

new fence and repairs, Coromandel; new private letter-boxes, Dunedin; underpinning walls, strong-room, &c., Greymouth; repairing foundation and new floor to operating-room, Gisborne; fittings, alterations, repairs, and additions, Hamilton; painting, Havelock; repairs to floor of upper storey, repapering and distempering quarters, Hawera; new safe, and fitting in safes in concrete, Hokitika; alterations, Kawakawa; fittings, Kohukohu; repairs, Lawrence; fittings and new private letter-boxes, Mangaweka; repairs and new fencing, Mataura; repairs and painting, Mercer; additions, painting, and repairs, Milton; additions and painting, Miranda; repairs, &c., Napier; repairs and painting, Nelson; new fittings, Otahuhu; gas and fittings, Pahiatua; painting, papering, and repairs, Palmerston; alterations to building purchased at Parnell; alterations, repairs, and painting, Port Chalmers; repairs, Raglan; repairs and painting, Riverton; repairs, Rotorua; additions and repairs, Te Aroha; repairs, Thames; additions, Waotu; alterations, drainage, and fittings, Wakapuaka; minor fittings, repairs, and renovations, Wellington; painting, Westport. Minor additions and repairs were made at other offices, and also additions to several railway-stations to provide for post-office business.

The post- and telegraph-office at Hamilton was totally destroyed by fire on the 6th October, while the Postmaster's quarters at Ashburton were partially destroyed through the same cause on the 20th March of this year.

New buildings are to be erected at Ashburton, Caversham, Denniston, Feilding, Gisborne, Hamilton, Inglewood, Karangahake, Levin, New Plymouth, Onehunga, Opunake, Sumner, Temuka, and Wanganui; while alterations and additions are to be made at Clyde, Cromwell, Greymouth, Kaikoura (Postmaster's house), Lyttelton, Nelson, Otahuhu (Postmistress's quarters), and Rotorua.

MONEY-ORDERS.

Nineteen money-order offices were opened during the year—namely, Howick, Karamea, Longburn, Millerton, Motupiko Railway, Ohoka, Opononi, Pahautanui, Pukeuri Junction, Rahotu, Ranfurly, Riwaka, Takapuna, Tauhoa, Tinakori Road, Tokomaru Bay, Tuparoa, Waihopo, and Waione.

Two offices were closed—namely, Omapere and Whananaki.

The number of offices open at the end of the year was 434, as against 417 twelve months previously.

344,664 money-orders were issued for £1,118,808 5s. 7d., as compared with 318,370 for £1,029,241 7s. 7d. in 1898—an increase of 26,294 in number and £89,566 18s. in amount.

244,917 money-orders, amounting to £948,013 3s. 4d., were paid, as against 229,720 for £880,052 13s. 11d. during 1898—an increase of 15,197 orders and £67,960 9s. 5d.

There were 36,933 telegraph money-orders issued for £120,034 3s. 2d., as compared with 35,204 for £114,622 13s. 1d. in 1898—an increase of 1,729 in number and £5,411 10s. 1d. in amount.

123,310 orders for £254,295 0s. 10d. were issued on places beyond New Zealand, as against 112,105 orders for £230,515 11s. 11d. during 1898.

24,023 orders for £85,824 4s. 6d. were issued at places beyond New Zealand for payment in the colony, as compared with 23,424 orders for £80,665 0s. 8d. during the previous year.

The commission received for money-orders amounted to £15,533 4s. 6d., as against £14,795 16s. received during 1898.

A direct exchange of orders between New Zealand and Natal was inaugurated during the year.

A money-order convention between the Cook Islands and this colony has been signed. The exchange will commence from the 1st August. This should prove a boon to the islanders, who are at present heavily mulct for exchange on remittances; and it is to be hoped that it will also have the effect of ousting the depreciated Chilian dollar in favour of sterling money.

POSTAL NOTES.

The following new offices were opened during the year ended 31st March, 1900:—

Awhitu.	Ohoka.	Takapuna.
Frasertown.	Omapere.	Tongaporutu.
Hawea Flat.	Opononi.	Tuparoa.
Howick.	Pahautanui.	Utiku.
Huiakama.	Porootarao.	Waihopo.
Kawhia.	Port Awanui.	Wai-iti.
Longburn.	Pipiriki.	Waione.
Millerton.	Ranfurly.	Wangamomona.
Motupiko Railway.	Riwaka.	

The office at Omapere was closed.

Total opened, 26; 1 closed.

The number of offices at which postal notes were sold at the end of the financial year was 497, as compared with 472 on the 31st March, 1899.

461,447 notes, of the value of £147,686 8s. 6d., were sold, as against 431,449, for £139,957 4s., sold during the previous year.

The postal notes paid numbered 457,767, of the value of £146,778 12s., as compared with 429,193, for £139,476 2s. 6d., paid during 1898-99.

The postal-note commission amounted to £3,054 11s. 5d.

SAVINGS-BANKS.

There were twenty offices opened during the year for the transaction of savings-bank business—namely, Howick, Karamea, Longburn, Millerton, Motupiko Railway, Ohoka, Opononi, Pahautanui, Pohangina, Pukeuri Junction, Rahotu, Ranfurly, Riwaka, Takapuna, Tauhoa, Tinakori Road, Tokomaru Bay, Tuparoa, Waihopo, and Weber.