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C.S.O.—11428/25.

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
4th August, 1925.

THE ACTING GOVERNOR directs the publication, for general information, of the following Annual Report on the working of the Postal and Telegraph Department for the year ended the 31st December, 1924.

By command,  
CHAS. W. DOORLY,  
Acting Colonial Secretary.

General Post Office,  
Jamaica, 25th June, 1925.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following report upon the Postal and Telegraph Department for the year ended 31st December, 1924.

2. The Cash collections are as follows:—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Postal ..	68,765	16	8½			
Telegraph ..	15,818	6	10½	84,584	3	7
Import Duty :	39,926	10	10			
Judicial Stamps ..	5,843	19	0			
Impressed Stamps, etc.	1,048	3	7½			
Quinine	498	5	7¼	47,316	19	0¾
				131,901	2	7¼

3. The sum of £47,316 19s. 0¾d, representing the collections made by this Department which do not belong to Postal Revenue, has been duly transferred through the Treasury to the appropriate accounts. With the exception of Quinine all the items fell off as compared with last year, the greatest difference being in the Import Duty Account which shows a reduction of £4,759. This is the first check received in the progress of this account since 1920.



4. The following table shews the collections under the various items of Postal Revenue in respect of the years 1923 and 1924:—

	1924.			1923.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Postage .. .. .	60,095	15	0½	64,524	11	3¼
Commission on Money Order .. .. .	106	10	6½	113	13	3½
Local Commission on British Postal Orders .. .. .	638	14	6½	745	10	3½
Miscellaneous .. .. .	7,924	16	7	4,552	0	10
Telegraph .. .. .	15,818	6	10½	17,115	12	2½
	£84,584	3	7	£87,051	7	11¼

It will be observed that the total decrease in 1924 as compared with 1923 amounted to £2,467. All the items shew a decrease except "Miscellaneous," which increased to the extent of £3,372.

5. The collections on account of postage show a reduction of £4,429, and are an index of the poor condition of trade during the year.

6. The telegraph receipts in 1924 were £1,297 less than those of the preceding year. This Branch of the Department's business may be looked upon as the barometer of the banana industry and the falling off in revenue is due entirely to the decreased activities of the banana companies.

7. The item "Miscellaneous" includes for the first time an entry "Credits on account of Parcels Post Exchange with the United States of America—£756 1s. 7d." This is the result of an arrangement with the United States Postal Authorities whereby this Department receives the equivalent of 1 franc on each parcel imported into the Colony and pays the same amount to the United States on each parcel exported from the Colony. As the importations are greatly in excess of the exportations the net result will always be in the Colony's favour.

8. A credit of about £600 has been received from the Imperial Post Office in respect of British Postal Orders which have been issued in this Colony and which have been outstanding for five years.

9. The credits which have accrued in connection with the settlement of the Money Order balances by the United States shew an increase of £1,147. This is due to increased Money Order transactions during the year.

10. The value of official telegrams despatched during the year was £1,369 or £19 less than in the previous year.

11. The progress of the collections of the Department is shown in the following return which covers a period of thirty years.

	1893—94	1903—4	1913—14	1924.
	£	£	£	£
Postage .. .. .	19,429	26,326	42,213	60,096
Commission on Money Orders .. .. .	354	487	315	106
Commission on Postal Orders .. .. .	432	690	787	639
Miscellaneous .. .. .	219	398	751	7,925
Telegraph .. .. .	6,256	5,195	7,811	15,818
	26,690	33,246	51,877	84,584

This return indicates that the total collections have increased by 216 per cent. during the period. The increase is very pronounced under the Heads "Postage" and "Telegraph."

12. The following is a summary of the actual expenditure in 1924 as compared with the estimated expenditure for that year and with the expenditure for the year 1923:—

	Expenditure.	Expenditure.	Estimates.
	1923	1924	1924
	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Personal Emoluments .. .. .	51,142	51,739 7 1	52,186 0 0
Mail Conveyance .. .. .	28,315	30,221 18 4	30,894 0 0
Services .. .. .	13,347	12,160 7 1¼	12,517 0 0
Telegraph Maintenance by Department .. .. .	478	686 9 5	850 0 0
	93,282	94,808 1 11¼	96,447 0 0
Telegraph line constructions and maintenance by Public Works Department .. .. .	6,653	5,726 9 7	5,670 0 0
	99,935	100,534 11 6¼	102,117 0 0



13. The following is a return of expenditure covering a period of thirty years:—

	1893—4	1903—4	1913—14	1924.
	£	£	£	£
Personal Emoluments .. ..	12,467	15,745	22,752	51,739
Mail Conveyance .. ..	13,224	11,436	16,698	30,222
Services .. ..	4,718	7,331	7,353	12,160
Maintenance of Telegraph Line, etc. ..	1,994	1,705	3,907	6,413
	<u>32,408</u>	<u>36,217</u>	<u>50,710</u>	<u>100,534</u>

14. The Revenue received under the head "Postal Miscellaneous" is shown in detail below:—

	£	s.	d.
Rent of Private Letter Boxes .. ..	219	14	0
do. do. Bags .. ..	54	1	6
Public Call Telephones .. ..	2	18	9
Fines .. ..	8	18	3½
Delivery Free Cash on Delivery Parcels .. ..	287	6	6
War Tax on Parcels from abroad .. ..	2,875	14	6
Trade Charges Commission .. ..	111	18	4
Credits on account Parcels Post Exchange United States America .. ..	756	1	7
Sale of Post Office Handbook .. ..	2	2	6
Value found in unclaimed dead letters .. ..	34	15	6½
Passenger Fares .. ..	946	0	11
Discount on Stamps purchased .. ..	0	16	1
Money Order Account United States America—Credit in settlement of balances .. ..	2,030	10	1
Outstanding British Postal Orders .. ..	593	18	0
	<u>7,924</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>7</u>

15. Child Welfare Stamps of three denominations, viz.:—½d., 1d. and 2½d. were sold during the months of January, November, and December. These stamps are sold at ½d. above their face value, the amount thus realised being handed over to the local "Child Saving League."

#### DISTRICT POST OFFICES.

16. No new Post Offices were opened during the year.

The following were closed:

Broadgate, St. Mary, on 30th September, 1924.

Harmons, Manchester, on 29th December, 1924.

The Post Office at Bybrook in the Parish of Portland was removed to Skibo on 1st May, 1924.

17. At the end of the year there were 236 Post Offices in existence which gives an average of one office to every 17.8 square miles of area. In 1904, or twenty years ago, there were 159 Post Offices or an average of one to every 26.4 square miles. This represents an increase of 48.4% in twenty years. All Post Offices enjoy at least a daily service to and from Kingston, and principal offices served by the railway receive as many exchanges per day as the train service will permit.

18. The railway is the main arterial system by which mails are distributed, and in addition there is a daily Motor Mail service from Ewarton to Green Island via St. Ann's Bay, Brown's Town, Montego Bay and Lucea, a tri-weekly mule Van service from Williamsfield to Sav-la-Mar via Mandeville, Santa Cruz and Black River; and a Daily Motor Mail Service from Kingston to Port Antonio via Morant Bay and Golden Grove. By means of these Services several important towns have between 9 and 12 exchanges with Kingston per week.

19. The facility of posting letters at Railway Stations, and on the trains was withdrawn for reasons of economy as from the 1st January, 1925.

20. Each District Post Office received at least one visit of inspection from the Travelling Supervisor during the year and the results were, with one exception, satisfactory.



## CIRCULATION OF CORRESPONDENCE.

21. The following table gives the count of registered articles and the estimate of ordinary letters which passed through the Department during the years 1923 and 1924:—

	Outwards.		Inwards.	
	1924	1923.	1924	1923
Inland Mails—				
Ordinary Letters:				
Public .. .. .	2,350,600	2,409,400	3,157,925	3,110,400
Official .. .. .	408,243	440,700	401,675	401,150
Post Cards .. .. .	59,748	11,000	68,706	67,200
By vessels, not contract:				
U.K. and United States of America—				
Ordinary Letters .. .. .	921,916	1,007,669	2,063,540	1,700,650
Post Cards .. .. .	88,393	73,704	60,100	56,100
Other Countries—				
Ordinary Letters .. .. .	496,884	486,748	742,174	950,400
Post Cards .. .. .	4,911	4,739	3,960	4,200
	<u>4,330,695</u>	<u>4,433,960</u>	<u>6,498,080</u>	<u>6,436,291</u>
			1924	1923
Registered Letters for delivery in Kingston—				
Local .. .. .			115,929	115,619
Foreign .. .. .			48,199	46,758
Official .. .. .			55,420	52,198
Registered Letters for delivery in the Country—				
Local .. .. .			159,195	151,623
Foreign .. .. .			92,170	85,405
Registered Letters for despatch—				
Oversea .. .. .			89,263	116,000
At District Post Offices—				
Ordinary Letters .. .. .			2,067,585	1,073,411
Post Cards .. .. .			92,482	124,106
Registered Letters .. .. .			121,390	198,326
			<u>2,841,633</u>	<u>1,963,446</u>

The figures disclose decreases in the volume of the ordinary as well as the registered mail. This is due, no doubt, to the depression in trade which has been felt during the year, the Post Office having always been an index of the prosperity, or otherwise of the Colony.

22. It is estimated that 1,912,664 letters were delivered by Letter Carriers under the House to House Delivery System during the year. Kingston, for the purpose of this delivery, is divided into 11 districts and there are usually four deliveries per diem.

23. The following return shows the number of Insured Letters received and despatched during 1924 as compared with the number dealt with in the previous year. It will be observed that there has been a slight increase in number under both heads.

Year.	No. Received.	Declared Value.	No. Despatched.	Declared Value.
1923.	38	£486 0 0	50	£889 0 0
1924.	44	538 10 0	61	736 0 0

## RETURN LETTER BRANCH.

24. The letters and other articles of mail matter which passed through the Return Letter Branch are classified as follows:—

	Paid.	Unpaid.
Letters returned to United Kingdom .. .. .	3,330	137
do. do. Other Countries .. .. .	10,906	318
Letters destroyed being illegible or anonymous not having been found .. .. .	36,169	14,051
Newspapers returned to Publishers .. .. .	700	
Letters returned to writers in the Island .. .. .	60,426	16,450

The number of packets which were found to contain value was 9,875, and the total value amounted to £1,579 17s. 3d. Each packet was returned to the writer under registered cover.



## MAIL CONVEYANCE—OCEAN.

25. The number of overseas mails received and despatched is shown in the following return:—

	OUTWARDS.				INWARDS.			
	1924.		1923.		1924.		1923.	
	Vessels.	Mails.	Vessels.	Mails.	Vessels.	Mails.	Vessels.	Mails.
<i>Kingston—</i>								
Non-contract ..	519	1,463	555	1,731	623	2,247	669	2,188
<i>Outports—</i>								
Non-contract ..	..	52	..	62	..	117	..	128
	519	1,515	555	1,731	623	2,364	669	2,188

It will be observed that there was a decrease of 216 in the outward mails and an increase of 176 in the inward. These mails were conveyed to and from Jamaica principally by the steamers of the United Fruit Company, Elders and Fyffes Ltd., the Atlantic Fruit Company, Ltd., and the Canadian Government Merchant Marine Ltd. The cost to the Colony for the conveyance of its outward mail was in 1924, £4,618 or £215 more than in 1923.

## MAIL CONVEYANCE—INLAND.

26. The inland Mail service has been conducted at a cost of £26,527 as compared with £23,912 in 1923. The Northside, Southside and Windward Trunk Services have been efficiently performed by the Public Works Department and the Contractors. The inland postal facilities are generous. Indeed, when the revenue of the Colony is taken into consideration, they may, in some instances, be regarded as extravagant; but postal facilities are an aid to trade and the existing services were, no doubt, originally provided in response to commercial demands.

## MONEY ORDERS.

27. A summary of the figures for the year shows that Jamaica issued 1,676 Money Orders having a face value of £4,423 and that the issues against the Colony were 15,147 with a face value of £45,849. Twenty years ago the position was very different.

Jamaica then issued 13,882 orders with a face value of £35,006, while the issues against the Colony were 5,270 with a face value of £12,063. During the intervening period the figures have fluctuated, and in 1921 there was a considerable reduction of business due to the means which had to be adopted to provide against loss in consequence of the unstable condition of the rate of exchange with the United States of America.

28. The following return indicates that the Money Order transactions with the United Kingdom and the United States of America are gradually recovering.

*United Kingdom.*

				Jamaica Issue.		Payable in Jamaica.				
Year.		No.			Amount.		No.		Amount.	
1923	..	712	..	£2,693	17	7	419	..	£1,729	1 10
1924	..	666	..	2,586	9	4	425	..	1,551	2 9

*United States of America.*

1923 ..	1,066	£1,908	12 3	11,405 ..	£32,937 1 10
1924 ..	928	1,491	7 2	13,681 ..	40,397 14 7

The transactions with the United States of America which fell off during recent years are now on the increase as a result of the steady return towards the normal rate of exchange. In this connection it should be noted that since 31st December, 1924, payment of Money Orders issued in the United States, Canada, and the Canal Zone on Jamaica has been made at the pre-war rate of \$4.87 to the pound sterling.



29. The Money Order is a safe means of remittance and, in this Colony, is seldom paid to the wrong party. To guard against any such possibility remitters should, however, always register letters which contain Money Orders so as to ensure that the Orders shall reach the Payees. One of the conditions of the conduct of Money Order business is that the Post Office is not liable, under any circumstance, for more than one payment of a Money Order.

#### POSTAL ORDERS.

30. The following statement shows the number, denomination, etc., of postal orders issued for sale during the years 1923 and 1924:—

1924.				1923.			
Denomi- nation.	No.	Face Value.	Commission.	Denomi- nation	No.	Face Value.	Commission.
£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
0 0 6	8,585	214 12 6	35 15 5	0 0 6	11,130	278 5 0	46 7 6
0 1 0	26,790	1,339 10 0	111 12 6	0 1 0	31,945	1,597 5 0	133 2 1
0 1 6	18,260	1,369 10 0	76 1 8	0 1 6	19,980	1,498 10 0	83 5 0
0 2 0	31,200	3,120 0 0	130 0 0	0 2 0	33,955	3,395 10 0	141 9 7
0 2 6	21,794	2,724 5 0	90 16 2	0 2 6	23,295	2,911 17 6	97 1 3
0 3 0	22,750	3,412 10 0	142 3 9	0 3 0	27,035	4,055 5 0	168 19 4½
0 3 6	9,570	1,674 15 0	59 16 3	0 3 6	11,430	2,000 5 0	71 8 9
0 4 0	21,455	4,291 0 0	134 1 10½	0 4 0	33,880	6,776 0 0	211 15 0
0 4 6	8,710	1,959 15 0	54 8 9	0 4 6	12,280	2,763 0 0	76 15 0
0 5 0	22,145	5,536 5 0	138 8 1½	0 5 0	21,915	5,478 15 0	136 19 4½
0 7 6	4,145	1,554 7 6	34 10 10	0 7 6	5,845	2,191 17 6	48 14 2
0 8 0	8,855	3,542 0 0	92 4 9½	0 8 0	14,915	5,966 0 0	155 7 3½
0 10 0	15,060	7,530 0 0	156 17 6	0 10 0	21,640	10,820 0 0	225 8 4
1 0 0	8,935	8,935 0 0	167 10 7½	1 0 0	10,080	10,080 0 0	189 0 0
Total ..	228,254	47,203 10 0	1,424 8 3	Total ..	279,325	59,812 10 0	1,785 12 8½

The number and face value of Postal Orders actually sold were:—

	No.	Amount.
1923 .. .. .	276,262	£59,332 10 6
1924 .. .. .	229,788	47,406 2 0

These figures disclose a falling off in the sales as a result of trade depression.

31. The Commissions accruing from the above sales were:—

Local Commissions on orders above 2/6 ..	£200 11 2½
Allowance of the London Post Office at the rate of £1 on every 1,000 orders sold and paid ..	422 3 7
	£622 14 9½

32. The value of Postal Orders paid at the different centres was as follows:—

	£ s. d.
At the General Post Office, Kingston .. .. .	20,193 13 3
At the Treasury, Kingston .. .. .	1,580 11 10
At District Post Offices and Parochial Treasuries ..	15,604 6 5
	37,378 11 6

The total is 1,344 higher than in 1923.

#### PARCEL POST.

33. A summary of the importations through the Parcel Post for the years 1923 and 1924 is given hereunder:—

Year.	No. of Parcels Received.	Declared Value.	Duty Assessed.
1923	157,646	£274,987 5 0	£43,576 12 0
1924	146,385	258,276 6 11	39,176 17 8

The total number of parcels despatched were:—

Year.	No. of Parcels.
1923	27,244
1924	29,728



34. The postage accruing to Jamaica from the Parcel Post Service during the year under review was £5,475 4s. 6d. or £2,327 17s. 1d. more than during the previous year. This increase is due to the introduction of the credits through the United States Parcel Post Account referred to in paragraph 7 of this report. When this sum is compared with the cost of dealing with 146,385 separate parcels it cannot be contended that the Parcel Post is a source of profit to the Department. One must not, however, lose sight of the fact that the duty collected on these importations (amounting to £39,926 10s. 10d. for the year 1924) is credited to the Revenue Department. For this service the Post Office receives no financial credit, and this fact should be borne in mind when making a comparison between the revenue and expenditure of the Department.

35. The declared value of parcels imported was £16,711 less in 1924 than in 1923 and, as a consequence, the duty collected was £4,400 below the 1923 collections. The number of parcels imported shows a diminution of 11,261, which is accounted for by reduced importations from the United Kingdom and is due to the cessation of a Coupon System introduced by an English firm which has spent itself so far as this Colony is concerned. The number of parcels imported from the United Kingdom was 51,970 with a declared value of £158,384, while the number imported from the United States was 83,673 with a declared value of £89,756.

36. Irritation is frequently caused to the addresses of letter packets which are detained on suspicion of containing articles liable to duty. The remedy for this is to import all dutiable matter through the Parcels Post where there is organised machinery for dealing expeditiously with such matter. The number of packets detained on suspicion during the year was 17,306 and the duty collected as a result was £1,276 10s. 9d. This indicates that there was ample justification for detaining these packets.

37. 439 parcels sent by Parcel Post were detained because the declared values were unsatisfactory. Of these 421 were released on payment of fines amounting to £53 13s. 2d. and the remaining 48 were seized.

38. While there has been a falling off in the importations through the Parcel Post the reverse is the case with the exportations. The total number of parcels despatched was 29,728 in 1924 or 2,484 more than in 1923. The estimated value of these parcels was £22,648.

39. The following is a return of the "Cash on Delivery" and Insured parcels received and despatched during the year 1924 as compared with the year 1923:—

Year.	No.	Insured Parcels Received.		Cash on Delivery Parcels Received.	
		Amount.	No.	Trade Charges.	Fees.
1923	5,632	£44,280 12 5	10,761	£21,021 0 7	£264 6 0
1924	5,504	49,766 4 9	12,466	21,660 8 2	287 6 6
Year.	No.	Despatched.		Despatched.	
		Amount.	No.	Trade Charges.	Fees.
1923	447	£5,622 0 11		Nil	
1924	408	2,117 12 11			

40. The "Cash on Delivery" parcels show an increase in number of 1,705. This system, which is confined exclusively to the United Kingdom, was inaugurated with a view to the fostering of British importations and it has, no doubt, achieved its object. The system entails a considerable amount of work, as the trade and other charges have to be sent to the head office at Kingston before the parcel is forwarded to its destination. It was hoped that, soon after the inauguration of the system it would have been possible to arrange for these parcels to be forwarded to certain of the larger Post Offices where payment would be made, but experience has shown that Importers who utilise the "Cash on Delivery" system are not always prepared to pay the necessary charges. A variety of excuses for not being able to pay are tendered; an extension of time is frequently asked for; requests are sometimes made for the delivery of a part of the contents of a parcel; and applications for various other concessions are made. This, of course, increases correspondence and tends to hamper the carrying out of a good system. Importers who use the "Cash on Delivery" system would do well to note that,

(a) The time limit cannot be extended.

(b) The trade charges cannot be reduced.

(c) The parcels cannot be forwarded to their destinations until the full amount to cover trade charges, duty, etc., has been remitted to Head Office, Kingston.

#### LOCAL PARCELS.

41. The figures given hereunder in respect of the years 1922, 1923 and 1924 indicate that there has been a gradual reduction in the number of local parcels received for delivery in Kingston and for despatch to Country Stations.

Year.	No. of Parcels for Kingston Delivery.	No. of Parcels for Country Delivery.
1922	23,233	126,091
1923	22,132	120,211
1924	20,371	118,438



## TELEGRAPHS.

42. At the close of the year there were 150 telegraph and telephone offices throughout the Island as compared with 134 in 1923. Telephone offices were established at the following places :—

Name of Office.	Parish.	Date opened.
Lambs River	Westmoreland	23rd January, 1924
Browns Hall	St. Catherine	27th February, 1924
Lluidas Vale	do.	do.
Mavis Bank	St. Andrew	4th March, 1924
Alligator Pond	Manchester	6th March, 1924
Munro College	St. Elizabeth	7th March, 1924
Southfield	do.	do.
Watt Town	St. Ann	8th March, 1924
Johns Hall	St. James	10th March, 1924
Hampden	Trelawny	29th March, 1924
Deeside	do.	do.
Four Paths	Clarendon	30th March, 1924
Mocho	do.	do.
Thompson Town	do.	do.
Crofts Hill	do.	31st March, 1924
Swift River	Portland	8th March, 1924

Of the 150 telegraph and telephone offices 62 are telegraph, 62 are telephone, and 26 are Phonophone Offices. In addition messages are received and dispatched at 39 Railway Stations.

43. Having regard to the small amount of business being done at many of the recently established offices and the relative cost of their maintenance it is a question for serious consideration whether some should not be closed or only allowed to be kept open if guaranteed against loss.

44. Telegraphic business decreased in volume in 1924, as compared with the previous year. The following are the figures :—

1924.			
Ordinary telegrams	..	283,855.	Value .. £15,852 19 8½
O.H.M.S. do.	..	32,880.	Value .. 1,369 0 4½
Total		316,735.	£17,222 0 1
1923.			
Ordinary telegrams	..	293,041.	Value .. £17,115 12 2½
O.H.M.S. do.	..	23,312.	Value .. 1,388 6 9
		326,353.	£18,503 18 11½

The decrease of 9,186 ordinary messages is attributable to depression in the banana trade.

45. The new telegraph line between Kingston and Dry Harbour referred to in paragraph 49 of the report of this Department for 1923, has not yet been completed. Its inauguration will be welcomed as it will afford relief in dealing with messages to Montego Bay.

46. The usual friendly relations with the local Superintendents of the Cable Companies have continued and the courtesies extended by them to this Department are hereby acknowledged. The following amounts were collected on behalf of the Companies :—

Direct West India Cable Company	..	..	£2,209 3 4
West India & Panama Telegraph Company	..	..	420 19 8

47. It is gratifying to be able to report that no trained Telegraph Operators have left the service for the United States of America since the Government of that country adopted the quota system of restricted immigration. As it requires a considerable time to train an operator, one of our principal causes of anxiety has been removed.

48. The Staff at the Kingston and Country Offices performed their duties during the year in a loyal and efficient manner.

I have, etc.,

(Sgd.) R. H. FLETCHER,

Acting Postmaster for Jamaica.

The Honourable  
The Colonial Secretary,  
Kingston.