

Peninsular and Oriental and Orient Lines (Federal Mail-service).

DR.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Payments to P. and O. and Orient lines	5,774	16	4			
Transit charges across Australia	414	12	9			
Transit charges across Europe	666	9	7			
Gratuities (to and from Australia)	2,184	12	4			
				9,040	11	0
CR.						
Postages collected in the colony	5,085	14	4			
Postages from London and foreign offices	1,088	16	8			
				6,174	11	0
Net cost to the colony				£2,866	0	0

The number of letters, post-cards, books, and newspapers conveyed from and to the United Kingdom by the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient packets were: Received—500,382 letters, 6,078 post-cards, 310,093 books, and 1,273,818 newspapers; despatched—209,877 letters, 2,549 post-cards, 56,620 books, and 248,360 newspapers.

The maximum, minimum, and average number of days within which the mails were delivered at and from London and Auckland, Wellington, Dunedin, and Bluff during 1900 by the San Francisco service and by the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient Lines was:—

	San Francisco Service.			P. and O. Line.			Orient Line.		
	Max.	Min.	Average.	Max.	Min.	Average.	Max.	Min.	Average.
London to Auckland	34	31	31·71	45	38	39·38	46	37	39·15
Auckland to London	32	30	30·85	47	38	40·36	44	38	40·74
London to Wellington	35	32	32·86	48	38	40·35	43	38	39·96
Wellington to London	33	31	32·69	49	37	41·20	46	37	42·14
London to Dunedin	37	33	34·07	46	39	41·13	47	39	41·71
Dunedin to London	34	32	33·69	47	38	41·01	47	40	41·89
London to Bluff	38	34	34·82	45	38	40·38	46	38	40·96
Bluff to London	35	33	34·44	46	37	40·26	46	39	41·14

The several subsidised mail sea-services, the subsidy-payments for the year 1900, the dates when established, and the date on which each terminates are shown as follows:—

Service.	Annual Subsidy or Payment.	Duration of Service.		Number of Voyages per Annum.	Mileage for Complete Voyage.	Cost per Mile.
		When established.	When terminated or terminable.			
	£ s. d.					s. d.
Auckland and San Francisco	April, 1871	Not determined ^a	17	11,850	1 6·92
Auckland and Fiji	1,690 0 0	June, 1880	..	13	2,334	1 1·37
Auckland and South Pacific Islands	1,200 0 0	June, 1885	..	12	6,992	0 3·43
Auckland and Devonport	60 0 0	Aug., 1863	Dec., 1902	939	6	0 2·56
Auckland and Great Barrier	250 0 0	Oct., 1891	Dec., 1902	52	120	0 9·62
Dargaville and Tangiteroria	100 0 0	Nov., 1893	Dec., 1902	52	46	0 10·03
Helensville and Matakoho	550 0 0	Jan., 1881	Dec., 1902	52	118	0 5·54
Helensville and Dargaville				104	170	
Horeke, Kohukohu, Rawene, Waitapu, and Opononi	157 0 0	Jan., 1889	Dec., 1902	52	48	1 3·10
Russell and Opuia	90 0 0	Jan., 1889	Dec., 1902	104	16	1 0·98
Whangaroa and Totara North	25 0 0	Jan., 1891	Dec., 1902	52	2	4 9·69
Wellington, Ketu Bay, Homewood, Maori Bay (and other offices), and Havelock	350 0 0	Dec., 1891	Dec., 1902	26	183	1 5·65
Nelson, Motueka, Totaranui, Takaka, and Collingwood	125 0 0	..	Dec., 1902	52	130	0 4·44
Westport and Karamea	400 0 0	June, 1886	Dec., 1902	36	102	1 8·62
Westport and Little Wanganui		Jan., 1895	Dec., 1902	12	82	
Hokitika, Okarito, Bruce Bay, Paringa, Haast, Okura, and Jackson's Bay		600 0 0	Jan., 1886	Dec., 1902	6	
Lyttelton and Chatham Islands (including Pitt's Island)	300 0 0	..	Mar., 1902	6	1,050	0 11·43
Bluff and Half-moon Bay	245 0 0	July, 1886	Dec., 1902	52	48	1 11·56
Bluff, Te Oneroa, and Cromarty	360 0 0	April, 1893	Nov., 1901	12	208	2 10·62
	300 0 0	Nov., 1901	Nov., 1902	12		2 4·85
Interprovincial service in connection with San Francisco line	3,500 0 0 ^b	Nov., 1886	Mar., 1901	13

^a Mails carried at present under arrangement with Oceanic Steam Ship Company of San Francisco on poundage basis. It is expected contract will be made later, when service more settled. Oceanic Company's contract with United States Government is for ten years, from about the end of 1900.

^b Plus one-thirteenth of £500 for each trip on which steamer with inward mails leaves Onehunga on a Tuesday.

BUILDINGS.

Steps for providing better accommodation for the larger chief post-offices have been taken.

The structural alterations and additions at the Auckland Chief Post-office mentioned in last year's report, and now on the point of completion, should afford sufficient accommodation for some years to come, and enable the enormously increased volume of work to be overtaken with greater facility.

At Wellington, where the need for additional space is more urgent than elsewhere, some relief has been given by removing the money-order and savings-bank branch of the office to the premises recently occupied by the Bank of New Zealand in Lambton Quay. This has afforded increased