

## THE PARCEL POST.

✓ THE introduction of a branch for the carriage of parcels in addition to that for the transmission of letters is certainly a bold innovation, but the English Post-Office Department has, nevertheless, ventured to undertake it, and the new adjunct actually came into operation on the 1st inst. The railway companies, as we showed some months ago, when the project was first before Parliament, made a strong fight against it, but as the Government was determined, and made besides such equitable concessions to the existing parcels' carriers it succeeded in prevailing. When the telegraph system of the country was absorbed by Government all the latter had to do was to step into the offices vacated by its predecessors and continue the work as left to them. The organisation was already complete and in good working order, requiring only such changes as the new proprietary might think it advisable to introduce. But in adding this new parcels' department the Government have an entirely new system to create in the place of finding already an perfected one to succeed to, and they have all their experience to acquire instead of inheriting it. It is too early yet to arrive at any definite idea of the amount of business to be done or the extent to which the facilities offered to the public will develop new business, as the project is yet quite in the experimental stage. In London, where the pressure of business is expected to be greatest, the whole work of parcel collection and distribution is to be divided among twelve central depots, most of which will be set up in the vicinity of the railway termini. These depots will be for the parcel system what the district stations are for the letter post, namely, local centres to which all the parcels of their locality will be conveyed, where they will be assorted, and whence they will be sent to their destination. In order to avoid as far as possible the friction incidental to the initiation of the system, new hands have been practiced in making up and sorting of dummy parcels, and in fact in doing anything that will be required in actual service except the dispatching. In London parcels will be collected and delivered by means of wagons. It is expected that there will be from three to five deliveries in the metropolis during the day, three in some parts of the city and five in others. Each post town in the United Kingdom is charged with the responsibility of elaborating a delivery and collection machinery for itself. If the new system were intended to be confined to the towns and cities alone, the experiment would not only be unjust to the rest of the community, but would start with a fair certainty of failure. It will, however, like the Post-Office proper, penetrate throughout every nook and corner of the United Kingdom, and will thus, we imagine, soon be recognised as a universal benefit. It is said, nevertheless, that country shop-keepers and small traders everywhere are already contemplating the possible effects of its working with no little alarm, as it is feared it will largely still more centralize trade within the great seats of population. The railways, however, have for years past fostered that tendency, and if the present scheme should still further develop it there will be no course but to submit and accept it as one of the inevitable tendencies of the times and of the widened facilities of communication. Intro-

duced into Canada it would at once go far to break down the extortionate monopolies of the existing Express Companies, and transfer from their hands enormous profits to fall into the national treasury. Matters, indeed, seem now to be so arranging themselves that the Government will shortly be compelled into taking into its own hands the whole of the existing methods of inter-communication—postals, parcels and telegraphic. The sooner the better.

THE U. S. MONEY ORDER SYSTEM.—A postal bill was passed by the late Congress, modifying the postal money order system so as to authorize Postmasters of money order offices, under authority of the Postmaster-General, to issue postal notes in denominations of \$5 and under. This is an important bill, and will greatly facilitate the transmission of small sums through the mails. It authorizes the issue of money orders without corresponding advices of \$5 and less, to be on engraved paper, and known as postal notes, payable to bearer, such notes to be invalid after three months, but the holder can after that time get the par value of the note by applying to the Post Office Department at Washington. For issuing a postal note a fee of three cents shall be charged. This bill authorizes the issue of money orders in denominations of \$100 or less, but none for more than \$100 can be issued. The following fees are fixed to be charged for money orders:—For orders not exceeding \$10, 8 cents; from \$10 to \$15, 10 cents; \$15 to \$30, 15 cents; \$30 to \$40, 20 cents; \$40 to \$50, 25 cents; \$50 to \$60, 30 cents; \$60 to \$70, 35 cents; \$70 to \$80, 40 cents; \$80 to \$100, 45 cents.

A POST-OFFICE STORY.—The post office at Iron Rod, Montana, has been discontinued, and the explanation is thus given by an officer of the department:—"A post office agent, while officially visiting various offices in Montana Territory for the purpose of correcting any irregularities of postmasters, stopped at Iron Rod. Going into the post office he found the room divided into three sections—first a saloon, next the post office, and last a faro bank. The mail bag was brought in, a rough-looking customer opened it, and emptied the contents on the floor. The entire crowd at once got down on their hands and commenced overhauling the letters, among which several were registered, and selected such as they wanted. After they were through, the remaining letters were shovelled into a candle-box and placed on the bar. The special agent, thinking the office needed a little regulating, asked the bar-keeper, who had received and distributed the mail, if he was the postmaster. He answered, 'No.' 'Are you the assistant postmaster?' 'No.' 'Where is the postmaster?' 'Out mining.' 'Where is the assistant postmaster?' 'Gone to Hell's Canon, and by thunder! Bill Jones has got to run this office next week; it's his turn.' The Government official then stated who he was, and demanded the keys of the office. The bar-tender coolly took the candle-box from the bar, placed it on the floor and gave it a kick, sending it out of the door, saying 'There's your post office, and now get.' The agent says: 'Knowing the custom of the country, I lost no time in following this advice, and got.' This is why the post office at Iron Rod was discontinued."

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