

APPENDIX.

JUBILEE OF IMPERIAL PENNY POSTAGE.

THE fiftieth anniversary of the introduction of uniform penny postage in the United Kingdom was celebrated in London, and in other parts of the country, in 1890. The Penny Postage Jubilee Dinner, which was held in the Holborn Restaurant on the 15th January, proved a most successful initial gathering. But the Corporation of the City of London, anxious to celebrate the jubilee in a fitting and more public manner, asked the Post Office to co-operate in arranging for an important conversazione at the Guildhall. The conversazione was opened on the 16th May, and the proceedings were brought to a pleasant conclusion on the 19th by a dinner at the Albion Tavern, under the presidency of Alderman Sir James Whitehead, Bart., at which the Postmaster-General and the principal officers of the Post Office were present.

The official celebration of the jubilee took the form of a grand conversazione at the North Kensington Museum on the 3rd July. There was a double object in holding this gathering: not only to mark in a fitting manner the jubilee of a great reform, but to increase the Rowland Hill Memorial and Benevolent Fund, which, it may be explained, has for its object the giving of relief to Post Office servants, before or after retirement, who, through no fault of their own, have fallen into necessitous circumstances, or to their widows and orphans. Her Majesty the Queen consented to become the patron of the fund, and extended her patronage to the conversazione.

A special jubilee post-card (some of which have reached the colony) had been issued for sale at the Guildhall, for the benefit of the fund, and it was so popular that the entire issue of 10,000 was bought up in less than three hours. In view of this success, it was resolved to issue a limited number of a special jubilee envelope, impressed with a penny postage-stamp, and containing an appropriate correspondence card; the proceeds of which were also devoted to the Benevolent Fund.

The efforts to increase the fund by subscriptions, and by the sale of tickets, cards, and envelopes, resulted in a sum of £22,000 being added thereto. In other words, one of the direct results of the jubilee celebrations was to more than double the Rowland Hill Fund.

The Post Office Jubilee Celebration Committee published, in book form, a highly interesting account of the celebration proceedings, and "a brief account of the Post Office, with especial reference to the progress of the fifty years ended 1890." Beyond the fact that universal penny-postage was introduced in the Mother-country in 1840, little perhaps is known in the colony of what really led up to this, or of the enormous expansion of postal business which has taken place during the half-century ended in 1890. The following extracts, including an account of what was witnessed in the London Post Office during the Christmas season of 1890, are, therefore, reproduced for the information of officials and public:—

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE POST OFFICE, WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE PROGRESS OF THE FIFTY YEARS ENDED 1890.

The system of uniform penny postage for letters throughout the United Kingdom, originated by the late Sir Rowland Hill, was introduced on the 10th January, 1840, and during the fifty years which have elapsed since that date the business of the post-office has developed to an extent far exceeding his utmost anticipations.

Before 1840 the rates of postage on letters sent from one part of the United Kingdom to another was almost prohibitive. It is true that in regard to letters posted in London and other large cities for delivery within their local posts there existed, as shown hereafter, a "penny post" and a "twopenny post," but beyond these limits the rates for a "single letter," unless "franked" by a Member of Parliament, were as follows:—

From any post-office to any place not exceeding 15 miles from such post-office	d.
Above 15 miles and under 20	4
" 20 " " 30	5
" 30 " " 50	6
" 50 " " 80	7
" 80 " " 120	8
" 120 " " 170	9
" 170 " " 230	10
" 230 " " 300	11
" 300 " " "	1/-

and 1d. for every additional 100 miles; while, as regards Scotland, an additional charge of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. was made on every letter sent across the border.

Only "single letters," *i.e.*, letters written on a single sheet of paper, could be sent at these rates. Hence the use, which some of the present letter-writers can remember, of the large square sheets of letter-paper, folded in four, and secured with a seal. The use of an envelope or cover, or of two sheets of paper, or the transmission of any enclosure, rendered the letter liable to double postage, and two enclosures involved treble postage. Also, if the letter weighed 1oz. the postage was quadrupled, and every additional $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. in weight led to an additional rate of postage. Thus, the postage on a "single letter" from London to Brighton was 8d.; to Manchester, 11d.; to Edinburgh,