

500,847 letters, 7,741 post-cards, 535,402 books, and 1,140,552 newspapers were received from, and 473,741 letters, 7,322 post-cards, 113,960 books, and 396,650 newspapers despatched to, the United Kingdom *via* San Francisco.

The average time within which mails were delivered by the San Francisco service was: From Auckland to London, 31·77 days, as against 32·54 days in 1897; and from London to Auckland, 31·92 days, as compared with 32·62 days in the previous year. The shortest delivery was made in 30 days.

| <i>Vancouver Mail-service.</i>            |                    |     |             |    |    |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----|-------------|----|----|
| DR.                                       |                    |     | £           | s. | d. |
| Payments by weight—                       |                    |     | £           | s. | d. |
| Payments by New Zealand*                  | ...                | ... | 7,500       | 0  | 0  |
| Interprovincial service, mail agents, &c. | ...                | ... | 3,651       | 10 | 1  |
| Transit costs across                      | { Canada           | ... | 468         | 13 | 4  |
|                                           | { United States... | ... | 431         | 14 | 5  |
|                                           | { Atlantic         | ... | 969         | 8  | 7  |
|                                           |                    |     | 13,021 6 5  |    |    |
| CR.                                       |                    |     | £           | s. | d. |
| Postages collected in the colony          | ...                | ... | 5,226       | 9  | 0  |
| Penalties                                 | ...                | ... | 1,048       | 0  | 0  |
|                                           |                    |     | 6,274 9 0   |    |    |
| Net cost to the colony                    |                    |     | £6,746 17 5 |    |    |

401,539 letters, 6,205 post-cards, 468,391 books, and 997,800 newspapers were received from, and 243,495 letters, 3,763 post-cards, 62,183 books, and 192,395 newspapers despatched to, the United Kingdom *via* Vancouver.

*Peninsular and Oriental and Orient Lines (Federal Mail-service).*

| DR.                                      |     |     | £          | s. | d. |
|------------------------------------------|-----|-----|------------|----|----|
| Payments to P. and O. and Orient lines   |     |     | £          | s. | d. |
| Payments to P. and O. and Orient lines   | ... | ... | 1,476      | 16 | 2  |
| Transit charges across Australia         | ... | ... | 68         | 11 | 4  |
| Transit charges across Europe            | ... | ... | 138        | 18 | 11 |
| Gratuities (to and from Australia)       | ... | ... | 635        | 6  | 9  |
|                                          |     |     | 2,319 13 2 |    |    |
| CR.                                      |     |     | £          | s. | d. |
| Postages collected in the colony         | ... | ... | 1,281      | 0  | 0  |
| Postages from London and foreign offices | ... | ... | 293        | 10 | 9  |
|                                          |     |     | 1,574 10 9 |    |    |
| Net cost to the colony                   |     |     | £745 2 5   |    |    |

The numbers of letters, post-cards, books, and newspapers conveyed from and to the United Kingdom by the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient packets were: Received—120,208 letters, 1,858 post-cards, 44,516 books, and 179,334 newspapers; despatched—53,758 letters, 831 post-cards, 7,152 books, and 19,242 newspapers.

The maximum, minimum, and average number of days within which the mails were delivered at and from London and Auckland, Wellington, Dunedin, and Bluff during 1898 by the San Francisco and Vancouver contract services, and by the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient lines, was:—

|                         | San Francisco Service. |      |          |    | Vancouver Service. |      |          |    | P. and O. Line. |      |          |    | Orient Line. |      |          |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------|----------|----|--------------------|------|----------|----|-----------------|------|----------|----|--------------|------|----------|
|                         | Max.                   | Min. | Average. |    | Max.               | Min. | Average. |    | Max.            | Min. | Average. |    | Max.         | Min. | Average. |
| London to Auckland ..   | 33                     | 31   | 31·92    | .. | 42                 | 36   | 38·00    | .. | 39              | 38   | 38·15    | .. | 46           | 38   | 39·96    |
| Auckland to London ..   | 34                     | 30   | 31·77    | .. | 40                 | 37   | 39·00    | .. | 42              | 37   | 40·56    | .. | 45           | 37   | 40·40    |
| London to Wellington .. | 34                     | 32   | 33·08    | .. | 40                 | 35   | 36·54    | .. | 41              | 36   | 39·00    | .. | 44           | 38   | 40·27    |
| Wellington to London .. | 35                     | 31   | 32·77    | .. | 38                 | 34   | 36·31    | .. | 44              | 38   | 41·83    | .. | 46           | 38   | 41·70    |
| London to Dunedin ..    | 36                     | 33   | 34·54    | .. | 41                 | 36   | 37·85    | .. | 46              | 39   | 40·87    | .. | 47           | 38   | 40·87    |
| Dunedin to London ..    | 37                     | 33   | 34·77    | .. | 39                 | 35   | 37·62    | .. | 45              | 36   | 41·20    | .. | 46           | 38   | 41·36    |
| London to Bluff ..      | 37                     | 34   | 35·29    | .. | 42                 | 37   | 38·60    | .. | 45              | 38   | 40·12    | .. | 46           | 37   | 40·12    |
| Bluff to London ..      | 38                     | 34   | 35·52    | .. | 40                 | 36   | 38·37    | .. | 44              | 35   | 40·45    | .. | 45           | 37   | 40·61    |

The several subsidised mail sea-services, the subsidy-payments for the year 1898, the dates when established, and the date on which each terminates are shown as follows:—

\* Minimum payment under contract; at poundage rates the amount would have been £5,167 7s. 1d.