

UNDELIVERABLE POSTAL PACKETS.

The following is a comparison of letters and other articles dealt with as undeliverable during the year, compared with those so dealt with during 1924 :—

Year.	Returned direct to Senders from Chief Offices ("Special Request").	Returned direct to Senders from Dead Letter Office.	Returned to other Administrations from Chief Offices ("Special Request").	Returned to other Administrations from Dead Letter Office.	Destroyed (Senders unknown and Contents of no Value).	Total.
<i>Letters.</i>						
1925..	247,934	291,598	54,556	39,091	26,308	659,487
1924..	235,015	272,653	44,854	35,564	14,688	602,774
<i>Other Articles.</i>						
1925..	157,543	9,211	75,377	24,532	..	266,663
1924..	130,363	6,013	72,926	19,481	..	228,783

The proportion of undeliverable letters to the total number of letters delivered was 0·45 per cent. In 1924 the proportion was the same.

MISCELLANEOUS.

	1925.	1924.
Letters and letter-cards posted without addresses	19,731	17,352
Letters imperfectly or insufficiently addressed	19,380	20,335
Letters intercepted on account of libellous addresses	42	42
Registered letters unclaimed	9,650	8,762
Newspapers received without addresses	5,221	4,540
Other articles received without addresses	4,070	3,937
Newspapers returned to publishers as undeliverable	43,685	28,881
Articles bearing previously used stamps	81	77

During 1925 there were dealt with in the Dead Letter Office 5,287 packets (other than parcels) the contents of which gave little or no indication of the senders' names or addresses. In the majority of these cases special effort on the part of the Dead Letter Office was successful in tracing either the senders or the addressees. Two hundred and sixty-five letters from overseas bearing insufficient or wrong addresses were specially dealt with, and a large proportion was delivered.

During the year an auction of unclaimed packets and parcels was held, at which 164 bundles of miscellaneous articles were sold.

The number of "special request" letters returned unopened to senders shows a satisfactory increase. If business people realized that a special request for return in the event of non-delivery, printed on an envelope, meant a quicker return of a letter, still more would avail themselves of the system.

PROHIBITED POSTAL PACKETS.

During the year 3,873 letters addressed to persons or firms the transmission of correspondence for whom is prohibited under section 28 of the Post and Telegraph Act, 1908, were intercepted and forwarded to the Dead Letter Office, as against 2,214 in 1924.

REGISTER OF NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES.

Eighteen newspapers were registered for transmission by post, and fourteen were removed from the register. Ten magazines were registered, and nine were removed from the register.

The number of registered newspapers on the 31st March, 1926, was 300, and the number of registered magazines 337.

POSTAGE-STAMPS.

During the year the following new postage-stamps were issued : On the 1st April, 1925, 4d. and 9d. Official ; in November, 1s., Niue (printed in New Zealand) ; and on the 17th November, commemorative of the New Zealand and South Seas International Exhibition, $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d., and 4d. The last-named stamps, which were sold only at the Dunedin Exhibition post-office, were withdrawn from sale at the close of the Exhibition on the 1st May, 1926. Owing to the limited time available it was necessary for the Exhibition stamps to be produced entirely in New Zealand.

New postage-stamps of the Dominion which will be issued in the near future are 1d., 2s., and 3s., the design of the 1d. being His Majesty the King in military uniform, and of the 2s. and 3s. His Majesty in naval uniform. The 1d. stamp will replace the present "Universal" 1d. stamp, which was issued twenty-five years ago on the introduction of penny postage ; while the 2s. and 3s. stamps will replace, for postage purposes, the present stamp-duty stamps of those denominations.

STAMP-VENDING MACHINES.

In March, 1925, an order was placed in England for the supply of fifty stamp-vending machines, and towards the end of the year the machines commenced to come to hand. As the new machines are made ready for issue they are sent to the more important places throughout the Dominion. The convenience afforded by the machines in enabling stamps to be obtained at any hour of the day or night is greatly appreciated by the public.