

The quantity of snow which has to be removed to secure the regular running of the trains carrying mails, involves a very heavy outlay, and the breakage of rails and machinery during winter is exceedingly great and expensive.

The Victoria Bridge at Montreal is also of enormous benefit to the Postal Service, but provided at a ruinous cost to the Company. The outlay upon it was £1,500,000, costing the Company £90,000 a year. In a similar instance in England, where the Menai Bridge, of a much less size and cost, expedites the transmission of mails with Ireland, the British Government pay a special amount of £20,000 a year on account of this Bridge. The Victoria Bridge at Montreal expedites the Mail Service throughout Canada, especially that in connection with the Ocean Steamers, and secures a perfect crossing of the St. Lawrence in the most rapid manner every day in the year.

I need not remind you that at certain periods of the year, before the Bridge was built, the crossing of the river was impossible for many days together.

On this account, the Company is entitled to special payment, as well as on the ground of increased facilities generally, as in the case of the Menai Bridge, for which £20,000 a year is paid by the British Government.

Special carriages are provided, in which the letters are sorted whilst the train is travelling, affording great accommodation to the Post Office Department and increased rapidity in the transmission and delivery of letters.

There are thirty-six of these cars on the Grand Trunk Railway, constructed at a cost of £20,000 sterling; and they are supplied with light and heat at the expense of the Company, the annual outlay on this account being considerable.

One third of the space of each of these cars is appropriated entirely to Post Office purposes.

According to the Report of the Postmaster-General for 1857, there were then upwards of forty clerks specially employed by the Post Office Department to travel in the Post Office Cars to sort and distribute the mails. The fares of these clerks travelling on the Grand Trunk line, calculated at the rates paid by ordinary travellers, would amount to more than half the rate of \$70 a mile, proposed to be paid for the entire service! This one fact is sufficient to show the utter inadequacy of the rate suggested by your predecessor.

These Post Office Cars are run with passenger trains—if used for the ordinary passenger business of the Company, they would accommodate, at least, sixteen passengers, whose fares at the regular rate between Montreal and Toronto, would produce, on that district alone, upwards of \$100,000 a year, or at the rate of more than \$300 per mile of railway per annum.

The use of railways for the transmission of letters and newspapers, has unquestionably been a great public benefit, and has produced an enormous increase in the business and revenues of the Post Office Department.

In the Postmaster-General's Report for year ending 31st of March, 1856, attention is specially drawn to the acceleration of the mails, especially during winter, and a table given shewing, amongst other instances, that whilst in 1853 it took 10½ days to get a letter between Quebec and Windsor, it was in 1856 accomplished in 40 hours.

He then proceeds to say:

"The advantage thus gained between the more distant points, applies also to the reduction of the time occupied in conveyance between intermediate places, and will be shared, in a greater or lesser degree by nine-tenths of the whole correspondence of the Province; for at least that portion of the letters conveyed by mail partake in the benefit of railway transport. Besides this gain in speed, further important advantages are reaped, in the comparative immunity of railway mail conveyance from the irregularities, the damages from exposure to the weather, and other causes of injury, unavoidably incidental to the transport of heavy mail bags by stage or waggon over the ordinary roads of the country, and, above all, in the greater security from robbery or loss whilst en route."

In subsequent Reports, the Postmaster-General repeatedly calls attention to the advantages derived from successive openings of the sections of the Grand Trunk line, and in 1859 he says:

"Much of the satisfactory condition of this branch of the service is no doubt attributable to the enjoyment of the advantage of Railway transport for all the mails over all the great leading lines of Post Route,—for the punctuality of movement given by Railway conveyance to the connecting links of mail travel,—and the regular delivery secured at all the principal points, by a description of conveyance but little influenced by the variations of weather or of the seasons, as a matter of course greatly facilitate the observance of punctuality in the transport of mails over the country Post Routes, and lead to a comparative regularity in Mail service generally, not attainable in former years."

"The completion of the Victoria Railway Bridge at Montreal, and the western section of the Grand Trunk Railway to Detroit will have a very important influence upon the transmission of the mails over the main route between the two extremities of the Province."

"The superiority given to the Canadian Route as a medium of intercourse with Europe by the essential advantages above noticed, is of course applicable to the acceleration of the European correspondence of the large section of the United States lying west, north-west, and south-west of Canada and the great Lakes,—and, as mentioned in a previous Report, the attention of the United States Government had been called to the consideration of the point, but without any definite result, until the establishment