

for Bristol, Aug. 24th, 1784. The speed of the mails was at once increased from three and a half to more than six miles an hour, and subsequently still greater acceleration was effected. About the year 1818, Mr. Macadam's improved system of road-making began to be of great service to the Post-office, by enabling the mails to be much accelerated. Their speed was gradually increased to ten miles an hour, and even more; until, in the case of the Devonport mail, the journey of two hundred and sixteen miles, including stoppages, was punctually performed in twenty-one hours and fourteen minutes. In 1830, upon the opening of the line between Liverpool and Manchester, the mails were for the first time conveyed by railway. In 1835, Lieutenant Waghorn commenced transmission to India, by the direct route through the Mediterranean and over the Isthmus of Suez, a line of communication subsequently extended to China and Australia. In 1859, the distance over which mails were conveyed by mail-coaches, railways, foot-messengers, and steam-packets was about one hundred and thirty-three thousand miles per day, this being about three thousand miles more than in the year ending 1857. In the year 1859, the whole distance traversed by the various mails was *thirty-seven millions, five hundred and forty-five thousand miles!* The annual procession of the mail-coaches on the birthday of George III. (June 4) was once a metropolitan sight which the king loved to see from the windows of Buckingham House. The letters are now conveyed to the railways in omnibuses, nine of which are sometimes filled by one night's mail at one railway. In 1839 was invented the travelling post-office, in which clerks sort the letters during the railway journey, and the guard ties in and exchanges the letter-bags, without stopping the train. Four miles an hour was the common rate of the first mail-carts; a railway mail-train now averages twenty-four miles an hour; while, between certain stations on certain lines, a speed of fifty miles an hour is attained. By the Pneumatic Despatch the mail-bags are blown through the tube in iron cars in about one minute, the usual time occupied by the mail-carts being about ten minutes. Persons have been conveyed through the tube, and returned by vacuum, without having experienced the slightest discomfort.

*The Rates of Postage* varied according to distance until December 5th, 1839, when the uniform rate of 4d. was tried; and January 10th, 1840, was commenced the uniform rate of 1d. per letter of half an ounce weight, etc. The Government received two thousand plans for a new system, and adopted that of Mr. Rowland Hill; but not until the change had been some years *agitated* by a *Post Magazine* established for the purpose. Among the opponents of the uniform penny stamp was the Secretary of the Post-office, who maintained that the revenue would not recover itself for half a century, and that the poor would not write. Lord Lichfield pointed to the absurdity of supposing that letters, the