

620. No payment is to be made for parcel-mails that do not exceed in weight 1 lb., or in respect of parcels conveyed a second time by steamers owned by the same company or proprietors.

621. (a.) A larger number of hampers, baskets, wrappers, &c., than necessary should not be kept at any office, and those received which are not immediately required should be returned to the chief office or other suitable distributing office, as soon as possible. Controlling officers must see that no undue accumulation of hampers is permitted.

(b.) Any avoidable failure to return "empties" promptly will be severely noticed. Empty receptacles must not be left exposed to the risk of damage from the weather or other causes. Baskets, &c., when returned should be enclosed, as far as practicable, one within the other. "Empties" are not to be sealed, although they must be entered on the waybills as if they were full. Empty receptacles being returned by rail should be forwarded in regular mail-trains, and not deposited in roadside vans. All such empty receptacles are to be labelled with the special blue label marked "Empty," as well as with the usual address label; and the word "Empty" must not appear on the address label.

622. (a.) Care must be taken that parcel-post receptacles are not damaged by rough usage. The lids of the boxes are to be screwed down, but the screws must not be hammered in. Hampers, &c., are to be examined by responsible officers periodically, and as soon as any part is noticed to be showing signs of wear or breakage the receptacle is to be forwarded to Wellington at an early opportunity. A label is to be attached stating that when empty the receptacle is to be sent to the Stores Manager for repair. No hamper, basket, &c., in an unsafe condition is to be used under any circumstances.

(b.) Postmasters and controlling officers generally must see that messengers and others who deal with hampers and other parcel-post receptacles exercise every care in handling them. When placed on coach, steamer, or train the lid must always be uppermost. To avoid accident, a line is to be run through the handle of a hamper when it is being lowered to the deck of a steamer. Special efforts must be made in post-offices, at railway-stations, and on wharves and steamers to minimize wear-and-tear to parcel-post receptacles. Any officer, permanent or non-permanent, found guilty of cutting straps, or otherwise wilfully injuring any parcel-post receptacle, will be required to pay the full cost of repairs, and will, in addition, render himself liable to severe penalties.

623. (a.) Under no circumstances is a parcel-post receptacle to be issued to a Government Department without express authority being first obtained from the Secretary.

(b.) Hampers lent to Government Departments, and containing large packages of official papers, are not to be forwarded by registered post.

624. When a Postmaster is satisfied that the despatch or delivery of letters would be delayed by the inclusion of parcels, he may detain such parcels until the following despatch or delivery, except in the case of express-transit parcels, which must invariably be accepted up to the time of the closing of the ordinary letter-mail and forwarded by that mail.

625. Parcels which can conveniently be sent by slow trains are not to be sent by express trains. This rule is to be read subject to the provisions of the express-transit system. As far as possible only express-transit parcels are to be forwarded on R.T.P.O.s.