

NEW POSTAL DISTRICTS.

Two new postal districts have been established, with Hamilton and Palmerston North as the respective chief post-offices. In view of the growth of the Auckland and Wellington Postal Districts, the establishing of new districts was deemed desirable in the interests of speeding up the conduct of public business.

POSTAGE-RATES.

In February, 1923, the rates of postage, which had been increased as a result of the additional burden cast on the country by the war, were reduced—the letter rate from 2d. to 1½d., the packet rate from 1½d. to 1d., and so on. In October, 1923, it was found possible to reduce still further the rates of postage. The letter rate was reduced from 1½d. to 1d., and the packet rate from 1d. to ½d.

In 1924 there was introduced a concession rate of ¾d. for "Householder" packets posted in numbers of 250,000 or more by one sender at one time. It was later found possible to grant a further concession, in that the ¾d. rate applies in the case of a 250,000 posting spread over any period of twelve months.

It was found possible in January, 1926, to introduce a cheap postage-rate for library books. Books exchanged between libraries, between libraries and their subscribers, between recognized book clubs and their subscribers, may now be sent within New Zealand at the rate of 2d. for 1 lb. and 1d. for each additional 1 lb. up to 5 lb. This cheap rate has proved a boon to the country reader.

PREVENTION OF LOSS OF POSTAGES TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Prior to 1922 the New Zealand Post Office retained the postages on parcels addressed to the United States of America, and the United States of America retained the postages on parcels addressed to New Zealand. This arrangement was most inequitable, as the United States forwarded to New Zealand many more parcels than New Zealand sent to the United States. In 1922 this disability was removed by the introduction, at the request of New Zealand, of a system of accounting, under which the country of origin pays to the country of destination 20 cents in respect of each parcel despatched.

INSURED-PARCEL POST.

The insured-parcel-post system was extended in March, 1925, to parcels exchanged between New Zealand and Australia; in October, 1925, to parcels exchanged between New Zealand and Canada; and in July of the following year to parcels exchanged between New Zealand and Fiji.

CASH-ON-DELIVERY SYSTEM.

The system of cash on delivery for post parcels exchanged between Great Britain and New Zealand was introduced in January, 1920. Under the system it is possible for a person in New Zealand to order goods from Great Britain, to have them despatched by parcel-post, and to pay for them on delivery. Similarly, a person in Great Britain may order goods from New Zealand and pay for them on delivery.

This system was adopted as a result of representation by the British Government.

In July, 1926, the system was extended to parcels exchanged between New Zealand and Fiji.

PARCEL-POST TO GREAT BRITAIN: INCREASED WEIGHT-LIMIT.

The acceptance of parcels weighing up to 22 lb. for Great Britain was commenced in August, 1927. Prior to this the weight-limit was 11 lb.

DELIVERY AND RECEIPT OF MAILS ON FAST-MOVING TRAINS.

An automatic mail-bag-exchanging device, for use in dropping and picking up mails from fast-moving trains, was successfully operated at Levin on the 8th March, 1928, when the south-bound Main Trunk express, travelling at a speed of thirty miles an hour, dropped a mail for Levin and picked up one for Wellington. The