

Appendix Q.

REPORT ON THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, HONGKONG, FOR THE YEAR 1914.

I.—STAFF.

Mr. E. D. C. Wolfe acted as Colonial Treasurer in addition to his other duties from the 14th April. Mr. M. J. Breen, Assistant Postmaster General, was appointed Assistant District Officer on 1st January, 1914, but continued to perform the duties of Assistant Postmaster General until the 19th March when he was appointed to act as Assistant Colonial Secretary. He was relieved by Mr. N. L. Smith who performed the duties of Assistant Postmaster General throughout the year. Mr. J. D. Lloyd was appointed Assistant Postmaster General on the 12th January, 1914. He returned from leave on 27th November and took up the duties of Deputy Registrar and Accountant, Supreme Court. Mr. R. A. J. Savage, formerly Superintendent of Mails, retired on pension on the 14th February and was succeeded by Mr. T. Hynes of the Sanitary Department who took up his new duties on his return from leave on the 14th December. Mr. G. G. Burnett, senior clerk, went home on sick leave on the 26th September and Mr. R. C. Watt of the Hongkong Police was attached to the General Post Office as Postal Inspector, the indoor duties of the senior clerk being divided among two members of the clerical postal staff.

In the clerical staff 2 clerks resigned, 2 shroffs died, 2 were transferred to other Departments and one was dismissed. Six new appointments were made and one clerk was transferred to the General Post Office from the Supreme Court.

One new post, that of 6th Grade shroff, was created when the new Branch Post Office was opened in Saiyingpun.

All the new clerks appointed were selected from among the Staff of Probationer Sorters.

2.—MAILS.

The number of mails, mail bags and packets despatched showed an increase of 3,647 over the 1913 figures, but those received decreased by 15,382. The total number of mail bags and packets dealt with amounted to 250,304 as compared with 262,039 in the preceding year. The decrease is entirely due to the war and the consequent withdrawal of a large number of mail steamers, notably those of the Canadian Pacific Railway, but it is interesting to note that in spite of the unsettled state of affairs the despatches from the Colony should show a slight increase.

The number of bags and packets sent in transit through the Post Office amounted to 72,955, *viz.*, 560 less than in 1913. The parcel receptacles handled showed an increase over the previous year, the figure being 11,998 as compared with 10,602. Full details appear in Table I.

3.—REGISTRATION AND PARCEL BRANCH.

Registered articles and parcels handled in Hongkong amounted to 910,496 as compared with 1,026,558 in 1913. The decrease of 116,062 articles and parcels handled is mainly due to the war but the entry of China into the Postal Union in September and the consequent transmission of closed mails to various ports in South China direct to some extent account for the decrease.

Registered articles despatched and received *via* Siberia totalled 58,995 as compared with 74,323 in 1913, 70,002 in 1912 and 54,207 in 1911. The decrease of 15,328 articles as compared with 1913 is accounted for by the less frequent arrival of steamers owing to the absorption of a large number as transports and merchant cruisers. A detailed statement is given in Table II.

4.—REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

Table III contains a statement of Revenue and Expenditure for the year. Revenue amounted to \$398,426.38, a decrease of \$40,762.99 as compared with the year 1913. The decrease in the sale of Postage Stamps amounted to \$42,065.35 due to the war, and the increase under the head Boxholders' Fees was brought about by the introduction of Private Letter Boxes in the Chinese Branch, which new source of revenue yielded \$1,092. The expenditure amounted to \$371,646.06 a decrease of \$250,941.45; but it must be borne in mind that large claims in respect of the Hongkong share of the Peninsular and Oriental contract and the Siberian mail service had to be met in 1913. The balance of revenue over expenditure amounted to \$26,780.32.

5.—MONEY ORDERS.

The expansion of business in the Money Order Department, reported from year to year, has this year been unfortunately arrested on account not only of the war in Europe but also of the Revolution in Mexico. The decrease of £17,104 consists mainly of the cessation of Chinese remittances from the United Kingdom, Mexico (through the intermediary of Japan which has a direct line of steam communication with that country), the Straits, Burmah and the German Possessions in the Pacific; and it likewise accounts for the decrease in the payment of British Postal Orders (£1,278) which, as stated in last year's report, are extensively made use of by Chinese in the various British possessions.

There is also a decrease of £1,856 on the sale of British Postal Orders, due no doubt to the many calls on the people on account of the war, but also in a lesser degree to the absence of the Fleet and

the reduction of the British Garrisons in the East. The vagaries of the silver market and the puzzling fluctuations in the silver dollar currencies obtaining in each China Port and Hongkong would account for the greater demand for Local Postal Notes (increase about \$9,000) for postal remittances. Further details appear in Tables VI, VII, and VIII.

6.—CHINESE BRANCH OF THE GENERAL POST OFFICE.

The total number of Chinese registered articles handled by this Branch amounted to 216,132 as compared with 247,462 in 1913 a decrease of 31,330. Of these articles 136,824 were received from the United States of America and Canada and 79,308 from China and other countries.

The figures for the last three years are as follows :—

	1912.	1913.	1914.
From U.S.A. and Canada,	156,541	160,794	136,824
„ China and other countries, . .	77,613	86,668	79,308
Total,	<u>234,154</u>	<u>247,462</u>	<u>216,132*</u>

The Hong licences of 27 Chinese firms who had previously held such licences were renewed. No new licences were issued.

7.—SHEUNGWAN DISTRICT BRANCH POST OFFICE.

(Formerly Western B.P.O.)

This office deals with the bulk of the Chinese correspondence passing between Hongkong and Canton. During the year 1,000,657 letters, 10,530 other articles and 4,127 registered letters were despatched to Canton and 973,978 letters, 5,284 other articles and 4,599 registered letters, were received from Canton. The number of letters, other articles and registered letters despatched exceeded the figures for 1913 by 214,720 but as in 1913 the total letters, other articles and registered letters received show a decrease which amounts to 101,376 for the year under review. This decrease can only be accounted for by the fact that the Chinese Post Office in Canton apparently prefers to send its Chinese mails to the General Post Office direct rather than to forward them to Sheungwan Branch Post Office. The total number of Chinese letters received in Hongkong shows no general tendency to decrease. Statistics of ordinary Chinese correspondence are now being kept in the Chinese Branch of the General Post Office so that it will in future be possible to give the total number of Chinese letters despatched from and received in Hongkong.

The number of postal hong packets despatched from this branch amounted to 7,331 and the number received to 9,075 as compared with 7,590 despatched and 362* received in 1913, and 8,815 despatched and 9,879 received in 1912.

* Note.—The small number received in 1913 was due to the despatch of most of the hong packets from Canton to the Chinese Branch Post Office, General Post Office, where no postal hong statistics were kept.

The revenue derived from the sale of stamps rose from \$75,760.80 in 1913 to \$89,439.33, an increase of \$13,678.53.

8.—SAIYINGPUN DISTRICT BRANCH POST OFFICE.

A new Branch Post Office was opened in the West of the City of Victoria on the 1st of May, 1914, to meet the requirements, not only of the University of Hongkong which is in the immediate vicinity, but also the needs of a thickly populated district which has hitherto been entirely unprovided for. During the 8 months of the year in which business was transacted at this Branch 19,177 ordinary letters, other articles, and registered letters were despatched to the General Post Office for transmission abroad and 28,426 to Sheungwan Branch Post Office for Canton. The mails received for delivery amounted to 123,986 from the General Post Office and 71,915 from Sheungwan Branch Post Office (Canton correspondence).

The revenue derived from the sale of stamps amounted to \$5,108.22.

9.—TSIM SHA TSUI (KOWLOON) DISTRICT BRANCH POST OFFICE.

This Branch Post Office was established in 1898 on the mainland to supply the requirements of the increasing non-Chinese population resident there. No statistics of the correspondence dealt with have been kept in the past but they are now being taken. Accurate information of the business done at this Branch Post Office will therefore be available in future. The most important feature of this Branch is the comparatively large money order business transacted mainly on behalf of the Indian troops stationed in Kowloon.

The revenue derived from the sale of postage stamps amounted to \$14,718.03 and revenue stamps \$2,338.90.

10.—MISCELLANEOUS.

The chief feature of the year was the outbreak of the European war which has materially affected the General Post Office and which accounts for the decrease of postal business and of the postal revenue. On the outbreak of war the movements of ships became very erratic, a large number were withdrawn, and serious delays occurred in the arrival and despatch of mails. A considerable improvement had however been effected by the end of the year, the only non-enemy service which remained suspended being that of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, the whole of whose Pacific fleet had been requisitioned by the Admiralty. It is a matter for congratulation that the Siberian mail service which was entirely suspended in August was re-opened in less than a month and though the service is slower than before the (war mails now reaching the Colony in 32 days on an average which before the war arrived in 20 days,) it is very satisfactory to find that this service is working so smoothly under prevailing conditions. Only two mails have been lost owing to the sinking of the S.S. *Atle* in the North

Sea, *viz.*, those dated the 7th and 8th November from London, and the services to all allied and neutral countries are working satisfactorily. The services to enemy countries were suspended shortly after the outbreak of war and are still suspended.

The entry of China into the Universal Postal Union which took effect on September 1st has brought about a reduction in the work of the General Post Office which is much appreciated. Most of the correspondence formerly sent *à découvert* to Hongkong for onward transmission to China and *vice versa* now passes through the General Post Office in closed mails entailing considerably less work on the part of the General Post Office Staff. The local rates of postage from Hongkong to China which were in existence prior to her entry into the Union are still in force and it is hoped will be maintained in the interests of the Chinese Post Office no less than the General Post Office, Hongkong.

E. D. C. WOLFE,
Postmaster General.

23rd March, 1915.

Table I.

Mails Received and Despatched during 1914.

	To and From Hongkong.			For H.M. Ships on China Station.	For Foreign Men-of-War.	Sent in Transit through Hongkong.		Steamers Carrying Mails.	
	Bags.	Packets.	Loose Letter Boxes.	Bags.	Bags.	Bags and Packets.	Boxes and Baskets.	Arrivals.	Depart- tures.
Received in 1914,	111,226	13,528	1,312	2,404	463	...	...	4,910	...
Received in 1913,	121,146	18,990	1,621	7,382	1,205	...	...	4,944	...
Increase,	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Decrease,	9,920	5,462	309	4,978	742	...	...	34	...
Despatched in 1914,	124,723	827	879	2,085	925	72,955	11,998	...	5,294
Despatched in 1913,	121,358	545	1,472	5,660	1,376	73,515	10,602	...	5,886
Increase,	3,365	282	...	...	...	...	1,396	...	...
Decrease,	...	...	593	3,575	451	560	...	...	592

Table II.

Statistics of International and Hongkong Registered Correspondence and Parcels for the year 1914.

Description of Correspondence.	International and Local.		Total 1914.	Total 1913.	Comparison with 1913.	
	Despatched.	Received.			Increase.	Decrease.
Insured Letters,	1,787	2,730	4,517	3,864	653	.....
Registered Articles,	273,533	433,113	756,646	827,944	.....	71,298
Registered Articles <i>viâ</i> Siberia,	41,938	17,057	58,995	74,323	.....	15,328
Insured Parcels <i>viâ</i> Gibraltar,	2,169	2,471	4,640	4,589	51	.....
Insured Parcels <i>viâ</i> Brindisi,	130	.....	130	240	.....	110
Insured Parcels <i>viâ</i> Marseilles, .....	.....	511	511	1,079	.....	568
Ordinary Parcels <i>viâ</i> Gibraltar,	7,085	11,581	18,666	24,556	.....	5,890
Ordinary Parcels <i>viâ</i> Brindisi,	103	.....	103	332	.....	229
Ordinary Parcels <i>viâ</i> Marseilles, .....	.....	1,299	1,299	2,932	.....	1,633
Cash on Delivery Parcels, .....	.....	189	189	435	.....	246
<i>Carried forward,.....</i>	326,745	518,951	845,696	940,294	704	95,302

Table II,—Continued.

Description of Correspondence.	International and Local.		Total 1914.	Total 1913.	Comparison with 1913.	
	Despatched.	Received.			Increase.	Decrease.
<i>Brought forward</i> ,.....	326,745	518,951	845,696	940,294	704	95,302
America, Manila and Honolulu Parcels, ...	2,175	5,829	8,004	8,195	.....	191
German Parcels by German Ships,	125	1,676	1,801	3,626	.....	1,825
French Parcels by French Ships, .....	.....	989	989	1,418	.....	429
India Insured Parcels,	749	212	.....	.....	.....	.....
India Ordinary Parcels,	1,485	2,610	.....	.....	.....	.....
Australian Parcels,	1,529	572	.....	.....	.....	.....
Japan Parcels,	1,468	3,622	52,703	70,947	.....	18,244
Miscellaneous Parcels,	24,335	16,005	.....	.....	.....	.....
Parcels <i>via</i> Siberia,	116	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Parcels received for China Fleet, .....	.....	1,303	1,303	2,078	.....	775
Total,.....	358,727	551,769	910,496	1,026,558	704	116,766

Grand Total for 1914:—910,496. Decrease of 116,062.

Table III.

Revenue and Expenditure.

Receipts.	1913.	1914.	Increase.	Decrease.	Expenditure.	1913.	1914.	Increase.	Decrease.
	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$
Sale of Postage Stamps,	397,083.40	355,018.05	...	42,065.35	Carriage of Mails :--				
Unpaid Postage,	3,977.40	3,761.73	...	215.67	Share of P. & O. Mail Subsidy.				
Boxholders' Fees,	4,909.00	6,111.00	1,202.00	...	Year 1913,	133,193.78	115,964.63	...	17,229.15
Commission on Money Orders					4th Quarter, 1912, ..				
and Postal Notes,	13,814.54	14,210.81	396.27	...	Transit Payments :--				
Profit on Exchange on Money					Year 1913,				
Order transactions,	18,620.95	17,794.06	...	826.89	Mails sent <i>ad</i>				
Interest on Money Order Fund,	773.23	1,418.55	645.32	...	Siberia years				
Void Money Orders and Postal					1910 & 1911, ..	332,432.21			
Notes,	10.85	112.18	101.33	...	Year 1914,				
					Deduct amount				
Total Receipts,	439,189.37	398,426.38	2,344.92	43,107.91	recovered from				
Deficit,	188,398.14	...	...	...	China for years				
					1911 & 1912, ..				
					Working Expenses,	156,961.52	93,146.00		
							162,535.43	5,573.91	
					Total Expenditure,	622,587.51	371,646.06	5,573.91	256,515.86
					Profit,	...	26,780.82	...	...
					Total,	622,587.51	398,426.38	...	...

Table IV.

Postage Stamps, etc., issued for sale in Hongkong
during the years 1913 and 1914.

	Denomina- tion.	1913.	1914.	Increase + Decrease —
Postage Stamps,	1 cent.	639,840	571,437	— 68,403
„	2 cents.	3,710,200	3,773,757	+ 63,557
„	4 „	2,220,860	2,056,077	— 164,783
„	6 „	74,160	56,637	— 17,523
„	8 „	68,880	49,437	— 19,443
„	10 „	1,168,300	1,049,277	— 119,023
„	12 „	43,920	44,393	+ 473
„	20 „	46,560	33,957	— 12,603
„	25 „	...	10,553	+ 10,553
„	30 „	55,500	40,197	— 15,303
„	50 „	42,960	43,853	+ 893
„	1 dollar.	27,725	22,292	— 5,433
„	2 dollars.	13,156	12,022	— 1,134
„	3 „	3,084	1,975	— 1,109
„	5 „	4,225	4,412	+ 187
„	10 „	5,249	4,516	— 733
Books of Stamps,	1 dollar.	7,260	6,475	— 785
Post Cards,	1 cent.	51,270	54,139	+ 2,869
„	2 cents.	300	472	+ 172
„	4 „	16,550	15,252	— 1,298
„	8 „	100	347	+ 247
Newspaper Wrappers,	2 „	17,700	14,497	— 3,203
„	4 „	600	...	— 600
Postage Envelopes,	1½ „	...	...	...
„	2½ „	3,400	...	— 3,400
„	4½ „	12,075	12,694	+ 619
„	5½ „	...	...	...
„	10½ „	300	...	— 300
Registration Envelopes,	11 „	12,872	11,572	— 1,300

Table V.

Revenue and Expenditure of the Post Office for the years 1905 to 1914.

Year.	Total Revenue. \$ c.	Total Expenditure. \$ c.	Profit + Loss — \$ c.	Percentage of Expenditure to Revenue. %	Military Con- tribution.		Net Profit + Net Loss — after deducting Military Con- tribution. \$ c.
					\$	c.	
1905,	414,838.19	585,449.25	— 170,611.06	141.12	82,967.64		— 253,578.70
1906,	420,454.04	339,484.08	+ 60,969.96	85.49	84,090.81		— 23,120.85
1907,	445,420.92	366,452.47	+ 78,968.45	82.27	89,084.18		— 10,115.73
1908,	412,431.60	371,486.17	+ 40,945.43	90.07	82,486.32		— 41,540.89
1909,	444,046.58	510,729.99	— 66,683.41	115.01	88,809.32		— 155,492.73
1910,	519,066.54	470,984.35	+ 48,082.19	90.74	103,813.31		— 55,731.12
1911,	399,217.15	422,267.97	— 23,050.82	105.77	79,843.43		— 102,894.25
1912,	401,054.32	296,867.12	+ 104,187.20	74.02	80,210.86		+ 23,976.34
1913,	439,189.37	622,557.51	— 183,368.14	141.76	87,837.87		— 271,236.01
1914,	398,426.38	371,646.06	+ 26,780.32	93.27	79,685.27		— 52,904.95

Table VI.

Money Order Transactions during 1913 and 1914.

Country.	1914.		1913.		Increase.		Decrease.	
	Orders issued.	Orders paid.	Orders issued.	Orders paid.	Orders issued.	Orders paid.	Orders issued.	Orders paid.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
United Kingdom,	14,080 9 1	15,667 10 10	16,070 10 11	23,369 6 7	.....	.....	1,990 1 10	7,701 15 9
Queensland,	129 5 0	18,429 4 11	108 18 10	14,008 9 8	20 6 2	4,420 15 3	.....	.....
New South Wales,	616 3 1	4,532 7 7	672 13 11	4,419 5 11	.....	113 1 8	56 10 10	.....
Victoria,	393 9 5	1,712 18 6	313 0 3	1,170 12 7	80 9 2	542 5 11	.....	.....
South Australia,	44 12 10	1,915 14 11	86 8 1	1,748 6 11	.....	167 8 0	41 15 3	.....
Tasmania,	8 10 7	521 12 5	10 6 1	387 17 1	.....	133 15 4	1 15 6	.....
New Zealand,	83 13 11	1,314 6 0	65 18 11	1,415 19 1	17 15 0	.....	.....	101 13 1
Western Australia,	65 6 2	4,157 19 1	127 4 4	4,859 9 4	.....	.....	61 18 2	701 10 3
Union of South Africa,	53 10 3	611 13 4	57 1 8	510 17 8	.....	.....	3 11 5	.....
United States of America,	1,037 6 4	8,343 3 9	1,289 16 0	7,878 16 9	.....	100 15 8	252 9 8	.....
Canada,	562 15 5	3,108 14 2	416 8 9	3,894 16 7	146 6 8	.....	.....	786 2 5
Philippine Islands,	200 18 8	2,132 13 1	384 18 5	2,589 5 9	.....	.....	183 19 9	456 12 8
Japan,	29,094 14 4	5,658 5 3	29,293 15 8	8,196 2 10	.....	.....	199 1 4	2,537 17 7
Straits Settlements,	1,695 2 7	1,596 10 1	1,686 1 9	2,159 11 8	9 0 10	.....	.....	563 1 7
Federated Malay States,	224 4 1	3,427 3 10	99 15 6	4,817 3 7	124 8 7	.....	.....	1,389 19 9
Carried forward,	£ 48,200 1 9	73,129 17 9	50,682 19 1	81,426 2 0	398 6 5	5,942 8 10	2,791 3 9	14,238 13 1

Table VI,—Continued.

Money Order Transactions during 1913 and 1914,—Continued.

Country.	1914.			1913.			Increase.			Decrease.		
	Orders issued.	Orders paid.		Orders issued.	Orders paid.		Orders issued.	Orders paid.		Orders issued.	Orders paid.	
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
<i>Brought forward,</i>	48,290 1 9	73,129 17 9	50,682 19 1	81,426 2 0			398 6 5	5,942 8 10		2,791 3 9	14,238 13 1	
British North Borneo,	139 11 0	1,154 4 8	96 5 9	2,056 18 3			43 5 3				902 13 7	
Saravak,	6 0 10	457 15 0	18 10	376 3 6			5 2 0	81 11 6				
Siam,	8 1 11	55 16 10	4 10 2	72 12 1			3 11 9				16 15 3	
Macao,	413 1 2	385 17 11	140 17 1	395 10 11			272 4 1				9 13 0	
German Post Office in China,	210 9 9	179 12 4	540 14 8	208 16 8						330 4 11	29 4 4	
Shanghai,	5,580 12 1	7,034 11 9	6,218 10 6	7,031 8 6				3 3 3		637 18 5		
Agencies in China,		6,712 5 4		6,906 10 0							194 4 8	
India,	32,781 16 1	10,840 18 2	31,230 14 9	14,809 17 6			1,551 1 4				3,968 19 4	
Ceylon,	256 5 3	357 5 7	402 10 11	452 18 10						146 5 8		
Germany,	757 5 7	2,902 1 5	1,278 6 1	4,289 3 2						521 0 6	1,387 1 9	
French Indo-China,	125 3 11	2,067 9 6	112 5 2	2,215 12 6			12 18 9				148 3 0	
Base Post Office,												
Total,	88,568 9 4	105,277 16 3	90,708 13 0	120,241 13 11			2,286 9 7	6,027 3 7		4,426 13 3	20,991 1 3	
Net Decrease for 1914, £17,104 1 4	£193,846 5 7		£210,950 6 11				£8,313 13 2			£25,417 14 6		

Table VII.

British Postal Orders issued and paid at Hongkong, and at the Agencies in China.

ORDERS ISSUED.															Amount.	
VALUES.																
s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.		d.
0	6	1	0	1	6	2	6	5	0	10	0	10	6	20	0	£ s. d. 17,898 14 6 19,754 6 6
Total in 1914,		1,921		4,939'		4,023		5,788		6,012		943		11,899		
Total in 1913,		2,500		5,781		4,779		6,712		6,956		1,057		12,798		

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ORDERS PAID.															Amount.
.....															
Total in 1914,...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13,849	£ s. d. 10,959 18 9
Total in 1913,...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15,217	12,237 13 11

Table VIII.

Statement of Local Postal Notes issued at Hongkong, and at the Agencies in China.

	VALUES.								Amount.
	25 cts.	50 cts.	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$10.00	\$ cts.
.....									
Total in 1914,.....	460	604	679	727	817	849	1,603	3,027	46,682.00
Total in 1913,.....	537	617	505	406	650	597	1,049	2,639	37,732.75