property of the Montreal Telegraph Company, under a compact with the American lines, known as the Six Party Contract, whereby certain divisions of territory were made and allotted each company.

In 1850 there was projected and built a line between Montreal and Bytown (probably the first telegraphic connection enjoyed by Ottawa) by the Montreal and Bytown Telegraph Company, of which Edward McGillivray was president, and which a few years afterwards was purchased by the Montreal Telegraph Company.

In the year 1852 the Grand Trunk Telegraph Company was organized, and built a line between Buffalo and Quebec, and seem to have given the Montreal Company a pretty lively opposition between these points. After a few years, however, it went the way of so many of its predecessors, and was purchased by the Montreal Company for the sum of $11,000. Then sprang up another organization, known as the Provincial Telegraph Company, which built a line over the same route, but it too was soon absorbed by the Montreal Company.

In 1868 was organized the Dominion Telegraph Company, which had soon built lines embracing all the important points between Buffalo, Detroit and Quebec, and whose opposition became more lively as time went on. Rates were reduced, and the outcome promised disaster for all concerned. When in 1881, therefore, a proposition was made for the consolidation of these conflicting interests, under lease, by the Great North Western Telegraph Company, considerable satisfaction at the prospect was expressed by all concerned, and a deal on these lines was accordingly put through, and is in operation to-day. The combined mileage of the two companies at the present time, as operated by the Great North Western Telegraph Company at the present time, is 18,000 miles of poles, and 40,000 miles of wire, with some 1,800 offices throughout Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Northern New York State.

By means of this amalgamation the telegraph business of the country was for a time almost entirely in the hands of the Great North Western Telegraph Company. In every city and town where two offices had previously been maintained the wires were all taken into one, and sweeping reductions in expenses consequent upon such a move were at once inaugurated. The monopoly thus brought about was not destined to last long, however, and almost immediately afterwards the Canada Mutual Telegraph Co. was organized, and constructed lines between Niagara Falls and Toronto, Montreal, and the boundary line, and Montreal, Coteau and Ottawa. Some three or four years after the amalgamation had been effected, the Canadian Pacific Railway Co. had also commenced the construction of telegraph lines along the route of their road, and between many of the principal cities and towns of the Dominion, and in September, 1886, had opened 366 commercial telegraph offices throughout Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba and the North-West Territories. Since that time they have been constantly adding to their plant, and at the present time have somewhere in the neighborhood of 25,000 miles of wire in operation, and 800 offices.

In certain remote localities along the St. Lawrence and in the North-West Territories, where private companies would hardly be justified in extending their lines, the Dominion Government have in operation at the present time somewhere in the neighborhood of 3,000 miles of wire.

The total amount of capital invested in Canadian telegraphs may be roughly fixed at between six and seven million dollars, and the total wire mileage to somewhere in the neighborhood of 75,000.

In respect to population it can truthfully be said that no country in the world enjoys a more extensive system of telegraphs than Canada. Scarcely a town or hamlet in the whole country but has connection by this means with the outside world. Hundreds of offices are maintained throughout the country in small out of-the-way places, where the actual business is but trifling, and where the lines in reality prove much more a matter of convenience to the public than profit to the telegraph companies.

The following comparative table, showing the number of inhabitants per each telegraph office, will indicate more clearly the position of Canada in this respect:

Country.	No. of Inhabitants to each Telegraph Office
Great Britain	6,417
Switzerland	2,556
Holland	10,254
France	7,719
Germany	4,510
United States	5,625
Canada	2,320

In respect to rates, too, no country enjoys a cheaper schedule than Canada, distances and other conditions fairly taken into account. The maximum charge between offices in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick is 25 cents, and for this sum a message can be transmitted over twelve hundred miles of wire.

In Canada the telegraph companies have always kept well abreast of the times in promptly adopting the various improvements in apparatus which have from time to time been placed upon the market, and two well-known repeaters, the Toye and the Neilson, attest our own ingenuity in this respect. Both the duplex and the quadruplex systems are in daily use over some of the most important routes, and direct and rapid communication is maintained between all the larger centres, as well as with New York, Chicago, and other important American points.

So essential a feature in every day business life as the telegraph has now become is very apt to be regarded in its stability as something from which little more may be expected in the way of improvements. Great things may yet be looked for, however, in the practical operation of the telegraph. From the days of the old Phelps register, when messages were laboriously spelt off the slowly winding tape, the brightest minds in the profession have ever been directed towards achieving that rapidity and perfection of transmission towards which so much has already been done. Numerous contrivances have within recent years been placed upon the market in the shape of printing machines, and the latest achievement in this direction—known as the Buckingham Automatic Printer—gives promise of being an unqualified success. This machine has recently been put to a thorough test over a line one thousand miles in length, and a sample of the work done by this means is laid on the table for your inspection. It is a quadruplex printer, capable of transmitting and printing 150 words per minute.

Predictions are, of course, a little premature as yet, but if thoroughly successful and universally adopted it will readily be seen how much nearer every man's door the telegraph will come.

Within the past two or three years dynamo plants have been installed in the offices of the Great North