

The neglect by members of the public to register packets containing readily negotiable articles is a problem which exists in every postal administration in the world. The problem has become so acute that in some countries legislation has been passed making it a criminal offence to post in unregistered covers articles of value. While it should be made clear that at no time has the question of providing similar legislation been considered in the Dominion, the desirability of greater use being made of the registration facilities provided by the Department cannot be stressed too strongly. In the event of an unregistered packet containing valuable articles being reported missing, suspicion inevitably falls upon each person through whose hands the packet would pass, commencing with the person by whom it would be posted and ending with the person to whom it would be delivered. In the event of a registered packet being reported missing—a very rare occurrence—the Department's system permits of the point of loss being determined definitely. In addition, some further degree of security is offered by this system inasmuch as compensation is paid by the Post Office for any registered packet lost in the post. That the people of the Dominion are not making full use of the registration system is evidenced by the number of unregistered packets containing value reported missing each year, and also by the number of packets handled in the Dead Letter Office which, when opened, are found to contain bank-notes and other readily negotiable value.

POST OFFICE.

ARTICLES DELIVERED.

The number of articles delivered in the Dominion, including those received from places beyond New Zealand, during the year 1924, compared with the number in 1923, was as under :—

	1924.	1923.	Increase Per. Cent.
Letters	135,795,141	129,463,663	4·89
Post-cards	3,909,557	3,653,179	7·02
Parcels	3,644,506	3,544,650	2·82
All other articles	71,362,283	59,201,429	20·54
	214,711,487	195,862,921	

AVERAGE NUMBER OF LETTERS POSTED PER UNIT OF POPULATION.

1924, 103·7. 1923, 96·2.

NUMBER OF POST-OFFICES IN DOMINION.

Offices opened during year, 16 ; offices closed during year, 75 ; offices remaining open on 31st December, 1924, 2,071.

UNDELIVERABLE POSTAL PACKETS.

The following is a comparison of letters and other articles dealt with as undeliverable during the year, compared with those dealt with during 1923 :—

Year.	Returned direct to Senders through Chief Offices.	Returned direct to Senders through Dead Letter Office.	Returned to other Administrations through Chief Offices.	Returned to other Administrations through Dead Letter Office.	Destroyed (Senders unknown and Contents of no Value).	Total.
<i>Letters.</i>						
1924 ..	235,015	272,653	44,854	35,564	14,688	602,774
1923 ..	239,807	225,439	50,184	36,857	16,810	569,097
<i>Other Articles.</i>						
1924 ..	130,363	6,013	72,926	19,481	..	228,783
1923 ..	127,907	4,193	40,653	19,725	..	192,478

The proportion of undeliverable letters to the total number of letters delivered was 0·45 per cent., as against 0·43 per cent. in 1923.

MISCELLANEOUS.

	1924.	1923.
Letters and letter-cards posted without addresses	17,352	16,173
Letters imperfectly and insufficiently addressed	20,335	20,823
Letters bearing libellous addresses intercepted	42	56
Registered letters unclaimed	8,762	9,047
Newspapers received without addresses	4,540	3,893
Other articles received without addresses	3,937	3,635
Newspapers returned to publishers as undeliverable	28,881	27,780
Articles bearing previously used stamps	77	104