

CHAPTER XXI.

THE DAWN OF THE RAILWAY AGE.

Steamers and Railways.—Under the freedom of self-government all the Provinces made rapid progress. It is quite impossible to name all the improvements that in quick succession followed each other. Steamboats had already to some extent taken the place of sailing vessels. In 1840 the Cunard line of steamships between America and England was established by Samuel Cunard, a native of Halifax. On land the stage-coach was still holding its way through the country, travelling at the rate of seventy-five to a hundred miles a day. The age of railways now set in, giving greatly increased facilities to trade and travel. Besides several short lines of railway, there were built in Canada the Great Western, from Niagara Falls to Windsor, and the Grand Trunk, from the Lakes to the tidal waters of the St. Lawrence, with a branch to Portland in Maine, to secure access to the sea in winter. In Nova Scotia a railway was built connecting Truro and Windsor with Halifax, and in New Brunswick one between St. John and Shediac.

Postage Stamps, 1851.—The post-office department, which had been under the control of the British Government, was handed over to the Provincial Governments. This led to the opening up of more postal routes throughout the country, and to the reduction of postage to one-half or one-third the former rate. The use of postage stamps also added greatly to public convenience.

The Reciprocity Treaty, 1854.—An arrangement, known as the Reciprocity Treaty, with the United States promoted trade and good feeling between the two countries. It provided for trade free of duty for ten years, in the pro-