

nuggets, 48 greenstone ornaments, 17 silver watches, 6 silver chains, 10 silver spoons, 55 metal watches, 2 tourist tickets, 2 railway tickets, 17 pawn tickets, 33 share certificates, 52 lottery tickets, 73 Tattersall tickets.

The proportion of dead or unclaimed letters, letter-cards, and post-cards to the total number delivered within the Dominion was 0·47 per cent., as against 0·49 per cent. in 1912.

225,719 letters were opened and returned to writers through the Dead Letter Office; 62,301 were returned unopened to other countries; 322 were reissued; 36,448 were destroyed; 242,535 were returned by Chief Postmasters: a total of 567,325 letters, as compared with 562,761 in 1912.

45,020 other articles were returned to foreign countries; 4,812 were returned to senders through the Dead Letter Office; 202,758 were returned by Chief Postmasters: a total of 252,590 articles, as compared with 370,698 in 1912.

23,326 letters were wrongly addressed; 39 letters were discovered to have been posted with previously used stamps; 6,874 unclaimed registered letters were dealt with.

5,056 newspapers and 3,495 books and other articles without addresses were received, many of which were subsequently applied for and delivered.

25,100 newspapers were returned to publishers; 2,576 letters and 1,234 letter-cards were posted without addresses.

Fifty letters with libellous addresses were intercepted.

#### OFFENCES.

The post-office at Whakamatau was broken into and over £257 in cash and £4 15s. in stamps, together with four registered letters, were abstracted from a safe. The offenders were not traced.

Burglaries took place at five other offices. In one instance the contents of five mail-bags were interfered with.

Three posting-boxes were feloniously broken open and the contents abstracted.

The following penalties were imposed:—

For posting indecent prints, £20 and costs.

For forging and uttering, three months' imprisonment.

For obtaining money-orders by valueless cheques, conviction and admission to probation for two years.

For inducing by false pretences to deliver a postal packet, a fine of £3, and £1 8s. costs.

For unlawfully opening a registered letter, conviction.

For affixing in prepayment of postage a previously used stamp, conviction.

A firm complained of the theft of correspondence from its private box, but investigation disclosed that the thefts were committed by the firm's employee.

For endeavouring to corrupt telegraph message-boys, a man was sentenced to four years' reformatory treatment.

#### BUILDINGS.

The following offices were officially opened: Halcombe, North-east Valley, Ohaupo, Roxburgh, Te Awamutu, Tirau, and Tuakau.

The following offices were transferred to departmental new buildings: Awanui, Brooklyn, Clareville, Kaikohe, Kaitaia, Marokopa, Opotiki, Papakura, Roxburgh, Seatoun, Tokaanu, and Waiuku. In addition to these, buildings were erected at Halcombe, Hikurangi (telephone exchange), Hinuera (sledge office), Kaitieke (sledge office), North-east Valley, Ohaupo, Oterangi Bay (cable hut), Tauranga (lineman's shed), Tirau, Tuakau, and Wellington (bulk store).

Contracts have been let for buildings at Akaroa, Dargaville, Havelock North, Raetihi, Raglan, Reefton, and Seddon.

Buildings are in course of erection at Raetihi, Raglan, Reefton, Rotorua, and Waipukurau.

Sites have been purchased at Buckland, Clareville, Claudelands, Edendale, Gore (storage-yard), Hororata, Invercargill (store), Lumsden, Mangatoki, Maori Hill, Matakana, Matangi, Motueka (for Postmaster's residence), Northcote, Okaramio, Piopio, Te Horo, Waitoa, Walton, Ward, Whatawhata, and Woodend.

The island of Aitutaki was devastated by a hurricane which struck it at about midnight on the 9th January, 1914. The building in which the post-office was situated was destroyed, only the four walls remaining standing. No letters and no books or papers of value were lost. The business of the office was transferred to a room in the Postmaster's residence.

#### MONEY-ORDERS.

During the year there were 33 money-order offices opened and 11 closed, the number remaining open at the end of the year being 764.

690,745 money-orders were issued, for £3,357,774, as compared with 666,425, for £3,231,349, for the previous year—an increase of 24,320 in number and £126,424 in amount.

560,946 money-orders, amounting to £3,003,400, were paid, as against 536,130, for £2,870,523, during 1912—an increase of 24,816 orders and £132,877 in amount.

174,209 orders, for £536,151, were drawn for payment in places beyond New Zealand.

44,143 orders, for £180,571, were issued at offices abroad for payment in New Zealand.

The commission received for money-orders amounted to £16,872, as against £16,399 for 1912, an increase of £474.

#### POSTAL NOTES.

Forty-one offices were opened and 8 closed, leaving 944 postal-note offices at the end of the year.

2,238,842 notes, representing a value of £721,743, were sold, as against 1,970,643 notes, for £636,473, sold during the previous year—an increase of 13·61 per cent. in number and 13·39 per cent. in value.