

DEPARTMENTAL.

The following is a Schedule of all Post Offices in the colony in 1873, compared with the number open in 1872 :—

POSTAL DISTRICTS.	1873.				1872.			
	Head Offices.	Post Offices.	Sub-Post Offices.	Totals.	Head Offices.	Post Offices.	Sub-Post Offices.	Totals.
Auckland	1	3	117	121	1	3	111	115
Thames	1	...	3	4	1	...	3	4
Taranaki	1	...	7	8	1	...	7	8
Hawke's Bay	1	1	29	31	1	1	28	30
Wellington	1	1	47	49	1	1	44	46
Nelson	1	2	46	49	1	2	43	46
Marlborough	1	2	11	14	1	2	11	14
Canterbury	1	3	96	100	1	3	83	87
Westland	1	1	29	31	1	1	27	29
Otago	1	2	130	133	1	2	123	126
Southland	1	2	26	29	1	2	24	27
Chatham Islands	1	...	1	2	1	1
Totals	12	17	542	571	12	17	504	533

During the year, 47 new Post Offices were opened, 5 re-opened, and 10 closed.

A branch Post Office has been established at the junction of Albany and George Streets, Dunedin, and placed under the charge of an officer of the permanent staff. In connection with this office, there is also a Telegraph Station.

A branch Post Office has also been established at Colombo Street South, Christchurch, mainly with the view of affording the public facilities for posting newspapers.

The following is a Schedule of Officers in the Postal Department in the years 1872 and 1873 :—

Officers.	1873.	1872.
Postmaster-General	1	1
Secretary	1	1
Inspector of Post Offices	1	1
Accountant, Money Order and Savings Bank Department	1	1
Clerks in General Post Office	3	3
Clerks in Money Order and Savings Bank Department	3	3
Mail Agents	0	3
Chief Postmasters	8	8
Postmasters	21	21
Clerks	57	53
Sub-Postmasters	542	504
Letter Carriers	29	27
Messengers	7	8
Shipping Officers	2	3
Totals	676	637

Two receiving letter-boxes have been erected since the date of the last report.

The area of the letter carriers' delivery within the City of Wellington has been extended, and an additional letter carrier appointed.

At Dunedin, newspapers are now permitted to be posted in the receiving-boxes, hitherto available for letters only. It is the intention to extend this arrangement to the larger cities, should it be found that such an alteration can be effected without serious inconvenience, or much additional expense to the department.

INLAND MAIL SERVICES.

The Inland Mail Services have, on the whole, been satisfactorily carried out. Several additional services have been established. During the year, 253 inland mail services were in operation: 84 having been performed by coach and mail cart; 111 on horseback; 9 on foot; 42 by water; and 7 by railway. The distances to be travelled for the 253 services was 7,319 miles; and the total number of miles travelled was 1,350,232, at a cost of £23,648 16s. 2d., or an average of about 4½d. per mile.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

The following statement of the number of letters and newspapers received in, and despatched from, the colony during the year 1873, as compared with the number during 1872, shows how largely the correspondence increased during the past year :—

	1873.	1872.	Increase.
Letters—Received	4,221,977	3,588,073	
Despatched	3,694,008	3,370,470	
	<u>7,915,985</u>	<u>6,958,543</u>	957,442
Newspapers—Received	2,963,170	2,767,682	
Despatched	2,306,025	1,643,409	
	<u>5,269,195</u>	<u>4,411,091</u>	858,104