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To John M. Kenzie, Esq. 106 St.
St. J. & Gibson's compliment
St. Bonne Jan. 1832

REPORT

OF THE

SPECIAL COMMITTEE

OF THE

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

ON THE

POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT

IN THE

PROVINCE OF LOWER-CANADA.

ORDERED, BY THE *House of Assembly*, TO BE PRINTED,

26TH MARCH, 1831.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

RESEARCH REPORT

PHYSICS 890436

890436

REPORT.

THE Special Committee to whom was referred the Petition of divers Printers and others, of *Montreal, Three-Rivers* and *Quebec*, with instructions to enquire into the annual receipts and expenditure of the Post Office Department of this Province, the amount transmitted by the said Department out of this Province, the Costs incurred in the transmitting of the several Mails within this Province, the necessity of the several Post-Offices within this Province, and also all such other matters connected therewith as may be necessary to convey to Your Honorable House full information of the management and affairs of the said Post Office Department; and also, to enquire into the sufficiency of the communication by Post in the country parts of the different Districts in this Province, Report:

Your Committee have carefully examined the Petition referred, and taken such information thereon as they could obtain, and on the matters contained in the Instructions of the House, the whole of which will be found in the Minutes of Evidence hereunto annexed.

The matters embraced in the references in addition to the Petition of divers Printers and others, complaining of the charges for transmitting Newspapers by Post, are:—

1st. The annual Receipts and Expenditure of the Post Office Department in this Province.

2nd. The amount of money remitted by the Department to *England*.

3rd. Cost of transporting the Mail.

4th. Receipts of the different Post Offices.

5th. General Management.

6th. Sufficiency or insufficiency of communications by Post in the different Districts of the Province.

On the 1st, 2nd and 4th of these heads, Mr. *Stayner*, the Deputy Post Master General of British *North America*, declined giving any information, as well as on the general management of the Post Office concerns.

The total of gross receipts of the Post Office in *Canada* and *Nova Scotia* in 1825 and 1826, however, appears by a Return laid before Parliament, and hereunto annexed, to have been :

	In 1825.	In 1826.
	Sterling.	Sterling.
<i>Canadas</i>	£17,223 9 3	£18,829 2 5.
<i>Nova Scotia,</i>	4,341 18 3½	4,751 10 1½.

Mr. *Stayner* asserts that one half or three-fourths of the amounts, is military postage.

The Civil Government pays about £1600 per annum for postage.

With respect to the cost of transmitting the Mails, Your Committee have only been able to ascertain the amount between *Quebec* and *Montreal*, which is stated at £1300 per annum.

It appears that Mr. *Stayner* declined the offer of *Michel Gauvin* at *Quebec*, with sufficient securities, for the Contract from March 1829 to April 1833, although offered at eight pence seven eighths, which would have made a difference in favor of the Post Office on the existing contract, from April 1829 to April 1833, of about £600 for the whole period.—Your Committee have, however, reason to believe that Mr. *Stayner* was considered by the Post-Master General in *England*, as not having exceeded his discretion, upon the matter being brought before him by the person who offered to contract at the rate of eight pence seven-eighths.

With respect to the sufficiency or insufficiency of the communication by post in the different Districts of the Province, Your Committee refer to the evidence of Mr. *Stayner* on that subject: Although that communication is evidently improving, and the Deputy Post-Master General expresses his willingness to increase it,

Your Committee conceives it to be insufficient. The whole of the County of *Gaspé* has no communication with *Quebec*, but twice in the winter of six or seven months duration.

The whole County of *Rimouski*, below the road to *Halifax*, has no communication by post. This County is populous, and it is along its shores and those of the County of *Gaspé* that numerous shipwrecks occur, requiring ready and certain communication with *Quebec*. The Post to *Halifax* passing through the Counties of *Kamouraska*, *Islet*, *Bellechasse*, and *Dorchester*, once a week, with seven Post Offices on a distance of 120 miles, is the sole accommodation furnished by the Post-Office on the south side of the *St. Lawrence*, below *Quebec*, where the population is probably 100,000 souls. The whole of the populous country extending back from *Pointe Levi* to the head waters of the River *du Sud*, the *Etchemin* and the *Chaudière*, is without any regular communication by Post; and from *Pointe Levi* to opposite *Three-Rivers*, containing nearly three Counties, has long been in the same situation. Measures are, however, taking to establish a Post route along the *St. Lawrence*, in the last mentioned direction. The new Settlements on *raig's Road* will, however, remain without a communication by post. On the north shore below *Quebec*, the Counties of *Montmorency* and *Saguenay*, extending down ninety miles, are without any regular communication by post. In this quarter, however, it is only last year that the road has been made passable in summer.

On the route on the north shore, between *Quebec* and *Montreal*, the post passes five days in the week, but the Post Offices are certainly too thinly scattered, being only eight on a distance of 174 miles. From *L'Assomption* through that County, the County of *Lachenaie* and *Terrebonne* to *St. Eustache* in the County of *Two Mountains*, there is no Post Route, and in many places the settlements are very populous to a great distance in the rear.

The south shore in the District of *Montreal*, is bet-

ter provided for. The communication by post to *Misiskoui Bay*, is facilitated by its being the route to the *United States*. A Post to *Champlain Town* west of *Lake Champlain*, is in contemplation; but the population on the River *Chateauguay* is insufficiently supplied. The upper parts of the River *Yamaska* are nearly in the same situation. The Counties of *Drummond*, *Sherbrooke* and *Stanstead*, have a Post but once a week, and it is proposed to increase it to twice a week.

Upon the whole Your Committee are of opinion that the Inhabitants of many very populous parts of the Province are not provided with the advantage of a sufficient communication by Post; and that this circumstance is injurious to the activity of industry and enterprize, in the country, and, probably, even to the Post-Office revenue, which though it might suffer, at first by the expense of establishing new routes, in the end it would be a certain gainer.

The difficulty of finding Post-Masters which the Deputy Post Master General alleges, Your Committee have reason to believe would easily be got over, by a closer acquaintance with the country, there being hardly a Village near a Church, where some person is not to be found qualified to do the duty, with very little trouble to himself, and consequently little expense to the Department. It is obvious, however, that some personal instruction and superintendance would be necessary in many cases to secure regularity, and perhaps a small and certain annual allowance at first, beyond the 20 per cent. on receipts now allowed. Within the last three years, Mr. *Stayner* has established 18 additional Post-Offices in *Lower Canada*; but the Country being so far behind others, in respect to communication by Post, it requires more than ordinary exertions at the present time.

On the Petition of divers Printers and others relating to the charges for transmitting Newspapers by Mail, Your Committee have examined several individuals interested, and they refer to their evidence, and that of

the Deputy Post-Master General, in the Minutes annexed.

The sums exacted for weekly papers is four shillings per annum; for semi-weekly five shillings. It has risen to this price for weekly papers from one shilling, the price in 1791, at the mere will and pleasure of the Post-Office Department. The amount taken by the Post-Office for transmitting the papers, is about one-fifth of the price of the papers including the postage, and the Printers are required to pay it in some instances, at least, in advance. There is no law to compel the Post-Office to carry the Provincial Newspapers at less than the common rate of postage; nor any privilege of franking them as in *England*; hence the Post-Office imposes its own terms. These terms are clearly prejudicial to the circulation of intelligence through the Newspapers which is so necessary in new countries.— They fall heavy on the Proprietors of Newspapers, for they are bound to pay the Post-Office for all their Subscribers living at a distance, although the loss and expenses of collection of Newspaper subscriptions can hardly be less than 25 per cent. There is no regular conveyance but by the Post, no regular Stages or Carriers with whom they or their Subscribers can enter into arrangements for the delivery of Newspapers throughout the country. If the law did not prohibit carrying letters, there is no doubt but that the Newspaper Proprietors and their Subscribers, would find it for their advantage to establish lines of regular conveyance for themselves. As it is they remain at the mercy of the Post-Office. The total amount paid by them at present in *Lower-Canada* alone, cannot be much short of £500 per annum, and the circulation of Newspapers is much greater in proportion in the Upper Province. Mr. *Stayner* refused to say whether the amount received from the Printers, went into the General Funds of the Post-Office or not.

Your Committee cannot but regret that there should be any mystery about the receipts, expenditure and management of the Post-Office in the Colony; and that the Inhabitants for whose benefit it is instituted

should be left exposed to the unfavorable surmises which frequently accompany secrecy as to receipts and expenditure in any public Department.

The Post-Office is established in the Colonies in virtue of British Statutes. The Chief Officers are appointed, and under the direction and control of the Post-Master General in *England*. So long as the Post-Office is managed so as to be sufficient for the wants of the Colony, there would seem to be no just grounds of complaint that the Supreme Authority of the Empire should secure a regular communication throughout the whole of it, by Post; but if the benefit of the Colonies is not also attentively consulted, they will have a right to complain that an exclusive privilege is given to the Post-Office, which forces them to avail themselves of an insufficient conveyance, while they may suppose the revenue arising from that source, is not properly applied for the furthering of the objects for which it is raised.

Your Committee is persuaded that it is the wish of His Majesty's Government to afford every facility to the regular and expeditious conveyance of letters and intelligence of every description, throughout the whole Province, which the proper application of the Post-Office revenue will permit of: They are also convinced that laudable exertions have been made and are making with this view, by the Deputy Post-Master General. They are, however, of opinion that a representation to His Excellency the Governor in Chief, and through His Excellency to the Colonial Minister and the Post-Master General, would tend greatly to accelerate this desirable object, and to obviate every ground of public dissatisfaction, which might arise on the subject of this most useful Department of Government.

26th March, 1831.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,

FRIDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 1831.

RESOLVED, That the Petition of divers Printers and others of *Montreal, Three-Rivers* and *Quebec*, be referred to a Committee of seven Members to examine the contents thereof, and report thereon with all convenient speed, with power to send for persons papers and records.

Ordered, That Mr. *Leslie*, Mr. *Louis Bourdages*, Mr. *Cuillier*, Mr. *Heney*, Mr. *Stuart*, Mr. Solicitor General and Mr. *Quersnel* do compose the said Committee.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the said Committee to enquire into the annual receipts and expenditure of the Post-Office Department of this Province, the amount transmitted by the said Department out of this Province, the costs incurred in the transmitting of the several Mails within this Province, the receipts of the several Post-Offices within this Province, and also, all such other matters connected therewith, as may be necessary to convey to this House full information of the management and affairs of the said Post-Office Department.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the said Committee to enquire into the sufficiency of the communication by Post in the country parts of the different Districts in this Province.

Ordered, That Mr. *Neilson* be added to the said Committee.

Attest,

W_{M.} B. LINDSAY,
Clk. Assy.

Tuesday, 22d March, 1831.

Ordered, That Mr. *Peck* and Mr. *Huot* be added to the said Committee.

-Attest,

W_{M.} B. LINDSAY.
Clk. Assy.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,
AND
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

COMMITTEE ROOM,

Wednesday, 23rd February, 1831.

In Committee on the annexed orders of reference.

Present :—Messrs. *Cuvillier, Neilson, Heney, Leslie*
and *Quesnel*.

Mr. *Leslie* called to the Chair.

Read the orders of reference, and Petition.

Ordered, That *Thomas A. Stayner*, Esquire, Deputy
Post Master General, be summoned to attend this Com-
mittee on Tuesday next at ten o'clock A. M.

Adjourned.

Tuesday, 1st March, 1831.

Present :—Messrs. *Quesnel, Leslie, Cuvillier, Louis*
Bourdages, Heney, Neilson and Solicitor General.

Mr. *Leslie* in the Chair.

Thomas A. Stayner, Esquire, Deputy Post Master
General, called in ; and examined :—

1. When was the Post Office Department established
in this Province, and under what authority ?—I sup-
pose it has been established about forty years past ;

and I have understood under the Statute of the 9th Queen *Anne*, but cannot vouch for it.

2. Do you know how the Post Office Department was managed previous to that period?—I do not. I have however reason to know that there were no Post Offices in the country under the British Government till then.

3. How long have you been at the head of the Post Office Department in this Province?—Since April 1828.

4. From whom do you derive your Office as Deputy Post Master General, and what is the nature of and duties attached to that Office?—I derive my appointment from the Post Master General in *England*, and my duties are comprised in certain instructions from *England*, and in various Acts of the Imperial Parliament.

5. What are those Acts of Parliament that you allude to?—Many of them are contained in a Book, entitled, Acts of Parliament relating to the Post Office; and others are sent out to me as they are enacted.

6. Will you lay before the Committee the Book you

mention in your previous answer?—Yes, I will produce it before the Committee.

7. Will you submit to the Committee copies of those Instructions?—I respectfully submit to the Committee that I find myself placed in a delicate and unpleasant predicament. I hold my situation from a branch of the Imperial Government which in none of its instructions to me has recognized the right of the Assembly of this Province, to institute the enquiries which are now making. I hold my situation during the pleasure of the Post Master General. My instructions, as already mentioned, afford me no guide for my conduct in the circumstances under which I am now placed. If in my anxiety to avoid giving you offence, I should overstep those limits which my immediate superiors should consider I ought to have observed, I subject myself to the risk of serious consequences. I humbly urge, therefore, that questions such as the present, and others

which I understand it is proposed to put to me, relative to the revenue and expenditure of the Department, should be waived until I can write home and receive distinct orders for my government. I beg, however, that it may be clearly understood by the Committee, that I offer these objections only in reference to the questions above described, and to the principle which they appear to involve. I am ready to explain the principles upon which the Department in these Provinces are governed ; its present state as regards Post Routes and Offices, and the instructions which regulate its extension, &c. It may not be improper further to state, that the accounts of *Upper Canada*, of *Nova Scotia*, *New-Brunswick*, and their dependencies, are so blended, that it would be absolutely impossible for me to ascertain what the specific amount of receipts or of expenditure is for any one Province.

8. What are at present the emoluments of your office, and from what revenue supplied, detailing whether such emoluments are in the shape of Salary, Commission or Perquisites?—I decline answering for the reasons stated in the last preceding answer.

9. What is the present number of Post Offices, in this Province, and how many of them have been established by your authority?—There were 50 Offices in *Lower Canada* when I was appointed Deputy Post Master General ; there are now 68 ; application for 8 or 10 more have recently been received, and the probability is that all or the most of these will be put in operation in a short time, as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made.

10. Is it on the recommendation of individuals, or of your own accord that new Offices are established?—In most instances on the application of the inhabitants ; and in some cases I have recommended to the inhabitants to make such applications.

11. Has it ever occurred that applications have been made to you for the establishment of new Offices which you have refused, and what were your reasons for so doing?—In no instance do I think I have ever refused the establishment of new offices in this Pro-

vince ; if I ever have done so, it is from some insurmountable obstacle, such as the want of a road of communication, or not being able to find any person qualified to fill the situation of Post Master ;—those are the two only instances which have occurred.

12. In what manner and by whom are your Deputies appointed?—They are appointed by myself under Bond to the King for their good behaviour.

13. What are the emoluments allowed to the Post Masters, and from what funds derived?—At the larger Offices they are paid a fixed salary ; at the smaller ones their compensation is twenty per cent upon the collections ; and derived from the general fund of the Department.

14. Is not a special allowance made to the Post Masters of *Quebec* and *Montreal*, and to what amount?—There is : the Post Master at *Montreal* receives £450 sterling a year, for himself and expenses of his office ; the Post Master at *Quebec* £250 sterling a year, but the expenses of his office are paid.

15. What do you suppose the disbursements paid out of the allowance of the Post Master at *Montreal* amount to?—I cannot undertake to answer that question.

16. What are the duties of the Post Master at *Montreal*?—His office hours are from seven in the morning till five in the afternoon, in the winter, and from six in the morning, until eight in the afternoon, in the summer, during the week days, and three hours on Sundays.

17. What disbursements is he subject to that you may be aware of?—I know that he has two assistants : I do not know what he pays them. He is obliged to procure a Post-Office for which he pays £20 a year, and he is subject himself to provide the necessary fuel. There may be other disbursements which I am not aware of.

18. Are you in the habit of demanding security from your Deputies previous to their appointment, to what amount, and in what form?—Most certainly ; I take a bond to the King to the probable amount of what may cover the amount of the revenue at any time, like-

ly to be in their hands. The bond for the Post-Master at *Montreal* is for £1,500, and that of the Post-Master at *Quebec* for £1000.

19. How often are your Deputies required to regulate and transmit their accounts, and pay over their receipts?—Every quarter.

20. Have any of the Deputies ever been deficient; and have any proceedings ever taken place against them or their securities for the recovery of such deficiency?—Not within my time, in *Lower-Canada*.

21. In case the deficiency cannot be recovered either from the principal or the securities, upon whom does the loss fall?—If I do not use due diligence, it must fall upon myself; but I should suppose not otherwise.

22. It then falls upon the general funds of the Post-Office in this Province?—Such a case has not occurred during my time. If any such however should occur, I would consider it my duty to make a special report to the Post-Master General in *England*, and wait his instructions thereon.

23. What amount has been lost in that manner during the last ten years?—I cannot tell.

24. What have been the gross receipts of the Post-Office Department collected in this Province during the last ten years?—I must refer to my answer to No. 7.

25. What have been the expenses during the same period for the transportation of the Mails, allowance to Post-Masters, and incidental charges and expenses of the Department in this Province?—I must refer to my answer to No. 7.

26. What have been the nett proceeds of the Department after these deductions, during the same period, and how have these proceeds been employed?—I must refer to my answer to No. 7.

27. Has the General Post-Office in *London*, ever made any advances for carrying on the Department in this Province, during years, when from some unforeseen cause the revenue has not proved equal to the expenditure in the Province?—I am not prepared to answer

that question, having only been about two years and a half in office.

28. From which Departments of the public service in this Province do you collect the greatest proportion of postage?—From the Commissariat Department, Military Secretary's Department, Quarter-Master General's Department, Adjutant-General's Department, Ordnance Department, Engineer Department, Medical Department and other minor Departments.

29. What proportion do they bear to the whole nett Provincial revenue or postage?—I should suppose that one half, or perhaps three fourths of the nett revenue results from the accounts of Military postage.

30. Supposing the revenue of the Post-Office to be purely Provincial, and subject altogether to the control of the Provincial Legislature, are you of opinion that the benefits of Post-Offices, as at present extended throughout the Province, could be borne or supported to the same extent?—I do not think they could. I would instance the Post-Office Department in the *United-States* in proof of this, a Department conducted very much like the one in this country, which does not pay its own expenses.

31. Has the revenue of the Post-Office in this Province increased or diminished, since the introduction of steam-boats on the *St. Lawrence*?—On the grand route I consider it has diminished, owing to the great extent to which the private conveyance of Letters by steam-boats is practised.

32. Do individuals, or do the public departments to which you have above alluded, avail themselves of these conveyances?—Private individuals, I believe, almost exclusively.

33. In order to afford to the Committee an opportunity of judging of the correctness of your opinion and answer to question No. 29, will you state the amount of the revenue derived from the Civil Government of the Province, and also from private individuals?—The amount of postage paid by the Civil Government for the year ending 5th January 1830, was £1393 4 11; for the year ending 5th January 1831, it was £1756

7 7; forming an average for these two years of £1574 16 3 per annum. With respect to the revenue derived from private correspondence within the Province of *Lower-Canada*, it is impossible for me to furnish any accurate statement, as British postage, (that is English postage on the Mails brought by the *Falmouth* packets,) *Upper-Canada*, *Nova-Scotia* and *New-Brunswick* postage, all form part of the sums brought to account in the offices of the Lower Province, and it is out of my power or that of any other person to shew, what proportion of the total amount accrues within the territory of that Province; besides, I beg leave respectfully to remind the Committee, that in my answer to question No. 7, I stated, that, without orders from the Post-Master-General, I could not undertake to answer questions relative to the finance concerns of the Department. It being my desire to meet the wishes of the Committee as far as I can consistently with my duty to the authority under which I act, I have thought it not improper so far to deviate from the rule just mentioned, as to state the amount of postage paid by the Civil Government of the Province.

Adjourned.

Wednesday, 9th March 1831.

PRESENT :—Messrs. *Cuvillier*, *Neilson*, *Heney*, *Quesnel* and *Leslie*.

Mr. *Leslie* in the Chair.

John Neilson, Esquire, a Member of the Committee, examined :—

Can you furnish the Committee with any information respecting the Post-Office Department?—I deliver in a Return printed by an Order of the House of Commons, 21st February 1828.

A RETURN of the Establishment of the General Post-Office in *Upper and Lower-Canada*, and in each of the other Colonies in *North America*; stating the Number of Postmasters in each Province, the name of every Person receiving more than £50 sterling, in Salary, Allowances and Fees, and whether resident and performing the Duties of the Office in person or by Deputy, and by whom these Officers are appointed :—

Province.	Number of Postmasters.	Name of Person receiving £50 and upwards in Salary, &c.	By whom Appointed.
Lower-Canada,	Deputy Postmaster-General; 2 Assistants and Postmaster at Quebec, with 34 Deputies in that Province.	D. Sutherland, Esq., Deputy Postmaster-General. Francis Bélanger, Postmaster of Quebec. T. A. Stayner, Assistant Postmaster of ditto. J. Bignell, Three-Rivers. J. Williams, Montreal.	} Appointed by Postmaster-General. } Deputy Postmaster-General of Canada.
Upper-Canada,	58 Deputies in Upper-Canada.	J. Macaulay, Kingston. W. Allan, York. J. Crook, Niagara. J. Wilson, Amherstburg.	
New-Brunswick	10 Postmasters.	W. B. Phair, Fredericton. C. Drury, St. John's.	} Appointed by Postmaster-General. } Appointed by Deputy Postmaster-General of Nova-Scotia
Nova-Scotia,	Deputy Postmaster-General, with 15 Deputies.	John Howe, Esquire, Deputy Postmaster-general. None.	

The Fees, if any, being unknown in this Office, are not taken into the above Account.

All the above Persons are resident and perform the duties of their offices in person.

General Post Office,
5th July 1827.

F. FREELING,
Secretary.

—2.—

A RETURN of the Amount collected for Postage in *Upper and Lower-Canada*, and in each of the other Colonies in *North America*, during the years 1825 and 1826; also, an Account of the manner in which the same has been appropriated, and under what Authority collected and applied:—

	Year 1825, ended 5th January 1826.	Year 1826, ended 5th January 1827.
Gross Amount of British and North American Postage, collected in Canada,	£17,223 9 3	£18,829 2 5
Ditto, in Nova-Scotia,.....	4,341 18 3½	4,751 10 1½

The Net produce of Postage collected in the British Colonies in *North America*, is remitted to *London*, and incorporated with the Post Office Revenue.

AUTHORITY :

The Revenue is collected and applied under the Acts,

37 *Geo.* 3, c. 18.

45 - - - 11.

52 - - - 88.

General Post-Office,
5th July 1827.

F. FREELING,
Secretary.

Thomas A. Stayner, Esquire, Deputy Post Master General, again called in; and examined :

34. You have stated in your answer to question No. 7, that the Accounts of *Upper-Canada*, *Nova-Scotia* and *New-Brunswick*, are so blended, that it is impossible for you to ascertain what the specific amount of receipts or expenditure is for any one Province. Is not the Post Office Department in *Nova-Scotia*, distinct from that of *Lower-Canada*, and under a separate Deputy Post Master General, and is not the nett revenue remitted to *England* separately from that of *Lower-Canada*?—The postage for *Nova-Scotia* is remitted by Mr. *Howe*, if any is collected; and within two years that of *New-Brunswick* also; but, nevertheless, postage upon letters passing through *Nova-Scotia* and *New-Brunswick* is blended in my accounts with *Canada* postage, and I have no means of ascertaining the relative proportions. The accounts of all these postages undergo their final examination in *England*.

35. Is not *Lower-Canada* postage also blended in the Accounts of the other Provinces?—Yes.

36. In what manner, and by whom are the contracts made for the transportation of the Mail, and what are the conditions attached to the Contracts?—Contracts are made by me, and the large Contracts are uniformly advertised for, and the most eligible Tenders accepted. There are various stipulations in those Contracts regulated in some degree by the importance of the route; but all the Contractors and their servants are sworn to discharge their duty faithfully, and to be governed by the regulations of the Post Office.

37. A Petition has been referred to the Committee from the Printers of Papers, complaining of a tax imposed upon them by your Department; will you inform the Committee by what authority it is demanded, and the Amount?—All I can say to this is, that I collect and appropriate this money under the sanction of the General Post Office in *England*. The rate charged for performing the service of transmitting the Papers of Printers by Mail, which is performed by myself and Deputies, is 4s. per annum, for a weekly Paper, and 5s. per annum, for a Paper published and forwarded twice a week.

38. Have you instructions to that effect, and will you submit them to the Committee?—I have already respectfully informed the Committee that as regard my instructions on all matters of the Department connected with its Revenue, I do not feel myself at liberty to submit any such without first obtaining authority to that effect from the head of my Department.

39. Is this particular item of the revenue appropriated for the general purposes of the Department?—I beg to say that the only answer I can give to this, is contained in my answer to question No 37. My answer to questions relative to the appropriation of the Revenue generally is contained in my answer to No. 7.

40. Has that rate been encreased, and upon what grounds did such encrease take place?—I know nothing of any encrease: The present rates were in force when I was appointed Deputy Post Master General.

41. Upon what authority do you exact these rates from the Printers and not from the individuals to whom such Papers are addressed?—The present mode, as I understand, has been the usage from the earliest establishment of the custom of sending News-papers through the post; and I possess no authority for altering it.

42. Are you not aware that these rates form one fourth or one fifth of the whole cost of the Papers, and prevent in a great degree their circulation?—I am unable to answer the first part of this question, as I do not know precisely what the charges for News-papers are; besides the prices are not the same in all parts of the Country. I am not aware that the rates paid for the transmission of those Papers by the Post, prevent their circulation; on the contrary I think the increasing circulation of Papers throughout these Provinces, particularly in *Upper-Canada*, affords a strong proof that the expense attending them is not considered high. I believe indeed that there is no Country in the world in which News-papers are delivered to subscribers at a distance, at so low a cost as they are in *British America*. It may not be improper here to observe for the information of the Committee, that the exchange-Papers

(as they are termed) between News-paper Printers, are transmitted through the Post Office free of any charge.

43. What has been the amount of these rates received from the proprietors of News-papers in this Province since you came into office?—I beg leave to decline answering this question, until I receive orders to that effect from the Post Master General.

44. In what manner is the Postage due on letters coming from or through the *United States*, settled for by the Department in *Lower-Canada*, and to what Post Master is entrusted the settlement of these accounts?—This postage is collected principally by the Post Masters of *Quebec* and *Montreal*; but every Post Master in *Lower-Canada* collects a portion of it. The detailed account is kept by the Post Master of *Montreal* under my instructions. The accounts for this Postage as well as for American Postage collected throughout *Upper-Canada* are finally examined and compiled by me, and the money is transmitted by me to the Post Master General of *Washington*.

45. What deduction, commission or allowance is made by the American Post Office for the trouble and responsibility attendant upon such accounts?—The American Government makes to me an allowance for attending to this duty, which is by no means more than a fair equivalent for the great labour and responsibility that the service imposes upon me. I personally guarantee to that Government payment for all their postage collected in this Country. I indemnify my Deputies, such of them as do not receive a fixed salary, for assisting me in the collection of the money, and the remainder, as already observed, is not more than a just reward for the duty I perform, and the risk I incur. As to the specific amount of my receipts from this source, I humbly conceive that as I receive it as an Agency, and for a service quite apart from my other duties, the Committee has no more right to enquire into the specific amount than they have into the amount and resources of my private income.

46. Was not such allowance originally granted to

the Post Master in *Montreal*, in the same manner as it is allowed to the Post Masters of *York, Kingston, &c.*; when was such allowance withdrawn, by whom, and for what reason?—This allowance I have reason to know was never enjoyed by the Post Master of *Montreal*, but always by the Deputy Post Master General for the time being, whose right it certainly is, and the former Officer has no more claim to it than he has to any other portion of my income, for I consider it not merely an indemnification for the trouble and risk which I incur in collecting and transmitting the American Postage on the Correspondence which passes through the *Montreal* Office, but for exercising a similar control in behalf of the American Government over the Correspondence which passes through the other channels by which the Communication between the *United States* and the *Canadas* is maintained; of these Channels, there are not less than five in *Upper-Canada*, and the trouble which I have with these American Accounts for so many Offices (as mentioned in my answer No. 44.) forms a very important item in my labours. The Post Master of *Montreal* receives for his services a fixed salary, which has hitherto been considered an equivalent for all the duty he has been called upon to perform. It was formerly £300 Sterling per annum; but about eight or nine years ago, in consequence of the increase of business in the *Montreal* Office, £150 was added to the income of the Post Master.

47. Upon what authority is a charge made upon British Newspapers coming into the Province *via United States* or *Halifax*, when such papers are free or franked by Members of Parliament in *Britain*?—There is no authority for exacting postage upon British Newspapers arriving under such circumstances; nor am I aware of its ever having been done, if it had, it must have been ignorantly done, and had I been apprized of it, redress would immediately have been afforded. I rather think that some misconception exists upon this fact, and that the amount collected on such papers has been *United States* postage.

48. Upon what authority is a charge made upon American Newspapers coming into the Province, and how is

the amount collected and applied?—I know not the origin of this practice, but found upon taking charge of the Department that American Newspapers passing through these Provinces, paid one penny each, and I continued it: the same usage prevails throughout British *North America*. As to the application of the amount collected under this head, I must refer to the general answer No. 7, as my reply to this and similar questions.

49. What provisions are made in the Province for transmitting dead letters, and advertizing letters that remain uncalled for in the different Offices?—All letters that have remained at a Post-Office three months or *upwards* unclaimed, and which have been advertized for not less than six weeks, are sent in to me; such of them as originate in *Europe* are sent to the Dead Letter Office, *England*; those which originate in this country, are, after lying with me another month, opened and returned to the writers if they can be found, for payment of postage. Post-Offices that are located in the neighbourhood of a Newspaper Printer, are directed to advertize their unclaimed letters in such Newspaper, giving them three insertions; more remote Post-masters publish lists upon hand bills, and afford in this manner all the publicity in their power to their advertizements.

50. Is not the system of transmitting letters by way of *Halifax*, which is adopted in *England*, very inconvenient, expensive and dilatory, compared to that in more general use *via New York*?—The system of transmitting letters *via Halifax* is at present less convenient than *via New York*, for this reason, that *via Halifax* we have a Packet only once a month, whilst *via Liverpool* and *New York*, merchant vessels sail regularly from either place weekly, and through this medium, great numbers of letters are now sent: Many letters go by the line of merchant packets established between *New York* and *London*, and as there is no packet Postage payable on such letters, the expense of transmission *via New York*, is undoubtedly less than *via Halifax* and *Falmouth*: but I am, notwithstanding, of opinion that the route *via Halifax* may be made, in point of expedition, at

least equal to that *via New York*; indeed it has frequently occurred within the last year, that we have received later intelligence by the *Halifax* Packets than through the *United States*. Further, I beg leave to remark that I consider the route *via Halifax* the natural channel for our communications with *Europe*, as the land travel is all through our own territory, and the Mails of course are subject to the regulations of our own Government, whilst our intercourse *via New York* is contingent upon the state of our political relations with the *United States*, and upon their willingness to suffer us, as they do at present, to collect their postage. For these reasons I sincerely think, and I have constantly used the same language in my communications to my own Department in *England*, that the route *via Halifax* should be fostered by Government, and every means taken to improve its facilities.

51. Are you not aware that in the *United States* no greater charge is ever made for the transmission of a letter than one shilling and three pence, even if the distance be 2000 miles; and might not such a provision be very properly introduced into this country?—I am aware that in the *United States*, the postage on a letter is 25 cents for 400 miles and upwards, but I am not prepared to say that such a provision might be advantageously introduced into this country. I think the fact, which is notorious, that the *United States* Post-Office does not pay its own expenses, affords a very striking proof of its inexpediency, and I know also, that some of the most intelligent of the Officers of the General Post Office at *Washington*, think the regulation a bad one. The Postage rates in this country for distances under 400 miles, are upon an average lower than those of the *United States*, and they are *much lower* than the present rates in *Great Britain*! A letter in these Provinces can be sent 700 miles for one shilling and eight pence currency, or one shilling and six pence sterling, and as but a small proportion of the letters travel a greater distance than 700 miles, I cannot see the propriety of making the alteration proposed, or of any alteration which tends to reduce the postage. The present rates were fixed many years ago when mo-

ney was of more value than it is at present, and if they were not too high then, I humbly conceive they are not too high now.

52. What proportion do the receipts of the Post-Offices in the other parts of the Province bear to those of *Quebec* and *Montreal*?—The Committee must see that I cannot undertake to answer this question, without departing from the rule which I conceive my duty imposes on me, and which I have endeavoured to express in my answer No. 7.

53. Will you examine this printed Document, [*The Return laid before the Committee this day by Mr. Neilson, was here shewn to the Witness*] and say whether you conceive it an authentic statement of the affairs of the Post-Office in these Provinces, to which it has reference?—I have no reason to doubt its being an authentic Document.

54. What are the post roads established below *Quebec*, on the south side of the River *St. Lawrence*?—Only one, that which forms part of the communication with *Halifax*, and no application has ever been made to me for the establishment of offices on the south side below *Quebec*, other than those which now exist. I at this moment recollect that *Messire Painchaud*, the Curate of *Ste. Anne*, some time since applied to me for an office in that Parish, which is five miles below *St. Roch*, where an office already exists. I informed Mr. *Painchaud* that I was willing to create the office, and begged him to name a person as Post-master, since which I have not heard any thing on the subject.

55. Where are the Post Offices on that route established?—There are five: *St. Thomas*, *St. Jean Port Joli*, *St. Roch*, *Rivière Ouelle* and *Kamouraska*.

56. How frequently does the Mail pass on that route?—Once a week.

57. Is there any communication by Post to the *Baie des Chaleurs* and *Gaspé*?—I am now about completing an arrangement, by means of which the *Baie des Chaleurs* will have a weekly communication with *Quebec* through *Fredericton*, *Miramichi* and the Gulf Shore, and across the *Ristigouche* to *Carleton*, and thence down to

Point *Maqueraux*. In fact for some weeks, we have been sending and receiving letters through this channel, though the communication from *New-Brunswick* to the *Canada* Shore is not yet placed upon so perfect a footing as it will shortly be. With regard to *Gaspé*, I have a Deputy at that place who dispatches a Special Courier to *Quebec* twice a winter. This is the only communication with that part of the Province, under the control of the Post Office, nor do I conceive any better arrangement practicable until a road is formed. During the summer, the correspondence is maintained by vessels.

58. Are there any Post Offices established, and where, in the Bays *des Chaleurs* and *Gaspé*?—I have a Postmaster at *Gaspé*, and another in the *Baie des Chaleurs* at a Settlement called *Richmond*: This latter person under my authority, has lately established a Post Line, with several Post Deputies, extending from *Carleton* to Point *Maqueraux*, a distance of about sixty miles.

59. Where does the *Halifax* Post route leave the settlements on the Banks of the *St. Lawrence*?—At *St. André*, eighteen miles below *Kamouraska*.

60. Is there any communication by Post to the country situated on the River *Chaudière*?—Not yet.

61. Is there any communication by Post on the South Shore from Point *Levi* upwards?—There is not; I am now engaged in that object. The first application ever made to me, was a short time since, by Mr. *Joly*, Seigneur of *Lotbinière*, and some other Gentlemen, and I lost no time in attending to it.

62. Is there any on the North Shore below *Quebec*?—The only application ever made to me for a Post on this Shore, was by Dr. *Laterrière* of *Les Eboulements*, about two years since; at which time, as I understood, there was no practicable road further down than *Saint Joachim*, twenty-five miles below *Quebec*. I informed Dr. *Laterrière* that when the road then in progress to his Seigniory and *Murray Bay*, should be opened, I would attend to his wishes. I have not since heard any thing upon the subject, nor do I know whether there is a road on the North Shore practicable for a Courier.

63. Where are the Post Offices for delivery of letters established between *Quebec* and *Montreal*?—At *Cap Santé*, *Portneuf*, *Ste. Anne*, *Three-Rivers*, *Rivière du Loup*, *Berthier*, *Lavaltrie*, and *L'Assomption*, which latter office is off the main route about a mile and a half, and is supplied by a Way-Courier from *St. Sulpice*.

64. Is there any Post Route on the North Shore above *Quebec*, other than that to *Montreal*?—None other. I have had an application recently from the Inhabitants of *Rawdon*, and have expressed my willingness to establish one or more offices for the accommodation of that and the adjoining Townships of *Kildare* and *Kilkenny*, as soon as they would name proper persons as Post Masters.

65. Is there any Post Route between *Montreal* and the Settlements along the *Ottawa*?—Yes, there is a Post twice a week on that Route, supplying the following offices: From *Montreal* through *St. Eustache*, thence to *St. Andrews*, *Chatham*, *Grenville*, *Hawkesbury*, *L'Original*, *Petite Nation*, and *By-Town*; *Hawkesbury*, *L'Original*, and *By-Town*, are on the *Upper-Canada* side of the *Ottawa*.

66. Is there any Post Route along the South Shore of the *St. Lawrence*, between *Three-Rivers* and *Sorel*, and along the Rivers *Maska* and *Richelieu*?—Yes, the following offices are on the South Shore, between *Three-Rivers* and *Sorel*, viz: *Nicolet*, *La Baie*, *Yamaska*, and *William-Henry*. On the *Richelieu*, there is a Post twice a week supplying the undermentioned offices, viz: *St. Ours*, *St. Denis*, *St. Charles*, (the Post-master of *St. Charles* has a Deputy at *St. Hyacinthe*, who serves that and the neighbouring Parishes,) *St. Hilaire*, and thence to *Chambly*. There was an office at *Pointe Olivier* (*St. Mathias*), but it was abolished because the Post Master would not perform the duties of the office, and no qualified person could be found to succeed him: an application for the re-establishment of this office has been made within a short time, and I have requested the applicants to nominate a person as Post Master.

67. How often does the Post go along the Settlements on the River *St. Francis*?—Once a week; but I have re-

presented home the propriety, in consequence of the increase of the population and the business in the Townships lying along the River St. Francis, of having a Post twice a week on this route.

68. Does the Post proceed to *Stanstead* and *Eaton*, and will you state where the Offices are established?—The Post to the Eastern Townships *via Three Rivers* goes as follows: From *Three Rivers* to *Nicolet*, to *La Baie*, to *Drummondville*, to *Richmond*, *Sherbrooke*, *Lennoxville* (from which a by-Post goes to *Eaton* fourteen miles) *Compton*, *Hailey*, and *Stanstead* near the American Line, where the route terminates. There are Post Offices in all the places here named.

69. By what routes do the Mails proceed from *Montreal* to the *United States*, and how often?—The Mails from *Montreal* to the *United States* go six times per week, that is, on every day except Sunday. During the season of Navigation when the Steam Boats ply on *Lake Champlain*, the Mails go from *Montreal* through *Laprairie* to *St. John's*, where they are put on board the Steam Boats, and sent to *Whitehall*, &c. In the Winter, the route is through *Laprairie*, *St. John's*, *Henryville*, *Bedford*, *Philipsburgh* to *Swanton* in the *United States*.

70. What communication is there by Post from *Montreal*, along the South Shore between *Montreal* and *St. Régis*?—The Post Offices on the South Shore of the *St. Lawrence* above *Montreal* are as follows:—*Laprairie*, *Chateauguay*, *Beauharnois*, *North George Town*, *Huntingdon*, and *Dundee*, a Village in the immediate neighbourhood of *St. Régis*. An application for a new line of Post from *Laprairie* through *La Salle*, *Hemmingford*, &c. is now under consideration.

Adjourned.

Friday, 18th March 1831.

PRESENT :—Messrs. Neilson, Cuvillier, Heney, Qué-
nel and Leslie.

Mr. Leslie in the Chair.

Thomas A. Stayner, Esquire, Deputy Post-Master
General, again examined :—

71. Is there any communication by Post between *L'Assomption* and *St. Eustache*, and in the Settlements in the rear of the Counties of *L'Assomption*, *Lachenaie* and *Terrebonne*?—There is no communication between *L'Assomption* and *St. Eustache*, except *via Montreal*; nor is there any in the Settlements in the rear of *L'Assomption*, *Lachenaie* and *Terrebonne*.

72. How are the Mails carried in summer and winter, on horse-back or on what sort of carriage, or by lines of stages?—The Mail between *Quebec* and *Montreal* is carried in summer in a light covered cart, perfectly secured from the weather, and in winter in a cariole, similarly secured; above *Montreal*, on the *St Lawrence* route, it is carried in stages; on the *Ottawa* line it is carried part of the route in carriages, and on those parts where carriages cannot be used, on horse-back. We are on most routes obliged to vary the means of conveyance with the weather and the state of roads; wherever carriages can be employed that sort of conveyance is preferred.

73. What is the time required for the transmission of the Mails between *Quebec* and *Montreal* by the contracts?—The time allowed for carrying the Mail between *Quebec* and *Montreal* (180 miles,) is during summer 34 hours, and during winter 38 hours.

74. Had you several offers, and were the persons offered to be security for the performance of the contract sufficient?—I had, I think, three offers: I do not recollect who the individuals were who offered to be security for the performance of the contract on the part of the persons whose offers I rejected. I did not

reject any tenders for want of confidence in the securities, but because I wanted confidence in the principals, and I did not choose to jeopardize the regular and safe transmission of so important a Mail as that between *Quebec* and *Montreal*, by entrusting it to a person who appeared unfit for the duty, merely because his tender was somewhat lower than that of another person, in whose long tried faithfulness I had every confidence. My own experience in such matters had taught me at what price the work could be properly done for, and I know that the present price affords only a fair remuneration to the contractors for their labor and responsibility. I will further add, that in this instance (as in all important contracts, when I undertake to reject a lower offer and accept a greater,) I reported my proceedings to the head of my Department in *England*.

75. What is the present rate of the contract for carrying the Mail between *Quebec* and *Montreal*; who are the contractors, what is the date of the contract, and when will it expire?—The present cost for carrying the Mail between *Quebec* and *Montreal* is £1,300 currency per annum; the contract is dated March 1829, it expires in April 1833.

Adjourned.

Saturday, 19th March 1831.

PRESENT :—Messrs. *Neilson, Heney, Cuxillier, Quessel* and *Leslie*.

Mr. Leslie in the Chair.

Robert Armour, junior, Esquire, called in and examined :—

Can you state what sum of money is paid by the

Publishers of Newspapers and Periodicals in this Province, to the Post-Office, for the transmission of their papers and pamphlets?—I have no opportunity of knowing the precise amount which is annually paid by Publishers of Newspapers and Periodicals to the Deputy-Post-Master General, for their transmission by Mail through the Provinces over which he exercises his authority, but a charge is made against each of 5s. per annum for every semi-weekly, and 4s. for each weekly paper, put into the Post-Office, and transmitted either for 5 miles or 5,000. For pamphlets or other printed papers, the charge is 1d. per sheet. The amount thus levied upon the Proprietors and Printers of Newspapers is very considerable. My father, who is the proprietor of the *Montreal Gazette*, pays £50 per annum, and I have been informed that the proprietor of the *Minerve* pays a similar sum, the *Herald* and *New Gazette* (two papers,) £75, the *Courant* £40, and the *Vindicator* £40, making a total of £255 from the papers of *Montreal* alone. In *Quebec* there are published three journals, the *Quebec Gazette*, *Neilson's Gazette*, and *Mercury*, and one more is proposed. There is also one Paper at *Three-Rivers*. From all these a similar demand is made. There are now about 25 to 30 newspapers in *Upper-Canada* of more or less circulation, whose proprietors are all obliged to pay at the same rate to Mr. *Stayner*, the present head of the Department. Upon what authority this charge is made, I cannot learn. I have carefully looked over the Imperial Statutes which relate to the Post-Office, and in them there is nothing to warrant it; and all the demands and requests which my Father has made to Mr. *Stayner*, for the Law under which he made the charge have been fruitless. Despairing of obtaining it by amicable correspondence, he has at length instituted an action against Mr. *Stayner*, for damages sustained by his refusal to transmit the papers put into the Post-Office, and addressed to the subscribers. My father, deeming the demand illegal and unwarranted by any Law, either Provincial or Imperial, refused in January 1830, to grant the note for the postage of the ensuing

quarter, as he had hitherto done. Mr. *Porteous*, acting for Mr. *Stayner*, and by his orders, refused to send the papers which were directed to the Country subscribers ; upon this my Father protested, and eventually rather than ruin his business, he granted the note required under protest. It is upon this that the action for damages has been instituted. Similar proceedings were taken against Mr. *Stayner*, in January 1831. My Father has also laid his complaint before Sir *Francis Freeling*, the Secretary of the Department in *Great Britain*, but no answer has as yet been received from him.

Has the circulation of Newspapers been affected by the charge made by the Post-Office Department?—The Petition proceeds from almost every individual in the Province connected with the press, and contains a declaration, that the charge made and complained of prevents the diffusion of knowledge throughout the country. To the circulation of Newspapers it is particularly injurious, as it is equal to one quarter of the whole cost of a semi-weekly paper. The greatest hardship of the case, however, is that the Proprietors are called upon to defray the postage in advance, when perhaps, they are never paid either for the Paper or for the postage they have advanced. If the charge for postage is legal, which is very doubtful, it certainly is not equitable to call upon individuals to pay for the labor ere it is performed, and from persons for whom the work is not performed. I contend that the receiver should pay for the postage of papers in the same way as for letters ; but a charge for postage on Newspapers in a new Country like *Canada*, is exceedingly injurious. As the Post-Master General has Deputies in every portion of the Provinces, it is much easier for him to collect his postage from the receivers than from the Proprietors of papers who are all settled in the Towns, and the charges for agency on small sums from distant parts are very heavy. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying, that the charge made for postage has materially affected the circulation of the provincial journals. I have understood that the charge was only

1s. 8d. some twenty years ago, and it is now 5s.; but upon what authority this encrease has been made, the public have never been informed ; and there is nothing to prevent the present head of the Department adding to the already heavy demand.

Louis Lagueur, Esquire, a Member of the House, called in; and examined:—

Can you inform the Committee if any Tender was made in 1829, to the Deputy-Post-master-General for the transport of the Mails between *Quebec* and *Montreal*?—Yes; in consequence of a public advertizement by Mr. *Stayner*, Deputy Post-master General, *Michel Gauvin*, Livery Stable-keeper, of *Quebec*, made a Tender, dated, 16th January, 1829, to carry the Mail between *Quebec* and *Montreal*.

What was the rate at which the Tender was made?—The price asked was eight pence seven-eighths, per league.

Was the security offered for the performance of the contract good and sufficient?—The said *Michel Gauvin* offered two Securities for the fulfilment of the contract, viz: *Louis Massue*, Esquire, Merchant, and *Louis Juchereau Duchesnay*, Esquire, Deputy Adjutant General of Militia, both of *Quebec*, and possessed of large property.

Mr. *Thomas Cary*, of *Quebec*, examined:

Can you state what sum of money is paid by the Publishers of Newspapers and Periodicals in this Province, to the Post-Office, for the transmission of their papers and pamphlets?—For Newspapers issued twice a week, five shillings, and for weekly papers, four shillings per annum for each Subscriber, are paid to the Post Office. For pamphlets, one penny per sheet, or four pence per ounce is paid for conveyance by Post. The total sum paid to the Post-Office, in one year for Newspapers printed in *Lower-Canada*, may be about

£300. I cannot say what pamphlets produce to that Department.

Has the circulation of Newspapers been affected by the charge made by the Post-Office Department?—The circulation of Newspapers has been very materially affected by the charge for postage, which amounts to from one-fifth to one-fourth of the subscription to most of the papers of the Province. The manner in which the postage is collected being paid by the proprietors to the Post-master, is a further check upon their circulation. Newspapers subscriptions, especially at a distance, are troublesome and difficult to collect; and although a Proprietor of a Newspaper may be willing to take the chance of being paid, at some period or other, for the labor and material employed in furnishing a copy of his paper, yet, when he is called upon to lay out money in postage, for forwarding a commodity which offers such adoubtful return, he naturally pauses; and this has a very great effect in restraining the distribution of Newspapers, subject to such a charge.

John Charlton Fisher, Esquire, of *Quebec*, examined:—

Can you state what sum of money is paid by the Publishers of Newspapers and Periodicals in this Province, to the Post-Office, for the transmission of their papers and pamphlets?—It is impossible for me to state the amount, having no means of ascertaining the number of periodicals circulated by post in the Province. Since I have been an Editor here, I have paid, for a weekly paper, four shillings per annum, for each number sent by post. The charge is five shillings for Newspapers published more than once a week. As I think the whole number in circulation, by post, cannot be less than 1600, the sum paid would be about £400 per annum.

Has the circulation of Newspapers been affected by the charge made by the Post-Office Department?—I can entertain no doubt that the circulation of Newspapers has been very materially affected by the postage charged. Subscribers are constantly complaining of

this charge, and frequently give it as a reason for withdrawing their subscription. Should the charge be taken off the effect would be to reduce the price of subscription four and five shillings per annum—a material inducement to new Subscribers to come forward. When I first established the *Albion* Newspaper at *New York*, I know that our *Canada* Subscribers complained heavily of the postage: many refused to pay it, and withdrew their subscriptions. To shew that this charge is made solely by the Provincial Post-Office, I may state that Mr. *Sutherland*, in the case of the *Albion*, compromised his claim at two shillings and six pence per number instead of four shillings. The present Deputy Post-master General, I understand, claims the full amount. I know a Gentleman in *Quebec*, who subscribed to two papers, one of which he wished to send by post to his friends in the country; finding they did not receive it, he enquired at the Post-Office, where he found several numbers detained in default of the payment of the postage by the sender, previous to the paper leaving *Quebec*. The consequence was, the Gentleman withdrew his subscription from one of the Newspapers in question. It is well known that the papers in *England* go free. It is usual to address them nominally to a Peer or Member of Parliament, thus:—

<p>To Sir F. Burdett, Bart. M. P.</p> <hr/> <p>Revd. J. _____ F. _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Salisbury Wilts.</p>

I may add for the information of the Committee, that two years ago, I addressed a Memorial to the Duke of *Manchester*, then Post-master General, on the subject, and asking a special exemption from postage in *Lower Canada*, on the ground of publishing Proclamations, &c. The answer was, His Grace “ was sorry it was not in his

power to comply with my request." In objecting to the system, I beg to say, that I have no fault to find with the Post-Office Department, which makes a claim it considers no doubt founded in right. Mr. *Stayner* is a most zealous and intelligent Public Officer.

Messrs. *Neilson & Cowan*, of *Quebec*, examined:—

Can you state what sum of money is paid by the Publishers of Newspapers and Periodicals in this Province, to the Post-Office for the transmission of their papers and pamphlets?—We have no exact data upon which to give an answer to this question. We can, however, return one approximating to the truth, founded upon our knowledge of the circulation of the different papers of the Province, taking the proportion of the circulation of our Gazette paid to the Department (£52 10,) and comparing it with the circulation of the other papers. This proportion is as near can be, one-fifth, and we shall then have the following results:

In <i>Montreal</i> , published twice a week, paying the Post-Office 5s. a year, 4,648 papers, of which $\frac{1}{5}$ th will give.....	Dollars 929
In ditto, published once a week, paying 4s., 800 papers, of which $\frac{1}{5}$ th.....	128
In <i>Three-Rivers</i> , once a week, 800, at 4s.,.....	128
In <i>Quebec</i> , twice a week, at 5s., 1660 papers,	336
In ditto, once a week, at 4s., 400 ditto,...	64
In <i>Stanstead</i> , ditto, at 4s., 600 ditto,.....	96
Various American papers, <i>Albion</i> , <i>Spectator</i> , <i>Courrier des Etats-Unis</i> , &c., say 250, at 4s.,.....	200
English papers, (5 daily at <i>Quebec</i> , with others weekly, semi-weekly, &c.,) say equal to 10 daily papers, 300 a year, at 1d. a piece,) say equal 3,000d. or.....	50
English papers, again received at <i>Mon-</i> <i>treal</i> , and the country parts thereof, equal to the above.....	50

Dollars,..... 1981

Thus giving the Department £495 5 a year from Newspaper postage. The proportion we have taken may not hold good in regard to every paper, but there cannot be a doubt that the income arising from the source in question, is at least £450 a year. The circulation of papers in *Upper-Canada* we consider to be fully as great, probably greater than in *Lower-Canada*.

Has the circulation of Newspapers been affected by the charge made by the Post-Office Department?— This charge and the want of convenient post routes, has undoubtedly much affected the circulation of Newspapers, particularly in the District of *Quebec*, and in *Lower-Canada* generally, which has been more neglected than *Upper-Canada*. What we pay annually on our papers sent by post, is exactly $\frac{1}{4}$ of what we receive from our subscribers. This is paid by us in advance, before receiving it from the subscribers, and allowing one twentieth for bad debts, this sum is lost entirely, and received by the Post-Office, while in all other cases, but that followed in regard to Newspapers, the Post-Office holds the individual to whom letters or parcels are transmitted responsible. The Printers are therefore upon a more disadvantageous footing than other individuals using the Post-Office Department. The charge on papers is further of doubtful authority; letters are regulated by Law or the Department in *England*; newspapers appears to be governed by mere will, and the charge, so far as we have been able to learn, is a perquisite to the head of the Department here; in 1790, one shilling was paid for weekly, now 4s. is paid each year: yet in 1790 the revenue of the Department cannot at all have been proportionally what it now is. The charge was increased to 1s. 3d., 1s. 8d., 2s., 2s. 6d., and so on. On papers being issued twice a week, it was raised to 5s., all this was done without shewing any legal authority for it: at 5s. it is nearly equal to the tax of $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. paid in *England*, where the object is to raise a revenue for the State, and not to give a perquisite. A tax on the circulation of information in a country so often charged with needing it, for the advantage of an

individual, is extremely objectionable. Persons are not always good judges of their own interest. We can state, with certainty, after an examination of the number of our Country subscribers, who allow their papers to be called for in Town, that a reduction from 5s. to 2s. 6d. of the charge, would, by inducing these subscribers to make use of the Post-Office, give fully an equal, if not, a greater income to the Post-Office than it now receives at 5s. While we are persuaded that the circulation of papers has been restricted by the amount of the charge, and by the want of post routes, we have reason, we think, to object to the legality of the charge, and to our being put by the Post-Office upon a more disadvantageous footing than other persons.

Adjourned.

Tuesday, 22nd March 1831.

PRESENT :—Messrs. *Neilson, Peck, Huot* and *Quesnel*.

Mr. Neilson in the Chair.

Robert Armour, junior, Esquire, again called in ; and examined :—

You mention in your evidence, that your Father has commenced Law proceedings against *Mr. Stayner*, for refusing to transmit his papers by post ; at what time were these proceedings commenced ?—The first protest is dated in January 1830.

Was your Father in arrears with the Post-Office at the time of the refusal to transmit the papers, and to what amount ?—He was never in arrears, the demand was always made for a quarter's postage in advance, and a note granted for the amount.

Was there ever any instance of the notes not being taken up when due ?—They were always taken up when

due. Since January 1831, Mr. *Stayner* has refused to take a note as usual, payable at the end of the quarter, and insists upon cash.

What has been the result of the Law proceedings, or in what state are they at present?—The writ was taken out after last October Term, returnable 1st February 1831. Messrs. *Ogden* and *Buchanan* appeared and obtained from me, as the Advocate of my Father, to the last day of the Term, to file the plea in consequence of Mr. *Ogden* being detained by accident at *Quebec*. I cannot say whether it is now filed or not. The action is in damages for £100, and may be tried in vacation.

Have there been any offers of arrangement between your Father and Mr. *Stayner*?—None, that I am aware of. There was a correspondence before the action was instituted between my Father and Mr. *Stayner*, wherein my Father stated that he would be more inclined to submit to the demand for transmitting the Newspapers, if, like the other Printers, he enjoyed his share of Printing for the Department, which enabled them more easily to pay their accounts, and of which printing my Father had formerly enjoyed a share. It was however stated, that the enjoyment of such a share of the printing should not at all influence the expression of the Editors on the subject of the Mail arrangement.

Mr. *John Cady*, Livery Stable-Keeper, at *Quebec*, called in; and examined :

Are you Contractor for carrying the Mail between *Quebec* and *Montreal*?—Yes, with *Samuel Hough*.

How long have you been concerned in the Contract?—I have been employed in carrying the Mail since 1812.

What is the present rate of the Contract per league?—The Contract is not per league, but £325 per quarter, for carrying the Mail to *Montreal* five times a week, and also for carrying it off the route to *L'Assomption*.

What was the rate of the Contract before this last one?—I forget.

Did you give in Tenders for this last Contract?—Yes.

What were these Tenders?—The Tenders were for £325 per quarter.

Was there a public advertizement fixing the time for them to be given in?—There was.

Was it long after giving in the Tenders that you were notified that your offer was accepted?—I believe the same day.

Have you a Contract before a Notary with the Deputy Post Master General?—Yes, before Mr. *Scott*, Notary.

Does it state the time in which the Mails are to arrive at each place?—Yes, they are to arrive at seven in the morning in both Towns, and we are liable to a penalty of 10s. for delay, unless the state of the roads should render a delay unavoidable.

Did you make several Tenders for the last Contract?—I cannot say whether I did or not.

Had you any previous communication of the Tenders of others?—No.

Adjourned.

Saturday, 26th March, 1831.

Present :—Messrs. *Huot, Quesnel, Peck* and *Neilson*.

Mr. Neilson in the Chair.

The Chairman submitted the draught of a Report which was unanimously agreed to.

Ordered, That the Chairman do leave the Chair and Report.

The whole nevertheless humbly submitted.

J. NEILSON;
Chairman.