

lous. Including all the stamps and money buried in the thousands of little shacks throughout the country that do duty as country post offices; all wrecks and other accidents; all burglaries, embezzlements and other crimes; all losses through error or delay; all registered letters lost or unaccounted for;—the whole grand total of errors in which the post office was either the culprit of the victim amounted to \$4,468.

Somebody must have taken his attention from his newspaper for a minute or two, or surely this great work could not have been carried on with such a merely fractional loss.

Nor is the post office merely a big unchanging machine which takes in material, post-marks it and gives it out again. It is the most modern, the most progressive, the most up-to-date business in the country. One of its latest ideas is the rural mail delivery route, by means of which the post office is brought right to the farmer's front gate. This means the closing of many small post offices, making in the aggregate a very noteworthy change in the general system. There were nearly three hundred fewer post offices at the end of the year than there were at the beginning. But almost three hundred and fifty new offices had been opened, mostly in the suburbs of big cities and in the newly developing towns of the west and north. The rural mail routes had increased by 462, and almost 24,000 farm homes were being served that formerly had to depend for their mail upon visits to the village post office.

These are only the big changes. Consider the number of offices made vacant by resignation, dismissal or death. Consider the number of appointments to be made not merely to fill these places, but to man the new services of every kind that are constantly opening. Consider the changes in location of post offices, the changes in mail routes, the extensions into newly-settled territory. All these things are accepted by the public as

commonplaces, as things that are operated by several forces, like the movement of the planets. But the men and women of the Post Office Department could tell a different tale. They could tell of nerves worn out in office worry or of hardships endured in the storms of our northern winters; of endless care in threading a maze of small detail or of downright heroism shown in the one object of life to them,—getting the mail through on time. In the midst of their work they, too, smile at the joke that all this combination of miracles is wrought by idlers who spend their time lolling in office chairs and reading newspapers.

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### THE PATRIOTIC FUND.

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The response of the members of the Dominion Public Service, who have their permanent or temporary homes in the Capital, to the third call for contributions to the Canadian Patriotic Fund, is gratifying in the extreme. The campaign which was conducted on the 7th, 8th and 9th of February, consecutively with that of the Central Committee in Ottawa, was under the auspices of the Patriotic Affairs Committee of the Civil Service Association; Mr. A. DeB. Tremaine, chairman.

Profiting by the experience gained in a similar campaign in January, 1916, the committee organized itself and pursued its way along lines that the past had shown to be successful. In the face of many difficulties which presented themselves owing to the circumstances surrounding the public servants in Ottawa, as is also true elsewhere, the fact that at the final complimentary dinner which was tendered the campaign workers at Murphy-Gamble's the committee captain, Walter Todd, was enabled to announce a grand total of over \$137,000 as against the \$132,000 announced at the same time a year ago, speaks volumes for the people who had a part