

1876.
NEW ZEALAND.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.
(SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT.)

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

MY LORD,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 21st August, 1876.

I have the honor to submit to Your Excellency the Seventeenth Annual Report on the Postal Service of New Zealand.

The Most Hon. the Marquis of Normanby, K.C.M.G.,
Governor of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL,
Postmaster-General.

R E P O R T.

SINCE the date of last report, the whole of the Chief and Head Post Offices have been visited, and a very large number of the Sub-Post Offices inspected. In several instances, many of the offices have been visited twice, and generally there has been found decided improvement. Too much importance cannot be attached to a thorough system of inspection, which largely contributes to introduce and maintain order, discipline, and efficiency.

The introduction of penny post cards for circulation within the colony has been decided upon. The cards will be issued to the public as early as practicable. Post cards supply a general want, by enabling messages, orders, notices, and other short communications to be transmitted through the post at a nominal rate of postage. The introduction of the post-card system in New South Wales and Victoria has been attended with success; and in the United Kingdom for the year 1874, no less than seventy-nine million post cards were posted.

Attention has been directed to the desirableness of establishing Penny Savings Banks in connection with schools, under regulations similar to those of the Penny-Bank system which has been worked with such marked success in the United Kingdom, and also in Ghent, in Belgium. The importance of the matter is fully recognized, and every facility will be afforded to Penny Banks established not only at schools but at factories and other establishments throughout the colony.

One of the immediate results of the Postal Conference held at Berne, in October, 1874, has been a considerable reduction in the postage on letters and printed matter from New Zealand for places in Europe, &c. Further and still more substantial advantages are likely to follow.

The following table shows to what extent the staff of the department has been augmented, and the expenditure on account of salaries increased, compared with the increase of revenue, during the seven years ended 30th June, 1876 :—

Financial Year.	Number of Officers employed.		Expenditure for Salaries.	Revenue Collected within the Colony.	Increase per Cent.	
	On the Permanent Staff.	Non-Permanent.			Salaries.	Revenue.
1868-69	158	326	£ s. d. 24,884 0 0	£ s. d. 45,561 0 2	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. ...
1875-76	270	519	32,135 2 8	80,656 0 9	22 11 3	77 0 6

The total increase in the number of officers is about 72 per cent. The permanent officers increased 71 per cent., those not on the permanent staff, 59 per cent. Of the 789 officers on the strength of the department on the 30th June last, 152 are not in receipt of salary.