

1926.

NEW ZEALAND.

PRINTING AND STATIONERY DEPARTMENT

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1926.

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

SIR,—

Printing and Stationery Department, Wellington, July, 1926.

I have the honour to submit the annual report upon the working of this Department for the year ended 31st March, 1926.

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

Gazette.—The number printed of each issue was 1,000, the number of subscribers 437, and the amount received from subscribers and sales £2,324.

Hansard.—The number printed of each issue for session 1925 was 7,000, the number of subscribers 111, and the amount received from subscribers and sales £168.

Stamp-printing.—Stamps to the value of £3,339,861, and postal notes to the value of £16,714, were printed.

Stereo and Electro Plates.—The number of stereo-plates cast during the year was 32,449, the weight being 21,306 lb. The number of electrotypes was 2,357, and the weight 543 lb.

Rubber Stamps.—The number of rubber stamps made was 994.

Railway Tickets.—9,098,993 railway tickets were printed, the largest number (1,076,353) being printed in November.

Work of the Year.—The year just ended has been the busiest in the history of the Department, the turnover being approximately £234,000, against £221,000 the previous year, which was up to that time a record year. The New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition, census, electoral, and publicity printing considerably swelled the volume of work. This increase of £13,000 means a very considerable amount of handling, and it was necessary to work a great deal of overtime to cope with it. Another item which contributed to the increase was the printing of the telephone directories, for which this Department has obtained a five-years contract from the Post and Telegraph Department. This itself is a consideration, the magnitude of which may be gauged from the fact that it will annually consume at least 100 tons of paper. This work was undertaken without any increase in staff or purchase of special machinery, and it must be considered very satisfactory to know that the first issue of all the directories has been delivered, and in every case up to schedule time.

The pressure of work was maintained at a high level in the Photo-litho and Process Engraving Branch during the past year. 553 miscellaneous maps, plans, and diagrams were reproduced and printed. 500 large negatives were required to be made for the above. 1,200 negatives were made for process-block work, also a large number of bromide enlargements for the Publicity and other Departments.

During the year the Stationery Office dealt with 12,846 requisitions for stationery, the total sales amounting to £38,000. These requisitions comprised 133,536 items, and, in addition to parcels, over 2,300 cases of stationery were despatched. Cash orders numbered 7,500. In addition, 244 typewriters, of the value of £4,683, were issued to Government Departments.

Paper.—Stocks throughout the year have been kept well up to the required standard, although new contracts and other special work taken in hand throughout the year have required an additional 200 tons of material, severely taxing the storage accommodation. Prices for the main supply of paper have been satisfactory, showing a further decline on those of last year, the purchase amounting to £75,950, and the issues to £45,593, comprising 73,000 packages of paper and boards, and 11,000,000 envelopes.

Machinery.—The work of the Department having so largely increased special attention has been directed to the introduction of up-to-date automatic machinery. Several machines of this class are now in operation in the Letterpress Machine Branch.

These machines are capable of turning out the work at a very much faster rate than under the system of hand feeding. Several of the oldest machines, which have been in use for a considerable time, have been disposed of at very satisfactory prices.

Accommodation.—The lack of the necessary accommodation is causing a great deal of anxiety, in that the work cannot be handled in a less expensive and more expeditious manner. As the work required of the Department is rapidly increasing, the question of providing more accommodation should receive urgent consideration.

Finance.—The year's working has resulted in a profit of £3,245 16s. 3d. after allowing for interest on capital and full depreciation. The profit is over £10,000 less than that of the previous year, but the cost of printing to Departments has been correspondingly reduced. This Department is not aiming at making a large profit, but it is necessary in case of emergency to have a certain margin to work upon, and in proportion to the value of the capital employed in the business this amount of profit does not appear unreasonable.

Staff.—I have pleasure in testifying to the whole-hearted services of those holding responsible positions, while the staff generally has worked well.

I have, &c.,

W. A. G. SKINNER,

Government Printer.

The Hon. the Minister in Charge.