

During 1928 there were dealt with in the Dead Letter Office 5,185 packets (other than parcels) the contents of which gave little or no indication of the senders' names or addresses. In a large number of these cases special effort on the part of the Dead Letter Office was successful in tracing either the senders or the addressees. Four hundred and thirty-four letters from overseas bearing insufficient or wrong addresses were specially dealt with, and in the majority of these cases correct delivery was effected.

An auction of unclaimed packets and parcels was held during the year, at which 159 bundles of miscellaneous articles were sold.

PROHIBITED POSTAL PACKETS.

During the year 644 letters addressed to persons or firms the transmission of correspondence for whom is prohibited under section 32 of the Post and Telegraph Act, 1928, were intercepted and forwarded to the Dead Letter Office. (In 1927 the number was 980.) The letters for the most part were addressed to agents of art unions or lotteries in other countries. Some were addressed to recognized quacks, while others were addressed to persons who deal in obscene books or pictures, or are engaged in fraudulent business.

REGISTER OF NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES.

Sixteen newspapers were registered for transmission by post, and twenty-seven were removed from the register. Six magazines were registered, and eight were removed from the register.

The number of registered newspapers on the 31st March, 1929, was 289, and the number of registered magazines 302.

POSTAGE-STAMPS.

In February, 1928, a new centre-plate was made for the 3d. denomination of the postage-due series of stamps, and stamps printed from the new plate were first issued in the following May. The same design is now in use for the whole series, which comprises the denominations $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d., 2d., and 3d.

Stamp-vending machines continue to render a beneficial service to the public with almost unflinching regularity. During the year four additional machines were installed.

CUSTOMS PARCELS.

The following table shows the declared value of goods received by parcel-post from places abroad and the Customs duty thereon; also the declared value of goods despatched by parcel-post to places abroad. The figures for the years 1928 and 1927 are shown in each case:—

	1928.			1927.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Declared value of received parcels ..	1,523,924	0	0	1,491,441	0	0
Customs duty	351,896	15	4	331,277	8	5
Declared value of forwarded parcels ..	91,651	0	0	88,650	0	0

CUSTOMS EXAMINATION OF POST PARCELS AND PACKETS AT PALMERSTON NORTH.

The Customs Department is about to appoint a Customs officer at Palmerston North for the purpose of assessing Customs duty on post parcels and packets. The assessing of Customs duty at Palmerston North will expedite the delivery of overseas post parcels and packets in Palmerston North and the surrounding district, because it will no longer be necessary for the articles to be held at Wellington until the addressees forward documents for the assessment of Customs duty.

POSTAL NOTES.

The method of remitting small sums to places within the Dominion by means of postal notes continues to be popular, and, although the number of postal notes issued during the year ended the 31st March, 1929, was 38,233 less than in the case of the previous year, the value increased by £42,411. The sales for the year were 3,575,984 postal notes, of a total value of £1,057,624, as against 3,614,217, of a total value of £1,015,213, sold during the previous year.

The commission totalled £24,298 3s. 1d., an increase of £453 12s. 1d. on that for the previous year.

BRITISH POSTAL ORDERS.

British postal-order business shows a slight increase: 155,680 orders, of a value of £87,046 9s. 11d., were sold during the year, as against 153,286 orders, of a value of £86,955 10s. 3d., sold during the previous year. The number of orders paid was 33,652, of a value of £19,904, as against 33,360, of a value of £19,927, paid during the previous year.

HOME SAVINGS-BANK BOXES.

A reduction in manufacturing charges enabled the price of home savings-bank boxes to be reduced from the 1st March, 1929, from 4s. to 2s. 6d. each. The boxes are sold slightly below landed cost, but, having regard to the value of the boxes in the inculcation of the habit of thrift, the slight loss incurred is considered to be justified. Once in a home savings-bank box, money is as good as banked, because the only person who can open the box is an officer of the Post Office Savings-bank.