

In the Invercargill Postal District, in particular, many small post-offices have been permanently closed, the settlers preferring the rural delivery as a more modern method of receiving and despatching their mail-matter. On several occasions, settlers in different parts of the country have offered to subscribe an amount additional to the stipulated box fees in order that they might enjoy the benefits of rural-delivery service.

Approximately seventeen thousand farmers have joined up with the rural-delivery system, and many more are considering its advantages. The annual fee is trifling—£1 for a daily delivery, and 10s. for a delivery thrice-weekly or less.

Since the reorganization of the rural-delivery system and the fixing of the small annual charge the growth has been phenomenal and the service effective. Many do not realize that by instituting a small annual charge—a registration fee—the Department has converted a haphazard delivery into one thoroughly reliable and much appreciated by the farmers concerned.

MONEY-ORDERS.

The money-orders issued exceeded those of the previous year, but there was a slight decrease in value. The total number of orders issued was 803,481, and the value £4,995,090.

SAVINGS-BANK.

Despite the fact that withdrawals exceeded deposits by £2,973,931, the amount standing at credit of depositors was only £1,226,775 less than in the previous year. In view of the general trade recovery, it is anticipated that not only will there be an increase in the amount of deposits, but the balance at credit at the end of the coming year will be greater than on any previous occasion. The number of depositors has increased by 20,898. At the 31st March there were 804,725 depositors, with a total of £47,758,726 at their credit.

POST OFFICE INVESTMENT CERTIFICATES.

On the 1st September, 1927, there was offered for sale a new issue of Post Office investment certificates with a currency of one, two, and five years, bearing interest at the rate of $4\frac{1}{2}$, 5, and $5\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. respectively. The certificates are in three values—£1, £10, and £100—and form a regular avenue for investment. Up to the 31st March, 1928, the amount invested in this series reached the sum of £541,789. These certificates provide a substitute for the reduction in the maximum interest-earning deposits of the Savings-bank, and have the added advantage that they are virtually “fixed deposits.”

INSPECTION OF POST-OFFICES.

During 1927, 1,256 visits of inspection to post-offices were made. The accounts were audited at each inspection, and on no occasion was any serious discrepancy in the official cash disclosed. At a conference of Inspectors advantage was taken of the opportunity of discussing altered methods of inspection, which will raise still higher the Department's standard of efficiency.

TELEGRAPH, TOLL, AND WIRELESS SERVICES.

The year has been one of outstanding progress in the development of telegraph and telephone services throughout the world. The success of the trans-atlantic wireless telephone service between London and New York, and its subsequent extension to various points in the United States of America, Canada, Great Britain, and the Continent of Europe, the development of automatic telephony, and the remarkable results achieved in long-distance wireless communication have combined to make the year a notable one. Perhaps the most significant event has been the remarkable fulfilment of anticipations regarding the beam wireless telegraph services. Beam services have been established between Great Britain and Canada,