

value of any prescribed denomination might be made by recording-machines. The Minister of Telegraphs was authorized to grant licenses for the installation and working of apparatus for wireless telegraphy on board any ship registered in New Zealand, whether on the high seas or in New Zealand waters.

PARCEL-POST.

There has been a phenomenal growth in the parcel-post business generally, 1,613,010 parcels having been posted in the Dominion during 1911, as against 1,190,711 in 1910.

From the 1st March, 1912, the parcel-post rates to Canada were reduced from 1s. per pound to the following rates: For parcels not exceeding 3 lb., 1s.; not exceeding 7 lb., 2s.; and not exceeding 11 lb., 3s. A direct exchange of parcels was also established between Straits Settlements and New Zealand.

From the 1st October, 1911, the rate of postage on parcels to the Union of South Africa was reduced from 1s. to 9d. per pound.

DEFERRED CABLE MESSAGES.

From the 1st January, 1912, a system of deferred cable messages—ordinary and Press—was established. These deferred messages are transmitted after ordinary cable messages. The charge for deferred ordinary cable messages is one-half the rate for ordinary telegrams, and on deferred Press telegrams one-half the Press rate. At present the system of deferred Press messages is in operation only with Great Britain and Vancouver, and that of deferred ordinary cable messages with most countries to which the rate for ordinary cable messages is not less than 9½d. per word.

COLLECTION OF NATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND RECEIPTS.

Since last year's report the work of collecting moneys from contributors to the National Provident Fund has been undertaken by the Post Office. As the knowledge of the benefits of the fund becomes more general no doubt the business of the Post Office in connection therewith will largely increase.

POST OFFICE.

During 1911 the Assistant Inspectors of Post-offices visited 2,270 offices. In conformity with the system inaugurated in 1909, 444 small non-permanent offices were inspected by the permanent Postmasters in their vicinity.

Eighty post-offices were established (of these, 4 were reopened offices), and 25 closed. The number of post-offices open at the end of the year was 2,312, of which 1,747 were, and 565 were not, combined with telegraph or telephone offices.

The names of 13 offices were changed to meet altered circumstances or to agree more nearly with local designations.

The number of articles delivered in the Dominion, including those received from places outside, during the year 1911, as compared with the number in 1910, was as under:—

	1911.	1910.	Increase.	Decrease.
Letters and letter-cards ..	106,143,040	100,328,930	5,814,110	..
Post-cards ..	6,829,563	7,895,251	..	1,065,688
Other articles ..	53,555,632	50,301,836	3,253,796	..
	<u>166,528,235</u>	<u>158,526,017</u>	<u>8,002,218</u>	<u>..</u>
Parcels ..	1,714,369	1,281,253	433,116	..

The letters and letter-cards increased 5·80, post-cards decreased 13·50, other articles increased 6·47, and parcels 33·80 per cent. The decrease in the number of post-cards may be accounted for by the continued decline in popularity of the pictorial post-card. In 1910 letters and letter-cards increased 7·13, post-cards decreased 1·92, other articles increased 4·37, and parcels 14·19 per cent.

The average number of letters and letter-cards posted per head of population was estimated at 97·85. The average in 1910 was 97·14.

The correspondence of 35 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.

On the 5th January a warrant was issued prohibiting the issue of money-orders and delivery of postal correspondence to a company on the ground that it dealt in premium bonds—a lottery or scheme of chance. Subsequently, a test case was brought to determine whether a premium bond was a lottery, and it was decided in the Magistrate's Court, Wellington, that it was. This decision was to be appealed against, but on the company satisfying the Department that it would not use the Post Office for the purposes of the supposed lottery the prohibition was removed. The decision has since been affirmed.

Twenty-one newspapers were registered for transmission by post, and 18 were removed from the register.

The declared value of parcels received from places outside the Dominion in 1911 was £374,294, as against £307,299 in 1910. The Customs duty collected amounted to £65,967 16s. 8d.