

Electrotyped stamps for cancelling purposes have also been supplied to all the Law Courts, Wardens' Courts, and District Land Registrars throughout the colony. These were at first proposed to be cut in steel, with movable dates similar to those used in the Post Offices; but the expense attending their manufacture was so great, and the time allowed for their execution so limited, that resort was eventually had to the stereotype process, by which 229 of these stamps were manufactured within the time allowed, at a cost of not more than one shilling each.

The usefulness of this branch is year by year becoming more manifest, and I must in justice add that this is largely due to the intelligence and ability of the stereotyper (Mr. Kirk).

The railway-tickets for the whole colony are printed and issued under the supervision of the stereotyper. The tickets are printed by Waterlow's inimitable machines, three of which are in use, and the operation of counting the tickets before issue is also performed by machinery, hence mistakes are of rare occurrence. Another machine is brought into requisition to chop up the "used" tickets into small pieces when returned, after which they are packed up with the waste-paper and sold to the mills. The number of different stations required to be provided with tickets is 470, and the total number of tickets issued during the year was 1,521,135.

STATIONERY STORE BRANCH.

The work carried on in the store during the past year appears to have given general satisfaction, and complaints arising through non-delivery of stores are now seldom heard of. The number of requisitions received during the past two years were as follows: In 1880, 8,570 requisitions, containing 36,118 items, or 4.21 in each; in 1881, 7,209 requisitions, containing 45,370 items, or 6.03 in each.

The annual order for stationery is sent to the Agent-General, who calls for tenders in England for the supplies. The value of the order sent in 1880 was £7,883; in 1881, £8,095. The expenditure in the colony in the purchase of stationery during the last year has been small compared with former years, and amounted to £384, as against £881 during the year 1880.

The receipts from sale of publications show an increase of £108 4s. over those of the previous year, and amounted to £1,385 12s.

The waste-paper exported during the year shows a decrease of 12 tons, which may, I presume, be regarded as satisfactory. The use of cancelled forms for many purposes instead of clean paper has had an appreciable effect in bringing about this result. During 1881, 43 tons of waste-paper were shipped from Wellington, 21 of which were sent to England, and 22 disposed of to paper-mills within the colony. The amount shipped from Wellington in 1880 was 55 tons.

I have, &c.,

GEO. DIDSBURY,
Government Printer.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.