15 places.

One hundred and eight receiving-boxes were established, and five closed.

#### PENNY POSTAGE.

Penny postage is rapidly gaining ground. On the 1st October, 1908, penny postage was established between the United States and Great Britain, and on the 1st January, 1909, between Germany and the United States. The Postmaster-General of Great Britain was also urged to establish the system between Great Britain and France; but, while expressing sympathy with the idea, was unable to accede to the request on financial considerations. The French Post and Telegraph Commission, in a report to the Chamber of Deputies, also recommended the establishment of penny postage with Great Britain. The significance of these facts cannot be overestimated. Hitherto penny postage had been considered possible only between communities politically connected, such as countries and their colonies; and the fact of its establishment between countries so far politically separated as the United States and France, Great Britain and Germany, proves that its importance as a factor in the development of social, political, and commercial intercourse is being fully realised. The financial results of these experiments will be watched with interest, for upon them all depend to a large extent the chances of the adoption of penny postage by other countries at the next Postal Congress.