

first time possible there. Hitherto the Chief Postmaster has been unable to leave his Office at Dunedin, even temporarily, and much inconvenience has been felt from the impossibility of his inspecting the Country Offices.

At Canterbury an important change is about to be made by constituting Christchurch the principal Post Town instead of Lyttelton. The population of Lyttelton has latterly changed in its general character; five years ago that place was the Seat of Commerce, but gradually the mercantile firms have removed their chief offices to Christchurch. All the newspapers (even the *Lyttelton Times*) are now published at Christchurch. The head offices of the three Banks are at Christchurch; the offices of the Provincial Government are there; a branch of the Customs will soon be there too; and it has become necessary for the chief Post-office to follow.

The great difficulty in the Province of Canterbury in the way not only of postal, but of all business, is the Lyttelton hill, and a monstrous inconvenience it undoubtedly is. The Railway when finished will obviate all this, but until then the greatest care and attention on the part of the local Post-office authorities will be required to render it as little felt as possible.

In this Province, too, a large staff of Officers has been imperatively called for, together with increased pay. Arrangements have also been made partially to carry out a system of Country-office inspection.

Six new Offices have been opened during the past year, and it is very possible that a larger number will have to be opened this year.

At Hawke's Bay the Post-office has been recently separated from the Customs, and nowhere are these two Departments now connected.

The plan (which has been adopted in the principal towns) of private boxes and daily or twice a day delivery, works remarkably well, it is found to relieve the Post-office considerably from the confusion occasioned by the press and crush about the windows for Letters on the arrival of important Mails.

The Offices at which the largest amount of business is transacted are those of Dunedin and Auckland. A comparative return is given shewing in detail the business done in each of these offices for the six months of the current year, ended June 30th.

COMPARATIVE RETURN SHOWING THE NUMBER OF LETTERS RECEIVED AT AND DESPATCHED FROM CHIEF POST OFFICES AT AUCKLAND AND DUNEDIN FOR SIX MONTHS FROM JANUARY 1ST TO JUNE 30TH, 1863.

PLACES.	AUCKLAND.					
	RECEIVED FROM.		DESPATCHED TO.		TOTALS RECEIVED AND DESPATCHED.	
	Letters.	Newspapers.	Letters.	Newspapers.	Letters.	Newspapers.
WITHOUT THE COLONY.						
United Kingdom	33,837	55,612	28,661	51,746	62,498	107,358
Australian Colonies	10,496	12,031	10,108	11,920	20,604	23,951
Other Places	1,393	706	1,660	1,969	3,053	2,675
Total Foreign	45,726	68,349	40,429	65,635	86,155	133,984
WITHIN THE COLONY.						
Other Provinces of New Zealand	22,907	19,974	24,298	35,581	47,205	55,555
Within Province	35,144	6,475	45,878	83,363	81,022	89,838
Total Home	58,051	26,449	70,176	118,944	128,227	145,393
General Totals	103,777	94,798	110,605	184,579	214,382	279,377