

SESSION II.  
1921.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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## PRINTING AND STATIONERY DEPARTMENT

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1921.

*Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.*

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SIR,— Printing and Stationery Department, Wellington, 19th August, 1921.  
I have the honour to submit the annual report upon the working of this Department for the year ended 31st March, 1921.

The tables accompanying the report show the nature, extent, and result of the year's working.  
*Gazette.*—The number printed was 1,270, the number of subscribers 188, and the amount received £556.

*Hansard.*—The number of *Hansards* printed for session 1920 was 4,000, the number of subscribers 144, and the amount received £72.

*Stamp-printing.*—The number of sheets of stamps of various values printed was 1,402,093, the number of stamps 134,773,771, and the value £3,689,913.

*Stereo and Electro Plates.*—The number of stereo-plates cast during the year was 26,955, the weight being 24,549 lb. The number of electrotypes was 4,151, and the weight 1,170 lb.

*Rubber Stamps.*—The number of rubber stamps made was 5,296.

*Railway Tickets.*—10,457,812 railway tickets were printed, the largest number (1,141,009) being printed in November.

*Work of the Year.*—There has been no diminution in the volume of work, the whole staff being kept busy throughout the year. Two staffs are still employed in the Machine Branch, necessitated by the amount of printing going through.

The quantity of pads now being ordered instead of loose forms increases the work of the Binding Branch, and at times overtime is compulsory in this branch to keep level with the demands made upon us. Though the working of extra hours is neither satisfactory nor economical, it is sometimes a necessity. It is, however, avoided wherever possible.

*Paper and Stationery.*—The paper position is now much easier, the large stocks coming to hand from England and Canada enabling us to carry out the requirements of the country free from the anxiety that has been experienced during the past five years. Prices have fallen, and it is anticipated that, though the cost of paper will never come down to that of pre-war days, prices will be much easier than they have been for some years. Owing to the unsettled condition of affairs all over the world, it is, however, still necessary to preserve economy in paper-consumption, and the fact that the market has grown easier should not result in extravagance in the ordering of matter to be printed. The cost of printing is very high at present, and only essential printing should be undertaken.

Stationery is easier, and we have been able to stock a little more liberally, though it is still necessary to cut down requisitions. I have called attention to this over-ordering for some years, but though there has been a slight improvement there is still a lack of the necessary scrutiny by some of the responsible officers of the Departments ordering.

The position has also grown easier in regard to prices and supplies of binding-materials.

*Machinery.*—Since my last report several new machines have been installed, but if all the new work sent in for estimating the cost is to be undertaken, much more machinery will be required. Prices are about 120 per cent. over pre-war days, but it is now easier to obtain machines than has been the case for any time during the past five years. Still more machinery is required, but it will be difficult to place unless structural alterations are made to the building.

A stamp-coiling machine has been installed in the Stamp Branch. This machine is doing good work, the stamp-vending machines throughout the Dominion being supplied with the coils for the use of the public.

The railway-ticket-printing machines, at present under construction by Waterlow and Sons, are expected very shortly, and will be a great improvement on the machines now in use.

In the Binding Branch three very valuable up-to-date machines have been installed—the latest case-making machine, a rounding-and-backing machine, and a cloth-cutting machine. These machines should pay for themselves very quickly.

Four new letterpress-printing machines have been set up in the Machine Branch—one quad-crown and two double-royal Wharfedales, and a Kelly press (a most satisfactory and up-to-date small machine).

The "Reliable" flat-bed litho-printing machine has not yet come to hand, but it is hoped that it will arrive very shortly.