

OUR POSTAL HISTORY.

The presentation on Saturday to Mr. W. H. Griffin, the late Deputy Postmaster-General of Canada, was an occurrence of more than passing interest. Mr. Griffin, is probably the oldest official the Dominion has. He entered the public service as long ago as 1831, and has occupied the position of Deputy Minister, or head of the Postal Department, since June 12, 1857—thirty-one-years. It has fallen to the lot of few men to point to so long and to so honourable a record as that attaching to Mr. Griffin's name.

The changes Mr. Griffin has witnessed since 1831, when he began his official career, have been numerous and sweeping. In the year mentioned, and for twenty years afterwards the people of Canada were not bothered with postal concerns. The Imperial Government managed the post-office and gave us all the facilities it deemed desirable or necessary for the exchange of communications. The first official to regulate the postal business in what is now Canada was no less important a person than Benjamin Franklin, whose jurisdiction as Deputy Postmaster-General extended from Pennsylvania northward. Franklin had at Quebec a postmaster named Hugh Finlay. After the declaration of independence Mr. Finlay received the appointment of Deputy Postmaster-General for all Canada. He had in 1791 eleven post-offices under his management one as far west as Mackinaw and one as far east as the Baie des Chaleurs. He gave a weekly mail between Quebec and Montreal, and a monthly mail for the Western country. In 1800 Mr. George Heriot succeeded to the post. He gave Canada twenty-six post-offices. Seventeen years later, under Mr. Daniel Sutherland the number was increased and the mails were multiplied. A daily mail was established between Quebec and Montreal and a weekly mail between Montreal and Toronto. Mr. Stayner, his successor brought the number of post-offices in 1831, the year in which Mr. Griffin entered the service, up to 151. During all this time the carrying of letters was a profitable business. There was, for example, a profit of \$21,000 in

1824 and of \$47,000 in 1831, all which sums were duly remitted to England to swell the Imperial revenue. The rates, however, were exceedingly high. It cost eighteen cents to send a letter from Toronto to Kingston, and thirty cents to send one to Montreal. The charge for sending a weekly paper through the mails was a dollar a year, as much as the paper now costs, and the postage on a daily was over two dollars a year. When in 1851 Canada took charge of the postal service, reforms were promptly inaugurated. The postage on all letters to all destinations in Canada, was reduced to six cents per half ounce, and the cost of the ocean postage from Toronto was brought down to sixteen cents. Under Mr. Griffin the rates on letters have been brought down from six cents to five cents and, in 1868, from five cents to three cents. A one-cent rate has been adopted for city deliveries; one-cent postage stamps have also been introduced; and newspapers have been given the freedom of the mails. Post-offices to the number of 7,534 have been established, and a perfect system of communication with all points, including reciprocal postal relations with other countries, has been created. The post-office savings bank, the postal money order, and the system of registration have been given in addition during Mr. Griffin's regime.

All that is wanted now is a two-cent in the place of the three-cent postage. One obstruction stands in the way of this reform. It is the deficit in the working expenses, which last year amounted to \$854,845. Mr. Griffin probably could not advise the Ministers under whom he served to take the responsibility of a further reduction in the revenue. But he has done a good work without that, and deserves, as a result, to be remembered by the public as a worthy official.—*From Daily Mail, Oct. 24.*

—The constitution of the C. P. A. is now ready and will be mailed to members at once.

—Our membership has reached 169 and 10 applications; this is a good showing for first 11 months. Look out, A. P.A., we're after you.