

The following table gives the number of parcels exchanged with the United Kingdom and foreign countries *via* London and the Australian Colonies during the years 1893 and 1894 :—

Country.	Number of Parcels.			
	Received.		Despatched.	
	1893.	1894.	1893.	1894.
United Kingdom and foreign offices <i>via</i> London	13,586	13,147	2,962	3,325
Victoria	2,722	2,560	1,209	1,246
New South Wales	575	2,225	399	1,075
Queensland	163	141	173	205
South Australia	219	215	142	170
Tasmania ..	184	144	274	279
Western Australia	29	52	75	95
Samoa	11	21	11	72
Tonga	2		7	12
Rarotonga	9	15	5	45
Ceylon ..	23	25	6	19
Straits Settlements	20	22	6	4
Totals	17,543	18,567	5,269	6,547

The declared value of the parcels received from places outside the colony was £27,601 14s. 1d. The Customs duty collected amounted to £5,340 7s. 4d.

In 1893 the declared value was £27,941 5s., and the duty £5,279 2s. 1d.

The declared value of parcels despatched to places beyond the colony was £7,037 4s. 1d., as against £4,860 4s. 8d. in 1893.

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

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

Postal Districts.	Letters.	Books.	Value.	Postal Districts.	Letters.	Books.	Value.
	lb. oz.	lb. oz.	£ s. d.		lb. oz.	lb. oz.	£ s. d.
Auckland	10,043 11½	10,906 7¼	2,912 16 0	Hokitika	1,600 4	510 0	437 7 2
Thames	2,069 10	2,611 14	607 2 3	Blenheim	2,301 10	4,220 0	704 5 0
New Plymouth	3,360 12	16,200 0	1 233 18 0	Christchurch	10,434 2	19,623 8	3,191 5 1
Gisborne	1,704 0	2,725 0	511 3 5	Timaru	2,527 6½	1,034 9	695 16 8
Napier	6,915 12	7 112 0	1 993 3 4	Oamaru	1,595 12	1,650 0	454 18 2
Wanganui ..	7,023 0	9,050 0	2,064 16 2	Dunedin	12,551 0	7,491 0	3,504 11 2
Wellington	121,046 11	219,340 0	38,256 15 0	Invercargill	3,670 2	2 185 8	1,024 18 7
Nelson	1,059 2	9,250 0	475 8 2				
Westport	2,140 0	2,450 0	521 14 2				
Greymouth	1,405 9	5,269 4	484 11 10	Totals	191,448 8	321,629 2¼	59,074 10 2

The estimated value for 1893 was £63,838 17s. 9d.

DEAD LETTERS.

The number of unclaimed letters received and disposed of during the under-mentioned years is shown in the following table :—

Manner of Disposal.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	1892.	1893.	1894.
Opened and returned to the writers	68,942	66,592	66,729	62,847	55 118	62,654	60,540	63,483	62,209	61,745
Returned unopened to other countries	9,134	8,115	8,359	7,287	6,892	6,220	7 779	7,751	8,255	8,941
Reissued	107	185	251	96	88	92	141	128	160	130
Destroyed	3,986	2,872	6,600	5,974	5,246	4,340	2,660	2,092	2,941	4,725
Returned unopened by Chief Postmasters	17,593	19,187	21 144	20,185	19,963	21,164	21,931	19,909	23,115	22,042
Totals	99,762	96,951	103,083	96,389	87,307	94,470	93,051	93,363	96,680	97,583

The unclaimed letters dealt with show an increase of 0·93 per cent. compared with the number disposed of the previous year.

The proportion of dead or unclaimed letters to the total number of letters posted in the colony was 0·36 per cent.

The number of missing-letter inquiries to the total number of letters posted was in the proportion of 1 to 20,003.