

The names of 14 offices were changed to meet altered circumstances or to agree more nearly with local designations.

The number of articles delivered in the Dominion, including those received from places beyond, during the year 1912, as compared with the number in 1911, was as under :—

	1912.	1911.	Increase.	Decrease.
Letters and letter-cards..	108,143,256	106,143,040	2,000,216	..
Post-cards	6,058,962	6,829,563	..	770,601
Other articles	54,068,196	53,555,632	512,564	..
	168,270,414	166,528,235	2,512,780	..
Parcels	1,735,567	1,714,369	21,198	..

The letters and letter-cards increased 1·88, post-cards decreased 11·28, other articles increased 0·96, and parcels 1·24 per cent. The decrease in the number of post-cards may be accounted for by the continued decline in popularity of the pictorial post-card.

In 1911 letters and letter-cards increased 5·80, post-cards decreased 13·50, other articles increased 6·47 per cent.

The average number of letters and letter-cards posted per head of population was estimated at 102·06. The average in 1911 was 97·85.

The correspondence of 36 persons or firms was prohibited transmission under section 28 of the Post and Telegraph Act, 1908. Money-orders may not be issued in favour of such persons or firms. Letters addressed to prohibited persons or firms withheld from delivery during the year numbered 1,527. Prohibition was withdrawn in respect of five persons or firms.

Nineteen newspapers were registered for transmission by post, and 21 were removed from the register.

The declared value of parcels received from places outside the Dominion in 1912 was £435,594, as against £374,294 in 1911. The Customs duty collected amounted to £74,170 8s. 7d.

The declared value of parcels despatched to places beyond the Dominion was £39,432, as against £39,521 in 1911.

Six new letter-carriers' deliveries were established. Deliveries were extended in 43 and increased in frequency in 6 places.

As from the 1st January, 1913, undeliverable inland printed matter prepaid $\frac{1}{2}$ d., bearing a request for its return to the sender, is returned and charged $\frac{1}{2}$ d. postage. Undeliverable printed matter prepaid $\frac{1}{2}$ d. posted outside the Dominion and bearing a request for its return to an address in New Zealand is similarly disposed of and surcharged.

The Secretary of the General Post Office, London, was informed on the 26th May, 1913, that this Dominion would support the scheme to be advocated by the Imperial Postmaster-General at the next Postal Union Congress for raising the limit of weight for "printed papers" from 2 to 3 kilogrammes in the case of packets containing literature for the blind, and for fixing the postage at ordinary rates up to 500 grammes, and above that weight at 50 centimes irrespective of weight.

During the past year 16 automatic stamp-vending machines have been installed.

A machine designed to register letters automatically at any hour was installed at Christchurch on the 23rd September, 1912.

While being date-stamped in the Auckland Chief Post-office on the 25th July, 1912, a packet broke open, and was found to contain bank-notes to the value of £200, wrapped in brown paper, unsealed and unfastened.

POSTAGE-STAMPS.

2,400 halfpenny stamps overprinted "Victoria Land" in black type across the upper half of the stamps were issued to the late Captain R. F. Scott, C.V.O., R.N., leader of the British Antarctic Expedition, as Postmaster of Victoria Land.

Special stamps for the use of the Government Life Insurance Department were reintroduced from the 1st January, 1913. The denominations are $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d., 2d., 3d., and 6d.

Designs for the King George postage-stamps have been prepared, and sent to London for the engraving of dies. The following are the denominations proposed to be issued: $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 2d., 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 3d., 4d., 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 6d., 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 9d., and 1s. The design of the penny stamp will not be changed. It is expected that the new issue will be ready for sale towards the end of the year.

The following postage, postage-due, and duty stamps, and postal stationery will be demonetized as from the 31st December, 1913, but may be exchanged at any post-office for stamps or stamped material to an equal value, up to the 31st December, 1914: All postage and revenue stamps bearing a portrait of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria; all envelopes embossed with postage duty of 1d. and 2d., and bearing Her late Majesty's portrait; all registered-letter envelopes, excepting the small size, imprinted with registration duty of 3d. and bearing Her late Majesty's portrait; all post-cards, letter-cards, and newspaper-wrappers bearing Her late Majesty's portrait; all stamps of the Christchurch Exhibition commemorative series; all the first issue of postage-due stamps, $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d., and 2d., having only the denomination printed in red; all Law Court fee stamps of whatever denomination bearing the words "Law Courts, New Zealand"; all Land and Deeds fee stamps of whatever denomination bearing the words "Land and Deeds Stamp, New Zealand."

The issue of reply-paid post-cards ceased from the 8th October, 1912, there having been practically no demand for them.