

1873.
NEW ZEALAND.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING DEPARTMENT.

(REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1873.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.

Government Printing Office,
Wellington, 30th August, 1873.

SIR,—

I have the honor to transmit the Annual Return, showing the quantity and value of work executed at the Printing Office for the several Departments during the past financial year; also, the Balance Sheets for the Printing Office, Binding Branch, and Lithographic Branch; and a Statement showing the value of the Stock on the 30th June last.

With reference to the Return of Work executed, it is necessary I should point out that in the early part of the present year the whole of the plant and material had to be temporarily removed to the rooms vacated by the Audit Department in Molesworth Street, where operations had to be carried on while the additions to the Printing Office were in course of erection.

The Molesworth Street rooms were occupied by the Department for a period extending over three months, and the inconvenience experienced during that time had the effect of somewhat lessening the total value of the work for the year, the amount being £11,593 6s. 9d., as against £12,302 3s. 2d. for the previous year—thus showing a decrease of £708 16s. 5d. The amount paid in wages, however, was less by £317 2s. 8d. than in 1871–72. The drawbacks alluded to above will readily account for the difference in value in the Work Return—the difference in the amount paid in wages being also considered.

This deficiency has, however, been counterbalanced by a large increase in the net receipts of the Department for the past year. On account of sale of public documents, Gazette advertisements, &c., £981 1s. 1d. has been received; and on Land Transfer advertisements (paid through the Land Transfer Department to Public Account), £203 18s. 10d.; showing a net increase in the receipts for the year of £472 9s.

On examination of the amounts charged to the respective Departments on account of work performed, it will be observed that the printing for the General Assembly last year exceeded in value that of the previous year by £758 1s. 3d. The largest increase occurs under the head of "Bills," which are valued at £1,711 11s. 7d., as against £1,183 10s. 2d., thus showing an increase of £528 1s. 5d. during the past year under this head alone.

With reference to Parliamentary printing, I may observe that the plan adopted this Session of dispensing with the fly leaf, or title page, to Parliamentary Papers will effect a considerable saving in the cost of paper, presswork, and binding—an amount, calculated on the basis of last year's Appendices, of fully £440. The number of Parliamentary Papers which the extensive free issue in this Colony renders it necessary to print—a number largely in excess of those printed in the Australian Colonies—adds materially to the cost of printing and binding, and largely increases the consumption of printing paper. In Victoria only 750 copies are printed of all papers presented by command; in New South Wales, 950 copies; while in New Zealand the average for the present year is 1,300 copies.

The Balance Sheet of the Department for the past year will, I trust, be regarded as satisfactory. Notwithstanding the drawbacks we have had to contend with, and the exceptionally heavy charges placed to the debit of the Department on account of additions to buildings, purchase of type and machinery, &c., it still shows a net profit for the year of £1,299 5s. 7d.

Every item which a private printer would take into account when preparing his balance sheet has been carefully noted, while the books kept in the office afford the fullest information as to the details under the several heads of expenditure enumerated. The scale of prices at which the value of work is computed was printed with the report presented last year; and although the Government are paying considerably higher prices to private printers in Wellington for certain descriptions of work, I have not thought it desirable to alter the scale in accordance therewith, as any alteration would render a comparison of the results of our labours between this and previous years impossible.

The Building and Stock Account shows an increased value of £2,784 18s. 5d. Deducting, however, the sum of £627 3s. 7d., which represents the value of the Binding plant and building, the total increase in the value of the Printing Office building and plant is £2,157 14s. 10d. If, therefore, to this amount the net profit for the year is added (£1,299 5s. 7d.), the total amount to the credit of the Department at the close of the financial year would be £3,457 0s. 5d.

The additions and alterations which have been made in the office during the past year consist in the erection of an additional storey on the old building, and the re-arrangement of the rooms on the ground floor. By these means additional accommodation is provided in the composing rooms, reading rooms, machine and press rooms.

The stock has also been considerably augmented by the purchase of machinery and type. The additions to the machinery consist of a double-royal Wharfedale printing machine, and three small treadle machines, varying in size from demy folio to foolscap folio. One of Furnival and Co's. largest