

POST OFFICE WELFARE FUND

The Post Office Welfare Fund, a co-operative enterprise on the part of the staff, distinct from the departmental Staff Welfare Scheme mentioned above, is now firmly established. Membership is voluntary. Over 13,000 employees belong to the Fund, and membership subscriptions—4½d. a week—provide an annual income of over £12,000. Much good has been accomplished in an unobtrusive way, particularly in cases of sickness, and it is evident that members appreciate the worth-while objects of their Fund. The provision of holiday cottage accommodation continues to be a very popular feature of the scheme.

SUGGESTIONS SYSTEM

During the year ended 31st March, 1950, 255 suggestions were received from officers and 149 were finally disposed of by the Suggestions Board. Of these, 40 were adopted or partly adopted, 11 were forestalled, and the remaining 98, although many were of a commendable nature, were unsuitable for adoption. Over the same period awards totalling £186 10s. were paid to 34 officers for suggestions of more than ordinary merit.

JOINT ADVISORY SYSTEM

The Joint Advisory System, which was established in 1940 to provide a means of staff consultation in matters affecting the efficient working of the Department, principles governing conditions of service, improvements in office organization, and generally to co-opt the ideas and experience of the staff, has continued to function effectively during the year.

Since the inception of the scheme, some 2,000 proposals originating with Branch and District Advisory Committees, bearing on all phases of Post Office work, have been forwarded to the central Council for consideration. Many of them have resulted in improved service to the public. The Department, too, has not hesitated to refer to the Council a number of important questions for deliberation and report.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

During the year the Post Office has continued to develop its Public Relations functions. By the use of posters, general advertising, and press publicity the co-operation of the users of Post Office services has been sought in the interests of greater efficiency and improved service, and as a result there has been a valued increase in public understanding of Post Office problems. The staff, too, appreciate the efforts made to secure the co-operation of users of Post Office services, and in this way Public Relations functions have had an important bearing on general staff morale.

POSTAL SERVICES

Postal business expanded appreciably throughout the year. Compared with the previous year, approximately 7,000,000 more letters, 17,000,000 more articles of second-class mail, and 500,000 more inland parcels were sent through the post. The handling of this extra load in the face of the continued shortage of trained staffs has thrown a burden on the experienced officers of the postal branches; and although it was possible to deal with letter-mails expeditiously, these staffing difficulties were responsible on occasions for slight delays to second-class mail and parcels. Moreover, the increased quantity of second-class and parcel mail passing between the main centres frequently strained the mail space available in express trains, with the result that the overflow had sometimes to be sent by goods-trains.