

foolscap-folio, and which represent about 18 tons of type. Each rack is lettered, numbered, and carefully indexed, so that any forme can be handed out at a moment's notice when required.

The paper-cutting room is fitted up with two 42-inch Furnival's "Express" cutting machines, and a smaller one of the same make with 36-inch knife. A grinding-machine is also provided, on which the cutting-machine knives are sharpened for use. A rolling-machine and folding-machine are also fitted up in this room, all driven by steam. The folding-machine is able to fold about 2,000 sheets per hour. The sheets receive two folds while passing through it, and are then deposited in regular order in a receptacle beneath the machine. It is found very convenient for folding *Hansards*, Parliamentary Papers, &c., during the session.

The binding-rooms are situated upstairs, and comprise four work-rooms, two store-rooms, and a quire-room. Two of the work-rooms are allotted to the young women, of whom about eighteen are generally employed in folding, sewing, gathering, and collating books and sheets. They are kept separate from the workmen, are provided with a private entrance to the building, and are under the superintendence of a forewoman. The quantity of work executed in the binding branch is considerable, and represented in value £6,555 10s. 5d. for the year 1880. All the costly-bound account-books, registers, record-books, &c., for the various departments are executed here, many of which were formerly imported from England. The specimens of bookbinding forwarded to the Sydney Exhibition were highly eulogized in a report on the bookbinding exhibits. Referring to the New Zealand Court, the report states that "Perhaps the finest collection of colonial bookbinding is that of Mr. G. Didsbury, of Wellington. This includes eleven volumes of the Transactions of the New Zealand Institute, plainly but tastefully bound; a large ledger, bound in russia under bands; a journal, bound in green vellum with single russia bands; and a cash-book, bound in full rough calf with double russia bands. Although these fail to rival the magnificent display of commercial bookbinding belonging to Messrs. Waterlow and Sons, in the British Court, they approach so closely in many respects that the time cannot be far distant when the skill of the English handicraftsman will be found more than rivalled by the colonial workman."

A considerable annual saving has been effected by reducing the number of bound volumes of the Journals, Appendix, *Hansard*, and other books, while a judicious discrimination is now being exercised over the number of Parliamentary Papers printed—some of which might very well be cut down by many hundreds of copies, and the cost of paper and binding saved.

In the stereotype and electrotype branch, the work of manufacturing a new set of duty-stamps was completed towards the close of last year. The set comprised 43 stamps of different denominations, ranging from 4d. to £20. Sixty of each kind were electrotyped, making a total of 2,580 stamps. The work is entirely of local production, the engraving having been executed by Mr. Bock, of this city, and the moulding and electrotyping by Mr. Kirk, of this department. A very considerable saving in cost has been thus effected when compared with the amount paid for the postage-stamp plates procured from Messrs. De La Rue and Co., of London, some years ago.

The printing and issuing of railway tickets for all the lines in the colony is also performed in this branch, under the superintendence of the stereotyper. The number of stations for which tickets are printed is 432, and the number of tickets printed and issued during 1880 was 1,773,800.

Among the returns appended to this report is one showing the number of vouchers for printing and advertising which have been submitted to this department for examination, together with the amount of deductions made therefrom for a period of two years, commencing from the 1st May, 1879. The work of checking these accounts, formerly undertaken by myself, is now performed by the book-keeper, Mr. S. Costall, who submits for my approval any deductions he may make before the vouchers are returned to the departments. Prior to the 1st May, 1879, no record was kept of vouchers examined, but the amount of deductions annually made was considerable. During the last two years no less than 8,291 accounts were examined, and deductions made to the amount of £517 2s. 10d., giving an average of nearly 1s. 3d. off each account.

The balance-sheet of the department for the year 1880, with tables showing the quantity and value of printing and binding performed for each department during the year, and the quantity and value of paper consumed, will be found appended.

The total value of printing and binding performed each year since the last printing returns were issued is as follows:—

	Printing.			Binding.			Total.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1876	15,440	17	0	3,039	16	10	18,480	13	10
1877	19,555	15	11	7,566	8	10	27,122	4	9
1878	16,197	8	10	5,835	11	6	22,033	0	4
1879	19,646	13	5	7,179	6	11	26,826	0	4
1880	18,959	13	0	6,620	10	5	25,580	3	5

New Zealand productions and manufactures have been gradually introduced when practicable, and I am glad to be able to report that in some respects they are superior to the imported articles previously used. The following, among others, have recently been brought into use: Grey coal instead of Newcastle consumption about 130 tons per annum; Wellington-made candles (about 100 boxes per annum), for issue from Stationery Store; Canterbury twine (about three hundred pounds' worth annually); Porirua glue (about half a ton annually); printers' lye-brushes, scrubbing-brushes, and brooms from Lower Hutt Brushware Factory; Wellington trotter-oil supersedes the English neatsfoot and salad oil. Arrangements are also being made for procuring our supplies of parchment (of which about five hundred pounds' worth is annually imported) from a Blenheim manufacturer, who has recently started this branch of industry. The samples submitted by him are quite equal to the English-made parchment, and the price is reasonable. Totara timber has recently been brought into use for blocks for mounting stereo-plates, for which we have hitherto imported Sydney cedar. Several descriptions of printing material and tools required by the department are now manufactured on the premises by the engineer, such as broad brass-bottomed galleys, column galleys, brass-tipped shooting-sticks, and compositors' nippers. In the manufacture of galleys New Zealand totara is found quite equal to the cedar generally used in England for that purpose. The manufacture of envelopes, of