

1920.
NEW ZEALAND

PRINTING AND STATIONERY DEPARTMENT

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1920.

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

REPORT.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the annual report upon the working of this Department for the year ended 31st March, 1920.

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

Gazette.—The number printed was 1,750, the number of subscribers 190, and the amount received £307 18s.

Hansard.—The number of *Hansards* printed for session 1919 was 7,450, the number of subscribers 117, and the amount received £28 15s.

Stamp-printing.—The number of sheets of stamps of various values printed was 1,181,248, the number of stamps 159,630,239, and the value £7,404,396 17s. In addition war-loan certificates of a value of £197,000 were printed by this branch.

Stereo and Electro Plates. The number of stereo-plates cast during the year was 23,576, the weight being 17,821 lb. The number of electrotypes was 5,288, and the weight 2,316 lb.

Rubber Stamps.—The number of rubber stamps made was 7,877.

Railway Tickets.—9,469,652 railway tickets were printed, the largest number (1,316,375) being printed in December.

Work of the Year.—The work of the Department is growing, and, in order to keep it under, it is still necessary for two shifts to be employed in the Machine Branch. The year has been a busy one.

Overtime.—In some of the branches it was quite impossible to get through the work without a considerable amount of overtime being necessary, but it has been avoided wherever possible, the working of extra hours being neither economical nor healthy.

Paper and Stationery. The prices for paper are still soaring, and full supplies are exceedingly difficult to obtain. To keep up stocks involves constant attention, the fulfilment of orders never being certain until the goods have actually arrived. This applies equally to printings, writings, and news.

All orders for printing and stationery supplies from Departments have to be carefully scrutinized before being executed, and frequently it has been necessary to very considerably cut them down. Responsible officers of Departments should give careful attention to this matter of ordering; it is very serious, and needs the utmost care. I have called attention to this for the past two years, but I am obliged to again refer to it.

Stationery is in much the same position as paper—prices abnormal and stocks short. Envelopes are especially difficult to secure, some sizes being unobtainable.

Binding-materials have advanced considerably, and the prices for some of these goods are startling.

Machinery.—The position in regard to obtaining machinery is better than when I last reported, but it is still far from normal. Manufacturers are so overloaded with orders that deliveries are slow. Where at one time a machine could be delivered in a few months, it is now a question of at least a year or two before it can be supplied. The best and fastest machinery should be secured when such is available, and, as I reported last year, an officer should be sent abroad to buy the most up-to-date machinery for the Department at the earliest opportunity. It would well repay the expenditure. The work of Government printing is growing so fast that it is necessary to get the best of machinery to keep pace with it.