

An exchange of penny post-cards with the Australian Colonies was established in November last.

PARCEL-POST.

The following table shows the number and weight of parcels posted and the number delivered during the years 1888 and 1889:—

Postal Districts.	1889.			1888.		
	Posted.		Delivered.	Posted.		Delivered.
	Number.	Weight.		Number.	Weight.	
		lb. oz.			lb. oz.	
Auckland .. .. .	19,468	53,351 11	13,186	15,267	39,276 0	8,343
Thames .. .. .	1,199	3,053 1½	2,651	886	2,091 11	1,776
New Plymouth .. .. .	878	2,341 14	2,131	722	1,744 0	1,644
Gisborne .. .. .	770	1,969 0	1,991	694	1,731 11	1,508
Napier .. .. .	5,354	13,802 2	6,747	3,810	9,787 6	5,060
Wanganui .. .. .	3,344	7,862 8	7,111	2,794	6,044 0	5,229
Wellington .. .. .	20,856	55,910 9	14,088	16,591	42,627 8	10,500
Nelson .. .. .	3,767	11,013 13½	3,295	3,058	8,405 14	2,286
Westport .. .. .	868	1,859 14	2,091	674	1,497 2	1,474
Greymouth .. .. .	1,630	4,024 11½	3,449	1,496	3,840 13	2,699
Hokitika .. .. .	1,182	3,394 5	2,007	922	2,517 12	1,698
Blenheim .. .. .	1,785	4,008 15	3,903	1,165	2,603 10	2,711
Christchurch .. .. .	17,370	48,403 14	8,524	10,893	29,534 3	5,692
Timaru .. .. .	1,760	3,807 1	2,899	1,267	2,740 8	2,049
Oamaru .. .. .	854	1,873 14	2,100	650	1,417 7	1,434
Dunedin .. .. .	20,363	57,366 11	11,439	16,594	44,115 4½	9,709
Invercargill .. .. .	3,138	7,722 12½	3,932	2,295	4,748 0	2,911
Totals .. .. .	104,586	281,766 13	91,544	79,778	204,722 13½	66,723

The table includes both inland and United Kingdom parcels.

The number of inland parcels posted and delivered was—posted, 102,134 ; delivered, 78,209.

The increase in the number of inland parcels posted over the number posted in 1888 was 22,356, or 28·02 per cent. The postage collected amounted to £5,143 11s. 5d.

Of the parcels exchanged with the United Kingdom the numbers were—received, 13,335 ; despatched, 2,452. The received parcels were about five and a half times as many as the despatched.

The declared value of the 13,335 parcels received from the United Kingdom was £12,644 15s. 7d.

The Customs duty collected amounted to £1,883 4s. 6d., of which £1,751 3s. 11d. was paid to Public Account during the year.

The foreign parcel-post, through the intermediary of the London Post Office, was extended to nearly all parts of the world on the 2nd January last.

Negotiations are in progress for a more direct exchange of parcels through the intermediary of the Melbourne Post Office with India, China, the Straits Settlements, &c.

A parcel-post with Australia, except to New South Wales and Queensland, was established at the beginning of this year. The postage is—to South Australia, Tasmania, and Victoria, not exceeding 2lb. in weight, 1s. 2d., and 7d. for every additional pound or fraction of a pound ; to Western Australia, 1s. 6d. for a 2lb. parcel, and 9d. for each additional pound or fraction of a pound. The maximum weight for a parcel is 11lb. The rate for sea-conveyance between Australia and New Zealand is 2d. per pound.

FREE OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

The estimated value of the official or free correspondence for the year is given in the statement underneath:—

Postal Districts.	Letters.	Books.	Value.	Postal Districts.	Letters.	Books.	Value.
	lb. oz.	lb. oz.	£ s. d.		lb. oz.	lb. oz.	£ s. d.
Auckland .. .. .	24,979 13	16,297 1	7,661 12 6	Hokitika .. .. .	2,068 14	820 0	570 0 8
Thames .. .. .	2,219 11	1,995 0	660 17 1	Blenheim .. .. .	3,274 5	6,550 0	1,103 9 8
New Plymouth .. .. .	2,087 11	1,200 0	609 8 1	Christchurch .. .. .	10,367 8	14,088 6	3,234 5 7
Gisborne .. .. .	1,097 0	3,549 0	410 16 8	Timaru .. .. .	5,143 10	1,680 0	1,431 5 2
Napier .. .. .	4,116 2	7,527 0	1,348 10 8	Oamaru .. .. .	1,889 14	2,000 0	570 12 8
Wanganui .. .. .	7,311 10	6,271 0	2,165 8 6	Dunedin .. .. .	11,454 10½	16,911 8	3,618 18 11
Wellington .. .. .	153,541 2	276,424 0	56,241 14 6	Invercargill .. .. .	3,237 0	1,713 5	856 3 6
Nelson .. .. .	3,128 4	1,150 0	877 15 8				
Westport .. .. .	1,340 0	912 0	401 11 4				
Greymouth .. .. .	1,507 1	5,672 14	590 19 7	Totals .. .. .	238,764 3½	364,761 2	82,353 10 9

The estimated weight was over 269 tons. The estimated value of the free correspondence for 1888 was £75,087 8s. 7d.