

The maximum, minimum, and average number of days within which the mails were delivered at and from London, and Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, by the Peninsular and Orient and Orient lines is given in Table 15.

INLAND MAIL-SERVICES.

Owing to floods in July, 1911, the mail-services in the Marlborough District were somewhat disorganized.

The s.s. "Jane Douglas," while on a voyage from Wellington to Hokitika, was wrecked on the 14th January, 1912, between Stephen Island and D'Urville Island.

The number of inland mail-services in operation on the 31st December, 1911, was 1,643.

Tenders for mail-services for the triennium 1913-15 will be invited shortly. Special attention is to be paid to the substitution of motor vehicles for coaches where this is likely to be a success, and it is hoped to largely extend the system of rural deliveries.

DEAD AND MISSING LETTERS:

The undermentioned articles of value were found in letters in the Dead Letter Office, and returned to the senders where practicable: 732 post-office orders, £1,945 13s. 5d.; 62 bank drafts, £6,306 5s.; 806 cheques, £7,996 1s.; 24 dividend-warrants, £115 16s. 1d.; 13 promissory notes, £657 1s. 8d.; postal notes, £794 9s. 6d.; British postal orders, £91 11s. 6d.; stamps, £61 3s. 4½d.; bank-notes, £480; gold, £61 10s.; silver and copper, £17 8s. 11½d.: representing a total of £18,527 0s. 6d.

In addition, 7,442 letters intended for "Tattersall's," containing £3,984 11s. 1½d., were received from Hobart as prohibited, and returned to the senders.

Amongst others things dealt with, there were 8 gold watches, 30 gold brooches, 8 gold chains, 15 gold rings, 5 gold tie-pins, 4 gold bangles, 3 sets gold earrings, 3 gold lockets and chains, 1 pair gold sleeve-links, 1 gold-mounted tobacco-pouch, 27 gold and greenstone pendants, 6 gold-mounted greenstone brooches, 2 gold-mounted greenstone watch-chains, 34 silver and metal watches, 3 silver brooches, 2 silver chains, 6 greenstone silver-mounted spoons, 2 greenstone silver-mounted butter-knives, 1 silver-backed hair-brush, 1 silver-backed mirror, 1 silver flask, 1 silver serviette-ring, 1 silver photograph-frame, 1 silver butter-dish, 1 silver sovereign-case, 2 silver cigarette-holders, 3 pieces of electroplate, 1 steamer-ticket, 6 railway tickets, 9 pawn-tickets, 3 share certificates, and 52 lottery tickets.

The proportion of dead or unclaimed letters, letter-cards, and post-cards to the total number delivered within the Dominion was 0.44 per cent.

212,821 letters were opened and returned to writers through the Dead Letter Office; 54,591 were returned unopened to other countries; 526 were reissued; 21,983 were destroyed; 206,147 were returned by Chief Postmasters: a total of 496,068 letters, as compared with 424,339 in 1910.

51,416 other articles were returned to foreign countries; 6,196 were returned to the senders through the Dead Letter Office; 288,275 were returned by Chief Postmasters: a total of 345,887 other articles, as compared with 252,227 in 1910.

12,503 letters were wrongly addressed; 31 letters were discovered to have been posted with previously used stamps; 8,040 unclaimed registered letters were dealt with.

4,887 newspapers and 3,696 books and other articles without addresses were received, many of which were subsequently applied for and delivered.

30,984 newspapers were returned to publishers

3,568 letters and 853 letter-cards were posted without addresses.

125 letters with libellous addresses were intercepted.

4,534 inquiries for postal packets alleged to have been posted and not delivered were made during 1911. In 2,685 of the inquiries—over one-half of the total number—the investigations by the Department resulted in the missing articles being traced or accounted for. These may be summarized as follows:—

Number of Traced Cases.	Result.
784	Sender responsible for delay.
553	Addressee responsible for delay.
238	Post Office responsible for delay.
1,110	No delay, or responsibility not fixed.
<u>2,685</u>	

OFFENCES.

A letter containing £4 in postal notes was delivered to the wrong person, who on opening the letter discovered that a mistake had been made; but instead of returning the letter to the Post Office converted the contents to his own use. He was afterwards arrested for theft, and sentenced to three weeks' imprisonment.

On a charge of the theft of £5 from the post-office, Colac Bay, a man was fined £15 and ordered to refund the amount stolen. The KIWITEA office was entered by a burglar on the 19th January, 1912, and the Postmistress brutally maltreated. Burglars also entered the Manunui Post-office on the 26th April, 1911, and stole £134 4s. 7d.

At Cambridge an officer was sentenced to imprisonment for one month for stealing postal packets; at Gisborne a man was sentenced to three weeks' imprisonment on a charge of obtaining delivery of letters addressed to another person; at Hikurangi, a cadet and a railway porter, charged with opening