



SUPPLEMENT
TO
**The Hongkong
Government Gazette**

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REPORT OF THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, FOR THE YEAR 1907.

*To be laid before the Legislative Council by Command of
His Excellency the Governor, May 28th, 1908.*

STAFF.

1. The staff of the Hongkong General Post Office including that at Kowloon and the Western Branch consists of 74 staff, clerks, and sorters, and 99 postmen, messengers and launch crew.

2. Of the higher Officers Mr. L. A. M. JOHNSTON, the Postmaster General, was on leave from March 23rd until December 31st, and Mr. T. H. MARTIN, Superintendent of the Registration Department, was on leave from July 31st until the end of the year. Mr. E. C. LEWIS, the Assistant Postmaster General, returned from leave on January 17th and Mr. A. J. REED, the Accountant, on February 19th.

3. During the absence on leave of the Postmaster General, his duties were performed by Mr. S. B. C. ROSS from March 23rd until July 28th, and for the remainder of the year by Mr. C. McI. MESSER.

4. Amongst the remainder of the staff there were 11 resignations, 2 deaths, 1 dismissal, 1 invalided, 3 transferred to other departments and 4 new appointments. In Shanghai there were one resignation and two deaths.

OFFICE ALTERATIONS.

5. The Chinese distributing office has been removed to the basement under the Local Delivery Room, and the space so rendered vacant has been made into a room for the storage of mails in transit through Hongkong.

6. An electric exhaust fan has been placed in the Foreign Mail room with the result that sickness due to impure atmosphere has been very greatly reduced.

MAILS.

7. The number of mail bags and packets dealt with in the General Post Office, Hongkong, amounted to 168,141 as against 160,921 in 1906 being an increase of 7,220. Further details are given in Table I.

REGISTRATION AND PARCEL BRANCH.

8. Registered articles and parcels handled in Hongkong amounted to 856,415 as against 770,820 in 1906, an increase of 85,595. Further particulars are given in Table II.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

9. A statement of Revenue and Expenditure is given in Table III. Revenue amounted to \$445,420.92 shewing an increase of \$24,966.88 over that of 1906 and an excess of \$27,220.92 over the estimate. Expenditure amounted to \$366,452.47 being an increase of \$6,968.39. The excess of Revenue over Expenditure being \$78,968.45, an increase of \$17,998.49 compared with last year. The profit was therefore 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ % of the revenue.

POSTAGE STAMPS.

10. Table IV shows a comparative statement of the sale of postage stamps at the various British Post Offices in China for the years 1906 and 1907. Table V shows the number of stamps of different denominations issued for sale during the years 1906 and 1907. A six cent stamp was introduced during the year, as under the new postage rate for Union Countries the postage on every succeeding ounce after the first is 6 cents.

MONEY ORDERS.

11. Although exchange ruled high during the year, the issue of money orders has decreased, while, on the other hand, the payment has largely increased. (Table VI.) The fact of the increase of the issue of orders on Japan is owing to Hongkong being the intermediary for the exchange of money orders between Australia and India and the other British Possessions in the East with Japan. About £1,000 of the increase in the sale of Imperial Postal Orders is accounted for by the establishment of another agency at Tientsin.

12. Remittances to the Colony by the means of Imperial Postal Orders have become more popular and are yearly increasing in volume. The reduction in the amount of commission on Local Postal Notes from 2% to 1% effected in 1905 has resulted in the marked increased use of this means of remitting money. \$22,877 in 1907 against \$12,728 and \$15,497 in 1905 and 1906 respectively.

13. The exchange of money orders with Macao, hitherto between Hongkong and Macao only, has been extended to all the British Agencies established in China. Direct exchange with Kiautschou also came into force in 1907.

14. A system of advice of payment of money orders, to be furnished to the remitter by the paying office at a fee of 10 cents for each order, was introduced, but the public has not availed itself of this innovation.

15. With a view to expediting the payment of money orders in the United Kingdom a new system of dealing with the advices has been introduced. Instead of forwarding all the advices together with the money order list to the exchange office of London for onward transmission to the paying office, these documents, after being certified, are sent direct from Hongkong to their respective offices of payment under separate covers. This arrangement has been found to possess considerable advantage over that previously in force, inasmuch as payment has frequently been effected a day and sometimes two days, earlier than could possibly have been the case under the old system.

16. On the first December a new system inaugurated by the Post Office of the Straits Settlements was introduced for the purpose of providing illiterate coolies with a means of taking their savings back to China by means of money orders payable to bearer without any question being raised as to identification. As up to date only \$150 has been sent this system does not appear to find favour.

DEAD LETTER OFFICE.

17. The total number of all articles returned to and despatched from Hongkong during the year 1907 amounted to 79,222, *viz.*, 37,354 of the former and 41,868 of the latter showing an increase of 7,554 on the total of the previous year (Table VII). Of the former, those originating in Hongkong, it was possible to return to the senders 10,747.

18. Enclosed in 47 of these unregistered returned letters, there were found articles of value, Bank Notes, Bank Drafts, Cheques, Money Orders, etc. These when possible were subjected to registration and returned to the senders.

19. The following correspondence failed to be delivered in Hongkong, *viz.*, Received from abroad—Letters 11,993, Post Cards 1,453, Other Articles 7,011—Locally, Letters 1,595, Post Cards 137, Other Articles 1,959.

20. There were found among the unregistered letters posted locally 75 containing coin, principally small amounts. These were nearly all Chinese letters and were returned to senders whenever possible.

21. Thirty-five post cards were posted bearing no address, and very many of them lacked the senders' names. Fifty post cards bearing imitations of postage stamps addressed to places in the United Kingdom had to be withdrawn owing to the entry of such cards into the United Kingdom being prohibited. These were returned when the senders' names and addresses could be ascertained.

22. On account of a regulation made on 28th November the following number of letters and circulars concerning lotteries were stopped and returned :—

Shanghai Watch Club... ..	249.
German Lottery Circulars	128.

PILLAR BOXES.

23. The total number of articles collected during the year from all pillar boxes was 168,496 against 122,899 in 1906 and 92,170 in 1905. Special postmen are detailed for the work of clearing these letter boxes.

CHINESE BRANCH.

24. The total number of Chinese registered articles delivered by the Chinese Branch at the General Post Office was 162,920 of which 103,793 were from the United States of America and Canada and 59,127 from China and other countries showing a total increase compared with the year 1906 of 20,472. The amount of ordinary correspondence dealt with has also largely increased.

POSTAL HONG LICENCES.

25. Thirty-eight Postal Hong licences and 120 licences to letter carriers were issued during the year. These numbers show a decrease of 6 Hong licences and 36 letter carrier licences. The decrease is due to the increased rate of postage on Hong Packets to and from Canton which was raised to 4 cents per half ounce. The Hongers are still in the habit of smuggling their letters on board steamers, instead of sending them through the Post Office for transmission. An appreciable increase in the number of Hong Packets received by the Post Office for transmission to Shanghai was due to one of these hongers being caught smuggling and fined \$200 by the Police Magistrate and having its licence cancelled.

WESTERN BRANCH POST OFFICE.

26. The amount of correspondence sent between this Branch Office and Canton was:— Despatched 485,563 letters, 1,214 other articles and 4,647 registered articles; Received 622,745 letters, 6,730 other articles and 3,390 registered articles. This is a total increase compared with last year of 531,788 letters and other articles and 4,637 registered articles. In addition to the above 14,651 Hong Packets were despatched and 19,577 received. The revenue of the sale of stamps amounted to \$13,928.38 compared with \$14,724.20 in the previous year.

TIENTSIN POST OFFICE.

27. This agency was established in October 1906. During the year 1907 the amount of correspondence despatched was 45,316 ordinary letters, 4,705 newspapers and packets, and 4,085 registered articles. Exclusive of the above 632 parcels of a nett weight of 2,174 lbs. were despatched. The nett weight of annual outward mail exclusive of parcels does not exceed 5,000 lbs. while the nett weight of inward mail amounts to about 75,000 lbs. a ratio of fifteen to one.

28. A through service *via* Harbin was started on 17th October and the use of the Siberian route has come increasingly into favour.

29. The incoming mail consisted of 1,276 bags of letters and papers from Shanghai, 253 bags from Hongkong, 88 bags from Chefoo and 2 bags of letters only from London. Also 191 boxes and bags of parcels were received from various quarters.

30. The sale of stamps amounted to \$6,025.92. Imperial Notes were sold to a value of £1,114.0.0 and Local Notes to a value of \$1,466.75.

LOSSES OF MAILS.

31. The mail for London, *via* Siberia from Shanghai on 30th March, 1907, was opened and ransacked on board the S.S. *Baltica*. The S.S. *Dakota* carrying a mail from America was wrecked off the coast of Japan. The S.S. *Sullberg* carrying a mail from Haiphong to Hongkong foundered during a typhoon and has never been heard of since.

RESULTS OF THE CONGRESS OF THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION
HELD AT ROME IN 1906.

32. The Rome Convention came into force on October 1st. The chief changes introduced by this convention were as follows :—

33. The transit charges were altered. Payments for land transit are fixed according to distance instead of one fixed amount for any distance. The Maritime transit charges have been reduced. The Russian Government is still allowed to charge 15 francs a kilogramme for transmission by the Siberian Railway.

34. The method of taking statistics has also been simplified. Under former conventions efforts were made to arrive at exactitude of statement, which experience has shown to be impossible, and which called for an expenditure of labour out of all keeping with the results attained. The new method will furnish results quite as satisfactory as those obtained under the former method, and with very much less trouble. The new method is to take gross weight of mails instead of nett weight and for offices of exchange on receiving open mails for forward transmission to other postal administrations to take credit according to the number of letters, post cards and other objects received and then to treat this correspondence as domestic. The transit charge for each letter sent in open mail being fixed at 6 centimes for each post card and other article 2½ centimes.

35. Statistics were taken for all mails starting during the first twenty-eight days of November, and the results of such statistics are now being worked out so that transit charges for the next six years may be determined.

36. The postal rates have been altered, an important reduction having been made in the letter rate. For Hongkong the rate was formerly fixed at 10 cents for every ½ ounce. The new rate is 10 cents for the first ounce and 6 cents for every additional ounce. In the case of countries belonging to the Imperial British penny postage scheme, the unit of weight has been increased from half an ounce to one ounce. At the Postal Agencies in China maintained by the Hongkong Post Office, the unit of weight has been only raised to 20 grammes instead of half an ounce, (about 14 grammes), 20 grammes being the unit of weight for countries in the Postal Union which adopt the metrical measures. The advantage to the public of Hongkong from these rates is very great. In writing a letter of moderate length, it will no longer be necessary to use paper so thin as to make the writing almost illegible, and if one wants to send a heavier letter the diminution in the charge is very considerable. Thus a letter from Hongkong to Germany weighing just 4 ounces used to cost 80 cents, now it only costs 28 cents.

Table II.

STATISTICS OF INTERNATIONAL, LOCAL AND AGENCIES REGISTERED
CORRESPONDENCE AND PARCELS FOR 1907.

Description of Correspondence.	International & Local.		Total 1907.	Total 1906.	Comparison with 1906.	
	Despatched.	Received.			Increase.	Decrease.
Insured Letters,.....	335	371	706	550	156	...
Registered Articles,.....	345,959	399,390	745,349	672,186	73,163	...
Insured Parcels <i>via</i> Gibraltar,.....	1,850	1,772	3,622	3,697	...	75
Insured Parcels <i>via</i> Brindisi,.....	102	129	231	214	17	...
Insured Parcels <i>via</i> Marseilles,.....	...	313	313	321	...	8
Ordinary Parcels <i>via</i> Gibraltar,.....	14,605	13,569	28,174	24,435	3,739	...
Ordinary Parcels <i>via</i> Brindisi,.....	271	331	602	507	95	...
Ordinary Parcels <i>via</i> Marseilles,.....	...	1,031	1,031	950	81	...
America, Manila and Honolulu Parcels,	1,827	2,841	4,668	4,251	417	...
German Parcels by German Steamers, .	438	1,861	2,299	2,547	...	248
French Parcels received by French Steamers,.....	...	958	958	910	48	...
Insured Indian Parcels,.....	501	500	} 68,462	60,252	8,210	...
Ordinary Indian Parcels,.....	1,274	1,737				
Australian Parcels,.....	1,057	818				
Japanese Parcels,.....	2,092	1,884				
Miscellaneous Parcels,.....	41,007	17,592				
	411,318	445,097	856,415	770,820	85,926	331
Parcels received for China Fleet,.....	...	2,267	2,267	2,410	...	143
Parcels, Shanghai and Agencies,.....	20,409	13,872	34,281	30,807	3,474	...
Registered Articles, Shanghai,.....	51,458	29,032	80,490	118,135	...	37,645
Registered Articles, Agencies,.....	2,920	2,133	5,053	4,715	338	...
(Exclusive of articles also passing } through Hongkong,)..... }	74,787	47,304	122,091	156,067	3,812	37,788

Grand Total for 1907, 978,506 ; increase of 51,619 against 1906.

Table III.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

Receipts.	1906.	1907.	Increase.	Decrease.	Expenditure.	1906.	1907.	Increase.	Decrease.
	\$	\$				\$	\$		
Sale of Stamps, } Hongkong,....	275,158.77	289,189.26	14,030.49	.....	Transit Payments } to the United } Kingdom,.....	17,656.45	6,739.70	.....	10,916.75
Do., at the } Agencies, ...	106,189.51	114,861.67	8,672.16	.....	Transit Payments } to other Coun- } tries,.....	45,128.85	45,164.12	.....	24.73
Unpaid Postage,	6,763.24	5,375.37	.....	1,387.87	Gratuities to } Shipmasters for } the conveyance } of Mails,.....	3,799.99	4,091.38	291.39	.....
Boxholders' Fees,	7,480.32	7,601.20	120.88	.....	Contribution to- } wards P. & O. } Subsidy,.....	116,418.94	116,430.19	11.25	.....
Commission on } Money Orders, }	14,613.16	14,045.11	.....	568.05	Commission on } Money Orders, }	2,112.72	1,962.27	.....	150.45
Profit on Ex- } change on } Money Order } transactions, }	9,665.76	12,781.98	3,116.22	.....	Working Expenses,	174,367.13	192,124.81	17,757.68	.....
Interest on } Money Order } Fund,..... }	546.73	1,458.43	911.70	.....	Total Expenditure,	359,484.08	366,452.47	18,060.32	11,091.93
Void Money } Orders and } Postal Notes, }	36.55	107.90	71.35	.....	Profit,.....	60,969.96	78,968.45	.....	.....
Total Receipts, ...	420,454.04	445,420.92	26,922.80	1,955.92	Totals,.....\$	420,454.04	445,420.92		

Table IV.

REVENUE FROM THE SALE OF POSTAGE STAMPS, &C., AT THE BRITISH POST OFFICES
IN CHINA, 1906 AND 1907.

	1906.	1907.
Shanghai	\$65,718.97	\$65,063.42
Amoy	4,610.14	9,960.49*
Canton.....	11,205.60	10,827.37
Chefoo.....	1,610.87	1,609.71
Foochow	4,442.29	4,783.67
Hankow	4,788.95	3,925.03
Hoihow	1,605.27	1,202.33
Liu Kung Tau.....	4,272.72	4,424.51
Ningpo.....	499.82	527.33
Swatow	5,660.96	6,374.50
Tientsin †.....	1,773.92	6,163.31
	<u>\$106,189.51</u>	<u>\$114,861.67</u>

* Of this amount \$2,771.42 was in respect of sales during the year 1906.

† Opened 1st October, 1906.

Table V.

POSTAGE STAMPS, etc., issued for SALE in HONGKONG and at the BRITISH POST OFFICES
in CHINA during the years 1906 and 1907.

	Denomination.	1906.	1907.
Postage Stamps,	1 cent.	501,115	426,000
	2 cents.	2,044,075	2,330,880
	4 "	2,445,115	2,414,160
	5 "	817,675	879,600
	6 "	.....	17,760
	8 "	85,195	87,600
	10 "	1,036,555	1,108,560
	12 "	27,835	31,440
	20 "	149,275	139,642
	30 "	64,795	67,680
	50 "	62,935	62,520
	1 dollar.	50,315	44,581
	2 dollars.	14,055	18,148
	3 "	5,285	5,600
Books of Stamps,	5 "	3,145	2,420
	10 "	3,405	2,870
Post Cards,	1 "	5,994	6,075
	1 cent.	22,695	26,251
	2 cents.	240	520
Newspaper Wrappers,	4 "	17,140	18,900
	8 "	60	450
	2 "	2,405	1,325
Postage Envelopes,	4 "	905	528
	1½ "	1,020	925
	2½ "	2,340	1,620
	4½ "	6,590	8,225
	5½ "	240	200
Registration Envelopes,.....	10½ "	300	200
	11 "	10,925	11,070

Table VI.

STATEMENT OF MONEY ORDER TRANSACTIONS.

COUNTRIES.	IN STERLING.		IN GOLD DOLLARS.		IN GOLD YEN.		IN SILVER DOLLARS.		IN RUPEES.		IN MARKS.	
	Orders Issued.	Orders Paid.	Orders Issued.	Orders Paid.	Orders Issued.	Orders Paid.	Orders Issued.	Orders Paid.	Orders Issued.	Orders Paid.	Orders Issued.	Orders Paid.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	\$ c.	\$ c.	Yen. Sen.	Yen. Sen.	\$ c.	\$ c.	Rs As.	Rs As.	Mks. Pfs.	Mks. Pfs.
United Kingdom,	17,400 2 1	17,277 18 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Queensland,	103 18 2	18,778 8 6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
New South Wales,	998 13 9	3,040 19 10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Victoria,	582 19 1	1,690 1 7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
South Australia,	128 15 3	1,646 17 3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tasmania,	47 18 8	445 2 11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
New Zealand,	376 9 11	1,170 1 11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Western Australia,	93 11 7	3,286 13 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Transvaal,	4 19 9	787 17 5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cape Colony,	3 9 6	167 4 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
United States of America and Hawaii, .....	...	...	5,207.63	20,415.83	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Canada, .....	...	...	1,413.12	11,803.64	256,758.10	45,714.22	...	...	...	...	...	...
Japan, .....	...	...	...	...	3,989.26	18,653.17	...	...	...	...	...	...
Straits Settlements, .....	...	...	...	...	212.02	13,747.58	...	...	...	...	...	...
Federated Malay States, .....	...	...	...	...	160.63	5,858.29	...	...	...	...	...	...
British North Borneo, .....	...	...	...	...	82.30	571.90	...	...	...	...	...	...
Siam, .....	...	...	...	...	1,020.42	1,712.92	...	...	...	...	...	...
Macao, .....	...	...	...	...	139.51	462.87	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kiautschou, .....	...	...	...	...	54,697.54	24,920.50	...	...	...	...	...	...
Shanghai, .....	...	...	...	...	...	41,587.49	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agencies in China, .....	...	...	...	...	...	230.08	...	...	...	...	...	...
Base Post Office, .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
India, .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ceylon, .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Germany, .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	31,983.94	63,254.74
Total in 1907,	19,740 17 9	48,291 6 3	6,620.75	32,219.47	256,758.10	45,714.22	60,301.68	107,744.80	248,060 11	157,282 15 9	31,983.94	64,254.74
Total in 1906,	21,022 4 8	36,640 0 4	7,469.10	23,964.73	198,694.09	44,084.89	62,417.08	92,016.32	284,048 11	160,938 3 0	40,062.80	33,158.48

STATEMENT OF BRITISH POSTAL ORDERS ISSUED AND PAID AT HONGKONG
AND AT THE AGENCIES IN CHINA.

	ORDERS ISSUED.									
	VALUES.								AMOUNT.	
	<i>d.</i> -6	<i>s. d.</i> 1/-	<i>s. d.</i> 1/6	<i>s. d.</i> 2/6	<i>s. d.</i> 5/-	<i>s. d.</i> 10/-	<i>s. d.</i> 10/6	<i>s. d.</i> 20/-	£	<i>s. d.</i>
Total in 1907,.....	952	2,944	2,169	2,132	3,216	3,983	736	7,982	11,764	1 6
„ 1906,.....	683	2,248	1,546	1,578	2,514	3,018	437	6,438	9,247	12 0

ORDERS PAID.

	No.	Amount.		
		£	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Total in 1907,	4,314	3,269	4	9
„ 1906,	3,082	2,208	0	8

STATEMENT OF LOCAL POSTAL NOTES ISSUED AT HONGKONG
AND AT THE AGENCIES IN CHINA.

	VALUES.								AMOUNT.	
	25 <i>cts.</i>	50 <i>cts.</i>	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$10.00	\$	<i>cts.</i>
Total in 1907,.....	354	470	375	408	461	515	828	1,378	22,877	50
„ 1906,.....	217	344	714	275	286	331	485	940	15,497	25

Table VII.

RETURN OF DEAD LETTERS RECEIVED AND DESPATCHED IN THE DEAD LETTER BRANCH.

	RETURNED TO HONGKONG.			RETURNED BY HONGKONG.		
	Letters.	Post Cards.	Other Articles.	Letters.	Post Cards.	Other Articles.
United Kingdom,	2,819	873	626	2,872	406	9,225
India,	947	42	92	2,744	540	648
Straits Settlements,.....	3,353	44	54	2,578	75	803
Ceylon,.....	146	31	7	99	38	52
Batavia, N. I.,.....	98	2	...	359	28	89
Egypt,	38	5	2	133	41	65
Continent of Europe, .....	...	...	...	842	326	1,960
U. S. of America,	3,358	435	170	2,054	235	2,155
Canada,	395	40	24	339	34	241
Mexico,	175	1	13	...	...	...
Honolulu,	134	7	5	...	...	...
Manila,.....	152	18	5	301	30	67
Japan,.....	295	144	312	580	329	307
China,.....	4,530	81	1,244	7,690	352	753
French Indo-China,	92	4	27	379	19	78
Foreign Offices in China, .....	...	...	...	317	37	13
Macao, .....	...	...	...	168	11	11
Siam,	212	2	7	68	10	8
Victoria,	126	18	9	106	15	81
New South Wales,	112	19	10	230	51	112
South Australia,	17	4	...	24	9	12
Western Australia,	50	2	6	30	5	41
Queensland,.....	32	8	3	57	8	34
Tasmania,	14	...	...	12	10	2
New Zealand,	74	40	8	54	12	29
Natal (inclusive of all South Africa), .....	...	...	...	246	13	27
Transvaal,	399	32	8	...	...	...
Other Places,.....	2,680	582	1,408	135	2	2
Shanghai,.....	3,164	437	5,808	...	...	...
B. P. O.'s in China,	557	28	638	...	...	...
Total in 1907,	23,969	2,899	10,486	22,417	2,636	16,815
Total in 1906,	19,968	2,629	12,327	17,971	2,410	16,363