

CANADIAN POST OFFICE.

**COPY of REPORT of COMMISSION appointed by the
GOVERNOR-GENERAL of CANADA, since the
Union of the Two Provinces, to inquire into the
State of the CANADIAN POST OFFICE ; and
Mr. *Stayner's* STATEMENT relative thereto.**

(Mr. Warburton.)

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
28 August 1846.*

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CANADIAN POST OFFICE.

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons,
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“COPIES of REPORTS of any COMMISSION appointed by the GOVERNOR-
GENERAL of CANADA, since the Union of the Two Provinces, to inquire into
the State of the CANADIAN POST OFFICE.”

Colonial Office, Downing-street, }
27 August 1846.

B. HAWES.

(Mr. Warburton.)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
28 August 1846.

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COPY of REPORT of COMMISSION appointed by the GOVERNOR-GENERAL of CANADA, since the Union of the Two Provinces, to inquire into the State of the CANADIAN POST OFFICE.

Government House, Montreal,

26 October 1840.

Gentlemen,

I AM commanded by the Governor-general to inform you that his Excellency has been pleased to appoint you to be Commissioners to inquire into the present administration of the Post-office within the Provinces of British North America.

It is not his Excellency's intention, in notifying to you this appointment, to embarrass your discretion as to the extent of your inquiry, or the means of conducting it, by instructions pointing out minutely the course you are to pursue. You will understand that the object of Her Majesty's Government is to ascertain whether any and what alterations can be made to promote the efficiency of the Post-office establishment, and to advance the convenience of the public. The reduction of postage lately effected upon all letters from and to the United Kingdom seems already to have provided for that branch of the subject; but the end to be obtained in the Post-office arrangement for these provinces, as regards the transmission of letters within them, should be to afford such a reduction of charges, together with such augmentation of convenience, as may be found possible, consistently with security, that the revenue raised shall suffice to defray all expenses incurred. Much also may remain to be done even with respect to the communication with the United Kingdom, apart from the mere charges for letters, and you will therefore embrace in your inquiry every matter connected with the Post-office communication in these provinces which appears of importance; the number and situation of existing offices, and the necessity for new establishments; the improvement of internal communications, whether by land or water; the rates of inland postage; the expense of the different lines as compared with the revenue, and the manner in which that expense is defrayed; the emoluments of the different officers of the department, whether arising from fixed salary, from agency or from perquisites, and the means of facilitating communication between the respective provinces and the United States. To all these, and to any other points which may appear to you of importance, your attention will of course be directed.

To assist you in the conduct of your inquiry, the Governor-general has been pleased to appoint Mr. C. Dunkin to be your secretary, and you will consider yourselves authorized to require from all officers of the Government, and more especially from all postmasters or other individuals engaged in the several post-offices, such information or documents as may appear to you necessary. You will also be at liberty, should you think it expedient, to summon before you any of the servants of the Post-office, whose evidence you may desire to receive *vivá voce*; but in using this authority you will of course endeavour to interfere as little as possible with the conduct of the public business.

In respect to the other provinces of British North America, you will probably be able to obtain, by correspondence with the postmasters and other officers of the Government, all the particulars necessary for your inquiry. The Lieutenant-governors have already received from the Secretary of State instructions to transmit to the Governor-general such information on this subject as they may be able to afford, and the despatches which have in consequence been received from them will be laid before you at once. Should it appear to you at

any time necessary to invoke the interference of the Governor-general to obtain any additional information from public officers, whether in this or the neighbouring provinces, his Excellency will be ready to attend to any representation which you may make to him.

You will probably find it expedient to apply to some of those engaged most extensively in commerce for particulars relating to your inquiry; in that case his Excellency feels confident that you will receive from them all the attention which the importance of the subject demands.

When you shall have completed your inquiry, you will proceed to report the result to his Excellency, for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, accompanying your Report with a scheme of the measures necessary for carrying out the alterations which you may suggest.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

(signed) *T. W. C. Murdoch,*

Chief Secretary.

E. Dowling, Esq.

T. A. Stayner, Esq.

J. Davidson, Esq.

May it please Your Excellency,

WE who have hereunto subscribed our names and affixed our seals, having been appointed Commissioners to inquire into the administration of the Post-office within the provinces of British North America, have the honour to certify that we have entered upon the performance of our duties with a deep sense of the importance of the trust reposed in us, and an earnest desire to be instrumental in furthering the wishes of Her Majesty's Government for the improvement of the Post-office establishment in this part of Her Majesty's dominions.

For collecting information and making ourselves acquainted with the opinions of the people as to the present, and their wishes as to the future administration of the department, almost the only course open to us was that of taking evidence by means of written correspondence. To have procured the attendance of witnesses from all parts of a country which, in a straight line drawn from one extremity to the other, extends over more than 1,600 miles, was obviously impossible. We therefore prepared circular letters and a series of written questions, which we addressed, without distinction of classes, to all persons from whom they were likely to draw forth useful information. We addressed a second series of questions to the proprietors, editors and publishers of newspapers; a third to the heads of the civil and military departments; a fourth to the postmasters touching their emoluments; and a fifth was subsequently despatched to the postmasters for information as to the value of their franking privilege. We also requested from Mr. Stayner, the Deputy Postmaster-general for Canada; from Mr. Howe, the Deputy Postmaster-general for the Lower Provinces, and from some of the postmasters, a variety of returns, showing the general state of the department under their charge.

These circulars and queries, together with the principal returns and copious extracts from the correspondence, will be found in the Appendix to this Report.

The number of written communications (exclusive of returns) received by us is upwards of 1,500, a fact which not only shows that the inhabitants of these colonies take much interest in the subject, but also enables us to report with some degree of confidence on the state of public opinion in regard to most of the points within the scope of our inquiry.

We shall presently have to submit a detailed statement of the actual condition of the department, to which a short account of the rise and progress of the Post-office establishment in these provinces may, we hope, be advantageously prefixed. That account must necessarily be a short one, for we have to regret the absence of such documents as would enable us to furnish a more detailed history of the department; and it will be seen that the absence of more authentic records has compelled us to copy from the Quebec Almanac of remote years, lists of the post-offices then in existence, and that we have derived from

from the same source some scraps of information respecting the number of mails then transmitted between different places, and their gradual increase.*

A general post-office was first established in North America by the 9 Anne, c. 10, s. 4, where, amongst other things, the inland rates on letters sent by post through certain towns in the provinces of New England, Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania were prescribed. The rates thus fixed continued till the passing of the 5 Geo. 3, c. 25, by which Act the rates now collected in these provinces and in such of the West India Islands as are provided with inland post accommodation, were established.

First established by 9 Anne, c. 10.

Present rates fixed by 5th Geo. 3d, c. 25.

We have not been able to discover any record of the manner in which the administration of the post-office in North America was conducted before the reign of Geo. 3. In 1759, the year of the conquest of Canada, Benjamin Franklin was Deputy Postmaster-general of North America. By his excellent management he appears to have extended post accommodation in the provinces, and to have greatly increased the revenue of the department. It is stated in his memoirs that when he was appointed to the office, the revenue collected was not enough to defray his salary of 300*l.* a year, but ere long he was enabled to remit to the British Treasury 3,000*l.* the profit for one year.

Dr. Franklin, Deputy Postmaster-general in 1759.

In the year 1766, Dr. Franklin was examined at the bar of the House of Commons touching the contemplated repeal of the Stamp Act passed the year before. Being questioned as to the extent of post-office accommodation in America, he gave the following evidence:—

Question. Are you not concerned in the management of the post-office in America?—*Answer.* Yes; I am Deputy Postmaster-general of North America.

Question. Do you not think the distribution of stamps by post to all the inhabitants very practicable if there was no opposition?—*Answer.* The posts only go along the sea-coasts; they do not, except in a few cases, go back into the country, and if they did, sending for stamps by post would occasion an expense of postage amounting, in many cases, to much more than the stamps themselves.

Question. Can you disperse the stamps by post in Canada?—*Answer.* There is only a post between Quebec and Montreal; the inhabitants live so scattered and remote from each other in that vast country, that the posts cannot be supported among them, and therefore they cannot get stamps per post; the English colonies, too, along the frontiers are very thinly settled.

In the year 1774, Franklin was dismissed from office.

The first Deputy Postmaster-general resident in Canada was Mr. Hugh Finlay.

Mr. Finlay, the first Deputy Postmaster-general after the American Revolution, appointed 1767.

We find by an advertisement in the Quebec Gazette, published 23d July 1767, that in that year he was performing, under Franklin, the duties of postmaster at Quebec. The commission by which he was appointed Deputy Postmaster-general is dated 7th July 1784, one year after the peace with America; and as it is known that the British Government did not during the war which broke out a few months after his dismissal, appoint any successor to Franklin, it is certain that Mr. Finlay was the first Deputy Postmaster-general in Canada. He is designated in the commission as Deputy Postmaster-general of his Majesty's "Province of Canada," from which it would appear that the Lower Provinces were not included in his charge. An almanac, published at Quebec in the year 1791, represents the condition of the department in that year as follows:—

State of department in 1791.

Hugh Finlay, Esq., Deputy Postmaster-general.

Postmasters	{	Mr. E. Edwards	-	-	Montreal	-	-	L. C.
		„ Saml. Sills	-	-	Three Rivers	-	-	L. C.
		„ Louis Aimé	-	-	Berthier	-	-	L. C.
		„ Saml. Anderson	-	-	Cornwall	-	-	U. C.
		„ John Munro	-	-	Matilda	-	-	U. C.
		„ John Jones	-	-	Augusta	-	-	U. C.
		„ Peter Clarke	-	-	Kingston	-	-	U. C.
		„ Joseph Edwards	-	-	Niagara	-	-	U. C.
		„ George Leitch	-	-	Detroit	-	-	U. C.
		„ — Mitchell	-	-	Michilimackniac	-	-	U. C.
„ Hugh Munro	-	-	Baie des Chaleurs	-	-	L. C.		

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* Previous to the appointment of the present Deputy Postmaster-general, no records were kept in the post-office. The documents belonging to the department were treated as private property by each successive holder of the office, and removed by him or his representatives on his resignation or death.

There was a monthly mail despatched from Falmouth for Quebec, and once a month an English mail was despatched from Quebec, sometimes *viâ* Halifax, sometimes *viâ* New York. Between Quebec and Halifax there was in summer a mail every 15 days, and in winter once a month. There was a monthly mail for the "new establishments above Montreal," and for the establishments of Gaspé, the Baie des Chaleurs, &c. a mail was despatched as occasion offered. The couriers left Quebec and Montreal every Monday and Thursday at four o'clock in the afternoon, and reached their destination, unless prevented by the state of the roads, on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

In 1796 and 1798.

In the years 1796 and 1798 we find precisely the same number of post-offices, and generally the same amount of post accommodation as in 1791.

Mr. Heriot appointed Deputy Postmaster-general in 1800. State of department in 1803 and 1804.

Mr. Finlay was succeeded in 1800 by Mr. George Heriot. In 1803 Upper Canada had eight post-offices, but the mails were not more frequent than in 1791. In 1804 there were in Lower Canada five post-offices, in Upper Canada nine, in Nova Scotia six, in Cape Breton one, in Prince Edward's Island one, and in New Brunswick four.

In 1807.

Mr. Wood, the postmaster at Cornwall, in Upper Canada, and the oldest *employé* in the post-office, thus describes the condition of the establishment in the Upper Province in the year 1807:—"When I first took charge of the office at this place in 1807, I believe the mail was only carried four times in the year from Quebec to Amherstburg, and that on the back of an old Canadian pedestrian, who performed his trip once in three months. The arrival of this despatch was hailed with joy amongst the then contented and loyal inhabitants throughout the country."

Extent of Mr. Heriot's charge.

We have before us several commissions issued by Mr. Heriot to postmasters in Nova Scotia, in which he styles himself "Deputy Postmaster-general for the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, in North America, and their Dependencies." The absence of his own commission deprives us of the power of stating by what authority he made those appointments, and adopted that designation. If under that commission the Lower Provinces belonged to his charge, as well as Canada, it would appear that the connexion did not last very long. We are of opinion, that on Mr. Daniel Sutherland's appointment to succeed Mr. Heriot in the year 1816, he found Nova Scotia and Prince Edward's Island wholly withdrawn from the Canada charge, but New Brunswick still continued to form part of it, the postmasters for that province being commissioned at Quebec, and accounting directly with the Deputy Postmaster-general there.

Mr. Sutherland appointed Deputy Postmaster-general in 1816.

In the year 1816 had charge only of Canada and New Brunswick.

State of department in 1817.

In the year 1817, Lower Canada had 13 post-offices; Upper Canada, 12; Nova Scotia, six; New Brunswick, three; and Prince Edward's Island, one. In this year, the mails were running between Quebec and Montreal every day in the week except Sundays and Fridays; between Quebec and Halifax, once a fortnight all the year round; between Quebec and Kingston, once a week; between Kingston and Toronto, once a week; between Toronto and Niagara, once a week; and between Toronto and Amherstburg, once a fortnight.

In 1820.

In the year 1820, there were in Lower Canada, 20 offices; in Upper Canada, 19; in Nova Scotia, six; in New Brunswick, three; and in Prince Edward's Island, one.

Detailed Return for Canadas and New Brunswick in 1824.

Documents were fortunately discovered in the post-office at Quebec, which formed the basis of a very complete return of the state of the department in the Canadas and New Brunswick in the year 1824.

From this it appears, that there were then in the Canadas, 69 post-offices; 1,992 miles of established mail road; the weekly travel of the mail was 7,108 miles; the gross revenue was 14,504*l.* 6*s.* 11½*d.*, and the revenue remitted to England, after deducting 300*l.* the supposed surplus for New Brunswick, 5,386*l.* 2*s.* 2*d.* At that time the population of the Canadas amounted to nearly 600,000 souls; Lower Canada containing about 440,000, and Upper Canada, 150,000.

In the year 1826 or 1827, a correspondence took place between Mr. Rowe and Mr. Sutherland, on an application, as we are informed, made by the former gentleman to relieve Mr. Sutherland from the superintendence of the New Brunswick branch of the department. This arrangement, acquiesced in at the time by Mr. Sutherland, and approved by the Postmaster-general, was subsequently carried into effect, but not until after the present Deputy Postmaster-general

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general had been appointed, on the resignation of Mr. Sutherland. By a letter from Sir Francis Freeling, dated 12 December 1827, Mr. Stayner was informed of his appointment as "Deputy Postmaster-general of British North America." His commission and instructions, dated respectively the 5th April and 10th May 1828, designate him as "Deputy Postmaster-general of the Provinces of Canada and New Brunswick and their Dependencies." In the autumn of 1828, the separation of nearly the whole of New Brunswick from the Canada charge was effected, and since that time, Mr. Rowe has continued to superintend the New Brunswick branch.

Mr. Stayner was appointed Deputy Postmaster-general in 1827-8.

In 1828 most of New Brunswick detached from Quebec charge.

Returns received from the department at Quebec have enabled us to prepare a table by which the condition of the post-office in Canada in every year (except 1829 and 1830), from the year 1828 to 1840, is accurately shewn. On reference to this table, it will be found to present a detailed account of the gradual progress of the department in all its more important branches, the gross revenue, the cost of transport, the increase of post accommodation; to these we have thought it might be useful to add a statement of the increase of population in the provinces during the corresponding periods.

Increase of department in Canada from 1828 to 1840.

In 1831, the number of post-offices within the Quebec charge was 151; the number of miles of established mail road, 2,896; the number of miles travelled weekly, 13,213; the expense of carrying the mails, 6,720*l.* 18*s.* 5*d.*; the gross revenue, 21,180*l.* 10*s.*; and the net revenue, 9,524*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* currency.

Its state in 1831.

The population of Lower Canada was about 512,000, and that of Upper Canada 235,000, making, with the portion of New Brunswick under the Quebec establishment, rather less than 760,000 souls.

In 1840, the number of post-offices had increased to 398; the number of miles of established road was 5,736; the number of miles travelled weekly was 28,332; the expense of mail conveyance, 21,973*l.* 8*s.* 5*d.*; the gross revenue, 52,752*l.* 8*s.* 5½*d.*; and the net revenue, 19,499*l.* 13*s.* 1*d.* currency.

In 1840.

The population of Lower Canada is now estimated at 662,000, and that of the Upper Province at 420,000 inhabitants; so that the entire population within that charge is about 1,100,000.

It will thus be perceived that between the years 1831 and 1840, the amount of revenue of the department, and the extent of post-office accommodation, have increased more rapidly than the population of the country. The number of post-offices has increased 163 per cent.; the number of miles of established mail road nearly 100 per cent.; the number of miles travelled weekly upwards of 106 per cent.; the yearly cost of mail conveyance nearly 227 per cent.; the gross revenue more than 150 per cent.; and the net revenue nearly 105 per cent.; while the population has increased in the ratio of not quite 45 per cent.

Increase considerably more rapid than that of population.

In the year 1832, the Duke of Richmond, then Postmaster-general, required the presence of Mr. Stayner in England, to assist in the preparation of measures for the improvement of the post-office in British North America. Many and considerable evils were found to exist in the institution. The mode of accounting was defective; the complaints of printers as to the charges for the transmission of newspapers, and the appropriations of the money so raised, were loud and general; both branches of the legislature in each of the Canadas had in successive years appointed committees to inquire into the abuses and defects of the system. It was felt, in short, that the time had arrived when a general and extensive reform could no longer be denied or delayed. The first project entertained by his Grace was to regulate, by an Act of the Imperial Parliament, the whole of the department throughout British North America. But the improvement contemplated involved new rates of postage; and it was doubted whether an alteration of the existing rates by imperial legislation would not be an infringement of the rights of the colonists, as declared by the Act of the 18 Geo. 3.* The intention was abandoned; and it was resolved that

Changes projected in 1832.

the Post-office Bill prepared in England for action of Colonial Legislatures.

* We may observe that the Imperial Parliament has since, by the 3d & 4th Vict., c. 96, s. 33, conferred on the Lords of the Treasury a power far more extensive than the alteration in question. It is difficult to understand in what way the *reduction* of rates could be considered a violation of the principles of the Declaratory Act. But the Act of the 3d & 4th Vict. confers on the Lords of the Treasury the power to charge such rates of postage as they "by warrant under their hands, shall from time to time direct;" a power which clearly enables them to increase at their pleasure the rates now charged. It may be doubted, also, whether postage ought to be considered a tax within the meaning of the Act 18th Geo. 3d.

Imperial Act passed to authorize its enactment by them.

the draft of a Bill should be prepared in England, for the purpose of being presented to the legislature of each of the five provinces, in the hope that it would be adopted by them, without alteration either in principle or any material detail. It was expected, also, that the Act, when passed, would be brought into simultaneous operation in each of the provinces. It having been found, however, that imperial authority was required to enable the provincial legislatures to pass this Bill, a short Act was passed on the 26th March 1834, conditionally repealing the 5th Geo. 3d.

The condition, that of the passing of the Bill, prepared as above stated by each of the colonial legislatures, not having been performed, the repeal did not take effect; the Bill is important, nevertheless, on account of the principles which it recognizes; and we have, therefore, thought it right to subjoin a short abstract of some of its chief provisions. They are as follows:—

Leading features of the Bill prepared in England.

The Postmaster-general to have the entire control and management of the post-office within all the provinces, and to appoint a Deputy Postmaster-general under him, and other deputies and agents.

New rates of letter postage fixed, eight in number.

No distinct or separate rates to be charged on letters sent from one province to another.

Provincial newspapers to be sent within the British North American provinces for a halfpenny each; newspapers printed out of the provinces to be charged a penny each:

Except newspapers printed in Great Britain or Ireland, and sent thence by post; and also provincial newspapers sent to Great Britain or Ireland by post, which were to be free of postage.

Rates of postage fixed for pamphlets and other printed matter. No provincial charge made on such matter coming from Great Britain or Ireland.

Net proceeds of provincial rates to be divided between the provinces, in the proportion of the gross amounts of postage collected in each. All British and packet postage to be remitted to London.

A power conferred upon the Governor to grant warrants for sums varying in amount; but in no province exceeding 2,000*l.* for one year, to cover any possible deficiency in the post-office revenue.

Members of the legislative councils and assemblies to be allowed, during the sitting of the legislature, to frank ten letters a day, such letters not exceeding one ounce in weight, and to receive as many more free of postage. The Governor for the time being in each province, the Deputy Postmaster-general, and the post-office surveyors, to frank and receive letters without restriction, and certain of the civil departments in each province to have the same privilege for letters on the public service.

The Postmaster-general to be authorized to allow any of the officers of the department the franking privilege, under such restrictions as he might think fit.*

Letters or packets franked by certain civil or military departments in Great Britain to pass free throughout the provinces.

Entire failure of project.

The attempt to induce the several legislatures of British North America to pass this Bill failed signally. In each of the legislatures it was crushed in one or other of the earlier stages, and in no instance was it carried beyond a reference to a select committee. Indeed it is difficult to understand how a different fate could have been expected. The failure of the Bill in any one of the provinces, or even an alteration made by any one of the legislatures in any of its more important details, would be fatal to the whole measure.

The time, too, was unfortunate; the Canadian assemblies, being upon a variety of subjects deeply embroiled with the Government, were not likely to take a favourable notice of the project.

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* This provision appears to be intended to sanction the franking privilege as now enjoyed by the postmasters.

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In Lower Canada this Bill appears to have led to the appointment of the select committee, of which Dr. O'Callaghan was chairman. That committee sat for nearly four months during the session 1835-6, and on the 8th March 1836 produced a report, the concluding paragraph of which recommends the re-appointment of the committee in the following session, "with a view to the application of an efficient remedy to the defects in its (the post-office) management and organization," but the Parliament of Lower Canada never again proceeded to business: the first rebellion broke out, the constitution of 1791 was suspended, and the recommendation of the committee was never carried into effect.

Legislative proceedings in Lower Canada in 1835-6.

But not very consistently with their own recommendation, the committee had already prepared a Bill, the object of which was to remodel the post-office in Lower Canada. This Bill, after having passed through the House of Assembly, was rejected by the Legislative Council. It proposed the establishment of a *local* post-office, under the management of an officer, to be appointed by the Governor of Lower Canada; the effect of which would necessarily have been to confine the operation of its provisions, and the authority of the person in charge of the department, to the geographical limits of the province; thus leaving the intercourse with the neighbouring provinces and other countries altogether unprovided for. The course pursued by the Legislative Council in rejecting this Bill, and their opinions on that sent out from England, will be explained by the address to his late Majesty adopted by that body on the 15th March 1836, which we have inserted in the Appendix.

Of all the projects for the improvement of the colonial post-office, which, during that year, had been entertained by his Grace the Postmaster-general, only two were carried into effect—the establishment of the accountant's and surveyor's branches; the operation of each of which will be described hereafter.

The attention of the legislative bodies in Upper Canada was, during these years, frequently turned to the Post-office establishment; several committees were appointed from time to time.

Legislative proceedings in Upper Canada.

The grievance committee of 1835, of which Wm. Lyon M'Kenzie was chairman, and the financial committee of 1836, over which Dr. Charles Duncomb presided, both noticed the matter.

The report of the former characterized the Bill sent out from England in the following terms:—"The form of a law, such as Government would approve, is before the House, but *its provisions are so inapplicable and absurd*, that no benefit could be derived from their enactment. A change for the better must be that which will give the colonists the entire control of this department in Upper Canada."

Of the general state of the department, it observes, "The Post-office department, with about 100 Deputy Postmasters, is under the sole control of the Crown; contracts are made, and all appointments held during its pleasure; the surplus revenue is transmitted to England.

"No detailed accounts of receipts and expenditure have ever been laid before the colonial legislature. The rates of letter postage between the different places in the colony, between this colony and the others, and between Upper Canada and England, are very extravagant. The correspondence with Europe is chiefly carried on *via* New York, which is at once the cheapest and most expeditious route." The report of the latter committee recommends the establishment of a local post-office, differing in no less than 31 particulars (which are all specified in the report) from the Bill which had passed the House of Assembly in Lower Canada, but exposed nevertheless to every objection to which the latter measure was liable, and to some that are not to be found in the Lower Canada Bill. In the year 1837 a joint address from the Legislative Council and Assembly was presented to his Excellency the Lieutenant-governor. In the year 1838 another joint address was adopted, praying that the revenue produced by the post-offices in the colonies should no longer be remitted to England. The latter was referred to the Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, and by them referred to Lord Durham, on the ground that some general measure was required to carry into effect the prayer of the address.

We regret to state that we are destitute of the means of providing any account, however succinct, of the rise and progress of the Post-office establishment in the lower provinces. We have received from Sir Rupert George, the provincial

Early history of department in lower provinces still less known than in Canada.

secretary of Nova Scotia, a return of certain legislative proceedings in that province, commencing with the report of a committee of the House of Assembly, dated January the 30th, 1835, and ending with the report of another committee, together with an extract from the Journals of the House of Assembly, both dated March 1840. But we have no documents to enable us to prepare a statement of the rise and progress of the department in the lower provinces, except the occasional mention of the number of post-offices from time to time existing there in the documents already quoted relative to the condition of the department in Canada.

Provincial grants in aid of Post-office early resorted to in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Abandoned in Nova Scotia in 1839.

In the lower provinces a practice has long existed of aiding the Post-office establishment by provincial grants; the money so granted being, in Nova Scotia, paid to the head of the department to be expended in specified services; and, in New Brunswick, being paid directly to the individuals, such as couriers and others, by whom the services are performed. This practice led to frequent complaints by the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia, in consequence of which it was abandoned, as will be presently stated, in the year 1839; and the services to which the grants were applied are now borne upon the regular establishment, and defrayed out of the revenue theretofore remitted to England as surplus. Our information as to the state of the department in New Brunswick is very limited, but we are enabled to state that a surplus (the amount of which we cannot ascertain) was annually remitted to England, notwithstanding that the legislature was called upon to vote yearly grants for the maintenance of the post-office. Those grants still continue, and we observe that the amount of the sums voted annually seems to be increasing rather than diminishing.

Legislative proceedings in Nova Scotia from 1838 to 1840.

In 1838 an Act was passed by the legislature of Nova Scotia, the object of which was to assume, on behalf of the province, the whole of the internal postage and the control of the department within its limits, a measure which, for obvious reasons, was disallowed by Her Majesty's Government.

In the year 1839, Messrs. Young & Huntington having been sent as delegates from the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia, represented to the Imperial Government the views of that body on the questions under discussion between the legislature and the Post-office department in England. In reply to the representations of those gentlemen, the Lords of the Treasury expressed themselves of opinion, that "so long as the revenue derived from the internal postage should be sufficient to meet the expenditure for the internal communications, no demand for this object should be made upon provincial funds;" and, in conformity with those views, suggested to Lord Normanby, "that the Lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia may be instructed to inform the legislature that no vote will be required for maintaining the present lines of post-office communication, so long as the post-office receipts continue, as they would now appear to be, adequate to meet the expenditure; but that, should the legislature deem it advisable that the lines of communication should be increased, my Lords will in that case rely upon provision being made by the House of Assembly for defraying any expense of such additional communication that may not be covered by increased postage." The despatch of Lord John Russell, covering the letter from which the above extract is taken, expresses a hope that some joint action of the provinces might, ere long, be obtained, so as to enable the Government to place the post-office in those colonies on a new and satisfactory footing, and adds, that this subject had been pressed by his Lordship on the attention of his Excellency the late Governor-general.

A committee appointed in 1840 reported three resolutions, which were adopted by the House, approving unreservedly of the proposals and suggestions contained in the Treasury letter and his Lordship's despatch.

Present condition of the department within Quebec charge.

The charge of the Deputy Postmaster-general at Quebec extends, as already stated, over the united province of Canada, and a small portion of New Brunswick; the post-offices at Campbellton on the Ristigouche, and Grand Falls and Woodstock on the St. John, falling under his control, and the mail service on the line of the St. John, as far as Fredericton, being contracted for by him.* He holds his appointment direct from the head of the department in England. His powers

* The first of these three offices is merely a link in the chain of communication between Quebec and the remote district of Gaspé. The other two being the only offices in the county of Carleton, the whole of that county may be taken as comprised within the Quebec charge.

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powers within the limits of his charge are almost unbounded, and his patronage extends, subject however in most cases to the approval of the Postmaster-general, over every office in the department, with the exception of the accountant branch recently established at Quebec. He appoints all the postmasters, of whom there were on 5th July 1840, no less than 405 under his charge, a number which has reached its present amount by a very rapid increase, and is likely to increase still more rapidly hereafter.

Deputy Postmaster-general's tenure of office and powers.

He appoints the surveyors, of whom there are at present two, but the number must necessarily be increased.

He appoints all the clerks in his own office, the clerks and letter-carriers in the post-offices at Quebec and Montreal, and the office-keeper at Quebec. The names of all clerks and assistants in the other offices must be reported to him; and he has the power, in the words of his commission, "to discharge or suspend such deputy or deputies employed or to be employed in the management of any post-office, &c., who shall, in the opinion of the said T. A. Stayner, be found guilty of neglect, mismanagement, or breach of duty in the office or offices committed to his or their care or charge, from the further execution of his or their respective trusts, as also to nominate and appoint such other person or persons in his or their stead as he shall think proper, until the Postmaster-general's pleasure be made known." The power to erect new post-offices, subject to his reporting to the Postmaster-general, is conferred upon him by his instructions, and, by implication, the correlative power of closing offices at his discretion. All contracts and agreements are made by him, and these, according to the form of the instrument in common use, may be varied or annulled at his pleasure. Under those contracts he also levies fines and penalties on the contractors for any breach of duty or agreement, of which he is the sole judge. All general rules and orders for the government of persons employed in the department are issued by him.

His chief duties, as detailed in the instructions, are to report to the general post-office by every opportunity, all important transactions and remarkable occurrences; implicitly to obey all orders emanating from the head of his department; to see that within his charge the post-office laws are carried into full effect; to collect the revenues of the department, and remit, at least once a quarter, through the Commissariat, all balances as they accrue: for the collection, safe custody, and faithful remittance of the revenue he is held personally liable in a bond to the Crown, with sureties, who are jointly and severally liable with him for the sum of 4,000 £, under an agreement originally made many years ago between Mr. Heriot, then Deputy Postmaster-general of Canada, on the one hand, and the general post-office at Washington on the other; he is also the agent of that department, and collector of United States' postage.

His duties.

The emoluments of the Deputy Postmaster-general of Canada are as follows: he receives a salary of 500 £ sterling per annum; an allowance of 30 £ sterling a year for stationery; the sum derived from the postage of newspapers, which is his perquisite, was for the year ending 5th July 1840, 2,635 £ 8 s. currency (about 2,196 £ 3 s. 4 d. sterling); and that derived from his agency for the post-office establishment of the United States amounted in the same year to 603 £ 10 s. 10 d. currency (about 502 £ 19 s. sterling). Another source of emolument which existed during the greater part of the years 1839 and 1840, was the allowance of five per cent. on the freight money, or ship postage, collected by him on behalf of the proprietors of the New York steam and sailing packets; the amount of which for the year ending in July 1840, was 125 £ 6 s. 10 d. currency (104 £ 9 s. sterling); but the collection of this money having been since prohibited by the Postmaster-general, this per centage no longer forms a part of Mr. Stayner's emoluments. The circumstances under which the Deputy Postmaster-general has enjoyed these large perquisites, the manner in which his newspaper postage is collected, and the nature of his employment as agent for the United States' post-office, will be more appropriately described hereafter. The total amount of his official income from all sources, for the three years ended in July 1840, was 11,358 £ 18 s. 1 d. currency. For the last year of the three it reached the sum of 3,994 £ 3 s. 4 d. currency.

His emoluments.

The general establishment of the department in Canada is divided into three branches: the Deputy Postmaster-general's immediate office, and those of the surveyors and accountant.

General establishment.

In the first of these the correspondence is conducted, the revenue received,

Deputy Postmaster-general's office.

and the general superintendence of the department carried on. The establishment consists of—

A chief clerk	- - - -	at 200 l. sterling a year.
First clerk	- - - -	at 150 l. " "
Second clerk	- - - -	at 100 l. " "
Office-keeper and messenger		at 52 l. " "

The duties of the surveyors are nearly the same with those of the post-office surveyors in England; these gentlemen are employed as travelling inspectors, to superintend, examine and report upon the manner in which the postmasters, contractors and mail-carriers execute their tasks, and to assist those persons with advice and instruction in the performance of their respective duties; to ascertain by personal inspection the merits of applications for new post routes and offices, and to make the necessary preparations for such establishments, in all cases where the application shall have been acceded to; to report upon and carry into effect improvements in established lines; to investigate complaints of misconduct; to search for missing letters; to investigate the circumstances attending mail and post-office robberies, and to aid the Deputy Postmaster-general in any manner he may require in the general administration of the department.

The surveyors were first appointed in the year 1835. The charge of the one extends over all the country east of Kingston (Kingston included), and that of the other over the rest of what was formerly the province of Upper Canada. The eastern charge stretches westward over a line of 886 miles, and, including the lateral routes, over 3,400 miles of mail road.

The western reaches from east to west over 446 miles, and, including lateral routes, over 2,250 miles. The surveyors receive a fixed salary of 150 l. sterling, with an allowance of a guinea a day while engaged in the duties of their situation, and mileage at the rate of 6 d. a mile.

Their gross receipts for the three years ending 5th July 1840, amounted to somewhat less than 500 l. currency each a year.

The Upper Canada surveyor was last year provisionally allowed a clerk at 100 l. currency a year, but subject to our report on the necessity for this assistance,—a question which has been referred to us by his Lordship the late Postmaster-general.

The Account-office is composed of an accountant and two clerks, appointed directly by the Postmaster-general in the year 1834. The salary of the accountant is 300 l. sterling, and those of the clerks 150 l. and 100 l. sterling respectively. There are no fees, perquisites or privileges of any kind attached to these appointments. The duty consists in examining, checking and compiling the accounts of the department. The accountant makes up the general abstracts, which, after being signed by himself and the Deputy Postmaster-general, are transmitted to London. He is required to take upon himself the charge of the accounts for all the provinces, including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward's Island, and he is particularly directed to establish an efficient check upon the Deputy Postmaster-general. But although the head of the department in England has very properly retained as his own patronage the appointment of an officer charged with these peculiar functions, it appears, nevertheless, from his instructions that the accountant is bound generally to receive orders from and obey the directions of the Deputy Postmaster-general at Quebec.

The appointment of postmasters rests with the Deputy Postmaster-general, and that officer, however he may call for the advice of the surveyors, or rely upon the recommendation of other parties, acts always upon his own responsibility.

Every postmaster on his appointment is required to take the post-office oath, and to enter into a bond, with such sureties and under such penalty as the Deputy Postmaster-general may direct. He may delegate (except in the case of the two offices where the Deputy Postmaster-general names the assistants) any portion of the ordinary duty of the office to assistants, reporting their names to the head of the department, and causing them to take the post-office oath.

It is generally required, however, that the accounts rendered by the postmaster should bear his own signature.

Any

Surveyors;
their duties,

and emoluments.

Account branch;
emoluments of
Accountant, &c.

His duties.

Postmasters.

Postmaster's oath,
&c.

Assistants.

Any postmaster, if he pleases, can establish sub-offices for the convenience of his neighbourhood; the persons in charge acting as his agents, and receiving such remuneration as may be agreed upon.

Sub-post offices.

The department is not a party to these arrangements, and therefore we cannot say how many sub-offices are at present in operation, but the number is small.

The detail of a Canadian post-office may be learnt by a perusal of the standing instructions and circular orders of the Deputy Postmaster-general, and the several returns and tables bearing on the subject inserted in the Appendix. A general outline, showing simply the points in regard to which these duties differ more or less from those of a postmaster at home, is all that need be attempted here.

Postmaster's duties.

There is, unfortunately, in Canada nothing like the regularity in the arrival and despatch of the mails which distinguishes the English system. And without intending to deny that the system is susceptible of great improvement, we think it must be admitted that the wretched state of the roads in almost all parts of the country; the extreme vicissitudes of the climate, demanding as they do an entire change in the mode of transporting the mails at different seasons; the long distances to be travelled, and the necessity, from the small amount of correspondence carried through the post, for practising severe economy in making contracts, render a near approach to the regularity of the English post-office, for the present, at least, unattainable. As the case now stands, mails which, when the travelling is good, may arrive at an office at noon or earlier, are, not unfrequently, when the roads are bad, waited for till midnight or beyond it. Offices are, of course, variously affected by this irregularity; but the duties at all are increased by it more or less.

Wherein materially different from those of a postmaster in England. Irregular arrival of mails in Canada.

A second disadvantage arises from the want of guards* to take charge of the mails on the leading lines of communication; in consequence of which the postmaster has himself, in all cases, to take charge of the bags on their arrival, to pick out from their contents the packages for his office, to enclose his own packages, and, when time-bills are sent with the mail, to note upon them the hour of its arrival and departure.

Want of guards.

Another defect, and one which causes great delay, arises from the fact that the forward post system has never been introduced in Canada. Every postmaster, when making up a mail, is therefore obliged, upon rating and post-marking the letters he may have to send, to put them up in as many different parcels as there may happen to be post-offices addressed.†

Want of forward system.

A letter, for example, posted anywhere on the western frontier for a place east of Montreal, instead of being simply enclosed to the forwarding office in that direction, along with all the other letters addressed to the eastward of such office, must be at once made up in a special mail for the distant place, though it be perhaps the only letter so addressed. Thus, the despatch of what is called a single mail (as in England it would almost be, in fact,) is really the despatch of several mails, and at the larger offices often of a formidable number. Within each of these parcels or mails‡ there is sent a letter-bill, stating the amount of postage paid and due thereon; and the items of every letter-bill must be twice entered by the sending postmaster; first, upon the books which he is required to keep in a specified form as an office record, and afterwards upon the monthly sheets, which he has to transmit every quarter to the Deputy Postmaster-general.

The routine of duty is the same on the receipt of a mail. The packets addressed to any given place are loose in the mail-bag, and its whole contents (100 or more packages in many cases) must be examined at each office. The letter-bill in each packet, which the postmaster takes out, must be compared with the letters, its correctness verified by his initials, and any errors he may find particularly noted; a double entry of its items must then be made, first on his

* A "conductor" or guard is sent with the steam-boat mail between Quebec and Montreal, but this is the only mail for which this precaution is taken.

† The only exception to this rule occurs in the case of letters passing from an office eastward to one westward of Quebec, or *vice versa*. All such letters are first mailed on Quebec as a forward office, and there remailed.

‡ When the letters in a package are few, they are merely enclosed in a sealed paper wrapper; where the number ordinarily sent is considerable, canvas bags, furnished by the department, are in use. They are also used at all the small offices east of Quebec, in their exchange of mails with that office.

his books, and then on his monthly sheets, to be sent to the Deputy Postmaster-general; and the bills themselves must be numbered and filed for transmission with the monthly sheets.

To a limited extent, the labour thus imposed on postmasters is lessened, on the leading routes, by a more or less complete separation of the mail into two portions, only one of which the majority of postmasters have occasion to overhaul. On the main route from east to west, this has been effected by breaking up the line into the seven following divisions:—

1. Eastward of Quebec to Fredericton, New Brunswick.
2. From Quebec to Montreal.
3. From Montreal to Kingston.
4. From Kingston to Toronto.
5. From Toronto to Hamilton.
6. From Hamilton to London.
7. From London to Amherstburg.

The mails on each section are carried in two portmanteaus; those for or from the intermediate offices (all offices on the lateral routes included) being placed in one, which is called the way-bag, and all others in the other or grand mail bag. The latter is secured by a lock, for which none but the postmasters at the chief offices have a key. A similar arrangement is made in the transport of the American mail between Toronto and Queenston, and between Montreal and St. John's or Highgate, on the American border.

In a modified form, the system is acted upon in a few other cases.

Two other practices remain to be mentioned, which contribute further to the complexity of the duties of a postmaster in Canada: that of allowing newspapers and other printed matter to pass in the mail for the pecuniary benefit of the Deputy Postmaster-general; and the mode in which American postage on letters and papers for or from the United States is collected and accounted for. These require some explanation.

Collection of newspaper money separate from letter postage.

Prepayment having always been required by the Deputy Postmaster-general for printed matter, and by far the greater part of it being necessarily mailed at the principal towns, in which alone newspapers are published, most postmasters collect for him only on the few occasional papers which may happen to be posted at their offices, and upon the somewhat larger number which come in from the United States, charged always with the American, and generally with the provincial postage.

The great majority, however, collect some amount, larger or smaller, of newspaper money, and all who do, have to account for the same to the Deputy Postmaster-general separately from letter postage, in such manner as he may prescribe. All newspapers, &c. sent by mail are enclosed in the same general mail-bag with the letters, but not in the same packages; they are generally thrown loose into the bag in packages or single, as they happen to be posted. No mail-bills accompany them, and no entry is made of their receipt.

Collection of United States' postage.

The collection and remittance of American postage on letters, &c., for or from the United States is effected under a private agreement, in pursuance of which certain provincial post-offices, appointed by mutual agreement between the two departments, exchange mails direct with the United States, and are charged with the collection of American postage. There are at present 11 of these offices,* viz., Sandwich, Queenston, Niagara, Toronto (in summer only), Kingston, Brockville, Prescott, Montreal, Stanstead, Quebec and Woodstock, New Brunswick; of these, the offices at Niagara, Toronto and Brockville receive mails only for their own towns respectively, the others for distribution and transmission into the interior. The Kingston office is the only one that accounts directly to the general post-office at Washington; the rest account through the Deputy Postmaster-general.

* There are also some two or three other frontier postmasters, who collect American postage on letters for their own immediate neighbourhood, under a private agreement with the nearest American postmaster, and as his agents.

Postmaster-general. The offices in the interior have to keep separate accounts for American postage with every exchanging office which may happen to have forwarded to them any thing with such postage due upon it, or to have received from them any thing on which the American charge is prepaid.

These accounts must be kept, and the remittances made in the manner from time to time prescribed by the Deputy Postmaster-general or the exchanging postmasters. The great majority of postmasters have of course to keep such accounts, and most of them with more than one exchanging office. The accounts kept by the exchanging postmasters are of course numerous, though generally for very trifling sums.

On the other hand, the number of mails exchanged at most offices in Canada is much less than in England. Of the whole number of offices in the Quebec charge, nearly one-fourth (96 out of 412) receive and despatch the mail but once a week; four have a mail once a fortnight, and 96 have two mails a week. Branch mails for offices on side routes are made up at 107 offices, but few of these again have that duty to perform more than once a week. There is in these respects a marked difference between offices on the main and side routes. Of 91 offices* on the main route there are 51 at which mails are received and despatched more than six times a week; 28 at which they are received and despatched six times a week, and 12 where they are less frequent.

Small number of mails exchanged at most offices;

Forty of the 91 make up branch mails. But on the 321 offices on other routes there are only 15 which have more than six mails a week, and 19 more that have so many as six; 67 of the 321 have to make up branch mails. The proportion also of offices at which mails are usually exchanged at night is much greater on the main route than elsewhere, there being of the former class 40, and of the latter only 12.

The number of letters and newspapers delivered at most offices is trifling. In 142 offices out of the 405, which in the year ending in July 1840 remitted to Quebec, the amount of the year's postage fell short of 30 l.; 69 of these collected less than 10 l., and 99 between 10 l. and 20 l.; only 47 offices collected more than 100 l. A return now before us shows the average rate of postage on a single letter to be a small fraction over 8½d. currency. Supposing, then, the number of paid letters received at an office to be about equal, as it generally is, to the number of paid letters sent from it, the collection of 100 l. in a year indicates the delivery of letters and packets charged with about 2,800 single rates of postage, or not quite 54 rates a week. The number of free letters addressed to other parties than the postmaster is not great, and perhaps hardly balances the number of letters on which more than one rate is charged.† Another return shows that the number of newspapers sent yearly by post is less than that of the letters, so that it may be asserted that in the year ending in July 1840, there were not in Canada 50 post-offices where the average weekly delivery amounted to 54 letters, and as many newspapers, while at no less than 242 it fell short of 16 letters and 16 newspapers; at nearly 70 of these it was not a third of that number.

And few letters, &c. delivered.

Except at a few of the chief post towns, there is no delivery of letters or papers away from the office; and as the 24th article of their instructions relieves postmasters at "country offices" from the obligation of keeping regular office hours, it is to be presumed that they keep just such hours as they find most convenient to themselves. At the "principal offices" fixed hours are laid down in the instructions, subject, however, to modification by the head of the department. By the 25th and 26th articles it is required that "whenever it can be done, the office be kept in a separate room, and that no bar or public room in a tavern be so used." In a very large proportion of cases the former of these regulations is inoperative, and the latter, there is reason to believe, is frequently evaded. A partial system of registering money-letters has been for some time in operation in Canada. Postmasters are directed to enter specially in the letter-bill, at the time of mailing, all letters said or supposed to contain money; and

In country no delivery except at office.

Often no fixed hours.

Often no separate room used as an office.

Registry of money letters.

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* This number includes the line of offices from Hamilton to Queenston and Niagara, as well as that from Hamilton to Amherstburg.

† From data, which will be more fully explained hereafter, it appears that the whole number of free letters (those on the service of the department not included) is about one-thirteenth of the number of charged letters. The majority of these are addressed to postmasters. The delivery of free letters is, of course, less troublesome to the postmasters than that of charged letters.

it is the duty of the receiving postmaster to separate the letters so entered from the other contents of the mail-bag, and to take a receipt for them on delivery.

Unclaimed and
dead letters.

All unclaimed letters in the hands of a postmaster which may have lain in his office three months, and been advertised by means of a list posted on the office door or some other public place for six weeks of that time, he is to consider dead-letters, and is to forward them to Quebec quarterly along with his accounts: if originally mailed in Great Britain, they are sent from Quebec to the dead-letter office, London, to be there opened: if mailed in any of the North American provinces, they are opened in the accountant's office at Quebec by a sworn clerk, and returned (where practicable) to the writers for payment of postage: if mailed in the United States, they are also opened in the same way, and should they contain money or other valuables, they are then transmitted to the general post-office at Washington.

Refused letters.

Refused letters are forwarded to Quebec monthly, and there dealt with in like manner.

Letters for United
States not paid to
line.

Letters addressed to persons in the United States are also sent to Quebec, if mailed without payment of the postage chargeable on them to the lines; for the American post-office, under the existing arrangement, does not collect British postage. All postmasters are required to forward such letters to the Deputy Postmaster-general by the first mail, that he may, if possible, return them to the writers.

Postmaster's ac-
counts and remit-
tances.

Of the form in which a postmaster is required to keep his accounts with the general post-office at Quebec, and the manner of making remittances, it is for the present enough to say, that all postmasters are bound to forward their accounts, and to remit whatever balances may be due, within 25 days after the close of each quarter; and that the accounts and remittances of newspaper money are sent in at the same period. Postmasters in the interior are required to remit their United States' postage to the several exchanging offices within 10 days after the close of each American quarter.* In practice, however, a large proportion of postmasters usually take more than this time. The exchanging postmasters are allowed by the American department a somewhat indefinite term, within which to have their accounts prepared and transmitted to Washington.

Tenor of post-
master's bond.

The postmaster's bond is conditioned for the faithful discharge of all his duties, and binds him and his sureties to indemnify the Deputy Postmaster-general for all loss that may occur through his means; to give him three months' notice, commencing from a quarter-day, of his intention to resign; and upon his removal from office or resignation, quietly to surrender up the office, and all papers, instruments, &c. &c., belonging to it. It should be added, that his bond to the Crown is held to be sufficient to enforce the payment, as well of the United States' postage and the newspaper money, as of the British and provincial postage he may collect. United States' postage is not, strictly speaking, paid to the Deputy Postmaster-general; but by an order issued by Mr. Stayner the 28th December 1839, postmasters are informed that its payment will be enforced under the same penalties as that of other monies.

General rule as to
emoluments of
postmasters.

The general rule as regards the emoluments of postmasters and their expenses of office, may be thus stated: from the revenue of the department, they receive quarterly an allowance of 20 per cent. on the amount of letter postage (British and provincial) collected by them, and in most cases a further allowance for stationery, amounting usually to about 6*d.* in the pound, or two and a half per cent. more on such collections: from the Deputy Postmaster-general they receive (the postmasters at Quebec, Montreal, Kingston and Toronto excepted)† 20 per cent. on the newspaper money they collect for him, which in most instances, however, is but a trifling sum. For the collection of United States' postage, those in the interior are allowed to charge 10 per cent. commission in their

* The American quarters end on the 31st March, 30th June, 30th September and 31st December. The provincial, on the 5th April, July, October and January.

† The greater part of the income which the Deputy Postmaster-general derives from this source is collected at these four offices. At Quebec, it is collected by the Deputy Postmaster-general himself; at Montreal, by a clerk, in part paid by him; and at Kingston and Toronto, by the postmasters, for a commission of 10 per cent.

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their accounts with the exchanging offices, and the Deputy Postmaster-general and postmasters at the exchanging offices share between them, as will be explained presently, the remainder of the commission allowed for its collection by the United States. Postmasters derive some further emolument (the amount of which does not appear from the returns except in one or two cases, but which we believe to be generally very trifling), from a charge of varying amount on letters taken by them after the hour for closing a mail, and another of 1*d.* currency on letters posted at their own office for delivery there.* They enjoy the privilege of franking letters or packets under half an ounce, and of receiving letters and newspapers free of postage without stint as to number. The books and blank forms required for office use are furnished by the department; and postmasters are allowed to advertise unclaimed letters in any newspaper published in their neighbourhood at 1*d.* currency for three insertions of each name, sending in their accounts for payment to the department. For clerk hire, office rent, fuel and other contingent expenses, they have no allowance except at the four principal offices.

The establishments at the four principal towns are as follows :

Quebec.—The postmaster is styled First Clerk in the Sorting Office, and for the year ending 5th July 1840 his emoluments were—

Establishments at Quebec.

	£.	s.	d.	
A fixed salary from department - - -	360	-	-	currency.
Rent of boxes in post-office - - -	46	2	6	„
Commission paid by Public Departments, and by individuals, for keeping accounts with them - - -	120	10	6	„
Fees on late letters - - -	1	5	-	„
TOTAL - - -	£. 527	18	-	„

besides the franking privilege, which he values however at only 4*l.* 2*s.* currency per annum. The removal of the seat of government from Quebec has materially reduced the amount of his commission for keeping public accounts. No part of the expenses of the office is borne by the postmaster. The rent of his office, which is in the same building with those of the Deputy Postmaster-general and the accountant, and all the contingent expenses, are paid by the department; the postmaster is allowed three clerks and two letter-carriers, who are appointed by the Deputy Postmaster-general, and paid as follows :

NAMES, &c.	Fixed Salary paid by Department.			Emoluments from Fees on late Letters.			Emoluments from Fee of 1 <i>d.</i> each on delivery of Letters.			TOTAL.		
	Currency.			Currency.			Currency.			Currency.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
D. Logie, styled 2d Clerk in Sorting Office - - -	144	-	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	145	5	-
A. Henderson, 3d ditto - - -	108	-	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	109	5	-
D. M. Wright, 4th ditto - - -	100	16	-†	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	16	-
J. Watts, 1st Letter-carrier - - -	72	-	-	-	-	-	75	14	5	147	14	5
R. Patton, 2d ditto - - -	62	8	-	-	-	-	37	17	2	100	5	2

Montreal.

* We are not aware that these letters are sent out for delivery except at the four principal offices, where alone salaried letter-carriers are provided by the department, and at Three Rivers. At Quebec, Montreal and Kingston, the postmaster derives no pecuniary advantage from them. At Kingston, they are delivered at the office window without charge. They are charged, on account of the department, at Quebec, 2*d.* each; and at Montreal, 1*d.* At Toronto the 1*d.* is a perquisite of the postmaster, as at the minor offices. The letter-carriers at Quebec are not allowed to charge the penny perquisite on this class of letters when sent out by them; at the other offices they are.

† To be advanced after five years' service to 132*l.* currency.

*Montreal.**Montreal.*—The postmaster's emoluments are—

	£.	s.	d.	
Fixed salary from department	360	-	-	currency.
Rent of boxes in office in year 1839-40	75	-	-	"
Commission on public and private accounts (in 1839-40)	230	-	-	"
TOTAL	665	-	-	"

together with the franking privilege, the actual value of which he estimates at 10 *l.* currency, but which he would be unwilling to surrender for 25 *l.* currency a year. The removal of the seat of government from Montreal will considerably reduce his commission for keeping public accounts.

The present arrangement of the Montreal establishment dates only from last spring. Before that time the postmaster appointed his own clerks, and paid the greater part of their salaries himself. He had then several other sources of emolument, but his net income was perhaps never greater than it is now. It is only since the year 1838-39 that his commission on public accounts has been considerable.

The rent of the office, 50*l.*, is paid by the department, as are also the contingent expenses to an amount not exceeding 110 *l.* currency a year, the postmaster being required to produce vouchers for every item, and to defray any excess himself.

There are at present on the establishment four clerks and two letter-carriers, appointed by the Deputy Postmaster-general, and an office-keeper, appointed by the postmaster; they are paid as follows:

NAMES.	Fixed Salary paid by Department.			Fixed Salary paid by Deputy Postmaster-general.			Fixed Salary paid by Postmaster from his Contingency Allowance.			Emolument from Fee of 1 <i>d.</i> each on delivery of Letters.			TOTAL.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
H. A. Wicksteed, 1st Clerk	100	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	-	-
W. Gillespie, 2d ditto	140	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	140	-	-
P. W. Cooper, 3d ditto	140	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	140	-	-
— O'Neill, 4th ditto	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	-	-
— Huddell, 1st Letter-carrier	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	-	-	125	-	-
— Lyons, 2d ditto	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	-	-	125	-	-
Porter and Messenger, with Lodgings	-	-	-	-	-	-	?	-	-	-	-	-	?	-	-

Kingston.

Kingston.—The postmaster at this place appoints and pays his own clerks, and defrays all other expenses (except letter-carriers' wages) out of his allowances. These for the year ending in July 1840 were—

From the department:	£.	s.	d.	
A fixed salary of	154	10	-	currency.
Allowance for stationery	25	-	-	"
Ditto for clerk-hire	60	-	-	"
From other sources:				
Commission of 10 per cent. on collection of newspaper money	9	19	5	"
Commission on United States' postage	304	3	10	"
Ditto on freight money (since abolished)	22	8	3	"
Rent of boxes in office	10	15	-	"
Commission on public accounts	2	1	7	"
TOTAL	£. 588	18	1	"

From

From which sum, according to his return on the subject, the following items of expense are to be deducted :

Salary of two clerks—	£.	s.	d.		
A senior, at - - -	60	-	-		
A junior, at - - -	30	-	-		
	<u>90</u>	-	-	90	- - currency.
Office rent - - -	-	-	-	30	- - "
Stationery * - - -	-	-	-	25	- - "
Light and fuel - - -	-	-	-	<u>15</u>	- - "
TOTAL - - -	£. 160	-	-	-	- - "

Leaving him a net income of 428 l. 18 s. 1 d. currency for the year 1839-40, besides his franking privilege, which he values at 10 l. currency a year. His emoluments from American postage he states to be falling off. The removal to Kingston of the seat of government promises, on the other hand, to increase his commission on public accounts to an extent much exceeding that loss.

The establishment at Kingston consists of the two clerks above-mentioned and one letter-carrier, appointed, as the clerks are, by the postmaster; the latter receives a salary of 30 l. currency from the department. The value of his perquisite of 1 d. on each letter delivered by him is stated by the postmaster at about 60 l. currency a year.

Toronto.—This office is in most respects on the same footing with that of *Toronto.* Kingston. The postmaster returns his gross emoluments for the year ending 5th July 1840, as follows:—

From the department :	£.	s.	d.	
A fixed salary of - - - - -	237	13	10	currency*
Allowance for stationery - - - - -	30	-	-	"
Ditto for two clerks - - - - -	115	-	-	"
 From other sources :				
Commission of 10 per cent. on collection of newspaper money - - - - -	72	1	7	"
Commission on United States' postage - - - - -	152	10	4½	"
Gain on conversion of United States into provincial currency - - - - -	45	-	-†	"
Commission on freight money (since abolished) - - - - -	14	4	9	"
Rent of boxes in office - - - - -	50	-	-	"
Commission on public and private accounts - - - - -	316	7	10	"
Penny post letters † - - - - -	46	12	7	"
Charge on late letters - - - - -	13	4	1	"
TOTAL - - -	£. 1,093	5	-½	"

From which are to be deducted the following expenses incurred during the same year:—

Salary

* This item of expense is not returned by the postmaster, but it is to be presumed that it must have cost him about as much as he is allowed for it.

† This source of profit is returned only by the postmaster at Toronto. Though overlooked, it must form a considerable additional item in the emoluments of several other postmasters.

‡ The only known case of any considerable revenue to a postmaster from this source.—*Vide sup.* p. 17.

Salary of three clerks—				£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Two at 80 l.	-	-	-	160	-	-	220	-	-
One at 60 l.	-	-	-	60	-	-			
Office rent	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	-	-
Stationery	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	-
Light and fuel	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	-	-
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	11	6
TOTAL				-	-	-	345	11	6

Leaving him a net income of 747 l. 13 s. 6½ d., besides his franking privilege, which he values at 30 l. a year.

A material increase (from circumstances which will be presently stated) has recently taken place in the amount of his commission on United States' postage, which he now values at not less than 250 l. a year. But on the other hand, he has been obliged to raise the salary of his first assistant to 100 l.; and the removal of the seat of government for the Upper Province will greatly reduce the amount of his commission on public accounts.

The establishment at Toronto consists of the three clerks above-mentioned, and one letter-carrier, who receives 30 l. currency a year from the department, and the usual perquisite of 1 d. on each letter he delivers, the value of which the postmaster states at about 45 l. currency a year. They are all appointed by the postmaster.

Since the above statement was made to us, the postmaster at Toronto has been appointed post-office surveyor to fill the vacancy occasioned by the removal of Mr. Porteous on the 6th January in the present year to the postmastership of Montreal. We shall hereafter be called upon to express an opinion on this appointment, and shall, therefore, content ourselves for the present with stating that the income derived from it by Mr. Berczy is limited to the salary of 150 l. sterling a year. It is manifestly impossible that a person filling the important situation of postmaster at Toronto, whose presence is continually required there, and who is amply remunerated for his services, can discharge any of those travelling duties from which the greater part of the income of a surveyor is derived in mileage and other travelling allowances. The proper time for discussing the peculiar circumstances of this case will be when we come to treat of the amount of patronage confided to the hands of the Deputy Postmaster-general, and the propriety of its being so vested; but we cannot, in noticing this addition of 150 l. sterling a year to the income of Mr. Berczy, omit, even for the present, to express our conviction that he cannot possibly, in the capacity of surveyor, afford any services to the public sufficient to justify the bestowal upon him of an office, the duties of which are so obviously incompatible with those of the postmastership of Toronto.*

Besides the four principal offices, there are 14 others at which a fixed salary (exceeding the amount they would receive were they paid as other post-masters are) is paid to the postmasters in lieu of commission on provincial letter postage; these salaries are as follows:—

Three Rivers	-	-	-	-	-	£. 90	currency.
Queenston	-	-	-	-	-	50	"
Berthier	-	-	-	-	-	40	"
Laprairie	-	-	-	-	-	40	"
Stanstead	-	-	-	-	-	40	"
Woodstock, N. B.	-	-	-	-	-	40	"
Carleton	-	-	-	-	-	30	"
Lachine	-	-	-	-	-	25	"
Chatham, L. C.	-	-	-	-	-	16	"
L'Assomption	-	-	-	-	-	15	"
Henryville	-	-	-	-	-	12	"
Chateauguay	-	-	-	-	-	8	"
St. Ours	-	-	-	-	-	8	"
Repentigny	-	-	-	-	-	5	"

These

* This appointment has since been cancelled.

Other exception to rule in regard to commission on letter postage.

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These salaries are in lieu of commission on letter postage; but the postmasters receive their commission on United States' postage and newspaper money in addition to the above amounts.

The postmasters at the following offices receive an extra allowance, in consideration of their having a more than usual amount of duty to perform.

Brighton	-	-	-	-	-	£. 25	currency.
Cobourg	-	-	-	-	-	25	"
Cornwall	-	-	-	-	-	25	"
Hamilton	-	-	-	-	-	20	"
Prescott	-	-	-	-	-	20	"
William Henry	-	-	-	-	-	20	"
Franktown	-	-	-	-	-	12	"

The postmaster at Kamowaska is allowed, on similar grounds, a commission on his postage of 30 instead of 20 per cent.

The department at Washington makes to all postmasters who exchange mails with the United States the same allowance as to its own postmasters; viz.—

30	per cent.	on the first \$ 100	of letter postage	in the quarter,
25	"	next 300		
20	"	next 1,600		
8	"	all above 2,000	in any quarter,	

Payment for collection of United States' postage, how made and divided between the Deputy Postmaster-general and other officers of the department.

and 50 per cent. on all newspaper postage; out of which they allow 10 per cent. to the postmasters in the interior, who account to them. The Kingston office enjoys a special privilege, being allowed "three cents on each letter sent into the United States."

The Deputy Postmaster-general is responsible to the American post-office for the punctual remittance of all American postage, except that collected through the Kingston office. The balance of commission accruing at the Quebec and Montreal offices forms his share of remuneration; and each of the other eight postmasters, who account through him, keeps the net allowance of his own office for himself. In the year ending 5th July 1840 the division of the monies allowed by the American post-office was as follows:—

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
The Deputy Postmaster-general received from the post-office at Montreal (Quebec was made an exchanging office in July 1840, and he now receives consequently from both places)	0	10	9*			
The postmasters at the other exchanging offices received the following sums:						
Sandwich	13	17	6			
Queenston	493	7	2½			
Niagara	67	12	—			
(Toronto was made an exchanging office in July 1840, and the postmaster, as above stated, values his commission at about 250 l.)						
Kingston	304	3	10			
Brockville	36	11	4			
Prescott	56	5	9			
Stanstead	65	—	—			
Woodstock, N. B., about	65	—	—			
Other postmasters, in all				1,101	17	7½
				610	9	1
TOTAL				2,315	17	6½

The

* Till the new arrangement came into operation for the Montreal office, the postmaster was allowed at the rate of 75 l. currency a year for his services in the collection of the United States' postage, amounting for the year in question to 65 l. 12 s. 6 d. currency. Since the re-organization of the establishment this deduction has ceased to be made.

Value of postmasters' franking privilege.

The value of the franking privilege enjoyed by postmasters is extremely variable; depending altogether on the occupation or trade of the postmaster, and bearing no proportion either to the extent of his duties or the amount of his other emoluments. From the answers to the circular addressed to them on this subject, it appears that it is valued at amounts varying from a few shillings to 100 *l.* a year. At the Gananogue post-office (the postmaster there being the proprietor of the most extensive mills in Canada), it is worth 100 *l.* currency a year or more, and is so estimated by the postmaster; while at the Coteau du Lac office, which collects nearly half as much again, and has an equal number of mails to make up, it is valued at only 2 *l.* 10 *s.* currency. The postmaster at St. Hilaire, the proprietor of a large seignory, values the privilege at from 30 *l.* to 50 *l.*; at Dunham, with an equal number of mails to make up, and a slightly larger collection of postage, it is estimated at 1 *l.* From calculations made upon the data which these answers furnish, it would appear that the aggregate value set upon this privilege by the postmasters themselves is about 4,000 *l.* currency a year, or nearly 1-13th of the entire revenue of the post-office for the year 1839-40; and that the number of letters and packets sent and received under it (exclusive of correspondence on post-office business) is more than 1-13th of the whole number of charged letters and packets passing through the post yearly.

Net income of postmaster not easily ascertainable.

It is impossible to state with any approach to accuracy the net income of any considerable number of postmasters. They were all called upon to present a statement of their expenses as well as of their emoluments, and nearly all have answered the circular; but their answers are founded on such varying data that no dependence can be placed on any table compiled from them. One postmaster, for example, whose collection of postage for the last three years has averaged less than 60 *l.* currency a year, and whose emoluments last year were less than 15 *l.*, returns his yearly expenses at 70 *l.*, a result which he produces by charging 50 *l.* for clerk hire, 10 *l.* for office rent, and 10 *l.* for fuel and incidentals. Many others, by a similar process, have arrived at similar results; while some again, in much the same circumstances, have returned no expenses at all. A considerable number are unable to state even the precise amount of their emoluments. In the Appendix will be found a table, showing as nearly as possible the receipts and expenses of 41 of the more considerable offices. For the rest, it has been found impossible to do more than take account of their gross emoluments, as returned by the Deputy Postmaster-general, with the addition of the value set by themselves on their franking privilege.

Summary of their gross emoluments.

It appears from these data, that of 393 postmasters of whose emoluments and franking privileges we have returns (and inclusive in all cases of the asserted value of the latter), there are 145 whose gross emoluments are less than 10 *l.* a year; 166 who receive from 10 *l.* to 30 *l.*; 59 from 30 *l.* to 100 *l.*; and 23 more than 100 *l.* It happens, however, in many cases, that the situation of postmaster is prized by those who hold it much beyond its mere value in money. A postmaster in the country is in a position generally of considerable influence, from the many opportunities he has of obliging his neighbours. He gets his letters earlier, and can write later than any one else; and this to a man in business, as country postmasters generally are, is of itself a considerable advantage; to say nothing of that rather unfair one, of knowing when and with whom the correspondence of other men in business near him is carried on.

The office is generally prized above its money value.

It further appears, that the patronage of all the post-office appointments in Canada under his own (except those of the accountant and his two clerks, the aggregate amount of whose salaries, drawn wholly from the post-office revenue, is 660 *l.* currency), is vested in the Deputy Postmaster-general. The appointments made by the Deputy Postmaster-general, or subject to his approval, are as follows:—

Aggregate of gross emoluments of employes of department under Deputy Postmaster-general.

1. On the general establishment, two surveyors, three clerks and an office-keeper, named by the Deputy Postmaster-general, and one clerk,* named by a surveyor; receiving from the post-office revenue for the last year (inclusive of the

* His salary, 100 *l.* currency, is not included in the 1,607 *l.* 11 *s.* 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*, that amount being for the year 1839-40, before his appointment.

the surveyors' travelling charges), an aggregate of 1,607 *l.* 11 *s.* 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* currency,* which, with the franking privilege enjoyed by the surveyors, and a perquisite of about 12 *l.* a year enjoyed by the office-keeper, constitute their whole emolument.

2. Two conductors or guards appointed this year to take charge of the steam-boat mails between Quebec and Montreal, who are paid 50 *l.* currency for the season, and live on board the steamers.

3. On the establishments of the Quebec and Montreal post-offices, two post-masters, seven clerks, and four letter-carriers named by the Deputy Postmaster general, and one office-keeper named by the postmaster at Montreal, who for the same year received in the aggregate from the post-office revenue, 1,394 *l.* 14 *s.* currency; and from other sources about 1,065 *l.* 2 *s.* 1 *d.* currency, besides the franking privilege of the two postmasters, valued by them at from 14 *l.* to 29 *l.* a year, making thus a gross sum total of about 2,480 *l.* currency.†

4. At the other post-offices upwards of 400 postmasters, and an unknown and varying number of clerks and other assistants appointed by them, receiving in all for the year in question, from the post-office revenue, 5,761 *l.* 19 *s.* 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* currency, as salary or commission, and 541 *l.* 17 *s.* 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* as stationery allowance, and from other sources about 2,550 *l.*, besides some trifling emoluments, the value of which is not ascertained, and their franking privilege, which they value at nearly 4,000 *l.*, making thus a gross sum total of about 12,850 *l.* currency.

The above sums do not include the expenditure incurred from the post-office revenue for the incidental expenses of the general establishment, and of the Quebec and Montreal post-offices, the supply of books and blank forms for the offices, the advertising of dead letters, &c. These expenses amounted for the year ending 5 July 1840, to 1,844 *l.* 9 *s.* 9 *d.* currency. And its incidental expenses.

There were in force in July 1840, according to the returns in the Appendix, 136 contracts and eight informal agreements for the conveyance of the mail within the Canada charge. The number has since increased to about 150, and is continually increasing. Two of the contracts entered into since July are of great importance, and mention is accordingly made of them in the returns. Of the 145 engagements, the particulars of which are thus before the Commission, 95 are of secondary consequence, the stipulated yearly payments under each of them being less than 100 *l.* currency; of the remainder, 22 are for sums ranging between 100 *l.* and 200 *l.*; 15 between 200 *l.* and 500 *l.*; six between 500 *l.* and 1,000 *l.*; and seven for more than 1,000 *l.* The total amount paid for this branch of the service during the year ended 5th July 1840, was 22,342 *l.* 11 *s.* 8 *d.* currency. The amount at the present time is about 27,500 *l.* currency. Conveyance of the mail. Number and value of contracts and other agreements.

Contracts for the more important routes are to some extent submitted to public competition, by advertisements describing the services required, and inviting tenders for its performance for a term of three, four or five years; and the lowest tender is then accepted, provided the security offered be considered sufficient, and no apparent evidence exist of the incompetency of the party for the undertaking. Upon the minor routes contracts are made by private arrangement, at the discretion of the Deputy Postmaster-general. This mode is also occasionally followed in the case of larger contracts, and more especially in the renewal of existing agreements. Contracts, how entered into.

The form of contract in common use is given in the Appendix. It has been materially departed from in two cases only—the contracts made this year for the conveyance of the mail by steam-boat between Montreal and Quebec, and between Toronto and Dickenson's Landing. Their form

The terms of the contracts vary, however, as much as the amounts to be paid under them, and can be learnt in detail only by a reference to the returns. The number of the sureties required to join the contractor in the execution of his bond is sometimes one, more frequently two, and occasionally three. The penalty And terms. Number, &c. of sureties.

* Exclusive in both cases of some incidental charges not distinguishable from the other incidentals of the department.

† The re-organization of the Montreal establishment has probably had the effect of increasing this amount. Making the required changes for the new salaries allowed, and for the emoluments of other kinds abolished by it, the gross receipts from the revenue would be about 1,807 *l.*, and from other sources about 819 *l.*, besides the franking privilege; the sum total about 2,648 *l.*

Scale of forfeitures.

penalty of the bond is in two cases (those of the steam-boat contracts just mentioned) as high as 5,000*l.*, and in another (that of the land mail between Toronto and Kingston) 3,000*l.*; on several trifling routes it is as low as 19*l.* or 20*l.* The scale of forfeitures which can be levied by the Deputy Postmaster-general at discretion, varies as follows:

For leaving a mail-bag behind, if accidentally, between 10*s.* and 12*l.* 10*s.*; if wilfully, between 1*l.* and 30*l.*

For passing a post-office without stopping, or for not stopping as long as the postmaster may require, if a first offence, between 5*s.* and 5*l.*; if not a first offence, between 10*s.* and 10*l.*

For any other breach of contract, or for any violation or neglect of the rules of the department, between 1*l.* 5*s.* and 50*l.*

Such fines to be deducted by the Deputy Postmaster-general from his quarterly payments; with the option, however, if he please, of suing upon the contractor's bond, or summarily annulling the contract, instead of fining him. The scale of forfeiture on the two new contracts differs considerably from this, being as follows:

For neglect to serve any office, 20*l.* currency.

For delivery of the mail later than the stipulated time, at Toronto, Kingston or Dickenson's Landing, 5*l.* per hour.

At Quebec or Montreal, 10*l.* per half-hour, unless satisfactory cause be shewn.

Duration, &c.

The majority of contracts are for terms of three and four years, but some are for one, two and five years, and two (the steam-boat contracts just spoken of) are for six years. Except in these last, however, it is always stipulated that the Deputy Postmaster-general may at any time annul the contract "if in his opinion the public interest shall require it," giving three months' previous notice; and that unless the Deputy Postmaster-general should announce to the contractor his intention of closing the engagement at the end of the years above mentioned as the probable limit of the term, the said engagement is not then to cease, but is to continue in force thereafter in all its provisions, with the consent of the Deputy Postmaster-general for an indefinite time; the contractor binding himself to give at least four months' notice in writing to the Deputy Postmaster-general of his wish to relinquish his engagement. There is also a proviso in the common form of contract, that the Deputy Postmaster-general may alter at pleasure the days of travel and line of route, either adding to or diminishing the distance to be travelled, on condition only of continuing to pay at the mile-rate originally agreed upon.

Power of Deputy Postmaster-general to alter terms, &c.

Prohibition of conveyance of unmailed letters.

In what cases waived.

The forms of contract strictly forbid the conveyance by the courier of any letters or parcels containing letters, but there has always been a tacit understanding between the department and the contractors on routes served by steam-boats, or partly by land and partly by steam-boat conveyance, that their own letters, on the business of the line, may be carried out of the mail-bag. In two cases of agreements now expired, this stipulation was made in writing; at present the privilege rests only on a verbal or tacit arrangement.

Mode, rate, frequency and cost of mail conveyance.

The mails are carried in different parts of the country and at different seasons of the year, in a great variety of ways and under necessarily various stipulations as to the number of trips, the speed of travel and the rate of payment.

On the main route from Fredericton, New Brunswick, westward to Niagara, and Amherstburg, their transport is provided for as follows, under fourteen contracts and two informal agreements:

East of Quebec the mail travels twice a week each way as far as Woodstock, New Brunswick, and thence three times a week to Fredericton, under four contracts:

1. Between Fredericton and Woodstock, by waggon or sleigh, 64 miles; the distance to be performed within 18 hours, and the rate while travelling to be 5½ miles to the hour.

2. Between Woodstock and Grand Falls, also by waggon or sleigh, but with two horses, 74 miles within 24 hours, travelling at the rate of four miles an hour.

3. Between

3. Between Grand Falls and the head of Lake Temiscouata, 81 miles, to be performed by canoe in summer, within 24 hours downwards and 36 upwards, and by sleigh in winter, within 24 hours each way.

4. Between Lake Temiscouata and Quebec, 150 miles, in a light cart or sleigh, within 40 hours, travelling 4 miles an hour in summer and winter.

All stoppages included, the ordinary travel of the mail between Fredericton and Quebec, 369 miles, occupies, when the roads are good, about 113 hours each way; when the roads are at their worst, the time is longer, though seldom much longer, as the stoppages on the road are then considerably shortened. The contracts allow an extra 24 hours in the spring and autumn, but this year the allowance has not been claimed. Under the contracts which expired in 1838, 196 hours were allowed at all seasons; the stipulated price for the service as now rendered is 2,180*l.* currency for the year.

Besides the regular mail, there is also despatched in winter, as often as occasions may require,* an extra mail for the conveyance of letters from the Halifax steam-ships. This service is performed by the contractors for the ordinary mail, on condition simply of using all possible despatch, and these mails are commonly brought through from Fredericton in 12 hours less time than the ordinary mail. During the winter of 1840-41, six such trips were made at an expense of about 200*l.* currency.

Between Quebec and Montreal the mail was exchanged till the beginning of last May seven times a week throughout the year on the road by the north bank of the St. Lawrence; the department providing mail carts of an improved construction for the contractor's use, the entire distance (177 miles) to be travelled in summer within 34 hours, and in winter within 36; the rate while travelling to be six miles an hour, and the remuneration (after deducting 179*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.* for the use of the mail carts) about 2,675*l.*† currency per annum. Under the present arrangement, the route is travelled in summer only, three times a week, for the service of the country offices, and the mails for Quebec, Port St. Francis, Sorel and Montreal, are exchanged six days in the week by steam-boat.

For the downward passage of the boat 14 hours are allowed, and for the upward, 19. Except for a short period, while the ice is forming or breaking up upon the large streams which the land mail has to cross by ferries, the time allowed is seldom much exceeded. The cost of the present arrangement (after deducting about 680*l.* currency for the partial discontinuance of the land mail) will be about 4,600*l.* currency a year.

From Montreal to Toronto, 376 miles, the service is performed six times a week,—in summer by steam-boat and stage, and in winter by stage, waggon or sleigh.

In summer 56½ hours are allowed for the upward trip, inclusive of some six hours' delay at Kingston and Dickenson's Landing, and 52 hours for the downward, inclusive of delays at Kingston and Cornwall of about seven hours. In winter, with a delay of four hours at Kingston, 92 hours are allowed each way.

The summer conveyance is sufficiently regular; the trips seldom taking much more or much less time than the contracts allow. For the rest of the year they are more variable, 86 hours very commonly suffice when the travelling is good; but the contract time is often exceeded by 24, or even 36 hours, when the roads are breaking up.

This portion of the main route will cost for the current year about 5,110 *l.* currency.

West of Toronto the mail is conveyed by land through Hamilton to Niagara and Amherstburg six times a week throughout the year, and in summer by steam-boats direct to Hamilton and Queenston, also six times a week. On the western

* At the beginning of last winter this extra mail was sent only when the steam-ships arrived on a day that did not allow of the use of the regular Quebec post. In consideration, however, of the great bulk of the English mails, it has been since ordered that the letter-bags should always come through by an extra mail, and the newspaper bags only (or rather so many of them as the extra mail could not bring) be brought up with the regular mails. The bags for England are all sent by the regular conveyances to Halifax.

† This sum is rather larger than would appear from the return in the Appendix; about 430*l.* currency having been allowed last winter to the contractor for the use of a second horse, rendered necessary by the sleigh ordinance.

western section of the land-route from Sandwich to Amherstburg, a distance of 16 miles, it is carried on horseback, two and a half hours being allowed; between Hamilton and Sandwich, 205 miles, by stage coach or sleigh, within 60 hours; and from Toronto through Hamilton to Niagara, 106 miles, in a two horse waggon or sleigh, within 20 hours. When the travelling is at its worst, however, even these allowances of time (liberal as they necessarily are, on account of the wretched state of these roads in bad weather) are often considerably exceeded. At such times the mail between Toronto and Amherstburg (269 miles), instead of the 76 hours allowed, is not unfrequently more than four days, stoppages included. When the roads are good the prescribed time is seldom much exceeded, but from the fact that the contractor's arrangements are not made with a view to speedier travel, when it can be attained, the time allowed seldom fails to be consumed in stoppages, even when the roads are at their best. The Hamilton and Queenston steam-boats commonly make their trips (the one of 36, the other of 48 miles) in from four to five hours. The total cost of the land mail on these routes is about 2,574 *l.* currency per annum, and of the steam-boat mails not quite 200 *l.* currency.

A letter may pass, when the travelling is good, from Fredericton, New Brunswick, to Amherstburg, a distance of about 1,200 miles, in fourteen and a half days, some 60 hours of which are, however, lost in stoppages at the principal places on the way, owing to the impossibility of so timing the arrival and departure of the mail as to make this extensive route an unbroken one.

When the travelling is bad, it will take 19 or possibly 20 days, not more than 24 hours of which will at that season be lost at the principal offices.

The contracts on a few of the branch and side routes allow the conveyance of the mail by a foot-post, but the number of these is diminishing. A much larger number require that it be carried at least on horseback, and on nearly all the more considerable lines of communication the use of some kind of wheeled carriage or sleigh is prescribed. In summer the conveyance from Montreal to the United States' line is by steam-boat and railroad; and from Toronto to Rochester in the State of New York, and also from Bytown* to Fitzroy Harbour (33 miles) on the Ottawa by steam-boat.

There is one route only on which the mail is conveyed less than once a week, the route between Port Daniel and Gaspé Basin, in the district of Gaspé, served by a foot-post once a fortnight. Daily mails to the United States' frontier are established from Stanstead, Montreal, Kingston, Prescott and Queenston; and from Toronto to Rochester in summer, a mail is sent as often as a steam-boat leaves. On all the other side routes the mails travel once, twice or three times a week.

The number of miles of established mail road is returned for the 5th July 1840 at 5,736, and of this number it appears that 909 were travelled by the mail as often or more than six times a week, 43 miles four times, 1,340 three times, 1,293 twice, 2,078 once, and 85 only once a fortnight.

The travel of the mail for the year ended 5th July 1840, was 1,521,416 miles, and the cost 22,342 *l.* 11 *s.* 8 *d.* currency; being at the average rate per mile of rather more than 3½ *d.* currency. From the last report of the Postmaster-general of the United States it appears, that for the year ended 30 June 1840, the mail travelled in that country 36,370,776 miles, or nearly 24 times as far, to accommodate a population almost 16 times as numerous as that of Canada, and at an expense of 813,248 *l.* 15 *s.* 9 *d.* currency; averaging more than 5½ *d.* currency per mile.

The number of post-offices in the United States on the 30th June 1840, is stated in the same document at 13,468, being on the average one post-office to 1,250 souls. Within the Canada charge the average is only one post-office to about 2,670 souls. If we limit the comparison to the western division of the province, the disproportion is less striking, for in the country west of Montreal there is on the average a post-office to every 1,800 inhabitants.

The rates of letter postage levied in the Canada charge, except on correspondence

* The steam-boat conveyance of the mail on the Ottawa between Bytown and Grenville, mentioned in the return, has since ceased, and the mails are now carried the whole way to and from Montreal by land.

Mode of mail conveyance on other routes.

Its frequency.

Comparison between Canada and the United States.

Rates of provincial postage.

spondence by the Halifax packets, are as follows, being those authorized by the 5 Geo. 3, c. 25.

For a single letter to any distance, not exceeding 60 miles, 4 d. sterling.
(Converted in practice into 4 1/2 d. currency.)

On other than Halifax packet letters.

For a single letter from 60 to 100 miles	-	6 d. sterling	-	7 d. currency.
Ditto	-	100 to 200 miles	-	8 d. ,, - 9 d. ,,
Ditto	-	200 to 300 miles	-	10 d. ,, - 11 d. ,,
Ditto	-	300 to 400 miles	-	1 s. ,, 1 s. 2 d. ,,

and so on, adding 2 d. sterling for every additional 100 miles. The distance is computed along the route over which, according to the department regulations, the mail actually travels, and not along the shortest route that could be found. One charge is made for the whole distance a letter has to travel, and it is only when requiring to be redirected that it can be taxed with a further rate. For double and treble letters and packages exceeding an ounce in weight, the rule is the same as that which existed in England before the late changes.

Soldiers' and sailors' letters not exceeding half an ounce in weight are charged 1 d. each, without regard to distance, whether sent by the Halifax packets, or only passing within the provinces. Pensioners' papers sent in covers open at the end pass free.

Rate on soldiers' and sailors' letters.

With the exception of the Deputy Postmaster-general, the surveyors and postmasters, no public officers in Canada possess the privilege of franking. Those departments in Great Britain which formerly enjoyed that privilege in the United Kingdom, have always had the same right within the colonies; but as it has never been construed to extend to any of the departments established in subordination to them within the provinces, it follows that so much of their correspondence as is carried on with England passes free, but no more, and by far the greater part is within the provinces.

What letters free.

Letters or packages for or from the United States are charged according to the distance they are carried within the provinces at the rates established by law for provincial postage, and this distance is always reckoned upon the route to the exchanging office through which the letter passes, and thence to the frontier. Upon American letters mailed or delivered at any of the exchanging offices west of Montreal there is a charge made for what is called "ferriage postage," amounting at Kingston to 3 d. currency, and elsewhere to 2 d. currency, without distinction, however, between single and double letters.

Letters for or from the United States.

As the department at Washington does not collect our provincial postage, letters for the United States mailed in Canada must be prepaid to the frontier, but letters from the United States to Canada cannot be prepaid beyond it. The collection of American postage by the Canadian department leaves it optional in all cases with the sender of a letter to prepay the American charge or not, as he pleases. Both charges must be prepaid upon letters mailed in Canada for transmission to Europe by ship or packet* from any port in the United States.

Halifax packet letters are charged under authority of the 3 & 4 Vict., c. 96, and of a Treasury Minute of the 6th July 1840, at an uniform rate of 1 s. 2 d. sterling (1 s. 4 d. currency) per half ounce, between any place in the United Kingdom and any place in Canada; 1 s. sterling (1 s. 1 1/2 d. currency) of that sum is considered the packet postage to Halifax, and the remaining 2 1/2 d. currency the colonial charge for inland transport.

Halifax packet letters.

This rate may be prepaid either way, or not, at the option of the sender. Letters for any place in France may be sent to London by these packets on the same terms; or if the party sending prefer to do so, the French postage may be prepaid. Letters by the same for the West Indies, Bermuda, Malta and Gibraltar are charged 2 s. 2 d. sterling (2 s. 5 d. currency) the half ounce, and may be prepaid or not, as the sender pleases.

For any other British possessions the charge to the port of arrival from England must be prepaid, amounting, if the letter be forwarded by the ordinary

* The New York steam-ships charge 25 cents freight money on every letter for Europe, and this also must be in some way or other prepaid, and it cannot now be paid through the post-office in Canada. The sailing packets from that port at one time made a charge of 12 1/2 cents freight money, but have since abandoned it.

nary packets from England, to the sum above named; if by private ship, to 2s. 0½*d.* currency per half ounce; or if for the East Indies, *via* Marseilles, to 4s. 3½*d.* currency per quarter ounce, &c. On letters for other parts of the world, it is necessary to prepay the rates to London, and thence to the port to which they are to be conveyed by packet or private ship from England. The scale of these rates is given in the Appendix.

Ship letters.

During the summer months letters may be sent by private ship from Quebec or Montreal, between any place in the United Kingdom, and any place in Canada under the same authority, at a uniform rate of 8*d.* sterling (9*d.* currency) per half ounce, if mailed or delivered at the port of arrival in Canada, or of 10*d.* sterling (11½*d.* currency), if mailed or delivered any where else in the province; prepayment is, however, required.

Ship letters may also be sent from Montreal or Quebec for any port not within the United Kingdom, on prepayment of a ship letter rate of 4½*d.* currency per half ounce, but on such letters, if mailed at an inland office, the ordinary inland rate must be also prepaid.

Letters for Newfoundland, Bermuda and the West Indies.

For Newfoundland, Bermuda and the West India Islands, the practice has been to require prepayment of the inland rate, chargeable under the 5 Geo. 3, to Halifax, the post-office at that place forwarding the letters direct by the first opportunity.

Newspapers, &c. mailed in Canada.

The Act 5 Geo. 3, c. 25, subjected "all letters, packets and other things" to the rates of inland postage above described; but as these rates would have been altogether prohibitory of the circulation by post of newspapers, pamphlets and other printed matter, they were in practice waived. The precise time when this arrangement took place does not appear, but it must have been at a very early period, and was probably on the first publication of a Canadian newspaper.

Under this arrangement payment for the transmission of newspapers was made to the Deputy Postmaster-general at a much lower rate, and always, if mailed in the provinces, by the party mailing them. The proceeds, which were at first a mere trifle, have continued a perquisite of that officer. The rate itself has been more than once raised, but not by the present incumbent.

Rates charged to proprietors by the year.

Proprietors of newspapers in Canada are required * to pay as follows:—

For a weekly paper, 4*s.* currency a year on each copy mailed.

For a paper published twice a week, 5*s.* currency.

For one published three times a week, 5*s.* currency.

And for a daily paper, 9*s.* currency.

Rate on occasional papers when allowed to pass free.

Transient papers, as they are termed, or papers mailed by other parties than publishers, are charged 1*d.* currency each; pamphlets and other printed matter, 1*d.* currency per sheet,† whether mailed by a publisher or by any other person.

Proprietors of periodicals are allowed to exchange single copies of their respective publications free of charge, and the franking privilege allows postmasters to receive, free of charge, one copy of any provincial periodical.

Rate how enforced.

In case of the neglect or refusal of the party mailing to prepay at the above rates, the receiver is charged with letter postage, and the newspaper or pamphlet so sent is treated in every respect as a letter of equal weight would be.

Newspapers, &c. mailed in the United States.

Newspapers and pamphlets brought in by mail from the United States are rated at 1*d.* currency a sheet, in addition to the American postage (if any) charged upon them. It is, of course, impossible in their case to obtain payment from the party mailing, or to compound in any way with their publishers, and the charge is therefore made upon the receiver.

Upon such as are mailed in Canada for the United States, prepayment is required on the same terms as though they were to be delivered in the provinces; but no charge is made either on exchange copies or on copies addressed to provincial postmasters.

Stamped

* It rests, however, with the proprietor to state the number of copies he mails, and a statement once made is seldom afterwards questioned, so that the sums really paid fall considerably short of what they would be were these terms more rigorously insisted upon. In many cases, indeed, it appears that a fixed sum is paid under an old agreement, without any reference to the number of papers now mailed. Payment is always required at the close of each quarter for the quarter's services; in case of refusal or failure to do this, a proprietor is charged by the Deputy Postmaster-general for his papers, as any other person mailing them would be.

† Sixteen pages, whatever their size, are rated as a sheet.

Stamped newspapers coming by the Halifax packets, and colonial newspapers mailed for Europe to go by them, have passed free of charge since 1834, in which year an order to that effect was first issued from the general post-office, London. The right has been since sanctioned by the 3 & 4 Vict. c. 96, and under the same Act printed votes and proceedings of the Imperial Parliament, or any provincial legislature* sent by them, are entitled to pass at a uniform rate of 1*d.* sterling per four ounces. Every other description of printed matter† is rated with the letter postage, 2*s.* 8*d.* currency per ounce. Prepayment of these rates is not required.

Newspapers, &c. mailed for and from Great Britain by Halifax packets.

The accounts of the department relate exclusively to British and provincial letter postage: for the year ended 5th July 1840, they show a gross receipt of 53,023*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.* currency, about 2,820*l.* of which was derived from the Halifax packet letters‡, rather more than half being British, and the remainder provincial postage.

Resources of the department.

Letter revenue.

The provincial rates on other letters yielded about 50,200*l.* currency: for the transmission of newspapers, &c. under the Deputy Postmaster-general's privilege, the gross payment during the same year appears to have been about 3,062*l.* currency; and the American postage collected by the department amounted for the year to not less than 11,315*l.* § currency. Of this, however, 9,000*l.* currency was remitted to Washington, and cannot be said to have in any way formed part of the revenue of the department: the 2,315*l.* currency which was paid during the year to officers of the department for the collection of United States' postage may, on the other hand, be said to have formed part of the resources of the department in Canada, though not precisely in the same degree as monies otherwise collected by it, since the duties for which that sum was payment do not properly belong to the Canadian department.

Newspaper money allowance from department at Washington.

The franking privilege should also be regarded as one of the resources of the department, since it forms a part, and often the greater part, of the recompense of the postmasters.

Franking privilege.

The pecuniary value of this privilege may be looked upon as so much received by the department, and then paid away to its servants. The value at which the postmasters themselves have estimated their right of free postage is, in the aggregate, about 4,000*l.* currency; and though it be true that its abolition might not cause the actual revenue of the post-office to increase to that amount, still the result at present is, in effect, nearly the same as if that sum were collected and spent in salaries. The total resources of the department of every description are thus raised for the year in question to about 62,400*l.* currency.

Its net revenue for the year amounted to 18,885*l.* 8*s.* 10*d.* currency; the whole, of course, derived from the 53,023*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.* currency, received as British and provincial letter postage. The expenses, as stated in the accounts of the department, were as follows:

Comparative cost of mail conveyance and administration.

	£.	s.	d.	
For mail conveyances - - - -	22,342	11	8	currency.
For administration of department:				
Salaries - - - £. 9,409	8	3½		
Incidentals - - - 2,386	7	8½		
	11,795	16	8	„
TOTAL - - - £.	34,138	7	8	„

To

* Except by the Halifax packets, they are charged by the sheet, as other printed papers are, under the Deputy Postmaster-general's privilege.

† Under the old regulations of the department, a packet charge of 1*s.* an ounce was made in England, and none either on mailing or delivery in Canada. The Treasury warrant of the 28th December 1839 abolished this, with most other reduced rates, and letter-postage is now charged under the 3 & 4 Vict. In several instances last winter, pamphlet parcels were sent as freight by the steam-packets to Halifax, and thence forwarded overland to Canada in the mail bags. The Deputy Postmaster-general, in these cases, rated them with inland letter-postage from Halifax, per ounce, instead of charging them as ordinary pamphlets would have been charged under his or Mr. Howe's privilege.

‡ The reduction of the Halifax packet rates had not then taken place. The amount derived from this source, as will presently be seen, is now much larger.

§ This amount is for the year ended on the 31st December 1840; the Deputy Postmaster-general not having preserved duplicates of his accounts with the United States till 1840.

The collection for the year ending on the 30th June previous was certainly not less than for the year given.

To this amount, however, on the principles above laid down, some further additions require to be made; as a large portion of the payment, in fact, made for administrative services is made from other sources than the letter revenue. Omitting for the moment the value of the franking privilege, the expenditure of the year should rather be stated thus:

	£.	s.	d.	
For mail conveyance, the whole paid from				
letter revenue - - - - -	22,342	11	8	currency.
For administration: incidentals paid from				
letter revenue - - - - -	2,386	7	8½	„
Salaries paid from letter revenue - -	9,409	8	3½	„
Newspaper postage, about - - - - -	3,062	-	-	„
Per centage on United States' postage -	2,315	17	6½	„
	<hr/>			
In all about - - - - -	£. 17,173	13	6½	„

or if the per centage on United States' postage be not included in the estimate, about 14,857*l.* 16*s.*

The proportion between the two branches of expenditure in the post-office of the United States was as follows:

	£.	s.	d.	
Cost of mail conveyance - - - - -	813,248	15	9	currency.
Cost of administration - - - - -	367,676	5	-	„

showing a decidedly larger proportional outlay for mail conveyance in that country than in Canada.

Our reason for omitting the value of the franking privilege in the above calculation is, that it is not included in that of the department at Washington; but the proportion which really exists in either country between the two items of expenditure cannot be accurately stated without including it. We have no means of judging to what it may amount in the United States. In Canada, as just stated, we are led to estimate it at 4,000*l.* currency; and this sum, added to the 14,857*l.* 16*s.* currency, raises the cost of administration to nearly 19,000*l.* currency; or if the per centage allowed by the United States be included also, to more than 21,000*l.* currency, a sum very little less than that paid for mail conveyance.

The total amount of postage, British, provincial and American, actually paid on letters and newspapers during the year ended 5th July 1840, appears from the statements just made to have been about 67,400*l.* currency. Of this sum the civil departments paid about 5,609*l.*, and the military about 17,825*l.*; so that the post correspondence of the country (exclusive of the public departments) yielded not quite 44,000*l.* In the United States, where the public departments enjoy the franking privilege, a population about 16 times as numerous paid in postage during the same year, 1,134,751*l.* currency, or nearly 26 times as much.

It would be more correct, however, with a view to a comparison between the two populations, to contrast simply the amount of British and provincial letter postage paid in Canada (exclusive of the public departments, about 29,590*l.* currency), with the amount of letter postage (1,000,944*l.* currency, or more than 33 times as much) paid in the United States. As the rates of postage are rather lower there than here, the necessary inference is that more than twice as much correspondence is circulated by post, in proportion to the population.

This great inequality may be accounted for in part by a further examination of the returns of the department in Canada, which shew a still greater inequality between certain sections of the province itself. A table in the Appendix* shews that in the populous counties inhabited by French Canadians (the cities of Quebec and Montreal excepted), the average contribution of each adult inhabitant to the post-office revenue for the year 1839-40, was about 3½*d.* currency; and in the six township counties of what was lately Lower Canada, inhabited by a population of British and American extraction, about 10*d.* In the counties west of Montreal (exclusive still of the towns of Kingston and Toronto), it was nearly 1*s.* 9*d.*, or about six times that of the first-mentioned class of counties, and

* This table, with the notes appended to it, sufficiently explains the principle of calculation adopted in its preparation.

Total amount of postage paid in Canada. Charge in 1839-40.

Comparison with the United States.

Comparative amount of post correspondence in the different parts of Canada.

and more than double that of the second. For the whole eastern section of the country, bounded west by the St. Lawrence, and a line drawn north-west from and including Montreal, the average is not quite 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*; while for the western division it is almost 2*s.* This table exhibits the curious fact, that as we proceed westward the average increases progressively. For Kingston and the country beyond, it exceeds 2*s.* 3*d.* for each adult; and for Toronto and the western districts, 2*s.* 4*d.* The eastern districts, however, having a much larger population than the western, the average for the whole country is only about 1*s.* 4*d.* Calculated upon the same principle, the average contribution of each adult resident of the United States to the letter revenue of the post-office of that country, was for the same year about 2*s.* 11 *d.*, so that if the eastern portion of Canada contributed in the ratio of the western, the difference in favour of the United States would be reduced to 7 *d.*, instead of 1*s.* 7 *d.* per head.

Another cause of the greater productiveness of the United States post-office is to be found in the different proportions subsisting in the two countries between the town and country populations. The average for the four towns of Quebec, Montreal, Kingston and Toronto, is more than five times the average for the rural districts of the province; but the population of the latter is not far from 12 times that of the former. The number of towns in the United States exceeding Kingston in size and importance is so considerable, that their urban population must certainly bear a much larger proportion than ours does to the rural; and there is no reason to doubt that the ratio observable in Canada between the relative amounts of correspondence belonging to town and country fully holds in the United States.

Comparative amount of post-office correspondence in town and country.

The rapid increase of the revenue in Canada of late years must be taken into the calculation when we seek to ascertain its probable future resources. During the 12 years ended on the 5th April 1840, the gross yearly revenue from letter postage has increased from 15,344*l.* 13*s.* 7 *d.* currency, to 52,752*l.* 8*s.* 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* currency, or about 245 per cent. A part of this increase has been owing to the very large sums paid since 1837 for military postage; but making every allowance for this, it would still appear that the unofficial correspondence of the country must have nearly trebled in amount within those 12 years. A similar, but a somewhat more rapid rate of increase has obtained during the same period in the United States.* The table in the Appendix to which we have referred, shews that for the last 16 years the improvement has been far from regular; that it has on the whole very much exceeded in rapidity the increase of the population of the province; and that it has much more nearly kept pace with that of the amount of post-office accommodations; but for the influence of two or three disturbing causes, it would doubtless have been more regular, more rapid, and a more immediate consequence of the increased facilities afforded by the department.

Tendency of revenue to increase.

A small portion only of the increase of accommodation which took place between 1824 and 1831 was before the year 1827-8, and we observe accordingly that the more rapid increase of revenue was from 1828 to 1831. During the three years and three-quarters ended in April 1828, it rose only 11 per cent.; for the three years next following, 38; for the next two years (ending in April 1833), the extension of the department continued at much the same rate as before, and the increase of its gross revenue was more rapid than ever, being for the first year more than 15, and for the second almost 20 per cent. The revenue in 1833-4 was somewhat affected by the check which the cholera of 1832 had given to emigration and business, and fell off a fraction of one per cent. from that of the preceding year. During this year and part of the next, the absence of the Deputy Postmaster-general in England put a stop for the time to the extension of mail communication; but the year ending 5th April 1835, shews, with the returning prosperity of the country, an increase of revenue of nearly nine per cent. since 1833. The next two years exhibit a second extensive increase of the department in all its branches, and with it a rise in the revenue of nearly 20 per cent. The commercial embarrassments, however, of the summer of 1837, and the political disturbances of the winter following, not only checked

this

* From \$1,598,134, the revenue for 1827-8, to \$4,539,265 for 1839-40. That the increase of gross revenue should have been rather more rapid in the United States than in Canada was naturally to be expected, from the fact that the department in Canada has been conducted on the principle of endeavouring always to realize some amount of net revenue, while that at Washington has constantly augmented its expenses to the full measure of its means, and for the last few years, indeed, beyond them.

this increase, but reduced the post-office revenue more than nine per cent. For the years 1838-9, and 1839-40, the returns exhibit a great increase of revenue (amounting, if the years be reckoned to the 5th of April, to nearly 33 per cent. the first, and 17 per cent. the second year), with little addition to the post accommodation of the country. The advance of 1838-9 is attributable altogether to the great amount of official postage paid in that year on account of the large military force then newly arrived in Canada. Allowing for this, the revenue from the domestic correspondence of the country, is found to have been as nearly as possible the same for the two years ending on the 5th of July 1838 and 1839. Since the spring of 1839 the amount of postage paid by the public departments has been decreasing so much, that with a rise, as just stated, of only nine per cent. on the total gross revenue of the department, from the 5th July 1839 to the 5th July 1840, we find (from the best calculations in our power) that the amount of postage paid on the unofficial correspondence of the province increased no less than 20½ per cent. This cheering improvement, the most marked, so far as we can ascertain, that has ever taken place in a single year in Canada,* is not the least conclusive among the many evidences of the fast improving condition of the province. It shows clearly that the influence of those causes has ceased to be felt, which in 1837 prevented that continued increase of revenue which might have been looked for from the great extension of the department in 1835 and 1836; and it creates a strong presumption on financial no less than on general grounds, in favour of a return to the policy of post-office extension.

At what precise rate the revenue is at the present moment improving, it is impossible to say. There is still a constant, though not very rapid diminution going on in the item of military postage, with probably a slight increase (though to a less amount) in that of the civil departments of the Government. The accounts for the quarter ending on the 5th of October 1840 shew some advance upon the corresponding quarter of the previous year. The improvements in the service since that date must have done much to augment the gross receipts of the post-office, as the account for the current year will doubtless shew; though it is probable, also, that they will exhibit some falling off in the net receipts.

The revenue derived from the transmission of newspapers has not increased in the proportion of the letter revenue. For 1832 it was returned at about 2,074 *l.* currency; for 1840, at about 3,062 *l.* currency; showing an increase in eight years of not quite 48 per cent. Within the same period the letter revenue rose 116 per cent. The loose way in which this revenue is collected, and particularly the practice of letting proprietors continue for indefinite periods to pay the same price for a constantly varying number of papers, is no doubt the chief cause of the slower increase. There is reason to suppose that the number of newspapers actually sent by post has augmented for the last 8 or 10 years as fast as that of letters, and that the two revenues, if collected with equal care, would have shewn that result.

The American postage collected in Canada has rather more than doubled, and the per centage allowed for its collection has nearly doubled within the same period † of eight years. At the present moment it is questionable whether they are not in process of diminution, as the establishment of the New Halifax packets has had the effect of diverting a large proportion of the European correspondence which formerly passed through the United States. The accounts shew a considerable diminution from this cause upon the quarter ending 31st December 1840, but as the commercial relations of the province with the United States cannot fail to give rise to a constantly increasing correspondence, it is safe to presume that before long the falling off will be more than made up, and that this branch of revenue will be restored to its former elasticity.

The value of the franking privilege, as indeed of most other indirect emoluments enjoyed by officers of the department, is, of course, continually increasing, and at a rate, it is presumable, not widely differing from that at which

* Indeed, except between the years 1835-6 and 1836-7, we are not aware that there has ever been so large an increase of domestic post correspondence in the United States for any one year. The increase of the revenue of the Washington post-office for the year alluded to just exceeded 20 per cent.; generally it has been less than 10 per cent., and not unfrequently almost nominal.

† In 1832 the collection amounted to 5,248 *l.* 12 *s.* currency, and the per centage to 1,207 *l.* 4 *s.* 3 *d.* currency.

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which the other resources of the department have been ascertained to increase.

A return made by the Deputy Postmaster-general estimates the average rate of postage on a single letter in Canada at $8\frac{29}{48}$ d. currency, and the number of chargeable letters circulated by post in Canada (exclusive of Halifax packet letters, and reducing all double and treble letters and packages to single rates) during the year ending 5th July 1840, at about 1,400,000, and from the explanation we have received, we see no reason to doubt the accuracy of the calculations on which it is based.* Judging from the relative amounts of the official and unofficial postage of the year, about half of the 1,400,000 † must have been official. The number to be set down for the twelvemonth ending in July 1841 must be a matter of conjecture. Supposing the diminution on official and the increase on unofficial postage to have continued at the rate we find to have obtained from July 1838 to July 1839, it would considerably exceed 1,500,000.

Average rate of a single letter and number of single letters yearly at each rate.

But as one effect of the late changes has been to convert into Halifax packet letters a very great number of letters before sent through the United States, it would be hardly safe to make such a calculation, or to state confidently that the number is now much beyond the estimate for the year 1838-9.

Expressed in single rates, the number of free letters at present passing through the post in Canada in a year, under the franking privilege enjoyed by officers of the department cannot, from the returns before us, be far from 115,000, exclusive of the correspondence they carry on upon the business of the department itself, of the amount of which we have no satisfactory means of judging.

Number of free letters yearly.

Of the number of Halifax packet letters for the year 1838-9 we have no estimate.

With the exception of official letters (mostly duplicates) which passed free of charge, very little correspondence was carried on by this route till the establishment of the Cunard line of steam-ships, assisted by the reduction of the packet-rate of postage, which shortly after followed.

From calculations we have made upon a return furnished by the Deputy Postmaster-general as to the contents of the steam-ships' mails, since despatched from and received at Quebec, it would appear that, taking the average of the last nine or ten months, the number of letters they contain in a year is as follows:—

Ordinary correspondence charged 1 s. 4 d. currency per half ounce, nearly	- - -	192,000	single rates.
Soldiers' and sailors' letters	- - -	59,000	„
Official correspondence passing free of colonial charge, between 13,000 and 14,000 packets, amounting probably to		39,000	or more single rates.
TOTAL about		- - -	<u>290,000</u>

But from the rapid apparent increase of these mails this estimate is now, we believe, considerably below the truth.

The number of letters of every description passing yearly through the post in Canada is thus seen to amount to 1,805,000 single rates (exclusive of the correspondence on the business of the post-office), and of this number some 213,000, or about $\frac{2}{7}$ ths of the whole (including soldiers' and sailors' letters), pass free.

We have not been able to ascertain precisely how many newspapers and other printed sheets are mailed yearly. An estimate of the Deputy Postmaster-general (of which we can only say from the data before us, that it by no means appears to be an extravagant one) gives the number of printed sheets on which postage is paid at 860,000 a year; 600,000 paid for by printers at the reduced rates,

Number of newspapers mailed yearly.

* Every post-office, as we have already observed, sends a letter-bill, stating the amount of postage, with every package of letters mailed upon any other office. We are informed that all the bills thus sent for a quarter of a year were carefully examined, and the number of single letter charges made at each of the rates established by law, thus ascertained.

† Not, of course, that there are anything like as many official letters mailed as there are unofficial. The former, as a general rule, are so much more bulky, that by the post-office rule of charging, they count for about an equal number of single rates.

rates, and the remaining 260,000 by other parties at 1 *d.* a sheet; 50,000 of them mailed in the province, and 210,000 brought in from the United States. The same estimate fixes the number of printed sheets, which pass free through the post-office, at 596,000; 156,000 allowed to pass free to postmasters and editors; 120,000 sent by printers over and above the number they return and pay for; and 320,000 passing between the colony and the United Kingdom by the Halifax packets. The whole number of printed sheets is thus fixed at 1,456,000, a very large proportion of which are newspapers.

Average cost and profit on each single letter.

In his estimate of the number of charged single letters sent by post, exclusive of Halifax packet letters, the Deputy Postmaster-general states the average cost of transport on each at $3\frac{22}{33}$ *d.* currency, and that of management, $1\frac{16}{33}$ *d.*; leaving, therefore, a net profit upon each of $3\frac{11}{33}$ *d.* To this portion of the estimate the objection occurs, that, being based altogether on the accounts of the department, it, in the first place, throws the whole cost of transport on the letter revenue, though part of it is incurred for the carriage of other mailed matter; and in the next place, it leaves out of view the large sums paid towards the management of the department from other sources, such as perquisites, the franking privilege, and American agency. The total amount of the expenses of transport and management incurred on account of this class of letters, and not the sum total that happens to be charged against the revenue drawn from them, is the amount from which alone the true averages can be drawn.

It is perhaps impossible to determine it with precision, but it appears to us that a nearer approach to it than the above estimate can be made by first putting together all the expenses incurred for letters and newspapers, and then striking off, as the share of expense incurred upon packet letters and newspapers, and the collection of United States' postage, the amount received from these sources, or in other words, supposing neither profit or loss to arise from these branches of the service. This course may throw upon the letters some portion (how much, it is impossible to say) of the cost incurred for newspapers, &c., since the rate imposed upon the latter is clearly not a remunerating one; but that is precisely what a differential rate of this kind must in fact always do; and a calculation proceeding upon this basis merely shows what is the fact.

Thus calculated, the year's profit on the 1,400,000 letters exceeded by a very trifling sum the cost of transport incurred upon them; and (irrespective of the franking privilege and the 115,000 free letters supposed to be mailed under it) the average cost of transport on each was nearly $3\frac{11}{33}$ *d.* currency; that of management, over $\frac{1}{33}$ *d.* currency; and the average profit on each, $3\frac{11}{33}$ *d.* currency. Taking the 115,000 free letters into account, and adding the value of the franking privilege to the other expenses of management, the averages are, for transport, very nearly 3 *d.* currency; for management, $2\frac{22}{33}$ *d.* currency; and for profit, 3 *d.* currency.

State of departments in the lower provinces.

The returns which we have received from Mr. Howe are not such as would enable us to present a detailed account of the state of the post-office in the provinces of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward's Island and New Brunswick. But from his returns and from those received from some of his postmasters, together with the information we have derived from other quarters, we can supply, we trust, a tolerably correct account of the chief points of difference between his department and that of the Deputy Postmaster-general of Canada.

Mr. Howe's commission,

Mr. Howe's commission, constituting him "agent, deputy, manager and director of his Majesty's packet-boats between Great Britain and Halifax," bears date the 28th April 1818. We are not informed at what time he was first styled Deputy Postmaster-general, but that title has been long since used as well in the correspondence of the department in England, as by the public generally.

Powers, duties,

The powers and duties of his office, as it is now constituted, do not at all appear from the terms of his commission, and as we have no copy of any instructions addressed to him by the Postmaster-general, we cannot speak confidently on the subject; we are not aware that they differ materially from those of the Deputy Postmaster-general at Quebec, except in certain particulars, which we shall presently notice.

And emoluments.

His emoluments are a fixed salary of 400*l.* sterling,* an allowance of 50*l.* sterling

* Raised to this amount in 1836, before which time it was only 200*l.* sterling, the sum originally stated in his commission.

sterling a year for rent, and the newspaper privilege, the net proceeds of which for the three years ended 5th July 1840, he returns at 856*l.* currency. For the last year of the three, it amounted to 330*l.*

There is no general post-office establishment, properly so called, in the lower provinces. The account branch at Quebec is charged, as we have had occasion to state, with the compilation of the accounts for the whole of British North America; and we find that Mr. Howe has never been allowed the assistance of surveyors or clerks for the general business or correspondence of the department. In a letter dated March 20th of the present year, Mr. Howe states, that "in this office, until very recently,* but one clerk was employed, whose salary is 100*l.* sterling; a second is now employed at a salary of 100*l.* sterling. This assistance, which is not more than sufficient for the proper discharge of his duties as postmaster at Halifax, appears manifestly too little, when to these are added the functions of Deputy Postmaster-general for the lower provinces.

No general post-office for the colonies.

The number of regularly established post-offices within Mr. Howe's charge is very limited; in New Brunswick, east of Woodstock, there are only 14; in Nova Scotia, exclusive of the Island of Cape Breton, 15; in Cape Breton, two; and in Prince Edward's Island, one. Of these, one only (that of Newcastle, New Brunswick), has been established within the last three years; most of the others were created long ago. To make up in part for the want of regular offices, way-offices or places of deposit for letters have been established, the number of which we find has been much greater than that of the regular offices.

Small number of regular post-offices.

Number of way-offices.

Mr. Howe's post-office map and returns furnish a list of 86 such offices; seven in New Brunswick, 36 on the main land of Nova Scotia, 15 in Cape Breton, and 28 in Prince Edward's Island. The answers we have received from postmasters on this subject mention by name 46 more; but even with this addition the list is incomplete, as several postmasters have neglected to reply to our inquiries; and one or two of those who have answered, speak of the existence of sub-offices in their neighbourhood without naming them. Of the 132 reported to us, 17 are in New Brunswick, 57 on the main land of Nova Scotia, 30 in Cape Breton, and 28 in Prince Edward's Island.

The characteristic by which the sub-offices are chiefly distinguished from those on the regular establishment, is that their accounts, instead of being forwarded to Halifax, are kept privately with another or with neighbouring post-offices, and their remittances being made through some regular post-office, appear in the accounts of the department as part of its collections. They differ, however, in many respects among themselves; some are only places of call appointed by the courier, where the postage of any letter he leaves is collected, and unpaid letters are left for him to carry on. In some cases, the courier himself keeps the office. The place where it is held is sometimes fixed by a member of parliament or by the magistrates of the county; sometimes by a neighbouring postmaster, and sometimes by the Deputy Postmaster-general. The persons keeping them are variously remunerated; most of them enjoy to a greater or less extent the franking privilege; some are paid the usual postmaster's per centage; others share it with the postmaster or postmasters with whom they are in communication; many are suffered to levy a small extra rate on letters, which is in most cases their own perquisite, but is sometimes shared between them and the other postmaster who has to deal with the letters so charged; and there are some who perform the duty without any remuneration or privilege whatsoever.

Distinction between post and way-office.

The latter, wherein differing from one another.

No general instructions have been issued to the postmasters in the lower provinces, and from this cause, as well as from the want of surveyors, many irregularities of practice have necessarily resulted.

Irregularities of practice.

At some offices the postmaster has the superintendence of a considerable number of way-offices, several of which have other way-offices subordinate to them. In some instances, a way-office on the route between two other offices corresponds only with one of the two, and it often happens that there is no recognized communication between neighbouring way-offices, except through the more distant office on which they depend.

The

* In a letter dated the 17th December last, Mr. Howe states that he was then only allowed one assistant.

Mailing system
wherein different
from the Canadian.

The system of mailing in the lower provinces is essentially different from that which prevails in Canada. No postmaster or keeper of a way-office mails upon or receives mails from any great number of other places. Some exchange mails with only one office, others with two or three, and few with more than half a dozen.

The consequence is, that letters posted for any distance are generally remailed, as in England, at one or more intermediate offices. But the utter want of regularity in the arrangements deprives this plan (which is in some respects the "forward office system") of nearly all the advantages it would otherwise have over the Canadian practice; while from the irregular usage which prevails along with it, of rating letters anew every time they are remailed, instead of charging them at once for the whole distance, it often adds materially to the charges sanctioned by law.

Collection of news-
paper money.

The Deputy Postmaster-general's newspaper money is collected in the lower provinces, much in the same manner as in Canada; but we are without information as to the mode in which the charge on papers not mailed by printers is collected and remitted, and as to the per centage allowed by the Deputy Postmaster-general to postmasters in the country for collecting it. In towns where newspapers are published, he allows the postmaster to retain one-half of the money paid by the proprietors.

And of United States
postage.

United States' postage is collected by a different process from that which prevails in Canada; there is but one exchanging office, that of St. Andrew's; and the Deputy Postmaster-general leaves the whole of its duties and emoluments to the postmaster there. No separate accounts of American postage are kept by that officer with the postmasters of the interior, and he allows no share of the remuneration he receives on account of it to any other postmaster for his share of the trouble. The information with which we have been furnished as to the practical details of this system, however incomplete in other respects, is sufficient to prove that the arrangement as a whole is unsatisfactory.

Postmasters' ac-
counts and remit-
tances.

The seven post-offices in the western counties of New Brunswick account with Halifax through the postmaster at St. John, who is charged with the duty of auditing the accounts, and with a general surveillance over the department in that part of the country. Few postmasters have large remittances to make; in general they pay over to the couriers in their neighbourhood the whole or the greater part of their net collections, and transmit the courier's receipt instead of money.

Their bonds,

Postmasters at the regular offices give bonds, as in Canada, though not in the same form, and they are required to renew them yearly.

We are not aware of a bond being ever given by a person in charge of a way-office.

And emoluments.

No detailed returns of the emoluments of postmasters, either at the regular or way-offices, or of the establishments they maintain, have been furnished to us; such information as we have collected will be found in the Appendix.

The chief source of income at the regular offices (Halifax only excepted) is an allowance of 20 per cent. on letter postage. The postmasters at St. John and Fredericton receive an allowance for one clerk and for stationery, and the latter for office-rent also. There is mention in the returns of a small amount allowed for incidental expenses at St. Andrew's and Chatham. No allowance is returned for any other offices.

Few regular postmasters, we presume, derive much emolument from the rent of boxes, the keeping of accounts, &c. Indeed at the two principal offices of Halifax and St. John, the plan of accommodating the public with boxes has never been acted upon at all. The great diversities which exist in the mode of remunerating the way-postmasters will be more fully understood by a reference to some details in the Appendix.

Value of, and re-
strictions on their
franking privilege.

We have received information on the franking privilege from nearly all the regular postmasters and from many way-postmasters. Its average value to them, according to their estimate, is a little higher than in Canada. The restrictions are somewhat different, but they are not very strictly enforced in either province. At the regular offices the postmaster is allowed to send and receive by every mail four single or two double letters, or one packet of an ounce weight.

At many of the way-offices the rule is the same, but not at all, some having no privilege of free postage, and others only an exemption from the exceptional rates

rates irregularly levied at their own or neighbouring offices. Newspapers for postmasters appear in most cases to pass free of charge, but not always.

Imperfect, however, as our information is on the subject of the emoluments of postmasters in the lower provinces, we have been enabled to remark that the amount is in most cases extremely trifling, and never excessive. In the lower provinces the mails are not carried, as in Canada, by contractors, properly so called, but by persons employed by the department as couriers,* who give bond yearly, are paid a yearly salary, and are liable at all times to be dismissed for misconduct. A natural consequence of this system is that the stipulated rate of remuneration and travel on any given route is seldom altered. The same courier is commonly employed for a long course of years, on the terms originally agreed upon, and even when at length the courier is changed, it often happens that the terms of the service are not varied.

Mails carried by couriers without regular contract.

Mr. Howe considers it a great advantage resulting from this system, that "good men are thus secured without any increase of expense;" but of course it operates on the other hand just as much against that reduction of expense and increase of speed, which under a different system might be expected to result from the improvement of roads and the principle of competition. Another consequence of this practice is, that on routes where the mail travels twice a week, the two trips are sometimes performed by different parties, and at very different prices. It is obvious that one contractor could afford to perform the whole service at a much lower rate than two dividing it in this manner possibly can.

Generally speaking, the appointment and dismissal of couriers rests with the Deputy Postmaster-general; but on some of the minor routes we find that postmasters and even keepers of way-offices may appoint. More frequently, however, the nomination on these routes is made by the Deputy Postmaster-general, but upon the recommendation of persons residing on the spot, such as a postmaster, a member of parliament or a magistrate. In Prince Edward's Island it rests with the Lieutenant-governor. The degree of control, also, short of the power of dismissal, which postmasters consider themselves entitled to exercise over the couriers in their neighbourhood, varies greatly, some claiming the right of fixing the hours of arrival and departure, others taking no note whatever of their movements. There is as little uniformity in the mode of paying as in that of appointing and controlling the couriers. On most of the principal routes their salaries are paid from the general funds of the department, and this is also the case on some of the bye-routes leading to way-offices; on other routes, again, the whole or part of this expense is borne by the province; and sometimes (though we believe only in the case of certain way-office routes) it is in part defrayed by allowing the courier to share with the postmaster, or to take for himself an extra rate of postage on the letters he carries.

Appointment and control of couriers.

Different modes of paying couriers,

We are not aware that the last-mentioned mode of payment is to be met with in New Brunswick; the way-office rates, wherever they are levied, so far as our information extends, being there a postmaster's and not a courier's perquisite.

In New Brunswick.

The department is, to a certain extent, assisted by grants of the provincial legislature in aid of stages, packet vessels and couriers, but such grants are not made in concert with or through the post-office authorities, and much of the yearly amount is therefore not available in any way to the service of the department.

Certain sums are paid, either directly or through commissioners, to companies or individuals; and of those who receive this provincial aid, many are not even asked to carry a mail, and some, we believe, *refuse* to do so on reasonable terms; but even when some mail service is rendered, the payments made by the department and those by the province being independent of each other, it is to be presumed that the money is expended much less economically than if the whole were at the disposal of the post-office.

In Prince Edward's Island the province has long been allowed to take the whole of the postage collected, on condition of paying for the conveyance of the

In Prince Edward's Island.

* Several mails are carried by stage companies and sloop or steam-boat proprietors; but it appears by Mr. Howe's statement, that even with them there is no formal contract. Whether in these instances each stage-driver or captain of a sloop or steam-boat gives bond as a post-office courier, or whether the proprietors or their agents are considered as the courier and give bond, as they would were there a formal contract, is not stated.

the mails to and from Nova Scotia and within the island,—an arrangement by which a yearly grant from the legislature becomes necessary, but which in return surrenders the entire local control of the department to the province.

In Nova Scotia.

The greatest diversity of practice has grown up in Nova Scotia.

Provincial grants were from a very early date made through the Deputy Postmaster-general, but always as an aid towards the establishment of certain specified routes or offices, and with a condition, either express or implied, that the money was granted only to make good any deficiency of the inland postage on such routes. The practice hence became common in Nova Scotia to allow the couriers, over and above the sums granted them by the legislature, sometimes a share on the whole way-postage they might collect, and sometimes even the whole net proceeds of the offices they served; whether or not this mode of payment was resorted to on any routes not originally established by provincial grants, we cannot say; it prevails, however, extensively. Since 1840 the grant system has been in a great measure abandoned, and the general revenue of the department has been charged with the amounts formerly drawn from the provincial chest; but the old practice of allowing the couriers the net local revenues has nevertheless been suffered to continue.

Mails how often and in what manner carried.

The travel of the mail is less frequent, and apparently of a less expensive description,* than in Canada. On the main route from Halifax through Dorchester to Fredericton, there are only two mails a week, exclusive of the extra mails in winter for the conveyance of the Canada bags from the steam-ships.

The mail travels but twice a week on the three leading branches from this route: from Truro to Pictou, and from Dorchester to St. John and Miramichi; and on the main western route, from Halifax through Windsor to Annapolis, or sometimes to Digby. It is only from Fredericton to St. John, and from St. John through St. Andrew's to St. Stephen's, that the mail passes more frequently. The rule for the country generally is one mail a week, and there are several way-office routes that are served only once a fortnight.

Many of the mails on the routes where there are none but way-offices seem to be carried on foot, and the others on horseback or in carts, at the option of the courier. Between the regular offices, open waggons or sleighs (sometimes carrying passengers and sometimes not) are more frequently used than stages. Steam-boats are employed in summer between Prince Edward's Island and the main land on the Bay of Fundy and on the River St. John. In winter the Prince Edward's Island mails cross the strait in an ice-boat, and the St. John and Digby mails cross the Bay of Fundy in a sloop.

Extent of established mail road and of weekly travel of mail.

Mr. Howe returns the number of miles of established mail route in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick at 1,223, and the weekly travel of the mails at 2,402 miles; but it is not easy to understand by what calculations he has arrived at so low an estimate; we find more than 1,600 miles of mail route laid down on his own post-office map for these provinces, exclusive of all water communications, and of all routes for the mere accommodation of way-offices, and the latter are very extensive in Cape Breton and other parts of Nova Scotia, though less so in New Brunswick. An estimate of our own, which, though based to a certain degree on conjecture, we think comes somewhat nearer the truth, makes the whole number of miles of mail route within Mr. Howe's charge (Prince Edward's Island included) about 2,600, and the number of miles travelled weekly by the mail between 5,000 and 6,000, a calculation which would still indicate a marked disproportion in this respect between Canada and the lower provinces. In the former, to accommodate a population of about 1,100,000, the yearly travel of the mail exceeds 1,500,000 miles; in the latter, with a population of 400,000, it is about 290,000 miles.

Cost of mail conveyance.

Mr. Howe states the amount expended by him for mail conveyance in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick for the three years ended 5th July 1840, at 15,900*l.* currency, and the expenses incurred by the authorities of Prince Edward's Island for the conveyance of their mails during the same period, at 2,603*l.* 16*s.* currency.

The former of these sums includes, we have reason to think, the grants made during the years in question, from the Nova Scotia treasury; but it certainly cannot include either the New Brunswick post-office grants, or the amounts collected

* Though, as we shall have presently to state, more costly, in fact.

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collected for themselves by those couriers in Nova Scotia who are allowed to levy special rates for their own remuneration. Allowing moderately for these, the average cost for the last three years of mail conveyance in the lower provinces can scarcely have been less than 7,000 *l.* currency a year.

According to the estimate just given of the distance the mail travels, it would thus seem to have cost not far from 6 *d.* currency per mile, an expense much heavier than is incurred for that service in Canada.

The rates of postage as established by law are the same for all the provinces of British North America, but great diversities have in practice prevailed. Postmasters in the lower provinces, as we have before observed, do not make up mails for all offices, nor have they any general table of rates and distances, nor any detailed instructions to enable them to charge letters to all parts of the country, as the law directs; * letters are therefore rated for the whole distance only when they happen to be addressed to some office with which the mailing postmaster is in direct communication; when not so addressed, he rates them to the office upon which he mails them; the postmaster then adds a new rate to the next office, and so on till the letter reaches its destination.

Rates of postage.

Rule as to charges on unmailed letters.

Two or three rates are thus often levied on a letter, and sometimes as many as five or six.

Nor is this the sole cause of the irregularities which we find to prevail throughout the country. The rates themselves sometimes are not those which the law sanctions.

Some that formerly, perhaps, were legal, have ceased to be so, in consequence of shorter roads being opened; others were from the first illegal, for the statute nowhere recognizes them as rates for any distances whatever.

The anomalous rates, also, amounting to 1 *d.*, 2 *d.* or 3 *d.* currency, which couriers and keepers of way-offices charge on many routes as their own perquisite, sometimes in addition to a postage rate from the nearest office, and sometimes instead of it, add considerably to the irregularity. The returns we have received from a number of postmasters shew with what offices most of them are in direct communication, and what postage rates or perquisites are charged to and from each.

Perquisite rates.

Irregularity of the system of rating.

The departures from the rule laid down by law appear from these to be many and striking. The legal rate, for instance, from Halifax to Yarmouth is the same as to St. John, 11 *d.* currency; the distance in the former case being from 225 to 245 miles, and in the latter 270. The actual rate for the shorter distance is 1 *s.* 1½ *d.*, and for the longer, 9 *d.* currency. Between Lunenburg and Shelburne the charge is 9 *d.* for a distance of only 80 miles, the legal rate for which is 7 *d.*

But it is in the case of letters requiring to be remailed that these irregularities are most glaring. From Sydney, for example, in Cape Breton, a letter passes directly to Halifax (some 300 miles) for 1 *s.* 3 *d.*,† but from Sydney to Truro, on the road to Halifax (about 240 miles), where the law clearly allows no more than 11 *d.*, the rate is 1 *s.* 6 *d.*, the usage being, to charge first to Antigonish (140 miles), 10 *d.*, thence to Pictou (50 miles), 4 *d.*, and thence to Truro (40 miles), 4 *d.* From Fredericton, again, to Halifax (about 280 miles) the rate is as it ought to be, 11 *d.* currency; but from the office at Sussex Vale, 70 miles nearer to Halifax, on the same road, it is 1 *s.* 6 *d.*, letters being there mailed only to Dorchester, with a charge of 7 *d.*, and thence forwarded to Halifax, with a charge of 11 *d.* On some other routes, where there is more remailing, the matter is still worse. From Bathurst to Halifax (310 miles), the legal rate is charged 1 *s.* 2 *d.* currency; to Cumberland, not more than 180 miles, the rate (legally 9 *d.*) is 1 *s.* 6 *d.*, letters requiring to be remailed at Chatham; to Antigonish they must be three times remailed, and the rate in consequence becomes 2 *s.* 6 *d.* for 315 miles, instead of 1 *s.*; and to Sydney, in Cape Breton, 140 miles further, a fourth remailing raises it to 3 *s.* 4 *d.* in place of 1 *s.* 4 *d.*, the amount fixed by law! Some of our correspondents complain that the irregularity of these charges is further aggravated by the absence of uniformity in the

* For many parts of the country, indeed, it would be no easy matter for any one to determine what the rates ought to be, the distances along the roads or paths travelled being almost matter of conjecture.

† The legal rate would be either 11 *d.* currency or 1 *s.* 2 *d.* currency (9 *d.* or 11 *d.* sterling); the former, if the distance is less; the latter, if it is more than 300 miles.

the amount charged between even the same two places; a circumstance which is often (though not always) owing to the mailing postmasters having no fixed rule as to the office on which letters for particular places should be mailed, and charging them therefore sometimes to a nearer, and sometimes to a more distant office. Among other instances detailed in the Appendix, we find one in which it is stated to have been the practice of a postmaster to mail all prepaid letters for a particular office at once to their destination, rated 1*s.* 3*d.*, and all unpaid letters for the same place to an intermediate office with a rate of 1*s.*, to which the forwarding postmaster would add a second rate of 9*d.*; so that by this process the sender of a prepaid letter would have to pay 1*s.* 3*d.*, and the receiver of an unpaid letter 1*s.* 9*d.*

It is not the least of the evils of this state of things that a postmaster may not, and very often cannot, know what rates are charged at any other office than his own, so that in many cases it is impossible, even at a regular office, for the sender of a letter to prepay it to its destination.

At most way-offices it is worse still, as letters can neither be forwarded without prepayment to the nearest regular office, nor yet prepaid beyond it.

With such arrangements it must be impossible, in many parts of the country, to send letters at all to the United States by post, as prepayment to the line is a condition to their being forwarded beyond it; and it can seldom be possible (except at the principal towns) to prepay the American postage, though a letter cannot pass through the United States to Europe without being prepaid. We should infer from one of Mr. Howe's letters, and some expressions made use of by one or two of our correspondents, that no collection of American postage upon letters, &c. for the United States is ever made within the lower provinces, were it not hard to believe that the principal object for which the practice of collecting American postage has been resorted to, the securing of a post communication with Europe through New York, can have been so far overlooked.

Rates on newspapers.

The rate at which publishers in the lower provinces are allowed to compound for the conveyance of their newspapers is lower than in Canada, being only 2*s.* 6*d.* per annum for a weekly publication. Upon occasional papers, pamphlets, &c., we believe that the ordinary charges* are the same as in Canada, but Mr. Howe states, that he derives no emolument from any, except newspapers, as the small sums rateable on other printed matter are charged to the offices upon which the same may be mailed.

Department postage and franking.

Among other consequences resulting from the peculiar position of the department in Prince Edward's Island, we find that the civil departments have there the franking privilege, in so far as regards the inland rates of postage.

In Cape Breton, and perhaps elsewhere, letters to or from public departments, and even country officers, are exempted from the perquisite rates there levied. In Nova Scotia, Mr. Howe states, that the departments of the Provincial Secretary, Adjutant-general of Militia, and Treasurer,† have long enjoyed a franking privilege, in consideration of the sums voted by the province in aid of the post-office, Sir James Kempt having in 1827 instructed the Deputy Postmaster-general to cover the correspondence of the two former, and the revenue returns addressed to the latter, with his official frank. With these exceptions, payment of official postage is required in the lower provinces.

Gross revenue of department in lower provinces.

Mr. Howe's returns state only the aggregate collections of letter postage at the several offices within his charge for the three years ended in July 1840; so that we are unable to compare one year with another, or make any calculation as to the tendency of the revenue towards improvement. They show an aggregate collection for the three years of 27,206*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* currency, or rather more than 9,000*l.* currency a year, exclusive, of course, of all proceeds of local rates appropriated by couriers and postmasters, as to the amount of which, probably not inconsiderable, we have no information. It does not appear what proportion the British and packet postage collected bore to the provincial, though it must doubtless have been considerably higher than during the same period in Canada. The proportional amount paid for official postage we find to have

Proportion of British and packet postage.

* In Cape Breton and Prince Edward's Island, and perhaps at some way-offices elsewhere, newspapers as well as letters are subjected to the postmaster's extra charge, so often alluded to.

† The Clerk of the Legislative Council of Nova Scotia further states, that official communications to him pass free through the post-office, but to what extent and on what grounds do not appear.

have been much less than in Canada. So far as we can ascertain, there was paid in the three years—

	£.	s.	d.
For civil department postage, about - - -	2,997	17	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
For military " " - - -	4,379	7	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
Making a Total of - - -	£.7,377	5	5 $\frac{1}{2}$

Proportion of official postage.

or 27 per cent. very nearly of the whole sum collected. In Canada, for the same period, it was about 43 per cent.

It is apparent, however, that the amount of private correspondence passing through the post in the lower provinces is considerably less in proportion to their population than in Canada. For the three years, the average contribution of each adult to the post-office revenue is shewn, by a table which we have inserted in the Appendix, to have been not quite 10*d.* currency a year. In Canada, it was about 1*s.* 3*d.*; and for the last year of the three, as we have seen, more than 1*s.* 4*d.* currency. Mr. Howe was unable to furnish an estimate of the number of letters mailed in one year within his charge; and therefore we cannot say with confidence what is the average rate of postage on a single letter; but the presumption is, that it must be higher than the Canadian average rate; for though the country as a whole is less extended, and the rates for short distances are in some parts of it lower, they are certainly not lower between the places which have the most inter-correspondence, and the remaining system greatly increases the amount. We have, upon the whole, adopted the conclusion, that the same amount of revenue would indicate a larger amount of actual correspondence in Canada than in the lower provinces.

Less private correspondence than in Canada.

The table we have referred to further shows the average contribution of each adult to be higher for the province of Nova Scotia than for New Brunswick, where, indeed, it is even found to be considerably lower than in Lower Canada, —a result which it is impossible not to ascribe in a great degree to the comparatively small number of places where letters can be posted or delivered. In the four north-eastern countries, where there are more way-offices than in most of the others, and where the course of trade and travel offers fewer facilities for correspondence by private hand, the average is higher (1*s.* 2*d.*) than for any other district of the lower provinces, except the county of Halifax, where alone we find an average (3*s.* 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*) at all indicative of a town population. In the counties of St. John and Charlotte, where also from the size and commercial importance of the towns, the amount of postage collected should be large, the average (11 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* in the one, and 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* in the other) is hardly that of Lower Canada. For the other five counties of New Brunswick, the worst supplied with offices, it is lower still; the lowest, in fact, we believe, for any district of equal size in British North America. For Cape Breton, where, however, there is much more perquisite postage paid than anywhere else, and for the eight western counties of Nova Scotia, it is between 5*d.* and 6*d.*, and for the five eastern counties about 8*d.* In Prince Edward's Island it is not far from 7*d.*

Less in New Brunswick than in Nova Scotia.

The best consideration we have been able to give to such returns as bear upon the question of expenditure, leads to the conclusion, that from the 27,206*l.* currency received as postage between July 1837 and July 1840, for the several branches of the service, the expenditure has been in the following proportion :

Expenditure of department.

	Currency.	£.	s.	d.
For administration :				
Salaries, about - - -	£. 5,300			
Incidentals - - -	1,350			
		6,650	-	- currency.
For mail conveyance, about - - -	-	12,830	-	- "
TOTAL - - -	£.	19,480	-	- "

The balance of about 7,720*l.* is thus accounted for by Mr. Howe: he remitted to the general post-office during the three years, 7,453*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.* currency, at a cost of 264*l.* 14*s.* 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* currency incurred in the purchase of coin.

Remittances to General Post-office, London.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that these amounts by no means exhibit the real profits, expenses or resources of the department in the lower provinces.

To shew these satisfactorily, it would be necessary to go into farther calculations like those we have made for Canada, a task which our limited information renders impossible.

Department has, in fact, no surplus revenue.

As to the real profits of the department, it is enough to say that the sums paid by the provinces during the three years in aid of its operations have equalled if not exceeded the amount of the Deputy Postmaster-general's remittances to England, so that it can hardly be said that there was any net income at all. We presume that the new arrangement made in 1840 with regard to the grants from Nova Scotia, must have had the effect, since the period to which our returns relate, of very much lessening these remittances, perhaps of putting a stop to them altogether.

The real expenses of the department for mail conveyance exceeded the sum above mentioned by the amount of the courier's grants and perquisites, which may safely be taken, as we have already shown, to raise them to 21,000*l.* currency. To the expenses of administration, it would be necessary to add the sums received for newspapers, the commission on United States' postage, the perquisite rates levied by keepers of way-offices and by town letter-carriers, and the value of the franking privilege; but on most of these points our information is too imperfect to warrant even a conjectural estimate of their amount.

On this subject, generally, we would direct attention to the details which will be found in the Appendix, remarking only that, so far as we can judge, the number of newspapers mailed bears nearly the same proportion to that of letters as in Canada, though the revenue they yield is considerably less; and that the correspondence of the lower provinces with the United States is less in proportion than in Canada, and therefore contributes less to its indirect resources. The postmaster at St. Andrew's returns his collection of United States' postage for the year ended 30 September 1840, at 1,404*l.* 16*s.* 7½*d.* currency, which is less than one-eighth of the amount collected within the same year in Canada; while the ordinary letter postage revenue of the lower provinces for the three years ending in July 1840, was more than one-fifth of that of Canada, exclusive, indeed, in both cases of official postage, more than one-fourth.

Newfoundland

There is but one post-office in Newfoundland, at St. John, the capital town of the province. A despatch addressed to the late Lord Sydenham by the late Governor, Captain Prescott, which has been referred to us for our information, and which we have inserted in the Appendix, states that the Postmaster, Mr. Solomon, holds his appointment direct from the Postmaster-general, and is allowed by the general post-office a salary of 100*l.* sterling a year. Till last summer the appointment was a provincial one, and its entire emoluments (some 30*l.* or 40*l.* per annum) were derived from certain extra charges on letters and newspapers, authorized by the Governor. Communication is kept up with Halifax by packet-vessels, which meet the steam-ships to and from England, and occasionally letters are sent by other vessels. But there is no inland post conveyance whatever, and Captain Prescott states that the greater part even of the correspondence which passes by mail to and from Halifax and Great Britain is official.

and Bermuda post-offices.

In Bermuda, as we are informed by a similar despatch from Governor Reid, which also will be found in the Appendix, two attempts have been made to establish a local Post-office department by provincial legislation, but the only internal communication established in consequence is between St. George's Island, the landing-place of the English mails, and the central town of Hamilton.

At the former of these places there is a Deputy Postmaster-general appointed, as we understand, by the Postmaster-general, and at the latter a postmaster, whose office was established by provincial enactment. These two officers share between them the proceeds of the inland rates, and the Deputy Postmaster-general has, besides, a salary of 70*l.* a year.

The province further makes them a trifling grant for conveying the mails backwards and forwards.

A line of Halifax packets, in connexion with the steam-ships, keeps up a regular communication to and from the islands.

Leading defects of present system.

The Post-office department in British North America is marked by two leading defects in its constitution—the want of uniformity in the principles upon which it is conducted by two Deputy Postmasters-general of co-ordinate and independent authority, and the absence not only of responsibility to the executive or representative authorities in the colonies, but of all real responsibility to the head of the department in England.

Want of uniformity.

In proof of the first of these propositions, we have only to refer to our statement of the incongruous practices prevailing in Canada and the lower provinces.

The

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The commissions and instructions under which the Deputy Postmasters-general act, do not recognize the existence of any local authority to whom they are to report their proceedings, or from whom they are to receive directions. In these documents the Deputy Postmasters-general are regarded as the mere agents of the general post-office, to which all their reports are to be sent, and from whence all orders emanate. In certain exceptional cases, such as the late troubles in the Canadas, the Deputy Postmaster-general may have been directed to place himself, for specified purposes, under the orders of a provincial Executive. Of late years, also, the rule by which he was forbidden to communicate information on the state of the department to committees of the several legislatures has been relaxed or rescinded. Occasionally we have seen that under some peculiar circumstances an Executive or a House of Assembly has influenced, to a certain extent, the action of the post-office. In Nova Scotia, where this influence has most prevailed, although, from a variety of causes, it operated very anomalously, it cannot be denied that it had the effect at least of putting the department on a better footing, and rendering it more popular than in New Brunswick, where, though under the same administration, this sort of influence has been but little felt. Of the provinces of British North America it may be observed generally, that in practice there has been somewhat more intercourse between the Executive and the post-office authorities than the theory would suggest, but it has always been of an irregular and unsatisfactory character.

Deputy Postmaster-general not responsible to provincial authorities.

The responsibility to the head of the department in England, however complete in theory, in practice is little better than nominal. The ordinary proceedings of the provincial post-office are almost unknown to the Postmaster-general, and upon questions of graver importance and more unusual character, the decision of the imperial authorities must be mainly influenced by the report of the Deputy Postmaster-general, even though they affect his own pecuniary interest, the extent of the business of his office, or the manner in which he executes his functions.

Nor yet effectively responsible to Postmaster-general in England.

All applications and complaints are addressed to the Deputy Postmaster-general, and, in the majority of cases, finally determined by him. Whenever an appeal is made from his decision, the Postmaster-general is placed by distance and untoward circumstances in a false and embarrassing position. He has no officer whom he can send to investigate the circumstance on the spot, nor any independent means of inquiring into disputed facts or alleged grievances. There is evidence that, in this respect, the condition of the department has not been considered satisfactory, in the fact that, since the appointment of this Commission, the Postmaster-general has seen fit, on more than one occasion, to refer to us for our report on recommendations sent to his Lordship by the Deputy Postmaster-general.

We beg leave also to refer to two series of correspondence in the Appendix, as evidence of the working of the system. The first arose out of a robbery of the mail in the year 1835, on which occasion a letter covering a remittance of money addressed to Mr. Benjamin Brewster, of Montreal, was stolen, along with the other contents of the mail-bag. The contractors, whose carelessness had afforded to the guilty parties the opportunity of committing the robbery, became liable by the terms of their contract to make good the whole of the loss. They settled the matter by the payment of a round sum to the Deputy Postmaster-general, out of which Mr. Brewster received the amount of his loss without interest, and nearly the whole of the money he had expended in seeking to recover it. The robbery was committed on the 17th February 1835; the money was paid by the contractors on the 23d May 1837, and Mr. Brewster received his share on the 28th May 1838. Some portion of the correspondence, which extends over a period of more than three years, are of an unpleasant and irritating character; and without intending to impute blame to either of the parties, we think it deserving of attention, as showing in how dilatory and unsatisfactory a manner such proceedings in the present condition of the department must necessarily be conducted.

Examples of this.

Mr. Brewster's case.

The other series relates to a matter of greater importance, to which in another part of this report we have briefly alluded. In the year 1840 an arrangement was suggested to the Deputy Postmaster-general, with the object of relieving Mr. Porteous, the postmaster of Montreal, from duties which were becoming too onerous for a gentleman of his advanced years and infirm health.

Recent appointments to surveyorships.

In the absence of a fund for providing retired allowances for old officers of the department, it was proposed that the nephew of Mr. Porteous, then post-office surveyor in Upper Canada, should be promoted to the post-office in Montreal, with an understanding that his uncle should receive an allowance for life out of the emoluments of his new situation. Under the peculiar circumstances of the case, the Deputy Postmaster-general consented to this arrangement, feeling, however, that the proceeding was somewhat irregular, and one which must not be used as a precedent hereafter. Mr. Andrew Porteous consequently resigned the postmastership of Montreal, and Mr. James Porteous the surveyorship of Upper Canada. To the vacant surveyorship thus created, Mr. Stayner appointed his own nephew, Mr. Edward Freer. These appointments, having been submitted to the Postmaster-general, were sanctioned by his Lordship in a letter dated 19 October 1840.

It appears, however, that up to the present day (December 7th, 1841), Mr. Freer has never entered upon his duties as surveyor, but continues to act as clerk in the Deputy Postmaster-general's office at Quebec.

On the 6th January 1841, Mr. Berczy, the postmaster at Toronto, was appointed temporary and "resident surveyor," and is entitled to receive the salary of that office up to the 15th June, on which day Mr. Richardson, the postmaster at Brantford, was selected in place of Mr. Berczy, to perform Mr. Freer's duties.

The opinion we formerly expressed on the appointment of Mr. Berczy to this important office has only been strengthened by time and mature reflection. The phrase "resident surveyor," has always appeared to use little less than a contradiction in terms; and so indeed it must have appeared to Mr. Stayner, for before he appointed Mr. Richardson to the temporary office of acting surveyor, we find him insisting on Mr. Richardson's procuring a temporary substitute to perform the duties of acting postmaster at Brantford. So also it must have appeared to Mr. Berczy, who acknowledges in his letter of the 15th June that the public service was suffering detriment from the arrangement of the preceding January: "There are," he says, "many applications for new offices that I think should be attended to without delay." We observe, also, that whilst Mr. Berczy at Toronto was nominally holding the situation, Mr. Richardson was, on more than one occasion, withdrawn from his post-office at Brantford to perform some of the real duties of surveyor to which Mr. Berczy was unable to attend.

A letter on this subject addressed to the Commission by the Deputy Postmaster-general will be found in the Appendix. To that letter we must refer for the explanation of the views with which these proceedings were adopted. Mr. Stayner has declined laying before us his correspondence with Mr. Berczy, on the ground that it was of a private nature. The final arrangements with Mr. Richardson were conducted orally, and we are therefore unable to state whether Mr. Muirhead, the present acting postmaster of Brantford, is or is not the assistant in Mr. Richardson's office, to whom Mr. Stayner's letter of the 15th June alludes. It has been thought right to conceal from the Postmaster-general all knowledge of the facts that occurred since his Lordship's approval on the 19th October 1840 of Mr. Freer's appointment. His Lordship has been suffered to remain under the erroneous impression that Mr. Freer is discharging the duties of his office in Upper Canada, whilst in reality he is employed as clerk in the post-office at Quebec, and in utter ignorance of the arrangements by which for nearly a year the important duties of surveyor have been irregularly and imperfectly discharged. This concealment appears to us to be contrary to the spirit, if not the letter, of the Deputy Postmaster-general's instructions, which require that he shall, by the first opportunity, "acquaint the Postmaster-general with all the appointments he shall make on the death or removal of any of the deputies" (postmasters).

The Postmaster-general has not been informed of the removal of Mr. Richardson from Brantford, or the appointment of Mr. Muirhead to that office. In the year 1828, when those instructions were issued, the office of surveyor was not in existence; had it been in existence, we cannot doubt that it would have been expressly named in the instructions, and the Deputy Postmaster-general's power of appointment to it subjected to the same regulations as in the case of postmasters.

The distance, it is true, might have rendered it difficult, impossible perhaps, to obtain the Postmaster-general's sanction of all the temporary arrangements detailed

detailed in the correspondence ; but that has been one of our chief reasons for dwelling as we have done upon these facts. We think it a forcible argument for the recognition of some provincial authority to which matters of this kind might be conveniently referred, in order that arrangements, calculated to promote the efficiency of the department, may be sanctioned without delay, and that such as might appear irregular in practice, unjust in principle, or likely to prove injurious to the service, may be immediately forbidden.

A department constituted in the manner we have described could scarcely have escaped unpopularity. Power, however purely exercised, if subjected to no popular control, and to but little check of any kind, will always be liable to suspicion. Concealment creates jealousy and distrust, but if to this we add the fact that from some of the colonies, the Canadas especially, a large surplus revenue has been annually remitted to England, the public dissatisfaction will appear natural enough, even though the expediency of the changes we are about to recommend should not be admitted.

Necessary unpopularity of such a system.

It has been already stated that in the year 1834 a Bill was prepared in England, under the direction of the Postmaster-general, for the purpose of remodelling the post-office in these colonies ; amongst other provisions contained in that measure, it was proposed to form the whole of British North America into one charge, and the surplus revenue, instead of being remitted to England, was to have been distributed in certain proportions amongst the several provinces. Had it passed into a law, the effect of that measure would have been to remove some, but not all, the defects of the present system ; but it was prepared unfortunately with a view to its being submitted for enactment to each of the colonial legislatures, an error sufficient in itself to have rendered the success of the project almost impossible.

Bill of 1834 right in proposing one Deputy Postmaster-general only, and the relinquishment of the surplus revenue ;

but otherwise in error.

There was an admitted necessity for uniformity in the leading features of the system, as well in its relations with the several provinces as with the other parts of the empire ; but it was too much to expect that all those independent, not to say conflicting legislatures, each more or less ignorant of the subject, and some influenced by no friendly spirit, would have agreed upon all the details of a very complicated plan. When colonies begin to legislate, one of their first impulses is to make even an unnecessary display of independence by acting to the full extent of their powers, and we have seen accordingly that in every province where the subject was taken up at all, the Parliament evinced a strong desire for an independent post-office, overlooking in their love of self-assertion, all the obstructions, incongruities and extravagance which must necessarily be produced by a conflict of many provincial departments, each having separate officers, accounts, contracts, rates and regulations of its own. The result of this attempt has already been described—it failed completely ; but even if it had succeeded, the proposed measure was calculated to afford only an incomplete remedy for existing defects, whilst on the other hand it would have introduced difficulties from which the present system is free. To erect a post-office which in each particular colony would be the creature of its own legislative act would have been an admission that the paramount authority is vested in the provincial government, whilst the details of the measure inconsistently denied to them the smallest share of practical control over the administration of the department. No single legislature, notwithstanding the concession of this important principle, could have introduced further changes, however necessary in a system the very existence of which depended on its unbroken uniformity throughout the whole of the provinces. The head of the department, with enlarged authority, would have become more independent than ever of provincial control. He would, it is true, according to the letter of the law, be still subordinate to the Postmaster-general, but the authority of the latter would have been impaired, and the control which he is supposed to exercise, virtually abandoned in principle, would soon have become perfectly illusory in practice.

The fact, however, that the imperial authorities had consented to the principles of the Bill of 1834, is one the importance of which we cannot but estimate very highly, inasmuch as by encouraging the hope that the Government will not now refuse to confirm the generous sacrifice of income it was then prepared to make, it emboldens us confidently to recommend the adoption of some of the leading ideas embodied in that liberal though unsuccessful measure. It has almost ceased to be a question with us, whether, with a view to the remodelling of the provincial post-office, the Imperial Parliament should divest itself of any portion of its functions in favour of the provincial legislatures. We see no reason to

Importance, however, of concessions then intended.

Provincial legislation not called for ;

and probably, in-

doubt

deed, no legislation at all.

doubt that the whole, or nearly the whole, of a satisfactory plan might be arranged by the Lords of the Treasury and the Postmaster-general, and carried out by their authority alone, under the extensive powers in relation to colonial matters, already conferred upon them by the Act of the 3 & 4 Vict. ; but at the same time we are of opinion, that the time is now come when the Postmaster-general should consent to transfer to the executive authorities in the provinces some portion of that administrative control which, in his hands, is little better than nominal.

The remedy simple.

We do not conceal from ourselves that the question is surrounded by difficulties ; but much consideration of its tangled details has led us to adopt a very simple view of the subject, which we venture to submit as that to which there are the fewest serious objections, and which we think the best calculated to meet the wishes of those who desire to see the efficiency of the department increased, and its popularity restored by means of safe and feasible reforms.

Deputy Postmaster-general should be placed under the Governor-general's orders.

It has appeared to us, that the mere introduction of a few sentences into the commission and instructions of the Deputy Postmaster-general, requiring him to obey in all things lawful the orders of the Governor-general, as well as those of the Lords of the Treasury and the Postmaster-general, might be made the means of providing all needful subordination to provincial authority. The effect of this alteration would be to confer upon the Governor-general a sort of concurrent jurisdiction (if we may use that phrase), which could never by any possibility clash with that of the authorities at home, or impede the uniform working of the system, but would subject that officer to a real, because no longer a distant, responsibility, and introduce some measure of popular control, by making the local administrations answerable politically for abuses in the direction of the post-office.

Precedents for such an arrangement.

The introduction into the Deputy Postmaster-general's commission of a clause of this sort, though a novelty as regards the post-office, is not without precedent in other departments, subordinate as the post-office is to the Lords of the Treasury, or to the Secretaries of State. By a commission now before us, dated 13th November 1826, appointing John Davidson, Esq., Surveyor-general of Woods and Forests in Lower Canada, he is required "to follow such orders and directions as he shall from time to time receive, relating to the execution of the said office, from our said Commissioners of our Treasury for the time being, or from one of our Principal Secretaries of State, or from our Governor or officer administering for the time the government of our province of Lower Canada ;" and throughout the instructions of the same date, addressed to that gentleman, he is strictly enjoined, in nearly the same words, to obey all such orders and directions. A similar clause is contained in the commission of Mr. William Bowman Felton, the late Commissioner of Crown Lands for Lower Canada, and of Mr. Peter Robinson, late Commissioner of Crown Lands and Surveyor-general in Upper Canada.

There is also something analogous to this in the relations subsisting between officers of the Commissariat and the military authorities at their respective stations. Although the Commissariat is a branch of the Treasury, we believe that no difficulty arises from its being continually placed under the orders of officers whose authority emanates from the Horse Guards.

Arrangements for the lower provinces.

If this suggestion shall be deemed worthy of adoption, there is, in the fact that the administration of the Governor-general extends practically over Canada only, a difficulty to be obviated ; but it is one to which we have not omitted to turn our serious attention, and which we have not found insuperable. We would suggest that it should form a part of the working of the system, that the Governor-general should direct the Deputy Postmaster-general to defer to the wishes of the Lieutenant-governors of the lower provinces in all matters properly belonging to their respective governments, and not at variance with any principle, which, for the sake of uniformity, it might be essential to maintain. The Deputy Postmaster-general should give corresponding instructions to the surveyors for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and in this way all matters of minor import might be settled between the resident surveyor and the provincial government, and only those of greater consequence would require to be referred by the Lieutenant-governor to the Governor-general, or by the surveyor to the Deputy Postmaster-general. The Deputy Postmaster-general would become an administrative officer, with authority over the whole of British North America, but with responsibility equal to his power, and corresponding to the local extent of his authority. The several provincial governments would, to a certain extent, control his movements, and thus the post-office would be brought under

General working of the proposed system.

under some such parliamentary superintendence as applies to other departments, without rendering the Deputy Postmaster-general what, as an officer acting in more provinces than one, he could not be, the public servant of any. The patronage of the department might thus be placed in the same hands, and under the same conditions and limitations as other patronage. The whole arrangement would require only an official correspondence between the secretaries of the different provinces and the Deputy Postmaster-general, or his surveyors, which would not cause any material difficulty or inconvenience.

The relations existing between the department and the post-office authorities of the United States could not, it is true, be maintained under the proposed system; but as essential changes in those relations are required on other grounds (which it will presently be our duty to state), we cannot admit that this forms a solid objection to the project. The anomalous arrangement by which several officers of the department have become the paid servants of a foreign government, cannot, we humbly think, be suffered longer to continue.

It might probably be found necessary to the successful working of the proposed system, that the establishments of the Deputy Postmaster-general and the accountant should be permanently fixed at the seat of government in Canada.

The Deputy Postmaster-general's and Accountant's offices should be at the seat of Government in Canada;

We are aware of some plausible reasons which may be urged in favour of keeping these establishments at Quebec; speaking with reference to the whole of British North America, Quebec is more central than Kingston; it is nearer to the lower provinces, where, for some time to come, great changes of system and much attention to its working will be required. Quebec is moreover the terminus of the steam communication direct with England, and the place where the English mails to and from Canada are made up. But these considerations do not appear to us at all decisive of the question. The constant presence of a very active and intelligent postmaster is all that is absolutely required for these objects. The making up of the English mails is essentially a postmaster's duty, and if necessary, Quebec might also be made the usual residence of one of the surveyors. On the other hand, the easy communication of the head of the department with the Governor-general and his secretaries appears to us a much more vital consideration than any object that could possibly be gained by his permanent residence at Quebec. Such communications cannot be too prompt, frequent or unreserved; were they to pass by way of letters between Kingston and Quebec, one of two things must speedily happen,—they would become too infrequent to have the desired effect upon the post-office administration, or else create intolerable delays. In either case the effect would be the same, to reinstate the old irresponsible system; and so, by the disappointment of reasonable hopes, to increase the discontent of the community.

Halifax and Fredericton might each be the usual residence of a surveyor, who would be allowed an office and one or more clerks, in order to render the official correspondence with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick as easy as possible.

And Surveyors' offices at Halifax and Fredericton.

Five surveyors in all would probably be required, one for New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, one for Nova Scotia, and three for Canada. The present division of Canada into two surveyors' districts allots, we think, too large a share of labour to those officers. The addition now proposed would allow of one of the surveyors spending a great part of the year at Quebec.

Number of surveyors.

Some increase in the force of the Deputy Postmaster-general's immediate office would be required. Perhaps one additional clerk might suffice, as the appointment of the surveyors for the lower provinces would materially diminish the amount of correspondence which the Deputy Postmaster-general would otherwise have to conduct. If some further increase in his establishment be found necessary hereafter, it is among the advantages of the plan we propose, that such necessity would be easily decided upon by competent and impartial authority, and the assistance granted without delay.

Force of Deputy Postmaster-general's office.

The propriety of removing the accountant's establishment to the seat of government is based upon the same grounds. He also should be required to receive orders from the Governor-general; and he certainly ought not to be placed in any way under the orders or direct control of the Deputy Postmaster-general, whose accounts he is charged with auditing. We do not consider this the fittest opportunity for going into a detail of the changes desirable in the routine duties of the accountant's branch; but we may observe that his present force of two clerks is by no means adequate to the discharge of the new duties which

Accountant should also be under Governor-general's orders, and not under Deputy Postmaster-general's.

Increase of his establishment.

which would devolve upon him on the completion of the arrangements we have the honour to recommend.

No revenue to be remitted to General Post-office, London.

We have already intimated an opinion, that no remittance of surplus revenue should hereafter be exacted by England from the provincial office. This is a point on which the public wishes have been so decidedly expressed, that we should have no hope of any arrangement from which this principle was excluded, being satisfactory to the people of British North America.

Arrangement on this head proposed in 1834.

Difficulties in the way of its being carried out.

The Bill of 1834 proposed to divide the surplus amongst the provinces, in proportion to the gross amount of postage collected in each; and in the case of a deficit, to require contributions in the same proportion. We see no objection to this proposal on the score of fairness; but we should apprehend great practical difficulty in carrying out any measure that assumes either surplus or deficit as a matter of ordinary occurrence. On the one hand, if the provincial legislatures are to be taught to look to the post-office as a source of revenue, the temptation to undue interference with the department becomes great, and there will be much difficulty in satisfying all the provinces that it is properly administered. Every increase of expenditure in one quarter of the country will be so much visibly taken from a revenue in which the others were entitled to share. In one province it may happen that a larger revenue is desired; in another a more liberal measure of post-office accommodation; a reduction of rates in a third. But if, on the other hand, a deficit is to be a thing of ordinary occurrence, the difficulty will be still greater and more immediate. Vexatious and injurious delays are to be apprehended at the very time when the money is most wanted; and we are not aware of the existence of any security by which so great a mischief may be prevented. It is scarcely necessary to point out the unpopularity which such demands upon the public purse must needs create, or the solid arguments which might be urged against any measure which would involve the necessity of having recourse to them.

The post-office should support itself, but not yield a revenue.

But if we suppose a middle course to be taken, by which the revenue and expenditure of the department shall be brought to correspond as nearly as possible, some local jealousies, it is true, might still be felt, but it would be in the power of the provincial authorities to secure, by careful surveillance, such a judicious system of management as would prevent all well-founded complaint, and eventually satisfy the public mind.

We are convinced that in a new country where correspondence is limited, and its conveyance therefore costly, the true principle is that, which would make the post-office simply a self-sustaining institution, contributing no revenue for general purposes, and asking no aid from general taxation. On the one hand, no worse tax for purposes of revenue can be devised; and on the other, it is clear that if there be at any time in the public chest more money than the establishments of the country require, a better use might be found for it than applying it to the mere conveyance and handling of letters, by expending it in the improvement of the roads along which they travel; for such improvements benefit the country, as well in its general business and intercourse as in the increase of its post accommodations. The truth of this principle is felt and acted upon in the United States.

Some of our correspondents have formed extravagant hopes from the expected surrender for provincial purposes of the surplus revenue, under the idea that it would be sufficient, or might be made sufficient, for the accomplishment of great improvements in the roads or other internal communications. Some, again, are disposed so to cut down the rates, and to incur such large expenses withal, as to render necessary new taxes for the maintenance of the post-office. But we set aside all such suggestions as inapplicable and extreme. We are of opinion that the postage rates should be so fixed as always to yield income enough, and never much more than enough, to provide liberally for the expenses of the department. If the calculations be carefully and prudently made, there will be no great risk of a deficit on the one hand; whilst on the other, increased facilities and accommodation, or a still further reduction of rates, may be introduced as the income improves.

Present rates universally felt to be too high.

It is felt almost universally throughout these colonies, that the existing rates of letter postage are too high. From every province, and almost from every district of British North America, we have received strong remonstrances against the continuance of the present scale; and how much soever our correspondents may differ as to details, it will be seen from the Appendix, that whether the question be

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be treated as affecting the revenue of the department, or the social and commercial interests of the country, they concur generally in urging the necessity of some considerable reduction. The extent to which correspondence is repressed by those high charges must be mere matter of conjecture; but as a chief inducement to the illicit traffic in letters, some idea may be formed of their injurious effect upon the revenue from the following statement, abridged from communications addressed to us by persons of respectable station resident in all parts of the country. The printed correspondence will shew that the names here given are but a selection.

Great amount of correspondence carried on every where otherwise than by mail--

From the western section of what was lately Upper Canada, Colonel Furlong, the officer commanding on the frontier, and stationed at Amherstburg, writes, that letters are there forwarded by private hand on all occasions. Mr. Jones, the registrar for the county of Kent, writes from Port Sarnia, that the letters sent privately within the district (the western) are about one-third of its unofficial correspondence. Mr. Ermatinger, the postmaster of St. Thomas, in the adjoining district of London, estimates them for the route between Quebec and the head of Lake Ontario at nearly one-half of the whole correspondence. Mr. Wilkes, a lawyer residing at Brantford, in the Gore District, thinks, that for the whole province they form at least the half of all letters actually sent. From Hamilton, Mr. Ritchie, the postmaster, and Mr. Ferrie, the late M. P. P. for the town, speak of the almost universal prevalence of the practice.

In Western Canada.

In Gore district.

On the Niagara frontier, Messrs. Hepburne, Stayner and Davidson, the postmasters at Chippawa, Queenston and Niagara, speak of their number as very great. And Mr. Rykert, late a member of the Parliament of Upper Canada, residing at St. Catherine's, thinks them at least equal to those mailed.

In Niagara district.

Mr. Howard, the late postmaster at Toronto, now resident at Trafalgar, thinks that, exclusive of letters franked by postmasters, those sent by private hand equal the number mailed.

In Home district.

Similar opinions are expressed by persons residing at Toronto: by Mr. Berezy, the postmaster, the Honourable John Macaulay, late postmaster at Kingston, the Reverend J. Roaf, Mr. Hawke, the emigrant agent, Messrs. J. S. Baldwin, J. D. Harris, and others; as well as from the country lying behind Toronto, by Captain Steele, M. P. P. of Medonte, and Mr. Hamilton, the postmaster at Penetanguishene.

Mr. E. Perry, a merchant of Cobourg, is of opinion that five-sixths of all the letters passing between places on the lake shore, in summer evade the mail. Messrs. Ferguson and Sandford, of Peterborough, in the rear of Cobourg, the latter the postmaster of the place, represent the proportion there as very large at all seasons. Mr. Bockus, late member of Parliament for the county of Prince Edward, on the Bay of Quinté, writes from Pictou, that not more than half the correspondence of that place is carried by mail; and the Baron de Rottenburg, an officer stationed at Belleville, also on the Bay of Quinté, says, that in that neighbourhood, in summer, the greater part is carried privately by the steam-boats.

And throughout other districts on Lake Ontario.

Mr. Harper, the cashier of the Bank of the Midland District of Kingston, estimates the letters sent by private hand at full one-fourth of the correspondence of the country. Mr. H. Lusher, of Bath, in the same district, thinks, that in summer it amounts to as much as one-half of the whole.

Messrs. Jones and Wood, the postmasters at Prescott and Cornwall, estimate the amount of correspondence sent by private hand, on the route between Quebec and Toronto, the former at one-third, the latter, as far at least as regards business letters, at more than one-half.

In Eastern districts of Upper Canada bordering on the St. Lawrence.

From the districts bordering on the Ottawa, Mr. Pridham, postmaster at Grenville, writes, that he thinks there is more illicit correspondence on the route between Montreal and Bytown than on any other; and Mr. Stevenson, the collector of timber dues, and agent of the Midland District Bank at Bytown, and the Honourable A. Grant, of L'Original, both testify to the great extent to which the practice prevails in their respective neighbourhoods.

And in districts lying on the Ottawa.

The Board of Trade of Montreal give it as their decided opinion, that much less than half the correspondence of the country goes by mail. Mr. Castle, of the City Bank, speaks of the immense amount of correspondence that evades the mail on every route. Mr. Dunscomb, the M. P. P. for the county of Beauharnois, thinks that in summer nineteen-twentieths of all the correspondence

In districts between Montreal and Quebec.

between Quebec and Montreal, and one-half on all other routes, is by private hand, in winter perhaps not more than one-eighth. Messrs. Dougall, Stephens, Young, Gethings, Sheppard, and many others in Montreal and elsewhere, all agree in stating the illicit conveyance of letters between Quebec and Montreal to be far more than the mail; and Messrs. Wilson and Cullen, the superintendents of the news-rooms of the two cities, through whose agency most of this correspondence was carried on, give a variety of details establishing the fact in a very decisive manner. The contract, however, for the conveyance of the mail in steam-boats made during the last summer has much lessened this evil, but we are unable to say exactly to what extent.

From the eastern townships the accounts are more conflicting. Some of our correspondents represent the amount of private conveyance of letters in their neighbourhood as very trifling; others again state the reverse. Colonel Nickle, an officer commanding on particular service, and stationed at Hatley, says the number of letters passing otherwise than by mail is immense on all routes. Mr. Fraser, the Commissioner of the British American Land Company, stationed at Sherbrooke, thinks the proportion large. Mr. Rea, of Compton, a postmaster and magistrate, with extensive means of information, says one-half of all letters in the townships are carried otherwise than by mail. The Reverend Mr. Balfour, of Shefford, makes the amount two-thirds.

Below Quebec, the Honourable A. Dioune, of Kamouraska, on the main route to the lower provinces, says the number is very great. The postmaster at Carleton, in the district of Gaspé, Mr. Meagher, and the Grand Voyer of the district, Mr. M'Rae, represent that in summer the great bulk of the correspondence of the district with Quebec, and places above it, passes by coasting vessels.

It is from the lower provinces, however, that we have received the most startling statements. The postmaster at Woodstock, New Brunswick, Mr. English, thinks that full one-half of all the correspondence of the province is by private hand, and Mr. M'Connell, a member of the provincial Parliament, also resident at Woodstock, agrees with him in that opinion. Mr. G. F. Williams, of the same place, raises the estimate to two-thirds; Mr. Phair, the postmaster at Fredericton, places it at nine-tenths; Mr. A. Scott, of the same place, at three-fourths for the whole western section of New Brunswick; Assistant Commissary-general Robinson, at three-fourths between Fredericton and St. John; Mr. L. A. Wilmot, Queen's Counsel, at 10 to 1; Mr. J. F. Smith, at 20 to 1; and Mr. Asa Coy, at 99 to 1, still between the same two places.

The Honourable G. F. Street, of Fredericton, solicitor-general for New Brunswick, and Mr. G. Wheeler, advocate of St. John, speak of the practice as universal. The Honourable W. B. Kinnear, recorder of St. John, and a member of the Legislative Council, is satisfied that 11-12ths of the law correspondence in the province is carried on by other than mail conveyance.

Messrs. James Whitney, Isaac Woodward, M. P. P., and W. H. Street, write that three-fourths of all letters in the province, and Mr. L. Donaldson, chairman of the Board of Trade, that at least three-fourths on the routes to Fredericton and St. Andrew's, are thus conveyed.

From St. Andrew's in Charlotte county, on the United States frontier, the Honourable Harris Hatch writes, that in summer two-thirds, and in winter nearly half of all the letters of the neighbourhood pass otherwise than by mail; and his opinion is referred to and supported by several other individuals. One gentleman, the Honourable F. Wyer, goes so far as to speak of this correspondence as in summer 100 to 1, and in winter 50 to 1.

Mr. G. M. Porter, of St. Stephen's, in the same county, says, that three-fourths of the correspondence of that place with St. Andrew's and St. John, the places most connected with it commercially, are sent by private hand.

Mr. Bonnell, postmaster at Gage Town, between Fredericton and St. John, says, that no letters are ever mailed in his neighbourhood, except such as may be particularly important, perhaps one-third of all.

Mr. Vail, postmaster at Sussex Vale, on the main route from St. John and Fredericton to Halifax, thinks that less than one-third of all letters passing on his route go by post. Mr. Milner, the postmaster at Dorchester, on the same route, says, that he thinks the proportion is there about half. The Rev. Dr. Jarvis, of Shediac, on the eastern coast, and Messrs. Rankin and Street, of Miramichi, members of Parliament, with a number of other gentlemen of that place,

In Eastern townships.

And below Quebec.

In Western counties of New Brunswick.

In Eastern New Brunswick.

place, concur in fixing the proportion for that section of the country at two-thirds.

From Halifax less is said on this subject than from most other parts of Nova Scotia; but Sir R. D. George, the late provincial secretary, the Honourable H. Bell, of the Legislative Council, and Deputy Commissary-general Hewetson, speak of the proportion of letters not sent by mail as large. The Honourable S. G. W. Archibald, late Attorney-general and Speaker of the Assembly, says, "An immense number of letters is carried by coasting vessels, and also by land travelling, by waggons, stage-coaches, and other conveyances." The Honourable Joseph Howe, the present Speaker of the House, says, "Every boat and coasting-vessel carries letters, so does every teamster and passenger in a stage-coach; the number so conveyed must be enormous."

In Nova Scotia.

Messrs. Dimock and Smith, members of Parliament, residing in Hants county, Mr. Beckwith, another member, living in the county of King's, and Messrs. Ratchford and Hutchinson, the postmasters of Parrsborough and Kentville, also in King's county, rate the proportion in their neighbourhood at about half. Mr. Morton, late a member of Parliament, writes from Cornwallis, in the same county, that the correspondence from the interior is nearly all by private hand.

Counties of Hants and King's.

Mr. Chipman, M. P. P. of Laurencetown, in Annapolis county, rates the letters not sent by mail at two or three to one.

Western counties.

Mr. Gates, M. P. P. of Annapolis, says, they far exceed in number those mailed.

And Mr. Cowling, the postmaster of the place, says, they form a large proportion of those sent from Annapolis in the direction of Halifax, and nearly all those sent to and beyond St. John, New Brunswick.

From Digby, Mr. Stewart, the postmaster, writes, that they are 10 to 1 of all letters sent thence to St. John; and Mr. Holdsworth, M. P. P. of the same place, states, that this is the general opinion; adding, that of all letters sent from Digby eastward, and to the United States, they are four to one, and westward, two to one.

Mr. Clements, M. P. P. of Yarmouth, at the western extremity of the Peninsula, a place only second in Nova Scotia to Halifax in the extent of its commerce, says, that a very large proportion of its letters are carried in all directions by coasters. The Messrs. Sargent, of Barrington, on the southern coast, say, that the proportion of letters so sent from that place is 10 or 20 to 1 during the coasting season. And from Lunenburg, about half way between Halifax and Barrington, Mr. Heckman and several other gentlemen write, that the weekly coasting-packet alone to and from Halifax carries on an average 140 letters a trip, while the mail does not average 20.

Few of our correspondents in the eastern counties of Nova Scotia and from Prince Edward's Island say much on the subject; and probably the proportion is less there than in the western.

In Eastern counties and Prince Edward's Island.

Mr. Ross, however, the postmaster at Pictou, states, that more than two-thirds of the correspondence of that place with Halifax is not borne by the mail; and all who allude to the subject in Prince Edward's Island (among others, Mr. Hodgson, the attorney-general,) concur in stating, that less than half the letters passing between the island and the mainland go by post.

It is not easy to say what precise extent of influence the present rates of postage may have in producing this unsatisfactory state of things. Most of our correspondents speak of them as the main cause, and many seem to be hardly aware of the existence of any other. Public opinion, on the whole, we should judge, rather over-estimates its comparative importance.

To what extent caused by high rates.

In many cases it is clear that other causes, such as a want of post-offices, an inconvenient arrangement of office hours, or the infrequency or slowness of the mail, contribute to produce the result. Still the fact remains unquestionable that the rates of postage are every where thought too high, and that this is every where a chief, although not the only cause of so large an amount of correspondence being unlawfully conveyed.

We may add, that the present rates are most inconveniently complex, both in number and amount;* that they are considerably higher for most distances than those

Present rates too complex as well as too high.

* Such as 4½ d., 7 d., 11 d., &c.—amounts which could never have been fixed upon, except as a consequence of the sterling rates of 4 d., 6 d., 10 d., &c., requiring to be converted into currency.

those of the United States; that for all distances beyond 500 miles they exceed the rate to England; and that in the lower provinces they are still more complex, because wholly irregular in amount, besides being almost always higher than in Canada.

One uniform rate for all distances impossible.

Many persons throughout these provinces are desirous of seeing one uniform rate for all distances, but, upon considering this suggestion, supported though it be by the practice now in operation in England, and urged upon us by a number of respectable correspondents, we soon became convinced that, in the present condition of the department, we should not be justified in recommending the introduction of such a measure as would satisfy the advocates of the principle. It must be observed that it is not in uniformity alone, but in reduction also, that most of them desire to see some assimilation to the English practice; but if the necessity of preserving the self-sustaining character of the department be admitted, it will soon be perceived that reduction to such an extent is impracticable.

Cases of Great Britain and British North America not analogous.

In perusing the letters in which suggestions of this kind are offered, it has struck us occasionally that the writers have taken a mistaken view of the principle upon which the recent change in England was founded, and have failed consequently to make due allowance for the great difference in condition between the mother country and her colonies. In England the real question was, whether the monopoly of the conveyance of letters enjoyed by the Government ought to be continued as a source of general revenue. As the department yielded a surplus of more than 1,500,000*l.*, no question could have arisen as to the possibility of the country being called upon to contribute by some other tax to the support of the post-office. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did, it is true, think it right to obtain from the House of Commons a pledge that, if necessary, they would vote some new tax to supply any deficiency in the general revenue that might follow from the proposed reduction, because he did not choose to rely upon the calculations promising even an *increase* of general revenue, which were urged in favour of the penny-rate by the ardent supporters of Mr. Rowland Hill's project. But that was a precaution suggested by the state of the finances alone, and not by any apprehensions of such a falling off in the receipts of the post-office as might reduce them below the expenditure required for that service. It never was doubted that the penny-rate would be sufficient to keep the post-office out of debt. But it is our duty to show that in these provinces a great reduction in the present rates would have a very different effect, and must necessarily bring the receipts far below the expenditure of the department.

Mr. Hill stated on his examination by the Committee of the House of Commons in 1838, that the proportion of the cost of conveyance chargeable upon a single letter was in England less than a farthing, and that the expense of the general management of the department chargeable upon a single letter was about the same. He added, that the difference in the cost of conveyance upon a single letter for the longest or the shortest distance was "so trifling as not to be expressible in the smallest coin we have." The last of these three propositions was urged in favour of an uniform rate; the two former went to sustain the theory that the rate should be very low as well as uniform.

We have shown how different the case is in Canada. Here the expense of each single letter is about $5\frac{1}{2}d.$; that is, for conveyance about $3d.$, and for management more than $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ currency; but the lowest rate at present legally established in these provinces is $4\frac{1}{2}d.$; and as the majority of the advocates of uniformity contemplate a rate lower than the lowest now in existence, it becomes almost superfluous to state that the reasoning by which Mr. Hill's views were supported in England is not applicable here. On the one hand, Mr. Hill's arguments in favour of uniformity cannot be applied to the circumstances of a country where the average rate of conveyance is $3d.$ for each letter; whilst on the other, the income required for the support of the establishment would be annihilated by the proposed *reduction*. Not for the present alone, but for many years to come, we think it unreasonable to expect the establishment here of an uniform rate upon the English plan; and we spare ourselves, therefore, the trouble of making any calculations having that object in view. But we have turned our serious attention to reductions of a different character, such as will not be inconsistent with the self-sustaining character which the post-office ought

Extent to which reductions can be safely carried.

to preserve, and may probably tend to promote the financial prosperity of the department by rendering it more popular than at present.

The return we have before cited shows the number of single letter charges (exclusive of Halifax packet letters) made in Canada,* at each of the rates computed for the year ended in July 1840, with the nearest possible approach to precision. The contribution of each rate to the revenue appears to have been as follows:—

	Currency.		Single Letters.	Currency.		
	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
For distances under 60 miles	-	-	416,000	7,800	-	-
from 60 to 100	-	-	130,000	3,791	13	4
" 100 to 200	-	-	510,000	19,125	-	-
" 200 to 300	-	-	150,000	6,875	-	-
" 300 to 400	-	-	120,000	7,000	-	-
" 400 to 500	-	-	30,000	2,000	-	-
" 500 to 600	-	-	25,000	1,875	-	-
" 600 to 700	-	-	12,000	1,000	-	-
" 700 to 800	-	-	500	46	17	6
" 800 to 900	-	-	5,500	572	18	4
" 900 to 1,000	-	-	400	45	-	-
exceeding 1,000	-	-	600	75	-	-
TOTAL	-	-	1,400,000	50,206	9	2

Operation of existing scale.

The lowest and higher rates are those in regard to which reduction appears most loudly to be called for; the former having the effect of nearly prohibiting correspondence by post for distances under 30 miles, and the latter for all long distances. Only 74,000 rates out of 1,400,000 are charged for distances beyond 400 miles; and of these, a much larger proportion is levied on bulky official correspondence than is the case with the lower rates.

Where most demanding reduction.

The subjoined scale does little more than fix a maximum rate of 1s. 3d. currency for distances over 400 miles, and a minimum rate for those under 30. Its effect upon the revenue, supposing the number of letters unchanged, would be as follows:—

	Currency.		Letters.	Currency.		
	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
For distances under 30 miles	-	-	277,334†	3,466	13	6
from 30 to 60	-	-	138,666	2,311	2	-
" 60 to 100	-	-	130,000	3,250	-	-
" 100 to 200	-	-	510,000	19,125	-	-
" 200 to 300	-	-	150,000	6,875	-	-
" 300 to 400	-	-	120,000	6,000	-	-
over 400	-	-	74,000	4,625	-	-
TOTAL	-	-	1,400,000	45,652	15	6

Conjectured effect of proposed scale, No. 1.

Showing a loss of 4,553l. 14s. 6d. on the year's postage. Half of this loss, however, would be at those offices where the postmasters are paid by an allowance of 20 per cent.; so that 10 per cent. of it will fall upon the postmasters themselves, leaving the loss to the revenue about 4,098l. 7s. 1d. currency.

A considerable increase of correspondence would doubtless take place under such a scale on distances under 30 and over 400 miles, but the intermediate rates are so slightly affected that no material increase could be looked for on them. Indeed the two very important rates of 9d. and 11d. are not touched at all.

The

* The want of a similar return from the lower provinces obliges us to base the whole of our calculations on Canadian data.

† This number, two-thirds of the whole number now passing for distances under 60 miles, is taken, because if a reduced rate for 30 miles be adopted, twice as many letters are in our opinion likely to be mailed for distances under 30 miles as for those between 30 and 60. At present this proportion by no means holds.

The next scale proposes to reduce the 9*d.* rate to 7½*d.*, and the 11*d.* to 10*d.*, and would affect the revenue on the 1,400,000 letters in the following manner:—

Conjectured effect of proposed scale. No. 2.		Currency.		Letters.	Currency.		
		s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
	For distances under 30 miles	-	-	277,334	3,466	13	6
	from 30 to 60	-	-	138,666	2,311	2	-
	„ 60 to 100	-	-	130,000	3,250	-	-
	„ 100 to 200	-	-	510,000	15,937	10	-
	„ 200 to 300	-	-	150,000	6,250	-	-
	„ 300 to 400	-	-	120,000	6,000	-	-
	over 400	-	-	74,000	4,625	-	-
	TOTAL	-	-	1,400,000	41,840	5	6

making the loss 8,366*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.*, or, deducting the postmaster's share of one-tenth, 7,529*l.* 12*s.* 1*d.* We are not, however, of opinion that the slight reduction it proposes on the 9*d.* and 11*d.* rates would have much effect in the way of increasing the correspondence for those distances, or satisfying the public mind.

A reduction of the 9*d.* and 11*d.* rates to 6*d.* and 9*d.*, and of the rate next below them to 5*d.*, is proposed in the next scale:—

Ditto, No. 3.		Currency.		Letters.	Currency.		
		s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
	For distances under 30 miles	-	-	277,334	3,466	13	6
	from 30 to 60	-	-	138,666	2,311	2	-
	„ 60 to 100	-	-	130,000	2,708	6	8
	„ 100 to 200	-	-	510,000	12,750	-	-
	„ 200 to 300	-	-	150,000	5,625	-	-
	„ 300 to 400	-	-	120,000	6,000	-	-
	over 400	-	-	74,000	4,625	-	-
	TOTAL	-	-	1,400,000	37,486	2	2

The loss (allowing as before stated for the proportion falling on the postmasters) is 11,448*l.* 7*s.* 1*d.* But the salutary effects to be anticipated from a reduction to this extent of the rates for distances between 100 and 300 miles are in our opinion so great, that we think this scale preferable to either of the preceding. The inter-correspondence of the principal towns falls within these rates, and we, therefore, look upon such a reduction as calculated to add very greatly to the number of letters mailed, and to the general popularity of the department.

A material objection to the scale in our view, however, is the number of rates it retains. The subjoined scale makes only five, and proposes some further reduction on the shortest and longest distances.

Ditto, No. 4.		Currency.		Letters.	Currency.		
		s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
	For distances under 30 miles	-	-	277,334	2,311	2	4
	from 30 to 80	-	-	203,666*	3,394	8	8
	„ 80 to 200	-	-	575,000*	14,357	-	-
	„ 200 to 300	-	-	150,000	5,625	-	-
	over 300	-	-	194,000	9,700	-	-
	TOTAL	-	-	1,400,000	35,405	11	-

Reasons for preferring scale No. 4.

The apparent loss by this estimate is 13,320*l.* 17*s.* 2*d.* or rather more than one-fourth of the present revenue; but besides the general advantage of its greater simplicity, we are led to think it will not, in practice, prove to be more hazardous than the last. We question whether, for distances under 30 miles, a 2*d.* rate is not likely to yield as large a revenue as one of 3*d.*; and for distances beyond 300 miles, we have little doubt 1*s.* would prove as productive as 1*s.* 3*d.* There is, besides, an obvious propriety in keeping the highest provincial rate perceptibly below the rate, 1*s.* 4*d.* fixed for English letters.

It

* Assuming that half of the 130,000 letters mailed for distances ranging from 60 to 100 miles are carried less than 80 miles; and half, more.

It is to be observed, that according to this scale the rates are lower than those in the United States, an object which for many reasons we think important; they are more easily convertible into American currency than the American rates are into Canadian; and the distances on which they are calculated correspond as nearly as the distances between the principal towns of British North America will allow with those of the American scale, thus materially facilitating the conversion of rates upon letters crossing the frontier. This will appear from a comparison of the two following scales:—

Comparison of it with American scale.

United States Rates.	Proposed British American Rates.
Under 30 miles, 3¼d. currency, or 6½ cents.	Under 30 miles, 2d. currency, or 3½ cents.
From 30 to 80, 6d. " 10 "	From 30 to 80, 4d. " 6½ "
" 80 to 150, 7½d. " 12½ "	" 80 to 200, 6d. " 10 "
" 150 to 400, 11¼d. " 18¾ "	" 200 to 300, 9d. " 15 "
Over 400, 1s. 3d. " 25 "	Over 300, 1s. " 20 "

We have not attempted to state in figures the effect upon the number of letters to be anticipated from the adoption of each of the above estimates, not because we have the least doubt of the tendency of a reduction of rates to cause an increase of correspondence by post, but because we are not in possession of sufficient data to enable us to estimate accurately the proportion such increase is likely to bear to the reduction. For the reasons already stated, we are of opinion that the last scale is not more hazardous than a less decisive measure of reduction would be. It is true that it would lead to little increase of official correspondence, as that is very slightly affected by the rate of postage. Nearly all the additional correspondence to be looked for will therefore be unofficial. And, as in Canada, the official postage for the year we have taken for our calculation was nearly half (about 12-25ths) of the gross receipts, and the probable loss on the 1,400,000 letters has been estimated at rather more than one-third of the revenue they may be expected to yield at the proposed rates, it follows that in round numbers the unofficial correspondence of the province should increase about 66 per cent. to sustain the revenue at its present amount. This we are not sanguine enough to expect at first; but we cannot lose sight of the fact that, without any reduction of rates, it rose 20 per cent. for the last year of which we have any return. An increase of 33 per cent. will leave the revenue to be affected only by the falling off in official postage; and this or a greater increase may be confidently anticipated even for the first year of the new system. A few years under the proposed scale cannot fail, in our opinion, to raise the revenue of the Canadian post-office beyond its present amount. We do not hesitate, therefore, to recommend this scale as the one which combines the greatest amount of public advantage with the least risk of loss to the revenue.

Its probable effect on the revenue.

In these provinces, as formerly in England, the charges of postage are regulated in the following manner: All letters weighing less than an ounce are charged, if consisting of one piece of paper, single postage; if consisting of two pieces, double; and if consisting of three or more, treble postage. All letters weighing not less than an ounce, but less than an ounce and a quarter, quadruple postage; if weighing an ounce and a quarter and less than an ounce and a half, quintuple postage, and so on, adding a single postage for every quarter of an ounce. It thus happens, that as to letters weighing an ounce or upwards, weight is the principle which now regulates the charge.

Rates on double and treble letters, &c.

The objections to the present mode of charging letters weighing less than an ounce are stated in the Third Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Postage (p. 43); they are chiefly as follows:

Objections to system of rating by enclosures.

1st. Its unfairness. A letter, which is only an envelope covering a small drawing on tissue paper, pays double, though weighing only a quarter as much as a thick single letter; it is unjust further, because a double or treble letter does not occasion additional labour or expense to the department in proportion to the double or treble postage.

2d. Its uncertainty, as the number of the enclosures can only be guessed at on a hasty examination; whence it follows, that a number of letters being improperly charged, returns of postage are required, which gives rise to a great deal of trouble, both to the department and to the public.

3d. It leads to a close inspection of letters, and is frequently the cause of such as contain bank notes and bills being stolen in their passage through the post-office.

English weight system universally popular in British North America.

The taxing letters by weight seems to be desired by the inhabitants of these colonies generally as well as by a majority of the postmasters. The opinions of the latter upon this point carry with them much authority; for there can be no doubt that whatever advantages the public might derive from the change, would be at the expense of some additional trouble to the postmasters in learning the new practice, and at the risk of some decrease in their income as at present collected. Mercantile men and other persons, whose views are most entitled to consideration, advocate with great unanimity the adoption of the English system.

Opinion of Postmaster at Toronto.

Mr. Berezy, the postmaster at Toronto, writes in the following terms: "When the system of charging letters by weight was first adopted in England, I thought that it would much increase the labour of the postmasters, and in consequence, from the time that it came into operation have watched its working, and am now (after many thousands of letters rated in that manner have passed through my hands) of opinion, that instead of increasing the labour, it will have a different effect, and that therefore many more letters can be rated in a given time under that than under our present system. However, as to the effect it would have upon our revenue, I am by no means prepared to say; but being impressed with the belief that it would be otherwise advantageous to adopt it, I cannot but recommend that it be done. One strong argument in favour of it is, that by our present system letters are looked into to ascertain whether they are single, double or treble, which may create a temptation for fraud, or a wish to pry into the affairs of others; as no doubt persons, but most particularly in small offices, take advantage of the right they have to look into letters, to pry into their contents."

Objections of the post-office surveyor for Eastern Canada.

Its probable effect on the revenue at present drawn from military postage.

Mr. Griffin, one of the post-office surveyors, takes a view somewhat different from that of Mr. Berezy, as to the labour which the change would impose upon postmasters, but is not disposed to weigh that minor difficulty against the more prominent advantages of the weight system. He objects to it, however, on account of the great diminution of income it might produce (especially in the item of military postage) if the English scale of weights be adopted, the effect of which, taking the existing scale as the basis of his calculation, he estimates at 4,500*l.*, and taking scale No. 4 as his basis, at 3,109*l.* upon military postage alone. The following table shows the result of his calculations as to the amount of relief which the action of the weight system superadded to each of the four scales would afford to the military departments.

	Loss on Reduction in the Scale of Rates.	Loss on Introduction of Weight System, estimated at 25 per cent.	Estimated Total Loss on Military Postage.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Under existing scale of rates -	- - -	4,500 - -	- - -
Under Scale No. 1 - - -	1,963 13 -	4,009 1 9	5,972 14 9
Ditto - No. 2 - - -	3,436 7 6	3,640 18 1	7,077 5 7
Ditto - No. 3 - - -	4,909 2 -	3,272 9 6	8,181 11 6
Ditto - No. 4 - - -	5,563 12 11	3,109 1 9	8,672 14 8

This, however, so far from being in our eyes an objection to it, is rather an additional recommendation; for we keep constantly in view that these calculations proceed on the supposition that the Imperial Government will consent to abandon the surplus now annually remitted to England from Canada, and we cannot admit that the introduction of a system, in other respects desirable, ought to be prevented by the consideration that the military departments would benefit by it to a larger extent than the civil, or than the people of the province in their social and commercial intercourse. On the contrary, we should rather rejoice in any alterations which would diminish the weight of the sacrifice; and, moreover, it may have some effect in influencing the determination of the Imperial Government to find that, in adopting the weight system in conjunction with our fourth scale of rates, we propose to reduce the yearly amount of military postage by so important a sum as 8,672*l.* We think with Mr. Griffin that no material loss is to be apprehended from the adoption of the weight system, except on the item of military postage. Indeed, we incline rather to expect a trifling

Would have little or no effect on other post-office revenue.

trifling gain, from the great encouragement it will hold out to the transmission by post of letters with enclosures and small parcels, and of the increased facilities it will afford.

Assuming these our calculations to be correct, the utmost loss in Canada from the adoption of the two changes we propose may be estimated at 9,000*l.*, a sum which we think it well worth while to risk for objects so important. Of their effect in the lower provinces we can make no precise calculation; but the irregularities which prevail there are so many, and must be so injurious to the financial interests of the department, that we cannot but anticipate a decided increase of revenue from the introduction of the proposed changes.

Probable loss from adoption of scale No. 4, and weight system together.

It will be observed that we have taken for granted that the present payments of official postage will be continued. We addressed a circular on this subject to the heads of departments, civil and military, in all the provinces, and although the introduction of a system of official franking was strongly recommended by many, we do not find a majority of those who replied to our circular in favour of it. The project is certainly not in favour with the public generally. The great objection to it is, that it would so diminish the revenue as to make any reduction of rates impossible. We see no objection to the continuance of the franking privilege as heretofore enjoyed by the public departments in Great Britain, or as was proposed by the Bill * of 1834, inasmuch as it can never be a material consideration on the score of revenue.

Official franking incompatible with the support of the departments on a proper footing.

The only question is, whether a privilege so unimportant is worth keeping now that the English precedent on which it stood has been abolished. The principle upon which this suggestion is based is fully recognized by a despatch of the 8th February last, addressed by Lord John Russell to the late Governor-general, and which was referred to us for our information and guidance; the following passage extracted from that despatch appears to us almost decisive of the question:

Payment of the official postage sanctioned by late Colonial Secretaries and Lords of the Treasury.

“It has been therefore suggested by their Lordships that provision should be made by the provincial government for the establishment of efficient post-office arrangements on all the main lines of internal communication, for the use of which, when required for military purposes, or for the service of the general government of the North American provinces, payment may be made in the shape of postage from the funds of each office or department of the public service, as is now the practice in this country, in proportion to the correspondence transmitted through the post-office.”

It has been suggested that an exceptional rate for law papers, land patent deeds, and more especially for papers connected with the system of registry in force in Upper Canada and the lower provinces, and now about to commence in Lower Canada, would afford great accommodation to the public, and produce some increase in the revenue of the post-office. One judicious correspondent (Mr. J. S. Baldwin, of Toronto) has entered fully into the question, and suggests a mode by which the interests of the department might be protected against the commission of frauds under cover of the proposed privilege. Mr. Jones, the registrar of the county of Kent, grounding his opinion principally on the correspondence with his own office, writes in the following terms:—

Exceptional rate of postage on certain law papers.

“I have known, on several occasions, the sending of deeds to the office for registry to be retarded many months, with a view to getting a private conveyance, and saving the postage. I have known as many as 13 to be sent in that way at one time, which had been kept in waiting nearly a year, and I know of many others now in waiting.”

Looking to the importance of an efficient system of registration, and to the fact that the expense is one of the few objections which have been urged against it with any colour of truth, we are of opinion that some such plan as that suggested by Mr. Baldwin, but guarded with any further securities that may be required, might be advantageously adopted.

We do not think that the privilege of sending or receiving papers at the reduced

* It is worthy of remark that this Bill proposed to extend the privilege of official franking very slightly beyond its then limits. Our attention has been particularly drawn to this point by a claim to the privilege which Sir R. J. Routh, Commissary-general at Montreal, has urged on the strength of the provisions of this Bill in behalf of his department as a branch of the Treasury—a claim manifestly untenable, the Bill containing no allusion to any but officers of departments in Great Britain already privileged, and the heads of a few civil departments in the provinces.

reduced rate ought to extend beyond registrars and other persons connected officially with the administration of justice. Keeping in view this limitation, as well as those contained in Mr. Baldwin's letter, we see no reason why the papers in question should be charged a higher rate of postage than may be charged upon pamphlets, magazines and other printed matter of a like nature.

Newspaper postage

The origin of the present rates of newspaper postage, and the circumstances under which they have become a perquisite of the Deputy Postmaster-general, have been described in the earlier pages of this report. This perquisite, however, sanctioned by time, and countenanced by successive heads of the department in England, has given rise to much agitation and well-founded remonstrance in these provinces. The ruling party in the late House of Assembly of Lower Canada, and the proprietors of newspapers in both the Canadas, protested incessantly against what they described as a tax illegally collected for the exclusive benefit of the Deputy Postmaster-general. In Mr. Howe's charge, where, though the practice is the same, the burthen has been lighter by about one-half of the sum charged, complaints have been less loud and general.

We have been at some pains to learn the state of public feeling on this subject, and to ascertain the views and wishes of the publishers themselves.

should cease to be a perquisite.

It is admitted on all hands that the newspaper postage ought not to be a perquisite of office, and on this point we think it only necessary to observe further, that in 1834 this principle was recognized by the Postmaster-general, the Duke of Richmond, and embodied in the Bill prepared under his Grace's direction.

Free transmission of newspapers by post certainly not required by public opinion,

We have reason to believe that the existence of a perquisite so objectionable in many points of view is one of the chief causes, if not the only cause, of the aversion with which the newspaper postage has been regarded. Some of the publishers urge, on a variety of grounds, a claim for the free transmission of newspapers, but they are far from being supported in it by public opinion. It appears, on the contrary, to be well understood by most of our correspondents, that a journalist has no right, any more than other persons in business, to the gratuitous services of the post-office. The usage in England is not generally considered applicable here. It is well known that when the reduction of the English stamp duty was effected in 1836, the penny duty was retained on the express ground that, unless the newspaper contributed somehow to the revenue, the proprietors could have no claim for its free transmission by the post. It is satisfactory to us to have it in our power to state, that amongst the publishers themselves, the majority of those who have answered our circulars regard as untenable the pretensions set up by some of their own class.

nor even by their publishers as a class.

Rate should be reduced to a half-penny a sheet,

But the rate now charged is generally considered too high, and we see no reason to dissent from that opinion. Whether we consider the question as one affecting the interests of the community at large, or those of the department in particular, we think it would be advisable to reduce the rate to a halfpenny on each newspaper, the amount to which it was to have been fixed according to the Bill of 1834.

and pre-payment should cause to be required.

The regulation by which in all cases prepayment of the newspaper postage is exacted is very generally condemned.

It is disliked by the public, as having the effect of deterring persons from forwarding the newspaper to which they subscribe to a distant friend, by the publishers, to whom it occasions serious losses; and by the postmasters, whom it deprives of the remuneration to which they think themselves entitled for the trouble of sorting and delivering the papers. It certainly is a hardship upon the publishers, who have great difficulty at times in collecting payment from the country customers, and whose losses in that way are much increased by the necessity of advancing money for the postage. They cite the case of a subscriber removing to another part of the country, or not choosing to continue taking in his newspaper. The postage must still be paid in advance by the publisher, but the papers accumulate in the post-office for months, perhaps, before he learns that the name of the person to whom they are addressed ought to be removed from his subscription list. Directions have been given, it is true, to the postmasters to intimate to the publishers as quickly as possible, by returning one of the papers, that they are no longer taken in; but no precaution of this kind can suffice to guard the publishers from loss. The practice of prepayment is, we think, one of the causes, also, of that carelessness in the delivery, and frequent loss of newspapers, upon which complaints have reached us from all parts of the country, and which would be less likely to happen if it was the duty

duty of the postmaster to receive and account for the postage. We are not aware of any reasons for the continuance of a practice so universally unpopular, and so objectionable in many respects.

The above are the principal changes which we would venture to recommend in the matter of newspaper postage, and we see no reason to doubt that if henceforward the money collected be applied to the general purposes of the post-office, if the charge be reduced to a halfpenny on each newspaper, and prepayment be no longer exacted, these improvements will satisfy the public feeling, and tend to redress those grievances of which the publishers have reasonably complained.

The practice in Canada, and most of the lower provinces, as to the transmission by post of printed matter not published in the colony, is of a very anomalous and rather discreditable character. No printed matter coming from England, except stamped newspapers, which go free through the provinces, can pass through the post, unless charged by weight in the same way as letters exceeding an ounce are charged.

Rates on other printed matter.

In the case of English reviews, magazines and pamphlets, it is scarcely necessary to say that such exorbitant demands act as a complete prohibition. But the pirated American editions of these publications, which, by law, are contraband, and would be seized if it was attempted to pass them through the *custom-houses*, are freely sent through the post-offices on payment of a moderate sum, from which, however, as it is one of the Deputy Postmaster-general's perquisites, the public derive not the least advantage. Original American works which are not contraband, but chargeable with a duty of 30 per cent., are likewise freely transmitted by the post, on payment of the Deputy Postmaster-general's perquisite, to the manifest injury of the revenue, which is thus defrauded of the duty. The public have not complained much of irregularities, however gross, by which they have been enabled to purchase literature at a cheap rate; but our attention having been drawn to them by some sensible correspondents, and especially by important letters from Mr. Jessopp, the collector of customs at Quebec, and the Honourable John Macaulay, the late inspector-general of accounts, it became our duty seriously to notice a practice by which the customs' laws are evaded, and a direct fraud upon the revenue committed, an injustice inflicted on English publishers, and mischievous encouragement given to the literary piracy so extensively practised in the United States.

Prohibitory of British publications, but not of contraband American reprints.

Pamphlets and other publications, in pamphlet form, are now sent under the Deputy Postmaster-general's privilege, at a uniform rate for all distances of 1 *d.* a sheet, without any distinction, such as there is in the United States, between periodical and occasional writings. We have not received from the lower provinces any information respecting the practice there, or the rates of postage upon such printed matter.

Charged if mailed in British North America.

In this, as in the case of the newspapers, we are unable to discover any reason why the money collected for the service rendered by the post-office should any longer be an official perquisite.

We are of opinion that it would be desirable to make prepayment optional, and not compulsory, upon the sender; but we do not think the amount of the present rate objectionable. It is about equal to, or a trifle less than, that charged for the same service in the United States. If the weight system be adopted as the mode of charging letters, it will obviously be convenient to apply it to printed matter also. In that case we would recommend that the amount charged upon every sheet of average weight should not vary materially from the present rate. We have made some calculations from which it will appear that a rate of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* an ounce would yield on the average a rise of 15 per cent. on the present charge, and that 1 *d.* the ounce would be equivalent to a reduction of 25 per cent. We are disposed to prefer the latter, feeling confident that such a mode and rate of payment would lead ultimately to an increase of revenue. The only objection which we have heard stated is that it will encourage the use of inferior paper; an objection which does not appear very formidable when weighed against the advantages the change may be expected to produce.

Pre-payments should be optional.

and the charge should be by weight, and low.

However desirable it might be that original American works should be forwarded through the post-office on payment of the present rate, or of that which may hereafter be substituted for it, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that the duty of 30 per cent. is evaded by the existing practice, or to the impos-

Difficulty as regards American works, owing to requirements of revenue laws.

sibility

sibility of any arrangement by which the post-office could be enabled to collect that duty.

Rates to and from Great Britain should be as low as possible.

The proprietors of some of the best English periodicals issued some time ago the prospectus of a cheap colonial and foreign edition of their respective publications, an effort in which it appears to us that they deserve any encouragement which it may be in the power of the Government to afford. Much might be effected by enforcing the law against the surreptitious introduction of the American reprints into the colonies, and fixing such postage and packet-rates as would enable the cheap English editions to compete with the smuggled and pirated American ones. But in this case it would be necessary to reduce considerably the packet postage on printed matter coming from England by the Halifax steamers. The present charges are nothing short of prohibitory; but even a considerable reduction of postage would not be sufficient, unless the publishers themselves see the necessity of lowering their prices much beyond those given in the prospectus to which we have referred.

Rates on letters, &c. delivered at the office where they are mailed and on their delivery by letter-carriers, practice to which there are strong objections.

The rates to be charged on letters or packets deposited in a post-office for persons within its delivery, and on general post letters delivered by letter-carriers, also require notice. The various usages which prevail in the absence of any uniform rule on this subject have been sufficiently described. The Deputy Postmaster-general at Quebec has suggested a rule on both these points, to which we see no other objection than that at offices not provided with letter-carriers, he would permit the postmaster to receive the charge on the former class of letters as a perquisite, a practice to which there are strong objections. It is true that the check upon a postmaster for such collections is extremely slight; but we would still rather require him to deal with *all* monies received for postage as postage, than allow him to regard any portion of it, however small, as his own fee.

No great complaint of want of post-offices in Canada, though the number might well be increased.

We do not find any very general complaints in Canada of the insufficiency of the number of post-offices. Whatever complaint there is on this subject comes chiefly from Lower Canada, where the population make so little use of the post that it is impossible to maintain as extensive an establishment as in Upper Canada; we are, however, of opinion that a considerable increase might be made in both sections of the province, with advantage to the department.

In the United States there are about twice as many post-offices in proportion to the population as there are in Canada; and although this inequality may be caused in part by the difference in the habits of the population, we cannot think that cause sufficient in itself to account for so great a disproportion. For the correction of such errors as may have tended to produce this result, we have at present only to suggest generally the adoption of a policy somewhat bolder than that which has hitherto been pursued; the practice has been to wait for an application before proceeding to erect a new post-office; it does not appear that many applications are refused, but there is often considerable delay in making the preliminary inquiries through the surveyor, which, combined with the general vice of the system, its want of popular control, and hence of public confidence, does much to discourage applications. People have long been wishing for a post-office before they can make up their minds to apply for it, and there are instances in which for years they have suffered great inconvenience without ever applying at all in the proper quarter. With the aid of additional surveyors, and the more provincial and popular character we desire to see given to the administration, these evils would be greatly lessened. But the department should, we think, be constantly on the watch for opportunities, instead of waiting for the public to petition for every step that is taken towards the extension of post-office accommodation.

Many more offices wanted in New Brunswick.

Complaints of the want of post-offices are very general in New Brunswick, and there, certainly, a thorough change of system is required. We find only 34 places in the whole province where letters can be deposited or received, and half of these are mere way-offices, where postage cannot be prepaid, nor letters regularly mailed. To place New Brunswick on a par in this respect with Canada, there ought to be about 70 regular offices. At present on the four routes from Fredericton, the capital of the province, the nearest post-offices are Woodstock, in the direction of Canada, distant 64 miles; Miramichi to the north-east, distant 104 miles; Sussex Vale to the south-east, on the road to Halifax, 80 miles; and Gagetown, on the St. John road, 32 miles. No further proof can be required of the necessity for the immediate establishment of a great number of new offices.

Nova Scotia, perhaps, because it is the province in which the Deputy Postmaster-general resides, is better accommodated. Including way-offices, the average is as high as in Canada; but the proportion of way to regular offices is so large (about 87 to 17, we believe), and the accommodation at the former is generally so imperfect, that the comparison is really much in favour of Canada. There have been no regular offices erected for many years, but we presume that way-offices have been established wherever the people have taken steps to obtain them, though we are not aware of any rule as to the mode of applying for establishing them. We do not doubt that, under an enterprising administration, the amount of accommodation could be much increased, with equal advantage to the revenue and to the public.

And in Nova Scotia a considerable increase.

In Prince Edward's Island, where the provincial government has entire control, the number of offices is 29 (28 of them way-offices), to a population of 42,500; a proportion considerably higher than in any of the other provinces. The number, we presume, is sufficient, as we have not received any complaints on the subject.

In Prince Edward's Island the number probably sufficient.

We have received several letters from places in which it is said that post-offices are injudiciously placed. It was of course impossible for us to satisfy ourselves of the justice or injustice of these complaints, which are all of a purely local character; but it may be remarked, that in a country where post-offices are every day required in parishes and townships in which settlement is only just commencing, it is impossible that their site should be always so well selected in the first instance as not afterwards to admit of a change for the better. The active performance of the surveyor's duties, subject always to the control of the local governments, afford a sufficient and perhaps the only remedy for this evil.

Complaints as to site of post-offices.

The greatest defect, in our view, in the existing arrangements for the establishment of new offices is one of which the public at large has never been in a condition to complain, from want of information as to the interior government of the department,—we allude to the absence of that systematic classification into forwarding, ordinary and sub-offices, which has long been established in Great Britain. We have seen that, in Canada, every recognized post-office makes up mails direct for every other, and accounts directly to the general office at Quebec, and, though this is not the practice in the lower provinces, that the distinction between regular and way-offices, and between offices that correspond with each other and those that do not, is wholly arbitrary. The inconveniences resulting from this state of things are so many and various, that we feel bound to urge the adoption of the English system in all its integrity, as among the first and most essential reforms to be undertaken.

Necessity of promptly introducing the English forward and sub-office systems.

We have shewn how much the want of the forwarding system adds to the labour of postmasters in despatching and receiving mails; but this is neither the whole nor the worst of the evil. It is to some extent the cause, and to a still greater, the excuse of those delays in the travel of the mail, which are the subject of such loud and universal complaint. A postmaster, who must examine the whole contents of a large bag, that he may select from them an indefinite number of parcels addressed to his office, and who has then to replace these by a number of parcels of his own addressed to other offices, will always take his time; and a delay of this sort occurring every few miles on a long route becomes a serious hindrance. The number of parcels, moreover, in each bag, and the small size of most of them, make it almost a hopeless task to trace a missing letter, or detect fraud or negligence. The very accounts rendered to Quebec are made so complex by the number of offices with which each postmaster is in communication, and the small amount of postage in most instances, that no supposable force in the accountant's office could audit them in an effectual manner.

A judicious distribution of forward offices would go far to remove all these difficulties. Postmasters at most of the other offices would find their duties greatly lessened, from having to make up and overhaul fewer mails, and to keep fewer accounts; the duties would be better performed than they are now, and it would consequently be easier in new districts to find men able and willing to undertake them.

The mails would generally be overhauled at country offices in less time, and, with ordinary care, they might be traced from office to office in a manner which would render easy the detection of carelessness or dishonesty. The accounts of the department might, by the mere use of the common cross-post or square sheet,

be checked with ease and precision, and that, too, by a moderate force of clerks in the accountant's office.

It would contribute still further to all these ends, if a number of the smaller post-offices, such more particularly as lie off the leading routes, and with no others beyond them, were classed as sub-offices, and made dependent on a neighbouring office, the postmaster at which should incorporate their accounts with his own. The establishment of these, however, should not be, as is now the case with the few sub-offices existing in Canada, the mere act of the postmaster. They should be recognized like other offices by the department, and placed under its rules.

The same system should be extended to the lower provinces, and in that case the whole of the present arrangements regarding the inter-correspondence, and accounts of the regular and way-offices, will require to be remodelled.

In bringing this change into effect, it may be expected that some difficulties and confusion will occur at first. The first step ought to be the appointment of the full complement of surveyors, and before the change is made they ought to have the opportunity of making a tour of their respective districts to explain the new system to the postmasters.

Perhaps it might be desirable to proceed gradually, first in one surveyor's district, then in another, and so on; but in whatever manner it be effected, the necessity of such an improvement appears to us unquestionable.

It is a matter of complaint at many offices, that the public are not sufficiently accommodated in regard to the hours at which post-offices are kept open for the receipt or delivery of the mails. The Deputy Postmaster-general's printed regulations fix the hours for the larger offices at from seven o'clock A.M. to seven P.M. in summer, and in winter at from eight A.M. to four P.M. With the exception of the closing at four in winter, which at the principal places seems unreasonably early, we see no objection to this regulation; but at the minor offices there are practically no regulations at all; and from the smallness of the postmaster's remuneration, it is hardly to be expected that rules could be strictly enforced. Where an office is kept in a shop, the public will probably have access to it at all reasonable hours; when that is not the case, all that can be done is to insist upon every postmaster's giving the public as much accommodation as can reasonably be desired.

Another subject of general complaint is the unsuitableness of the hours fixed by postmasters for making up their mails; in consequence of which it is alleged that letters often cannot be received at an office, except on payment of a fee, for several hours previous to the actual departure of the mail,—a practice which is productive of much inconvenience and dissatisfaction, particularly in cases where another mail arrives in the meantime, or so near the hour as to make it impossible to reply to letters received by it. It must be admitted that some of the complaints made to us on this score are not altogether reasonable. A postmaster can neither be expected to make up his mails at uncertain hours, to suit the chances of a courier's arriving earlier or later than his usual time, nor (except at a few of the most important offices) during the night, or at a late hour in the evening. But there are cases which call loudly for amendment. The postmaster is allowed a fee on all late letters, and yet he is left to fix his own hours, subject only to their being changed by the Deputy Postmaster-general on complaint formally made and sustained by evidence; but making such complaints is always an invidious, and sometimes a troublesome proceeding, not free from difficulty even when the case is clearest. The postmaster's report has naturally an advantage over a remonstrance. The addition to the number of the surveyors, and the increased responsibility to public opinion, under which the other changes we have suggested would place the department, would suffice, we think, to effect the desired reform, by making the rules of the department more strict, and ensuring their more punctual observance.

This remark applies equally to the complaints against postmasters on the score of incivility and inattention, which have been in some cases brought before us. Constituted as the department now is, with its postmasters so poorly paid, and so imperfectly controlled, complaints of this nature cannot be altogether without foundation. We look forward, however, to an improvement in these respects.

Complaints have been frequently urged against the appointment of shopkeepers as postmasters. It is asserted that a postmaster in trade enjoys an undue advantage

Office hours,

And hours for closing mails.

Complaints of incivility and inattention of postmasters.

Appointment of shopkeepers, &c. as postmasters.

advantage over other tradesmen in his franking privilege, in the opportunities he has of getting his letters earlier, and of writing later than his rivals in business, and in the knowledge he must have of the persons with whom they correspond. It is also stated that the secrecy of letters is very often violated. Some persons object, on the same grounds, though certainly without equal reason, to the appointment of lawyers and notaries. We are not prepared to defend the practice of appointing tradesmen on any other ground than that of necessity. Wherever the emoluments of a post-office are sufficient, it would obviously be desirable to command the undivided services of a competent person; but it must not be forgotten that this can be the case at but few places in these provinces. Even in England, a great number of the smaller offices are kept by shopkeepers. Were they excluded here, fit persons could not be found to discharge the duties, for the best remuneration they could possibly receive, at more than half the offices in the country. All that we can venture to recommend is, that others should be appointed where they can be found; that the postmasters' privilege should be rendered as little objectionable as possible, and their abuse guarded against by strict attention to the discipline of the department.

The insecurity of money-letters has been much pressed on our attention. It is not to be wondered at that, under the present mode of mailing, they should sometimes be lost, and that when lost it is sometimes found impossible to trace them. In these cases, it is felt as a hardship that the department through whose fault the loss may be said to have taken place should not be held answerable for it. It is obvious, however, that no change of the rule on this head can be made with safety to the department. The complainants forget that the rates of postage are not rates of insurance, but simply a charge to cover the actual transport and delivery. It has been urged that the department should not merely register, but ensure money-letters at some fixed rate of premium; and to this we see no objection in principle, though we are not prepared to recommend the project. We think, however, it might be well to require a postmaster to give any person mailing a money-letter a certificate of his having done so, provided the contents of the letter are enclosed in his presence; and for this service a moderate fee might be allowed.

Rules of department as to money-letters.

The greater safety that would be ensured to the mail by the general changes of system we recommend will have the effect, we doubt not, of preventing many of those losses.

The adoption of the English system of post-office orders for money has been suggested; but looking to the small sums received on account of the department at the majority of offices, we think it would not be easy to effect such an arrangement, however desirable it would be as an accommodation to the public.

By some of our correspondents, a practice of violating the secrecy of letters is said to prevail in post-offices. An inquiry into some charges of this nature has recently been instituted in the Bathurst district, but we have not as yet been made acquainted with the result.* Other circumstances of strong suspicion, but not sufficiently proved to justify us in a more specific allusion, have been brought under the notice of the Commission, and some irregularities connected with a series of letters on public business, addressed to one of ourselves, are certainly of a nature to warrant us in noticing the matter. Our duty to the public forbids us to pass over these complaints in silence; but we feel, at the same time, that we shall sufficiently acquit ourselves of that duty by directing attention to the fact that such complaints do exist, and are not, we fear, altogether destitute of foundation. The horror with which such actions inspire every honourable mind will be sufficient in itself to impress upon the head of the department the necessity of great vigilance in the detection of offenders, and unrelenting severity in the punishment of postmasters proved to have been guilty of such disgraceful crimes.

Violation of the secrecy of letters.

It would be difficult to discuss the question of conveyance, and the improvements that may reasonably be looked for, in the speed and number of the mails, without some reference to the state of the roads and other communications; but

Mail conveyance, state of the roads, &c.

we

* Since the above was written, the report of the surveyor who was charged with the inquiry has been furnished us by the Deputy Postmaster-general; but unfortunately, all the documents connected with the case were lost in the burning of the Quebec post-office. The surveyor acquits the postmaster; but in its present form, the report is not worth printing.

we do not consider it necessary to enter at any length into the state of the internal communications in these provinces. In a new and thinly-settled country, where, from the severity and extreme vicissitudes of the climate, the roads, however well made originally, must often be almost impassable, sometimes blocked up with snow, at other seasons interrupted by a considerable depth of mud; where the rivers and lakes are closed for months, and where the land travelling requires, in winter, a class of carriages totally different from those used in summer, it would be vain to hope for any great degree of regularity in the travel of the mails. By no possible outlay of money can they be carried at the same rate of speed all the year round, any more than they could be carried always in the same conveyances. Poverty and the thinly-scattered population of the country have, it is true, forbidden the making of roads so good as they might be, even in this climate; but the same causes have operated with still greater effect to prevent the post-office from possessing a revenue applicable to these objects, or to any purposes beyond its own immediate functions. Future improvement in the roads will necessarily lead to corresponding facilities in the transmission of letters; but for the present, and for many years to come, we see no reason to think that any portion of the post-office revenue could be judiciously or with propriety expended in the improvement of roads.

We cannot doubt, however, that the slowness and irregularity of the mails, of which so many have complained, are in a great measure to be ascribed to the bad state of the roads; and we have observed with satisfaction that the several provinces appear to be doing much, as much, perhaps, as could reasonably be expected, to remove that evil. The large appropriations lately made by the Canadian legislature will furnish the means of vast improvement on all the principal lines; whilst the powers conferred upon the newly-created district councils can hardly fail to secure results not less satisfactory on routes of minor importance. In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the roads are generally much better than in Canada. We have reason to believe that the system now in operation in these provinces is working well, and bringing the roads into a condition to stand comparison with any on the American continent.

But there are means quite independent of improvement in the roads by which the conveyance of the mails may be greatly improved both in speed and regularity. To some of these we have already adverted. The adoption of the forward-office system would simplify the proceedings at the country offices, and produce a great saving of time. An efficient force of surveyors would enable the department to exercise a more vigilant control over its postmasters and contractors. Many causes of delay would thus be removed, in the lower provinces more especially, where hitherto there has never been any real check upon either the postmasters or the couriers.

Impossibility of generally employing guards.

The introduction of the English practice of placing the mails under the charge of guards is very generally desired; and if the expense were not beyond the present means of the department, it would undoubtedly be a valuable improvement. It would provide an effectual check upon postmasters and contractors, and contribute not less to the security than to the speed and regularity of the mails. We regret, therefore, to be compelled to report our opinion, that the expense would be greater than the financial condition of the department would warrant. The severity of the winters, and the fatiguing character of the travelling at all seasons, would render necessary a much larger number of guards on a given distance than is required in England. Wages, also, are so high comparatively, that it would be impossible to engage trustworthy persons, except at prices far beyond the English salaries. In addition to these considerations, the mails are so much smaller, and the postage so trifling in amount, as to render the systematic employment of guards almost impossible. Two guards were employed last summer on the steam-boats between Quebec and Montreal, and, we believe, with great advantage; but this was a peculiar case, and, except for mails so sent, we are not of opinion that in the present condition of the country it would be practicable to introduce the English custom.

Contracts.

Considerable improvement might be effected in the mode of contracting for the conveyance of mails, and much advantage derived from a stricter enforcement of contracts when made. Attention to these points, we are persuaded, would be rewarded not only by a great increase of speed and regularity, but also by a considerable diminution of expense.

Written contracts for a term of years do not appear to have ever been in use in

in the lower provinces. In Canada the practice has latterly been different, and nearly all the mail service is now performed under contract; but the contracts are not made by advertisement and tender, except on the more important routes, and not always on those, and it has been usual so to frame the terms of the contract as to admit of its being varied or indefinitely continued by private agreement. The effect of this is to give to a contract, which cannot be too stringent upon the parties, or too much exposed to public inspection and competition, the character of a mere private transaction between the Deputy Postmaster-general and the contractor. It may happen that parties whom the department must employ, because no others offer, may be unwilling to enter into a regular contract, and on some routes the service and remuneration may be so trifling as hardly to require a formal instrument. But we are strongly of opinion that a contract should not be dispensed with wherever it can be had, and that all contracts, without any exception, should be offered by public advertisement to general competition. We cannot admit that any supposed advantages of the secret method, such as the opportunity it may afford of promising to a meritorious contractor a renewal or an amendment of his contract and the like, are sufficient to balance the waste of public money and the jobbing to which secrecy may give rise, or the great evil of public discontent and suspicion which it can hardly fail to create.

Contracts should be formally made for all mail service and by public competition.

It may possibly be found necessary, with a view to the maintenance of that control which the department should exercise over those whom it employs, to insert commonly a condition by which the Deputy Postmaster-general shall have the power of varying within certain limits the terms of the agreement; but this, which is the exception, should never be suffered to become so far the rule of the department as to militate against the principle of written contracts binding upon both parties, and of public competition.

It would be difficult, and if practicable, it would hardly be desirable, to fix upon one period of time for which all contracts should be made. There are obvious reasons why it would be inconvenient that the whole or any large proportion of the number of contracts should be allowed to expire at the same time. They might be made to run generally for a term of from three to five years; but these and other similar details may, under an improved system of management and supervision, be safely left to the officers of the department.

There is, however, one point upon which we feel we ought to express a decided opinion—the necessity, whatever may be the terms of the contract, of insisting in all cases upon its strict fulfilment by the contractor. The loose manner in which these agreements are dealt with is a great defect in the present management of the Canadian post-office.

And their strict fulfilment should always be enforced.

The penalties which the Deputy Postmaster-general is authorized to levy ought to be levied upon every infraction of a contract, and remitted only in such cases as may present some extraordinary circumstances of justification; but instead of this, we have reason to believe that the practice in Canada is, not to levy the fines at all, except for some extraordinary infraction, which may appear to justify an unusual degree of severity. It can scarcely be necessary to suggest what injurious effects must flow from a practice, the obvious tendency of which is to raise in the minds of contractors an impression that they are not so much bound by their written engagements as by some vague understanding with the Deputy Postmaster-general as to the extent to which they may be violated with impunity. It has been urged that a strict enforcement of contracts would render it extremely difficult to find persons who would engage for the performance of some of the services required for such remuneration as the department has usually offered; but this seems to us to be only another way of stating that the terms of the contract are wrong, and ought to be changed. We can regard a contract in no other light than as an engagement by the conditions and penalties of which the parties are prepared, and, if necessary, should be compelled, to abide. If a necessity for some modification in the terms of existing agreements be shewn, it will be easy to effect the necessary changes; but we cannot doubt that a strict enforcement of contracts will tend to a great increase of speed and punctuality in the conveyance of the mails.

The mode of carrying the mails must necessarily continue to vary on different routes and at different seasons. This is a matter which must, we think, be left to the discretion of the department, and the only suggestions we feel justified in making are that foot-posts should as soon as possible be discontinued in those

Mode of carrying the mails.

few places where they are now employed, and that steam-boat and railroad conveyances, where attainable, should be preferred to all others.

Passenger conveyances must generally be used.

Some of our correspondents (principally persons residing upon the main routes in Upper Canada) are desirous of having the conveyance of land mails separated altogether from that of passengers. That course has been successfully pursued with regard to the land mail between Quebec and Montreal, and it has much to recommend it in cases where the circumstances of the country will allow it to be practised; but we question whether it could be practised on any other route. If the mail is carried in any kind of vehicle, the contractor will be sure to demand a far higher price if he is to be debarred from making the most of equipage by carrying passengers. It cannot be denied that the accommodation of passengers interferes with many desirable arrangements; it interposes sometimes to prevent the mails from stopping at those places only which the department would prefer, and sometimes regulates inconveniently the hours of departure and arrival; but these we regard as the necessary evils of an establishment in a new country, where on many routes the amount of the postage received and the number of letters are insufficient to cover the expense of their carriage.

From the lower provinces (where there is less accommodation for passengers than in Canada), the suggestions are generally the other way; and it happens curiously enough that stage companies on particular routes are in the receipt of legislative bounties, whilst the mail is often carried over the same road with the coach which receives the grant, but in another and generally a slower vehicle. In such cases, of course the complaint is that the stages do not carry the mails, and the demand is for some aid from the post-office in support of their stages.

It is obviously the policy of the department to avail itself of the existing means of communication, and in doing so to endeavour to improve them to the utmost, but not to attempt to create new ones for its own use alone. Some valuable suggestions upon this subject will be found in a letter from Mr. Stockley, a gentleman who has had a long experience in such matters in Ireland. It can hardly be expected in Canada that vehicles should be devoted exclusively to the mails, when we consider that even in England the use of mail-coaches on all the principal routes shews that the utility of the practice was felt even when a necessity for it could not be said to exist.

Though under stricter regulations than at present.

But, nevertheless, we are not disposed to deny that the present mail stage system in these provinces requires very considerable amendment; that is a subject upon which we have received many and apparently well-founded complaints. The number of passengers and the weight of luggage should be strictly regulated, and strong efforts should be made to restrain the irregularities of the stoppages, and the intolerable delays upon the road.

Frequency of the mail. In the Canada charge no great change is called for.

We do not feel called upon to offer any suggestions on the frequency of the mail in the Canada charge. The arrangements now existing or in contemplation appear to us to offer all, or nearly all, the accommodation in this respect which in the present circumstances of the country could be expected. The only route not served as often as once a week (a part of the communication between the district of Gaspé and Quebec) is shortly to be made a weekly route. As population or commerce increases in any particular district, it is to be hoped that an improved administration of the post-office will afford a proportionate increase of facilities for correspondence; but in the lower provinces we cannot but think that there is much more reason to complain, and we are of opinion that there a considerable increase in the number of mails is required. Between Halifax and the principal towns in the western part of New Brunswick, St. John's, Fredericton and St. Andrew's, the mail ought to travel daily. The towns along the eastern coast of New Brunswick, several of which have become places of considerable importance, should certainly communicate with the western towns and with Halifax three times a week. From Halifax to Yarmouth, the principal town in Western Nova Scotia, and the second in point of trade in the province, there should be two if not three mails a week; and to Prince Edward's Island and Cape Breton, two at least.

In the Lower Provinces much more.

Daily mails required from Halifax to Western New Brunswick. From Eastern New Brunswick to Halifax, three mails a week. From Halifax to Western Nova Scotia, two if not three. And to Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton, at least two.

We do not think that the department would suffer in a financial point of view from these changes, but the reverse, especially if they be adopted in conjunction with some others we have recommended. The information we have received from various parts leaves no doubt upon our minds that the want of accommodation, together with other great defects in the establishment, have almost driven the mail out of use as a means of ordinary correspondence throughout all this

section of country, and that it is scarcely ever employed unless in cases where there is some absolute but occasional necessity for resorting to it.

It has been suggested that there should be an unbroken daily mail communication from Halifax along the whole of the main route to Canada, a project which would no doubt be most desirable. But at present much of the country between Fredericton and Quebec is far too wild and unsettled to admit of this being accomplished without incurring an expense beyond the means of the department. The utmost that can as yet be done will be to maintain two or three mails a week, securing always the transmission of the English mails in winter by express, without reference to the days or the rate of travel of the ordinary mail.

Daily mail from Halifax through to Quebec at present impossible.

A few respectable correspondents demand that the travel of the mail and other operations of the post-office should be suspended on Sundays; their desire appears to be in general, that in their own particular neighbourhood the mail should not start, arrive, or be delivered on Sundays. But we doubt whether many of those gentlemen are prepared to carry to its full extent the principle upon which their recommendation is based; they do not ask, and we may therefore presume they do not desire, that the operations of the department should be suspended on that day throughout all parts of the country.

Question of Sunday mail service.

And yet if the principle is to be insisted upon to the extent of stopping the mail in any one place for 24 hours on the long routes (and in British North America all the leading routes are long), this is the conclusion to which it must necessarily lead. During the early part of last summer the mail between Montreal and Toronto was not allowed to leave either of those places on Sunday; but it left both places on the Saturday, and passed through to its destination without stopping, so that at all the intermediate places there was of course nearly as much Sunday travel as though there had not been this observance of the day at the *termini* of the route. At Kingston, about half way between the two places, the Sunday arrivals and departures were precisely those of any other day; but on Monday there was no mail either way, and no steam-boat, because none had started the day before from Montreal or Toronto. In like manner no mails were allowed to start on Sunday from Montreal for Quebec, or from Toronto for the West. One consequence of this arrangement was, that a Toronto letter for Quebec, if mailed on Saturday morning, would travel all Sunday and reach Quebec on Tuesday morning; but if mailed on Friday, after having travelled most of Sunday, to reach Montreal on the Sunday afternoon, it would be detained there until the Monday afternoon, and be there overtaken by the letter mailed on the Saturday. With letters from Quebec or east of Quebec, to places west of Toronto, or *vice versa*, the case was still worse. Six mails a week, for example, started from Quebec for the West, and from Hamilton for the East; but yet the Quebec mail could arrive at Hamilton, and the Hamilton mail at Quebec, only four times a week, one mail being detained for the Sunday at Toronto, and another at Montreal. But in all places except these two, the travel of the mail went on just the same on Sunday as on Monday, and is interrupted just as much on Monday as on Sunday. Great anomalies arise from the partial adoption of this principle, and intolerable inconvenience would result, we fear, from its complete adoption. The choice lies, we think, between the stoppage of the post-office business *everywhere* on Sunday on the one hand, and an effort on the other, to lighten the Sunday labours of the department, wherever it can be done, without great public inconvenience. The former alternative is hardly feasible; it would delay more than half of all the letters passing through the post-office in British North America more than 24 hours *in transitu*; many it would delay 48 hours; and some, in winter, 72. The latter alteration would admit of a great curtailment of office hours at all places, and of an arrangement of mails which would require no travelling on Sunday upon the side routes. But upon the main lines of communication we doubt whether Sunday travelling can be suppressed, and whether it would be reasonable to attempt its suppression.

We feel that the question of the routes by which the mail should travel is not properly within the scope of our present duties, but that it will hereafter belong to the Deputy Postmaster-general and his band of surveyors to suggest such improvements in this respect as their experience may show to be necessary. We may, however, state our opinion, founded upon the information collected in the course of this inquiry, that the routes now followed in Canada are generally well chosen.

Mail routes.

In the lower provinces, we believe, there is greater room for improvement; but for this, we look with confidence to the establishment of that supervision which the head of the department, with surveyors at command, will hereafter be enabled to exercise.

From Halifax to Quebec, the mail should travel *viz* Annapolis and St. John's.

We cannot, however, forbear from noticing the circuitous and ill-chosen route by which the Halifax mail travels to Quebec round the head of the Bay of Fundy, instead of taking the direct course to Annapolis or Digby, and thence by steam-boat across the Bay of Fundy.* We think that, ere long, it will be necessary to effect this alteration, and the sooner the better. It will be productive of great advantages, direct and indirect, to the western counties of Nova Scotia, as well as to New Brunswick, and we see no reason to doubt that it would afford the means of effecting a saving of two days or more between Halifax and Quebec,—an improvement the importance of which cannot be too highly estimated.

A separate English mail for New Brunswick suggested.

There is one point upon which the inhabitants of New Brunswick are very desirous of some improvement, and upon which we think it not impossible to comply to a certain extent with the views strongly urged by many of our correspondents in that province. In making up the mails in England to be sent by the Cunard steamers, the bags are addressed only to Halifax and Quebec, all letters for the lower provinces being placed in the former, and everything for Canada in the Quebec bag; an arrangement which is productive of unnecessary delay in the delivery of the New Brunswick letters brought out by the English mail. The Canada mail is forwarded immediately upon the arrival of the steamer at Halifax, and so might that for New Brunswick be, if it was made up in a separate bag, instead of being mixed with the Nova Scotia letters, and therefore detained for the purpose of sorting at Halifax. We do not agree with those who suppose it possible for the postmaster at Liverpool to make up separate mails for any considerable number of places in British North America; neither are we prepared to recommend, according to a suggestion which has been made by some parties, the employment of sworn clerks on board the steamers, whose sole duty would be to sort the letters on the passage. But we cannot help thinking that a great boon, at a slight expense of trouble, would be conferred upon the people of New Brunswick by making up a separate bag of English letters directed to that province.

The inhabitants of New Brunswick suffer under the present arrangement the mortification of seeing, during the winter months, the English mail for Canada pass their doors sometimes more than 48 hours, before their own letters (though brought by the same steamer to Halifax) are forwarded to their destination. If this suggestion should appear worthy of adoption, we are of opinion that the separate mail for New Brunswick ought to be addressed to St. John, the place of most consequence, and the site of the principal post-office of the province.

The increase of accommodation which this arrangement would produce would, we have reason to believe, be sensibly felt and thankfully acknowledged by the people of New Brunswick. In case of its adoption, the New Brunswick mail would of course follow the route we have suggested above, as an improvement on the route now used between Halifax and Quebec.

But to a claim which has been put in by some persons residing in Prince Edward's Island and the district of Gaspé, we are not prepared to yield the same assent. They ask that during the summer months the steam-boat which carries the English mails between Pictou and Quebec should call at Gaspé and Prince Edward's Island. Before this could be effected, it would be necessary to have separate mails made up for those places at Liverpool, which, as regards Gaspé, we do not think it would be reasonable to expect. But we think the delay it would cause in the travel of the Canadian mail is in itself an insuperable objection to the suggestion.

And (if possible) for Prince Edward's Island also.

If it should be found practicable to make up a separate mail for Prince Edward's Island (and as it is a distinct province, perhaps that question may be taken into consideration), that mail would travel to Pictou along with the Canadian

* It will be perceived that some of our correspondents in the north-eastern counties of New Brunswick insist strongly on the Metis line as the best for the main route between Halifax and Canada. A glance at the map will suffice, we think, to show its inferiority to the one we have recommended.

Canadian mail, but from Pictou it must be sent separately to Charlotte Town. If it be determined to make up a separate English mail for the province of New Brunswick, it would obviously be a great accommodation to the inhabitants of Gaspé that their letters should be put up with the New Brunswick instead of the Canada mail, so as to avoid the great loss of time caused by sending the letters to Quebec and thence back to Gaspé.

English letters for Gaspé might go with New Brunswick mail.

A great deal of importance has been attached to the establishment of a daily mail between Halifax and Western New Brunswick by the improved line suggested above. We have inserted in the Appendix the report of a commission of three gentlemen appointed by Sir John Harvey, the late governor of New Brunswick, to inquire into this subject. We cannot participate in the expectations entertained by those gentlemen of the productiveness of the proposed route, considered with reference to the correspondence between Halifax and St. John and the intermediate places; neither do we regard productiveness as the criterion by which so important a project should be tested. We are disposed to view it as a link in the great line of communication through the country, rather than as a mere local improvement; and in this wider view, it appears to hold out advantages sufficient to entitle it to serious consideration. But this, as well as the details of the proposed plan upon which great difference of opinion will be found to exist, is a matter which may best be decided upon by the head of the department when the necessary inquiries shall have been made upon the spot by competent surveyors.

Importance of direct daily mail from Halifax to Western New Brunswick.

There is one defect in the conveyance of the English mail from Halifax to Canada during the winter, to overcome which we trust that a strong effort will be made, though we are not sure that the means of the department are quite equal to the remedy. The great bulk of the newspapers mailed renders it impossible, under the present contracts, to forward them at once with the letters, and they are sent off, consequently, in instalments by the two, three or even four next ordinary mails. The people of Canada thus receive their newspapers irregularly, by twos and threes, at uncertain intervals, sometimes of not less than a fortnight. This great inconvenience will doubtless operate prejudicially by discouraging the use of the British press in this province.

English newspapers as well as letters should be forwarded promptly for Canada from Halifax.

But while we admit the extent of the evil, and are greatly desirous that a remedy might be found, we cannot but doubt whether the department can reasonably be expected to make a heavy outlay for the quicker transport of an article which pays nothing towards the expense of its transmission through the province.

Many persons residing in the western parts of Canada desire that the power of receiving and sending their English letters for the steam-ships through the United States should be restored to them; they urge that throughout the year much time would thus be saved for all the country west of Toronto, and as far east as Montreal during the winter months. To this it may be replied, that as regards the Cunard steamers, any one may now avail himself of the United States' route *via* Boston, who is content to submit to its charges and inconveniences; the postage must be paid both ways *as far as Boston*, but cannot be paid through either way. It varies in amount, but commonly averages twice or thrice as much as the postage by way of Halifax. The travel of the mail through the United States to most parts of Upper Canada is indirect, and in winter neither certain nor expeditious. We question, in fact, whether it is even now worth while, except in some peculiar cases, to mail English letters *via* Boston; but on the other hand, we think it quite possible so to improve the main route through the provinces from Halifax (for which purpose we have already submitted some suggestions), as to remove whatever inducement may now exist for preferring the route through the United States.

Demand in Western Canada for English letters to be forwarded through the United States for steam-ships.

It might indeed be possible to make an agreement with the American government, through which a great saving of time could be effected without either risk or difficulty, by a mode to which we shall presently advert in discussing the state of the post-office relations existing between the provinces of British North America and the United States.

The relations of the two post-offices are, we regret to state, at once anomalous and unsatisfactory. The American department enjoys in Canada facilities even greater than those which it possesses at home, and pays its Canadian agents (our postmasters) by a per centage regulated upon the scale of remuneration for their own officers. The amount of American postage received in this way for the last

Unsatisfactory character of post-office relations with the United States.

year of which we have a return, was 11,316*l.* 5*s.* 8*d.* currency, and the allowance for agency was 2,315*l.* 17*s.* 6½*d.* currency. Of the latter sum the Deputy Postmaster-general's share was 603*l.* 10*s.* 9*d.*, and most of the remainder was divided amongst nine postmasters. Mr. John Stayner received at Queenston, 493*l.* 7*s.* 2½*d.*; Mr. Deacon, at Kingston, 304*l.* 3*s.* 10*d.*, and at Toronto, which has only recently been established as an exchange office, Mr. Berczy calculates upon deriving an increase to his income of 250*l.* from the change.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that every possible facility should have been afforded to the American department; but it does not appear that the American authorities have ever been disposed to meet us in a spirit of reciprocal accommodation; neither do we see much reason to believe that their unfairness in receiving from us services which they pertinaciously refuse to perform for us in return, has ever been pressed upon them in a tone of becoming remonstrance. We find, at any rate, that nothing has been done to redress the well-founded complaints of our people, although there is no subject upon which complaint is more general, or the press more unanimous, than upon the injustice the provinces are thus compelled to suffer.

The American Postmaster-general will not allow any of the officers of his department to keep accounts of British postage; no letter, consequently, posted in the United States, to be delivered in Canada, can be prepaid to its destination. The American postmaster *cannot* receive the Canadian postage, and the writer need not pay the American unless he chooses; but the person in Canada who answers the letter *must* pay the postage of his answer to the lines, and may if he like pay it the whole way, for our officers are paid by the Americans for keeping accounts of their postage, although they will not suffer their officers to keep accounts for us; this is very loudly, and we think not less justly complained of.

Should be placed on a footing of reciprocal accommodation.

The evil is one for which there would not be much difficulty in providing a sufficient remedy. We see no reason why the department in each country should not engage to collect the postage for the other, at a fixed rate of per centage. If such an arrangement were effected, the exchanging postmasters alone would be required to keep separate accounts for foreign and domestic postage; the other postmasters would treat all postage as domestic, and the returns from the frontier offices would enable the two departments to regulate their accounts with each other. So far as we can perceive, the only practical difficulty which has heretofore stood in the way of this arrangement on the part of the United States, has been the necessity it would impose upon postmasters of calculating the foreign postage on prepaid letters. Under the present complex scale of rates in British North America it has been urged, with some reason, by a late Postmaster-general at Washington, that it would be impossible for his postmasters to make these calculations. But the scale which we have recommended is at least as simple as the American; and it should be remembered that in Canada every postmaster has long been required to keep most vexatiously complicated accounts of United States' postage.

Desirableness of a light express mail from Boston to Canada for steamship letters.

Were it possible to obtain from the American government permission to send a light mail express from Boston on the arrival of the steam-ships to Kingston and Montreal, a great saving of time might be effected by the arrangement. It would, in our opinion, be very desirable that an attempt should be made to induce the American government to enter into a convention similar to that by virtue of which the overland mail from India to England is carried through France. If the proper steps were taken, we cannot think there would be any serious difficulty in arranging with the United States the terms and conditions upon which such a permission should be accorded, so as to secure to the inhabitants of this part of the country all the advantages they can possibly derive from the great establishment of Atlantic steamers, without trenching upon the right of postage enjoyed by the United States. If such an arrangement should hereafter be contemplated, it would be found necessary, we think, that the messengers carrying this express should be in the employ of our establishment.

Delays between Montreal and New York.

The rate should be uniform, but necessarily much higher than the charge upon letters sent by way of Halifax. The delays between Montreal and New York are much and justly complained of. With a little co-operation on the part of the United States' government, which could not fail to derive great advantages

advantages from the improvement of this line, the grievance might easily be removed.

Some increase in the present number of exchanging offices is also required; but even in this matter, though apparently calculated to advance the interests of both establishments, great difficulty is found in inducing the department at Washington to enter into the necessary arrangements. Increase of number of exchanging offices.

The truth is, that to afford a reasonable prospect of success in negotiations of this kind, it is absolutely necessary that they should be undertaken as a national affair, and urged as such by the British minister at Washington. In his hands we should be sanguine in anticipating a favourable result; but no head of a provincial department, under any circumstances, and least of all under such as exist at present, can have sufficient weight with the American government to induce them to enter upon negotiations for placing the two departments on a footing of reciprocal accommodation. The establishment and the great success of the Cunard line of steamers has placed it within our power to offer as well as ask for facilities; heretofore the asking has been all on our side; the Americans had already obtained all that they desired. Negotiation on all these points should be carried on by British minister at Washington.

As regards the post-office communications between the four provinces of British North America and other countries, we have little or nothing to remark. With Newfoundland and Bermuda, the communication *via* Halifax is as regular and frequent as it need be; and the rates recently established are as low as they can safely be made. With the West India Islands the communication *via* England is somewhat indirect, but the correspondence is certainly not sufficient to warrant the establishment of a direct line of packets on its account. Post communications with Newfoundland, Bermuda, &c.

Governor Reid has strongly recommended, on national grounds, a line of steam-vessels from Halifax to some of the West India Islands, to touch at Bermuda; a suggestion which, for the reasons he assigns, we should be glad, if possible, to see carried into effect.

The internal arrangements of the post-office in Newfoundland and Bermuda we have considered a subject foreign to our inquiry; but we cannot pass from it without referring to the very judicious recommendations of Governor Reid for the improvement of the establishment in the latter. Internal arrangements of department in Newfoundland and Bermuda.

It remains for us to notice the emoluments of the officers of the department. Emoluments of officers of departments.

Of late years those of the Deputy Postmaster-general have swelled to an amount quite disproportioned to the general range of incomes, private or official, enjoyed by persons of the highest station in British North America. Upon this subject there has been an expression of public sentiment so unequivocal as to convince us that much of the unfriendly feeling towards the department existing in many quarters may be traced to this one fact alone. Of Deputy Postmaster-general.

It will not, we believe, be disputed that the time has arrived when the office of Deputy Postmaster-general must be placed upon a different footing as to income; regard being had, on the one hand, to the great importance of the office, and to the station which the incumbent is supposed to hold in society; but, on the other hand, to the standard of official income enjoyed by other servants of the Crown in these colonies.

As a general rule, we would recommend the abolition of all perquisites and privileges,* and, as far as possible, the payment of officers by fixed salaries, liberally proportioned to the amount of labour and qualification required in them.

Looking to the suggestions we ventured to offer in a preceding part of this Report, as to the best mode of securing the efficiency and popularity of the department, we are of opinion that it would be prudent to leave it to the Governor-general to decide upon the amount of salary to be attached to the office of Deputy Postmaster-general. We feel that it would be difficult, if not presumptuous, for us now to offer an opinion upon the amount of remuneration—a point which depends so much upon the nature and extent of the duties which the Deputy Postmaster-general will hereafter be required to perform.

In

* The only exception to this rule that occurs to us is in the case of services rendered by a postmaster solely at his own cost or responsibility, and not as a part of the accommodation the department is called upon to render by his means; such as keeping accounts for postage, mailing late letters, giving receipts for money-letters (should that system be adopted), and fitting up post-office boxes wherever the department may not be prepared to furnish them.

In accordance, also, with the same recommendation, we think that the provincial executive should be charged with the responsibility of deciding whether any and what compensation should be awarded for the loss of those perquisites of which an improved system will deprive him.

In the event of our recommendation being acted upon, and the whole of British North America placed under one Deputy Postmaster-general, the unquestionable claim of Mr. Howe to compensation ought, we think, to be considered, and the amount settled in like manner, by executive authority within the colonies.

Emoluments of officers on the general establishment.

We have already stated to what extent we are prepared to recommend an addition to the force of the Deputy Postmaster-general's, surveyor's and accountant branches of the department.

The Deputy Postmaster-general has laid before us suggestions for an increase of salary to several officers on the establishment; these estimates will be found in the Appendix; but we think that upon all details of this character the provincial government should be allowed to decide, after due investigation of the facts. We are not in possession of sufficient information to warrant us in making any specific recommendation respecting them. Should the funds of the department, however, admit of it, we venture to recommend that the salary of the accountant should be increased, as at present it is hardly commensurate with the importance and responsibility of his situation; and as a general rule, we think that the principle of allowing the salaries of clerks in the accountant's office to increase, like those of the Deputy Postmaster-general's, with length of service, can scarcely be called in question.

Emoluments of postmasters at present generally too low; and franking privilege very objectionable.

A perusal of the postmaster's correspondence in the Appendix must show the obvious insufficiency of the incomes derived from the business of the minor offices, and the objectionable character of the franking privilege, which operates, however, in many instances as the only inducement to undertake the duties of postmaster for a very inadequate money payment. Amongst the postmasters a favourite remedy for the mischiefs of the present system is the introduction of the system of fixed salaries; but to this we fear there are serious objections.

The frequent and rapid changes which belong to a new country would render necessary a constant revision of those salaries, under which the system would be too likely to degenerate into one of mere caprice and favouritism. It will be observed that at many of the offices the receipts are so small that any assignable salary must necessarily exceed them. For these reasons, amongst others, we are not prepared to recommend a departure from the principle of a per centage on receipts, but the scale might be improved in several particulars, and we think it ought to be made more liberal to the postmasters.

In the first place the per centage should be reckoned upon the whole receipts, and not, as at present, on the British and provincial letter postage only. The effect of adopting our recommendations respecting newspaper postage would be to throw the collection of it almost entirely into the hands of the delivering postmaster; and if the United States' postage is brought into the general account, the effect of reckoning the same per centage on these new sources of income would materially improve the position of the postmasters, and redress a grievance of which they have reason to complain.

Proposed scale.

But the amount of the per centage might be raised also. Mr. Stayner has proposed to make it 25 per cent. on the first 10*l.* collected in every quarter, and 20 per cent., as at present, on the remainder. Mr. Griffin, taking this question in connexion with that of abolishing the franking privilege, proposes 30 per cent. on the first 10*l.* in each quarter, and 20 per cent. on the remainder, as a means of accomplishing both objects. He has shown the effect it would have on the incomes of postmasters by selecting a number of cases which he thinks afford a tolerably fair criterion. We are of opinion that this suggestion might be advantageously adopted. It is impossible to think of compensating each individual postmaster for the loss of this privilege; but to those who use it in moderation, Mr. Griffin's plan would afford full compensation. Those who are largely benefited by the privilege would probably regard the proposal in a different light, and some might resign their situations; but we do not doubt that competent persons could be found to take their places, and in all such cases the revenue would gain considerably.

In connexion with this subject, it should be remembered that the adoption of the

the "forward" and "sub-office" systems will greatly diminish the labour at most of the minor offices,—an effect which ought not to be lost sight of when considering the necessity of raising the incomes of postmasters at such places. At the forward offices themselves it would be necessary to establish a graduated scale of salary, over and above the per centage, in consideration of the additional labour which the new system would impose upon the postmasters; and we would extend the principle of extra payment to all places where an unusual number of mails are made up, or where much night-work is required. On these points the Deputy Postmaster-general has offered suggestions. We are not prepared to express an opinion upon the details of his project, but we think the principle might be carried out unobjectionably, and at a moderate expense.

At the larger offices, where a permanent establishment of clerks is required, the postmaster should be placed on a suitable salary, and the appointment and payment of the clerks should belong to the department. We cannot undertake to pronounce an opinion upon the number of clerks or the amount of salaries to be allowed to the several offices at present belonging to this class. The general changes we have recommended are of a nature to effect so materially the amount of labour to be performed, that no calculations made on the basis of the present system could be relied upon for any length of time afterwards. But with the check which the superintendence of the local government would impose, we see nothing to prevent these arrangements being made in a satisfactory manner, as the condition of the department shall from time to time appear to require them. It is not the least of the advantages to be expected from this superintendence, that the system will easily accommodate itself to new exigencies, in a country where new exigencies are of every day occurrence.

Establishments at larger offices.

At the smaller offices the postmasters must continue to select and pay their own assistants.

Amongst those which will require either a fixed establishment of clerks or an allowance for extra duty, will of course be the offices which shall have to exchange mails with the United States. A question has been raised as to the right of the postmasters who now enjoy the large emoluments derived from this service to compensation from the British or provincial government, under the system we have proposed; having given to this matter our best consideration, we have formed a decided opinion against the claim. The system is one which ought not to have been suffered to grow up. A mere private arrangement entered into for their own benefit by certain public servants of our government with the authorities of a foreign country, if found to be incompatible with the interests of the government they serve, cannot be said to furnish a just claim to compensation. These gentlemen should receive a fair remuneration for their labours as frontier postmasters; we do not consider them entitled to more.

Offices exchanging with United States.

It is not in our power to submit an estimate in figures of the effect of our various recommendations upon the financial condition of the establishment, but after maturely considering the whole subject, we have arrived at the conclusion that the proposed scale of rates will yield a revenue sufficient to enable the department, in the exercise of a judicious economy and foresight, to adopt the principle we have suggested in the payment of all its officers, and at the same time to enter upon a liberal system of mail extension. Taken in connexion with the abolition of the postmasters' franking privilege, we believe that our scale of remuneration will not be found more costly than the present. From the appropriation of the newspaper postage to the general fund, we anticipate a considerable increase of revenue; and the increase of correspondence which may be expected to arise from the establishment of a system of reciprocity with the United States will not add to the expense of that service. We do not regard the proposed addition to the cost of the Deputy Postmaster-general's, the surveyors' or the accountants' establishments, as by any means an unproductive outlay; it cannot fail to effect great improvements in every branch of the service, and especially in the facilities it will afford for checking the postmasters' accounts; neither can we consider increased mail accommodation, which has a natural tendency to promote the efficiency of the department, in the light of a mere expense.

General result of recommendations in a general point of view.

We have already stated that from the proposed reduction of rates we do not anticipate any formidable diminution of revenue, even for the present, in Canada. In the lower provinces we have no doubt that it will immediately

produce a material improvement; but throughout the whole of the provinces the decided tendency of the revenue to keep pace with the increase of population and the expanding resources of the country, affords gratifying proof that in a few years the aggregate revenue of the department cannot fail to exceed its present amount.

The rates we have suggested are lower, it is true, than those collected in the United States, but it should be remembered that the cost of mail communication is also considerably less in these provinces, and that postmasters in the United States, in addition to a scale of remuneration somewhat higher than that we recommend, enjoy to an unlimited extent the franking privilege, which we propose to abolish. In the United States, not only do all the departments of the federal Government, and all members and officers of Congress enjoy the franking privilege, but the department gives a special allowance to postmasters for the trouble of delivering franked letters and parcels, although it receives nothing for them. We have not recommended that any correspondence, except that of the department itself, should pass free. With so many points of difference between the two systems, we do not fear to propose a lower scale, and we do so with the more satisfaction, because we think it likely to promote the contentment of the people of these provinces,—an object which we have ever kept in view in deliberating on the various matters which have formed the subject of our inquiry.

All which is most respectfully submitted.

(L. s.)	(signed)	<i>E. Dowling.</i>
(L. s.)	(signed)	<i>T. A. Stayner.</i>
(L. s.)	(signed)	<i>John Davidson.</i>

31st December 1841.

I sign this Report, because I believe it to be my duty to do so *under any circumstances*; but differing, as I decidedly do, from the other Commissioners in some statements of fact, and in many of the most material of the opinions and recommendations expressed in the document, I am preparing a Protest or Statement, containing my views on the points alluded to, which will be completed so soon as I am supplied with certain papers for which I have written to Kingston, and I shall then respectfully request that my Statement may receive from his Excellency the Governor-general and Her Majesty's Government the same consideration that they bestow upon the Report.

Quebec, 3d February 1842.

(signed) *T. A. Stayner.*

MR. STAYNER'S STATEMENT.

To his Excellency the Right honourable Sir *Charles Bagot*, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, one of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, Governor-general of British North America, and Captain-general and Governor-in-chief in and over the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the Island of Prince Edward, Vice-Admiral of the same.

May it please your Excellency,

THE fire which destroyed the General Post-office on the 29th of November last, and with it every document belonging to the department, has thrown such an increased amount of labour upon me that it has not been in my power sooner to enter upon the duty which circumstances have created of submitting for your Excellency's observation my views upon the post-office question of these provinces, in opposition, as in some important particulars they are, to those of the gentlemen with whom I was associated in the late Commission.

I can assure your Excellency that I engage in this task with no common feelings of reluctance and diffidence, for there are reasons connected with it which make the effort more onerous than under ordinary circumstances such an undertaking would be; the most prominent of these is the disadvantage of my position in appearing in the light of an interested party in discussing subjects which ought to be decided upon general principles, and the difficulty even in the phraseology which I may employ of maintaining a proper distinction between my two capacities of Deputy Postmaster-general and Commissioner; for however it may be supposed that in the communication I am now preferring, I have no right to speak but as a Commissioner dissenting from the opinions of his colleagues, I find it will not be possible, consistently with the obligations I owe to myself and the department over which I preside, to confine myself altogether to this latter character.

I have been placed upon my trial by my colleagues, and a judgment pronounced upon some of my acts as chief officer of the department which I will not submit to without remonstrance, and an appeal to higher and more competent authority; added to these, (perhaps) inevitable causes for a very natural anxiety, others, not necessarily arising from my position, have occurred in the course of my connexion with the Commission of a nature extremely painful to me, and from the influence of which it may not be possible for me altogether to divest myself in making my statement; should I therefore not prove quite successful in maintaining a course free from objection (and which I would fain pursue), I must throw myself upon your Excellency's indulgence, with this apology for entreating your Excellency's favourable consideration of my humble attempt to vindicate my opinions, as well as my character, in relation to the very important matters under discussion.

I shall now proceed to remark, in the order in which they stand in the Report (so far as may be practicable), upon those points on which my observations appear to be necessary.

The first in the series seems to be that relating to the accountant of the department.

The Report states that the accountant is bound (by his instructions) "generally to receive orders from and obey the directions of the Deputy Postmaster-general," and in page 47 it says, "he certainly ought not to be placed in any way under the orders or direct control of the Deputy Postmaster-general whose accounts he is charged with auditing."

Accountant: see Report, pp. 12 & 47.

But one interpretation, either in theory or practice, was ever put upon this part of the instructions to the accountant by any individual in the post-office, and that is the obvious one, that he should obey the orders of the Deputy Postmaster-general, *when those orders are not incompatible with his duty to the authority by which he was appointed.*

The Postmaster-general, from whom the instructions proceed, was perfectly aware when framing them, that with officers whose duties are so intermixed as are those of the Deputy Postmaster-general and the accountant, cases would be perpetually

perpetually occurring in their relations together in which the authority of the Deputy Postmaster-general must be exercised—either the Deputy Postmaster-general or the accountant must be the superior officer! And were it otherwise than it now is, I do not see how the business of the department could proceed; but the exercise of the Deputy Postmaster-general's discretion in the manner signified by the instructions, by no means impairs the independence of the accountant, or weakens the salutary effects which his appointment was intended to produce.

The accountant cannot be controlled in the free exercise of his duties by any act of the Deputy Postmaster-general; if the latter were to attempt any thing of the kind, an appeal to the common superior of both would at once secure the proper remedy.

The accountant makes what reports he pleases to the Postmaster-general without reference to the Deputy Postmaster-general; he moreover has *not* the final auditing of the Deputy Postmaster-general's accounts, which might be inferred from the Report; he examines the accounts and makes observations thereon, and calls for such authorities as may be required; finally, he compiles them into abstract form; but they all undergo two more scrutinies, the first by the Accountant-general of the post-office, London, and lastly by the Auditor-general (Treasury), and the Deputy Postmaster-general receives observations upon them from both these officers.

The actual working of the system, however, to which I with confidence appeal, is at once the best proof of the right judgment of the Postmaster-general who formed it, and of the inexpediency of such a change as the Report recommends.

As I am not satisfied with the conditional manner in which the accountant and his clerks are recommended in the Report to the consideration of the Government, I avail myself of this opportunity to request your Excellency's notice of my communication to the Commissioners upon this branch of the establishment, as it appears in the Appendix, part I. In submitting the above to the Commission, I was influenced by a mere sense of justice to Mr. King, the accountant, who is a most excellent officer, to represent the insufficiency of his salary of 300*l.* a year, and the fairness, likewise, of increasing the salaries of his clerks, who have served nearly eight years in the department without any improvement in their pay.

The Report admits that the salary of the accountant is hardly commensurate, even at present, with the importance and responsibility of his situation.

I think, therefore, that with the increased labour preparing for him, there can exist no reasonable question as to his claim for an improved income; and the same argument, in a limited degree of course, added to their length of service, must apply to his clerks.

Under other circumstances than the present, I should not, for obvious reasons, consider it proper for me to prefer opinions such as these in regard to the accountant's establishment; but seeing that the gentlemen composing it are unrepresented by any one acquainted with their claims, at a time when the demands and interests of the rest of the department are undergoing revision, I hope the course I am adopting may not be deemed objectionable.

As regards *office hours*, the Report states, in reference to article 24 of their instructions, that at country offices "it is to be presumed postmasters keep just such hours as they find most convenient to themselves." This conclusion is not quite correct, for although the circumstances of the country render it impossible, as indeed it is *unnecessary*, in the case of most of the smaller offices, to enforce the observance of regular office hours, postmasters are not suffered to consult exclusively their own convenience in the matter; the language employed in the article quoted in the Report conveys, also, as I conceive, a reverse impression to that signified in the Report; but apart from this, the surveyors, and I myself, whenever a question on this subject comes before us, never fail to explain that every reasonable accommodation on this score shall be afforded to the public, and this, as I believe, is generally understood throughout the country, and acted upon.

Regular office hours in towns are necessary and indispensable; but in the rural districts, even if they could be enforced, they would not afford to the inhabitants the amount of accommodation which a postmaster, who construes his instructions in a proper spirit, now extends to those who correspond through his office.

Farmers and others living at some distance from a post-office, and whose labours occupy them during the day, go *for* or *with* their letters at what cannot be

be considered office hours (or frequently on Sundays), and I believe it is rarely indeed that they are not attended to.

The Report states, with reference to the 25th and 26th articles of my instructions to postmasters, which direct that, where it can be done, the office is to be kept in a separate room, and that no bar or public room in a tavern be so used, that "in a large proportion of cases the former of these regulations is inoperative," and that "there is reason to believe the latter is frequently evaded."

And often no separate room as an office, p. 15.

This may be perfectly true, and yet reflect no reproach upon me or any one.

I have been compelled, under circumstances which every respectable individual in the country conversant with the history of the post-office will admit to have been replete with difficulties, to open up mail routes, and establish post-offices in places where it would have been utterly impossible to insist upon the rigid observance of many of the rules which form part of my general scheme of management; in homely language, where I could not have things exactly as I could wish, I have taken them on the best terms they could be obtained: the inhabitants have been benefited, and have expressed thankfulness for the advantages thus rendered to them, imperfect though in some cases they must be; yet knowing how a post-office should be kept to be perfectly effective, I never lose sight of the necessity for progressive improvement as the condition of the country advances.

I am frequently obliged in the newer settlements to accept for postmasters men whose business acquirements are of a very low grade, and it may be more easily imagined than described what labour and vexation the blunders of such persons entail upon the offices of the Deputy Postmaster-general and the accountant; still a great measure of good is in the meantime rendered to the inhabitants; and as the character of the population is gradually improving, I avail myself of the first opportunities that arise to choose better qualified persons as my deputies, when of course the business is better conducted.

This is the plan of management which I set out with when I took charge of the department in 1828, and I have constantly adhered to it since, so far as the means at my disposal have permitted.

With more surveyors more could probably have been done as well in this as in other objects requiring improvement, and one good which I look to as the result of the suggestions of the Commission, notwithstanding that I dissent from so many of the notions expressed in the Report, is that there will be such an increase to the force of this very important branch of the department throughout British North America as will enable the chief officer to give proper effect to a well-considered system of management. Necessary as post-office surveyors are found to be in England, they are even more indispensable in this new country.

The Report here states that the postmaster of Toronto has, since a period therein referred to, been appointed post-office surveyor to fill the vacancy occasioned by the removal of Mr. Porteous, and in a note it says, "this appointment has since been cancelled."

Postmaster of Toronto's appointment as acting surveyor: Report, p. 44.

I respectfully beg your Excellency to bear in mind the terms which are made use of in introducing these facts to your knowledge; they are preliminary to an accusation of a very grave character circumstantially advanced against me in page 43, and which I shall not fail to meet when in due course I arrive at that part of the Report; for the moment, it is unnecessary I should say anything more upon the subject.

There is no point in the whole economy of the department which calls for a change more than this, nor one perhaps so difficult to dispose of satisfactorily.

Postmasters' franking privilege: see Report, p. 22.

With very many of the postmasters (I may say indeed with by far the greater proportion) the privilege is esteemed beyond its money value, and I should fear that the withdrawal of it would deprive the establishment of numbers of its best officers; still it is an evil of so great a magnitude that I think it should be done away with as soon as may be practicable.

The question appears to be very properly treated in the Report, in connexion with the commission (as salary) now granted to postmasters generally, and I am not prepared to offer any new suggestions on either head further than this, that if the franking privilege is at once to be done away with, postmasters (not paid by fixed salaries) should receive 30 per cent. on the first 10*l.* collected in each quarter, and 25 per cent. on the remainder.

It may not be improper to introduce here, as I am not aware that it is stated

in any part of the Report, that all postmasters in the United States are paid upon the following scale, which is much higher than that suggested by me.

On the first \$ 100 of letter postage collected in a quarter,	30 per cent.
On the next \$ 300	25 per cent.
On the next \$ 2,000	20 per cent.
On the remaining amount	8 per cent.
On newspaper and pamphlet postage	50 per cent.

Mail contracts, how entered into, &c. : Report, pp. 23 & 64.

As a general rule, I consider it advantageous to the Government to call publicly for tenders for those services, and in the cases of large undertakings I have for the most part pursued this plan; but the frequent changes found to be necessary with a view to the improvement of the mail conveyance (arising from various causes incidental to a new and rapidly improving country) often induce me to modify the terms of original engagements to suit altered circumstances, and to keep a contract for two or three, or even more years beyond the term first agreed upon, in the hands of an old contractor. I have found, indeed, that a rigid adherence to the plan of depending upon open competition for the conveyance of the mails was not in every instance so beneficial to the post-office as a private engagement.

In the case of old established routes, where the contractors have been known to the department for a long time, I am persuaded that the course I have pursued of governing myself according to circumstances has been productive of the best results.

When a contractor has reason to know that the chance of his contracts being renewed depends mainly upon the manner in which he discharges his duties, it is certain that he will exert himself to give satisfaction; further, too, such a man (having his equipments already provided) will generally be disposed to renew an engagement upon lower terms than another individual who may have his appointments to purchase, for it must be observed that there are very rarely rival lines of transport in existence at the same time on any route, the *mail money*, with some few exceptions, being the main consideration with persons engaged in public land conveyances, and the individual who secures *that*, is likely to keep the business in his own hands.

I beg it may be distinctly understood that I do not defend the practice I have been pursuing on any other ground than that it is the best suited to the *existing* condition of the country, and that by it more good has been effected than could have been obtained by constantly depending upon public competition. The circumstances of Canada, and of all British North America, are rapidly changing, and the time is probably not far distant, when it may be judicious, even as an invariable rule, to call for public tenders for the conveyance of the mails every few years; that time, however, in my opinion, has not yet arrived, nor do I apprehend that it will be advisable, when the period for a change does come, to make it general at once; it should be brought about gradually, and as may be warranted by the altering circumstances of the various sections of the country, the capabilities in some parts being much in advance of others.

Report, p. 24.

In describing the communications between Quebec and the lower provinces, I think it may be proper to add, after the words 200 *l.* currency, the fact that "during the season of navigation (which, as regards Mr. Cunard's contract, is understood to extend from 1st May to 31st October) the English mails are conveyed between Halifax and Pictou (Nova Scotia) 100 miles by land, and thence by steamer to Quebec." The whole time occupied between Halifax and Quebec at that season is generally about four days. On such occasions a provincial mail is always conveyed with the English.

Route between Port Daniel and Gaspé Basin, p. 26.

The route between Port Daniel and Gaspé Basin has since last summer been made a weekly line; at this moment there is no route within my charge served less frequently than once a week.

Report, p. 30.

The report says, "*in the United States where the public departments enjoy the franking privilege.*" I beg to observe, and indeed the fact will be found stated in a subsequent part of the Report, that the departments of the federal government *only* possess this privilege; the state departments and the state legislatures pay their postages pretty nearly upon the same plan that prevails in Canada.

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The Report states "that the postage rates in the United States are rather lower than in Canada."

Comparison with the United States: Report, p. 30.

I consider that, for the distances on which the greater part of the correspondence is sent, the rates are lower in Canada than in the United States; for instance, the chief correspondence in both countries is between large towns separated by distances under 300 miles, and it will be seen by the comparative scales below,* that our rates, under that distance, are upon an average less than those of the United States.

The Report says, "the improvements in the service since then (meaning the 5th October 1840) must have done much to augment the gross receipts of the post-office, as the accounts for the current quarter will doubtless show, though it is probable, also, that they will exhibit some falling off in the net receipts."

Post-office revenue, p. 31.

It is probable there will appear an increase in the gross revenue, but I am persuaded it will not be in proportion to the increased expenditure, and that the falling off in the net revenue will be very considerable.

The expense of the steam-boat service of the mails is very heavy, and I am disappointed at finding, from the cursory examination of the accounts which I have been enabled to make, that the revenue has not increased under the operation of this improved mode of conveyance, as I had hoped it would have done; and I am forced to the conclusion that, notwithstanding the effort thus made to accommodate the public, the illegal transmission of letters still continues to be practised, particularly between Quebec and Montreal, to a serious extent.

The Report says, "that the post-office department in British North America is marked by two leading defects in its constitution;" the first is stated to be "want of uniformity in the principles upon which it is conducted by two Deputy

Leading defects of present system, p. 42.

* Scales of distances and rates of postage graduated upon a scale of 40 miles.

A letter transmitted a distance of—	In Canada.		In the United States.	
	Hx.	Cy.	Cents.	Hx. Cy.
40 miles is rated - - - - -	-	4½	10 - =	- 6
80 " - - - - -	-	7	- - =	- 6
120 " - - - - -	-	9	12½ - =	- 7½
160 " - - - - -	-	9	18½ - =	- 11½
200 " - - - - -	-	9	18½ - =	- 11½
240 " - - - - -	-	11	18½ - =	- 11½
280 " - - - - -	-	11	18½ - =	- 11½
300 " - - - - -	-	11	18½ - =	- 11½
Aggregate charge - - -	5	11½	- - -	6 3½

Graduated upon a scale of 50 miles.

50 miles - - - - -	-	4½	10 - =	- 6
100 " - - - - -	-	7	12½ - =	- 7½
150 " - - - - -	-	9	12½ - =	- 7½
200 " - - - - -	-	9	18½ - =	- 11½
250 " - - - - -	-	11	18½ - =	- 11½
300 " - - - - -	-	11	18½ - =	- 11½
Aggregate charge - - -	4	3½	- - -	4 6½

Graduated upon a scale of 60 miles.

60 miles - - - - -	-	4½	10 - =	- 6
120 " - - - - -	-	9	12½ - =	- 7½
180 " - - - - -	-	9	18½ - =	- 11½
240 " - - - - -	-	11	18½ - =	- 11½
300 " - - - - -	-	11	18½ - =	- 11½
Aggregate charge - - -	3	8½	- - -	3 11½

For distances under 30 miles the charge in the United States is a trifle lower than in Canada; being at 4 d. is to 4½ d.

Deputy Postmasters-general;" and secondly, "the absence, not only of responsibility to the executive or representative authorities in the colonies, but of all real responsibility to the head of the department in England."

To the first proposition I fully assent, nor can there, as I conceive, be a difference of opinion as to the necessity for a change of government in this particular in the mind of any one who has had an opportunity of witnessing the working of the present system, if "system" it may be called.

His Grace the Duke of Richmond, then Postmaster-general, had nine years ago arrived at a similar conclusion, and in planning a new constitution for the department in British North America had provided accordingly; the increased intimacy of the relations between Canada and the lower provinces which has arisen since that time, has but augmented the evils then found to result from the anomalous nature of the local administration of the establishment; but as regards the second position, I consider the language of the report to be altogether too strong, and as leading to conclusions which not only cannot be maintained by any facts that have ever come before the commission, but which are absolutely contradicted by the proceedings which properly indicate the principles upon which the department (in Canada) has been conducted for a number of years past.

I freely admit that the responsibility to the local government is not of that kind which obtains in *provincial* departments, nor is it necessary, as I conceive, that it should be so, or indeed possible; but that there is a direct and practical accountability to the head of the provincial government, the history of my conduct of the department for a considerable time back abundantly testifies; and that it was not always so, anterior to the time to which I refer, is to be attributed, not to a defect in the constitution of the department, nor to any undue assumption of independence on the part of the Deputy Postmaster-general, but simply because the Governor-general did not think proper to exercise the authority over the department which he possesses in right of his commission. Whenever that authority has been put forth, I have cheerfully yielded to it, and so far from evading or shunning its exercise, I have sought it; and sure am I that no Governor-general has ever had cause to be otherwise than satisfied with the manner in which I have attended to his wishes, on any and every subject relating to the duties entrusted to my management. It is very true that the commission and instructions under which the Deputy Postmaster-general acts do not recognize, or rather I should say do not *name* any local authority to whom he is to report his proceedings, or from whom receive orders; but it is not to be supposed that any person of ordinary intelligence holding such a charge as that of a Deputy Postmaster-general can be so entirely ignorant of the nature of his position, and the spirit of the commission under which he acts, as to imagine that he is independent of the authority of the head of the local government; indeed the concluding paragraph of the Report upon the subject almost allows the truth of the views I have here expressed, for it says that "*in practice there has been somewhat more intercourse between the Executive and the Post-office authorities than the theory would suggest,*" but, as if fearful of having admitted too much, it adds, "*but it has always been of an irregular and unsatisfactory character.*"

I repeat, that if it has been irregular and unsatisfactory, no blame on that score can attach either to the Postmaster-general or his Deputy, or to the constitution of the department, or the instructions alluded to.

The assumption that there is no real responsibility to the head of the department in England is as indefensible as the other. The author of the Report, after a research of 15 months, with every facility at his command for the most scrutinizing inquisition into my administration of the department for a period of 14 years, and after having, as I believe, received more than 1,000 communications expressive of their opinions from all classes of people in the country, many of those persons, from causes which I could not control, imbued with no friendly feeling towards either me or the department, has been able to find but two cases upon which he could pretend to build up what I believe to have been a preconceived opinion, namely, that the Deputy Postmaster-general possessed a power which *could* be abused, or at all events *perverted* to ends contrary to the intentions of the government and the interests of the public; what these cases are, and the spirit in which they have been dealt with, I shall presently have occasion to show; and having done this, I shall leave it to your Excellency and Her Majesty's

jesty's Government to decide as well upon the justice rendered to me by my colleagues, as upon the value of the evidence which these two cases are stated to afford of the evil working of the present system of administration.

Before entering into the details of the two accusations against me, which commence at page 43 and continue to page 45, I must be permitted to repeat that I am fully alive to the impropriety, under ordinary circumstances, of obtruding into public questions, personal feelings, motives or influences, and that I am compelled, notwithstanding this conviction, to speak of myself or others individually, I deliberately charge to the two gentlemen with whom I was connected in the Commission, though certainly not to them both in the same degree, for from one of them (so far as personal association extended) I have experienced unvarying courtesy, but I have been placed upon my trial by those gentlemen jointly, upon accusations relating to matters really of a nature which left me no other course than that which I pursued, and a sentence thereupon has gravely been recorded against me, in relation to one of the cases at least, which, if unremoved, would stamp me as a betrayer of the trust confided to me, and as unworthy of the future confidence of a Government which I have served faithfully for more than 30 years, without experiencing in that long period the mortification of a censure from one of my superiors. These considerations compel me, in adverting to this part of the Report, to view my colleagues together.

I shall now, as briefly as the nature of the cases will permit, proceed to give a narrative of them, stating all the circumstances, as I know them to exist, in truth, and placing in juxtaposition the colouring given thereto by the other Commissioners, with the conclusions to which they have arrived; following these with a very few remarks, I shall consider my duty discharged as regards this portion of the Report.

The first of the cases alluded to, is the matter of a money-letter belonging to Mr. Benjamin Brewster, of Montreal, which was dropped from the mail-sleigh with the bag in the year 1835, and subsequently rifled.

I respectfully solicit your Excellency's perusal, in the Appendix, of the correspondence connected with this loss, which shows the grounds upon which Mr. Brewster ultimately obtained payment of his claim, with the exception of the demand for interest, which was disallowed by the Postmaster-general. The Report winds up the case by saying, "We think it deserving of attention, as showing in how dilatory and unsatisfactory a manner such proceedings in the present condition of the department must necessarily be conducted." Here there is no *direct* blame, as I understand it, imputed to me; but the case is made use of to prove that the present administration of the department is vicious, and that a different responsibility is requisite.

I shall have no difficulty in establishing that this case does not prove *all* that it undertakes to do, and that the greater part of the delay alluded to would have occurred had the subject in question been submitted for the judgment of the Executive of the province, instead of to the Postmaster-general.

The facts are as follows:—It became necessary to institute legal proceedings against the mail contractors for the penalty incurred under their contract by the loss of the mail. I placed the case in the hands of the late Mr. O'Sullivan, the solicitor-general; he was met in the first stage of the action by the difficulty of ascertaining the names of the several partners belonging to the stage-coach company by whom the mail was carried.

I addressed repeated letters to the solicitor-general, and sent the post-office surveyor to him more than once, to urge on the matter; but still the difficulty continued, and Mr. O'Sullivan alleged, that unless all the names of the copartnership could be procured (and they were understood to be numerous), the action would fail.

After much time had been thus consumed, as greatly to my annoyance as it could have been to that of Mr. Brewster, or any of the other individuals who had suffered by the robbery, the managing partner of the mail-coach company came down to Quebec to see me on the subject, and proposed, as a compromise to the action, to pay 250*l.* to the department.

I thought it prudent to accept this offer, and did so, immediately reporting the circumstances to the Postmaster-general, and recommending that I should be authorized to reimburse (out of the money so recovered) to the several persons who had suffered by the robbery the respective sums which they had lost, carrying the residue to the credit of the revenue, to cover, so far as it might,

the heavy expenses in various ways to which the department had been subjected in the pursuit of the robber, the prosecution, &c.

The Postmaster-general approved of this suggestion of mine at once; but it unfortunately happened, that the packet-ship by which his Lordship's authority was forwarded was lost; and several months passed before I suspected that the letter had miscarried, and had recalled the attention of the secretary, Sir Francis Freeling, to the subject, when a duplicate of the authority was sent out, and the matter, so far as rested with me, was at once disposed of.

The loss of time sustained by the failure of the packet would certainly have been avoided, had the question been to be decided by the Governor-general; but that was a small proportion of the time consumed; and under the improved system of packet-conveyance which now prevails (enabling us to exchange letters in six weeks), the delay of communicating with the general post-office cannot be put forward with much effect as an argument for any object in connexion with this department.

It is only right I should state, as well in justice to my colleagues of the Commission as to myself, that I do not recollect having been questioned by them upon this subject. I knew that Mr. Brewster had addressed the Commission, claiming interest for a certain time for the money he had lost; but the subject not having been brought forward by the chairman (for I repeat that I think it was not), and not having any suspicion that it was intended to make use of it in the manner that has been done, I gave it no consideration until I read it in the Report.

Report, p. 43.

The other case is one of much greater importance in the estimation of the two Commissioners; and to the introductory part of it, at least, I should not have objected, but for the unnecessary allusion to Mr. Edward Freer's being the "own nephew of the Deputy Postmaster-general"! omitting to notice a fact of quite as great importance, and known to them upon equally good authority, namely, that *he was a meritorious officer of the department of several years' standing*. This, however, I shall not dwell upon (it is of no consequence, except as a manifestation of feeling); but it is with the overstrained inferences deduced from certain facts connected with this case, and the consequent incorrect general conclusions of the other Commissioners, that I have to do; and if, in the prosecution of this disagreeable duty, I should be more burthensome to your Excellency than I ought to be (an error, however, which I will endeavour to avoid), I must again beg of your Excellency indulgently to bear in mind the painful position in which I have been placed by the Report, and the obligations imposed upon me now, whilst the opportunity is open, of repelling what I conceive to be a most unwarrantable imputation levelled against me.

Report, pp. 43 and 44.

I request your Excellency will be pleased to read, in the first instance, that portion of the Report on this subject which commences at page 43, and is continued to page 44.

Report, p. 44.

I shall observe here, that there is a mis-statement of fact in the page last mentioned, which is doubtless the consequence of an error of memory on the part of the chairman of the Commission; but which, nevertheless, it is a duty to myself to correct emphatically. The language is, "Mr. Stayner has declined laying before us his correspondence with Mr. Berczy, on the ground that it was of a private nature." *I did not decline* laying this correspondence before the Commission; on the contrary, I offered to produce the correspondence in question, if permitted. It is quite true I stated that it was of a private nature, and that I had preserved no copy of my letter asking Mr. Berczy to take the resident duties of the surveyor for a short time; but I added, I could procure the original from Toronto, and that I had no objection to show it, as well as Mr. Berczy's answer, if they could afford any satisfaction to the Commission. Mr. Dowling's notice of this offer was in the following words—both the tone and language (upon which it is unnecessary to comment) I perfectly well recollect: "Sir, I want to see none of your private correspondence!"

This, however, is of little consequence compared to what follows.

The Report, in page 44, proceeds to sum up my delinquencies in this matter thus: "It has been thought right to conceal from the Postmaster-general all knowledge of the facts that occurred since his Lordship's approval, on the 19th October 1840, of Mr. Freer's appointment. His Lordship has been suffered to remain under the erroneous impression that Mr. Freer is discharging the duties of his office in Upper Canada, whilst in reality he is employed as clerk in the post-office

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post-office at Quebec, and in utter ignorance of the arrangements by which for nearly a year the important duties of surveyor have been irregularly and imperfectly discharged."

These are serious charges, and if I did not possess the power of divesting them of the guilty complexion which the terms employed in the Report are calculated to convey, they might well form an argument, not merely for a change of system, but for showing that I have criminally abused my trust, and rendered myself undeserving of future confidence; but it is now for me to state the circumstances of a transaction, from which Mr. Dowling and Mr. Davidson have attempted to draw such grave deductions, preliminary to the recommendation of certain views, and to show that the whole of it from beginning to end was not only justifiable, but actually the only course left for me to take under the peculiar difficulties of a position into which I was thrown by causes which I neither created nor was accessory to.

That I did not report to the Postmaster-general the facts which had occurred since his approval, on the 19th October 1840, of Mr. Freer's appointment until a recent period, the 5th December 1841, is perfectly true. I will add, that even then I mentioned them only incidentally, but when I have stated the reason of my silence (not "concealment," as alleged in the Report), I think your Excellency will be disposed to admit that I had full and imperative cause for it.

My statement is as follows: I recommended Mr. Freer, who was the first clerk in my office, for the situation of surveyor, about to become vacant, upon the grounds of his having stronger claims for the promotion than any other person in the department. The Postmaster-general was pleased to approve of the appointment on the 19th October 1840.

On the 26th of that month the Post-office Commission was organized, and I was compelled to take up my abode in Montreal.

At this time, when consulted by the late Governor-general and the chief secretary, Mr. Murdoch, as to the probable duration of the proceedings of the Commission, I stated that I conceived two or three months would be sufficient to do every thing that was required, and so fully was I impressed with the belief that more time could not be needed, that when I left Quebec by one of the last steamers for the season, I gave the people in my office to understand that I should return and resume my duties by mid-winter.

As I could not, however, remain away from my office even for those probable two or three months, without leaving a competent force there to conduct the duties, I had no alternative but to arrange that Mr. Freer should remain in charge of my correspondence; and I explained to Mr. James Porteous, then conducting the surveyor's duties in Upper Canada, that he must continue where he was, and his uncle, the postmaster of Montreal, where *he* was, until I could carry out a permanent arrangement. All parties cheerfully acquiesced, and it was my intention, so soon as I should be relieved from my attendance upon the Commission, to report to the Postmaster-general what steps it had been necessary for me to take to meet the exigency which had arisen, and at the same time, as a measure of justice to Mr. Freer (whose labours were greatly increased, and who was deprived of the advantages pertaining to the surveyorship), to submit to his Lordship that he should receive some extra compensation.

Such were my first arrangements, and I knew that they were the best that could have been made, and I felt perfectly assured, also, that they could not be otherwise than satisfactory to the Postmaster-general, who, in approving of the alterations consequent upon Mr. Andrew Porteous's resignation, must, as a matter of course, have intended to leave it to me to carry them into operation at my convenience.

Early in December the elder Mr. Porteous became importunate to be relieved from the duties of postmaster of Montreal, alleging that his health was failing, and entreating that I would let his nephew come down from Toronto and take his place. This was a great annoyance and disappointment to me, because I still hoped that in a short time I might be suffered to return to Quebec, and carry out the original design by sending Mr. Freer to Toronto; however, as I could not insist upon Mr. Porteous's continuing in charge of the Montreal office longer than was agreeable to him, I told him he should be relieved at the end of the quarter, and as the occasion pressed, I immediately wrote off a hurried letter to Mr. Berczy, the postmaster of Toronto, who had formerly been the surveyor for Upper Canada (and who was the most likely to aid me in the exigency), to ask him if he thought

he could oblige me by conducting the surveyor's *resident* duties for a short time after the 5th January, explaining in a few words how awkwardly I was situated, and the necessity I was under of adopting some provisional plan.

The *resident* duties of the surveyor in Upper Canada, I beg your Excellency to understand, are laborious and important; in this capacity he maintains an extensive correspondence, and pays nearly the whole of the contract services, besides attending to other objects with the detail of which I shall not swell this paper. I stated to Mr. Berezy, in my communication, that if he could undertake this portion of the duty, I thought I could easily provide, by other means, for such travelling services as were likely to be called for in the probable brief period that the arrangement would last, as I should see that Mr. Porteous got his ordinary travelling work well up before he came to Montreal; I, of course, told Mr. Berezy that he should be properly compensated for this extra duty.

Mr. Berezy promptly acceded to my request, stating, so far as my memory serves me (for his letter was destroyed by the late fire), that by providing an extra clerk to assist in some of his office duties (which he did at his own expense), he could meet my wishes.

On the 6th January, Mr. Berezy took the duty in question and discharged it, as he has done every duty I have ever entrusted to him, to my entire satisfaction.

Whilst Mr. Berezy had this task in hand, two occasions only, I think, occurred in which it was found absolutely necessary to employ a travelling agent, and Mr. Richardson, the postmaster of Brantford, who had frequently before been engaged for similar objects (*they related to missing money-letters*), was then despatched, and he executed the services perfectly well.

This arrangement continued from January until early in June,* when finding that instead of closing its proceedings, the Post-office Commission seemed destined to an unlimited duration, and that I should be obliged to continue with it at Kingston, still leaving my duties at Quebec to be got through with as best they might, I found it necessary to make another change, and I proposed to Mr. Richardson, the postmaster of Brantford (the person before alluded to), to give up his post-office and devote the whole of his time to the surveyor's duties, so long as I might find it necessary to employ him, he receiving all the advantages appertaining to the appointment of surveyor.

This arrangement still continues in force, in consequence of my being compelled to retain Mr. Freer at Quebec, to assist me in meeting the difficulties arising from the late unfortunate fire.

So far I have been under the necessity of troubling your Excellency with what may be termed a narrative of my proceedings, as they relate to the arrangements themselves, connected with the matter in question.

I must now enter upon the more painful task (painful, because I must speak of the injustice rendered to me by a party to whose authority circumstances for a time subjected me) of explaining why I for so long a period abstained from reporting to his Lordship the Postmaster-general the provisional arrangements I had made in relation to the surveyor's duties in Upper Canada, and to which the Report attaches so much importance.

I have already observed, that in the first instance I expected my absence from Quebec in attendance upon the Commission would have been but for a few months, two or three, and that when I could return thither and send Mr. Freer to Toronto, I would report my temporary arrangements to the Postmaster-general.

I should observe likewise, that I took one of my clerks with me to Montreal, to assist me with my correspondence, which I conducted under the disadvantage of a separation from nearly all my office records, involving the necessity of perpetual reference to Quebec, and keeping me engaged with but little intermission from early in the morning until midnight.

I was

* I conceive it proper to state here, that the whole amount of Mr. Berezy's claim for the services rendered to the department whilst conducting the resident duties of surveyor between January and June was - - - - - £. 66 15 -

Out of which he paid from his own funds for the assistance of an extra clerk taken into the post office during the same time - - - - - 33 10 -

Sterling - - - £. 33 5 -

Leaving Mr. Berezy the sum of 33 l. 5s. as his entire compensation for an amount of labour which would not have been adequately paid for by less than thrice that sum.

I was compelled, also, for a great part of the winter to have with me Mr. Griffin, the surveyor for Canada East, to aid in preparing the numerous statements and calculations required for the Commission, the whole of which work does not appear in the Appendix.

I mention these facts to afford your Excellency some idea of the difficulties under which I have conducted my office duties whilst in attendance upon the Commission, and the consequent necessity I was under of keeping Mr. Freer at Quebec. It might have been thought that a knowledge of these difficulties during this lengthened period (for they could scarcely have been ignorant of them) would have induced the gentlemen with whom I was connected in the Commission to have made some allowance in my behalf, and to have given me the benefit thereof in the Report for failing, in their opinion, *in one instance* in a point of duty; not so, however; the occasion, poor as it was, was eagerly caught at to support a position not sustainable, as I conceive, by sound argument; and in the pursuit of this object they have exerted themselves to the utmost to present circumstances in a light unfavourable to me.

That your Excellency may the better estimate the value of the imputation that I could have intended from any unworthy motive to conceal from the Postmaster-general my proceedings in the matter in question (for nothing short of this is meant), I beg to say, that I could not bring one shilling of the expense incurred in these temporary arrangements into my accounts without first submitting the vouchers for the special approval of his Lordship.

I have paid all those expenses out of my own funds, nor can I be reimbursed until the Postmaster-general is satisfied to approve of what I have done; but to show even more strongly, if possible, how little ground there existed for charging me with *concealment*, and for "suffering the Postmaster-general to remain under the impression that Mr. Freer was in Upper Canada, whilst he was actually at Quebec," I beg to state, that during the many months I was kept away from Quebec, *Mr. Freer, under his own signature, in my behalf, was by every packet in the practice of making reports to the secretary of the general post-office.*

I felt that the Postmaster-general was aware that the circumstances in which I was placed would compel me to make various arrangements for a time upon my own discretion, and that he had sufficient confidence in me to trust for a satisfactory explanation (when the time for it should arrive), of any delay which might occur in reporting to him, and I have consequently been free from anxiety upon this part of the subject.

Having already explained why I did not think it necessary to report to the Postmaster-general my provisional arrangements for conducting the surveyor's duties in Upper Canada, and of my own at Quebec, during the first few months of my absence from Quebec, I shall now crave your Excellency's further attention whilst I state my reasons *for abstaining to report one word upon the subject after it was taken up by the Commission.*

See my letter to Post-office Commission, in Appendix.

I think it was in April last, after Mr. Berczy had been managing the duties of acting surveyor for about three months, that application was made to the local government* by some gentlemen of political influence in Upper Canada for the situation of post-office surveyor (presumed by them to be vacant) for Mr. Howard, formerly postmaster at Toronto, who was dismissed from his office by Sir Francis Bond Head in 1837, in consequence of his suspected connexion with the rebellion.

Upon a question on the subject of this supposed vacancy being put to me by Mr. Dowling at a sitting of the Commission, I informed him that the appointment was *not vacant*, and proceeded to state exactly how the matter stood, and what I had done in consequence of being unable to spare Mr. Freer from Quebec. Being conscious that throughout the whole of my proceedings in the case in question I had consulted the best interests of the public, I supposed my explanation would have been satisfactory; not so, however, for I was questioned and cross-questioned about it by Mr. Dowling in so offensive a manner, that I desired permission to lay before the Commission, in *writing*, a statement of the transaction as it occurred, which I immediately did.

Notwithstanding the undisguised and full explanation then afforded, and which I am quite sure would have exonerated me with the Postmaster-general from the slightest

* It is proper I should state, that I do not know officially, nor indeed certainly, that this application was made to the head of the Government, but I have reason to believe that it was, and I am quite prepared, if called upon, to state the grounds for this belief.

slightest blame. Mr. Dowling, the chairman of the Commission, with a precipitancy and want of decorum, hardly excusable, as I conceive, under any circumstances, still less in our relative positions, thought proper to say the transaction was "*a job*," or looked like "*a job*," with phrases of a similar character, equally ill-judged and out of place; my first impulse naturally was, under so gross a provocation, to abandon the Commission as a member; but I was dissuaded from this by the advice of judicious friends, who represented to me, and I am sure justly, that if I took any course which should have the effect of breaking up the Commission, it would be believed that I had done so because the inquisition into my conduct was more searching than I could endure, and that I had resorted to stratagem to get rid of it. I, therefore, under a protracted state of vexation, which I would not submit to again for the value of my Commission, continued to sit at the Board, and to lend my assistance to the business in every manner in my power for several months longer, until my health actually gave way under the annoyance which I was enduring, and I returned to Quebec early in August, leaving behind me at Kingston (with the consent of Lord Sydenham), Mr. Griffin, the surveyor for Lower Canada, who was perfectly equal to supply my place for all that was required to be done; he was detained there some three months or more, before he was permitted to take his departure.

Your Excellency will, I trust, give me credit for being actuated by a right feeling, when I resolved, after the language alluded to had been used by the chairman of the Commission, to make no communication whatever to the Postmaster-general on the subject in question whilst the Commission should be in action; had I done otherwise, I should naturally have expected that the same tendency to put the worst construction on my proceedings which had been previously manifested by the chairman would have led him to say, that finding myself in a dilemma, I had sought to escape from the consequences, by entrapping the Postmaster-general into an approval which his Lordship would not have afforded, had he known all the circumstances of the case as they would appear in the Report.

I beg leave here to draw your Excellency's attention to the fact, that though this case is ostensibly brought forward as a powerful illustration of a great inherent defect in the existing constitution of the department, it does not, even as set forth by my colleagues, tend to such a conclusion; but rather resolves itself exclusively into an impeachment of the Deputy Postmaster-general for having overstepped the discretionary power vested in him, and in fact for having deliberately violated the instructions which form a material part of the above constitution.

To have led to the desired inference, it should have been demonstrated that the existing system was so defective as to enable me to escape or evade the consequences of my proceedings in this case. It cannot be shewn that I could entertain any such expectation, nor other reliance than my trust in the impartial consideration of my Lord the Postmaster-general, of the circumstances of peculiar difficulty in which I had been placed. If I am right in my view of the case, I think it will be admitted, that the main argument of Messrs. Dowling and Davidson drawn from it falls to the ground.

I shall now, may it please your Excellency, bring to a close all that it appears necessary for me to say with regard to mere personal defence in the matter of the Report; my statement under this head has extended to a length much beyond what I anticipated when I commenced, and it may not be free from objections on other grounds. I must however repeat my hope, that in consideration of the peculiar circumstances of my position, which has indeed been one of singular difficulty, your Excellency will be disposed to make such allowance for the course I have pursued as I may be entitled to. Had Lord Sydenham (by whom the Post-office Commission was constituted) survived, it was my determination, before he left the country, to have represented to his Lordship every thing which I am now laying before your Excellency, with many other particulars, indeed, with which it would have been right he should have been made acquainted, but with which it is unnecessary to trouble your Excellency.

There is an assumption here that the Postmaster-general is not satisfied with the nature of the responsibility of his Deputy, which I conceive his Lordship, when the remark meets his observation, will not fail to disprove.

The Report says, "There is evidence, that in this respect the condition of the department has not been considered satisfactory;" and again, "Since the appointment of this Commission, the Postmaster-general has seen fit on more than one occasion

occasion to refer to us for our report on recommendations sent to his Lordship by the Deputy Postmaster-general."

It is quite true that, pending their sittings, his Lordship the Postmaster-general deferred to the judgment of the Commissioners two or three cases involving expense—the establishment of the Montreal office was one of the cases; this I conceive was quite natural under the circumstances. It was proper, indeed, that every question of the kind that could be subjected to the judgment of the Commissioners should have the benefit of their consideration; but I think I may safely say that the fact does not bear out the inference drawn from it by my colleagues.

I shall now, with permission, take up that part of the Report, page 45, which undertakes, after having endeavoured to shew that I have abused the trust reposed in me, to draw a general deduction from the premises; it says, "Power, however purely exercised, if subjected to no popular control, and to but little check of any kind, will always be liable to suspicion. Concealment creates jealousy and distrust; but if to this we add the fact that from some of the colonies, the Canadas especially, a large surplus revenue has been annually remitted to England, the public dissatisfaction will appear natural enough, even though the expediency of the changes we are about to recommend should not be admitted."

No one, I fancy, will be disposed to dissent from the abstract truth of the above propositions, but I believe the Report to be wrong so far as Canada is concerned, at all events in supposing that the "power" alluded to in its general application to the business of the post-office has had much to do with the dissatisfaction described.

I think that *three* causes have operated to prevent the attainment of that degree of popularity to which the department might fairly have laid claim, had there existed no counteracting cause, from the great improvements that have been introduced within the last few years, and which are generally admitted; and they are, firstly, the charge against printers for the transmission of their papers, or rather the enforced prepayment of that charge, and its appropriation to the Deputy Postmaster-general as a privilege of office.

This exaction is supposed to bear injuriously upon printers; by it they are constantly brought into irritating collision with the department, and it can scarcely be necessary to do more than state this fact, to account for the dissatisfaction expressed, and the little disposition that there has been to speak favourably of the post-office. With the whole public press, actuated by a direct personal feeling against any establishment, popularity, in the ordinary acceptation of that word, is not to be expected. I have long been convinced, therefore, that both the mode of paying for newspapers, and the application of the proceeds, required alteration; and it is well known that I have for many years advocated the necessary change.

The second ground for dissatisfaction is the remittances of the surplus revenue of the department. This surplus revenue has undoubtedly resulted from military postage, paid by the several army departments; and there have not been wanting arguments to show, that under the circumstances, the British Exchequer was well entitled to a return into it of money expended in the postages of an army stationed in the colony for its defence.

The public generally has been ignorant of the fact which I have stated above; the great amount of military postage has not been known or suspected; and the common belief is that some 12,000*l.* or 15,000*l.* a year remitted to England as post-office revenue comes from the pockets of the inhabitants of the provinces, although it can be demonstrated that this is an error,

The third cause for dissatisfaction has been the high rates of postage, more especially the rates for great distances, and this dissatisfaction has gained strength rapidly since the introduction of the general penny rate in England, and the reduction of the postage on our correspondence with Europe; for, as a correspondent of the Commission very justly observes, "Charges for postage will always be referred for comparison to the lowest rate with which the people are acquainted."

If the three causes for dissatisfaction above described were removed, and the same attention to the general improvement of the department which has obtained for the last several years continued, I entertain not the slightest doubt that the post-office would become as popular as could be desired.

I agree with the other Commissioners in their reasoning (commenced in page 45) upon the Bill sent out in 1834. The course adopted on that occasion was radically wrong, and not suited to accomplish the desired end. I think, also, that the whole or nearly the whole of a satisfactory plan might be arranged by the

Report, p. 45.

Report, p. 47.

Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury and the Postmaster-general, and carried out by their authority alone; but I do not see any good reason for the Postmaster-general's transferring to the executive authorities in the provinces any portion of his administrative control over the department, if by this is meant, as I believe it is, to take from the Postmaster-general or his Deputy the right of appointing to office people for whose conduct the latter individual is accountable! The intention itself is only named in *words*, and as it were incidentally, nearly at the close of the general argument in page 47; nevertheless it is the great question upon which I am at issue with the other Commissioners; it is the question whether the Postmaster-general shall be deprived of all substantial power in the department, that of appointing his own officers, or whether those officers shall be appointed by the respective Governors of the provinces, and the department be made (to the destruction of its usefulness) an arena for political partisanship!—for that I have no doubt it *would* become.

I can conscientiously say, that when reflecting upon this most important branch of the question, I have endeavoured to divest myself of every consideration arising from my present position in the department, and my firm impression is that to take from the Postmaster-general or his representative the right of appointing to office, will not only weaken its efficiency in its working operations, but effectually prevent the establishment's acquiring what after all is the principal object to be looked to—the confidence and favour of the public.

I consider that the proper policy to be pursued with regard to the post-office in these provinces is to make it a common link of union between the Government and the people, and that neither its own action nor the choice of its officers should be made subservient to political party objects.

I can easily conceive that it might be a convenience to the Executive for a time, and that some apparent immediate advantage might be derived, were the several Governors to appoint their political adherents to the situations of surveyors, postmasters, and to the superior clerkships; but the character of the department would thereby sink in public estimation, and become in a short time what it is in the United States, where of late we have witnessed the extraordinary fact of the highest functionary in the Government (the President) brought to a conviction of the pernicious consequences springing from a post-office influenced by political considerations, and repudiating in a public document what has notoriously been the guiding principle of that establishment.

Any and every other department, in a country peopled as these provinces are, may with more safety than the post-office be made accessory to the advancement of any course of policy which the Government may be pleased to advocate; but the post office, for reasons just stated, and others which I think must come home to every man, should if possible remain sacred from even a suspicion of being under party bias; it is upon its unquestionable integrity in the minds of all classes that the post-office must mainly rely for its character and prosperity.

It may be supposed, notwithstanding my protestation to the contrary, that I am biassed in my views by the situation I happen to hold in the department, and that I wish to perpetuate a system which has been advantageous or convenient to myself; I do not think, however, that I am obnoxious to such a charge, nor do I think that the continuance of the "patronage" of the department, as it is called, where it has hitherto been, can necessarily expose the government to injury, for there can be no doubt that the Executive of the country has at all times the power of suspending from the exercise of his functions any Deputy Postmaster-general who may be found abusing the authority entrusted to him; no other idea can for a moment be seriously entertained, and with such a power the responsibility of the post-office to the local government of the country is as positive and actual as it can be for any useful object.

The Report goes on to say, page 46, "It appears to us that the mere introduction of a few sentences in the commission and instructions to the Deputy Postmaster-general, requiring him to obey in all things lawful the orders of the Governor-general, as well as those of the Lords of the Treasury and the Postmaster-general, might be made the means of providing all needful subordination to provincial authority; the effect of this alteration would be to confer upon the Governor-general a sort of concurrent jurisdiction which could never by any possibility clash with that of the authorities at home, or impede the uniform working of the system, but would subject that officer to a real, because no longer a distant responsibility, and introduce some measure of popular control by making the
local

local administration answerable politically for abuses in the direction of the post-office."

The Report continues—"The introduction into the Deputy Postmaster-general's Commission of a clause of this sort, though a novelty as regards the post-office, is not without precedent in other departments, subordinate as the post-office is to the Lords of the Treasury or to the Secretary of State;" and a Commission of the Surveyor-general of Woods and Forests in Lower Canada and the Commission of the Commissioners of Crown Lands are cited as instances. The relations existing between the Commissariat and the military authorities at their respective stations are also supposed to constitute a precedent for the application of a concurrent jurisdiction in the case of the post-office.

I have no objection, whatever, to urge against the introduction of the "few sentences" suggested in the Commission of the Deputy Postmaster-general, for I do not see that these words would in any degree affect the accountability which the Deputy Postmaster-general owes to the provincial Executive, but I would respectfully protest against these sentences being construed to deprive the Postmaster-general of any portion of his prerogative as now exercised, and this should be clearly explained. The change recommended is not necessary, and would in its effects be bad, nor can I see that the original argument for it is in any degree strengthened by the references to the Wood and Land departments.

The post-office is necessarily an imperial establishment (not a provincial one), because its government and operations must pervade the several provinces.

The Wood and Land departments are strictly local, confined in their accountability to one province, and the orders of the Governor are sufficient for every relation coming within the sphere of their operations.

It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the different character of the post-office in this respect; further, I conceive it to be quite an erroneous assumption that the provincial jurisdiction "*could not by any possibility clash with that at home,*" if the former is to be exercised in the manner and to the extent evidently aimed at by the authors of the suggestion.

The Commissariat is a better illustration of the kind of concurrent jurisdiction which ought to prevail in the post-office, *so far as the different nature of its character and service would permit*; my opinion indeed is, as already stated, that it does exist at present, but if it would conduce to the public satisfaction (*and I think it might*), I should be glad it were formally proclaimed; but I must again enter my solemn protest against the introduction of any change that would identify the post-office in its action with the political movements of the country, or that would have the effect of making the Deputy Postmaster-general a political character.

The next proposition advanced by the other Commissioners is that the "establishments of the Deputy Postmaster-general and the accountant should be permanently fixed at the seat of government in Canada." Report, p. 47.

My opinion is, that the proper position for the central establishment is at Quebec. The Report has given the outline of my arguments, but adds, "these considerations do not appear to us at all decisive of the question; the constant presence of a very active and intelligent postmaster" (at Quebec) "is all that is required for these objects."

The more I consider this matter, the more am I convinced that Quebec is the natural and proper station for the managing officer of the department. If a central government is required, it is of the first moment that it should, as nearly as possible, be *geographically* central. Should the government of Canada continue at Kingston, and the Deputy Postmaster-general of British North America be stationed there, he would be 1,300 miles away from one extremity of his charge, and only 450 from the other! and it is certain that the organization of the lower extremity, meaning the country east of Quebec, will require three times as much of his direct superintendence as the upper part. The disadvantages which must result from conducting his operations at such a distance, I humbly conceive, form a consideration which should outweigh every other in deciding this question.

I admit the advantage of an easy communication with the Governor-general, but it is not in my opinion a vital consideration that he (the Deputy Postmaster-general) should always reside in the same town with his Excellency. I think he should be so situated as to be within easy call of the Governor-general and the Legislative Assemblies of Canada; and further, I consider it highly advisable that his office business should be so arranged, as to permit him, without injury to it,

to visit occasionally the several provinces, and see that the surveyors are doing their duty, and to consult with the several Lieutenant-governors upon the improvement of the Post-office establishments within their respective provinces; this, perhaps, more than anything that could be devised, would have the effect of increasing the efficiency of the department generally, and of rendering it extensively popular.

Report, p. 47.

The five surveyors, as recommended in page 47, would probably suffice for some time to come, but if possible, I should wish to avoid keeping a surveyor at Quebec for any great length of time; he ought to be differently occupied, more especially if Quebec should remain the station of the Deputy Postmaster-general.

Hitherto Mr. Griffin, the Lower Canada surveyor, has been obliged to remain too much at Quebec in order to assist the Deputy Postmaster-general in his duties, which otherwise he could not have got through with; this, I repeat, ought not to be necessary, and one serious objection to it is, that it is an injustice to the surveyor himself, who receives pay only at the rate of 150*l.* a year whilst at his head quarter station,—a very insufficient compensation if he continues stationary for a considerable portion of the year.

Force of the Deputy Postmaster-general's office, Report, p. 47.

The Report says, with reference to there being one central office for British North America, that perhaps "one additional clerk might suffice" for the Deputy Postmaster-general's office, and adds "that if some further increase in the establishment be found necessary hereafter, it is among the advantages of the plan we propose, that such necessity would be easily decided upon by competent and impartial authority."

In one of my communications to the Commission, I observed that in the event of annexing the lower provinces to the Canada charge, I should require another clerk in my own office. I stated this without pledging myself that it was all that would be necessary. I should require that addition at once; but the task of assimilating the duties of the lower provinces to those of Canada, and of subjecting the whole to a system that would work well, will be a very heavy one, and until it is fairly entered upon, I cannot venture to say what additional force will be necessary as a permanent establishment.

I should think, however, that the Postmaster-general would be as competent and as disinterested an authority to decide upon a question of this kind as could be found, and I consequently cannot see the collateral advantage claimed in the Report as likely to be realized in this instance from the adoption of the change of management. In any event the opinion of the Deputy Postmaster-general, except all confidence is to be withdrawn from him, must have weight in a question relating to the duties of his own office. The great fear of the Commissioners, however, seems to be that the Deputy Postmaster-general should be trusted to for any thing, and their chief object to place him in a position where, although his responsibility is to remain, he is permitted no free action; but surely some confidence ought to be reposed in the judgment and good intentions of an officer who has attained to his rank, and standing too, in the particular position in which he does; nor is it possible to work a department of this kind effectually unless a large share of discretionary power is vested in him, or in some officer, by whatever other name he may be called, entrusted with his duties.

I hold it to be perfectly right that the Deputy Postmaster-general should be rigidly watched by the Governor-general and by the Legislature also, and that he should be obliged to render ample explanations of his conduct and proceedings whenever these high authorities may deem it necessary, and that it should be a part of the system that full periodical reports, in such form as may be satisfactory, should be furnished by him; and further, that it should be distinctly made known to the public that to this extent he is responsible, and that for abuse of his power or neglect or incompetency, he may be suspended by the Governor-general; but to trammel him in the practical discharge of his duties by any checks beyond these, and what exist in the surveillance of the Postmaster-general, the Audit-office, and more immediately in the Account branch, would only tend to defeat the reasonable expectations of the Government and the public.

I think it may be advantageous at this stage of the question to solicit your Excellency's notice of part of a letter from the Honourable John Macaulay, inspector-general of accounts in Upper Canada, which appears in the Appendix, and which goes immediately to the point now under consideration.

Mr. Macaulay was, for several years, postmaster of Kingston, and during that time he devoted his attention not merely to the operations of his own office, but to a study of the Post-office system generally, the working of which, as well in the United States as in the British provinces, he thoroughly understands; added to this recommendation, the opinions of this gentleman upon all matters of departmental business are acknowledged to be of the highest order; I consider, therefore, I am justified in now referring to what he says in regard to the management of the post-office.

The language is: "In order, however, to ensure the steady progress of improvement in all branches of the department, I am under an impression that its chief officer in this country should be endued with larger responsibilities and higher powers than I apprehend it has hitherto been the policy of the superior metropolitan authorities to concede to him. He should, I think, be permitted to act in reasonable conformity to his own views of the general advantage, and to the desire of the head of the local government upon any special matter, without a previous and perhaps a very dilatory reference to London. The colonial executive should be allowed a control over the department to a certain extent, which, however, should be so defined as not to go the length of sanctioning any sort of executive interference with appointments to office in the department. The patronage should exclusively appertain to the Deputy Postmaster-general, who it is clear would be careful in the unfettered exercise of his own discretion to select his deputies according to the opinion he might be led to form of their integrity and ability, and with little reference to any other consideration. Were the executive government in any manner to exert an influence over the appointments, they would become political, which is the last thing to be desired in such a department of the public service."

Appendix, Part II.

I do not differ so materially from the other Commissioners in their statements on this head as to render it necessary for me to record my impressions at any length in opposition to theirs.

Postage rates, arguments for reducing, &c., Report, p. 52.

I have already remarked, with reference to what is said in pages 30 and 52 with regard to the United States' rates, that my opinion is, that for those distances upon which the greatest amount of correspondence is conducted in both countries, the rates in the United States are higher than those in Canada! A very material difference, however, in favour of the United States' tariff, and that which impresses the public most strongly when contrasting the rates of the two countries, is, that in the United States they have a maximum rate, and it is comparatively a low one; the charge does not increase after 400 miles. I have always considered this principle a good one, and that it might be advantageously applied to these provinces.

Having myself devised the four scales of postage described in the Report, and, upon a comparison of the merits of them all, given the preference to No. 4, I unite in the recommendation that it should be adopted (and the weight system also), but I cannot, consistently with my own credit and the obligations I owe to the public, concur in that recommendation in the unqualified manner that is done in the Report, nor without earnestly entreating your Excellency, before giving to so very material a question the weight of your voice in sending it to Her Majesty's Government, to consider the disastrous consequences that will ensue, if, upon the application of these fundamental changes, *without any previous provision being made for a want of funds to carry on the business of the department*, a deficiency should arise! For that an actual deficiency will be the early consequence of those changes I am well persuaded, nor can I see upon what grounds the other Commissioners have ventured to estimate (as they have done in page 57) "the utmost loss in Canada from the adoption of the two changes" at 9,000 l.

Recommendation that Scale of Rates, No. 4, should be adopted, &c. Report, p. 54.

I beg to lay before your Excellency the scale, No. 4, with my remarks thereon, as originally prepared for the Commission, wherein you will perceive, Sir, that I stipulate (if I may be permitted to use the term) for a provision against the probable deficiency that may be expected to follow the alteration for some time.

When draughting the scale just mentioned (No. 4), I was not called upon to take into account the operation of the weight system, as alluded to in the Report, page 56; but without having in view the loss which I consider as inevitable therefrom, I see enough in other causes, more especially in the rapidly increasing expenditure for steam-boat service, &c., to teach me that if such a scale as

No. 4 is adopted, an extraordinary fund should be provided to enable the Deputy Postmaster-general to fulfil his engagements.

The year's statement of the Canada post-office revenue up to July 1840, as laid before the Post-office Commission, was, in its appearance, very encouraging, and calculated, when compared with the previous year's, to warrant the feasibility of a considerable reduction in the postage rates; but the expense of steam-boat mails, and several other heavy items of charge for improved mail service upon land routes, did not then exist.

Had it not been for the fire which destroyed the general post-office in November last, I should have it in my power, as I fully believe, to show that the surplus revenue of the Canada charge for the year ending January 1842, was only about half, or more probably less than half, what it was for the year before cited. I very much doubt, indeed, if the British postage were subtracted from it for the last year (and this postage must of course be subtracted if the new system is adopted), whether the actual surplus revenue for the year ending in January last will exceed 7,000 *l.*, whilst the *possible* loss arising to the year's revenue from the adoption of scale No. 4, is computed at 13,320 *l.* 17 *s.* 2 *d.* currency! and this, it must be borne in mind, is independent of any loss that may accrue from the adoption of the weight system.

I should not think I had discharged my duty, whilst upon this branch of the subject, if I did not refer to the condition of the United States' post-office in illustration of my argument, that the department in British North America would be unable to sustain itself under the proposed changes, and that it would consequently require extrinsic aid.

The elements for the self-sustainment of a post-office in the United States are unquestionably far greater than they are in these provinces,—I should think upon an average nearly as two to one; and yet it is certain that for some years past the expenditure there has considerably exceeded the income, so that the Postmaster-general has been compelled to reduce the amount of post accommodation throughout the extent of his charge; in these provinces, a reduction of accommodation could not be borne; the constant demand is for its increase.

Except, then, I am altogether wrong in my calculations and arguments, I think your Excellency will admit that it would be criminal in me not to protest against an unconditional adoption of the two changes recommended in the Report, *i. e.*, the weight plan, and the new tariff of rates. I should be happy, under a proper provision against failure in the revenue, to see both changes introduced; but that provision, wherever it is to come from, *ought to be ready whenever the necessity for its use shall arise*; for, even supposing that the several provincial legislatures would be willing, as I trust they would, to supply the deficiency upon an exposition of the accounts, the establishment might be bankrupt before relief could be obtained. I am persuaded, indeed, that in three months or less such a conclusion would arrive.

Rates on letters, &c. delivered at the office where they are mailed, and also by letter-carrier, Report, p. 60.

The rates to be charged on letters or packets deposited in a post-office for persons within its delivery, and on general post letters delivered by letter-carriers:

The plan suggested by the Deputy Postmaster-general is not approved of by my colleagues.

As I do not know of any better mode of providing for the convenience of the public in the matter in question than that suggested by me, I respectfully solicit your Excellency's notice of the paper in which my views are contained: Appendix, Part I.

The argument used in the Report against fees is quite right when large and regularly constituted post-offices are in question, but this argument cannot be extended to the numerous petty offices which constitute by far the greater portion of the establishment in British North America, and whether upon the postage of the letters alluded to you allow a commission or grant the whole as a fee or perquisite, there can be in neither case a check.

Newspaper postage, Report, p. 58.

I agree in the opinion that it is advisable to make the postage on newspapers a halfpenny each currency, payable either by the sender or receiver, and I would apply this tax as well to papers printed in this country as to British, United States, or other papers, passing by the post otherwise than by the regular packet mails.

As regards newspapers for or from England by our packet mails, which now pass free of any charge from one extremity of the provinces to the other, I am strongly inclined to think, bearing in mind the heavy and rapidly increasing cost of the communication between Quebec and Halifax (through an unproductive route of nearly 700 miles), that some tax should be imposed upon those papers, if only as a salutary restraint upon the unreasonable use that is now made of the accommodation by numerous individuals, who recklessly send huge files of such papers, evidently without any regard to the great difficulty and expense which attends their transport at that season when the steam conveyance is suspended, which is for about half the year. It is no uncommon occurrence for a private individual in Canada to receive from 40 to 50 British newspapers by one packet; these newspaper mails are large and heavy, they already constitute a weight of from three-quarters of a ton to a ton, and there is no saying to what extent this will go on augmenting; even at present it requires three or four trips of the couriers to bring one of these mails, and when I state that through great part of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia the post-office pays from 2s. 9d. to 4s. 9d. a mile for the conveyance of this mail (limited as the weight by each trip necessarily is), your Excellency may form some idea of the burthensome expense attending the service, and what it is likely to become; but, as above-mentioned, the whole of the newspaper mail is not now brought by "one despatch," neither does it come with a sufficient expedition to satisfy the public,* and if the demands for improvement in these respects (which are reasonable enough in one point of view) are to be fully complied with, the charge of the Halifax communication will become enormous, exceeding beyond all proportion the revenue resulting from it.

Report, p. 69.

The intention of the Government in affording this great facility for the free transmission of newspapers was no doubt founded on enlarged and liberal views, and I am most loath to do anything to injure the full effect of the beneficent intention; but if the department is to be thrown entirely upon its own resources, it appears to be but reasonable that these papers should contribute something towards the revenue.

This idea is very judiciously treated by one of the correspondents of the Commission, Mr. Freer, of Quebec, to whose communication I would respectfully refer your Excellency.

Appendix, Part II.

Whilst upon this subject, I think it may be useful to affix to my statement a notice which I have recently cut from a newspaper,† describing the intentions of the United States Postmaster-general with regard to the size of newspapers passing through the post in that country; a corresponding check should be in force in the provinces.

In speaking of the creation of new offices, the Report says, "It does not appear that many applications (in Canada) are refused, but that there is often delay in making preliminary inquiries through the surveyor, which, combined with the general vice of the system, its want of popular control, and hence of public confidence, does much to discourage applications."

No great complaint of the want of post-offices in Canada, though the number might well be increased, &c. Report, p. 60.

I protest against this averment, for I do not believe that there has been for years any backwardness on the grounds alluded to in applying for post-offices and other post-accommodation. It is well known that every application is received courteously by the department in Canada, and I think its present compared with its former position (going some 10 or 12 years back) will shew that an amount

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* The mail is now brought through from Halifax in from six to eight days, according to the state of the roads and weather; 14 years ago it generally occupied 18 days.

† "Boston, March 21.—The Postmaster-general has submitted for the consideration of the Committee on Post-offices, &c., two Bills. The one proposes to change the rates of postage so as to make them conform to the federal coin. The rates now charged are 6 cents, 10 cents, 12½ cents, 18½ cents and 25 cents for single letters. It is proposed to charge 5 and 10 cents, 20 and 25 cents. This is, in fact, an important reduction upon all rates of postages below 18½ cents. It is proposed to charge letters, now paying 18½ cents, 20 cents, and reduce the rate of 12½ to 10 and 6 to 5. This is as great a reduction as it would be safe to make at this time. The other Bill is designed to reach the evil and relieve the department from the burden, or, in other words, to indemnify it for the expense of transporting these immense mammoth sheets assuming the name and appearance of newspapers, but which, in fact, are in most cases a reprint of books. Mr. Wickliffe says, 'I have adopted the principle of charging newspapers by the square inch. I would suggest the largest size newspaper printed in the United States as the size which is to pay the rate of postage now charged upon newspapers by the law of 1825. All sizes above are required to pay one cent for every five square inches over that size.'"

of improvement has been introduced at least equal to the advance of the country in other respects; this is even admitted in the Report itself; the only cause that a single complaint exists of a real want of post-office accommodation is that the Deputy Postmaster-general has not had a sufficient force in surveyors to attend to every case immediately. I think besides that, as a general rule, it is better to wait for an expression of public opinion with regard to increasing post-office facilities, rather than to anticipate it; such accommodation is always asked for sufficiently early in the districts within my control.

The prevalent desire in Canada now is, not so much for more post-offices, as for more frequent mails upon the established routes, and greater expedition.

Report, p. 63.

A practice of violating the secrecy of letters is said to prevail in certain post-offices.

I cannot pass over this portion of the Report without comment.

Amongst so many offices, the services of which are frequently left to clerks in the absence of their principals, it would be a cause of surprise rather than otherwise if such delinquencies never occurred; but I believe the instances of crime of this sort are as rare in the Canada establishment as they are in any other, and in proof of this, I have only to point to the numerous reports of inquiry into the Post-office establishment instituted by the Assemblies in Upper and Lower Canada! Those inquiries were oftener than otherwise, under the conduct of such persons as M'Kenzie, Duncombe and O'Callaghan (men who have all been driven from the country), prosecuted in a spirit of rancour against the establishment, and every fault that could be got at was prominently thrust forward; yet no imputation of the kind alluded to has ever been advanced, and I cannot believe that the department, since the time when those inquiries were pursued, has sunk in its moral character.

The true cause from which the suspicion of the violation of letters sprung is very simply explained. During the political troubles of 1837 and 1838, when the post was notoriously made use of by the disaffected for the advancement of their revolutionary projects, it became necessary at all the principal offices, and some of the minor ones, to open suspected correspondence; persons formally qualified to perform this onerous but imperative duty were appointed by the Governor-general in Lower Canada, and by the Lieutenant-governor in the upper province, and all suspected letters were opened and examined; this was continued in some parts of the country so late as 1839. It is not surprising that people whose correspondence was subjected to so offensive an inquisition should feel sore, and that some of them, in ignorance, should direct their resentment against the post-office, and, without making allowance for the original cause, should have arrived at the conclusion, that it was a systematic practice for which that establishment was answerable. That this reasoning has prevailed to a considerable extent, I had cause to know long before the Post-office Commission was appointed, and I have painfully felt the unmerited odium it had entailed upon the department.

I stated all this to the chairman of the Commission, who, having recently come to the country, I supposed might not have known the facts; and I cannot but think that when placing the *imputation* upon record, and recommending in such very emphatic terms the necessity of vigilance on the part of the head of the department, to detect and punish the disgraceful crime, it was his duty to have adverted to my testimony, as Deputy Postmaster-general, upon a question of so much moment.

Other circumstances in connexion with the discussion of this subject transpired before the Commission, which, at the time they occurred, I had resolved, in justice to myself, to bring under the notice of the Government. My great dislike, however, to encumber the proceedings with any matter of a nature personal to myself, that can possibly be avoided, has induced me to waive that resolution; and I shall content myself with saying that, as the head of the department in Canada, no one can view with greater "horror" than I do, the crime of violating the correspondence entrusted to the post; nor is any argument beyond what belongs to my own conviction necessary to teach me the paramount importance of vigilance in the detection of offenders in a matter of this nature, and of signally punishing any individual of the department found guilty of so vile an abuse of his trust.

Emoluments of
Deputy Postmaster-
general,
Report, p. 71.

I had hoped not to have found it necessary to make any observations upon this portion of the Report; but when I see it proposed as a debateable point, whether

whether the Deputy Postmaster-general is to receive "any" compensation for the deprivation of his privileges of office, I cannot abstain from saying a few words upon the subject.

It is said that the emoluments of the Deputy Postmaster-general have swelled to an amount disproportionate to the general range of incomes in the country. Admitting this proposition to its utmost extent, and that persons could be found willing to relieve that officer from his charge, for one-half or one-quarter the income he receives (and there are, no doubt, abundance of such persons), I am not inclined to think that Her Majesty's Government will place me, for the time to come, exactly upon the footing that might be very equitable and satisfactory in the case of a new appointment to office.

My emoluments as Deputy Postmaster-general have grown with the general business of the department, and the gradual improvement of the country. I have never drawn anything my right to which has not been repeatedly recognized by competent authority; and I have by the same authority been promised, that when the period for relinquishing those privileges should arrive, I would be allowed compensation according to the scale which in similar cases prevails in the general post-office at home! Further than this, the late Lord Sydenham distinctly assured me, that when such an alteration in the system should take place as would deprive me of my privileges or perquisites, I might rest easy as to a satisfactory compensation for the same.

This principle was admitted, and recommended to the Government for adoption, in a joint address to his late Majesty by the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of the province of Upper Canada, in March 1837.

In discussing the claim for compensation to postmasters (including, as I have a right to suppose, the Deputy Postmaster-general) for the loss of the income at present derived by them from the collection of United States' postage, the Commissioners have pronounced that they have no claim! adding, "the system is one which ought not to have been suffered to grow up;" and again, "a mere private arrangement entered into for their own benefit by certain public servants of the Government with the authorities of a foreign country, if found to be incompatible with the interests of the Government they serve, cannot be said to furnish a just claim to compensation."

Compensation to postmasters for loss of commission on United States' postage, Report, p. 69.

There is scarcely a point among the many in which I differ from the other Commissioners, in which their mode of treating the subject has surprised me more than this. It might really be supposed, from the language employed, that the department in British North America had been guilty of criminal misconduct in its arrangements for conducting the correspondence with and through the United States, than which no idea can be more unfounded. Whatever the decision of Her Majesty's Government may be upon this or any other question affecting me, I am prepared respectfully to bow to it; but I cannot suffer the views upon our intercourse with the United States, as given in the Report, to go forth without an attempt to correct them.

It is altogether wrong to suppose, as must be inferred from the language of the Report, that the chief advantage of the intercourse in question has been gained by the United States; on the contrary, the chief advantage has been derived by us *in the provinces*. We had a boon to ask, and nothing to offer as an equivalent; but owing to the great liberality of the United States' government, in trusting to the individual responsibility of the Deputy Postmaster-general, we obtained what we required (previous to the establishment of the Cunard line), namely, the means of a regular and convenient correspondence with the British isles through the American merchant packets.

The provinces are now independent of the United States in this respect; and so far a different character applies to the existing arrangement, which it is now reasonable to expect should be modified in such a way as to confer reciprocal benefits, and impose corresponding obligations upon the post-offices of the two Governments.

I must take leave further to say, that the intercourse in question has grown from what some 15 years since was a very insignificant item in the post-office business to its present importance. The system, such as it is now, was, by the very nature of our position at the period it commenced, forced upon us; it was a necessary first step towards a more perfect treaty or arrangement, such as I trust will ere long be brought about; and I contend that the Commissioners were not

justified in asserting or insinuating that the existing plan was entered into for their own benefit by postmasters.

This allegation, if correct, might indeed form a strong support to the dictum that *the postmasters have no claim to compensation*; but I do not believe that in *any instance* those communications were formed for the convenience or profit of postmasters. I opened several of them myself, at the desire of the inhabitants, and for their accommodation, and my own emoluments from United States' postage being confined to what is collected at Quebec and Montreal, it is clear that I derived no personal benefit from thus multiplying the channels of intercourse with the American territory, but, on the contrary, I subjected myself to increased responsibility and labour.

With the statement of facts in relation to our post communication with the United States, the truth of which I can substantiate, I cannot but think it extremely improper that such imputations as appear in the Report should have been made, nor can I see justice in the proposition that I or others should be deprived of a source of income such as this without compensation therefor, in some shape or degree.

It is right I should state (otherwise it will not be suspected), that under the present arrangement I have been exposed to and have sustained heavy losses; besides minor sums, the large amount of 1,300*l.* due to me by a deceased postmaster for American postage is now in extreme jeopardy, and may be lost to me altogether. This money, under my agreement, I was bound to pay over to the American post-office, though never received by me, and although I never derived any portion of the commission accruing to the postmaster whose debt I was thus compelled to assume.

As to the *measure* of remuneration due to the Deputy Postmaster-general and others for the loss of commission on United States' postage, I have never considered that it should be equal to the advantage that it has afforded; but *something*, I conceive, will be due to those persons, if the deprivation takes place, and I have little doubt that it will be so determined by your Excellency and Her Majesty's Government. So far as this question applies to the several postmasters concerned, I had proposed what I deemed an equitable consideration in the plan of establishments for the principal offices prepared by me, which the Commissioners have not judged it necessary to publish in the Appendix: for my individual claim, I am quite willing to leave it to the decision of the Government.

I have just alluded to the fact that the Commissioners have not judged it necessary to publish in the Appendix the estimates for the principal offices as prepared by me; I have felt considerable disappointment at this omission, because I have believed that it was an especial point of their duty to take cognizance of so material an item in the general economy of the establishment, and to pronounce a positive opinion thereon, and I know, besides, it was the expectation of his Lordship the Postmaster-general that they would do so. Impressed as I am with these convictions, I cannot hesitate to submit for your Excellency's observation, copies of the estimates alluded to, which were drawn up by me after the best consideration I could bestow upon the subject. It is the more necessary I should do this, because the existing arrangements are not satisfactory either to the postmasters or to myself, and there can be no doubt they require early consideration.

Certain remarks of mine, in my capacity as Deputy Postmaster-general, which will be found in the Appendix, Part I. originally included observations on the estimates in question, but the Commissioners have not published this portion of my observations, nor have I now the means of supplying the deficiency.

Under this head I cannot repeat too decidedly an opinion which will be found in different words in other parts of this statement, namely, that I do not concur in the belief that the adoption of the new system of rates proposed by the Commissioners will furnish means for a self-sustainment of the department, either in Canada alone or throughout British North America; on the contrary, the more I consider the matter, the more convinced am I that it would be a suicidal act to adopt the recommendation of the Report on this subject *in extenso*, without a previous provision for meeting a *probable*, I may say, indeed, a *certain* deficiency of revenue. It is, of course, impossible to demonstrate the truth of my views by figures, but with the experience I have had in the working of the post-office in British North America for so many years, I do not think it is presumptuous in

me to say that I know, as it were intuitively, what the general result of the experiment would be.

I am a friend to many points of the reform suggested, to a degree quite equal to my colleagues, but I will never put my hand to a recommendation with the conviction strong upon me, as it is in the present case, that its adoption would involve consequences of the most mischievous nature.

The Commissioners have not, I am persuaded, attached sufficient importance to the consideration that the expenses of the establishment are in a rapid course of increase from the improved means of conveyance required to satisfy the demands on all hands for a more speedy and more perfect transmission of the mails; the increased cost, indeed, attending the acceleration of the pace of a mail is seldom properly estimated, except by those who have had actual experience in the business. The communication between Quebec and Halifax alone in the conveyance of our English mails (already referred to in page 93) is of itself a very heavy charge on the revenue, and is constantly augmenting, as well from the increasing weight of the newspaper part of the mail (altogether unproductive as a source of revenue), as from the incessant calls of the public for greater expedition.

I beg to observe that the route last alluded to is the most important we have, inasmuch as it is the principal channel of our intercourse with the mother country during six months of the year, and until it is improved to the utmost extent of its capabilities, the public will not be satisfied. I may add too, that there is a strong disposition in the inhabitants of Canada, especially in the mercantile classes (and I think it a commendable one if not carried too far), to require a very large and perfect post accommodation generally. Our close proximity to the United States, where it has been the study of the Government for many years to gratify the taste of the people in this particular, has served to create and keep alive this inclination, and assuredly it is a point not to be lost sight of when contemplating the possible effect of a very important alteration in the tariff of rates.

It may naturally be expected that, having expressed such strong objections to the unqualified adoption of several of the most material of those suggestions of my colleagues which are likely to affect the revenue, I should be prepared to place my own views thereon in a more precise shape than I have yet done; this I shall now attempt to do.

It is adopted as a fundamental principle in the Report, that the revenue of the department should be maintained as nearly as practicable at a self-sustaining point; that while on the one hand the creation of a surplus would be objectionable, the existence of a deficit should be avoided; in this I fully concur, and it is from my firm conviction of the wide departure from this governing principle, in which the unconditional adoption of these recommendations would involve the establishment, that I am led to dissent from them in the shape in which they appear in the Report.

I have already stated that I should be well pleased to see both the weight system and the scale (No. 4) of rates as described in the Report, pages 54 and 59 in operation, but that I was convinced that the unassisted resources of the department would be found totally inadequate to the immediate accomplishment of these objects in their full extent.

I will now proceed to show what I conceive may be prudently attempted in these branches of reform with the revenue of the department, keeping in view the large expenditure which will inevitably follow the proposed change of system in the eastern provinces, and which I am persuaded cannot immediately draw forth a reimbursing income.

I would propose that the minimum and maximum rates of the scale No. 4, that is, the twopenny rate for all distances under 30 miles, and that of 1s. for all distances over 300, be put in operation as soon as convenient, say from 6th of January 1843.* That from the 6th of January 1844 the reduction of the intermediate rates be

* The scale of rates would then stand thus:—

For distances up to 30 miles inclusive	-	-	-	2d. currency.
" from 31 to 60 "	-	-	-	4½d. "
" " 61 to 100 "	-	-	-	7d. "
" " 101 to 200 "	-	-	-	9d. "
" " 201 to 300 "	-	-	-	11d. "
" over 300 "	-	-	-	1s. "

be adopted, and from the 6th of January 1845, the weight system. Time would thus be afforded to the revenue between each change to recover its elasticity, and derive the advantage which the impulse given to correspondence by these several reductions of charge to the public may reasonably be expected to produce; and though a deficit might and very probably would follow upon the final accomplishment of the scheme, it would not, I trust, be considerable, more especially as I should propose that any surplus accruing in the two years of transition should be applied as a fund to meet the impoverishing effect of the adoption of the weight system in the third year. But under this or any other plan I must be permitted to repeat my earnest recommendation that even a possible deficiency in the revenue should be provided for; and I think that the only safe mode, as I view the subject, by which these important improvements could safely be put in train of speedy attainment, would be for Her Majesty's Government to lay before the several provincial legislatures, in the clearest and most distinct terms, their intentions with regard to the reforms contemplated, explaining amongst other things that the department in British North America should have the full benefit of the receipts of provincial postage; that the general management, as being essential to the interests of all the provinces, and to an impartial distribution of post-office accommodation throughout their whole extent, should continue with the Postmaster-general of the Empire, subject to such a surveillance of the respective provincial governments as shall be found consistent with his Lordship's control, and conducive to the well working of the establishment. That an account of the English postage collected in the provinces shall be kept, and the amount remitted to the General Post-office, London; and that as regards the introduction of the weight system, and the reduction in the postage scale, that it should be stated that these measures, however cautiously approached, would entail a material risk of a deficiency in the post-office revenue; that in the event of such an exigency, the Postmaster-general's deputy, upon application through the Governor-general, shall obtain, upon his Excellency's warrant from time to time, imprests from the Commissariat chest of such sums as he may require to carry on the service, and that at the end of the year, when the post-office annual accounts are made up, each province shall be required to make good the loans from the Commissariat chest, in proportion to its population. That it would depend on the expression of the opinion of the legislatures in this regard whether these important improvements should be introduced gradually, as the financial means of the department warranted, or whether they shall be immediately adopted in their full extent, upon the understanding that the provision for the material deficiency which might then be *certainly* looked for would be made in the manner just described.

These conditions are plain and simple, and withal, I think, so equitable, that they can hardly fail to be satisfactory to the several legislatures; and should an unreserved guarantee for possible deficiencies in the resources in the department be obtained, then every obstacle to continued and enlarged improvement throughout the extent of the country will have been removed.

Further, I beg to say, that I do not consider it at all necessary to wait the result of an appeal to the provincial legislatures before adopting the changes recommended with regard to newspapers and pamphlets, and with regard, likewise, to a change in our mode of dealing with American postage.

I am quite willing, so far as I am concerned, to surrender the privileges I enjoy under both these heads, trusting to the Postmaster-general and Her Majesty's Government for such compensation as I may be considered entitled to therefrom, as well as for such increase to my fixed salary as it may be deemed just to allow me under a new arrangement.

The American postage to be merged in our revenue upon the principle suggested in my Report to the Postmaster-general, dated 25th September 1837, 2d, 3d and 4th articles.—*See Appendix.*

A national treaty, such as suggested in the Report, page 71, to be the subject of attention afterwards.

I submit, also, that immediate steps should be taken to improve the surveyors' and accountant's departments, and the force in the Deputy Postmaster-general's office.

The establishments of all the larger offices should be speedily looked to and placed on a proper footing; and the forward system, with an attendant scale of compensation to the postmasters in charge of forward offices, be adopted as soon as practicable; in like manner the night-work should be provided for.

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The change in the scale of compensation to the deputies generally, calls likewise for early attention ; but perhaps it may be found expedient to postpone the final consideration of this part of the subject until the Government shall be prepared to pronounce upon the adoption of the new tariff of rates and the weight system recommended in the Report ; at which time, also, the question of abolishing the franking privilege to postmasters, noticed in page 77 of this communication, will, I trust, be decided upon.

Humbly submitted.

(signed) *T. A. Stayner.*

Quebec, 2d April 1842.