

POST OFFICE.

ARTICLES POSTED AND DELIVERED.

Although the number of letters handled increased by 12,881,969, letter-cards and post-cards showed a decrease. This, however, was to be expected, as the tendency of the penny post is for many such articles to fall into the letter mails.

The number of articles posted in the colony, and received from places outside the colony, during the year 1901, as compared with the number in 1900, was as under :—

		1901.	1900.	Increase.
Letters—				
Posted in the colony	48,370,816	36,185,045	
Received from places outside the colony	3,173,449	2,477,251	
		51,544,265	38,662,296	12,881,969
Letter-cards—				Decrease.
Posted in the colony	1,023,295	1,236,183	212,888
Post-cards—				
Posted in the colony	1,460,589	1,858,064	
Received from places outside the colony	61,788	50,451	
		1,522,377	1,908,515	386,138
Books and pattern-packets—				
Posted in the colony	16,176,195	16,111,221	Increase.
Received from places outside the colony	2,086,371	1,604,181	
		18,262,566	17,715,402	547,164
Newspapers—				
Posted in the colony	13,858,234	12,347,374	
Received from places outside the colony	5,115,398	4,698,341	
		18,973,632	17,045,715	1,927,917
Parcels—				
Posted in the colony	233,491	199,220	
Received from places outside the colony	39,951	34,236	
		273,442	233,456	39,986

The letters increased 33·32, letter-cards decreased 17·22, post-cards decreased 20·23, books and pattern-packets increased 3·09, newspapers increased 11·31, and parcels increased 17·13 per cent.

In 1900 letters increased 3·43; letter-cards, 12·00; post-cards, 16·16; books and pattern-packets, 0·31; newspapers, 8·45; and parcels, 4·52 per cent.

The average number of letters posted per head of population was estimated to be 62·18, or 63·49 including letter-cards. The averages in 1900 were 47·39, or 49·01 including letter-cards.

The Post Office receipts for the year amounted to £281,096 17s. 3½d.—a net decrease of £35,761 0s. 3½d., or 11·29 per cent.

The expenditure was £253,340 18s. 5d., as against £223,256 15s. 6d.—an increase of £30,084 2s. 11d., or 13·48 per cent. The increase was mainly caused by unusually heavy payments for ocean mails to close the accounts of the expired San Francisco contract, and the new service. The conveyance of inland mails and mails by railway also showed a considerable increase. There was a balance of revenue over expenditure of £27,755 18s. 10½d.

The estimated value of official (free) correspondence was £62,142. The gross earnings of the Post Office for the year were therefore £343,239, and the credit balance £89,898.

WORK PERFORMED FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

Customs duties amounting to £23,671 8s. were collected on articles received through the post from places beyond the colony, and £2,093 6s. 2d. on account of ordinary Customs work.

The sum of £2,509 10s. was collected from the sale of game licenses.

Premiums amounting to £28,726 2s. 4d. were collected from policyholders on behalf of the Government Insurance Department.

£584 4s. 6d. was collected for the Government Printer on the sale of Government publications.

Income-tax amounting to £111,605 12s. 11d., and land-tax for £240,499 15s. 5d., were received at post-offices.

Fees under the Live-stock Acts amounting to £21,143 13s. were collected.

The sum of £4,487 12s. 2d. was received for machinery fees.

The receipts from the sale of miners' licenses amounted to £1,041 17s.

£11,815 was lodged at post-offices for investment in New Zealand Consols.

The receipts on behalf of the Public Trust Office were £381,390 17s. 8d., and payments £381,034 12s. 5d.

Railway receipts for £13,086 10s. 10d. were also accounted for through the Post Office Account.

The fees collected in respect of the registration of births, deaths, and marriages totalled £2,041 8s. 3d.

The Advances to Settlers Office receipts amounted to £563,976 7s. 2d., and payments £564,246 15s. 6d.

Fees, &c., were also collected on account of the Audit Office, water rates, goldfields, County Councils, Clerks of Court, Harbourmasters, Arms Act, fishing licenses, Lunacy Department,