

1917.
NEW ZEALAND.

PRINTING AND STATIONERY DEPARTMENT

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1917.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

SIR,—

Printing and Stationery Department, Wellington, 9th June, 1917.

I have the honour to submit the annual report upon the working of this Department for the year ended 31st March, 1917.

The tables accompanying the report show the nature, extent, and result of the year's operations.

By the balance-sheet it will be seen that the profits upon the year's transactions have been £6,992 0s. 2d., after allowing for depreciation on plant and buildings (£2,625 0s. 3d.).

Hansard.—The number of copies printed during the session 1916 was 8,250, the number of subscribers 142, and the amount received £31 6s.

Gazette.—The number printed was 1,690, the number of subscribers 195, and the amount received £309 15s. The amount received in payment of advertisements was £631 9s. 3d.

Stamp-printing.—The number of sheets of stamps of various values printed was 1,362,722, the number of stamps 193,723,306, and the value of these stamps £1,892,673 3s. 1d. The number and value include impressed stamps.

Stereo and Electro Plates.—The number of stereo plates cast during the year was 23,491, the weight being 22,915 lb. The number of electrotypes was 5,816, and the weight 1,549 lb.

Railway Tickets.—The number of railway tickets printed was 8,627,548. The largest number was printed in the month of May (1,018,125).

Rubber Stamps.—The number of rubber stamps made was 6,401.

Work of the Branches.—The year has been a very busy one in all branches, and the machine-room is still working two shifts to enable them to keep pace with the rush of work.

Overtime.—Our staff has been considerably drawn upon by ballots and enlistments, which has necessitated the working of a considerable amount of overtime to keep the work under. As the staff is likely to be still further reduced from these causes, it is probable that there will be no alteration in this respect for some time. The work has increased rather than decreased since the outbreak of war, and as a consequence of this and the call upon our men it is necessary to work extra hours. Overtime, however, is being kept down to a minimum.

Military Ballots.—The printing and publishing of the military ballots every four weeks has been a great strain on the establishment, and has necessitated many extra hours being worked by the staff. Each of the last two lists contained from sixty to seventy pages of closely printed matter, and, as over eight thousand copies are struck off, the consumption of paper has been very considerable.

Storage Accommodation.—Since my last report (due to the alterations going on in connection with the new wing) the matter of storage has been giving more trouble than ever; but the alterations now taking place, by which the old machine-room and its basement are to be converted into paper-stores, should, when completed, entirely relieve this unsatisfactory position. When the work is finished our capacity for paper and stationery storage will be greater and more convenient than it has ever been.

Paper and Stationery.—The cost of paper is still advancing, and some lines are 300 per cent. dearer than pre-war prices. The enhanced charges are not the only difficulty: the possibility of a stoppage of supplies has to be faced.

The English Royal Commission on Paper has reduced the allowance of raw products to be imported into Britain to 50 per cent. of that imported for the year 1914, which limits the exports to the same percentage. The shortage of raw materials and the use of the factories for munition purposes must necessarily have an effect upon supplies at this end. The problem of getting ships to carry the goods intensifies the trouble.