

HUNT'S

# MERCHANTS' MAGAZINE.

Established July, 1839,

BY FREEMAN HUNT, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

VOLUME XXXV.

NOVEMBER, 1856.

NUMBER V.

Feb. 56

## POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

### FRANKING PRIVILEGE TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

In answer to inquiries from postmasters, we learn the Postmaster-General decides that, under the law, as the right to *send* or *receive* mail matter free of postage is a *personal* privilege, and travels with the person possessing it, it follows, of course, that it can be exercised in but one place at the same time. Therefore, a member of Congress while at Washington, for instance, cannot have mailable matter sent free, under his frank, from the post-office at the place of his residence, nor such matter *received free* at such office by his family, partner, or agent, on the ground that it is addressed to a person enjoying the right to frank. A member may have any of his mail matter, entitled to go free, forwarded to him wherever he may be, free of charge. In like manner, a letter or packet, duly franked, may be forwarded from one office to another free of postage, if the person to whom it is addressed has changed his location.

### SAILING OF THE UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMERS AND POSTAL REGULATIONS FOR 1856.

POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, January 14, 1856.

FREEMAN HUNT, *Editor of the Merchants' Magazine*:—

SIR:—I transmit herewith, agreeably to your request of the 9th inst., a copy of the schedule for 1856 of the days of sailing of the United States Mail Steamers between this country and Europe.

I also inclose a copy of the last issue of "Tables of Postages to Foreign Coun-

tries," together with the regulations with respect to the registry of valuable letters, &c.

The circular letter inclosed may also be serviceable to you as it contains many important instructions, with copies of the recent acts of Congress modifying the rates of postage, &c.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES M. CAMPBELL.

SCHEDULE OF THE DAYS OF SAILING OF THE UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMERS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE FOR 1856.

Line.	From New York.	From Liverpool.	From Southampton.	From Havre.	From Bremen.
Collins.....	January 5	January 12			
Havre.....	January 12		February 13	February 13	
Collins.....	January 19	January 23			
Bremen.....	January 26		February 27		February 23
Collins.....	February 2	February 6			
Havre.....	February 9		March 12	March 12	
Collins.....	February 16	February 20			
Bremen.....	February 23		March 26		March 22
Collins.....	March 1	March 5			
Havre.....	March 8		April 9	April 9	
Collins.....	March 15	March 19			
Bremen.....	March 22		April 23		April 19
Collins.....	March 29	April 2			
Havre.....	April 5		May 7	May 7	
Collins.....	April 12	April 16			
Bremen.....	April 19		May 21		May 17
Collins.....	April 26	April 30			
Havre.....	May 3		June 4	June 4	
Collins.....	May 10	May 14			
Bremen.....	May 17		June 18		June 14
Collins.....	May 24	May 28			
Havre.....	May 31		July 2	July 2	
Collins.....	June 7	June 11			
Bremen.....	June 14		July 16		July 12
Collins.....	June 21	June 25			
Havre.....	June 28		July 30	July 30	
Collins.....	July 5	July 9			
Bremen.....	July 12		August 13		August 9
Collins.....	July 19	July 23			
Havre.....	July 26		August 27	August 27	
Collins.....	August 2	August 6			
Bremen.....	August 9		Septem. 10		Septem. 6
Collins.....	August 16	August 20			
Havre.....	August 23		Septem. 24	Septem. 24	
Collins.....	August 30	Septem. 3			
Bremen.....	Septem. 6		October 8		October 4
Collins.....	Septem. 13	Septem. 17			
Havre.....	Septem. 20		October 22	October 22	
Collins.....	Septem. 27	October 1			
Bremen.....	October 4		Novem. 5		Novem. 1
Collins.....	October 11	October 15			
Havre.....	October 18		Novem. 19	Novem. 19	
Collins.....	October 25	October 29			
Bremen.....	Novem. 1		Decem. 3		Novem. 29
Collins.....	Novem. 8	Novem. 12			
Havre.....	Novem. 15		Decem. 17	Decem. 17	
Collins.....	Novem. 22	Novem. 26			
Bremen.....	Novem. 29		Decem. 31		Decem. 27
Collins.....	Decem. 6	Decem. 10			
Collins.....	Decem. 20	Decem. 24			

## IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS.

The single rate of letter postage *by either of the above lines*, (and the same in respect to the British lines,) to or from any point in the United States, (except Oregon and California,) for or from any point in Great Britain, is 24 cents—*prepayment optional*. Newspapers, each two cents United States, and two cents British; each country to collect *its own postage*, whether the paper is sent *from* or received *in* the United States. [British newspapers usually come *British postage paid* by a penny stamp, equal to two cents.] They must be sent in narrow bands, open at the ends. Letters for the continent of Europe, to pass *through* Great Britain in the *open* mail, must be prepaid 21 cents when the Atlantic conveyance is by United States packets, and 5 cents when by British packets, except from California or Oregon, when the sum to be prepaid is, in the former instance, 26 cents, and in the latter, 10 cents. Thus, in the one case, the Atlantic sea postage is to be collected at the mailing office in the United States, and in the other left to be collected, together with the British transit and other foreign postage, at the office of delivery. Between Great Britain and Oregon and California, the single rate of letter postage is 29 cents.

Periodical works and pamphlets may be sent from the United States to the United Kingdom, and *vice versa*, at 2 cents of United States postage each, if they do not exceed two ounces in weight, and at 4 cents per ounce, or fraction of an ounce, when they exceed that weight, to be collected in all cases in the United States; and the same will be subject to an additional like charge in the United Kingdom. When sent to foreign countries, *without passing through the United Kingdom*, they will be chargeable with 1 cent an ounce, or fraction of an ounce, United States postage—*prepayment required*.

Single rate of letter postage to or from Bremen, *by the Bremen line*, 10 cents—*prepayment optional*. Newspapers, each 3 cents, being the United States, and German postage—*prepayment required*. Letters and newspapers to other parts of the continent may also go by this line, subject to various rates; for which see Foreign Postage Table.

Single rate of letter postage to or from France, *by the Havre line*, 20 cents, to be *prepaid* on letters sent and collected on letters received. Newspapers, 2 cents each, to be collected in the United States, whether the paper is sent or received.

Single rate of letter postage by the Prussian *closed* mail to Prussia, Austria, and all the other German States, 30 cents, being the full postage—*prepayment optional*. Newspapers, 6 cents each, being also the full postage—*prepayment required*. This mail is sent by every steamer, being landed at Liverpool by the Collins, and at Southampton by the Bremen and Havre lines.

N. B. ALL LETTERS to and from FOREIGN COUNTRIES (the British North American Provinces excepted) are to be charged with single rate of postage, if not exceeding the weight of half an ounce; double rate if exceeding half an ounce, but not exceeding an ounce; quadruple rate if exceeding an ounce, but not exceeding two ounces; and so on, charging *two rates* for every ounce, or fractional part of an ounce, over the first ounce. As this rule differs from that followed in respect to domestic letters, great care is requisite to prevent mistakes. Postmasters should be careful, also, where the postage is prepaid, to collect the proper amount. They should be particular to notice the *route indicated* on the envelopes of letters, and to collect postage accordingly. Letters mailed at some offices, marked "*via England*," or "*via Prussian closed mail*," for the German States, are frequently taken upon the prepayment of Bremen rates, and those marked "*via Bremen*," at Prussian closed mail rates, &c. Refer in all cases to the Postage Tables.

The mails for the Pacific leave New York on the 5th and 20th; Charleston and Savannah on the 4th and 19th; and New Orleans on the 5th and 20th of each month.

Mails for Mexico will be dispatched tri-monthly by the New Orleans and Vera Cruz United States Steamship Line. United States letter postage, 10 cents under 2,500 and 20 cents over 2,500 miles from the mailing office; to be prepaid

when sent from, and collected when received in, the United States. Newspapers, 2 cents each, to be collected in the United States, as above.

Single rate of letter postage to Havana and the British West Indies, 10 cents under 2,500 and 20 cents over 2,500 miles; newspapers, 2 cents; and to West Indies, (not British,) Carthagena, Honduras, and St. Juan, (Nicaragua,) 34 cents under 2,500 and 44 cents over 2,500 miles; newspapers, 6 cents each—*prepayment required*.

JAMES CAMPBELL, Postmaster-General.

POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT, December 1, 1855.

### REGISTERED LETTERS AND THE FRANKING PRIVILEGE.

Any persons having the franking privilege for their private communications may frank a registered letter, but their frank does not cover the registration *fee*, which must always be paid. Except in the case of public documents, a member of Congress cannot send nor receive free any letter or packet weighing over two ounces. The excess above two ounces on any such private packet, to or from a member of Congress, must be charged and collected.

Postmasters should bear in mind that the regulation which required all packages of registered letters to be sealed has been revoked by the Postmaster-General.

### NEW BRUNSWICK POST-OFFICE REGULATIONS.

26. 1856. Official notice has been given by John Howe, deputy postmaster-general for New Brunswick, that on and from the 5th January next, all letters conveyed by post in British North America will be chargeable by weight, according to the scale now in operation as regards letters to and from the United Kingdom. On and from the same date, the franking privilege of the deputy postmaster-general, in respect to colonial newspapers and printed sheets, will cease; and there will then be charged for all such newspapers and printed sheets, (not exceeding two ounces in weight,) when sent to any town in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Canada, or Prince Edward's island, one halfpenny per sheet; to any other British colony, when not intended to pass through the United Kingdom, one halfpenny per sheet; to any foreign country, the (United States excepted,) whether intended to pass through the United Kingdom, or not, one halfpenny per sheet; to the United States, by the land-post, via St. Andrews or Woodstock, one penny per sheet; which postages, except on such newspapers as are addressed to towns in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward's island, or Canada, must be prepaid by the senders, or the newspapers cannot be forwarded. Newspapers to the United Kingdom, when conveyed by Her Majesty's packets, will not be liable to any inland or packet postage. The limitation as to weight does not apply to newspapers addressed to the United Kingdom; but any colonial newspaper sent by post to any other place, and exceeding the weight of two ounces, will be liable to postage as a pamphlet. Pamphlets and other publications, printed in the United Kingdom, in British North America, or in the British West Indies, not exceeding sixteen ounces in weight, sent by post to any place in British North America, or in the United States, or in the British West Indies, without passing through the United Kingdom, will be liable to an inland postage of one penny per ounce, in addition to any charge for sea postage. No pamphlets or printed publications, exceeding the weight of sixteen ounces, can be forwarded through the post.



HUNT'S

# MERCHANTS' MAGAZINE.

Established July, 1839,

BY FREEMAN HUNT, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

VOLUME XXXIV.

MARCH, 1856.

NUMBER III.

## POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

### UNITED STATES POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

The annual report of Postmaster-General Campbell, accompanying the President's Message, and communicated to Congress in January, 1856, is an interesting document. This report shows a net increase of 862 post-offices during the year ending 30th of June, 1855—the whole number of offices at that date being 24,410, and on the 30th of November, 24,770. On the 30th of June last there were 7,033 mail routes, at an estimated length of 277,908 miles. The total annual transportation of mails was 67,401,166 miles, costing \$5,345,238. Compared with the previous year there is an increase of 3,397,025 miles of transportation of about 5½ per cent, and of \$675,221 cost, or about 14 4-100 per cent. The increase by railroad service is 3,483,132 miles; by modes not specified, 3,575,177 miles—while the transportation by coaches is less by 2,325,628 miles, and by steamboat 1,335,656. This change results mainly from the reletting of contracts in many of the Southern and Western States and Territories. On the 30th of June last there were in service 319 route agents at a compensation of \$235,170 65; 29 local agents at \$19,328; and 981 mail messengers at \$100,471 65, making a total of \$354,970 30 to be added to the cost of transportation. This makes the total amount for the current year, \$5,824,989 30, which will probably be increased to \$6,000,000 by new services and routes. The cost of foreign mail service, not included here, amounts to \$611,467.

The expenditures of the department for the last fiscal year are \$9,968,342, and the gross revenue derived from postages (inland and foreign) is \$6,642,136 13, which, adding to the annual appropriations made in compensation of mail service to the government, by the acts of 3d March, 1849, and 3d March, 1851, amount to \$7,342,136 13. Deducting the balance against the United States, due to foreign powers, for postal accounts, from the above, the actual gross revenue of the department, for the year ending 30th June, 1855, will be \$7,335,177. The gross revenue of 1854, after deducting foreign balances, amounted to \$6,816,651 61, making a difference in favor of 1855 of \$518,519 10. The excess of expenditure for 1855 over that of 1854 is \$2,622,206 16. The condition of the department goes to show that the rates fixed by the act of 3d March, 1851, will not enable the department to sustain itself by its own resources.

The expenditure of the department for 1856 is estimated at \$10,199,024, and the means available the same year \$9,010,873, leaving a deficiency of \$1,188,151 to be provided for.

Reference is again made to the fact that the Collins line of steamers receives from government \$858,000 for twenty-six trips, while the British government paid the Cunard line \$866,700 for fifty-two trips, which, in the opinion of the Postmaster-General is amply sufficient.

#### REVENUE FROM LETTERS AND NEWSPAPERS BY OCEAN STEAMSHIPS.

We give below a carefully prepared table showing the revenue derived from postages by the Cunard, Collins, Bremen, Havre, and California mail steamers. These figures, from successive reports of the Post-Office Department, show the business done by the steamers during the last four years. The figures show the amount of postage paid, and the entire correspondence, in both directions :—

##### REVENUE FROM POSTAGES BY OCEAN STEAMERS.

	1852.	1853.	1854.	1855.	Total.
Cunard .....	\$565,573	\$598,717	\$701,409	\$516,828	\$2,382,527
Collins.....	228,868	310,362	307,917	504,694	1,351,841
Bremen.....	77,220	100,370	138,037	130,663	446,280
Havre.....	80,304	100,170	94,778	96,329	372,581
California .....	195,907	271,714	338,839	328,956	1,185,416
Total.....	\$1,148,872	\$1,381,333	\$1,580,980	\$1,577,460	\$5,688,145

##### LETTERS SENT AND RECEIVED BY OCEAN STEAMERS.

	1852.	1853.	1854.	1855.	Total.
Cunard .....	\$2,758,096	\$2,774,424	\$3,107,508	\$2,161,232	\$10,801,259
Collins.....	963,692	1,018,345	1,210,326	1,744,315	4,936,678
Bremen.....	354,470	412,117	812,067	840,218	2,418,872
Havre.....	345,289	406,126	371,055	436,562	1,559,032
California .....	1,594,909	2,777,802	3,060,221	2,917,136	10,350,118
Total.....	\$6,016,466	\$7,388,813	\$8,561,177	\$8,099,513	\$30,065,959

##### NEWSPAPERS SENT AND RECEIVED BY OCEAN STEAMERS.

	1852.	1853.	1854.	1855.	Total.
Cunard .....	\$942,960	\$1,034,163	\$1,596,324	\$1,395,425	\$4,968,862
Collins.....	280,974	305,045	639,720	1,286,540	2,512,279
Bremen.....	.....	36,768	144,493	268,623	449,884
Havre.....	.....	4,987	156,011	268,142	429,140
California .....	.....	.....	3,640,666	3,869,813	7,409,979
Total.....	\$1,223,924	\$1,380,963	\$6,077,214	\$7,088,043	\$15,770,144

#### POSTAL MONOPOLY TO BE ABOLISHED IN FRANCE.

The Paris correspondent of the *North American* writes :—

"There are hopes at last of getting rid, at Havre, of a monopoly which has been the plague of all seafaring men frequenting that port since 1776. By prescriptive right, the whole of the business between the authorities and British and American captains, has been ever since that period transacted by four marine clerks, or *courtiers*, as they are called. The consequence has been for a long time a deplorable delay in business, and waste of time to all masters of vessels. The British have at last petitioned the authorities here, through their ambassador, and the Americans have gone still more directly to work and petitioned the emperor himself, to rid them of this nuisance, and increase the number of clerks, or throw open the business to all alike.

"The consequence of the recent postal arrangement between this country and

England is, that newspapers are now delivered in Paris free of cost, whether coming only from Great Britain, or merely via Great Britain from America and the Transatlantic States. This is a great boon to American correspondents, previously subjected to a very heavy and very arbitrary postage. In future, all printed matter is to be transmitted between the two countries at the rate of eight centimes."

HUNT'S

# MERCHANTS' MAGAZINE.

Established July, 1839,

BY FREEMAN HUNT, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

---

VOLUME XXXIV.

APRIL, 1856.

NUMBER IV.

---

## POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

---

### INSTRUCTIONS TO POSTMASTERS AND NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

We have received an official copy of the following "Instructions to Postmasters and Notice to the Public," for carrying into effect the third section of the act of March 3d, 1855, providing for the registration of valuable letters:—

SEC. 1. Letters, alleged to be valuable, posted at one post-office in the United States, and deliverable at another such office, shall from and after the first day of July, 1855, be registered at the office of mailing, on the application of the person posting the same, and the payment of a registration fee of five cents.

2. Postmasters are instructed to enter all such letters in a book to be prepared and kept for the purpose, to be called the "Receipt Book," (which, in small offices, will be prepared by stitching together the several sheets of blank receipts furnished by this Department,) containing blank receipts with a wide margin for a brief duplicate of each, as in bank check-books. The postmaster will enter in this margin the number of the receipt, the date of filing it, the name of the person to whom the letter is addressed, and of the place to which it is to be mailed. He will then fill up the receipt to correspond with this marginal entry, separate it from the margin, and deliver it to the person who deposited the letter.

3. Registered letters will not be entered in the ordinary accounts of mails received and sent, but separate accounts of such letters will be kept at each post-office, to be called account of registered letters received, and account of registered letters sent, blanks for which will be furnished by the Department.

4. When a letter has been received, registered, and receipted for, as directed in section 2, the postmaster will enter its number, the date of mailing, the rate of postage, the name of the person to whom it is addressed, and of the office (whether of distribution or delivery) to which it is to be sent, in his account of registered letters sent. He will make a separate letter bill for each registered letter or parcel of registered letters for the same office of delivery or distribution, entering therein the number, address, registration fee, and rate of postage each. He will then

mail each such letter or parcel of letters, in a separate package from his unregistered letters, and will seal each package, after tying it in the usual manner. The letter bills of such registered letters will not be inclosed in the packages with them, but such letter bills will be inclosed in a separate wrapper or envelope, sealed and addressed to the postmaster, at the office to which the corresponding package of registered letters is sent.

To prevent delay in the examination and comparison of letter bills, the postmaster at each of the larger offices will assign to some confidential clerk (not employed in opening the mails) the duty of opening in his absence official letters addressed to him.

5. In all large offices, where letters are received, entered, and mailed by different persons, it shall be the duty of the postmaster either to keep the receipt book, provided for in section 1, or to designate some one specially for that service.

The postmaster or receiving clerk, having received a letter for registry, will pass it to the clerk who keeps the account of registered letters sent, who will receipt for it by writing his name or initials across its marginal entry in the receipt book. He will enter it in his account of registered letters sent, and keep it in a secure place of deposit until the hour of mailing. He will then make up his letter bill of registered letters, which is to be forwarded in a separate sealed wrapper or envelope, as provided in section 4, addressed to the postmaster at the office to which the corresponding package of registered letters is to be sent. It shall also be his duty to make up each package of registered letters, seal the package with wax at the tie, address it to the office of its destination, and see that it is placed in its appropriate bag at the moment when that bag is to be finally locked and sent from the office.

6. On the receipt at the distributing office of registered letters for distribution, the clerk who opens and distributes the mail will apply to the postmaster, or to such one of his assistants as may be authorized to open official letters addressed to him, for the corresponding letter bill. Having compared the letters with the bill, he will indorse it "correct," if he find it so, or will note the error if there be one, and will pass it with the letters to the clerk who keeps the account of registered letters received for distribution, who will enter its contents in his account, and indorse upon it his signature or initials. He will then fill up the corresponding return bill, noting upon it whether correct or otherwise, and will pass it to the postmaster or his principal assistant, who will see that it is returned by the first mail thereafter with his indorsement to the office of mailing.

Registered letters remailed at a distributing office for their respective offices of delivery, are to be passed from the charge of the clerk who keeps the account of registered letters received, into the charge of the clerk who keeps the account of registered letters sent, (if two are employed in these duties,) who will receipt for them by indorsing the original letter bill, and afterward dispose of them in the same manner as is provided in section 5 for letters originally mailed at the office.

7. On the receipt of registered letters at the office of delivery, if it be a large one, the clerk who opens the mail will apply for the post-bill, and otherwise proceed in the same manner as prescribed in section 6. The clerk who keeps the account of registered letters received, will, on receiving the letter bill, enter its contents in his account, make a duplicate thereof on the blank return bill which accompanies it, and having indorsed thereon the word "correct," if it be so, or noted the error, if there be one, he will pass it to the postmaster or his principal assistant, who will inclose it in a sealed envelope and mail it direct by first mail to the address of the postmaster from whose office the bill was received.

8. On the receipt of registered letters at smaller offices of delivery, the postmaster or his assistant will compare such letters with their letter bill, make a duplicate upon the blank return bill annexed, and will then mark the return bill "correct," or note upon it any error found in the original bill, and inclose it in a sealed wrapper or envelope, and mail it direct by first mail to the address of the postmaster at whose office it was originally mailed.

9. When the duplicate letter bill of any registered letter or letters is returned

from the office of distribution or delivery to the office where it was originally mailed, that fact shall in each case be noted by a check mark on the margin of the account of registered letters sent, opposite the original entry; and if it be not duly returned, the failure shall in like manner be noted by a different check mark, and such failure shall in all large offices be immediately reported by the clerk who keeps the account of registered letters sent to the postmaster or his principal assistant, and each postmaster will give immediate notice to the chief clerk of this department of every such failure noted in his office.

If upon the receipt of any duplicate or return letter bill it be found on examination that a letter originally mailed with it is missing, or that any important error or discrepancy is indorsed on it, the fact will be duly noted on the account of registered letters sent, and immediately reported to the chief clerk of this department, and if the discrepancy implies a robbery of the mail, or if a money letter or package of considerable value is found to be missing, such report will be made by telegraph, if possible.

It will also be the duty of the postmaster to report by telegraph any mail robbery of which he may otherwise receive early information.

10. On the delivery of a registered letter at the office of its destination, a receipt therefor will be taken from the person authorized to receive it, and such receipt will be carefully filed and preserved at that office.

The blank receipts furnished by this department can be used for this purpose, but postmasters may adopt any other certain method of verifying the delivery of registered letters.

11. Letters for Germany by the Bremen line via New York, and by the Prussian closed mails via New York and Boston, will be registered in the same manner and on the same terms as those deliverable in the United States, but the postage on such letters must be prepaid to the place of their destination.

Prepaid letters from Bremen, and those received by the Prussian closed mails, (if accompanied with letter bills similar to those prescribed for the use of this department,) will be duly registered at the American office of distribution or delivery at which they are first received, and will thereafter be treated in all respects in the same manner as letters originally mailed in the United States.

12. Each postmaster will see that his accounts of registered letters are legibly and accurately kept; and at the end of each quarter he will forward with his quarterly returns, full and perfect transcripts of such accounts, with the letter bills pertaining to them, retaining the original accounts in his office for reference.

JAMES CAMPBELL, Postmaster-General.

POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT, May 10, 1855.

The above regulations and instructions to postmasters for carrying into effect the 3d sec. of the act of March 3, 1855, providing for the registration of valuable letters, are, by direction of the Postmaster-General, modified as follows, viz. :—

1. So much of sections 4, 5, and 6 of these regulations as requires that packages of registered letters shall be sealed, is hereby revoked.

2. All registered letters are, before mailing, to be numbered on the upper left-hand corner; their numbers to correspond with those on the letter bills in which they are entered.

3. Each registered letter, or package of registered letters, will be inclosed in a wrapper in the usual manner, and if there be a package of unregistered letters to be sent by the same mail, the package of registered letters will be placed in such package, without being tied, and the whole will then be carefully tied up into one package, addressed to the office of its destination, and placed in its appropriate bag at the moment when that bag is to be finally locked and sent from the office. If no unregistered letters are to be sent by that mail, the package of registered letters is to be tied and forwarded in the same manner without being sealed.

4. The registered letter bill will be inclosed in a separate envelope, addressed to the postmaster, as now required, and will be forwarded by the usual route as an unregistered letter.

5. The numbers given to registered letters at the office of mailing are not to be changed in the accounts or letter bills of distributing offices through which they may pass.

6. Postmasters are required to see that the *post-mark* of each registered letter, whether written or stamped, is clear and distinct, so that the place and date of mailing can be readily determined.

#### POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN SOUTH AMERICA AND THE UNITED STATES.

The following statements which we find in an Aspinwall paper, appear to be indifferently understood by the mercantile community :—

"It is a common custom with the people of Valparaiso and Callao, to forward their correspondence for the United States to an agent here, instead of sending it direct, and so it is in the United States among people sending letters to the South. In this way not only is additional expense and trouble incurred, but a great risk is run of the letters having to lie over here one steamer longer than necessary.

"If letters intended to be sent from Valparaiso or Callao to the United States, or *vice versa*, are properly mailed at these points, they will be put in a closed mail bag which is not opened until it reaches its final destination, whereas by sending them to an intermediate agent here, they have to pass through the Consulate first, then through the general post-office, and afterwards through the hands of the agent, who has to pay for their receipt, and again to remail them for their final destination; thus subjecting them by this roundabout way to be delayed, if not altogether mislaid, giving the agent here unnecessary trouble, for which he can make no remunerative charge, and adding at least twenty cents extra postage to the expense of each letter. In fact, such a mode of forwarding letters possesses not a solitary advantage, and gives rise to an endless amount of trouble and dissatisfaction, the routine of receiving the letter here, acknowledging its receipt, forwarding it, and keeping an account of the postage, being just as troublesome as if it were a package of a hundred pounds' weight."

July 5-6

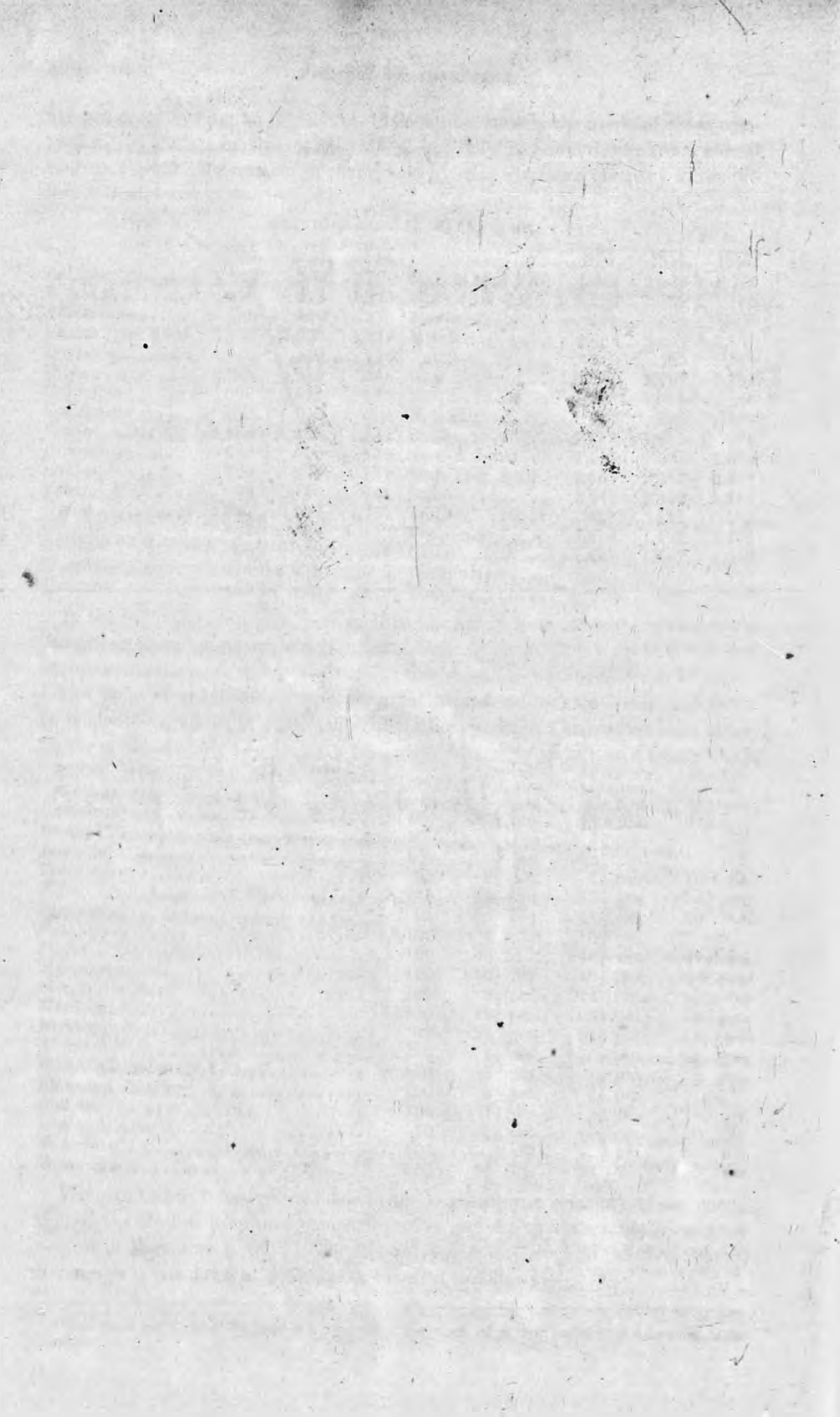
#### POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

III 174

##### THE LONDON POST-OFFICE.

A well-informed writer in *Putnam's Magazine*, describing the management of the London Post-Office, says :—

Each letter goes through from ten to fourteen processes, and the wonder is, how 500 men can handle 200,000 with so little confusion and so few mistakes. A spectator is always astonished at the rapidity with which the letters are made to pass under the stamp. An active stamper will stamp and count from seven to eight thousand an hour. The process of sorting is carried on on large tables, which are divided into apartments, labeled "Great Western," "Eastern Counties," "South Eastern," "Scotch," "Irish," "Foreign," "Blind," &c. Those marked "Blind," are carried to a person called the "Blind Man," who has more skill in deciphering bad writing than a Philadelphia lawyer. He will take a letter directed thus :—"Srom Predevi," and read at once Sir Humphrey Davy; a letter superscribed "jonsmeet ne Weasal pin Tin," he sees, immediately, belongs to "John Smith, Newcastle-upon-Tyne." In short, he is such an adept at this business that it is almost impossible to write or spell so as to be unintelligible to him. The mail-bags are made of sheep-skin, soft and pliable. They are sealed up with wax upon the twine that is tied around the top. This is thought to be safer than locking, although bags that have to go a great distance are secured with locks. The average weight of the evening mail from London is about fourteen tons. The number of newspapers sent from the office yearly is estimated at 53,000,000; the average number of letters sent daily is 267,521; the average number received 283,225.



HUNT'S

# MERCHANTS' MAGAZINE.

Established July, 1839.

BY FREEMAN HUNT, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

VOLUME XXXIV.

MAY, 1856.

NUMBER V.

## POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

### A POSTAL PROHIBITION IN THE UNITED STATES.

The following explanation touching the prohibition of letters to different persons in one envelope, is published in the *Washington Union*, and may be regarded as emanating from the department:—

We had occasion to state, not long since, that it is a violation of law to inclose to different addressees two or more letters in a single envelope, the penalty in each case being \$10. This announcement, it appears, has given rise to indignant remarks on the part of some persons who do not understand the reason of this restriction. We have been shown a letter from one gentleman, who says, "If this is a regulation of the department, it is a gross insult to the whole nation, except to those that wish to pry into the millions of letters of correspondence."

To correct erroneous impressions on this subject, it may be well to state that the 13th section of the act of 3d March, 1847, makes it a penal offense to deposit in any post-office, to be conveyed in the mail within the United States, any envelope or packet containing letters addressed to different persons; but *under no circumstances whatever is a postmaster allowed to open any letter not addressed to himself*. By the act of 1820, when the single rates of postage were 6, 10, 12½, 18½, and 25 cents, and which act was continued in force until 1845, it will be recollected that, for every letter composed of a single sheet of paper, one rate was charged, double rate for two sheets, and so on. By the act of 1845, this restriction as to the number of sheets was removed, and "every letter or parcel not exceeding half an ounce in weight" declared to be a single letter. Under this law great abuses were practiced by merchants and others, who, by uniting together in sending their letters, written on tissue paper, particularly between cities and large towns, got their letters carried for a mere fraction of the regular rate. Hence the amendment above alluded to in the act of 1847. It should be observed that the law does not prohibit the sending of two or more letters to the *same address* in one envelope, nor does it apply to letters addressed to foreign countries.

In this connection, may we not venture the additional remark that, considering our present low rates, by far the lowest in the world, taking into account the extent of our territory, is it not strange that there are so many persons ready to

seek out ways of evading the payment of postage? There is not a doubt but that the Post-Office Department would not only support itself, but would be able to extend its accommodations, if all the matter conveyed in the mail were paid for, even at the present reduced rates.

### OF POSTAGE ON LETTERS BETWEEN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES.

#### CANADA POSTAGE.

James Campbell, the Postmaster-General, has issued, under date Post-Office Department, Washington, February 19, 1856, the following circular :—

My attention has been called to the circumstance that letters inclosed in the United States stamped envelopes, or prepaid with United States postage stamps, are received in this country from Canada charged by our frontier exchange officers as unpaid.

This practice on the part of the United States exchange officers is, strictly speaking, correct, as each country recognizes its own postage stamps only in the prepayment of letters, and hence it is irregular to use United States stamps in the prepayment of letters from Canada.

But, inasmuch as the parties addressed feel aggrieved if postage is demanded on the delivery of such letters, and urge that the practice of charging them as unpaid operates as a hardship upon them, the postage having been once received by this department, I am disposed to treat for the future such letters as prepaid, and deliver them as such.

You will therefore discontinue the present practice of charging letters of this character as unpaid, in United States stamps, and forward them to destination without additional charge.

JAMES CAMPBELL.

---

## HUNT'S

# MERCHANTS' MAGAZINE.

VOLUME XXXIV.

JUNE, 1856.

NUMBER VI.

---

## POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

### REGISTRATION OF LETTERS BETWEEN THE U. STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN.

The following additional articles have been agreed upon between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post-Office Department of the United States of America. These articles were signed by HORATIO KING and ROLAND HILL, and approved by JAMES CAMPBELL and ARGOYLE, for their respective governments :—

In pursuance of the power granted to the two post-offices by article twenty-one of the convention of December 15, 1848, between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the United States of America, to settle the matters of detail, which are to be arranged by mutual consent, for insuring the execution of the stipulations contained in the said convention, the undersigned, duly authorized for that purpose by their respective officers, have agreed upon the following articles :—

ARTICLE 1. Letters posted in the United Kingdom addressed to the United States, or posted in the United States addressed to the United Kingdom, and intended to be forwarded between the United Kingdom and the United States by British or United States packets, may be registered on the application of the persons posting the same, but such registration shall not render the post-office departments of the United Kingdom or the United States liable for the loss of such letters or the contents thereof.

It is understood that this regulation applies equally to letters between the United Kingdom and California or Oregon, whether conveyed via New York, Boston, or Panama.

ART. 2. The conditions under which registered letters shall be received and delivered, and the forms to be observed in their transmission from the place at which they are posted to the office of exchange, or from the office of exchange to the place of their destination, shall be regulated by the rules in force in the two countries respectively.

ART. 3. The postage upon registered letters shall invariably be paid in advance, including not only the ordinary postage to the place of their destination, but also any registration fee to which letters of this class may be liable, according to the regulations of the country from which they are sent.

ART. 4. The post-office of the United Kingdom shall be at liberty to fix the amount of the registration fee to be levied upon all registered letters forwarded from the United Kingdom to the United States; and, in like manner, the post-office of the United States shall be at liberty to fix the amount of the registration fee to be levied upon all registered letters forwarded from the United States to the United Kingdom.

These amounts may be altered from time to time by the respective post-offices, if an alteration be deemed expedient.

No charge, whether for registration or other service, shall, under any pretext whatever, be made in the United Kingdom or the United States, on the delivery of registered letters.

ART. 5. Upon every registered letter forwarded from the United Kingdom to the United States, the post-office of the United Kingdom shall account to the post-office of the United States for one-half of the amount of the registration fee levied upon the posting of such registered letter in the United Kingdom; and, in like manner, upon every registered letter forwarded from the United States to the United Kingdom, the post-office of the United States shall account to the post-office of the United Kingdom for one-half of the amount of the registration fee levied upon the posting of such registered letter in the United States.

ART. 6. All registered letters forwarded from the United Kingdom to the United States, or from the United States to the United Kingdom, shall be made up at the respective offices of exchange in a parcel separate from the unregistered letters, which parcel shall be tied in the usual manner, and securely sealed by the dispatching officer.

The name of the person to whom each registered letter is addressed, the place of its destination, and the amount to be credited to the office to which the letters are forwarded shall be entered at the respective offices of exchange in a separate letter-bill, which shall be made out in the form annexed to these articles. Such letter-bill shall not be inclosed in the parcel containing the registered letters, but shall be forwarded in a separate wrapper or envelope, sealed and addressed to the postmaster of the corresponding office of exchange.

ART. 7. Upon the arrival at an office of exchange in the United Kingdom of registered letters from the United States, and upon the arrival at an office of exchange in the United States of registered letters from the United Kingdom, the postmaster of such office of exchange shall compare the letters with the letter-bill, and if they agree, he shall write at the foot of the letter-bill the word "correct," and affix his signature and official stamp.

The letter-bill thus certified must be returned by the first mail to the office of exchange from which the registered letters were received.

If any error be observed, the postmaster shall report the circumstance to the general post-office, in London or Washington, as the case may be, in order that the error may be investigated through the ordinary channel.

ART. 8. The letter-bills and acknowledgments of receipt for the mails exchanged between the two countries shall be made out according to the amended forms annexed to the present articles, in lieu of the forms (F and G) as originally adopted.

ART. 9. The present articles shall be considered as additional to those agreed upon between the two offices for carrying into execution the convention of December 15, 1848, signed at Washington the 14th of May, 1849, and shall come into operation on the 1st of May, 1856.

Done in duplicate, and signed at Washington on the 20th of March, and at London on the 9th of April, 1856.

The registration fee on letters to Great Britain is five cents, the same as on registered letters from one point to another in the United States; therefore, on a single letter to Great Britain the postage and registration fee combined will be 29 cents. Prepayment required.

#### LETTERS FOR CALIFORNIA AND TERRITORIES OF OREGON AND WASHINGTON.

The following notice is published under the head of the Post Office Department in the *Union*, prefaced with a note signed by the Senators and Representatives in Congress from California, and the Delegates from Oregon and Washington Territories, requesting journals throughout the United States to publish the same in their respective columns. Appended to the circular is a certificate from Hon. James Campbell, the Postmaster-General, authorizing Mr. Woods to put his plan, as set forth in the following circular, in operation; but no responsibility is assumed by the department, and all correspondence in regard to this arrangement must, the Postmaster-General says, be addressed to the "Pacific Mail List," New York. That the public may avail itself of the advantages thus offered, postmasters are requested by the Postmaster-General to give the circular a conspicuous place in their respective offices:—

#### *To Persons Mailing Letters for California and the Territories of Oregon and Washington:—*

Thousands of letters sent to the Pacific coast become dead letters. To remedy this evil, the Post Office Department, under the authority of Congress, has adopted, as an auxiliary to its operations, the following plan for simultaneously publishing at each and every post office in the Pacific region, in a list called the "Pacific Mail List," the names of persons to whom letters have been sent by mail to post offices in California and the Territories of Oregon and Washington. By this system a letter may be sent to any post office in the Pacific region for a person whose location is unknown save the mere fact that he is *somewhere* in California or the Territories of Oregon and Washington; yet, if the letter be published in the "Pacific Mail List," its ultimate reception by the person for whom it is intended will be rendered highly probable. To enable those who may desire to extend to their Pacific correspondents the advantages thus offered, the following illustration is given:—

Suppose it is wished to send to the Sacramento post office a letter for George Wilson, who emigrated to California from Pike County, Missouri, but it is feared that he may have changed his location, and hence may not receive the letter. In this case direct the letter to George Wilson, (late of Pike County, Missouri,) Sacramento, California. Then, in order to publish the letter in the "Pacific Mail List," copy the address of the letter upon a piece of paper or card, and inclose the card, together with a three-cent postage stamp, in an envelope, and direct the

envelope to the "Pacific Mail List," New York. Deposit the letter, *as usual*, in the mail for California, and at the same time drop the envelope, containing the card to *publish the letter*, in the mail for New York. From the address on the card thus received at the New York post office, the name, George Wilson, will be entered in its appropriate place in the "Pacific Mail List," which list is printed and sent by each mail to each and every postmaster in California and the Territories of Oregon and Washington, and by them posted in a conspicuous place in their respective offices. The list being thus distributed over the entire Pacific region, George Wilson may at once learn from it that a letter for him has been sent to the Sacramento post office. No person of a similar name will receive the letter, for the address on it points out that it is intended for George Wilson, late of Pike County, Missouri. Thus *many* letters will be received that would otherwise be transmitted to the dead-letter office.

The envelopes containing the advertising cards, sent to the "Pacific Mail List," New York, pay postage like ordinary mail matter, and *must* be prepaid. The addresses of letters copied on the pieces of paper or cards should be written in a *plain and distinct* manner. The three-cent postage stamps inclosed in the envelopes defray the expenses of publication, and *must not* be pasted to the cards, but simply inclosed with them. In the absence of postage stamps, three-cent coins may be substituted.

It is believed that this circular has been drawn up so explicitly as to require no explanations; but, should this prove not to be the case, postmasters will take notice that all interrogatories must be addressed to the "Pacific Mail List," New York, and *not* to the department.

The first of this series of lists will accompany the mail of May 5th, 1856, and will be forwarded by each succeeding mail.

OLIVER EVANS WOODS.

#### POSTAGE TO FOO-CHOW, CHINA.

We are requested to state that the postage of thirty-three cents via Southampton, and forty-three cents via Marseilles, collected in the United States, on letters addressed to Foo-Chow-Foo, China, covers the conveyance as far as Hong Kong, beyond which no regular mail communication exists. For their subsequent conveyance, by private ship, from Hong Kong to Foo-Chow-Foo, they are liable, in common with all other letters sent between those places, to a ship-letter rate of fourpence (eight cents) per half ounce, which is the only charge levied on their delivery. With respect to letters sent from Foo-Chow-Foo to the United States, the ship-letter rate for conveyance to Hong Kong is only required to be prepaid; it being optional with the writer to prepay the postage chargeable for the conveyance from Hong Kong to the United States or leave it unpaid, to be collected at the office of delivery in this country.

#### THE FRANKING PRIVILEGE.

We learn from the *Union*—and the statement is made on the authority of the Department—that several letters were lately put into a distant post-office bearing the frank of a member of Congress who was, at the time of this occurrence, in Washington attending to his legislative duties. Of course, this was done without the knowledge or consent of the member, and the letters had to be retained as unpaid.

It will have been seen from a circular of the Postmaster-General, published in the *Merchants' Magazine* some months since under this head, that it is a violation of law for a person having the franking privilege, to frank any other than his own letters.

aug 56

## POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

## STATISTICS OF THE BRITISH POST-OFFICE, 1855-56.

The following condensation of the Postmaster-General's Report on the Post-Office, as presented to both Houses of Parliament, is taken from the first number of LEONE LEVI'S "Annals of British Legislation," for a copy of which we are indebted to Messrs. WILEY & HALSTED, the general agents for the United States:—

The number of post-offices in the United Kingdom was increased last year by 525, making the whole present number 10,498. Of these, 920 are head post-offices, and 9,578 sub-post-offices, or receiving offices. Additional accommodation has been afforded by the appointment of rural messengers in the rural districts. Pillar letter-boxes have been put up, which afford much public accommodation. Free deliveries have been extended to several places. It is proposed that the morning delivery of general post-letters shall be completed by 9 A. M. Certain recommendations are made in order to carry out the arrangement. The mails between London, the North of England, Ireland, and Scotland, are as much as possible accelerated by arrangements with the railway companies. Improvements were also made in the mail communication with the Isle of Man and with the Orkney Islands. Letters to France by the day-mail may be posted as late as 1:30 P. M., so that time is given to answer letters received in the morning by the night mail. Measures are in contemplation with respect to Irish mails. The whole distance over which mails are now conveyed in the United Kingdom is 59,000 miles per week-day, being about 2,000 miles more than at the end of 1854. The mails are conveyed over 27,109 miles per week-day by railway, and 31,667 miles per week-day by coaches. The average charge per mile by railway is 10d., and by coaches 2½d. The number of letters in 1855 was for England 368,000,000, about 19 to each person; for Ireland 42,000,000, or 7 to each person; and for Scotland 46,000,000, or 15 to each person: total, 456,000,000, or about 16 to each person, showing an increase of 3 per cent on number in 1854, and the increase for the last five years was on an average 5½ per cent. The number of Valentines passing through the post-office every year, in Valentine week, is 800,000. In Ireland the number is on the decrease, whilst in England and Scotland it is increasing. One-fourth of all the letters are delivered in London and its suburbs, and nearly half the letters pass through the London office.

There was an increase last year of 300,000 letters from Australia, 150,000 letters from the East Indies, 70,000 from Canada, 340,000 from France, and 340,000 from Prussia. In the letters from the United States there was a decrease of 500,000, owing to the withdrawal of some mail packets for the purposes of the war. During the eight months of 1854 and the year 1855, there passed 2,568,711 letters to and from the army and navy. Last year as many as 2,400,000 letters were returned and sent to the Dead Letter Office. This was the case especially with Victoria. Of 350,000 letters sent, more than 42,000, or about 12 per cent, were returned, though 40,000 of these had been pre-paid, and 1,500 registered. Of letters to the United States, 5 per cent were returned, and to France, 1½ per cent; 93 per cent of all letters inland, and 71 per cent of foreign letters, are now sent in envelopes. The abolition of stamp duties on newspapers, and the substitution of a postal charge, caused a decrease of one-fourth in the number of newspapers posted. But notwithstanding it, there are 71,000,000 newspapers per annum posted, or 200,000 every day. The results of the measure, in a financial point of view, show, as compared with the amount of the former newspaper stamp duty, a loss of about £242,000 for a year, or more than one-half. The number of book-packets, exclusive of newspapers, which pass through the London office, is at the rate of about 1,400,000 per annum, being an increase

of more than a million, or of 273 per cent on the number in 1854. There was, however, a decrease in the average weight per packet from ten ounces to four-and-a-half ounces. The number of book-packets posted in the United Kingdom is estimated at the rate of 3,000,000 per annum. There are 1,935 Money Order Offices. The number of money orders issued in the year in England and Wales was 4,901,316, of £9,403,104 5s. 6d.; in Ireland 444,220 money orders, of £753,560 2s. 8d.; and in Scotland 461,376 money orders, of £852,615 4s. The proportion of money orders issued to the population is 1 to about 4 persons in England and Wales, 1 to 14 in Ireland, 1 to 7 persons in Scotland. The total number of money orders for the United Kingdom was 5,807,412, of £11,009,279 12s. 2d., or 1 to about 5 persons, showing an increase of  $5\frac{1}{4}$  per cent on 1854. The profit, after deducting expenses, was £20,252. The increase of money orders was greater in certain towns, such as Liverpool and Birmingham. A uniform rate of postage of 6d. the half-ounce has been introduced between the mother country and the colonies. The Australian mails were conveyed during the war twice a month by clipper ships. Steam communication will soon be established with the Cape of Good Hope. A reduction of postage to 4d. the half ounce, has been effected between colony and colony. The reduction in the French postage has produced a great increase in the number of letters between this country and France. The reduction has also been extended to books, newspapers, and other printed matters.

There are now 22,547 officers and servants in the department of the Post-Office; of whom 10,498 are postmasters, and 10,314 are letter-carriers, messengers, &c. A new system has been beneficially introduced in the appointments and promotions in the department. Measures have been taken to encourage the officers to insure their lives; and, during the year, 952 policies were effected. The total gross revenue of the department in 1855 was £2,717,000, and the expenditure £1,591,000; the net revenue £1,126,000, being a decrease of £150,000, or more than 13 per cent on the net revenue of 1854, arising from different causes, increased expenditure, &c. The Report is dated 30th January, 1856, and signed by the Duke of Argyll. An Appendix is annexed to the Report, containing papers on district offices in London, and on the postal effects of railway. The effects of the first general reduction of postage on the 5th December, 1839, is shown by the increasing number of letters before and since that time. In 1839, the estimated number of letters was 75,907,572, and of franks 6,563,024. In 1840, there were 168,768,344, or an increase of  $122\frac{1}{4}$  per cent; in 1841, 196,500,191, or an increase of  $16\frac{1}{4}$  per cent; in 1850, 347,069,071; and in 1855, 456,216,176. The net revenue in the year 1839 was £1,633,764. In the year 1840 it was £500,789; in 1841, £561,249; in 1850, £840,787; and in 1855, £1,065,056.

The amount of postage collected in different cities in 1855 was as follows:—In London, £817,333; in Liverpool, £92,842; in Manchester, £78,121; in Glasgow, £57,788; in Dublin, £48,499; in Edinburgh, £41,922; in Birmingham, £35,695; in Bristol, £28,510, &c. &c. The money orders issued in 1839 were 188,921, of £313,124; in 1841, 1,522,845, of £3,127,507; in 1855, 5,807,412, of £11,009,279; and money orders paid in 1839, 188,615, of £311,727; in 1841, 1,560,210, of £3,140,096; and in 1855, 5,801,209, of £11,002,377. A treasury minute, dated 27th November, 1855, is also appended on postal communication with the Australian colonies, and other documents relating to the services of letter-carriers, &c.

#### REDUCTION OF POSTAGE TO EGYPT.

We are requested to state that the British postage charge on letters between the United Kingdom and Egypt, whether sent via Southampton or via Marseilles, has been reduced to sixpence (twelve cents) the half ounce, and therefore the single rate of letter postage between the United States and Egypt will, for the future, be 33 cents via Southampton, and 43 cents via Marseilles, instead of the rates heretofore charged. The postage must, in all cases, be prepaid.

**POSTAGE TO VAN DIEMAN'S LAND AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA.**

The Washington *Union* of July 10th, 1856, states, on the authority of the Post-Office Department, that the British postage charge on letters between the United Kingdom and the British colonies of Van Dieman's Land and Western Australia having been recently reduced to sixpence the half-ounce, whether such letters are conveyed by packet or by private ship, the single rate of letter postage between the United States and either of these colonies will, hereafter, be 33 instead of 45 cents—the postage, in all cases, to be paid in advance. This rate is, however, independent of any transit postage to which the letters may be liable for conveyance through a foreign State other than Great Britain and her colonies.

**HUNT'S****MERCHANTS' MAGAZINE****SEPTEMBER, 1856.****POSTAL DEPARTMENT.****INFORMATION FOR LETTER WRITERS, ETC.****INSTRUCTIONS TO POSTMASTERS.**

By the act of March 3, 1855, requiring the pre-payment either by stamps, stamped envelopes or in money, of all letters to places within the United States, from and after April 1st, 1855, the single rate under 3,000 miles is three cents, and over 3,000 miles, in the United States, ten cents. From and after January 1st, 1856, all such letters must be pre-paid either by stamps or stamped envelopes. The franking privilege is continued, and by another act extended to Ex-Vice Presidents of the United States.

The law relative to drop letters is not changed in any particular by the recent act.

The act of March 3, 1855, making no provision for unpaid letters to places within the United States—on the same or day following any such unpaid letter or letters being put into a post office, the Postmaster thereof will post up conspicuously in his office a list of the same, stating that they are held up for postage. Any unpaid letters, dropped into mail cars to be forwarded, must be deposited by the route agents in the post office at or nearest the point where they are received, and the postmaster will add them to his list, stating that they were put into the cars unpaid. If not attended to, all such letters must be returned monthly to the dead letter office.

Letters part paid should be dispatched, charged with the additional postage due at the prepaid rate, according to distance, established by said act, except where the omission to pay the correct amount is known to have been intentional, when they should be treated the same as letters wholly unpaid.

It is proper to forward a letter when duly requested. When forwarded, no additional postage should be charged, if the letter, contrary to its address, has been mis-sent. If it has been sent according to its address, and then forwarded, it must be charged with additional postage, at the prepaid rate, according to dis-

tance, established by the act of March 3, 1855, which additional postage may be paid either at the forwarding office or at the office of delivery.

The franking privilege is not changed by the new postage act of 3d March, 1855. Of course all persons entitled to this privilege before the passage of the late law still retain it. Any postmaster whose compensation for the last preceding fiscal year did not exceed \$200, can send through the mail all letters written by himself, and receive letters addressed to himself, on his private business, free of postage, the weight of each letter not to exceed half an ounce. He cannot receive free nor frank printed matter of any kind; nor letters addressed to his wife, nor any other member of his family; nor can he frank letters to editors or publishers containing money in payment of subscription.

The franking privilege of postmasters whose yearly compensation exceeds \$200 is restricted to sending and receiving free, written communications relating exclusively to the business of their offices, or of the post office department. The penalty for a violation of law in this particular is \$300.

It being impracticable in all cases to determine what postmasters are entitled to receive their private communications free, a manuscript letter addressed to a postmaster should not be detained in the mailing office, for the reason that the postage on it is not pre-paid, except in cases where it is known that the postmaster addressed is not entitled to receive his private letters free. And if letters to any postmaster are known to relate exclusively to "post office business," being so superscribed, they should be mailed free.

Any postmaster receiving a letter free, which should have been charged with postage, is bound by his oath of office to charge himself with such postage in his account with the department.

Postmasters are required to report to the department all violations of the franking privilege.

The law, fixing the penalty for violation at fifty dollars, provides "that no postmaster or assistant postmaster shall act as agent for lottery offices, or under any color of purchase, or otherwise, vend lottery tickets;" and that "no postmaster shall receive free of postage, or frank lottery schemes, circulars or tickets." Therefore, all such lottery schemes, circulars or tickets addressed either to a postmaster or assistant postmaster, must hereafter be excluded from the mail, together with all other transient matter of this kind, addressed simply to an office and not to any individual.

Copyright books, charts, &c., required to be delivered to the library of Congress or Smithsonian Institution, and which are entitled to pass free in the mail, should be superscribed "Copyright for Congress Library," or "Smithsonian Institution," as the case may be.

All letters placed on a mail steamboat, on which the mails are in charge of a route-agent, should go into the hands of such agent, and on these letters the master of the vessel is not entitled to receive any compensation. None but pre-paid letters should be received on such steamboat, and these should be duly mailed. But should any chance to be unpaid, they should be deposited by the route-agent in the post office at or nearest the point at which they are received, and the postmaster should post up a list of them, with the unpaid letters dropped into his office, adding that they were put on board the steamer unpaid.

In like manner, when practicable, all letters should be prepaid which are received by steamboats or other vessels not in the mail service, or carrying the mail with no route-agent on board. When pre-paid, the master of the vessel, if under contract to carry the mail, may receive one cent "way," and if not under contract with the department, two cents each from the postmaster in whose office he deposits them; and they should be delivered to their address without any charge beyond the amount prepaid. But if unpaid, they should be treated as ship-letters, and are chargeable as such with a postage of six cents if delivered at the office at which the vessel shall arrive, and with two cents in addition to the ordinary rate of postage if destined to be conveyed by post to another place. In the latter case, the master of the vessel is entitled to receive two cents a letter.

Persons desiring to send their letters by steamboats can most readily accomplish their object by inclosing such letters in the stamped envelopes issued by the department, inasmuch as letters so enclosed may be conveyed out of the mail without a violation of law, and need not be delivered to the postmaster on the arrival of the vessel.

Letters relating exclusively to the cargo of the vessel by which they are conveyed are not subject to postage, but should be left unsealed—the law relating to such letters remaining unchanged.

Ship letters, as they cannot be prepaid, and are not supposed to be embraced in the new act, will continue to be dispatched agreeably to the provisions of the 15th section of the Act of March 3, 1825. Abstract logs, addressed to the Superintendent of the National Observatory, are to be treated as ship letters.

The rates and regulations in regard to letters to or from Canada and all other foreign countries are not changed by the new act.

Every postmaster, in addressing the department, should be careful to write the name of his office, County and State, at the head of his letter, and to avoid writing upon more than one subject in the same letter. He should then postmark the letter with the name of his office and State, as well as date of mailing, and address it to the proper bureau.

In stamping letters, great care should be observed to render the impression distinct and legible.

JAMES CAMPBELL, Postmaster General.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

### RATES OF POSTAGE TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

POSTAGE TO THE EAST INDIES, JAVA, BORNEO, LABUAN, SUMATRA THE MOLUCCAS, AND PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.

We state, on the authority of the Post Office Department, that arrangements having been made by Great Britain for collecting in India the British and other foreign postage on letters between the United Kingdom and the East Indies, whether transmitted via Southampton or via Marseilles in the British mails, hereafter the United States postage only should be prepaid in this country on letters for the East Indies, to be transmitted by either of the above routes, viz : five cents the single rate when the Atlantic conveyance is by British packet, and twenty-one cents when by United States packet.

Owing to a reduction of twelve cents in the British postage beyond England, which took place on the 1st of February last, the single rates of letter postage between the United States and Java, Borneo, Labuan, Sumatra, the Moluccas, and the Philippine Islands, will hereafter be as follows :

To Java, via Southampton. 33 instead of 45 cents the half ounce ; and via Marseilles, 53 instead of 65 cents the quarter ounce, and 63 instead of 75 cents the half ounce ; prepayment required.

To Borneo, Labuan, Sumatra, the Moluccas, and the Philippine Islands, the single rate will be 41 instead of 53 cents when sent via Southampton, and 61 instead of 73 cents the quarter ounce, or 71 instead of 83 cents the half-ounce, when sent by closed mail via Marseilles ; prepayment also required.

The rates above mentioned as chargeable for the Island of Java will provide for their conveyance by British packet as far as Singapore, but they will afterwards be subject to a Netherland rate of postage on account of the conveyance from Singapore to Java.

By the Prussian closed mail the rates to these countries remain unchanged.

HUNT'S

III. 99

# MERCHANTS' MAGAZINE

AND

## COMMERCIAL REVIEW.

---

OCTOBER, 1856.

---

### POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

---

#### POSTAL REFORM IN THE UNITED STATES.

Vigorous efforts will be made at the next session of Congress to accomplish a reform in our postal system. It is certainly desirable to have as good a system in the New World as they have in the Old, or at least in England. The movement has our hearty co-operation, and we will most cheerfully open our pages to the discussion of the subject. The following circular, emanating from a committee of the Mercantile Library Association of Boston, briefly and succinctly sets forth the prominent features of the needed reform, and at the same time presents an array of facts quite irresistible. We give the substance of the circular, and commend it to the careful attention of our readers. It will be perceived that there is nothing sectional, partisan, or political in the petition to be presented. It complains of no officer and of no administration, but desires certain specified changes in the Post-office Department—all of which, except cheap ocean postage, have been adopted, and have succeeded to a wonderful degree in England, not only in accommodating the people, but also in materially enhancing the revenue :—

1. *Uniform Postage of Two Cents.* No one can doubt the advantage of this plan who has witnessed its operation abroad or considered its influence in analogous cases. The mere saving in the expense of *handling* letters by the adoption of this principle in England, by comparing the cost in 1854 with the expense before the adoption, is amazing. The diminution has been from \$30 to \$7 per thousand; 443,000,000 letters in Great Britain, in 1854, cost in the handling (not transportation) \$3,233,195, while at the rate of cost before a uniform post-

age, the expense would have been \$13,309,470. If it be objected that uniformity is desirable, but why reduce from three cents to two, while the department is yearly becoming a greater burden to the government, we reply, a uniform rate of two cents will pay. The receipts of the English government are nearly double the expenses, and the proportion is increasing in favor of the department, showing that half a penny (or one cent) per letter, instead of two, would now sustain the department. Will it be contended that at double the amount which will sustain the British office, the United States office cannot be supported? Even if the English are more compact, are they not also more expensive in their scale of prices? Will Americans concede that postal machinery cannot be constructed in this country at double the expense which it costs in England?

2. *Receiving-Houses and Letter-Carriers.* Free delivery is the right arm of the English system, and at the same time it is the most profitable branch of the service. In London there are 1,385 letter-carriers, 498 receiving-houses, and frequent deliveries daily. The last accounts from England inform us that the number is to be further increased. An American now in England writes that he has often dropped a letter into a receiving-house, had it delivered to his correspondent several miles away, and received an answer by a carrier at his door, in three hours.

Drop-letters in England comprise nearly half of their whole number, and they have increased in an astonishing proportion under the present system. The number of these in six of our principal cities was recently ascertained to be 290,694 in a year. During the same period in England, in six cities, the number was 74,005,791. Had the proportion been the same in the two countries, our letters would have amounted to 26,863,552—an increase of nearly one hundred-fold.

A free delivery system might probably be arranged, by which the twelve or fourteen cities and towns immediately around Boston could have their letters left at the door of each citizen several times each day, at a cost not much exceeding that now paid for postmasters and rents in the same places. Who can estimate the vast social and economical advantages growing out of such an arrangement, exclusive of the profit to government which would certainly result from the greatly increased correspondence which this convenience would produce? Out of the 150,000 or 200,000 residing in the vicinity of Boston, 35,000 or 40,000 are daily in the city attending to business. What an accommodation to them and to their families would be the result of such a reform!

3. *Money-Orders.* This system was commenced in England in 1839, and consists simply of such machinery as enables persons, by means of drafts from one post-office to another, to transmit small sums not exceeding \$25. The best mode of showing the way in which this is regarded, is to compare the business in 1839 and 1854:—

	Orders.	Amount.
1839 .....	188,921	\$1,566,623
1854 .....	5,466,242	52,821,059

4. *Cheap Ocean Postage.* The London *Athenæum*, in answer to the question, "Would ocean postage pay?" says:—Compared with the charge for goods and passengers, the letter rate is enormously high. A man weighing 200 lbs., with all his food and luxuries and baggage, is taxed £30, while a harmless bag of letters, of equal weight, content with a dark corner and left alone, is mulcted for its transport from Broadway to St. George's Pier, more than £230!

If mail packets can carry a man, with all his wants and provisions and luggage, for £30, a bale of letters or a bale of cotton can be carried for one-third of the same amount. If government wish for mail steamers to be at their control in case of war, the charge should be to the Navy, and not the Post-office Department.

5. *Franking Matter to be charged to the Government.* There is no justice or equality in taxing letters with the expense of sending government maps and pictures to a favored few; with equal propriety might the expenses of the courts, or of surveys, &c., be charged to the Post-office Department. The Representatives

ought not to bear the burden—neither should the poor woman or the orphan who has a friend abroad in California. Let government pay from the treasury for its own work.

6. *No Compulsory Prepayment.* Prepayment is very well; but is it just that when not prepaid, letters should be destroyed? We hear of small remittances detained here, and large ones there; of an estate of \$30,000 lost for want of a witness's testimony—confiscated for want of a postage stamp; of life lost by a letter not being received, when the stamp had been lost or stolen after being placed on the letter. With a charge of two cents when prepaid, and four cents when not paid, 98½ per cent of letters have been prepaid in England.

7. *Dead Letters to be returned.* Is nothing of value but gold or silver, or their immediate representatives? One would think so, judging from our postage laws. In England, these letters are returned every six days; and when the name of the writer can be ascertained from the seal or the outside of the letter, it is returned unopened, instead of being detained six months or longer, and then burned, as with us.

The number of dead letters in England is 5 to 1,000; with us, it is nearly 44 to 1,000. This fact, taken in connection with what we have said as to the increase of letters, proves the certainty as well as promptness of their system of free delivery.

Rowland Hill, in 1837, prior to the great postal reform in England, laid down four propositions:—

- 1st. Uniform rate of postage.
- 2d. Increased speed in delivering letters.
- 3d. Greater facilities for their dispatch.
- 4th. Simplification in operations in post-offices.

Although the increase of letters in England in 1845 was threefold what it was in 1839, it actually cost the government less to handle them; and with us it takes twice the number of clerks to do the same work as in England, owing to their reform, principally in uniformity and free delivery. Such has been the effect of these facilities in developing correspondence, that more letters have been circulated through the English post-office within the last four years than through the United States post-office during the whole period of its existence, from 1790 to the present time.

The merchants first led off in the English reform under Rowland Hill; they have done so in New York; others will follow. The people should speak and instruct their Representatives—they will hear and obey. This question addresses itself primarily to the large cities and suburbs; but it speaks to our whole Commonwealth and to New England as a question of the utmost importance to their family, social, intellectual, financial, and economical arrangements. It comes home to every individual man and woman—and with them we leave our appeal.

---

#### POSTAGE STAMPS.

The invention of postage stamps is generally ascribed to the English, and certainly they were first brought into use in England, in 1839; but a Stockholm paper, the *Frysikten*, says that, so far back as 1823, a Swedish officer, Lieut. Trekenber, of the artillery, petitioned the Chamber of Nobles, to propose to the government to issue stamped paper, specially destined to serve for envelopes for prepaid letters. "The fact," it adds, "is duly recorded in the minutes of the Chamber, under date of the 23d March, 1823. The proposition was warmly supported by Count de Schwerin, on the ground that the invention, if thus used, would be both convenient to the public and the post office, but it was rejected by a large majority."

# MERCHANTS' MAGAZINE.

III. 174A.  
Established July, 1839.

BY FREEMAN HUNT, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

VOLUME XXXV.

DECEMBER, 1856.

NUMBER VI.

By OTIS CLAPP, Esq., of Massachusetts

## Art. II.—THE POST-OFFICE AS IT HAS BEEN, IS, AND SHOULD BE :

AS A MEANS OF MODERN CIVILIZATION.\*

As Congress is about to be asked to reform our postal system, with a view of incorporating into it some improvements which the experience of other countries have successfully tested, it has been thought advisable to set forth some of the considerations which have operated to call public attention to the subject, as well as to state some reasons why all are invited to participate in the movement.

As the Post-office affords an ebbing and flowing system, by which all the secret thoughts, feelings, and affections of a people are, or should be, safely, quickly, and confidentially imparted to each other, it certainly becomes us, as American citizens, to see that our system is in no respect behind that of the most favored nations. A very little examination will satisfy the intelligent observer that our postal system is very far behind, in its means for public accommodation, those of many European countries.

The Post-office of England, in the completeness of its working machinery, takes its position at the head of the list. Such are the facilities which it affords for correspondence, and so completely are the habits of the people assimilated to them, that over 443,000,000 letters were circulated in 1854, while in the United States the number was less than 120,000,000, or about one-quarter the number.

It must be borne in mind, at the same time, that the population of the two countries is about the same, while there is a much larger number in England than in this country who cannot read or write.

Can such a disparity be reconciled upon any other principle than that of a superiority of system? We hold that it cannot.

\* The substance of this article was delivered as a lecture in Boston, and is now first published in the *Merchants' Magazine*.

In our judgment, those who speak the English language on this continent are developing the same necessity for an extension of intercourse, as their brethren on the other side of the Atlantic. Scholars speak of the English language as in itself a power. No people have spoken it, or can speak it, but a powerful people. No other language equals it. With a law and genius of its own, it levies contributions upon all other languages, and incorporates the power and beauty, the heart and core, of every other tongue into it. For perspicuity and force, for elegance and smoothness, poetry and science, metaphysics and theology, the pulpit or the forum, the Senate or the bar, for any and every use, there is no language which equals it. By the use of this common language, our country is bound together by a common sympathy; and by the same means—unity of language—we are allied to the most powerful nations of the earth.

The English language is rapidly spreading into all lands, and will, according to present indications, soon become the language of commerce in all nations.

The English and Americans are in the East Indies, in Australia, at the Cape of Good Hope, on the coast of China; in Asia, Africa, Europe, America; on all continents, seas, and islands; along all lines of travel, where they find or *leave* some who speak the language.

With a language of such powers, and representing such impulses, taken in connection with the fact that correspondence is the means of holding conversation with those at a distance, it follows that the machinery which gives scope to these powers, in order to answer the requirements of an advanced civilization, should be as free and perfect as the power of man can make it.

Our correspondence has been compared to the blood of the country, which resembles the arterial and venous circulation of the human system, while the electric telegraph represents the nervous system of the nation and of modern society. They spread over the land, interlinking distant parts, and making possible a perpetually higher co-operation among men, and higher social forms than have hitherto existed. By means of its life-like functions, the social body becomes a living whole, and each of its new applications marks a step in the organization of human life.

Viewed from this point, the Post-office is seen to be one of the most important institutions in civil society, serving and aiding all other institutions, and scattering its blessings among the whole people, alike to the rich and poor.

The postal system may be divided into three distinct eras. The first era was when governments established systems of posts, or royal couriers, not for the accommodation of the public, but only for the purposes of the government and the convenience of the court.

Second. When commerce began to flourish, and a necessity existed for a more general correspondence, letters had to be dispatched by messengers. As soon as it became a profitable business, governments took the control, abolished all private posts, claimed the business as a government monopoly, and wielded it almost exclusively as a means of raising revenue.

The third era was inaugurated under the auspices of Rowland Hill, which established the British Post-office upon the principle that its paramount object should be the convenience and accommodation of the universal public.

All progress in postal affairs refer themselves to one of these periods.

The first era extended over a period of about 2,000 years. The second, from 200 to 300 years. And the third covers a period of only about 16 years.

Although the working of the Post-office system under its new auspices is in a state of infancy, it has been sufficiently tested to show its vast powers as an agent in facilitating the operations of commerce, as well as that of all the great moral, social, and educational movements of the age. Among all the institutions of society there is none which more strikingly illustrates and marks the progress of civilization than the Post-office, in its successive states of progress. Notwithstanding this fact, it must be apparent to the careful observer, that its grand mission in ministering to the wants of humanity, have but just begun.

It may not be uninteresting to take a glance at the past, and to give a brief sketch of the Post-office from its earliest history. Such a survey presents a most striking picture of the world's progress in intercourse.

King Cyrus, of Persia, was the first to establish *posts* throughout his kingdom, with regular couriers, to obtain the latest news from his armies at the seat of war.

This was 560 years before Christ. Augustus introduced the same institution among the Romans, about the time of the Christian era. He also introduced post-chaises.

The same plan was introduced by Charlemagne in the year 800. None of the ancient governments, however highly cultivated, had anything like the modern Post-office Department. Neither Egypt, Greece, nor Rome, in their days of highest glory, had any such thing as a mail for the accommodation of the public. At the time of the Christian era, the Apostles had no other means of communicating their epistles to the churches than by messengers, and they are accordingly mentioned by nearly all of them.

Louis XI., of France, introduced posts in 1470, and this was the first of their appearance in Europe.

Edward IV., of England, in 1481, introduced them into that country with riders on post-horses, which went stages of twenty miles each, to procure the latest intelligence of the events that had passed in the war which he was carrying on with the Scots.

The first chief-postmaster in England was appointed by Queen Elizabeth in 1581—275 years ago.

Posts existed in the reign of Charles I., but were overturned in the civil wars which followed, but were re-established under the energetic government of Cromwell.

Mail-coaches were introduced into England by a Mr. Palmer, in 1784. Mr. P. introduced his plan to Mr. Pitt, then Prime Minister, which was adopted after much opposition from the functionaries of the Post-office Department. Mr. Palmer found the post, instead of the quickest, nearly the slowest conveyance in the country, the average speed being but three-and-a-half miles per hour.

Richard III. improved the system of couriers in 1483.

About the same time similar establishments were started in various portions of the German Empire.

As late as 102 years ago there was no regular stage-coach between the great metropolis of England and of Scotland.

In 1754, one Hosea Eastgate advertised to run between London and Edinburgh, "a new genteel two-end glass coach machine, hung on steel

springs, exceeding light and easy, to go in ten days in summer and twelve in winter," to leave London every other Tuesday. "Performed if God permits," so reads the advertisement, "by your dutiful servant, Hosea Eastgate."

The transition in travel from on horse-back to coaches was the cause of a large amount of lamentation, or, what is called in popular language, old foggism. It has been supposed by some ardent disciples of Young America, that this age was in advance of all others, even in this class of exhibitions. A brief extract may aid those, curious in such matters, in forming a correct judgment on this point:—

In a pamphlet called "The Grand Concern of England Explained," published in 1673, the writer gravely depicted the miseries and the ruin of trade, occasioned by the introduction of coaches. The style of reasoning is worthy of notice, for the method of argument; and the political and social principles enunciated in it still find acceptance among a few in our own day. "Before the coaches were set up," he says, "travelers rode on horseback, and men had boots, spurs, saddles, bridles, saddle-cloths, and good riding suits, coats and cloaks, stockings and hats, whereby the wool and leather of the kingdom were consumed. Besides, most gentlemen, when they traveled on horseback, used to ride with swords, belts, pistols, holsters, portmanteaus, and hat-cases, which in these coaches they have little or no occasion for. For when they rode on horseback they rode in one suit and carried another, to wear when they came to their journey's end, or lag by the way; but in coaches they ride in a silk suit, with an Indian gown, with a sash, silk stockings, and the beaver-hats men ride in, and carry no other with them. This is because they escape the wet and dirt which on horseback they cannot avoid; whereas, in two or three journeys on horseback, these clothes and hats were *went to be spoiled*; which done, they were forced to have new very often, and *that increased the consumption of manufacture*. If they were women that traveled, they used to have safeguards, and hoods, side-saddles and pillions, with strappings, saddle or pillion cloths, which, for the most part, were laced and embroidered; to the making of which there went several trades, *now ruined*."

Another extract will serve to show the condition of roads in the past century:—

Arthur Young, an author of some note, who traveled in Lancashire about the year 1770, has left us a forcible and graphic, if not elegant, sketch of the state of the roads and of the means of communication. "I know not," he says, "in the whole range of language, terms sufficiently expressive to describe this infernal road. Let me most seriously caution all travelers who may accidentally propose to travel this terrible country, to avoid it as they would the devil; for a thousand to one they break their necks, or their limbs, by overthrows, or breakings down. They will here meet with ruts, which I actually measured, four feet deep, and floating with mud, only from a wet summer; what, therefore, must it be after a winter? The only mending it receives is tumbling in some loose stones, which serves no other purpose than jolting a carriage in the most intolerable manner. These are not merely opinions, but facts; for I actually passed three carts broken down, in these eighteen miles of execrable memory."

Subsequently, in speaking of a turnpike-road near Warrington, he says:

This a paved road, most infamously bad. Any person would imagine the people of the country had made it with a view to immediate destruction! for the breadth is only sufficient for one carriage; consequently, it is cut at once into ruts, and you may easily conceive what a break-down, dislocating road, with ruts cut through a pavement, must be.

Such was the style of traveling in Britain less than a century ago from the time we write.

One more sketch we will venture to give, and that is of a country postmaster :—

The country postmaster was generally an innkeeper ; and Taylor, the water-poet, in his "Penniless Pilgrimage," from the metropolis to Scotland, in the early part of the seventeenth century, describes one of these extortionate worthies :—"From Stamford," he says, "we rode to Huntingdon, where we lodged at the postmaster's house, at the sign of the Crown ; his name is Riggs. He was informed who I was, and wherefore I undertook this, my penniless progress ; wherefore he came up to our chamber and supped with us, and very bountifully called for three quarts of wine and sugar, and four jugs of beer. He did drink and begin healths like a horse-leech, and swallowed down his cups without feeling, as if he had the dropy, or nine pounds of sponge in his maw. In a word, as he is a post, he drank post, striving and calling by all means to make the reckoning great, or to make us men of great reckoning. But in his payment he was tired like a jade, leaving the gentlemen that was with me to discharge the terrible shot, or else one of my horses must have laid in pawn for his superfluous calling and unmannerly intrusion."

Even so late as between 1730 and 1740, the post was only transmitted three days in a week between London and Edinburgh ; and the metropolis on one occasion sent only a single letter, which was for a banker.

In 1648 the English Post-office yielded a revenue of.....	£5,000
1658 it was farmed out to John Manly, Esq., for.....	10,000
1663 " " " Daniel O. Neal, for.....	21,500
1674 " " out for.....	43,000
1764.....	482,048
1800.....	745,818
1820 rising of.....	2,000,000

Here it reached its culminating point, and the revenue either remained stationary, or fell off, while population and correspondence was daily increasing.

An examination into the causes of this state of things disclosed the fact, that in consequence of high rates for carrying letters, an *outside* post-office had sprung into existence, which was carrying letters between all the large places for one penny (two cents) each. This outside post-office had as regular a system of exchanging bags as the regular office. The average rate of postage in England, as well as in this country, at that time, was about fourteen cents per letter, which was regarded as so exorbitant that public sympathy went with the outside, rather than with the government office.

It was the successful working of this outside office that went far to convince the people of the feasibility of Rowland Hill's plan. The intelligent and far-seeing statesmen of England were satisfied that any rate of postage over one penny per letter would give the letters on long routes to the Department, while the short ones would seek the outside office. The fact was conceded by them, that the only way to invite all correspondence to pass through the mails, was to put the price so low as to take away all motive for competition with the government.

In the debates in Parliament, Sir Francis Baring, Chancellor of the Exchequer, said, "that the whole authorities conclusively bear in favor of a penny postage," and he "conscientiously believed that the public ran less risk of loss by adopting it."

Referring to the petitions of the people, he said :—"The mass of them

present the most extraordinary combination I ever saw, of representations to one purpose, from all classes, unswayed by any political motive whatever, from persons of all shades of opinion, political and religious, and from the commercial and trading communities in all parts of the kingdom."

Mr. Goulburn, then one of the leaders of the opposition, opposed so great a sacrifice of revenue, in the existing state of the country, but admitted that it would "ultimately increase the wealth and prosperity of the country." And if the experiment was to be tried at all, "it would be best to make it to the extent proposed," for "the whole evidence went to show that a postage of two pence would fail, but a penny might succeed."

Mr. Wallace declared it "one of the greatest boons that could be conferred on the human race," and he begged that, as "England had the honor of the invention," they might not "lose the honor of being the first to execute" a plan, which he pronounced "essentially necessary to the comforts of the human race."

Sir Robert Peel, then at the head of the opposition, found much fault with the financial plans of Mr. Baring, but he "would not say one word in disparagement of the plans of Mr. Hill;" and if he wanted popularity, "he would at once give way to the public feeling in favor of the great moral and social advantages" of the plan, "the great stimulus it would afford to industry and commercial enterprise," and "the boon it presented to the lower classes."

Mr. O'Connell thought it would be "one of the most valuable legislative reliefs that had ever been given to the people." It was "impossible to exaggerate its benefits." And even if it would not pay the expense of the Post-office, he held that "*government ought to make a sacrifice for the purpose of facilitating communication.*"

Sir Robert Peel admitted that "great social and commercial advantages will arise from the change, independent of financial considerations."

The Duke of Wellington admitted "the expediency, and indeed the necessity" of the proposed change. He thought Mr. Hill's plan "the one most likely to succeed."

Lord Ashburton said "there could be no doubt that the country at large would derive an immense benefit, the consumption of paper would be increased considerably, and it was most probable the number of letters would be at least doubled." It appeared to him "that a tax upon communication between distant parties was, *of all taxes, the most objectionable.*" At one time he had been of the opinion "that the uniform charge of postage should be two pence, but *he found the mass of evidence so strongly in favor of one penny,* that he concluded the ministers were right in coming down to that rate."

The Earl of Lichfield, Postmaster-General, "assented to it on the simple ground that *the demand for it was universal.*" So obnoxious was the tax upon letters, that he was entitled to say that "the people had declared their *readiness to submit to any impost* that might be substituted in its stead."

This glance at the Parliamentary debates, brief as they are, will serve to show the overruling considerations which operated to induce the British government to adopt their present postal system—the most perfect that exists on the face of the globe.

It may be interesting, also, to glance at the past history of our own Post-office.

The first Post-office in the colonies was established in 1710 by act of Parliament, which continued until the Revolutionary War, when it was controlled by Congress.

Dr. FRANKLIN was commissioned as one of two Deputy Postmasters-General in 1753, at which time the length of post-roads was 1,532 miles. After improving and enlarging the service, and returning to the British crown three times as much clear revenue as the Post-office in Ireland, he was dismissed from office in 1774, as he says, "by a freak of ministers."

In 1790, the Department was organized, and Samuel Osgood, of Massachusetts, appointed Postmaster-General.

It is interesting to recur to this day of small things, for the purpose of comparing the past with the present. Mr. Osgood's first communication as Postmaster-General was addressed to Alexander Hamilton, then Secretary of the Treasury, and was dated January 20, 1790.

At this time there was one grand mail-route extending from Wiscasset, in Massachusetts, (now Maine,) to Savannah, Georgia, with ten "cross roads," as they were called, such as from Hartford to New London, Philadelphia to Pittsburg, New York to Albany, &c.

In 1791, Timothy Pickering was appointed Postmaster-General, and afterwards Secretary of State, under the administrations of Washington and John Adams. He was a man of great firmness, and not easily discouraged by obstacles. His first communication to Congress made known to that body a formidable difficulty which he had encountered in running the mail through the State of New Jersey. It consisted of an act passed by the Legislature of that State, "for raising a revenue from certain stages, &c.," and as the United States government had contracted to have the mail carried through the State by a line of stages, they were thus subject to taxation.

Mr. Pickering, in a communication to the government, says:—

"If the sums exacted from the proprietors of the stages were expended in extraordinary reparations of the road, no passengers would complain of paying enhanced prices for *safer and easier seats in the stages*; but such an appropriation is not even thought of; the avowed design is to increase the revenues of that State. And thus the citizens of the United States have to *purchase permission* to travel on the highways of New Jersey. At the same time, it is remarkable that the express object of one section of the act is 'to *prevent imposition on travelers*.' Having represented this tax, what I conceive it to be, an unwarrantable imposition, it is proper to add that, from information I have received, it originated in the voluntary offer of the proprietors of two lines of stages then running, designed thereby to make a monopoly of the business."

This taste for monopoly, and for taxing citizens of other States for purposes of revenue, it would thus seem, commenced in that State at an early period; and, as is well known to travelers, has not been eradicated even down to the present time.

The fourth Postmaster-General was Gideon Granger, of Connecticut. Very soon after entering upon his duties, he too perceived breakers ahead, which he lost no time in communicating to the Post-office Committee. This difficulty he characterized as of "too delicate a nature to engraft into a report which may become public, and yet too important to be omitted or passed over."

It related to *employing negroes in carrying the mails*, and is interesting in several points of view, and among them as illustrating some of the dangers which attend the acquisition of knowledge.

"Everything," he says, "which tends to increase their knowledge of natural rights, of men and things, or that affords them an opportunity of associating, acquiring, and communicating sentiments, and of establishing a chain or line of intelligence, must increase your hazard, because it increases their means of effecting their object.

"The most active and intelligent are employed as post-riders. These are the most *ready to learn*, and the most *able to execute*. By traveling from day to day, and hourly mixing with the people, they must, they will acquire information. They will learn that a man's rights do not depend upon his color. They will, in time, become teachers to their brethren. They become acquainted with each other on the line. Whenever the body, or a portion of them, wish to act, they are an organized corps, circulating our intelligence *openly*, their own *privately*."

This led to the passage of a law which removed all such dangers.

The extraordinary increase in the number of Post-offices in the United States, with the number of miles of post-roads, to meet the growing wants of our increasing population, as well as the increase in the revenue and expenses, and in the number of letters, may be seen by reference to the following table, commencing with 1790, at which time the Department was founded under the Constitution, and ending with 1854:—

STATISTICS OF THE UNITED STATES POST-OFFICE.

Date.	Post-offices.	Miles of post-roads.	Expenses of transportation.	Revenue.	Total expenses.	No. of letters.
1790 .....	75	1,876	\$22,081	\$37,935	\$32,140	265,545
1791 .....	89	1,906	23,293	46,294	36,697	324,058
1792 .....	195	5,642	32,731	67,444	54,531	472,108
1793 .....	209	5,642	44,734	104,747	72,040	733,229
1794 .....	450	11,984	58,005	128,947	89,973	902,629
1795 .....	453	13,207	75,359	160,520	117,893	1,124,340
1796 .....	468	13,207	81,489	195,067	131,572	1,365,469
1797 .....	554	16,180	89,382	213,998	150,114	1,497,936
1798 .....	639	16,180	107,014	232,977	179,084	1,630,839
1799 .....	677	16,180	109,475	264,846	188,038	1,858,922
1800 .....	903	20,817	128,644	280,804	213,994	1,965,623
1801 .....	1,025	22,309	152,450	320,443	255,151	2,243,101
1802 .....	1,114	25,315	174,671	327,045	281,916	2,289,315
1803 .....	1,258	25,315	205,110	351,823	322,364	2,462,761
1804 .....	1,405	29,556	205,555	389,450	337,502	2,726,150
1805 .....	1,558	31,076	239,635	421,378	377,367	2,949,651
1806 .....	1,710	33,431	269,033	446,106	417,234	3,122,742
1807 .....	1,848	33,755	292,751	478,763	453,885	3,351,341
1808 .....	1,944	34,035	305,499	460,564	462,828	3,223,943
1809 .....	2,012	34,035	332,917	506,684	498,012	3,546,438
1810 .....	2,300	36,406	327,966	551,654	495,969	3,861,788
1811 .....	2,403	36,406	319,166	587,247	499,999	4,110,729
1812 .....	2,610	39,378	340,626	649,208	540,165	4,544,456
1813 .....	2,740	39,540	438,559	703,155	681,012	4,922,085
1814 .....	2,870	41,736	475,602	730,370	727,126	5,112,590
1815 .....	3,000	43,966	487,779	1,043,065	748,121	7,301,455
1816 .....	3,260	48,976	521,970	961,782	804,022	6,732,474
1817 .....	3,459	51,600	589,189	1,002,973	916,515	8,023,784
1818 .....	3,618	59,473	664,611	1,130,235	1,035,832	9,041,880
1819 .....	4,000	67,586	717,831	1,204,737	1,117,861	9,637,896
1820 .....	4,500	72,492	782,425	1,111,927	1,160,926	8,895,415
1821 .....	4,650	78,808	815,681	1,056,658	1,182,923	8,453,264
1822 .....	4,799	82,763	788,618	1,117,490	1,167,572	8,939,920
1823 .....	5,043	84,860	767,464	1,114,845	1,169,886	8,914,760
1824 .....	5,182	84,860	768,939	1,156,812	1,169,199	9,251,496
1825 .....	5,677	94,052	785,646	1,252,061	1,206,584	10,016,488

Date.	Post-offices.	Miles of post-roads.	Expenses of transportation.	Revenue.	Total expenses.	No. of letters.
1826 .....	6,150	94,052	885,100	1,388,417	1,309,316	11,110,336
1827 .....	7,008	105,886	942,345	1,473,551	1,373,239	11,788,408
1828 .....	7,651	114,586	1,086,812	1,598,134	1,623,383	12,785,072
1829 .....	8,060	114,780	1,153,846	1,707,418	1,782,138	13,659,344
1830 .....	8,450	115,176	1,274,009	1,850,583	1,932,708	13,804,664
1831 .....	8,686	116,000	1,252,226	1,997,812	1,936,123	17,980,808
1832 .....	9,205	104,467	1,482,507	2,258,570	2,266,172	20,327,130
1833 .....	10,127	119,916	1,894,688	2,616,538	2,930,415	23,548,842
1834 .....	10,693	112,500	1,922,431	2,823,707	2,896,591	25,443,363
1835 .....	10,770	112,774	1,719,007	2,993,557	2,767,350	26,942,013
1836 .....	11,091	113,264	1,638,052	3,398,455	2,755,624	30,586,095
1837 .....	11,767	141,242	2,081,786	4,100,605	3,303,423	36,905,445
1838 .....	12,519	134,818	3,131,308	4,285,078	4,621,837	38,115,702
1839 .....	12,780	133,999	3,301,922	4,477,614	4,654,718	40,298,526
1840 .....	13,468	155,789	3,213,043	4,543,522	4,718,236	40,891,698
1841 .....	13,778	155,026	3,034,814	4,407,726	4,499,528	39,669,534
1842 .....	13,773	149,782	4,192,196	5,029,507	5,674,752	45,265,563
1843 .....	13,814	142,295	2,982,512	4,296,225	4,374,754	38,666,025
1844 .....	14,103	144,687	2,912,947	4,237,288	4,296,513	36,135,592
1845 .....	14,183	143,940	2,898,630	4,439,842	4,320,732	39,958,978
1846 .....	14,601	149,679	2,597,455	4,089,990	4,084,332	41,879,781
1847 .....	15,146	163,818	2,476,456	4,013,447	3,971,275	47,585,757
1848 .....	16,159	163,208	2,448,766	4,161,078	4,326,850	52,384,319
1849 .....	16,747	167,703	2,490,028	4,705,176	4,479,049	60,159,862
1850 .....	18,417	178,672	3,095,974	5,552,971	5,212,953	69,426,452
1851 .....	19,769	196,290	4,016,588	6,727,867	6,024,566	83,252,735
1852 .....	20,901	214,284	4,136,907	6,828,982	7,108,459	95,790,524
1853 .....	22,320	217,743	4,729,025	7,940,724	7,982,757	102,189,148
1854 .....	23,548	219,935	4,925,785	6,883,537	8,577,424	119,634,418

## RECAPITULATION—TOTALS.

Expenses of transportation..	\$86,453,415	Total expenses .....	\$135,030,314
Revenue.....	133,881,650	Number of letters.....	1,393,930,814

The following table will show the statistics of the British Post-office from 1839 (the last year under the old system) to 1855:—

## STATISTICS OF THE BRITISH POST-OFFICE—REVENUE, EXPENSES, NUMBER OF LETTERS, AND NUMBER AND AMOUNT OF MONEY-ORDERS.

Date.	Gross receipts.	Expenses.	Net revenue.	No. of letters.	No. of mon'y-ord'rs.	Amount of mon'y-ord'rs.
1839.	\$11,953,318	\$3,784,997	\$8,168,321	82,470,596	188,921	\$1,565,623
1840.	6,797,332	4,293,385	2,503,947	168,768,344	587,797	4,804,878
1841.	7,497,093	4,690,845	2,806,248	196,500,191	1,552,845	15,637,588
1842.	7,890,729	4,887,522	3,003,207	208,434,451	2,111,980	21,685,889
1843.	8,104,338	4,903,252	3,201,086	220,450,306	2,501,523	25,564,204
1844.	8,525,339	4,925,553	3,599,786	242,091,684	2,806,808	28,476,977
1845.	9,437,883	5,627,971	3,809,912	271,410,789	3,176,126	32,066,805
1846.	9,819,287	5,693,726	4,125,561	299,586,762	3,515,079	35,355,284
1847.	10,905,084	5,982,600	4,922,484	322,146,243	4,081,185	39,515,886
1848.	10,718,400	7,016,253	3,702,147	328,830,184	4,203,651	40,756,475
1849.	10,826,749	6,622,814	4,203,935	337,399,199	4,248,891	40,763,219
1850.	11,323,421	7,308,928	4,019,493	347,089,071	4,439,713	42,472,493
1851.	12,110,841	6,520,818	5,590,023	360,647,187	4,661,025	44,402,104
1852.	12,171,684	6,719,536	5,452,098	379,501,499	4,947,825	47,191,389
1853.	12,872,089	7,003,399	5,868,640	410,817,489	5,215,290	49,680,976
1854.	13,509,313	7,532,781	5,976,532	443,649,301	5,466,244	52,312,059
1855.	13,582,100	.....	.....	456,216,176	5,307,412	55,046,400
<hr/>						
	178,045,400	*93,609,380	*70,953,920	5,075,989,472	59,462,310	577,198,196

\* Sixteen years.

It is instructive to trace the rate of increase in England, and the causes which operated to produce it.

The increase in the number of letters in the first eight years averaged over 40 per cent each year, although the third and fourth years it averaged but fourteen and eighteen per cent. The cause of this depression is explained by the *London Spectator*, to have been occasioned by the official torpor of the Chancellor, who had hardened his heart against faith in Post-office improvements, and curtailed its accommodations, on the ground that it was expensive. Hence the falling off. This led to parliamentary agitation, which caused the extension of accommodations to the public; and which brought both letters and revenue. "The moral taught," says the *Spectator*, "by this steady increase both of letters and revenue in the Post-office is, that increased facilities for the public bring a corresponding increase both of business and profit to the Department."

The first question that meets us from all quarters, in relation to the proposed system, is, *will it pay?* We submit that it will; and our opinion is based upon the following, among other reasons.

Before, however, proceeding to state these reasons, we would beg leave to ask, with all due deference, if there is any other one department of government that does sustain itself? Does the State, Navy, War, Judiciary, or Interior Departments pay their way? If not, why should we not mutilate and cripple *them*, as well as the Post-office? Our reasons for believing the Department can sustain itself, are—

1st. The receipts of the English Department are nearly double the expenses; which demonstrates that a rate of *one cent* per letter, instead of two, would sustain their Department. Hence it is inferred that if the British Post-office can sustain itself at a rate of *one cent*, the United States Post-office can certainly do so at twice the amount. Most things in England are conducted upon a more expensive scale than in this country. Are we prepared to concede, without trial, that postal machinery can be worked in England at less than one-half of what it can be done in this country? Our position is sustained, in part, by Major Hobbie, one of the Assistant Postmaster-Generals, in an able and satisfactory report upon the English system, made in 1848. He then took the ground, that, considering the vastness of our territory, and the magnitude of our system of mails, and the still greater extent to which they must be carried, three cents here will be a cheaper rate, in comparison to service performed, than in England. If, then, the two systems can sustain themselves in the proportion of three to two, as supposed by Major Hobbie, who is one of our most intelligent and experienced officers, there seems little room to hang a doubt upon, after experience has proved that the proportion is two to one.

2nd. The great reason why our Post-office is supposed to be more expensive than the English is, because of greater distances. This difficulty only needs a little examination to melt away. The idea that distance is the main element of expense, was thoroughly exposed by Rowland Hill. He showed before a Committee of the House of Commons, that it cost as much to send letters from London to Barnet, (11 miles,) as from London to Edinburgh, (397 miles.) The cost of transit from London to Edinburgh he showed to be only one thirty-sixth part of a penny—or one-eighteenth part of one cent—and this was found to be a fair average of the cost of transportation in all the mails of the kingdom.

The profitable routes are always on the great thoroughfares, which command large quantities of letters; and the expensive routes are those through sparse settlements, with few letters, *irrespective of distance*. To illustrate this point, it is only necessary to cite a few cases.

The average weight of passengers is about 150 pounds, and with baggage, 230 pounds. The cost of transit between Boston and New York would be by railroad, \$5. By the sound, \$4. The cost of transit by express, including delivery, would be but \$1 25. Letters average about fifty to the pound, 230 pounds would, therefore, be equal to 11,500 letters. This, at two cents each, would amount to \$230. If we estimate the cost of a mail-bag of letters between Boston and New York, of 230 pounds, at passenger fare, the cost of transit is less than the two-hundredth part of one cent! If we estimate the same at the cost of express freight, it would be less than the eight-hundredth part of one cent. If we extend the same bag of letters to New Orleans at the cost of express freight, the cost is less than the eightieth part of one cent per letter. And last of all, if we extend the same bag of letters to San Francisco, across the Isthmus, what is the result! The price of express freight to that point is thirty cents per pound. Taking the average of letters to be fifty to the pound, this makes the cost of transit six mills each. If we add the cost of handling letters in England, seven mills, we make the total thirteen mills, which at two cents per letter would leave seven mills (thirty-five per cent) surplus for profit and contingencies.

In the face of facts like these, coupled with the additional consideration that government secures itself against competition, by making a monopoly of the whole business, can the question be seriously entertained, that a low rate of postage will not pay? The question is often asked, why attempt to reduce postage, when the Post-office Department does not pay its way? But *why* does not the Department sustain itself? The answer is very simple.

1st. It has too many burdens to carry; and 2nd, its facilities for accommodating the public are not up to the times.

Among its burdens are the *franking privilege*. From 1790 down to the present time, letter postage has had to pay not only its own way, but has *done all the government work for nothing*, in addition.

The expenses of the Department from 1790 to 1854 (64 years) were .. \$135,090,314  
Amount of revenue same period ... 133,381,650

Balance against the Department..... \$1,708,664

If the government were to be charged its fair proportion, as in England, the balance would be shifted, and bring them from \$20,000,000 to \$40,000,000 in debt. The amount of free matter which leaves Washington alone is upwards of 5,000 tons per annum. The Post-office Committee estimated the franked matter, at the usual rates, at \$2,500,000 per year. If this franked matter had been paid for at the usual rates for the last fourteen years, there would now be a credit to the Department, instead of a deficit, of \$18,919,172, without reckoning interest. This is one class of burdens. Another has always been the desire on the part of persons in sparse settlements to have the mail carried in four-horse coaches instead of on horseback, or in sulkeys—thus introducing a more expensive kind of service. Why? Because the travel is insufficient to sustain lines of coaches, and if the burden can be thrown upon the Post-office in this way, it is regarded as so much gained.

A clerk, recently employed in the contract department, informed us that they had now got in the way of testing such applications, by requesting postmasters at certain points to weigh the mails every day for one week, and report. The result usually was something like this—say forty-five pounds one day, thirty-five the next, forty the third, and so on; which would show at once, the necessity for nothing more than horseback power.

Another burden, and a very heavy one, is the ocean service. The amount paid for transporting the mails in steamships, on the ocean, in 1854, was \$2,023,010 29. To the three lines crossing the Atlantic, viz.: Collins line, the Bremen and Southampton line, and the Havre lines, the amount paid was \$1,178,833 26. The total net revenue realized in postage on account of this sum, was but \$237,588 09, or less than twenty per cent of the amount paid. Loss on the three lines, \$941,245 17, or over eighty per cent. The Collins line is paid \$858,000 per year for twenty-six round trips, or \$33,000 per trip. Formerly it was \$19,250 per trip, but was raised to the former sum. The government got back for this in postage, in 1854, \$153,377 61; less than eighteen per cent of the amount paid for transportation. What service does Mr. Collins perform for this money? He carried in 1854, 1,086,495 letters, which was an average of 41,019 per trip. This makes, on an average of fifty letters to the pound, 820 pounds. He carried also 630,685 newspapers, or an average of 24,257 per trip, which at one-and-a-half ounces each, would weigh about 2,274 pounds. The aggregate, including bags, would make about one-and-a-half tons per trip. The bags *charged as freight*, either by the Collins or Cunard steamers, would amount to less than \$100. A round trip in the New York or Boston packets of the same bulk, would be charged about \$30. Mr. Collins thus receives from government \$33,000 for a service, for which he would charge a merchant less than \$100. He was paid about fifty cents for each letter and newspaper which he transported. The transit of the 630,685 newspapers sent in 1854 would, at this rate, cost \$315,342. For this government receives two cents each, which includes handling, amounting to \$12,613, showing a deficiency of over \$300,000 on this one item.

Would not such financiering bankrupt any business firm in Christendom? And yet, the first synopsis of the President's message, which came to us over the telegraphic wires, announced the important fact, that the Post-office was over \$2,500,000 in arrears.

We have thus presented some of the causes for this appearance—and shown, as we trust, that it is *only* an appearance. The question naturally arises, why pay steamships for transporting the mails more than five times the whole receipts of postage? The answer to this question is given in the following extract from the Postmaster-General's report:—

"The object of Congress," he says, "in the passage of this Act, [authorizing a contract to carry the ocean mails,] *seems to have been to build a naval steam marine which might temporarily be employed for commercial purposes.*"

A naval steam marine may be all very well, but why, in the name of humanity, should it be saddled as a tax upon letter postage? Rev. Dr. Bacon, in an able article on the subject, asks:—

"Why should we, in the walks of private life, pay our own postage, and that of members of Congress beside? In great Britain, Mr. Hill's system has abolished franking. The Department is no respecter of persons. The queen herself, as we understand the case, pays her postage like an honest woman."

Nobody expects the State, War, Navy, Judiciary, or in short, any other department of government will sustain themselves; but the Post-office—the one which comes home to the business and affections of the great universal public, more than all the others combined, is, as now managed, made to carry, in addition to its own proper burdens, those of all the other departments. It has to carry over 5,000 tons of government correspondence and printed matter, amounting, at the usual rates, to over two-and-a-half millions of dollars annually. It is taxed to the amount of nearly \$2,000,000 a year to build up a naval steam marine. It wastes, according to the estimate of Mr. Miles, and which is partly corroborated by Major Hobbie, nearly \$1,000,000 annually in useless labor—to say nothing of its liability to be used as a vast political machine for rewarding friends, and *not* rewarding enemies; and yet it is held up to the world by officers high in the government, as running behind hand.

If such burdens were imposed, and such injustice practiced among individuals, our thoughts would at once recur to the machinery of courts, and government accommodations, as a means of redress.

Having gone over the ground with regard to the necessity for postal reform, it now remains to explain, as briefly as may be, the kind of reform proposed.

This subject has received a good deal of attention by large committees in New York and Boston. The principles adopted by them, and for which they have concluded to petition Congress, are the following, viz. :—

- NO. 1. NO FRANKING. LET GOVERNMENT PAY ITS OWN POSTAGE.
2. UNIFORM POSTAGE, TWO CENTS, WHICH INCLUDES DELIVERY.
3. FREE LETTER DELIVERY.
4. NO COMPULSORY PREPAYMENT.
5. DEAD LETTERS TO BE RETURNED.
6. POST-OFFICE MONEY ORDERS.
7. CHEAP OCEAN POSTAGE.

With regard to the first proposition, there seems to be but little difference of opinion. The sentiment is nearly universal that government should pay its own postage.

2d. Uniform postage, two cents. Who can doubt, who carefully studies the facts, that this sum will be remunerating?

The Postmaster-General's estimate of expenses for the coming year, including all the extraordinary expenses for ocean service, &c., is \$10,199,024.

Are we asked how these expenses are to be met under the new system? We will answer by submitting an estimate, which, we believe, can be realized within a reasonable time, provided the new system is carried out in good faith. It is this :—

Estimate of income on 800,000,000 of letters (about two-thirds the number in England) at 2 cents .....	\$6,000,000
On newspapers and periodicals .....	1,500,000
On 5,000 tons of government matter .....	2,500,000
Amount to navy estimates .....	1,500,000
<b>Aggregate.....</b>	<b>\$11,500,000</b>

Which leaves a surplus of \$1,300,000 for contingencies. It also leaves out of view the \$1,000,000 expended in useless labor.

The postmaster of Liverpool was asked by the Parliamentary Commit-

tee, "the best way of increasing the revenue?" His answer was, "A great many deliveries, facilities for sending letters, and quickness of dispatch, must be the best way of raising revenue." Rowland Hill's propositions in 1837 were essentially the same, viz.:—

1. Uniform rate of postage.
2. Increased speed in delivering letters.
3. Greater facilities for their dispatch.
4. Simplification in operations in the Post-office.

Experience has demonstrated the practical character of all these propositions. By the simplification of operations, it actually cost the British Department less to handle the letters in 1845 than in 1839, although the increase was over threefold. The cost of handling letters in 1839 was 3 cents each, and in 1854 7 mills each; while in the United States it was 21 mills each. It takes twice the number of clerks, under our system, to do the same work as in England. It has been stated, as a striking illustration of the want of simplification under our system, that the number of rates of postage between a primer and Webster's Dictionary amounts to 1,224.

3d. Free delivery. This is the right arm of the English system. While it is a great public convenience, it is at the same time the most profitable branch of the service. In London there are 1,385 letter-carriers, 498 receiving-houses, and from 3 to 10 deliveries daily. The latter are to be increased to a delivery every hour. In Dublin there are 7 deliveries daily; and in Glasgow, Manchester, and Edinburgh, 4 daily. An American gentleman residing in England, writes that he has often dropped a letter in a receiving-house, had it delivered to his correspondent several miles away, and received an answer by a letter-carrier, at his door, in three hours. What are called the local or drop-letters in England comprise 47 per cent of their whole number.

The number of local or drop-letters in the six principal cities of England were 74,005,791; while in the six principal cities of this country the number was 290,694. Had the proportion been the same as in the British cities, it would have been 26,863,552—an increase of nearly 100 to 1. The expenses of these six English cities were but 18 per cent of the receipts, leaving a profit to the Department of \$1,518,348, or 82 per cent. The advantages of a well-arranged system of free delivery in our cities and large towns, can be hardly over-estimated in a merely economical point of view—to say nothing of its vast social and moral advantages. Upon the principle that "a penny saved is a penny earned," who can estimate the amount of saving in the number of useless steps taken in traveling to and from the post-office?

It has been estimated by those having the means of judging in such matters, that of those who call at the post-office windows for letters that only about 1 in 4 obtain them. The letter-carrier, on his regular circuit, does the running for his whole district, and loses neither time nor steps. The loss of time, by a want of system in these things, is generally overlooked. An intelligent and active newspaper-carrier can earn from \$20 to \$30 per week in selling papers at 1 and 2 cents each. His profits are one-third and two-thirds of 1 cent on each paper, which includes the trouble of collecting and the risks of business. The government letter-carrier runs no risks. His collections are only for non-prepayment, which

is two postages, or 4 cents. A friend who lived one mile from the post-office, gave us the following estimate, which will farther illustrate this point :—

He visited the post-office twice each day, excepting Sundays, which visits averaged about one hour each. This was equal to 620 hours, or 62 days of 10 hours each per year; and if we estimate his time at 25 cents per hour—about the price of a hand-cartman's wages—it amounts to the modest sum of \$155 per annum!

We have no doubt, from estimates we have seen, that a free delivery system could be arranged, by which the twelve or fourteen cities and towns immediately around Boston could have their letters left at the door of each citizen, several times a day, at a cost not much exceeding that now paid for salaries and rents for postmasters. When we consider that there are some 7,000 persons doing business in Boston, who reside in its suburbs, and whose families would have constant occasion for intercourse by letter, who can estimate the vast social and economical advantages growing out of such a system?

The cities and large towns are points to which government must look mainly for letters as a means of revenue, and it is here that the number must be developed. While London contains but one-twelfth of the population of the kingdom, it furnishes one-fourth of the letters; and yet her number of letters to each individual is the least of the six principal cities of Great Britain. It is 43 to each person in London, while it is 57 in Bristol and Manchester, and in Dublin 46. Even the metropolis of old Ireland, with these enlarged postal facilities, looms above the metropolis of the world in the extent of its correspondence. The same rule holds good in this country. The mercantile, trading, and professional classes write the largest portion of the letters. In the six cities of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, New Orleans, and Cincinnati, the number of letters was 24 to each inhabitant, while in the rest of the country it was but 4.

It is estimated that 4,000,000 of inhabitants in the cities and large towns write 97,000,000 of the 120,000,000 of letters in this country, and pay \$3,840,000 of postal revenue; while the remaining 24,000,000 pay but \$2,415,000. It is, therefore, doing no injustice to the rural districts, but rather aiding them, to multiply facilities in the populous parts, as it is here that the surplus money is earned to make good the deficiency which always exists in running the mail through thinly settled portions of the country.

4th. No compulsory prepayment. The reason for this is, that stamps are often stolen, or drop off in the post-office, and it is thought too great a penalty to hold back a letter for this cause, which often proves of great value and importance to the parties concerned. The proposed penalty, therefore, for non-prepayment, is simply double postage. This has been thoroughly tested in England, and it is found that 97½ per cent of the letters are prepaid.

5th. Dead letters to be returned. This is done in England every six days, and when the name of the writer is on the seal or letter, they are returned to him unopened, instead of waiting six months, and then burned, as now practiced under our system. The number of dead letters in England is 5 to every 1,000, while in this country it is nearly 44 to 1,000.

This fact goes far to show the certainty, as well as promptness, of a system of free delivery.

6th. Post-office money-orders. The money-order system of England consists simply in a machinery which enables persons to transmit small sums, not exceeding \$25, through the medium of drafts from one post-office on another. It commenced in 1839, in which year the number of money-orders drawn was—

	No. of orders.	Amount.
1839 .....	188,921	\$1,565,628
1847 .....	4,081,185	39,515,886
1854 .....	5,466,242	52,321,059
1855 .....	5,807,412	55,046,400

The whole number of orders in 17 years was rising of 59,000,000, and the amount of money remitted was rising of \$577,000,000—a sum nearly equal to the valuation of Massachusetts in 1850. The system is there spoken of as a “gigantic auxiliary for carrying out the Penny Postage scheme,” and as a “necessity of their social fabric, as they facilitate trade and the comforts of society to an incalculable extent.” The amount of money transmitted in our mails is estimated at \$100,000,000 per year; of this, over \$2,000,000 finds its way into the dead letter office—to say nothing of the amount lost by fires, robberies, &c. The frequency of the latter is a subject of public concern. When it is considered that post-masters and their clerks form an army of 50,000 persons, with the temptation before them of purloining money, it can readily be seen that there are great facilities for demoralization, and that the money-order system, while it affords great facilities to the public, at the same time removes one of the main causes of temptation.

7th. Cheap ocean postage. It is well known that the cost of transit by water is the cheapest of all modes, and there is, therefore, no valid reason why ocean postage should be at higher rates than inland. The postage on ship letters used to be 6 cents; but when private parties, in connection with the government, conceived the idea of building up a steam marine, with as little expense as possible to the government, it was regarded as a *shrewd financial transaction* to raise as much of the amount required as possible by a tax on postage. Hence, the present rate of 24 cents.

That this rate is extortionary, will be sufficiently manifest in view of a few facts. A ton of freight by Train & Co's. packets averages about 20 shillings, or \$4; by the steamers it would be more. As letters average about 50 to the pound, a ton would make 112,000 letters. If we deduct even \$100 for transit and 7 mills for handling, we still have left \$1,360 for profit and contingencies. The amount of such profits may appear a little like homeopathic doses, but will, we submit, answer tolerably well when they come in showers, as must necessarily be the case between two such continents as Europe and America. Can a good reason be given why the transit of one ounce of paper across the Atlantic should cost more than a barrel of flour—an advance of 3,392 per cent? The London *Athenæum* has an article, commencing with the question, “Would ocean postage pay?” Among the points made is one which is thus quaintly stated:—

Compared with the charge for goods and passengers, the letter rate is enormously high. A man weighing 200 pounds—not to speak of his trunks, boxes,

portmanteaus—will take up at least ten times as much room as a bag of letters of equal weight. He will consume no small quantity of ducks, fowls, bread, wine, beer, and vegetables; he will expect to be served with attention night and day; he will claim a right to quarrel with the officers and abuse the captain; he will, perhaps, smoke and swear, and otherwise worry the passengers in the cabin—yet he will have to pay for all these luxuries only some £30; while a harmless bag of letters of equal weight, content with a dark corner and with being left alone, is mulcted for its simple transport from Broadway to St. George's Pier, more than £230! We now speak of the actual and the possible. If 200 weight of whims and wants, flesh and phantasies, besides luggage, can be taken from Liverpool to New York for £30, by the mail packets, surely a bale of letters, like a bale of cotton, may be carried for a third of the money.

We have thus gone through with the various points presented by the New York and Boston committee.

We beg leave, therefore, to submit the question to your candid judgment. To all who are satisfied that the facts presented make out a case which calls for the action of government upon the question, we invoke their aid, not only in signing a petition to Congress themselves, but in inducing their neighbors to do the same—male and female—for this is a question that concerns the female sex as well as the lords of creation. It is believed that of the letters written outside of business circles, those which relate to family and social circles, those written and received by mothers and sisters—to say nothing of those of a more delicate nature—a large proportion are by the female sex. We submit, therefore, that as it is a question which directly concerns their daily life and wants, it is perfectly legitimate for them to make known those wants to the assembled wisdom of the nation.

To the people of New England, and of Massachusetts in particular, it is, we submit, a question of paramount importance. While her children are going forth to plant her principles and institutions in all portions of the broad West, the facilities for holding intercourse with them should be as free and easy as any that exist in the civilized world.

When Rowland Hill first published his plan, the merchants were the first to lead off in the matter. They associated for the purpose of collecting and diffusing information, which aroused the British mind and affections, and thus prompted petitions, with over 38,000 names, to pour into the House of Commons the first year. They proceeded from Town Councils, Chambers of Commerce, Commissioners of Supply, insurance offices, printing offices, banks, charities, mechanics' institutes, &c., &c. Government gave these petitions, the first year, the cold shoulder. The next year the agitation increased, and the number of petitions exceeded 200,000. The demand was so universal that the government yielded to the popular wish, and in so doing, have done more to satisfy her people and to consolidate the British empire, than any other one act within a century.

What has made England in times past the great workshop, as well as the great carrier, of the world? Is it not her economical, industrial, social, and moral machinery, which have been in advance of her neighbors? Is not this the source of her wealth and power? Mr. Stephenson, one of her most eminent engineers, in a recent address, recapitulates some of her economies. Among them is that of railroads. He contends that if they were suspended, the same amount of traffic could not be carried on under a cost of \$300,000,000 yearly—a saving of \$200,000,000 per

annum. To the public, he says, "time is money;" and in point of time, a farther saving is effected, for on every journey of 12 miles an hour is saved to 11,000,000 of passengers, which is equal to 38,000 years in the life of a man working 8 hours per day. This, at 75 cents per day, amounts to some \$10,000,000 in addition. The same law of economy holds good when applied to the post-office.

Shall we, her children, fold our arms and leave to her, uncontested, the proud supremacy she now occupies in these respects? Is not such a postal system, fraught with such means of good to the human race, worth importing and establishing in this favored land?

To the citizens of the United States, we beg to submit this question.