

nection with the through trains at New Plymouth. The increased frequency has not only enabled a greater number of through mails to be exchanged between Auckland and Wellington than formerly, but has materially added to the postal facilities of places on the line of railway.

The number of contracts for inland mails in operation in 1898 was 755, as compared with 750 in 1897. There are, in addition, 308 services not under bond.

The length of inland postal routes by road (counted one way only) was 9,457, and the total number of miles travelled 2,168,451, at an average cost of 3·26d. per mile. In 1897 the respective mileages were 9,112 and 2,049,001, and the average cost 3·35d. per mile.

Ordinary trains with mails travelled 2,618,051 miles.

The estimated sum payable to the Railway Department for the conveyance of mails by ordinary trains was £30,129, being an average of 2·76d. per mile.

The following services were established during the year :—

Auckland—

As required : Okupu Post-office and vessels in harbour.

Twice daily : Cambridge—Cambridge West.

Daily : Auckland—Epsom, to serve Epsom (R.O.) ; Frankton Junction—Hamilton (extra service), daily throughout the year, and, in addition, twice weekly during the summer months.

Twice weekly : Te Aroha—Manawaru.

Weekly : Huntly—Pukemiro ; Kawakawa—Ohaeawai—Ngawha ; Kaikohe (giving twice-weekly mail) ; Raglan Road—Te Mata ; Ruakaka—Mangapai (giving Mangapai twice-weekly mail) ; Russell—Pururua ; Tauhoa—Port Albert (giving Port Albert twice-weekly mail) ; Whangamata—Wharekawa.

Blenheim—

Twice weekly : Blenheim—Renwicktown—Kaituna.

Christchurch—

As required : Little Akaloa Post-office and Wharf.

Daily : Barrhill—Highbank.

Thrice weekly : Loburn—Okuku.

Dunedin—

As required : Hyde Post-office and Railway-station.

Daily : Allanton—Momona ; North Taieri Post-office and Railway-station (re-established) ; Wylie's Crossing Post-office and North Taieri Railway-station.

Thrice weekly : Henley Railway-station—Henley West.

Twice weekly : Dunback—Stoneburn ; Milton—Table Hill.

Weekly : Pembroke—Maungawera.

Greymouth—

As required : Ahaura Post-office—Railway-station.

Hokitika—

Weekly : The Forks—Waiho Gorge.

Invercargill—

Twice daily : Middlevale Post-office—Railway-station.

Daily : Gore—Waikaka Valley—Waikaka.

Thrice weekly : Makarewa Post-office—Railway-station ; Waianiwa—Spar Bush ; Waikaka—Wendon Valley.

Napier—

Twice weekly : Mangatoro Valley and Mangatoro Station (junction on Dannevirke-Weber Road), while Dannevirke—Weber coach runs so, otherwise once weekly.

Nelson—

Weekly : Whangamoa—Croixelles.

New Plymouth—

Weekly : Awakino—Mahoenui.

Thames—

As required : Ohiwa—Opotiki ; Opotiki Post-office and Wharf.

Daily : Paeroa—Karangahake—Waikino—Waihi (one way only ; additional service).

Twice weekly : Hikutaia—Maratoto ; Tapu—Waipatukahu.

Monthly : Tauranga—Motiti.

Timaru—

Thrice weekly : Albury—Tengawai.

Weekly : Lake Tekapo—Tasman Downs Homestead (not a post-office).

Wanganui—

Daily : Wanganui—Rakautaua.

Twice weekly : Punihu Stream—Opunake.

Weekly : Mangaonoho—Ohingaiti—Mangaweka—Utiku—Taihape—Te Horo—Moawhango (separate service, giving twice-weekly mail during winter) ; Pukeroa—Pohonui ; Taihape—Sommerville.

Wellington—

As required : Petone Post-office and Railway-station.

Twice daily : Wellington—Seatoun.

Daily : Matarawa Post-office and Railway-station ; Wellington—Worser Bay.

Thrice weekly : Hutt—Muritai.

Twice weekly : Mauriceville—Tikitapu—Ditton (not a post-office) ; Pohangina—Awahou ; Post-office—Cunningham's and junction Main Road.

Weekly : Brancepeth—Stronvar ; Pongaroa—Mangatiti.