

letters, were ordered to come up for sentence when called upon; at Nelson an officer was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for stealing postal packets; at Orepuki a railway cadet was admitted to probation on a similar charge; at Te Aro two telegraph message-boys, charged with stealing postal packets, were admitted to probation for two years; and at Thames a letter-carrier was convicted and ordered to come up for sentence when called upon on a charge of delaying and destroying circulars.

On a charge of defacing Post Office receiving-boxes two boys were severely cautioned in the Juvenile Court, Oamaru.

On a charge of the theft of two money-orders from the counter of the Foxton Post-office a man was sentenced to one month's imprisonment.

Several offences occurred in connection with Savings-bank accounts: a person was convicted at Palmerston North for forging a Savings-bank withdrawal; at Thames a man was convicted on a charge of fraudulently obtaining payment twice of a Savings-bank withdrawal; and at Wellington a man was convicted for forging a Savings-bank withdrawal.

A man at Wellington, on a charge of forging a telegram, was ordered to come up for sentence when called upon.

BUILDINGS.

The following new offices were officially opened: Balclutha, Ellerslie, Green Island, Kilbirnie, Kingsland, Manaia, Porirua, Putaruru, Rangiwhia, and Te Aroha.

The following offices were transferred to departmental new buildings: Amberley, Avondale, Culverden, Granity, Hamilton East, Kaero, Leeston, Manaia, Manutuke, Matata, Mercer, Murchison, Ongarue, Putaruru, Rangiwhia, Riverton, Runanga, Seddon, Shannon, Taneatua, Taradale, Taupo, Te Awamutu, Tikokino, Wairoa, and Warkworth.

Sites have been purchased at Eastbourne, Fitzroy, Kawakawa, Little River, Lumsden, Otahuhu, Ravensbourne, Russell, and Taupiri.

During the year buildings were erected at Bannockburn, Ellerslie, Green Island, Kilbirnie, Kingsland, Kirikiriroa, Porirua, Rahotu, Takapau, Waimate, and Wellington (workshops).

General repairs, additions, &c., were carried out during the year at the following offices: Ashburton, Avondale, Carterton, Eltham, Hokitika, Huntly, Inglewood, Invercargill, Kaponga, Lawrence, Lower Hutt, New Brighton, Newton, Ohakune, Owaka, Paeroa, Pahiatua, Te Kuiti, Waipiatu, Wanganui, Wellington (Molesworth Street), Wellington (Tinakori Road), Wellington (bulk store), and Whakatane.

Contracts have been let for buildings at Addington (clock-tower), Balfour, Clive, Hawea Flat, Kaiwarawara, Lyttelton (clock-tower), Otane, Pleasant Point, Takaka (quarters), and Whangamomona.

Buildings are in course of erection at Auckland, Kaitangata, Matamata, Murchison, Ohura, Ponsonby, Sydenham, Waiiau (lineman's cottage), Wellington (G.P.O.), and Westport.

The old post-office building, Shannon, was handed over as a Coronation gift to the residents for a library and reading-room.

The Cheltenham Post-office was destroyed by fire on the 18th October, 1911. No postal property, except that in the safe, was saved.

The Raglan Post-office was destroyed by fire on the 18th May, 1911. Fires occurred in the following non-permanent offices: Hataitai (14/4/12), Kawerua (2/3/12), Kiritehere (9/5/12), Makomako (30/5/12), Onerahi (26/5/12), Oruanui (1/5/11), Rawhitiroa (1/6/11), Taipa (13/2/11), Waitetuna (25/3/11), and Woodend (25/3/12).

MONEY-ORDERS.

During the year there were 46 money-order offices opened and 6 closed, the number remaining open at the end of the year being 704.

607,764 money-orders were issued, for £2,759,393 8s. 5d., as compared with 569,657 for £2,457,522 18s. 5d., for the previous year—an increase of 38,107 in number and £301,870 10s. in amount.

483,043 money-orders, amounting to £2,416,958 15s. 10d., were paid, as against 449,773 for £2,126,588 16s. 7d., during 1910—an increase of 33,270 orders and £290,369 19s. 3d. in amount.

163,595 orders, for £497,027 5s. 11d., were drawn for payment in places beyond New Zealand.

39,427 orders, for £162,606 12s. 8d., were issued at offices abroad for payment in New Zealand.

The commission received for money-orders amounted to £15,307 7s. 7d., as against £14,300 7s. 9d. for 1910, an increase of £1,006 19s. 10d.

A direct money-order exchange with France was brought into force from the 1st August, 1911.

POSTAL NOTES.

Forty-four offices were opened and 7 closed, leaving 866 postal-note offices at the end of the year.

1,821,566 notes, representing a value of £574,979 18s. 6d., were sold, as against 1,666,959 notes, for £524,942 18s. 6d., sold during the previous year—an increase of 9.27 per cent. in number and 9.53 per cent. in value.

The postal notes paid numbered 1,811,096, of the value of £572,112 16s., as compared with 1,650,065, of the value of £520,675 16s., paid during 1910-11.

The postal-note commission amounted to £8,329 13s. 2d., as against £7,627 12s. 4d.—an increase of £702 0s. 10d., or 9.20 per cent.