

Post Office Department.

During the year 1897-98 the operations of the Railway Mail Service have resulted in a marked increase over 1896-97 in the number of miles of additional railway lines utilized for mail purposes, which, naturally, has had the effect of providing a much more efficient mail service than hitherto. Services were established over new lines as the needs of the community required improved means of communication.

550·65 miles of new railway were utilized and of this increased mileage attention need only be directed to the following :—

A baggage car service daily, each way, between Metapedia and New Carlisle by the Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway, 98 miles, giving the offices en route direct daily connection with the Intercolonial Railway south and west. In conjunction with this service a daily service by stage was operated between New Carlisle and Paspebiac, thus providing a satisfactory service along the Bay of Chaleurs.

A daily service by baggage car was also established between Norton Station and Chipman on the line of the Central Railway of New Brunswick, a distance of 45 miles, affording greatly improved mail facilities to the terminal points and the intermediate offices on the route.

Owing to the arrangement entered into whereby the Drummond County Railway was made part of the Intercolonial system, the Department was enabled to extend the postal service over the Intercolonial Railway to Montreal and also continue the postal car service, as formerly operated by the Drummond County Railway between St. Hyacinthe and Nicolet. A daily postal car service over the new line between Lévis and St. Leonard Junction, and a service by baggage car between Lévis and Montreal represents the increased service resulting from the additional mileage put into operation, the track of the Grand Trunk Railway between Lévis and Chaudière Junction and between Ste. Rosalie and Montreal being used in conjunction with the above ; the actual number of miles of new railway being only 70·9, namely, between St. Leonard Junction and Chaudière Junction.

An extension of the daily postal car service on the line of the Lake Erie and Detroit River Railway, from Leamington to Ridgetown, 46·05 miles, and of the daily baggage car service on the Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound Railway from Whitney to Scotia Junction—67·2 miles, the latter service completing direct postal connection by railway between Ottawa and Parry Sound gave to the respective districts a much desired means of mail communication.

The weekly service by baggage car between Dauphin and Winnipegosis—39·1 miles, and the semi-weekly service by postal car between Portage la Prairie and Dauphin—120·3 miles—(The Northern Pacific Railway being used between Portage la Prairie and Gladstone) provided the Lake Dauphin District with mail facilities greatly required in that rapidly growing portion of the Dominion.

By the extension of the daily baggage car service on the Slocan Branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway, from Slocan Junction to Slocan City, a distance of 32 miles, and the establishment of a daily baggage car service between Robson and Rossland, B.C., on the line of the Columbia and Western Railway, 32·6 miles, the mail facilities hitherto existing in those districts were improved to a degree commensurate with their importance.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,

B. M. ARMSTRONG,

Controller

R. M. COULTER,

Deputy Postmaster General.