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THE PARCEL POST.

The Civilian presents to its readers an article on the proposed Parcel Post from the pen of Mr. W. A. Code of the Post Office Dept., Ottawa. Mr. Code furnished The Civilian with one of the best of many good departmental articles, that on the Postage Stamp Branch. The present article may serve prospectively as a departmental article on the Parcel Post.

The question of a parcel post system for Canada is of such general interest that it may be considered, in view of the recent announcement of the Postmaster General, a timely topic to touch upon in your columns, even though it be in a brief and superficial way. There are many matters that enter into the consideration of a parcel post service, not the least of these being the difficulties arising from the establishment of such a service in a country where the population is comparatively small, the transportation facilities as yet not by any means an extensive as desired, and where distances are great. Such things as affecting a parcel post service apply to conditions in Canada. It follows, too, in any event, that the cost involved in the establishment of such a service must be considerable, and will, no doubt, prompt the Postmaster General in this departure to act on the old adage and "make haste slowly."

Parcel post systems have been for many years operated in England, France, Switzerland and Germany with splendid success, but conditions in these countries are vastly different from conditions in Canada where a relatively small population is spread over a large area.

As the United States on the 1st January last put into operation a system of parcel post, and as that country, geographically speaking, has much the same conditions as to dis-

tances (particularly from east to west) to contend against as has Canada, it is permissible, perhaps, for our present purpose that an outline of the scheme adopted by our American neighbours be given so that we may have something to work upon.

The United States parcel post scheme is divided into eight postal zones, the first of these including "all territory within such quadrangle in conjunction with every contiguous quadrangle, representing an area having a mean radial distance of approximately fifty miles from the centre of any given unit of area." The following six zones are determined on a somewhat similar plan, each one increasing in distance from the centre of a given unit of area, and extending outward 150, 300, 600, 1,000, 1,400 and 1,800 miles, the eighth zone including all units of area outside of the seventh zone.

Distinctive parcel post stamps in the 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c, 10c, 15c, 20c, 25c, 50c, 75c and \$1 denominations are issued and are required to be used; the use of the ordinary postage stamps on parcels being prohibited.

The subjects of the several denominations are:—

- 1c, "Post office clerk."
- 2c, "City carrier."
- 3c, "Railway postal clerk."
- 4c, "Rural carrier."
- 5c, "Mail train."
- 10c, "Steamship and mail tender."
- 15c, "Automobile service."