

(No. 43.)



1871.

T A S M A N I A.

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y.

P O S T O F F I C E.

REPORT FROM THE SECRETARY ON THE EFFECT OF
THE REDUCED RATES ON INLAND AND INTERCOLONIAL
POSTAGE.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be
printed, November 8, 1871.



General Post Office, 6th November, 1871.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to forward herewith a Report on the working of this Department under the reduced Rates of Inland and Intercolonial Postage, that came into force on the 1st November last year.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

A. C. DOUGLAS, *Secretary.*

The Hon. THOS. D. CHAPMAN, Postmaster-General.

REPORT.

ON the 1st November, 1870, the Postage upon Inland Letters was reduced from Four-pence to Two-pence per half-ounce; and upon Intercolonial Letters, or Letters to Australia and New Zealand, from Six-pence to Three-pence per half-ounce. The effect of these reductions in the revenue of the Post Office has, as was anticipated, caused a large decrease in the amount derived from Postage Stamps; but, on the other hand, a large increase in the number of Inland and Intercolonial Letters has taken place, as shown by the Returns attached hereto.

In the first three quarters of the year 1870, the amount received at the Post Office for Postage Stamps sold was £12,248 4s. 1d.; and for the like period during the year 1871, the amount was £9427 4s. 6d.,—showing a loss for the first nine months of 1871, when compared with that period of 1870, of £2820 19s. 7d., all of which may be attributed to the reduction of the Postage on Inland and Intercolonial Letters.

It is to be regretted, however, that the present system of allowing Postage Stamps to be used for purposes of "The Stamp Act" prevents any calculations being made with certainty on matters connected with postal revenue; but, as there is no reason for supposing that any greater or lesser quantity of Postage Stamps than usual has been purchased for legal and other documents under "The Stamp Act," there is every reason for concluding that the difference in the cash receipts as shown above has resulted (with the exception of a small decrease in the number of Letters sent to England, &c., hereinafter referred to) from the alteration in the Postage on Inland and Intercolonial Letters.

In the correspondence with the United Kingdom and other places, excepting Intercolonial, a falling off has taken place in the number of Letters despatched during the first three quarters of this year, when compared with the first three quarters of last year, of 2595 Letters, or at the annual rate of 3460 Letters, or 8·6 per cent. This decrease may, however, be only of a temporary nature; but, at the same time, much business is now carried on between this and Melbourne that hitherto existed between this and London: therefore, the fact of the English Letters decreasing is not a matter to create much surprise.

The very large increase in the number of Inland Letters,—being at the rate of 140,829 per annum, or 31·9 per cent.; and of Intercolonial Letters,—being at the rate of 14,824 per annum, or 10·9 per cent., must prove a matter of considerable satisfaction; and, notwithstanding the deficiency that has occurred in the receipts from Postage, (a deficiency that will, no doubt, become much diminished every year by the gradual increase of Letters, &c.), a large compensating indirect advantage has in all probability accrued to the Country from the freedom given to business transactions by cheap Postage.

A. C. DOUGLAS, *Secretary.*

RETURN of the Amounts received at the General Post Office for Postage Stamps sold during the first Three Quarters of the Years 1870-71.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Amount received.</i>			<i>Decrease.</i>		
Nine Months 1870.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
	12,248	4	1	—		
Nine Months 1871.	9427	4	6	2820	19	7

RETURN of the Number of Letters posted in Tasmania for the United Kingdom and other Places (exclusive of Intercolonial), during the first Three Quarters of the Years 1870-71.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Number of Letters.</i>	<i>Decrease.</i>
Nine Months 1870.	30,219	—
Nine Months 1871.	27,624	2595

RETURN of the Number of Intercolonial Letters (or Letters for the Australian Colonies and New Zealand) posted in Tasmania during the first Three Quarters of the Years 1870-71.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Number of Letters.</i>	<i>Increase.</i>
Nine Months 1870.	84,037	—
Nine Months 1871.	95,155	11,118

RETURN of the Number of Inland Stamped Letters and Packets posted in Tasmania during the first Three Quarters of the Years 1870-71.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Inland Stamped Letters.</i>	<i>Inland Stamped Packets.</i>	<i>Increase of Letters.</i>	<i>Increase of Packets.</i>
1870. Nine Months...	331,534	8653	—	—
1871. Nine Months...	437,156	14,142	105,622	5489