

EXPENDITURE.

The regular expenditure of the Department has been seriously increased by the abnormal rise in the prices of material which is absolutely necessary for the upkeep of its telegraph and other business. The price of iron wire has gone up some 260 per cent.; of insulators, 75 per cent.; battery zincs, 160 per cent.; soldering preparations, 300 per cent.; lead seals, 88 per cent.; checking and copying pencils, about 200 per cent.; the cheaper qualities of paper, from 200 to 300 per cent.; canvas for mail-bags, according to quality, from 91 to 173 per cent.; twine, 90 per cent.; and stationery generally, about 40 per cent. These are simply quoted as leading examples, and will give some idea as to how the increased expenditure has arisen.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS.

The receipts and payments of the Department for the financial year 1916-17 are shown in the following table:—

Item.	Postal.		Telegraph.		Total.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
<i>Receipts.</i>						
Postages	913,458	9 8½	..	..	913,458	9 8½
Money-order and postal-note commission	27,168	4 9½	..	..	27,168	4 9½
Money-order commission received from foreign offices	819	8 7	..	..	819	8 7
Private box and bag rents	15,985	7 4	..	..	15,985	7 4
Miscellaneous receipts	7,361	12 9½	113,395	0 5	120,756	13 2½
Paid telegrams	..	..	413,853	12 0	413,853	12 0
Telephone exchanges	..	..	317,275	4 9	317,275	4 9
Totals	964,793	3 2½	844,523	17 2	1,809,317	0 4½
<i>Payments.</i>						
Salaries (classified officers)	293,537	7 6	403,794	5 9	697,331	13 3
Salaries (country Postmasters and telephonists, and contributions to Railway Department)	21,570	0 0	40,530	0 0	62,100	0 0
Conveyance of mails by sea	68,786	8 1	..	..	68,786	8 1
Conveyance of inland mails	103,827	12 8	..	..	103,827	12 8
Conveyance of mails by railway	72,101	0 6	..	..	72,101	0 6
Money-order commission credited to foreign offices	2,319	7 2	..	..	2,319	7 2
Maintenance of telegraph and telephone lines	..	..	108,173	10 5	108,173	10 5
Miscellaneous	127,450	10 9	128,719	13 4	256,170	4 1
	689,592	6 8	681,217	9 6	1,370,809	16 2
Balance of receipts over payments	275,200	16 6½	163,306	7 8	438,507	4 2½
Totals	964,793	3 2½	844,523	17 2	1,809,317	0 4½

The total receipts exceeded those of 1915-16 by £113,560 3s. 4½d

The receipts and payments for the ten years ended 31st March, 1917, and for the years 1881-82, 1891-92, and 1901-2, are shown hereunder:—

Year.	Receipts.	Payments.	Balance of Receipts over Payments.
	£	£	£
1881-1882	234,529	233,291	1,238
1891-1892	320,058	268,343	51,715
1901-1902	488,573	465,756	22,817
1907-1908	822,639	709,024	113,615
1908-1909	913,994	807,652	106,342
1909-1910	961,500	858,059	103,441
1910-1911	1,037,265	914,069	123,196
1911-1912	1,087,710	988,911	98,799
1912-1913	1,167,826	1,069,272	98,554
1913-1914	1,269,921	1,173,314	96,607
1914-1915	1,359,059	1,246,850	112,209
1915-1916	1,695,757	1,296,522	399,235
1916-1917	1,809,317	1,370,810	438,507
Total for ten years	12,124,988	10,434,483	1,690,505