

and sale of official publications show a very satisfactory increase, amounting to £2,697 12s., as compared with £1,576 18s. 5d. for the previous year.

The value of articles made or repairs effected by the office engineer, in addition to his other duties, are valued at £155 3s. 6d. This embraces work done for other departments, such as repairing copying-presses, mending date-stampers, and sundry other jobs, which would cost a considerable sum if given out. The stereotyper also contributes his quota in the shape of rubber-stamps, electros, &c., manufactured for other departments, amounting in value to £113 11s. 6d. This work is in addition to his ordinary departmental duties.

The value of the stock and buildings on the 31st December last, after making the usual allowance for depreciation, was £15,537 4s. 3d. Under the head of "Working Expenses," the cost of fuel and gas amounts to £603 7s. 4d. I am in hopes that this amount will be sensibly diminished by the use of steam and electricity for heating and lighting purposes in the new office. The return showing the value of paper, envelopes, and parchment used in the department amounted to £5,743 5s. 3d. The upward tendency of the paper market in England will probably cause this item to assume larger proportions in my next annual statement, unless an appreciable reduction is made in the number of copies now printed of parliamentary papers, Bills, *Gazettes*, &c., and the free issue curtailed. It is noteworthy that the much larger Colony of Victoria issues, as a rule, less than half the number usually printed in this colony.

The return of the number of employés during each month of the year shows an average per month of 145. The highest number employed was 161, and the lowest 129.

The number of vouchers for printing and advertising examined during the year in the Accountant's office was 3,962; the deductions made therefrom, £289 17s. 5d.; and the total amount passed for payment, £14,578 12s. 2d.

#### STEREOTYPE BRANCH.

The number of stereotype plates cast last year was 1,722; of electrotypes, 1,355; and 90lb. of leads of various sizes were cast for office use. The number of rubber-stamps manufactured for Government departments was 341.

Among the electrotypes are included one plate of Samoan postage-stamps; also two plates of New Zealand postage-stamps, each containing 240 stamps; and one plate of post-cards.

The railway-ticket printing executed by this branch during the year was as follows: Railway tickets, 2,422,345; season tickets, 12,642; flag-station tickets, 335,600; luggage tickets, 69,450; parcels tickets, 41,050; weighbridge tickets, 22,800. The printing of the railway tickets required 12,263 separate alterations, being an average of one alteration to every 197 tickets.

#### STATIONERY STORE.

The number of requisitions received and complied with during the nine months ending the 31st December last was 13,265, or at the rate of 45 per day. The number of separate items in the requisitions was 61,042. The quantity of waste-paper shipped was 44 tons, representing in value £110, which was sold to the local paper-mills.

I have, &c.,

GEO. DIDSBURY,  
Government Printer and Stores Manager.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

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