

The colony's outward international and intercolonial cable business, not including Press, for the years 1898 and 1899 was as follows:—

International,—	Messages. Number.	Value.	
		£	s. d.
1898	9,439	32,527	3 4
1899	10,335	36,881	13 9
Increase	896	4,354	10 5
	or 9·49 per cent.		or 13·89 per cent.

Intercolonial,—	Messages. Number.	Value.	
		£	s. d.
1898	45,703	11,033	19 0
1899	49,722	11,690	18 11
Increase	4,019	656	19 11
	or 8·79 per cent.		or 5·95 per cent.

The total increase in 1899 was therefore 4,915 messages, and £5,011 10s. 4d. in value.

The forwarded and received cable Press business for the past nine years ended 31st December, 1899, has been:—

Year.	Forwarded.			Received.				
	Number of		Value.	Number of		Value.		
	Messages.	Words.		Messages.	Words.			
			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1891	837	45,285	932	15	8	2,828	198,935	2,739 6 0
1892	791	44,263	898	3	9	2,884	197,477	2,796 9 4
1893	796	57,390	504	9	9	2,883	202,170	1,540 17 10
1894	994	103,366	899	4	9	3,033	203,326	1,179 13 7
1895	1,168	68,682	433	13	0	3,926	314,136	1,782 13 5
1896	1,069	92,946	531	4	9	2,946	285,369	1,576 1 3
1897	1,294	128,839	945	4	8	3,665	323,617	1,752 7 5
1898	1,154	133,342	907	7	0	3,599	282,882	1,599 7 0
1899	1,570	182,066	1,800	10	4	3,822	298,218	1,690 12 4

NOTE.—The intercolonial cable Press rate was reduced from 3d. to 1d. per word on the 1st April, 1893.

POST OFFICE.

ARTICLES POSTED AND DELIVERED.

The number of articles posted in the colony, and received from places outside the colony during 1899, as compared with the number in 1898, was as under:—

	1899.	1898.	Increase.
Letters—			
Posted in the colony	35,032,452	32,465,875	
Received from places outside the colony	2,348,219	2,271,441	
	37,380,671	34,737,316	2,643,355
Letter-cards—			
Posted in the colony	1,108,700	917,631	186,069
Post-cards—			
Posted in the colony	1,605,383	1,399,450	
Received from places outside the colony	37,668	80,514	
	1,643,051	1,479,964	163,087
Books and pattern-packets—			
Posted in the colony	16,211,572	14,340,131	
Received from places outside the colony	1,448,286	2,277,970	
	17,659,858	16,618,101	1,041,757
Newspapers—			
Posted in the colony	11,447,657	10,872,459	
Received from places outside the colony	4,269,731	4,223,028	
	15,717,388	15,095,487	621,901
Parcels—			
Posted in the colony	193,143	177,559	
Received from places outside the colony	30,207	27,044	
	223,350	204,603	18,747

The letters increased 7·61; letter-cards, 20·28; post-cards, 11·02; books and pattern-packets, 6·27; newspapers, 4·12; and parcels, 9·16 per cent.

The increase in 1898 was: Letters, 7·64; letter-cards, 21·19; post-cards, 10·30; books and pattern-packets, 13·61; newspapers, 5·85; parcels, 3·57 per cent.

The average number of letters posted per head of population was estimated to be 46·31, or 47·77 including letter-cards. The averages in 1898 were 44·10 and 45·34 respectively