

## THE TWOPENNY-HALFPENNY RATE.

Why should any man pay  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  when  $1d.$  postage will be sufficient? (Cheers.) Although unable to object openly to Imperial Penny Postage on the ground of cost, the postal officials maintain that the reform is unnecessary, as the present Government has instituted a uniform postal rate of  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  to the Colonies, and that is low enough. Yes, it is low enough for a well-to-do official, or wealthy trader, but it is still one and a-half times higher than the inland rate, and one and a-half times higher than the actual cost of transit to the Colonies, as we have seen, would justify. This rate of  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  per letter was instituted in answer to my repeated complaints that we were forced to pay  $5d.$  for a letter to India, and  $6d.$  for a letter to Australia, while foreigners paid but  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  per letter. Here was a scandalous anomaly, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself compelled, by the public opinion I had aroused, to redress it. But he cannot, therefore, plume himself upon having done any great thing for us. The foreigner enjoyed an advantage over us for many years, and although this reduction abolishes anomalies, against which I have long protested, it gives our trading classes no advantage whatever over the foreigner in the matter of writing to the Colonies. But my fundamental objection to the view that we should be content with the new rate, is that it does not go far enough to reach and benefit