

392. During the past year, 227 new offices were opened, and the total number of offices is now considerably more than double the number at Confederation, there having been an increase of 4,650. As compared with 1891 there was a decrease of 5,300 in the number of registered letters, and an increase of 528,000 in that of free letters, and 4,875,000 in the total number of letters sent. Considering that the privilege of free postage was taken away from members of the Dominion civil service, early in 1892, the increase in the number of free letters is surprising. The number of registered letters was about the same as in the two preceding years, but considerably less than in previous years, due no doubt to the increased registration fee. The increase in the total number of letters sent was rather more than in the previous year, but too much importance must not be attached to fluctuations in these figures, for as the total number is derived from an average struck four times a year, it may well be that the circumstances prevailing at the times of enumeration have a tendency to abnormally increase or diminish the figures then obtained. The total number sent was nearly six times the number sent in the first year of Confederation; while the number of letters per head of estimated population is now almost four times what it was in 1868. Post cards, which were first issued in 1871, have now reached the large total of 20,815,000, the increase over 1891 being 515,000, as compared with an increase of 820,000 in 1891 over 1890.

Increase in number of letters, etc.

393. The next table gives the number of newspapers, books, periodicals and parcels sent during the same period :—

Number of Newspapers, etc., 1868-1892.

NEWSPAPERS, PERIODICALS, BOOKS, CIRCULARS, PARCELS, &c
1868 TO 1892.

YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE.	Newspapers and Periodicals posted otherwise than from Office of Publication.	Newspapers and Periodicals posted from Office of Publication.	Books, Circulars, Samples and Patterns, &c.	Parcels.	Total.	Number per Head.
368.....	18,860,000			24,800	18,884,800	5·60
369.....	18,709,000			38,720	18,738,720	5·49
370.....	20,150,000			51,844	20,201,844	5·85
371.....	22,250,000			64,160	22,314,160	6·34
372.....	24,400,000			95,200	24,495,200	6·78
373.....	25,480,000			112,300	25,592,300	6·98
374.....	29,000,000			102,800	29,102,800	7·61
375.....	31,300,000			131,352	31,431,352	8·08
376.....	38,549,000		4,539,912	70,724	43,159,636	10·09
377.....	39,000,000		4,638,000	90,000	43,728,000	10·09
378..	6,252,740	33,483,672	5,090,000	107,800	44,934,212	11·02