

Destination.	Ordinary.		Press.	
	No. of Messages.	Value.	No. of Messages.	Value.
		£ s. d.		£ s. d.
International	2,930	11,279 10 9	...	...
Victoria	6,629	5,286 12 3	183	95 15 1
South Australia	772	536 15 0	...	...
New South Wales	6,626	4,410 7 3	608	802 8 8
Queensland	785	607 7 8	...	...
Tasmania	738	553 7 1	...	...
Western Australia	208	182 9 6	...	...
Total	18,688	22,856 9 6	791	898 3 9
Total for 1891	19,270	27,626 17 9	837	932 15 8

The employment of women in telephone-exchanges, which has now had an extended trial, has confirmed the opinion that women can satisfactorily overtake the duties. There have been occasional complaints, as might have been expected, but these probably would have been made even had a number of young men been placed in the exchanges under similar conditions. The employment of women as exchange clerks has been limited to the four principal exchanges; but, on the completion of the new offices at Invercargill, women will be appointed to the exchange there.

It is necessary to state that the applications from women for employment are far in excess of possible requirements. No fewer than 484 applications for employment from women have been recorded since the Classification Act of 1890 became law, in addition to numbers disposed of without being recorded; but up to the beginning of last month vacancies could be found for only 79. There is no prospect whatever of employment being found for any but a minimum number of the applicants whose names are now on the books. The exchange staffs are about at their maximum strength, and there are no other openings in the department for women at present.

A contract has been made with a business firm in Wellington for the right to advertise on the backs of postage stamps and telegram forms for a payment of £800 a year. The department had been repeatedly urged to agree to this method of advertising, and eventually decided to give it a trial. The contract, which is for three years, may be terminated by the contractors at the end of twelve months.

The Thames office is now lighted by electricity. The motive power is derived from the county water-race, at a reasonable rate, minimising the annual charge for maintenance. It is intended to light the General Post Office building throughout by electricity during the ensuing year.

Seven officers who attained the age of sixty years were retired on pension. Their pensions aggregate £1,003 per annum.

The work of inspection has been strengthened by the appointment of a Sub-Inspector for the Districts of Auckland and Thames, and another for the Dunedin and Invercargill Districts.

The promotions and transfers, consequent upon the retirements and the appointment of the Sub-Inspectors, involved no less than thirty-six changes—the first series of any importance since the introduction of classification.

A Bill has been introduced into Parliament to amend existing Post Office Acts in the direction of giving power to deal with newspapers, packets, or parcels containing anything of an immoral, indecent, or obscene nature; providing for the introduction of letter-cards; paying compensation, not exceeding £2, for the loss of a registered letter, on production of satisfactory evidence; relieving masters of vessels from personally attending post offices for the purpose of making declarations as to the delivery of mails; for varying the form of postal notes; and for determining that the currency of £1 and £5 postal notes shall not be limited.

POST OFFICE.

The number of letters, post-cards, books and pattern-packets, and newspapers, delivered and posted during the year, compared with the number dealt with in 1891, was as under:—

	1892.	1891.	Increase.
Letters—Delivered	25,079,938	23,867,402	
Posted	25,530,804	23,745,462	
	<u>50,610,742</u>	<u>47,612,864</u>	<u>2,997,878</u>
Post-cards—Delivered	1,224,938	1,097,788	
Posted	1,346,098	1,181,141	
	<u>2,571,036</u>	<u>2,278,929</u>	<u>292,107</u>
Books and Sample-packets—Delivered	6,508,463	3,342,781	
Posted	6,774,924	3,827,980	
	<u>13,283,387</u>	<u>7,170,761</u>	<u>6,112,626</u>
Newspapers—Delivered	9,538,945	9,768,226	
Posted	9,018,620	8,733,686	
	<u>18,557,565</u>	<u>18,501,912</u>	<u>55,653</u>