

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

PRINTING AND STATIONERY DEPARTMENT

(ANNUAL REPORT ON).

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

SIR,—

Government Printing Department,
Wellington, 25th June, 1886.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the operations of the Printing and Stationery Department for the year 1885 :—

DEPARTMENTAL RETURNS.

The usual balance-sheet and departmental returns for 1885 have been prepared and will be found appended to this report. I am glad to be able to show a profit to credit of colony of £6,788 10s. 4d., notwithstanding the fact that during the past year a large portion of the work, such as the reprint of *Hansard*, was of an exceptionally solid and unremunerative character.

The return of the number of employés during each month of the year shows a more equable result as compared with former years. The difference between the minimum and maximum number was 38, while in the previous year it was 54. The monthly average was 137, as against 129 for the previous year.

MACHINERY, ETC.

During the past year steps have been taken to replace some of the machines in use by others of a more modern type and likely to prove more suitable to our requirements. The large four-feeder machine has been disposed of at a satisfactory advance on the price originally paid for it, and, on the arrival of the new machines ordered, I propose disposing of two others, one of which has been in constant use for the last twenty years. These old machines have recently undergone some costly repairs, but I consider it inadvisable to continue expending money upon them as the amount could be much more satisfactorily invested in the purchase of new machinery. The machines under order are being obtained from Messrs. Dawson and Son, London, and may be expected to arrive in Wellington by the next direct steamer. The order comprises two double-royal, one double-demy, and one demy Wharfedale printing machines; one foolscap folio Arab platen machine, and one of Dawson's self-clamp cutting machines.

Additional ruling and wire book-sewing machines and hydraulic presses are wanted for the binding-room, but cannot be obtained until accommodation is provided for them in the new office.

HANSARD.

The number of subscribers during 1885 was 720, being less by about one-half than that for 1884. As I have previously pointed out, the large free issue made by members, and to all newspapers, public libraries, and local bodies, deters many from subscribing who would otherwise pay the small fee demanded.

Steady progress has been made in the printing of the early debates from 1854 to 1866, which are reprinted from the newspaper reports of the period. The debates will occupy five volumes in all, four of which are printed, containing the proceedings up to the end of 1863. The last volume will embrace the years 1864–66, and will, I trust, be ready for issue during next recess.