

THE POST OFFICE.

From the twenty-ninth report of the Postmaster-General it appears that the estimated number of letters delivered in the United Kingdom during the twelve months was 1,250,636,200, showing an increase of 4.2 per cent; the number of post cards 144,016,200, an increase of 6.4 per cent; the number of book packets and circulars, 288,206,400, an increase of 6.3 per cent; and the number of newspapers, 140,682,600, being slightly less than last year. The number of letters received in the returned letter offices was 5,651,443, an increase of 196,558; of post cards, 596,614, an increase of 37,205; of book packets, 4,988,990; an increase of 287,596; and of newspapers, 477,978, an increase of 63,184. Of the letters, 562,291 were unreturnable; 26,293 bore no address, and of this number 1604 contained cash and cheques, &c., amounting to £6016, the whole of which, with the exception of about £150, has already been returned to the senders. Notwithstanding repeated warnings to the public, nearly 30,000 articles were received loose and coverless, owing to the weak and flimsy nature of the wrappers used and the insecure mode of packing. Reply post cards, both inland and foreign, have been introduced; but hitherto the public have not availed themselves to any great extent of the facility thus offered. The number of telegraph messages was 32,092,026, being an increase of 746,165 only, as compared with 1,933,879 in 1881-2. The business of the savings bank shows satisfactory progress. The total amount due to depositors, including interest (but exclusive of Government stock), at the close of the year was £39,037,821, showing an increase of £2,843,326. The number of accounts remaining open at the close of the year was 2,858,976 as against 2,607,612 in the previous year, an increase of 251,364. The savings bank business in Ireland again showed a large increase. The total amount, including interest due to depositors at the end of the year, was £1,925,460, being an increase of 202,065. This does not include the amount of Government stock standing to the credit of depositors in Ireland, which is estimated at £125,000. The total amount of Government stock standing to the credit of depositors at the close of the year was £1,143,717. The postal order returns show a large increase. About £3,451,000, as compared with £2,000,000 in 1881-2, were transmitted by means of these orders within the year, and no less than 7,980,328 orders were used. The gross revenue for the year was £9,413,812, and the net revenue £3,061,748 being a decrease of £38,727 on the previous year.

THE PARCELS POST.

Mr. Fawcett has brought about one of the greatest extensions of the Post Office which has taken place since Rowland Hill introduced uniformity and simplicity of charge. It is difficult to attempt to predict into what the Parcels Post may grow. The transmission of parcels as an incident of social intercourse is now reduced to a minimum of time, trouble, and expense. Combined with these advantages, it is the introduction among us of a social reform of no ordinary kind. The regulations are sufficiently wide as to the character and extent of the articles which may be sent by the Parcels Post.

The following will be the general conditions in regard to weight, dimensions, rates, and time of postage:—

| FOR-AN INLAND POSTAL PARCEL of a weight of | The rate of postage, to be pre- paid in ordinary postage- stamps, will be— |
|--|--|
| Not exceeding 1 lb. | Os. 3d. |
| Exceeding 1 lb. and not exceeding 3 lb. | Os. 6d. |
| " 3 lb. " " 5 lb. | Os. 9d. |
| " 5 lb. " " 7 lb. | 1s. 0d. |

DIMENSIONS.

The dimensions allowed for an Inland Postal Parcel will be:—

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Maximum length | 3 ft. 6 in. |
| Maximum length and girth combined | 6 ft. 0 in. |

The most convenient mode of measuring will be by means of a tape 6 ft. long, having the length of 3 ft. 6 in. marked thereon. So much of the tape as is not used in measuring the length will be the measure of the maximum girth permissible. Such a tape, if provided by stationers, might conveniently be marked in one colour up to 3 ft. 6 in., and the remaining portion in another colour.

TIMES OF DELIVERY AND COLLECTION IN LONDON.

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Delivery | 9 a.m. 2 and 7 p.m. |
| Intermediary | 11.30 a.m. and 4 p.m. |
| General Collection | 9 a.m. 1.30 and 7 p.m. |
| Intermediary | 11.30 a.m. and 4 p.m. |

PROHIBITIONS.

There shall not be conveyed or tendered for conveyance by post:—

(a) Any parcel containing any substance, material, article, or thing of any kind whatsoever, which might in the course of transmission through the post be, or become, or be rendered injurious to any officer of the Post Office, or any other person who may deal with such parcel, or to any bag, basket, box, or other receptacle in or by which such parcel may be conveyed by post, or to any other parcel or other contents of any such receptacle.

(b) Any parcel consisting of or inclosing any bladder or other membranous substance containing a liquid of any kind.

(c) Any parcel containing a live animal of any kind whatsoever.

(d) Any parcel which either from the nature of the contents thereof, or from the absence of proper packing or covering, is, in the opinion of the Postmaster-General or his officers, likely to injure any person in the course of the conveyance of the parcel through the post, or any receptacle in or by which such parcel may be conveyed by post, or any other parcel or any other contents of such receptacle.

Any such parcel, if posted or tendered for conveyance by post, may be detained, and either returned or given up to the sender thereof or dealt with or disposed of in such other manner as may be authorised by the Postmaster-General.

PROHIBITIONS.

No parcel shall be posted or tendered for conveyance by post consisting of or containing more than one parcel or other postal packet where any one of such packets is intended for delivery to a person other than the addressee of such parcel, and if any such parcel shall be posted, or tendered for conveyance by post, the contents thereof, so far as the same consist of parcels, may be forwarded to the addressees of such parcels charged with new and distinct rates of postage according to the rates fixed by this warrant, and, so far as the same consist of other postal packets, may be treated and charged

as unpaid postal packets, or such parcel may be otherwise dealt with or disposed of as the Postmaster-General may authorise.

USE OF POSTES RESTANTES.

On every parcel addressed to a post office "to be called for" there shall be charged and paid by the person to whom such parcel is addressed the sum of 1d. (which sum shall be paid in money, and not in stamps), in respect of every day or part of a day during which such parcel may remain in such post office after the expiration of the day next after that on which such parcel was delivered at such post office; provided that in no case shall such sum be payable in respect, in England or Ireland, of any Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday, or Bank Holiday; or in Scotland, of any Sunday, Bank Holiday, or Sacramental Fast Day of the Church of Scotland or of any parts of such days respectively.

RETENTION OF PARCELS AT POSTES RESTANTES.

Any parcel addressed to a post-office "to be called for" shall (unless the same be found to contain any perishable article), if not called for, remain at such office for a period of three weeks after the date of the arrival of such parcel thereat, and shall then be dealt with as provided in this warrant.

RETURN AND DISPOSAL OF UNDELIVERED PARCELS.

The following provisions shall apply, that is to say:—

(1) The parcel shall, as the Postmaster-General may from time to time direct, be detained at or forthwith forwarded to such place as the Postmaster-General may from time to time appoint, and may if necessary be there opened and examined.

(2) Where the name and address of the sender can be ascertained from the parcel, notice shall be given by post to the sender that the parcel will be returned to him by post on payment of postage.

(3) Where the name and address of the sender cannot be ascertained from the parcel, notice shall be publicly given (by affixing the same at such place or places, or in such other manner as the Postmaster-General may direct) that the parcel will, upon payment of certain charges, be given up upon the personal application of the sender or his agent.

(4) In any case the notice shall state that in default of the receipt by the Postmaster-General of an application for the parcel during a period to be specified in such notice from some person who, in the Postmaster-General's judgment, is entitled to receive the parcel, it will be disposed of in such manner as the Postmaster-General may direct.

(5) The Postmaster-General may, in his discretion, specify in any such notice or otherwise the periods during which parcels may be returned to the senders thereof, and in so doing may have regard to the nature and contents of parcels.

(6) A parcel shall not be given up or returned by post to the sender except upon payment by him of any charge for re-direction or other charge to which the parcel has become liable under the provisions of this warrant, or of any such regulations as are referred to in section 15 of the Post Office (Parcels) Act, 1882.

THE PARCELS POST AT HOME AND ABROAD.

With reference to the future, it is stated that the question of establishing an international parcels post was being carefully considered. The Postmaster-General is most desirous to introduce the tariff for cheap telegrams as soon as possible, but it is necessary to make adequate preparations, otherwise many of the wires would inevitably become blocked, causing great delay and much inconvenience. To show the character of the preparations required, it is estimated that 15,000 miles of new wire would have to be erected before the new change could come into operation; but it is expected that the reduced charge will come into operation on Oct. 1 next year at the furthest.

The introduction of the Parcels Post into England leads to a comparison between the rates fixed in this country and elsewhere. This cannot be very exact, owing to the fact that in many Continental countries the charge varies with distance, whereas in England it is uniform. This also necessitates a double comparison—namely, that where distance is an element of the charge and that where distance is immaterial. Take the latter first. The new scale of charges established by the London Post Office contrasts as follows with that of Belgium, Holland, and France:—

| |
|---|
| England: 1 lb., 3d.; 1-3 lb., 6d.; 3-9 lb., 9d.; 5-7 lb., 1s. |
| France: 7 lb., 8d.; 7 lb., if not delivered, 6d.; 7 lb., received and delivered in Paris, 2d. |
| Belgium: 11 lb., 5d.; 11 lb., express, 8d. |
| Holland: 2-5 lb., 3d.; 2-5-7 lb., 4d.; 7-11 lb., 5d. Express extra. |

In England the charges include delivery. In France the charge for delivery is 2d. over and above the charge for dispatch from station to station. The idea of a low charge of 2d. for all parcels sent and delivered in the capital has not been adopted by Mr. Fawcett. Neither has the express rate met with his approval. In Holland this varies from 5d. extra on parcels in towns to 10d. per three miles on parcels delivered in rural districts. Another foreign idea is that of charging 1d. for receipts. It will be seen that our rate for 7 lb. is dearer than any charged in France, Belgium, or Holland. Holland carries for 3d. more than twice the weight franked by that sum in England, and Belgium carries 11 lb. for less than Mr. Fawcett will convey 1 lb. 1 oz.

The following table gives the rates charged by distance as well as by weight. The parcel-post rates are given for the sake of comparison:—

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| England: 1 lb., 3d.; 1-3 lb., 6d.; 3-5 lb., 9d.; 5-7 lb., 1s. | | | |
| English Railways: 1 lb. 50 miles, 4d.; 1 lb. any dist., 6d.; 7 lb. 30 miles, 6d.; 7 lb. 50 miles, 8d.; 7 lb. 400 miles, 1s. 3d.; 7 lb. further, 1s. 6d. | | | |
| India: 5 lb. per 100 miles, 4d. (average). | | | |
| Austria: 7 lb. 12 miles, 3d.; 7 lb. further, 7d.; 3½ lb. delivered in Vienna, 1d.; 3½ lb. in other towns, 3d.; 3½ lb. in country, 1½d.-3d. | | | |
| Germany: 7 lb. 50 miles, 3d.; 7 lb. further, 6d.; 7 lb. town delivery, 1½d.-2d.; 6 lb. rural, 1½d.; 6-11 lb. rural, 3d. | | | |
| Switzerland: 7 lb. 16 miles, 2d.; 7 lb. further, 4d.; crossing Alps, 2d. extra. | | | |
| From this it will be seen that the English parcel rate is cheaper for 11 lb. parcels for long distances than any foreign parcel post, but that for short distances and heavy parcels the English rate is the highest. For instance— | | | |
| if we desire to dispatch a 1 lb. parcel and have it delivered at a distance of 100 miles, the rates would be as follows:— | | | |
| England, Parcel post | 3d. | Holland | 8d. |
| " Railway | 6d. | " Belgium | 5d. |
| France | 8d. | " Switzerland | 4d. |
| Germany | 7d. | India | 4½d. |
| Austria | 5d. | | |

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The dimensions allowed for an Inland Postal Parcel will be:—

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| Maximum length | 3 ft. 6 in. |
| Maximum length and girth combined | 6 ft. 0 in. |

The most convenient mode of measuring will be by means of a tape 6 ft. long, having the length of 3 ft. 6 in. marked thereon. So much of the tape as is not used in measuring the length will be the measure of the maximum girth permissible. Such a tape, if provided by stationers, might conveniently be marked in one colour up to 3 ft. 6 in., and the remaining portion in another colour.

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(b) Any parcel consisting of or inclosing any bladder or other membranous substance containing a liquid of any kind.

(c) Any parcel containing a live animal of any kind whatsoever.

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Any such parcel, if posted or tendered for conveyance by post, may be detained, and either returned or given up to the sender thereof or dealt with or disposed of in such other manner as may be authorised by the Postmaster-General.

PROHIBITIONS.

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as unpaid postal packets, or such parcel may be otherwise dealt with or disposed of as the Postmaster-General may authorise.

USE OF POSTES RESTANTES.

On every parcel addressed to a post office "to be called for" there shall be charged and paid by the person to whom such parcel is addressed the sum of 1d. (which sum shall be paid in money, and not in stamps), in respect of every day or part of a day during which such parcel may remain in such post office after the expiration of the day next after that on which such parcel was delivered at such post office; provided that in no case shall such sum be payable in respect, in England or Ireland, of any Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday, or Bank Holiday; or in Scotland, of any Sunday, Bank Holiday, or Sacramental Fast Day of the Church of Scotland or of any parts of such days respectively.

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The following provisions shall apply, that is to say:—

(1) The parcel shall, as the Postmaster-General may from time to time direct, be detained at or forthwith forwarded to such place as the Postmaster-General may from time to time appoint, and may if necessary be there opened and examined.

(2) Where the name and address of the sender can be ascertained from the parcel, notice shall be given by post to the sender that the parcel will be returned to him by post on payment of postage.

(3) Where the name and address of the sender cannot be ascertained from the parcel, notice shall be publicly given (by affixing the same at such place or places, or in such other manner as the Postmaster-General may direct) that the parcel will, upon payment of certain charges, be given up upon the personal application of the sender or his agent.

(4) In any case the notice shall state that in default of the receipt by the Postmaster-General of an application for the parcel during a period to be specified in such notice from some person who, in the Postmaster-General's judgment, is entitled to receive the parcel, it will be disposed of in such manner as the Postmaster-General may direct.

(5) The Postmaster-General may, in his discretion, specify in any such notice or otherwise the periods during which parcels may be returned to the senders thereof, and in so doing may have regard to the nature and contents of parcels.

(6) A parcel shall not be given up or returned by post to the sender except upon payment by him of any charge for re-direction or other charge to which the parcel has become liable under the provisions of this warrant, or of any such regulations as are referred to in section 15 of the Post Office (Parcels) Act, 1882.

THE PARCELS POST AT HOME AND ABROAD.

With reference to the future, it is stated that the question of establishing an international parcels post was being carefully considered. The Postmaster-General is most desirous to introduce the tariff for cheap telegrams as soon as possible, but it is necessary to make adequate preparations, otherwise many of the wires would inevitably become blocked, causing great delay and much inconvenience. To show the character of the preparations required, it is estimated that 15,000 miles of new wire would have to be erected before the new change could come into operation; but it is expected that the reduced charge will come into operation on Oct. 1 next year at the furthest.

The introduction of the Parcels Post into England leads to a comparison between the rates fixed in this country and elsewhere. This cannot be very exact, owing to the fact that in many Continental countries the charge varies with distance, whereas in England it is uniform. This also necessitates a double comparison—namely, that where distance is an element of the charge and that where distance is immaterial. Take the latter first. The new scale of charges established by the London Post Office contrasts as follows with that of Belgium, Holland, and France:—

| |
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| England: 1 lb., 3d.; 1-3 lb., 6d.; 3-9 lb., 9d.; 5-7 lb., 1s. |
| France: 7 lb., 8d.; 7 lb., if not delivered, 6d.; 7 lb., received and delivered in Paris, 2d. |
| Belgium: 11 lb., 5d.; 11 lb., express, 8d. |
| Holland: 2-5 lb., 3d.; 2-5-7 lb., 4d.; 7-11 lb., 5d. Express extra. |

In England the charges include delivery. In France the charge for delivery is 2d. over and above the charge for dispatch from station to station. The idea of a low charge of 2d. for all parcels sent and delivered in the capital has not been adopted by Mr. Fawcett. Neither has the express rate met with his approval. In Holland this varies from 5d. extra on parcels in towns to 10d. per three miles on parcels delivered in rural districts. Another foreign idea is that of charging 1d. for receipts. It will be seen that our rate for 7 lb. is dearer than any charged in France, Belgium, or Holland. Holland carries for 3d. more than twice the weight franked by that sum in England, and Belgium carries 11 lb. for less than Mr. Fawcett will convey 1 lb. 1 oz.

The following table gives the rates charged by distance as well as by weight. The parcel-post rates are given for the sake of comparison:—

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| England: 1 lb., 3d.; 1-3 lb., 6d.; 3-5 lb., 9d.; 5-7 lb., 1s. |
| English Railways: 1 lb. 50 miles, 4d.; 1 lb. any dist., 6d.; 7 lb. 30 miles, 6d.; 7 lb. 50 miles, 8d.; 7 lb. 400 miles, 1s. 3d.; 7 lb. further, 1s. 6d. |
| India: 5 lb. per 100 miles, 4d. (average). |
| Austria: 7 lb. 12 miles, 3d.; 7 lb. further, 7d.; 3½ lb. delivered in Vienna, 1d.; 3½ lb. in other towns, 3d.; 3½ lb. in country, 1½d.-3d. |
| Germany: 7 lb. 50 miles, 3d.; 7 lb. further, 6d.; 7 lb. town delivery, 1½d.-2d.; 6 lb. rural, 1½d.; 6-11 lb. rural, 3d. |
| Switzerland: 7 lb. 16 miles, 2d.; 7 lb. further, 4d.; crossing Alps, 2d. extra. |

From this it will be seen that the English parcel rate is cheaper for 11 lb. parcels for long distances than any foreign parcel post, but that for short distances and heavy parcels the English rate is the highest. For instance— if we desire to dispatch a 1 lb. parcel and have it delivered at a distance of 100 miles, the rates would be as follows:—

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|-------------------------|------|
| England, Parcel post | 3d. | Holland | 8d. |
| " Railway | 6d. | " Belgium | 5d. |
| France | 8d. | " Switzerland | 4d. |
| Germany | 7d. | India | 4½d. |
| Austria | 5d. | | |

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON ALMANACK FOR 1884.

If, on the other hand, a 5 lb. parcel is to be sent from one part of the capital and delivered in the other, the charges would be as follow:—

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| England, Parcels Post 1s. | Holland 4d. |
| " Railway 6d. | Belgium 5d. |
| France 2½d. | Switzerland 2d. |
| Germany 4½d. | India 9d. |
| Austria 5d. | |

The Indian rate is calculated approximately from the rate established at the Railway Conference at Simla, where the rate was fixed at 2s. 9d. per 5 lb. carried 700 miles. Both in Germany and Austria the charge for delivery is extra, and varies with distance from ½d. to 5d. The charge of the Parcel Delivery Company varies with distance and competition. They can do the work cheaper between large centres than the Government, for they collect small parcels and make them up for dispatch into large ones, which are carried by the railway companies at low rates. For instance, to send a 7 lb. parcel by the Post Office from London to Bath costs 1s., to send it by railway costs 1s. 3d., but to send it by the Globe Parcels Express only costs 4d., because the freight to Bath by goods-train is only from 2s. 6d. to 3s. per cwt.—that is to say, the railway companies convey in bulk sixteen 7 lb. parcels for 3s., at a little less than 2½d. each, as against 1s. 3d. each charged for their separate collection and delivery.

THE GENERAL POST RATES.

The rates of postage on inland letters prepaid are as follow, viz:—

| | |
|---|------|
| For a letter not exceeding 1 oz. | 1d. |
| Exceeding 1 oz., but not exceeding 2 oz. | 1½d. |
| " 2 oz., and less than 4 oz. | 2d. |
| " 4 oz., and less than 6 oz. | 2½d. |
| " 6 oz., and less than 8 oz. | 3d. |
| " 8 oz., and less than 10 oz. | 3½d. |
| " 10 oz., and less than 12 oz. | 4d. |

A letter exceeding the weight of 12 oz. is liable to a postage of 1d. for every ounce, beginning with the first ounce. A letter, for example, weighing between 14 oz. and 15 oz. must be prepaid 1s. 3d.

A letter posted unpaid is chargeable on delivery with double postage; and if insufficiently prepaid is chargeable with double the deficiency.

No letter may be above eighteen inches in length, nine inches in width, or six inches in depth.

Letters for the Country posted in London or the London Districts on Saturday too late for the ordinary Evening Mails, but in time for the last Evening Collections are delivered next morning, if for places within the range of the Midnight despatches; if for places beyond that range, they are delivered on Monday. The late fee charged for posting inland ordinary letters, after the time of closing the boxes for the dispatch of a mail, is extended and reduced to a uniform rate of a halfpenny.

All Post Offices in the London District are closed on Sundays, with some few exceptions, which are open for the receipt and dispatch of telegrams during the hours stated in Postal Guide.

Double or reply inland post-cards are sold at the following prices:—Stout Cards—1, 1½d.; 2, 2½d.; 3, 3½d.; 4, 4½d.; 5, 5½d.; 6, 6d.; 7, 7d.; 8, 8d.; 9, 9d.; 10, 10d.; 11, 11d.; 12, 12d.; 13, 13d.; 14, 14d.; 15, 15d.; 16, 16d.; 17, 17d.; 18, 18d.; 19, 19d.; 20, 20d. Thin Cards—1, 1½d.; 2, 2½d.; 3, 3½d.; 4, 4½d.; 5, 5d.; 6, 6d.; 7, 7d.; 8, 8d.; 9, 9d.; 10, 10d.; 11, 11d.; 12, 12d.; 13, 13d.; 14, 14d.; 15, 15d.; 16, 16d.; 17, 17d.; 18, 18d.; 19, 19d.; 20, 20d. The reply cards will not be sold in sheets like the single cards.

Inquiries for Missing Letters, &c., should be made at the Secretary's Office, New Buildings, between ten a.m. and four p.m. (Saturdays between ten and one).

The Returned Letter Office is in Telegraph-street, Moorgate-street. The Money Order Office is at No. 1, Aldersgate-street. The Post-Office Savings Bank is in Queen Victoria-street, E.C.

EXEMPTIONS FROM POSTAGE.

Petitions and addresses to the Queen, forwarded direct, are exempt from postage; they are also exempt, if addressed to a member of either House of Parliament, as are petitions to either House so addressed, provided they do not exceed 2 lb. in weight, and, if in covers, are in open covers. There must be no inclosure; any inclosure, unless it bear the proper number of postage stamps, will be charged as a letter. There is no restriction as to the size of petitions or addresses to the Queen, or of petitions to Parliament. Printed votes or proceedings of the Imperial Parliament, in open covers, having the words "Parliamentary Proceedings" written or printed thereon, may be sent within the United Kingdom and to the colonies and those foreign States to which there is a book post, at the book rate of postage, the prepayment, as regards inland packets, being optional. The limits as to size and weight are not applicable to Parliamentary proceedings.

LETTERS "TO BE CALLED FOR."

There is a Poste Restante both at the General Post Office, St. Martin's-le-Grand, and at the Charing-cross Post Office, where letters "to be called for" can be obtained between the hours of nine a.m. and five p.m. No letters (except communications from the Savings Bank Department) are taken in "to be called for" at the other district or branch offices, and any so directed are sent to the Returned Letter Office, to be returned to the writers.

COLONIAL AND FOREIGN LETTERS.

Full particulars of the rates of postage on letters to the colonies and foreign countries will be found in the British Postal Guide, published quarterly, price Sixpence.

Parliamentary Notices may be forwarded through the post under the following regulations:—The words "Parliamentary Notice" must be legibly printed on the face of the letter; and in order to secure the speedy return of any Notices which may be undelivered, the name and address of the solicitor issuing such Parliamentary Notice should also be legibly printed or written on the face of the letter; though this is not imperative. The postage chargeable on these Notices, and the registration fee of sixpence on each, must be prepaid by stamps.

No letter, for any colony or foreign country may be above two feet in length or one foot in width or depth (neither must it contain gold or silver money, jewels, or precious articles, or anything liable to Customs duties), can be sent, even if registered, to any country of the General Postal Union.

INLAND BOOK POST.

The postage is one halfpenny for every 2oz. or part of that weight. A packet posted wholly unpaid is charged with double the book postage; and if posted partially prepaid, with double the deficiency.

COLONIAL AND FOREIGN BOOK POST.

The limit of size for a book-packet addressed to any place abroad is 24 in. in length and 12 in. in width or depth. The postage is 1s. a pound.

FOREIGN CARD POST.

Foreign post-cards may be sent to Canada and to all the countries comprised in the General Postal Union, with the exception of British India. The postage of a card is in every case one half the rate for a single letter. Foreign post-cards with an impressed stamp of 1d. and 1½d. each are sold at that rate, and are transmissible to the majority of the countries of the Union without extra charge, but reference should be made for exceptional rates to the Post Office Guide.

REGISTRATION (INLAND AND FOREIGN).

The fee for registering a letter, newspaper, or book-packet passing between any two places in the United Kingdom is twopence.

The fee chargeable for registration to Colonies and Foreign Countries is variable. See Post Office Guide.

Every letter to be registered should be presented at the counter, and a receipt obtained for it, and should on no account be dropped into the letter-box. If, contrary to this rule, a letter marked "Registered," be dropped into the letter-box, it will, if directed to any place in the United Kingdom or the British Colonies, be liable to a registration fee of 4d., instead of the ordinary fee of 2d.

INDIAN PARCEL POST.

1. Persons wishing to send parcels to any part of British India can do so through the Indian Parcel Post Agency—established under authority of the Director-General of the Post Office of India—at 122, Leadenhall-street, E.C.; and (Branch Office) at 25, Cockspur-street, S.W.

2. The charge for parcels is 1s. per lb. or fraction of 1 lb. (prepayment optional), covering transit from London to destination in India. Insurance may be effected, if desired, at the rate (to be prepaid) of 1s. up to £3 value, 2s. 6d. up to £10 value, and 5s. up to £20 value. Indian Customs duty (if chargeable) will be realised from the addressee.

N.B.—Parcels containing books only, or articles treated as books under the British Inland Book Post Rules, are charged 6d. per lb.

COLONIAL AND FOREIGN PATTERN AND SAMPLE POST.

There is a Pattern and Sample Post to certain colonies and foreign countries, but it is restricted to bona fide trade patterns or samples of merchandise.

MODES OF PREPAYMENT.

Inland letters, newspapers, and book-packets cannot be prepaid in money, but must be prepaid by means of stamps, either adhesive or embossed or impressed. This rule applies also to registered letters.

Exceptions.—At the Chief and District Post Offices, and at the Charing-cross and Lombard-street Post Offices in London, as well as at the Head Offices in Edinburgh and Dublin.

POSTAL ORDERS.

Postal orders, for certain fixed sums from 1s. up to £1, are issued to the public at all post offices at which money order business is transacted.

The following are the amounts for which postal orders are issued, together with the poundage payable in respect of each order:—

| Amount of Order. | Poundage. | Amount of Order. | Poundage. |
|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| 1s. 0d. | ¾d. | 7s. 6d. | 1d. |
| 1s. 6d. | ¾d. | 10s. 0d. | 2d. |
| 2s. 6d. | 1d. | 20s. 0d. | 2d. |

The person to whom a postal order is issued must, before parting with it, fill in the name of the Money Order Office at which the amount is to be paid. The person so named must, before payment can be made, sign the receipt at the foot of the order, and must also fill in the name of the Money Order Office, if that has not been already done.

The postmaster may require the person to sign his name on the order before payment is made, although it has been already signed. A postal order may be crossed to a particular banker, and the banker to whom it is crossed may cross it to another banker or agent for collection; and when so crossed specially a postmaster shall refuse to pay it, except to the banker to whom it is crossed. By the Act of 1833 this Act is extended to our Dominions out of the United Kingdom.

MONEY ORDERS.

The commission on Inland Money Orders is:—For sums under 10s., 2d.; 10s. and under £2, 3d.; £2 and under £3, 4d.; £3 and under £4, 5d.; £4 and under £5, 6d.; £5 and under £6, 7d.; £6 and under £7, 8d.; £7 and under £8, 9d.; £8 and under £9, 10d.; £9 and under £10, 11d.; £10, 1s.

POST-OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.

The usefulness of this department to the working classes goes on extending. There are now more than ten millions of depositors. Much has been done during the year to encourage thrift.

Post-Office Savings Banks are established at all Money-Order Offices in the United Kingdom, and are open for the receipt and payment of money and for the transaction of Government Stock business daily during the hours appointed for Money-Order business.

Any person desirous of saving one shilling by means of penny contributions, for deposit in the Post-Office Savings Bank, may do so by purchasing with every penny so saved a penny postage-stamp and affixing it to a form to be obtained at any post-office. When twelve such stamps have been so affixed, the form may be taken to any post-office savings bank in the United Kingdom, where it will be received by the postmaster, and one shilling be allowed for the stamps, which shilling will be accepted either as the first deposit in a new account then to be opened, or as an ordinary deposit if the owner of it has already opened an account. If the stamps affixed to the form are defaced, or in any way damaged, they will not be received by a postmaster.

INLAND TELEGRAMS.

The charge for telegrams throughout the United Kingdom is 1s. for the first twenty words, and 3d. for every additional five words or part of five words. The names and addresses of the sender and receiver are not counted.

The charges for press telegrams are 1s. for every hundred words or portion of one hundred words handed in between six p.m. and nine a.m.; and 1s. for every seventy-five words or portion of seventy-five words handed in between nine a.m. and six p.m.; with an additional charge of 2d. per hundred or 2d. per seventy-five words, as the case may be, for every additional address.

The cost of a reply, not exceeding forty words in length, may be prepaid; and a Reply Form will then be delivered to the addressee, who will be at liberty to send his reply, from any Telegraph Office, at any time within two months after the date of the original telegram.