

1924.
NEW ZEALAND.

POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT

(REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR 1923-24.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

To His Excellency the Right Honourable John Rushworth, Viscount Jellicoe, Admiral of the Fleet, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Member of the Order of Merit, Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over His Majesty's Dominion of New Zealand and its Dependencies.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report of the Post and Telegraph Department for the year ended 31st March, 1924.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS.

The business of the Department continues to be satisfactory. The excess of receipts over expenditure was £568,369, approximately £4,400 less than last year. Notwithstanding this, the surplus for the year was the second largest in the history of the Department. This must be regarded as satisfactory, considering the very large reduction in rates made on the 1st October, 1923, when postage rates were reduced by $33\frac{1}{3}$ per centum.

REDUCTION IN POSTAGE-RATES.

The outstanding feature of the year's work has been the redistribution of charges for services rendered to the public. After a careful examination of the position I was able to arrange, as from the 1st October, for the reintroduction of penny postage within New Zealand, to places in the British Empire, and to countries with which New Zealand had special agreements; and for the reinstatement of the halfpenny rate for commercial papers, &c. As a result, New Zealand now enjoys the cheapest rate of postage in its history. The cost of furnishing this service is still high, on account of the depreciated value of the pound sterling. Nevertheless it is confidently expected that the reduction in postage-rates will result in a much increased volume of business. When the Commonwealth of Australia was asked to accept letters from New Zealand at the new rate the request was declined, but after further negotiations the decision was reversed.