

SNOWSTORMS IN NEW ZEALAND.

SERIOUS POSITION IN THE BACK COUNTRY.

Wellington, July 3.

Heavy snowstorms, extending over the whole of Canterbury, have prevailed during the past three days, and telegraphic communication is seriously interrupted. The position in the back country is serious, as snow is still falling. Heavy losses of stock are anticipated.

Wellington, July 4.

The severe weather, which has prevailed in the south since Monday is moderating somewhat. At Canterbury the railways are blocked, the snowdrifts being 4ft. deep in some places. It is feared that the loss of stock will be heavy.

Firms Threatened.—Last week four of the leading city business firms of Perth, W.A., each received a letter demanding £2,000. The writer declared that he was claiming the money on account of the "profiteering" practised by these firms, and he threatened them with "serious destruction" should payment be withheld. The firms were also told that should the demand be acceded to they must send a boy with the money to a spot outside the town hall. The police were informed, and a boy duly took up his station, with detectives close by. The writer of the letter did

attractive enough, while the country districts needed all the attention they could get.

A Russian at the Court.—At the local police court on Tuesday the proceedings were brought to a sudden stop. A Russian named Peter Srebel was charged with failing to give notice of intention to change place of abode. His knowledge of the English language was so limited that he didn't know whether he was being charged with manslaughter or stealing a turkey! He evidently pleaded guilty, but no one knew whether he did or not. Inquiries were made, but no one in the court, or outside of it, knew anything of the language. For once the genial senior-sergeant was nonplussed. The case was ultimately adjourned, and the sergeant was last seen "russian" about town looking for an interpreter.

High Prices for Rams.—On Monday last the previous world's record price for a ram was exceeded by several hundred guineas when Messrs. Goldsborough, Mort and Co. sold privately, on account of Mr. Thomas Millear, of Deniliquin Stud Park (N.S.W.) to Messrs. Lord Bros., of Victoria Downs Station, Morven, Q., the extra special double stud-merino ram, Stud Park No. 10, for the sum of 2500 guineas. The previous record was 2000 guineas (paid two years ago by a South Australian breeder for a Bundemar ram, this price being repeated last month for a Boo-