

At the present day, Canada is in this particular matter behind every nation in Europe and every part of the British Empire. The telegraph lines of the Mother Country were, at first, and for a number of years, owned and controlled by Companies, but in the public interests a change was made by authority of Parliament. The Government expropriated all the telegraph lines and paid the companies their full value. They were placed under the control of the Post Office Department. Under that Department they became, and have long been, a remarkably efficient and successful public service. No better model for imitation by the Dominion can be found. Take a single illustration, any person in any part of the Three Kingdoms may send to, or receive from, any other person, however remote, a message of twelve words at the small cost of six pence, that is at the rate of a half penny a word, each additional word being charged one half penny. This privilege is enjoyed and much used by the forty millions of people between "Lands End and John O'Groat's House."

In the Dominion, we have not yet followed the example set us by the Mother Country, and until we do we shall simply be denying ourselves the advantages which every European Nation and all parts of the Empire other than Canada have gained.

More than seventy years ago, a far-seeing, patriotic Englishman discovered the true policy to follow in connection with the conveyance of correspondence and transmission of intelligence. Before the good Queen Victoria ascended the throne the postal service of England was complicated and costly. The inland postage on letters varied from four pence to one shilling and eight pence per letter, and still higher rates for long distances such as from London to Scotland and Ireland. In 1835, Rowland Hill, after much study, initiated a bold reform, which by all officialdom was at once denounced as ruinous, and ridiculed as visionary. His chief proposal was to reduce the postage to one penny a letter, and to make that rate uniform for all distances within the limits of the three Kingdoms. After some hesitation by the public, the arguments and reasons advanced by him were found to be so sound that some two thousand petitions in favor of uniform penny postage poured into Parliament. Eventually a Bill was passed, and in 1840, the great Postal Reform went into operation throughout England, Ireland and Scotland. For a few years afterwards, dire predictions of failure were still heard, but the experience of two-thirds of a century has now amply vindicated the wisdom of the postal reformer, and the reform, which was ushered in with the opening years of the reign of our late beloved Queen, has now been crowned by its extension, in principle, to the world wide Empire.

Some few years after the adoption of uniform penny postage in the Mother Country, electric telegraphy was, as stated, introduced by private Companies. The telegraph lines remained in the hands of the companies for about twenty years, when at length the public interests demanded that they should be taken over by the Government. In 1870, they were placed under the Post Office Department, and naturally and fortunately the policy initiated thirty years earlier with respect to the mail service was applied to the telegraph service,—that is to say, the charges on telegraph messages were reduced to a low uniform rate for all distances. It was impossible for that policy to fail of success seeing that it had proved so eminently successful with the mail service, and as already