

1895.
QUEENSLAND.

REPORT OF THE POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT
OF QUEENSLAND FOR THE YEAR 1894.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command.

To His Excellency General Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Companion of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony of Queensland and its Dependencies.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

I have the honour to present to Your Excellency the accompanying Annual Report of the Under Secretary and Superintendent of Telegraphs upon the operations of the Post and Telegraph Department for the year 1894.

A Conference of Representatives of the Imperial Government, and of the Governments of the Dominion of Canada, South Africa, and the Australasian Colonies, assembled at Ottawa, Canada, on 28th June, 1894, at which the Hon. W. Forrest and I attended as representatives of this Colony. The following Resolutions were agreed to:—

STEAMSHIP COMMUNICATION.

- “That this Conference expresses its cordial approval of the successful efforts put forth by Canada and New South Wales for the establishment of a regular monthly steamship service between Vancouver and Sydney, and affirms the advisability of the reasonable co-operation of all the colonies interested in securing the improvement and permanence of the same.
- “That the Conference learns with interest of the steps now being taken by Canada to secure a first-class fast mail and passenger service, with all the modern appliances for the storage and carrying of perishable goods across the Atlantic to Great Britain, and the large subsidy which she has offered to procure its establishment.
- “That it regards such an uninterrupted through line of swift and superior communication between Australasia and Great Britain as is above contemplated as of paramount importance to the development of intercolonial trade and communication, and to the unity and stability of the Empire as a whole.
- “That, as the Imperial Post Office contributes towards the cost of the mail service between England and Australia, *via* Brindisi or Naples, the sum of £95,000 per annum, while the sea-postage amounts only to £3,000; and to the mail service between Vancouver and Japan and China £45,000, less £7,300 charged against the Admiralty; this Conference deems it but reasonable to respectfully ask that assistance be given by the Imperial Government to the proposed fast Atlantic and Pacific service; more particularly as the British Post Office, whilst paying the large subsidy of £104,231 a year to the line from Liverpool to New York, has so far rendered no assistance in the maintenance of a direct postal line between Great Britain and Canada.

THE PACIFIC CABLE.

- “That, in the opinion of this Conference, immediate steps should be taken to provide telegraphic communication by cable, free from foreign control, between the Dominion of Canada and Australasia.
- “That the Imperial Government be respectfully requested to undertake at the earliest possible moment, and to prosecute with all possible speed, a thorough survey of the proposed cable route between Canada and Australia; the expense to be borne in equal proportions by Great Britain, Canada, and the Australasian Colonies.
- “That it is for the interest of the Empire that, in case of the construction of a cable between Canada and Australasia, such cable should be extended from Australasia to the Cape of Good Hope; and that for that purpose arrangements should be made between the Imperial and South African Governments for a survey of the latter route.
- “That, in view of the desirability of having a choice of routes for a cable connection between Canada and Australasia, the Home Government be requested to take immediate steps to secure neutral landing ground on some one of the Hawaiian Islands, in order that the cable may remain permanently under British control.
- “That the Canadian Government be requested, after the rising of this Conference, to make all necessary inquiries, and, generally, to take such steps as may be expedient, in order to ascertain the cost of the proposed Pacific cable, and promote the establishment of the undertaking in accordance with the views expressed in this Conference.”

I strongly supported the project for a telegraph cable across the Pacific, to connect Canada with the Australasian Colonies, and thereby open another means of telegraphic communication with Europe. In compliance with the request above stated the Canadian Government subsequently called for offers for the laying and maintenance of the cable by eight different routes. In response to their invitation several tenders were received ranging from £1,068,000 for a cable to Bowen, up to £1,517,000 for one to New Zealand and the Tweed River, thus proving that a cable to the Queensland coast could be laid down for a lesser amount than was originally estimated. The routes for which offers were invited were not discussed before I had left Canada, and hence no tenders were invited for a cable by way of Fiji to Caloundra, although after my return to Queensland, and after the particulars of the eight routes became known here, the Canadian Government were asked that this route should be included. Apparently the Canadian Government found it then too late to amend the terms of their advertisement for offers, but it is estimated, after careful consideration of the tenders received, that such a cable could be laid for £1,300,000.

The adoption of a Queensland route would secure the cheapest and most effective cable, and one giving all the necessary connections.

The lowest tenderers undertake to bear all the cost of the maintenance of the cable for the first three years, the cost of which is included in the amount of their tenders.

I may be permitted to express my belief that the construction of the Pacific Cable by the Governments interested in its promotion can be carried out, not only without any material financial loss, but with a reasonable prospect of such financial success, that these Colonies would be great gainers, both by the reduction of present cable rates, and by the establishment of a much less vulnerable means of communication with Europe, in times of disturbance, than they now possess.

The Imperial Government has been approached by representatives of Canada, Queensland, and other Colonies, and the matter is now under consideration by them.

A Postal Conference was held at Hobart in February last, and a large number of Postal and Telegraphic subjects were considered. The matter of the Pacific Cable was brought forward by me upon the following motion:—“That in the opinion of this Conference it is desirable that (a) the construction, working, and maintenance of a submarine cable through British territory or under British control, from Vancouver Island to Australasia, be undertaken by the Governments of Great Britain, the Dominion of Canada, and the Australasian Colonies as a joint national and public work; (b) the cost of its construction, working, and maintenance be borne in the following proportions—viz., Great Britain one-third, the Dominion of Canada one-third, and the Australasian Colonies one-third.”

After considerable discussion, in the course of which it appeared that the question had not been fully considered by several Colonies represented, that motion was withdrawn, and a resolution couched in more general terms was carried—viz., “That this Conference reaffirms the desirableness of the construction of the Pacific Cable to connect the Australasian Colonies and Canada, and, in view of the ascertained practicability of the scheme, respectfully urges upon the various Colonial Governments that steps be taken for the furtherance of the project at the earliest opportunity.”

It affords me gratification to note that the Postal Revenue for 1894 has improved as compared with the previous year by £7,937. The total for the year was £143,455, the highest yet received. The revenue derived from the Telegraph Service, I regret to say, continues to decrease, and the receipts for 1894 exhibit a falling off of £9,044 as compared with 1893.

The expenditure of the Department for 1894 was £6,524 less than the previous year, and was about the same as in 1885, when the difference between the revenue and the expenditure was £116,619, whereas the difference in 1894 decreased to £80,635. It must, however, be remembered that in 1885 the subsidy to the Torres Straits Service was £55,000, since reduced to £19,800, but on the other hand there was no payment for Railway services which are now paid for at the rate of £40,000 per annum.

The reduction of the rate of postage on letters to the United Kingdom and Foreign Countries has again occasioned a loss of revenue, amounting for 1894 to £5,655, as compared with the postages received at the higher rate in 1890, and I find that the total estimated loss attributable to this cause alone, since the reduction in 1890, has reached £20,000.

Notice having been given in February last to discontinue the mail service *via* Torres Straits, tenders were called for a steam service to provide for the carriage of frozen meat, and farm and dairy produce, in refrigerating chambers. Only one tender was received—namely, that from the British India Associated Steamers, Limited, and an agreement with that company is now being drafted. In the meantime the present mail service has been extended for a further period, to afford time for the completion of the arrangements for the new service, which it is hoped will commence early next year. As the projected service is intended for purely commercial purposes, the expenditure will be provided on the Treasury Estimates, and thus lessen the expenditure of the Post and Telegraph Department.

During the very stormy weather which prevailed in the early part of the year the telegraph line on Moreton Island was again interrupted, causing considerable inconvenience. After several surveys it has been decided to adopt a route which it is hoped will not be so readily affected by the gales that so frequently prevail on this exposed island.

Consideration has been given to the proposal to lay a submarine cable from Cowan Cowan to Redcliffe, and an offer was received to supply and lay a suitable cable for the sum of £6,000, but this offer has not been accepted. The mere laying of a cable between the points mentioned, over what is considered the best route, would not, as is apparently supposed, afford complete immunity from the interruptions caused by storms, as it would have to be connected with land lines from the landing place at Cowan Cowan to Cape Moreton, and from Redcliffe to Brisbane; and as these lines would be exposed to the violence of the storms which so frequently occur on the coast, they could not be absolutely depended upon in bad weather. In any case the line *via* Cleveland, connecting Stradbroke and Moreton Islands with Brisbane, would have to be maintained.

The development of the Parcel Post has been steady and continuous, and it has been largely availed of by the public, to whom it has proved a great convenience. Until the end of 1894 its benefits were to a great extent confined to persons residing near the coast and in the vicinity of the railway lines, but I was able in January of this year to make the necessary arrangements for the extension of this popular service to nearly the whole of the coach mail lines of the Colony. This has given a great impetus to the business, and the additional convenience has been much appreciated by persons residing in the interior of Queensland: frequent applications are received for further extensions, but the cost is in most instances prohibitive.

The desirability of making such alterations in the time-table of the Overland Mail Service between Brisbane and the Southern capitals as would afford a through service without the delays that now occur owing to the breaks in the continuity of the railway system has been again under notice, and negotiations have taken place between the Railway Commissioners of the Colonies concerned but no improvement has yet been effected, owing principally to the objections of the railway authorities of New South Wales. I am not disposed, however, to allow this important matter to remain in abeyance, and will take an early opportunity of again urging it upon the attention of the Commissioner.

The necessity of utilising the telegraph system of the Colony to the fullest extent for the purpose of affording timely and sufficient notice of the flooding of the head waters of our rivers has not been lost sight of. Arrangements have been made for concerted action, in conjunction with the Hydraulic Engineer and the police, in the important matter of flood warnings: the telegraph lines connecting Brisbane with Esk, and the flood warning station established at Caboonbah, have been placed beyond the possibility of interruption from the highest floods yet known, at very considerable expense to the Department, and the necessary action has been taken to remove the intermediate station at Goodna to higher ground in event of the river rising to the level of the railway at that place.

The submarine cable between Bundaberg and New Caledonia has continued to work satisfactorily. It is useful for meteorological purposes, and has been largely availed of by this Colony in that direction, and it was of great service in the case of the "Ringarooma" which was ashore at the New Hebrides in September last. The commercial business appears to be increasing, and the mere fact of the existence of this cable seems to have had a deterrent effect upon the escape of criminals from New Caledonia and their landing on our shores.

In the practical application of electricity in its various forms great advances have been made of late years, and the necessity of procuring the assistance of a thoroughly trained electrical engineer to advise the Department upon the general telegraph system of the Colony, its economical working, and the facilities that may be thereby afforded for its extension to places not now served, as well as to protect the public interests upon such important matters as electric lighting and electric motive power, has forced itself strongly upon my attention, and it is now proposed to ask Parliament for the necessary authority for supplying this urgent need. It is also proposed to effect a considerable saving by the combination of the Post Offices and Telegraph Offices in several places under one officer in charge. Steps have also been taken to afford facilities to the members of the staff to acquire practical knowledge of the duties of both post office and telegraph office work, and so promote the amalgamation of what have been practically two separate departments. With these measures and a continuance of strict supervision of expenditure, it is hoped that the annual deficiency of revenue to meet the expenditure charged against this Department will be much decreased in the early future.

I have the honour to be

Your Excellency's Most Obedient Servant,

A. J. THYNNE.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 1st August, 1895.

REPORT.

INTERCOLONIAL POSTAL CONFERENCE.

An Intercolonial Postal Conference was held in Hobart, Tasmania, in February last.

All the Colonies were represented :—

- New South Wales* : The Hon. JOSEPH COOK, M.P., Postmaster-General.
S. H. LAMBTON, Esq., Deputy Postmaster-General.
- Victoria* : The Hon. JOHN GAVAN DUFFY, M.L.A., Postmaster-General.
JAMES SMIBERT, Esq., Deputy Postmaster-General.
- South Australia* : The Hon. J. A. COCKBURN, M.P., Minister of Education, &c., &c.
Sir CHARLES TODD, K.C.M.G., Postmaster-General.
- Queensland* : The Hon. A. J. THYNNE, M.L.C., Postmaster-General.
JNO. McDONNELL, Esq., Under Secretary to the Post and
Telegraph Department and Superintendent of Electric
Telegraphs.
- Western Australia* : Sir JOHN FORREST, Premier.
- Tasmania* : The Hon. P. O. FYSH, M.H.A., Treasurer and Postmaster-
General.
H. V. BAYLY, Esq., Secretary to the Post Office.
- New Zealand* : The Hon. J. G. WARD, M.H.R., Treasurer, Postmaster-General,
and Electric Telegraph Commissioner.
WM. GRAY, Esq., Secretary to the Post and Telegraph
Department.

The undermentioned subjects were dealt with :—

1. Federal Mail Contract—
 - (a) Proposed Extension of.
 - (b) Time of Departure from Adelaide.
 - (c) Cold Storage.
 - (d) Coloured Labour.
 - (e) Delay of Train at Adelaide for English Mails.
2. Pacific Mail Service.
3. Italy charging Sea Surtax—Report by Postmaster-General, Adelaide.
4. Stoppage of Letters addressed to senders of obscene matter.
5. Mr. Henniker Heaton's proposal to reduce Rate of Postage to England to 2d.
6. Delivery of indefinitely addressed Letters to business people.
7. Colonies remitting through the Treasury.
8. Uniform Statistics.
9. Notification of promotion of Higher Grade Postal Officials.
10. Postal Guides : uniformity of.
11. Post Cards of private manufacture : Regulations.
12. Letter Cards—
 - (a) Uniform exchange of.
 - (b) Consideration of Berne Circular *re* Rates chargeable thereon.
 - (c) Whether Victorian Letter Cards should not bear Stamps equivalent to their face value.
13. Proposed discontinuance of Letter Bills intercolonially.
14. Australasian Postal Convention—proposed revision or expunging of Article 7, and revision of Convention generally.
15. Rates on Circulars and Packets from United Kingdom (*vide* London Letter).
16. Transmission by post of Samples in Envelopes bearing printed notices relating thereto.

17. Rate of Postage on Seedsmen's Catalogues or such matter got up in book form.
18. Travellers' Orders: whether, when filled up in manuscript, they should pass at Packet Rate.
19. Printed matter and Trade Notices on Accounts and Invoices.
20. Rate on printed circular from Matters and Co.
21. Christmas and New Year Cards.
22. Obscene Photographs and Catalogues.
23. Precious Stones and Jewellery passing at Sample Rates.
24. Queensland surcharging New Zealand $\frac{1}{2}d.$ matter.
25. Austro-German proposal for Uniform Rate of Postage on Parcels up to 11 lbs.
26. Liability of Steamship Owners for damages to parcels, to be increased.
27. Insurance of Parcels.
28. Charge for intermediary service in regard to Intercolonial and Foreign parcels.
29. Parcel Post, United States.
30. Parcel Post Rates with United Kingdom: Reduction of.
31. Parcel Post Convention with Italy: London's offer.
32. Parcel Post Convention with Malta.
33. Parcel Post Convention with Canada.
34. Parcel Post Convention with France.
35. Re-direction of Parcel Post Packets: Calcutta's proposal.
36. Reduction of Commission on Money Orders to United Kingdom.
37. Telegraph Money Order Regulations.
38. Issue of Duplicate Money Orders.
39. Universal Postage Stamp—Federal Postage Stamp.
40. Marking Stamps "Specimen."
41. Patent Envelopes.
42. Postal Note System, England.
43. Arbitrary marks in Newspapers to convey information of a personal nature.
44. Enclosure of printed Papers in Newspapers.
45. Payment for conveyance of Letters in English Mails in transit Victoria to Tasmania.
46. Delegate to next Universal Postal Union Congress.
47. Postal Union (Sea Transit Rates).

TELEGRAPH.

48. Pacific Cable.
49. Cable Guarantees, and proposed withdrawal of Victoria.
50. Improved Telegraph facilities between South Australia and Western Australia.
51. Consideration of proposed Official Code Vocabulary.
52. Registration of Code or abbreviated Addresses (Uniformity of Regulations).
53. Telegraph Code—Alteration of.
54. Rate on Telegraph Messages to and from New Caledonia.
55. Fire Alarms—Regulations, &c.
56. Rectifying Telegrams or Repeats for corrections.
57. Name of Terminal Country to be given in Foreign Telegrams.
58. Reply Paid Telegrams—Mode of accounting for.
59. Cablegrams "on Service."
60. Repeated Telegrams—Uniform mode of dealing with.
61. Question of precedence of Press Cable Messages.

MISCELLANEOUS.

62. Consideration of Second Report of Electric Light and Power Leads Committee.
63. Standard Time.
64. Telephone List: Patent arrangement of Alphabetical Index.

The Report of the proceedings will be laid before Parliament.

REDUCTION OF RATES *VIA* FRANCE AND ITALY.

The rates for the special service for letter and post-card correspondence were reduced on the 1st of January, 1895, from 7·70 francs per kilogramme (33·26d. per lb.) to 6 francs (25·92d. per lb.), so that the cost of a single half-ounce letter is now about three-fifths of a penny.

As half the mails from the Colonies—viz., those by the “Orient” steamers—are conveyed by ordinary train, the special Continental transit costs on an average $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per single letter, and the advantage of having the homeward mails delivered in London in alternate weeks from twelve to twenty-four hours earlier than otherwise would be the case, is secured at the difference between $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per letter.

ENGLISH MAILS *VIA* TORRES STRAITS.

The cost of English mails *via* Torres Straits in 1894 was as follows, viz.:—

Subsidy	...	...	...	...	...	...	£19,800	0	0
Premiums	...	...	...	...	...	...	250	0	0
							£20,050	0	0
Less Penalties...	...	...	...	...	...	...	100	0	0
							£19,950	0	0
Less sea conveyance for other Colonies	...	£98	11	6					
Less land conveyance for other Colonies	...	3	12	4			102	3	10
							£19,847	16	2
Proportion of Coastal Branch Services	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,600	0	0
							£21,447	16	2

FEDERAL MAIL SERVICE—CONTRACT WITH P. AND O. AND ORIENT COMPANIES.

Queensland's share of the subsidy for the present year (1895), calculated on the basis of population, is £9,628 as against £9,547 for 1894.

The division of the subsidy between the Colonies is as follows:—

	Population, 31st December, 1894.	Proportion of Subsidy for 1895.
Victoria ...	1,179,104	£25,502
New South Wales ...	1,251,450	27,067
Queensland ...	445,155	9,628
South Australia ...	352,402	7,622
Western Australia ...	82,072	1,775
Tasmania ...	157,456	3,406
Total ...	3,467,639	75,000

REDUCTION OF POSTAGE TO THE UNITED KINGDOM AND FOREIGN PLACES.

In 1892, or shortly after the reduction of postage to the United Kingdom and Foreign places to the universal rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz. letter, the correspondence despatched to these places reached the highest point—429,484; since then there has been an annual falling-off—in 1893 to 400,320, or a decrease of 6·79 per cent., and in 1894 to 384,327, a further decrease of 3·99 per cent., with a loss in the latter year as compared with the amount received at the higher postage rate in 1890 of £5,655. The estimated loss since the reduction in 1890 is £20,167.

This continuing decrease in the number of letters would seem to disprove the assertion that a reduction of postage invariably causes an increase in the correspondence.

The correspondence from the United Kingdom and Foreign places also shows a decrease.

The following is a statement of the British and Foreign letter correspondence despatched in 1894, and the eight years preceding :—

Year	Number	Estimated Revenue.
1886	365,949	...
1887	372,342	...
1888	380,310	...
1889	379,672	...
1890	367,972	*£9,347
1891	410,699	+5,010
1892	429,484	‡4,392
1893	400,320	4,127
1894	384,327	3,692

CORRESPONDENCE BY OCEAN MAIL ROUTES.

The letter correspondence received and despatched by all routes during 1894, *vide* Appendix, was as follows :—

Route	RECEIVED.	DESPATCHED.
Torres Straits	44,191	32,244
P. and O.	235,330	154,463
Orient	255,113	165,188
French packet	1,511	2,438
German packet	3,561	2,065
San Francisco	23,800	14,322
Vancouver	8,577	7,167
Other Routes	7,759	6,440
	<u>579,842</u>	<u>384,327</u>

LETTERS, NEWSPAPERS, AND PACKETS.

There was an increase in the number of letters, newspapers, and packets in 1894, as compared with the previous year.

The following statement shows the increase per cent. in the total correspondence in each year, as compared with that preceding, during the last fifteen years :—

Year	Letters.	Newspapers.	Packets.
1880	3.64	9.74	14.14
1881	13.14	4.71	25.53
1882	14.94	9.49	32.92
1883	21.96	18.30	19.51
1884	22.05	26.92	25.19
1885	10.33	18.06	41.80
1886	7.43	6.78	14.25
1887	10.32	3.84	16.13
1888	8.02	4.45	19.12
1889	9.05	8.83	6.80
1890	8.14	3.39	9.22
1891	4.44	7.19	21.19
1892	2.24	Decrease 7.99	14.49
1893	3.40	5.24	38.88
1894	9.18	Increase 3.42	23.04

LETTERS, NEWSPAPERS, AND PACKETS, 1894.

	POSTED IN QUEENSLAND.						RECEIVED INTO QUEENSLAND.			TOTAL.		
	For Delivery within the Colony.			For Despatch beyond the Colony.			Letters.	Papers.	Packets.	Letters.	Papers.	Packets.
	Letters.	Papers.	Packets.	Letters.	Papers.	Packets.						
1893	11,838,775	5,595,030	2,267,803	2,393,665	1,214,650	715,204	2,065,387	3,735,406	582,318	16,297,827	10,545,185	3,565,415
1894	12,518,909	5,947,049	2,478,258	2,804,293	1,152,491	823,384	2,470,890	3,807,087	1,085,427	17,794,092	10,906,618	4,387,069
Increase, 1894	680,134	352,001	210,365	410,628	...	108,180	405,503	71,591	503,109	1,496,265	361,433	821,654
Number per cent.	5.74	6.21	9.27	17.11	...	15.11	19.58	1.91	86.39	9.18	3.42	23.04
Decrease, 1894	...	...	...	...	62,159	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Number per cent.	...	...	...	...	5.11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

* At higher rates.

† At partly reduced rates.

‡ At universal rate of 2½d.

POSTED IN 1894.

	Letters.	Newspapers.	Packets.
For delivery within the Colony	12,518,909	5,947,040	2,478,258
For despatch Intercolonially	2,419,966	920,500	732,698
For despatch to British and Foreign Places	384,327	231,991	90,686
Totals	15,323,202	7,099,531	3,301,642

INLAND SERVICE.

The following table shows the extent and cost of the Inland Mail Services during the years 1893 and 1894:—

Year.	Extent in Miles.	Total Miles Travelled.	Cost of Conveyance, including Landing and Shipping.	Cost per Mile travelled in 1894.	Number of Post Offices.	Number of Receiving Offices.
1893	28,578	5,298,730	£ s. d. 86,717 0 1	$\left. \begin{array}{l} d. \\ b \ 2\frac{1}{2} \\ c \ 4 \\ d \ 5 \end{array} \right\}$	383	580
1894	28,963	5,291,736	a 85,973 18 8	$\left. \begin{array}{l} b \ 2\frac{1}{2} \\ c \ 4\frac{1}{2} \\ d \ 5 \end{array} \right\}$	385	608
Increase	385	...	...	...	2	28
Decrease ... ..	...	6,994	743 1 5	...	...	...

a Includes £287 ls. unpaid, on account of Inland Mail Service. b By horse. c By vehicle. d By railway.

The cost per mile travelled by vehicle increased from 4d. to 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., owing to the extension of the Parcel Post system to nearly all coach lines.

The extent of mail lines on 31st December, 1893 and 1894, was as follows:—

	1893.	1894.
By railway	2,477	2,477
By coach	9,053	8,371
By horse	17,048	18,115
Total miles	28,578	28,963

The cost of inland mails in 1894 as compared with 1893 shows a reduction of £743 ls. 5d., and the cost per mile travelled by horse was reduced from 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

The Postal revenue for 1894 was £143,455, being an increase of £7,937 as compared with 1893, and is the highest amount ever received.

The Telegraph revenue shows a decrease of £9,044 in 1894 as compared with 1893.

The expenditure of the Post and Telegraph Department in 1894 was £296,251, or £6,524 less than in 1893, and is about the same as in 1885, when the deficiency was £116,619, whereas the deficiency in 1894 was £80,635, or a reduction of £35,984. It must, however, be remembered that in 1885 the subsidy to the Torres Straits Service was £55,000, since reduced to £19,800; but on the other hand there was in that year no payment for conveyance of mails by railway, now £40,000.

REVENUE.

POST OFFICE.				TELEGRAPH OFFICE.			
Year.	Amount.	Increase.	Decrease.	Year.	Amount.	Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£	£		£	£	£
1883	77,476	4,958		1883	70,583	10,420	
1884	88,769	11,293		1884	77,118	6,535	
1885	97,650	8,881		1885	82,037	4,919	
1886	105,805	8,154		1886	82,958	921	
1887	116,531	10,726		1887	83,061	103	
1888	131,305	14,773		1888	103,790	20,728	
1889	134,843	3,538		1889	93,296		10,493
1890	130,999		3,843	1890	91,779		1,516
1891	127,443		3,556	1891	95,146	3,367	
1892	135,722	8,279		1892	82,952		12,194
1893	135,518		204	1893	81,203		1,749
1894	143,455	7,937		1894	72,159		9,044

The following statement shows the detail of the Revenue of the Post and Telegraph Department during the years 1893 and 1894:—

Year.	Sale of Stamps.	Postage on Unpaid Letters, &c.	Fees for Private Boxes and Bags.	Money Order Commission.	Postal Note Revenue.	Received from other Colonies and Countries on Parcel Post Account.	Received from other Countries for Conveyance of Mails <i>via</i> Torres Straits.	Totals.	
								Post Office.	Electric Telegraph.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1893...	124,101 19 9	2,225 14 6	3,189 5 3	5,400 0 0	540 8 1	44 15 6	16 6 9	135,518 9 10	81,203 0 10
1894...	131,237 0 10	2,203 6 10	3,144 16 1	5,100 0 0	1,111 14 4	636 3 3	22 6 5	143,465 7 9	72,159 19 0
Increase	7,135 1 1	...	...	...	571 6 3	591 7 9	5 19 8	7,938 17 11	...
Decrease	...	22 7 8	44 9 2	300 0 0	...	...	...	...	9,043 1 10

The following statement shows the Expenditure of the Post and Telegraph Department during the year 1894, exclusive of Loan Expenditure:—

Votes.	—		Total.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Salaries, including Country Post Offices throughout the Colony	124,317	6 2
Conveyance of Mails—				
Mail Service <i>via</i> Torres Straits	19,950	0 0
Inland Mails and Landing and Shipping	48,655	0 5
Coastwise Mails	11,000	0 0
<i>Via</i> Adelaide and San Francisco	11,333	19 1
Gratuities to Masters, &c.	3,011	7 8
By Railways	40,000	0 0
			133,950	7 2
Miscellaneous Services—				
Mail Bags, Uniforms, &c.	5,800	8 0
Instruments, Batteries, &c.	1,596	2 4
Maintenance and Repair of Lines	8,460	5 4
Fuel, Light, and Water	2,062	3 0
Travelling Expenses, &c.	2,485	12 11
Forage Allowances generally	6,407	1 2
Rent of Temporary Offices, &c.	1,099	8 5
Labourers for Protection of Stations	1,352	2 6
Allowance to cover extra Cost of Provisions	3,168	14 10
Stores and Stationery generally	3,144	0 8
Guarantee Cable to New Caledonia	2,407	12 2
			37,983	11 4
Total, 1894	£ 296,251	4 8
Expended in 1893	£ 302,775	5 8
Decrease	£ 6,524	1 0

The above includes £1,606 5s. on account of previous years.

METEOROLOGICAL BRANCH.		—		Total.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£
Salaries	£855 0 0
Contingencies	233 14 10
Total, 1894	£1,088 14 10
Expended in 1893	1,216 13 7
Decrease	£127 18 9

The above includes £13 18s. 6d. on account of previous years.

EXPENDITURE, 1893 AND 1894.

—	1893.		1894.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Expenditure during the year ...	302,775	5 8	296,251	4 8
Included on account of previous years ...	1,441	5 0	1,606	5 0
	301,334	0 8	294,644	19 8
Amount unpaid on account of 1893 and 1894 ...	962	3 5	838	4 8
Net expenditure for the year ...	£302,296	4 1	£295,483	4 4

Net decrease on account of 1894, £6,812 19s. 9d.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE, 1893 AND 1894.

YEAR.	REVENUE.			EXPENDITURE.	DEFICIENCY.
	Post Office.	Electric Telegraphs.	Total.		
1893	£ s. d. 133,518 9 10	£ s. d. 81,203 0 10	£ s. d. 216,721 10 8	£ s. d. 302,775 5 8	£ s. d. 86,053 15 0
1894	143,455 7 9	72,159 19 0	215,615 6 9	296,251 4 8	80,635 17 11
Increase	7,936 17 11	...	...	...	...
Decrease	...	9,043 1 10	1,106 3 11	6,524 1 0	5,417 17 1

The expenditure includes the amount paid on account of previous years.

STATEMENT showing the APPROXIMATE COST to QUEENSLAND of OCEAN MAILS for the Year 1894.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<i>Torres Straits Service—</i>						
Subsidy	19,800	0	0			
Premiums	250	0	0			
	20,050	0	0			
Penalties	100	0	0			
	19,950	0	0			
Less Conveyance for other Colonies	£98	11	6			
Less Land Transit for other Colonies	3	12	4			
	102	3	10			
				19,847	16	2
<i>Coastal Branch Service</i>						1,600 0 0
<i>P. & O. and Orient—</i>						
Subsidy—						
Month of January, @	£9,519	0	0			
1st February to 31st December, @	9,547	0	0			
	9,544	13	4			
Exchange on Remittances	£50	14	7			
Cablegrams notifying arrival of Mails in London	5	3	0			
	55	17	7			
	9,600	10	11			
Less from Non-contracting Colonies (one month of 1894)	29	12	1			
	9,570	18	10			
<i>San Francisco Service</i>	277	9	0			
<i>Vancouver Service</i>	127	5	5			
				9,975	13	3
Transhipping at Sydney	£18	0	0			
Gratuities for Sea Transit	95	5	6			
	113	5	6			
Land Transit to New South Wales	£248	15	9			
Land Transit to Victoria	233	11	5			
Land Transit to South Australia	231	14	6			
	714	1	8			
Land Transit, Brisbane to Wallangarra	326	0	0			
				1,153	7	2
				32,576	16	7
Estimated amount due to the United Kingdom for Transit	800	0	0			
Estimated amount due to other Colonies	200	0	0			
	1,000	0	0			
Less estimated amount due from Non-contracting Colonies	300	0	0			
				700	0	0
Total estimated Cost of the Services in 1894						33,276 16 7
Cost of 1893 to date						33,275 1 2

The amount of postage collected on British and Foreign Correspondence in 1894 is estimated at £5,118.

POSTAL NOTES.

There was a considerable increase in Postal Note transactions in 1894 as compared with the previous year. The number of transactions in 1894 was 314,025, or an increase over 1893 of 76·13 per cent.

The amount was £109,098 7s. 1d., or an increase of 65·50 per cent.

POST AND RECEIVING OFFICES.

Eight Post Offices were opened and six closed during 1894, leaving 385 on the 31st December.

There was an increase of 28 Receiving Offices, making 608 on the 31st December.

The number of Letter Receivers on 31st December was 169, being the same number as on 31st December, 1893.

POST OFFICES, 1894.

		Opened.		Closed.	
		Anakie		Gregory	
		Breakfast Creek		Ida	
		Calcifer		Mount Jacob	
		Graceville		Mount Kent	
		Homestead		Muldiva	
		Mackinlay		Welford Lagoons.	
		Nobby's Siding			
		Parliament House			
		NUMBER OF OFFICES ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1894.		NUMBER OF RECEIVERS ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1894.	
		Post Offices.	Receiving Offices.	Brisbane.	Country.
1893	...	383	580	87	82
1894	...	385	608	87	82
Increase	...	2	28	...	...

MONEY ORDERS.

Four Money Order Offices were opened in 1894—viz., Childers, Lake's Creek, Mareeba, Ravenswood Junction; and one closed—viz., Limestone; leaving 111 on the 31st December.

The number of transactions was 261,110, or an increase of 12·78 per cent. over 1893.

The amount was £769,930 6s. 9d., which was a decrease of 6·61 per cent. as compared with 1893.

Although there was a decrease in the amount the number of transactions shows an increase.

CORRESPONDENCE BRANCH.

The number of documents received and entered in the Registers during 1894 was 41,635; the number of letters written, 27,008; and the number of mail way-bills examined, about 90,325.

ACCOUNTS BRANCH, CHIEF OFFICE.

The number of vouchers paid in 1894 was 13,677; the number of cheques drawn, 9,204; and the number of letter bills examined, about 511,000.

TRANSACTIONS.

Revenue:—

Post Office	...	...	...	£143,455	7	9
Electric Telegraph Office	...	...	...	72,159	19	0
Total	...	...	...	£215,615	6	9

Expenditure:—

Post and Telegraph	...	...	...	£296,251	4	8
Meteorological Observer	...	...	...	1,088	14	10
Loan	...	...	...	7,196	10	11
Total	...	...	...	£304,536	10	5
Money Orders	...	...	...	£769,930	6	9
Postal Notes	...	...	...	109,098	7	1
Grand Total	...	...	...	£1,399,180	11	0

POSTAGE STAMPS.

In consequence of the marks of official defacement not being easily seen on the coloured backgrounds of the postage stamps hitherto used, when the articles bearing such stamps were dealt with under artificial light, it was considered desirable to make a slight alteration in the design by substituting a white background, on which any marks can be readily discerned. The general design of the stamps has not, however, been altered.

PROPOSED ACCELERATION OF MAIL TRAINS BETWEEN BRISBANE, SYDNEY, AND MELBOURNE.

The matter of the proposed acceleration of mail trains between Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne was brought forward again in October last, and the following notes of an interview between the Queensland and New South Wales Railway Commissioners at Wallangarra in July were submitted by the New South Wales Postal Department :—

“The New South Wales Commissioners were willing to alter the time of their train so as to leave Sydney at 6.10 p.m. and reach Wallangarra at 11.5 a.m., which would enable the Queensland train to reach Brisbane at about 10 p.m. They were also desirous of getting the Queensland train into Wallangarra in time for the New South Wales train to leave at 5.5 a.m. and reach Sydney at 10.5 p.m.

“If this arrangement were carried out the New South Wales Commissioners would probably alter the present 9 p.m. mail from Sydney to Albury to 10 p.m. and connect at Strathfield with the Northern train. Thus passengers and mails would be in Melbourne the following night instead of waiting in Sydney until 5.15 p.m. next day, and not arriving in Melbourne until noon of the second day after arrival in Sydney.

“This would provide a connection with all the branch lines as well as the main line south of Sydney, and also effect a saving of twenty-four hours’ time.

“These arrangements, it was stated by the Postal Department, Sydney, the New South Wales Commissioners were ready to bring into operation at any time, but any greater change cannot be made without completely sacrificing the interests of New South Wales, which the Commissioners did not feel they would be justified in doing.

“The Queensland Commissioners considered that the proposal of the New South Wales Commissioners aggravated the objection to the early start from Wallangarra for Sydney.”

The Postmaster-General pointed out that the inconvenience now is nearly as great as it would be if the change were to take place at Wallangarra half-an-hour earlier. On the other side of the question is the very great gain of having both passengers and mails taken to Melbourne *via* Strathfield in the same time, as far as business hours are concerned, as they are now taken to Sydney. If there were some suitable arrangement for passengers’ breakfasts at Tenterfield or Glen Innes much of the objection to the early transfer at Wallangarra would be removed. From a postal point of view the matter was of so much importance that it was hoped the Commissioners would give the matter further consideration before finally refusing to fall in with the New South Wales suggestion.

The Commissioners stated in reply that they intended to have a further meeting with the New South Wales Commissioners.

The matter was again brought under the notice of the New South Wales Post and Telegraph Department, and in reply it was stated that that Department was disposed to favourably entertain the proposal as far as the exchange of mails at Strathfield was concerned, provided the Railway time table could be arranged; but subsequent correspondence showed that the New South Wales Railway Commissioners were not favourable to the alteration.

The matter, therefore, remains *in statu quo*.

MAIL WORK OF THE CHIEF OFFICE.

The returns for 1894 show a satisfactory increase of business, notwithstanding a considerable falling off in the English and foreign correspondence received and despatched, due to the almost total cessation of immigration from the United Kingdom and foreign countries during the year. As compared with 1893, the total

number of mails received during 1894 increased by 5,337, and the net increase of letters and packets received during the same period was respectively 341,000 and 376,519; newspapers showed a decrease of 81,069, due entirely to the falling off in the number received from places beyond the Australasian Colonies. The increased number of letters received was affected by a diminution in those from England and foreign countries to the extent of 24,562.

There was an increase in the number of mails despatched of 6,534 over those sent away in 1893; the net increase of letters despatched was 483,952, and of packets 7,397; newspapers for England and foreign places decreased by 62,263, and for the Australasian Colonies by 22,717; a total decrease in the number of newspapers despatched as compared with 1893 of 84,980.

The increase of work must, however, be estimated by the increase in the number of articles posted and received during 1894, the subsequent disposal, whether by despatch to other offices or by local delivery, being only the necessary incidence of that increase. The total increase in the number of letters posted and received at the Chief Office during 1894 as compared with 1893 was 1,387,759, and of packets 827,397. There was a net increase in the number of newspapers posted during 1894 of 40,139.

The totals of ordinary correspondence posted and received at the Chief Office during 1894 were—letters 9,948,266, packets 2,660,240, newspapers 5,325,474. Packets and newspapers received in mails from places within the Colony are not counted, and are therefore not included in this statement.

A distinct feature in the posting during the year in connection with the Chief Office was the introduction of the system of posting letters, packets, and newspapers in receptacles attached to the tram-cars. This system was in use during the last six months of the year only, and the posting was—letters 29,554, packets 1,604, newspapers 2,797.

LOOSE SHIP LETTERS.

There was a small increase in this class of correspondence, the total number received during 1894 having been 10,532, while in 1893 10,289 were received. The increase was confined to those from the Northern ports, those from the South showing a slight decrease.

TRAVELLING POST OFFICE.

The Travelling Post Offices both on the Southern and Western and the Central Railways continue to perform very necessary work in connection with the Postal System in the districts through which they run, facilitating the circulation of correspondence especially through the smaller offices, and in the South and West providing a channel for the collection and distribution of much important matter in connection with the mails exchanged with England and the Southern Colonies, thus obviating the delay that would necessarily ensue if it had to pass through the Chief, or any of the larger offices, that exchange direct mails with places outside this Colony.

On the Southern and Western Lines there was a slight falling off in the number of letters posted, but the number of letters received increased by 61,687; while on the Central Line there was an increase of 4,296 in the letters posted, but those received decreased by 9,124.

The Travelling Post Offices of the Southern and Western Lines dealt with a total of 1,153,401 letters posted and received during 1894, and those on the Central Line with 237,642 posted and received during the same period. The former made up mails for England and Foreign places during the year containing 23,197 letters, 2,322 packets, and 11,140 newspapers.

COLLECTION OF CUSTOMS DUTY.

Under the Post and Telegraph Act the task of collecting Customs duties on all articles subject thereto that are introduced into the Colony through the Post Office devolves upon the officers of this Department. The law does not recognise the letter post as a legitimate channel for importing goods liable to duty, and provides that letters having dutiable articles enclosed in them may be handed to the Customs to be dealt with according to law. Letters and packets are, however, so largely availed of for the introduction of articles of a comparatively small bulk and weight, but subject to duty, as to compel a systematic examination of them for

the protection of the revenue. During the year 5,896 letters and packets were thus examined, a considerable increase as compared with the 4,477 examined in 1893; 3,087 were found to have enclosed articles subject to duty of the value of £3,178 17s. 4d., the duty on which amounted to £597 11s. 11d.

Customs duties are also collected through the Post Offices at the several ports and border towns. A much larger amount of duty is collected on merchandise imported through the Parcel Post. It is worthy of consideration whether some measures should not be taken to confine the introduction of dutiable goods to the more appropriate channel provided by the Parcel Post.

DEAD LETTERS.

It is highly satisfactory to note that notwithstanding that the number of letters posted and received into the Colony during 1894 increased by 1,496,265, yet those unclaimed again show a remarkable decrease, the numbers received into the Dead Letter Office as unclaimed having been 79,583, and of these 1,539 were irregularly posted, while the unclaimed letters for 1893 numbered 87,023, and for 1892 113,761. This affords a further proof of the advantage of retaining letters for a longer period at the offices to which they are addressed instead of keeping them in the Dead Letter Office as formerly.

Included in the number of letters opened in the Dead Letter Office during the year were 583, containing property of the value of £5,120 9s. 7d.; of these 430 were unregistered and they contained enclosures of the value of £4,487 18s. 5d. No owners could be found for 46 letter sand their contents were paid into the Treasury; 519 were either returned to the senders or delivered, and 18 remained on hand.

MISSING LETTERS.

The number of letters reported as having failed to reach the persons to whom they were addressed was 1,066, that is 105 more than during the previous year, but a larger number were satisfactorily traced, namely 813: of 253 unregistered letters no trace could be found. In the large majority of cases in which missing letters were traced the fault was found to rest with the senders, who had either misdirected their letters or had written an insufficient or illegible address, and it may be very fairly assumed that of the number of which no trace could be found many were never posted. Every letter given to a child, an employee, or even to persons almost strangers to the sender, who may be going into town or passing a post office, are as a matter of course supposed to be posted, but in some instances it is only a supposition, though a fault in this respect is rarely admitted. If the contents of the register in which the particulars of all missing letters are recorded could be made public it would be a forcible illustration of the carelessness of the public in dealing with their own letters; but probably the fact that 1,539 passed into the Dead Letter Office because they had been irregularly posted, that is were so deficient in some material respect that they could not be forwarded, is sufficient for this purpose. It cannot be too often repeated that letters, &c., sent loose are not posted, and that the Post Office cannot accept any responsibility with respect to such letters before they reach the Office. The facilities for sending loose matter afford no doubt a great but in some respects a dangerous convenience, and those who use them must be prepared to take a certain risk. The advantages of the registration system, especially in those instances in which it may be necessary or desirable to trace through the Post Office missives having important or valuable enclosures, is again urged upon those interested, and it is necessary again to repeat that it is only in rare instances that unregistered articles can be satisfactorily traced through the post.

INFRINGEMENTS OF THE POSTAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

It has been observed with much satisfaction that the attempts to use stamps that have been officially defaced for the prepayment of postage have not been nearly so frequent during the past year as in 1893, but the instances brought under notice in which communications that can only be legally sent through the Post Office at the letter rate of postage have been sent as packets in open covers, and frequently with endorsements such as "Printed matter only," "Commercial papers," &c., have been so numerous as to indicate that the revenue of the Department has been

seriously affected by the payment of the lower instead of the higher and legitimate postage. The majority of the mistakes referred to are probably the result of ignorance or inadvertence, but it may be as well to state, as bearing upon this subject, that Section 96 of the Post and Telegraph Act provides—

That any person who—

- (1) Knowingly and fraudulently puts into a post office a packet in or upon which, or in or upon the cover whereof, there is any letter, communication, or intelligence not allowed by law to be there placed; or
- (2) Wilfully subscribes on the outside of a packet a false statement of the contents thereof,

shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding fifty pounds nor less than one pound.

It must be obvious that every article purporting to be a packet cannot be closely examined when posted, and probably the greater number of the illegally posted packets escape detection; those that are detected are charged as insufficiently prepaid letters, and are therefore refused by the persons to whom they are addressed. This, however, is not sufficient to protect the revenue, and if the practice continues it will be necessary to take some more stringent action.

POST AND TELEGRAPH STORES.

The business of this branch has been satisfactorily conducted throughout the year. Strenuous efforts have been continued with a view to such economy as was consistent with the maintenance of the efficiency of the Service, and a considerable saving has been effected while the standard of quality has been maintained.

REGISTRATION.

At the Chief Office there has been a slight decrease in the number of articles registered during the year: the numbers were, for 1893 55,619, and for 1894 54,891. Notwithstanding this, the number of registered articles dealt with throughout the Colony in 1894 was the largest yet recorded; the total number of articles registered and received was 430,148, while those for the previous year amounted to 271,492, the increase being 158,656.

THE PARCEL POST.

The returns for 1894 show a sufficient increase to indicate that this important branch of the Postal Service is becoming more popular, and that its utility is largely recognised throughout the Colony. It may be said to have become indispensable to the social and business life of the entire community.

Dealing with the whole Colony, the returns show that there were posted in 1894 for inland delivery 63,371 parcels, weighing 238,809 pounds; those posted for the other Colonies amounted to 3,216, and they weighed 7,102 pounds; the British and Foreign parcels numbered 1,339, and their aggregate weight was 4,174 pounds. The total number of parcels dealt with was 81,531, as against 67,489 in 1893; the increase for the year was 14,042 parcels, and the increase of weight was 152,199 pounds. The total revenue derived by the Post Office was £4,731 17s. 6d., as compared with £4,173 15s. 11d. in the previous year, and the amount collected for Customs duty was £2,749 18s. 1d., while that for 1893 was £1,145 19s. 11d.

In the Chief Office the parcels dealt with numbered 60,720, and those in 1893 50,284, an increase of 10,436 for the year 1894. 36,744 parcels were received from the public over the counter, weighing upwards of 66 tons, and on these postage to the amount of £2,414 12s. 8d. was collected; 13,272 were received from Queensland offices, and 10,704 from places beyond the Colony, on these Customs duty was paid amounting to £1,862.

Complaints having been made of the inconvenience occasioned by the detention of dutiable parcels at the ports until the duty was received, a system substituting collection of duty at or near the office to which the parcels were addressed was formulated and submitted to the Treasury and the Auditor-General for approval; as soon as the necessary sanction could be obtained the improved method was brought into operation, and appears to have given general satisfaction, but it has entailed a very great increase of work in this Department. The Customs work in the Parcel Post Branch of the Chief Office now occupies the whole time of one officer.

The tenders accepted for coach mail services from the 1st of January, 1895, provided for the carriage of parcels, and from that date the Parcel Post, which previously had been confined to mails carried by steamers and the railways, was extended to almost all places served by mail coaches. This extension has proved a great boon to residents in the interior of the Colony, and has very much increased the utility of the parcel service, adding largely to the business of this branch of the Postal Service. Previous to the extension of the Parcel Post to coach services, the cost of carrying a parcel weighing ten pounds from Brisbane to such places as Adavale and Tambo was 6s. 6d., and to Hungerford and Windorah 10s. 6d.; by Parcel Post they are carried to these and other equally remote townships at the uniform rate of 2s. 9d. The growth of the business is ample evidence of the public appreciation of the facilities offered for the carriage of parcels by the coach mails and of the stimulating effect of this extension on the trade of the Colony.

LETTER CARDS.

In accordance with the almost universal system it was resolved to issue a Letter Card, and, the Postmaster-General having approved of a suitable design, one has been issued bearing a twopenny stamp, which entitles it to transit through the various Colonies.

PRIVATE LOCK-BOXES.

There are now 1,112 lock-boxes in various offices throughout the Colony, viz.:—

Office.	No.	Office.	No.	Office.	No.
Barcaldine	3	Fortitude Valley	8	Rockhampton	103
Blackall	10	Geraldton	11	St. George	7
Bowen	15	Gladstone	14	South Brisbane	1
Brisbane	231	Gympie	19	Stanthorpe	2
Bundaberg	63	Herberton	12	Tambo	9
Burketown	5	Hughenden	9	Thargomindah	8
Cairns	34	Ipswich	26	Thursday Island	7
Charleville	32	Laidley	7	Toowoomba	25
Charters Towers	92	Mackay	25	Townsville	96
Cloncurry	7	Maryborough	58	Warwick	22
Clermont	11	Muttaburra	4	Winton	13
Cooktown	28	Normanton	20	Woolloongabba	7
Croydon	49	Port Douglas	6		
Cunnamulla	11	Queenton	2		

LETTER-CARRIERS.

The following list shows the number of letter-carriers employed throughout the Colony:—

Office.	Number, 31st December, 1893.	Number, 31st December, 1894.	Additions in 1894.
Brisbane	31	31	...
Albion	2	2	...
Bundaberg	4	4	...
Cairns	1	1	...
Charters Towers	5	5	...
Cooktown	1	1	...
Croydon	1	1	...
Dalby	1	1	...
Fortitude Valley	4	4	...
Gympie	3	3	...
Ipswich	4	4	...
Mackay	1	1	...
Maryborough	4	4	...
Mount Morgan	1	1	...
Normanton	1	1	...
One-Mile	1	1	...
Rockhampton	6	6	...
Roma	1	1	...
Toowong	3	3	...
Toowoomba	3	3	...
Townsville	6	6	...
Warwick	1	1	...
Woolloongabba	7	7	...
	92	92	...

ELECTRIC LIGHTING, &c.

At the Postal Conference in New Zealand in 1894 a resolution was passed, namely:—

“That the Committee be requested to complete their labours by reporting on Electric Tramways, and drafting Regulations in regard to Electric Power Leads generally.”

In compliance with this resolution the Committee met at Melbourne in October and November last year, and amended the Regulations drawn up at the first Conference of the Committee in Sydney. These, as amended, were embodied in the complete code of Regulations which the Committee recommended for adoption throughout the Australasian Colonies.

These are very comprehensive, and embrace Electric Light power and traction.

The full text of the Report and Regulations is appended to the report of the proceedings of the Postal Conference held at Hobart in February last, which has been laid before Parliament and printed.

It may be pointed out that the Queensland telephone and telegraph wires are unprotected so far as Electric Lighting is concerned, and it is desirable that immediate action should be taken.

TELEPHONES.

The desirability of altering the telephone system in force in Queensland, and assimilating it with those of the other Colonies, has been under consideration for some time. In Brisbane each subscriber supplies his own instrument, and the Department keeps it in order for an annual fee of £1 in addition to the yearly subscription of £5 for the first mile or any intermediate distance, and a rate of 12s. 6d. for every additional quarter of a mile or fraction thereof; in other towns the initial rate is higher. The result is that there are various types of instruments, involving the supply of different material for repairs, and there is a tendency in the direction of the purchase of second-hand and inferior instruments, which are likely to cause complaint and dissatisfaction.

In the other Colonies the Departments supply the instruments, and charge an additional amount for the rent thereof.

This matter has not been finally dealt with, but the almost universal system of the Department supplying instruments will sooner or later have to be adopted.

ELECTRIC TELEGRAPHS.

LINES—EXTENSIONS COMPLETED OR PROPOSED.

Since the last Annual Report (30th June, 1894) the contract for the erection of a new telegraph line along the Brisbane Valley Railway above the level of the flood of 1893 has been completed. This contract was let in March, 1894, but through bad weather and other causes the work was not completed until the beginning of October. About 38 miles of new line were constructed under this contract, and 44 miles of new wire were stretched.

In January of the present year a contract was let for the construction of a line between Cressbrook and Caboonbah (near the junction of the Brisbane and Stanley Rivers), and for raising the existing line from Esk to Cressbrook above flood level. Under this contract $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles of new line were erected. The contract was completed in April, and there is now a line well above the highest known flood level, between Caboonbah and Brisbane *via* Cressbrook, Esk, and Ipswich. To further ensure, as far as possible, that there shall be no interruption to communication Morse instruments have been placed at Caboonbah, being considered less likely to get out of order than telephones.

In consequence of the representations of the responsible officers of the Department and the desire to connect Meringandan with the telegraph system of the Colony, it was considered advisable to construct a new line from Pengarry Junction (on the Southern and Western Railway) to Pechey's siding (about four and a half miles from Crow's Nest), a distance of about twenty-five miles. When this work is completed the telegraph line from Toowoomba to Crow's Nest will be within the railway fences. Tenders have been invited for this work, and close on the 5th of August.

Owing to the very unsatisfactory state of telegraphic communication with Cape Moreton, in February last an officer of the Department was instructed to report fully on the best means of avoiding, as far as possible, interruptions to communication in future. After an exhaustive examination, which included a survey for a new route, it has been decided to construct a new line on portion of Moreton Island where it will be in as sheltered a position as can be found. Portions of the existing line will then be re-poled with iron poles (to minimise the danger from bush fires), and a bimetallic wire of steel with a copper covering will take the place of the present iron wire. When these alterations are completed, it is considered that this line will be as safe as a telegraph line can possibly be. Tenders have been invited for this work, which includes nearly sixteen miles of new line, repairs and deviation to the existing line for about sixteen miles, and the stretching of about thirty-three miles of bimetallic wire. In connection with the Cape Moreton line, it is proposed to duplicate the cable between Cleveland and Dunwich. A suitable type of cable has been ordered from England for this purpose, and will be laid on arrival. A new cable of about two knots in length was laid between Amity Point (north end of Stradbroke Island) and the South Passage signal station (south end of Moreton Island) last October. There are now two cables across the South Passage, both in perfect working order. It will be seen that probabilities of interruption between Brisbane and Cape Moreton will be thus reduced to a minimum.

The Woody Island—White Cliffs—cable remains in the same unsatisfactory condition as at date of last report. It will be necessary to lay a new cable at this place sooner or later.

The cable from Gladstone to Gatcombe Head became interrupted, and was repaired.

In the Northern District of the Colony it is proposed to construct a short line of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Geraldton to Flying Fish Point and the mouth of the Johnstone River, for the purpose of notifying shipping movements to Geraldton. It is intended to work this line with telephones.

The only submarine cable faults in the north were two on the Flat-top Island line. Both were removed.

The extension of the line from Paterson to Cape York was finished on the 14th August. The station building has been removed to the latter place.

The land lines on Thursday, Hammond, and Goode Islands for the Goode Island extension were completed on the 27th August.

An office was opened on the 7th January at Halifax, near Ingham, on the guarantee principle, with satisfactory results so far, and without decreasing the revenue from the Ingham Office as compared with the same period of last year.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS.

In June, 1894, a contract was let for general repairs to the line between St. George and Mungindi, seventy-three and a half miles, the work including supply and erection of 470 new poles as required. This contract was completed early in November.

On 1st July of the present year a contract was let for general repairs to the line between Blackall and Isisford, a distance of seventy-six miles. This work includes erection of 160 new poles, clearing undergrowth, and all required to place the section in first class order. This contract will probably be completed in about three months.

Six maintenance parties have been constantly employed during the past year, four in the south and two in the northern portion of the Colony. One of these parties is now effecting general repairs between Warwick and Goondiwindi. Another party is engaged in repairing lines in the vicinity of Toowoomba. A third party is working on the line between Tiaro and Inskip and Double Island Points. This party, in addition to general repairs, is stretching a hard-drawn copper wire on the portions of the line exposed to the sea air. Galvanised iron wire deteriorates so rapidly that it has been considered advisable to use hard-drawn copper wire, which is unaffected by saline influences. The fourth party in the Southern District is effecting general repairs to the line from Rockhampton to Gladstone, having recently repaired the various lines in the vicinity of Rockhampton.

In the Northern Division of the Colony one party is working on the line between Charters Towers and Junction Creek. The second party is effecting general repairs on the line from Herberton to Junction Creek.

MILEAGE OF LINE AND WIRE.

There are now 9,986½ miles of line and 17,801 miles of wire open for public business.

NUMBER OF STATIONS.

At the close of 1894 there were 362 stations in daily operation.

NEW STATIONS.

Since the 30th June, 1894, the undermentioned new stations have been opened:—

Fisherman Island	...	...	...	...	26th July, 1894
Goode Island (Torres Straits)	...	...	...	...	19th November, 1894
Government Residency, Thursday Island	...	...	...	...
(Official)	...	...	...	...	21st November, 1894
Halifax	...	...	...	...	8th January, 1895
Manly (R.T.S.)	...	...	...	...	1st April, 1895
Caboonbah (private)	...	...	...	...

STATIONS CLOSED.

Watsonville	...	...	...	...	14th July, 1894
Limestone	...	...	...	...	29th December, 1894
Fisherman Island	...	...	...	...	19th June, 1895

Paterson moved to Peak Point, and now known as "Cape York"; Whitecliffs moved to Mitchell's Camp, and now known as "Bogimba"; Emu Vale (R.T.S.) altered to "Neereedah."

WORKING OF LINES.

SOUTHERN AND WESTERN DISTRICTS.—During the year there have been 546 interruptions to communication, the average duration being eighteen hours; 108 for less than one hour; 148 for more than one hour and less than three hours; 80 for more than three hours and less than six hours; 47 for more than six hours and less than twelve hours; 69 for more than twelve hours and less than twenty-four hours; 61 for more than one day and less than two days; 23 for more than two days and less than seven days; 10 for more than seven days.

The principal causes of interruption have been—timber fallen on line, 67; crosses with telephone wires, 60; office faults, 55; broken pins and insulators, 48; storms, 37; defects in cables, 11.

The principal interruptions exceeding two days were:—4th April, 1894, between Isisford and Welford, 118 hours, wire submerged by flood; 4th April, between Woody Island and Whitecliffs, defect in cable, 552 hours; 13th August, Fisherman Island and Pile Light, defect in cable, 16 days; 29th August, Woody Island and Whitecliffs, defect in cable, 9 days; and 3rd October, same cause, 528 hours, and 3rd November, same cause, 3 days; 19th November, same cause, 3 days; 23rd November, same cause, 38 days; 28th November, Fisherman Island and Pile Light, defect in cable, 4 days; 4th January, 1895, Woody Island and Whitecliffs, still on (in cable); 10th January, 1895, Lake Nash and Camooweal, broken insulator, repairs delayed by flood, 16 days 7 hours; 25th January, Gladstone and Bustard Head, tree on line, repairs delayed by flood, 7 days 22 hours; 25th January, Miriam Vale, Gladstone, flood, 72 hours; 30th January, South Passage and Tangaluma, gales, 56 hours; 13th February, Cloncurry and Boulia, flood, 126 hours; Lake Nash and Urandangie, flood, 789 hours; 17th February, Lake Nash and Camooweal, flood, 266 hours; 22nd February, Cleveland and Dunwich, defect in cable, 70 hours.

NORTHERN DISTRICT.—It is satisfactory to note that the number of interruptions is considerably less than during the preceding year, and nearly all these were of short duration.

The total number of interruptions was 271, varying in duration from a few moments to 577 hours. The longest were caused by floods.

The interruptions may be classified as follow:—Office faults, 50; crosses from various causes, 36; trees on lines, 27; insulators broken by lightning, &c., 26; wire corroded, &c., and broken, 19; ant-eaten and broken pins, 18; broken ties and clips, 18; floods, 18; fallen decayed poles, 14; repairing parties, 12; birds flying against wires, 10; poles and wires damaged by wool teams, 7; strong winds, 6; brackets off poles, 5; bush fires, 2; cause unknown, 2; wire stolen by blacks, 1.

The greatest number of faults occurred in November, 1894 and February, 1895; 42 in the former, with an average duration of 11 hours 28 minutes, and 36 in the latter, with an average of 64 hours 25 minutes. Fifteen of the breaks in February were caused by unusually high floods at many places, carrying away the lines altogether where they crossed rivers and creeks and submerging the lines on low-lying country. Besides several interruptions of shorter time, these floods were the cause of a break-down of communication of 90 hours between Georgetown and Gilbert River; 120 hours between Junction Creek and Georgetown; 152 hours between Croydon and Gilbert River; 197 hours at Macrossan's Bridge; 200 hours between Charters Towers and Hillgrove; 220 hours between Junction Creek and Tate River; 270 hours between Donor's Hill and Normanton; 384 hours between Ravenswood and Mount McConnell; and 577 hours between Floraville and Normanton.

The most serious interruptions, and where the greatest damages occurred, were between Charters Towers and Hillgrove, where all our wires were broken in several places for nearly three miles and many poles swept away by the flood waters of Fletcher River and Big and Little Sandy Creeks.

Unfortunately the interruptions between Charters Towers and Hillgrove, and Normanton and Donor's Hill, existed together, so that for four days nearly all the stations in the Northern District were cut off from direct telegraphic communication with the south. Advantage was, however, taken of the several small steamers coasting frequently between Townsville and Cairns, to forward all accumulated telegrams by them. Efforts are being made to find a more satisfactory route for the lines between Charters Towers and Hillgrove, so as to reduce the risk, if possible, of such interruptions in the future.

SUMMARY TELEGRAPH SERVICE, 1894.

Number of telegraph stations	362
Miles of line	9,986
Miles of wire	17,801
Number of messages transmitted and received (including international)	991,773
Value of ordinary messages transmitted (excluding O.H.M.S., value £9,083 19s. 10d.)	£67,416 9s. 7d.
Revenue paid to Treasury (including £4,679 5s. 1d. on account of telephones)	£72,159 19s.
Cost of construction to date (including buildings)	£845,334 1s. 9d.

METEOROLOGY.

The Government Meteorologist reports as follows:—

"For economical reasons, voluminous annual reports and appendices thereto have been discontinued, and monthly reports and annual synopses are issued instead. It is thought that by this means the public are better served in this important branch of physical science, inasmuch as the information is brought as nearly up to date as is possible when dealing with monthly mean values. These are published in the *Government Gazette* and by other means, and circulated in all parts of the Colony. The work of the Chief Weather Bureau, since its inauguration in 1887, has very rapidly progressed in point of efficiency and distribution of stations and accuracy of observation. The Observers throughout the country are mainly officers of this Department who have been specially trained in meteorological duties. These stations, supplied with the best possible instruments, have now been placed in all parts of our vast territory, and additional ones will shortly be established in Cape York Peninsula with a view to giving earlier intimation of local conditions which precede heavy flooding in the Daintree, Mossman, and other northern rivers. The position of the Chief Weather Bureau as a federal institution is fully recognised by the public of the other Colonies. Forecasts are issued daily at my office in Brisbane for all parts of Australasia, including New Zealand and New Caledonia, and calculation shows that these are verified to an extent almost reaching 90 per cent. They are published regularly in the southern newspapers and are found to be of great practical utility, especially in shipping, pastoral, and agricultural interests. The forecasts for New Caledonia are cabled to the French settlement, by international arrangement, in return for the data which the French authorities so kindly send. It must be mentioned, however, that this Colony has been at the expense of largely equipping the New Caledonian stations, that at Gomen having been entirely started at the expense of this Colony. We have also stations in the New Hebrides, Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands; and although the receipt of data from these places is necessarily late, they prove of great value in the subsequent discussion of weather and climate.

"Lately, the entire meteorological service of Tasmania has been reorganised, at the request of that Government, by myself, wholly on the lines adopted in Queensland, and as a federal section of the Queensland Meteorological Service. A high-level station has also been established on the summit of Mount Wellington, as a counterpart in the southern hemisphere to the Ben Nevis Observatory in the northern; and it is believed that valuable results will be forthcoming. A complete account of the operations of the Chief Weather Bureau, Brisbane, will be found in the Queensland Postal Guide, which is issued quarterly.

"Daily weather-charts showing the distribution of atmosphere over that region lying between 10 degrees N. and 50 degrees S. latitude and between the meridians of 95 degrees E. and 175 degrees W. are published daily; and large standard charts embracing the regions lying between the parallels of 40 degrees N. and 55 degrees S. and the meridians of 30 degrees E. thence easterly to 130 degrees W., are issued periodically, as showing the march of the seasons and with a view to investigating the seasonal or long-range forecasting problem.

"I desire to take this official opportunity to tender my best thanks to the Directors of Foreign Observatories and the owners and masters of ships who most generously supply me with data from the vast area above-named, from time to time.

"A new branch of investigation has lately been taken up embracing that attaching to ocean currents. Current papers, as recommended by the Admiralty authorities, are supplied from the Chief Weather Bureau in eight different languages to all the principal shipping companies and their vessels trading to Australia and elsewhere, and valuable results showing the voyages of these bottle-papers, and hence the set of the currents or the influence of the winds, have already been received. A special report on this subject will be issued as soon as practicable and forwarded to the Government, the Admiralty, the shipping companies, and other maritime and scientific institutions.

"CLEMENT L. WRAGGE,
"Government Meteorologist."

JOHN McDONNELL,
Under Secretary and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 1st August, 1895.

Price 9d.]

By Authority: EDMUND GREGORY, Government Printer, William street, Brisbane.