

### **"MAIL FACILITIES."**

Mr. S. Sutchkoff, of Edith Creek, via Smithton, writes:—A recent statement of the Federal Treasurer in the House of Representatives reads: "The profit of the Postal department had been £524,000 in 1919 without including the war tax on postal articles. The Government was of opinion that the Post Office should not continue to be used as a taxing machine after the war closed, and consideration was being given to extending the facilities in country districts." Up to last New Year's Day our country people used to get their mail twice a week from Smithton Post Office, distributed in private boxes at the farms by the mailman. It was not very much in the way of "facilities," but people did not grumble. Since New Year's Day, with the opening of the Stanley-Trowutta railway, there came alterations, and thirteen miles of Smithton-Trowutta main road is left now completely without mail service. Everyone is to devise his own means to get the mail! Some are nearer to Smithton, others to Irish Town, others to Trowutta Post Office. But Edith Creek station, as a central one, is nearest to nowhere! It is seven miles to Irish Town, six miles to Trowutta, and ten miles to Smithton. The farthest post office, however, is the nearest, for the people have more chance to be there on business than anywhere else. And so we get our mail only occasionally, mostly once a week, sometimes once a fortnight. In this case we have to suffer very often in our business transactions with the cities, and the daily papers, when they reach us, are too old to be of any use. We applied to the Deputy Postmaster-General, pointing out all the absurdity of the situation, that our mail should be left at

tion, that our mail should be left at the mercy of a chance, while the train stops every day at our station! In response he suggested such a complicated and expensive way of getting our mail that he might just as well have recommended hiring an aeroplane for the same purpose. It would be just as magnificent, and just as inconsistent with the principle of a free delivery. Are we not taxpayers and ratepayers? Are we not the equal citizens of the Commonwealth? Is this not sufficient to have the right of free delivery of the mail? Well, the Deputy Postmaster-General does not think so! In his answer to us he says that he cannot grant free mail service owing to the paucity of the population at the Edith Creek station. Might be it is true that 16 farmers, who would benefit by the Edith Creek mail service do not make a very big census population, but we strongly doubt if that is sufficient ground to deprive us of the right which every citizen of the Commonwealth receives as a matter of course. Besides, among the residents there are within one mile from Edith Creek station five returned soldier farmers, and the Deputy Postmaster-General dares to deny them some of their postal rights.

---