

the general excess of expenditure over the receipts. Such an arrangement would afford room for jealous comparisons, and in the apprehension that might arise in one Province that economical forbearance on its part would not find kindred practice in others, new incentives would not unnaturally be presented for seeking the utmost benefit out of the common fund, by urging an excessive extension of Postal accommodation, and the most effectual check against extravagant expenditure be thus expressed by weakening the inducement for economy to which we have alluded.

Independently however of the arguments to be advanced on the merits of either side of the question, we believe the scheme by which each Province will be left to the disposition of its own Revenues, and the extension of its own Postal benefits, to be that which is most likely to secure the acquiescence of all the Provinces.

It presents especially to the smaller Colonies the aspect of less hazard as regards finance, and less uncertainty as regards Postal accommodation; and therefore as a first step, we conceive it will prove the more practicable and attainable measure, nor will it close the future against a more enlarged and combined system, should experience warrant the extension.

The conditions and usages suggested by His Lordship the Post Master General, in his letter of the 18th August, 1846, as necessary and valuable under any system of Provincial management, next demanded and have received our careful consideration.

The following propositions comprise everything His Lordship has deemed necessary:—

Concurring in their appropriateness, and believing they will meet the approval of the Provincial Legislatures, we adopt them as part of the scheme we have the honor to recommend in this Report, subject to some explanation which we have subjoined.

1st. That the British principle of Weight, and the scale by which additional rates are calculated, should in no case be abandoned. We also recommend that the system of Accounts, Checks, and Audits, as now used, should be preserved unaltered as far as practicable.

2d. That there should be maintained throughout the British North American Provinces, one uniform system and rate of Postage, with no greater modification than their circumstances may demand.

3d. That no transit Postage should be chargeable on letters forwarded between these Provinces for the cost of conveyance through any of them.

4th. That the uniform internal Colonial rate of two pence sterling the half ounce, should remain in operation as regards letters transmitted in the British Mails between the United Kingdom and the North American Provinces, to be extended to Countries having Postal conventions with Great Britain, as suggested by Lord Clanricarde.

5th. That the prepayment of Postage, as well between the Provinces as between the United Kingdom and the Provinces, shall remain optional.

6th. That to avoid complicated Accounts, each Province shall retain the amount of Postage it collects; a stipulation that involves the understanding of unrestricted freedom and uniformity of principle in respect to the pre-payment of Postage.

7th. The Packet Postage of one shilling sterling per half ounce, we understand will be collected in the four enumerated Provinces, and be remitted to the Post Master General in England, after the deduction of any just claim on behalf of the Provincial Postal Departments.

The internal Colonial rate of two pence sterling, chargeable on letters by the British or other Packet Mails, stands on a different footing, and will, we assume, remain at the credit of the respective Provinces where it may be collected, while in the case of pre-payment in England, it will be passed to the credit of the Province to which the letters shall be addressed for delivery.

It is also understood that Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are not chargeable out of their several Postal funds for the transmission through either of those Provinces, of the Packet Mails passing to Colonies lying beyond them respectively.

While this stipulation is advanced by those Provinces as just in itself it is not calculated to induce practical difficulties; as the Packet Mails referred to are not required to be opened while in transit to their destination, and the service may be (and is understood to be now chiefly, if not solely,) performed under distinct contracts, leading to no complication of Accounts.

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