

and correspondence is limited by considerations of expense found to be oppressive in all classes of Society.

This state of the Post Office in the Colony is found to be the more oppressive, because revenue from that source has not been accustomed to be received, and because the public mind is not disposed to consider any revenue, which can be derived from Postage, as of sufficient consequence to be compared with the advantage of cheap correspondence, and moreover the success of the admirable project of Penny Postage in England, has produced a universal conviction, that high rates of Postage are destructive of revenue and of the means of self-maintenance, to arise from the Department itself.

Entertaining these opinions, and feeling that they are concurred in generally, the first object of enquiry, is, to fix a rate which, by its amount, would not be so large as to discourage correspondence, or induce evasions of the use of the Post Office, and which, at the same time, would be sufficiently high to make the Revenues of the Department defray its expenses.

On this question the Committee of Council are of opinion, that the establishment of a Penny Postage, in preference to a rate somewhat higher, would not increase the transmission of Letters by Post, so as to make the Revenue of the Post Office sufficient for its expenses. They think that, at a considerably higher rate of Postage, the correspondence through the Post Office would be nearly equal to any which could be procured by a rate so low as a Penny, while the higher rate would secure the Public Revenue from any considerable charge, on account of the expenses of the Post Office.

The Committee are disposed to concur with the Government of Nova Scotia, in fixing the rate of Postage, on the half-ounce-Letter, at Three-pence, Currency.

On inquiry of the Deputy Post Master General, the Committee find, that the gross number of Letters transmitted through the Post Office in Canada, in the last year, is 1,873,386, which, if paid for at the uniform rate of Three-pence, supposing all the Letters to be single, or not over the half-ounce, would produce £23,417 6s. 6d. It is estimated, that one-fifth would be a low proportion to add, on account of Letters over that weight, which addition would produce £4683 9s. 3d. To this remains to be added the Newspaper Postage, amounting to £7000. Giving in all a Revenue of £35,000 5s. 9d.

The whole expenditure of the Canadian Post Office is stated, by the Deputy Post Master General, deducting the sum paid to the United States Post Office, at £56,522 5s. 6d., which would make the present expenditure a little more than one-half greater than the estimate Revenue to arise from a Three-pence Postage.

The Committee have no doubt, that the increase of correspondence arising from the uniform low rate of Postage, would, in a few years, be fully as large as the whole of the present correspondence, and that not only would the expenses of the Department be repaid by revenue, but that there would be a considerable surplus. To make the measure advisable, it would only be necessary to avoid loss; and, therefore, in recommending the adoption of the rate of Three-pence, the Committee feel that they are perfectly safe, and that there can arise no danger of a continuing charge upon the Public Revenue from such a measure.

The Committee are glad to find, that their opinion, as regards this rate, is supported by that of Mr. Stayner, the Deputy Post Master General, who, in a letter to the Inspector General, uses the following language:—

“I hope you will permit me to add, on the subject of Letter Postage, that I am more and more impressed with the conviction, that there should be but one rate, and that it should be Three-pence.” Thus the Committee find that their own reasoning, the opinion of the Government of Nova Scotia, and that of an Officer of great intelligence and experience in the Department of the Post Office, lead to the same conclusions.

The Committee would be glad to find that Her Majesty's Post Master General saw no objection to place the Inland Postage on Letters from the United Kingdom, and from countries with which there are Postal Conventions, at the same rate of Three-pence, Currency, an amount so little over the proposed rate of Two-pence, Sterling, that it is conceived the former rate cannot give rise to any serious objection. If there should, however, be found any reluctance on the part of the Post Master General to assimilate the rate on English Letters, to the Three-pence rate proposed, the difference would not present any obstacle to the arrangements in the minds of the Committee.

The Committee of Council are prepared to adopt the suggestions, submitted by Mr. Uniacke, as follows:—