

season of navigation. Charges were necessarily high, \$1.12 being paid on ordinary letters from London to Toronto *via* Halifax.

The first post office in Toronto was opened about 1800. By 1816 there were 19 offices in the two Canadas, and in 1827 this number had increased to 114. At this time the system consisted primarily of a trunk line of communication between Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, Toronto and Amherstburg, over which couriers travelled at varying intervals. Branching off this line were routes to Sorel, Sherbrooke, St. Johns, Hull, Hawkesbury, Perth and Richmond, with most deliveries made once or twice a week.

Hitherto the Post Office had been under the control of the Imperial Department, but considerable agitation resulted in the service being transferred on April 6, 1851, to the several provinces. Only enough mutual control was maintained to insure the continuance of Imperial and intercolonial relations. The provinces had complete jurisdiction over the establishment and maintenance of systems and rates.

At Confederation the provincial systems were transferred to the Dominion. The Post Office Act of 1867 established a service throughout Canada. The domestic rate on letters was reduced from 5 to 3 cents per half-ounce, and in 1870 the rates to the United States and Great Britain were reduced from 10 to 6 cents and from 12½ to 6 cents respectively per half-ounce. In 1875 a convention between Canada and the United States reduced postal rates between the countries to the domestic level. In 1878, on the admission of Canada to the Postal Union, letter postage to the countries of the Postal Union was reduced to 5 cents per half-ounce. After a conference in 1897, Imperial penny postage (2 cents per half-ounce) was established on Dec. 25, 1898, while the domestic rate was reduced from 3 to 2 cents per ounce. These rates were maintained until 1915, when a 1-cent war tax, still in force, was imposed on all 2-cent letters, on post cards and postal notes. Recently the rate to Great Britain has been increased to 4 cents an ounce (3 cents on succeeding ounces) while that to Postal Union countries, previously raised to 10 cents and 5 cents on first and succeeding ounces, is now 8 and 4 cents respectively.

The Post Office Department is administered by the Postmaster-General. Besides the several administrative branches within the Department, the Dominion is divided into 15 districts, each in charge of a Post Office Inspector. The Canadian system embraces a territory more extensive than that served by any other systems except those of the United States and Russia, the sparsity of population and the comparative lack of development making inevitable a peculiarly difficult and expensive service.

Rural Mail Delivery.—A system of rural mail delivery was inaugurated in Canada on Oct. 10, 1908, limited at that time to existing stage routes, persons residing on such routes being entitled to have mail boxes put up in which the mail carrier was to deposit mail matter and from which he was to collect mail matter and carry it to the post office. As a consequence of the public approval of this scheme, new regulations, taking effect on April 1, 1912, made all persons residing in rural districts along and contiguous to well-defined main thoroughfares of one mile and upwards eligible to receive their mail in this manner, while couriers of rural mail routes were also required to sell postage stamps and take applications for and accept money, money orders and postal notes. The result has been an increase in the number of rural routes from approximately 900 in 1912 to 3,772 in 1924, having 201,392 mail boxes as against approximately 25,000 in 1912. The establishment of these routes has been an important factor in the recent amelioration of the conditions of Canadian rural life.