

Books and pattern-packets—			
Posted in the colony .. ..	..	17,976,214	17,613,689
Received from places outside the colony ..	..	2,131,707	1,954,045
		<u>20,107,921</u>	<u>19,567,734</u>
			540,187
Newspapers—			
Posted in the colony .. ..	..	15,404,618	14,107,523
Received from places outside the colony ..	..	6,096,126	5,588,911
		<u>21,500,744</u>	<u>19,696,434</u>
			1,804,310
Parcels—			
Posted in the colony .. ..	..	289,617	267,974
Received from places outside the colony ..	..	67,887	59,655
		<u>357,504</u>	<u>327,629</u>
			29,875

The letters increased 7·61, letter-cards 17·63, post-cards 58·97, books and pattern-packets 2·76, newspapers 9·16, and parcels 9·12 per cent.

In 1903 letters increased 6·74, letter-cards 14·57, post-cards 11·62, books and pattern-packets 5·05, newspapers 6·37, and parcels 12·33 per cent.

The average number of letters posted per head of population was estimated to be 71·76, or 73·4 including letter-cards. The averages in 1903 were 68·94, or 70·38 including letter-cards.

The Post Office receipts for the year amounted to £383,242 11s. 4d., an increase of 11·67 per cent.

The expenditure was £300,943 10s. 8d., an increase of 11·1 per cent.

The balance of postal revenue over expenditure was £82,299 0s. 8d. The estimated value of the free official correspondence of other Government Departments was £83,075 1s. The gross earnings of the Post Office for the year were therefore £466,317 12s. 4d., and the credit balance £165,374 1s. 8d.

WORK PERFORMED FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

Among the many branches of Government work performed by the Department may be mentioned the following:—

Customs duties were collected on parcels and other articles coming through the post from places beyond the colony amounting to £37,209 10s. 8d., and on account of ordinary Customs work £2,212 13s. 7d.

The Advances to Settlers receipts amounted to £447,396 12s. 11d., and payments to £451,799 0s. 4d.

Fishing licenses were issued by Postmasters to the value of £1,566 15s. 6d., and game licenses to the value of £2,263.

For the Government Insurance Department premiums were collected from the public amounting to £27,246 5s. 5d.

Publications sent out by the Government Printer and paid for through the Post Office brought in £831 4s. 3d.

Income-tax amounting to £143,656 5s. 1d., and land-tax £259,839 8s. 9d., were collected by Postmasters.

The sum of £6,387 19s., fees due to the Machinery Department, was received.

Under the Mining Act the receipts were £213 6s.

New Zealand Consols for £1,030 were sold on behalf of the Treasury.

£7,845 19s. 3d. was the amount paid for Official Assignees as dividends in bankrupt estates.

The amount paid to old-age pensioners through the Post Office was £196,322 5s. 4d.

On behalf of the Public Trustee £433,386 2s. 6d. was received, and £438,856 1s. 10d. paid.

Railway revenue amounting to £10,885 13s. was collected by Postmasters.

Fees for the registration of births, deaths, and marriages received by Postmaster-Registrars were £2,249 19s.

Receipts from the Hanmer Springs Sanatorium amounted to £2,217 19s. 1d.

Sheep rates amounting to £19,247, and £24 7s. sundry amounts, were collected for the Stock Department.

On behalf of the Tourist Department £1,502 6s. 1d. was received.

Valuation Department fees paid to Postmasters reached £2,986 4s. 1d.

Claims on the General Government for £683,147 14s. 7d. were paid on behalf of the Treasury.

Discount-stamps numbering 3,220,800, for £3,355, were sold, and 3,024,864, for £3,150 18s., redeemed, during the year.

The amount invested by the general public in Government 4-per-cent. debentures through the medium of the Post Office was £104,800.

GROSS RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS.

The gross amount received by the Department during 1904 was £16,385,474 10s. 8½d., of which £13,998,953 19s. 7½d. was departmental, and £2,386,520 11s. 1d. on account of other Departments.

The gross amount paid out was £16,332,668 18s. 10½d., made up of £13,930,042 8s. 4½d. departmental, and on behalf of other Departments—to individuals £1,777,971 1s. 4d., and to accounts £624,655 9s. 2d.

The total gross receipts and payments were therefore £32,718,143 9s. 7d.