



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

**SECOND REPORT**  
**OF**  
**THE POSTMASTER GENERAL,**  
**ON**  
**THE POST OFFICE.**

---

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.*

---



**LONDON:**  
**PRINTED BY GEORGE E. EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,**  
**PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.**  
**FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.**

**1856.**



# CONTENTS.

---

	Page
<b>EXTENSION OF INLAND SERVICE, IN 1855:—</b>	
Number of Post Offices - - - - -	7
Rural Posts - - - - -	7
Pillar letter boxes - - - - -	7
Free deliveries - - - - -	7
Morning delivery in London District - - - - -	8
District offices - - - - -	9
Public co-operation requisite for rapid sorting - - - - -	10
Day mails - - - - -	11
Accelerations - - - - -	11
Mails between London and the north of England, Ireland, and	
Scotland - - - - -	11
Other improvements in communication - - - - -	12
Conveyance of mails - - - - -	13
Distance travelled, and cost - - - - -	14
Post Office service as affected by railways - - - - -	14
 <b>NUMBER, WEIGHT, &amp;C., OF LETTERS, NEWSPAPERS, &amp;C. :—</b>	
Number of letters - - - - -	16
Valentines - - - - -	16
Correspondence of Army and Navy - - - - -	17
Returned letters - - - - -	18
Envelopes - - - - -	19
Weight of letters - - - - -	19
Number and weight of newspapers - - - - -	19
Number and weight of book packets - - - - -	19
 <b>MONEY ORDERS :—</b>	
Number of Money Order Offices - - - - -	20
Number of money orders, &c. - - - - -	20
Changes in Ireland - - - - -	21
Increased facilities - - - - -	21
Extension of money order system to the Army in the East, and	
to the Navy - - - - -	22
Great increase in the number of money orders at certain towns	
in England - - - - -	22
Payments in London - - - - -	22
Lapsed money orders - - - - -	22
Improvements in Chief Office - - - - -	22

	Page
<b>COLONIAL POSTS :—</b>	
Reduction in postage	23
Book post	23
Australian mails	24
Mails to the Cape of Good Hope	24
Reduction in inter-colonial postage	25
Postal improvements in colonies	25
<b>FOREIGN POSTS :—</b>	
Reduction in French postage	25
French book post	25
Contemplated new Conventions with Belgium, the German Postal Union, and Spain	25
Proposed reduction in postage to Madeira	26
General reduction of Foreign postage	26
Indian mail accelerated	26
American mail packets	26
<b>STAFF OF OFFICERS :—</b>	
Number of officers	26
New system of appointment and promotion	27
London letter carriers	27
General effect of new system	27
Examination of candidates for clerkships	29
Examination of candidates for the situation of letter carrier	29
Satisfactory result of allowing provincial Postmasters to appoint their own clerks	29
Letter carriers' uniform	30
Revision of Post Offices	30
Irregular applications for increase of salary or for promotion	30
Medical attendant	30
Health of officers	31
Improved dwellings for letter carriers	31
Life insurances	32
<b>REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE :—</b>	
Gross revenue	34
Apparent increase but real decrease	34
Discrepancy explained	34
Expenditure	35
Actual increase of expenditure	36
Chief causes of increased expenditure	36
Net revenue	37
Simplification of accounts	37
<b>MISCELLANEOUS :—</b>	
History of the Post Office	37
New code of rules	38
Postal guide	38

	Page
Regulation of clocks - - - - -	39
Money sent in unregistered letters - - - - -	39
Unfounded complaint of irregularities in the Post Office - - - - -	39
Letters posted without addresses - - - - -	39
Notice exhibited at each Post Office - - - - -	40
Improved arrangements at certain Post Offices - - - - -	40
Secure mode of sealing letters - - - - -	40
Circular to Surveyors - - - - -	40

## CONTENTS OF APPENDIX.

### APPENDIX A. :—

Extracts from a Report to the Secretary of the Post Office by a Committee of Officers, on the question of establishing District Sorting Offices and hourly deliveries in the Metropolis	41
---	----

### APPENDIX B. :—

Report by Mr. Edward Page, Inspector-General of Mails, on some points connected with the relations between the Post Office Department and Railway Companies - - - - -	45
---	----

### APPENDIX C. :—

Number, as nearly as can be estimated, of chargeable letters delivered in the United Kingdom in the year immediately preceding the first general reduction of Postage on the 5th of December 1839, and in each complete year subsequent thereto ; also (in the first year) the number of franks - - -	56
---	----

### APPENDIX D. :—

An account showing the gross and net Post Office revenue, and the cost of management, for the United Kingdom, for the year ending the 5th January 1838, and for each subsequent year - - - - -	57
--	----

### APPENDIX E. :—

An account of the amount of postage, &c., collected at certain cities and towns of the United Kingdom, including postage stamps sold by this department, and by the office of Inland Revenue and its agents, during the years 1854 and 1855 -	58
---	----

### APPENDIX F. :—

Number and amount of money orders issued and paid in the United Kingdom during the year ending the 5th January 1840 and each subsequent year ; being, as respects England, up to the 5th April 1847 inclusive, to a certain extent estimated - - - - -	59-60
--	-------

	Page
APPENDIX G. :—	
Postal communication with the Australian Colonies - -	61
APPENDIX H. :—	
Reply to a Memorial from a number of London letter carriers -	72
APPENDIX I. :—	
Medical officer's first periodical Report - - - -	74
APPENDIX J. :—	
Extracts from an historical summary of the Post Office in Scotland - - - - -	78
APPENDIX K. :—	
Unfounded complaints against the Post Office respecting the loss of letters - - - - -	81
APPENDIX L. :—	
Circular to Surveyors - - - - -	82

## SECOND REPORT.

To the Right Honourable the LORDS COMMISSIONERS  
of HER MAJESTY'S TREASURY.

MY LORDS,

I HAVE the honour to present to your Lordships the  
Second Annual Report on the Post Office, being that for  
the year 1855.

### Extension of Inland Service.

Last year the number of Post Offices in the United Kingdom was increased 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.

Number of Post  
Offices.

Further progress has been made in revising the postal arrangements of the rural districts. It is in these districts that many of the new Offices have been opened, and much additional accommodation has been afforded by the appointment of rural messengers, who collect and distribute letters at places too small to warrant the establishment of a Post Office.

Rural Posts.

In addition to these extensions of the system many pillar letter boxes have been put up, and have been found to afford much public accommodation. One advantage they afford is that collections can be made from them at hours when it would not be reasonable to expect any but regular Post-masters to be on duty.

Pillar Letter  
Boxes.

The experimental use of pillar letter boxes having fully succeeded, I intend soon largely to increase their number, especially in London.

Free deliveries were established last year at 1,327 places where none had formerly existed; and at 649 other places the free delivery was extended or otherwise improved.

Free deliveries.

The extent to which a free delivery has been provided at places which did not till lately enjoy this advantage is shown by the following table, containing the estimated number of letters now delivered free in the rural district



round each of the towns enumerated, for which it would formerly have been necessary either to send a messenger or to pay a gratuity to the postmaster:—

Surrounding Rural district.	Letters delivered free every week.
Southampton - - -	- 980
Greenock - - -	- 1,360
Tunbridge Wells - -	- 1,420
Colchester - - -	- 2,440
Huddersfield - - -	- 2,760
Norwich - - -	- 4,030
Halifax - - -	- 4,680

Morning  
delivery  
London Dis-  
trict.

An earlier morning delivery of General Post letters, which about two years ago was afforded to many places in the London District, that had not before that time enjoyed this advantage, was last year extended to Tottenham, Finchley, Edgware, Barnet, and several other places.

The early completion of the first daily delivery of letters in London has long been justly regarded as an object of great importance, comprising, as it does, the great bulk of the correspondence both from other parts of the United Kingdom and from foreign countries.

Contemplated  
improvements.

I hope that by the gradual introduction of various measures, the time for completing this important delivery throughout the metropolis may be eventually brought as early as 9 A.M.

It is most desirable, at the same time, to secure a more speedy transmission of letters between one part of London and another.

Requisite mea-  
sures.

For some time past measures have been in progress for attaining both these important ends, but the machinery involved is so extensive and complex that it is necessary to proceed with great caution, since any violent change might produce an amount of derangement which, however temporary, would interfere most seriously with the public convenience.

Thus one necessary preliminary was the union of the two corps of letter-carriers, district and general. This union implied a re-arrangement of the walks; since under the old system London had been differently divided with reference to the duties of each class, whilst neither mode of division was found suitable to the service when united.

An obvious consequence of such a change, affecting, as it did, not only the delivery but the sorting of the letters, was that, in the outset, the delivery underwent some delay. This inconvenience is not even yet quite removed.

In the Appendix\* will be found an extract from the Report of a Committee of Officers appointed to consider the details involved in the necessary changes.

The plan may be briefly described as follows:—

District Offices.

To remove the obstacles arising out of the enormous magnitude of London—obstacles constantly on the increase,—the whole metropolis has been divided into ten districts, and each district will be treated in many respects as a separate town. Thus, instead of all district post letters being carried, as at present, from the receiving-houses to the office in St. Martin's-le-Grand, there to be sorted and re-distributed, the letters will be carried to the principal office of the district in which they are posted, and being sorted there, will be distributed at once to the different districts to which they are directed.

It is obvious that this arrangement will, in many cases, greatly reduce the time of transmission. Thus a letter from Cavendish-square to Grosvenor-square, instead of travelling four or five miles, as at present, would go almost directly from one place to the other.

When this plan is brought fully into work, hourly deliveries will take place throughout the metropolis, thus bringing delay in the transmission of District Post letters almost to a minimum.

The chief obstacle encountered in the establishment of the district system is the want of suitable buildings; a want, however, which the Department is supplying as fast as circumstances allow.

This division of the metropolis into *quasi* different towns, in addition to its more obvious advantages, may be made materially to facilitate the acceleration of the delivery of General Post letters referred to above. To complete this acceleration, however, other extensive changes are required.

In the first morning delivery 481 letter-carriers are employed, each having his separate walk; consequently the letters have to be sorted into 481 distinct portions, according to the localities to which they are addressed. As it would be obviously impracticable to do this at once, the plan has long been to sort them first according to districts, the letters thus divided being subsequently subsorted for the walks by district sorters, who alone have the minute local knowledge required for this latter process.

Sorting of  
Letters before  
arrival in  
London.

It is obvious that to whatever extent the District sorting can be effected before the letters reach London, to a

\* Appendix, page 41.

corresponding extent the commencement of delivery may be hastened; and though, from what has been said above, it is clear that the subsorting must be done in London, yet the previous process may, at least with assistance from the public, be performed before the Mails reach London, viz., partly at the larger provincial offices, and partly on the railways.

If this can be effected, the bags, on reaching the London Stations, may be at once forwarded to their respective districts, and the letters, after being sub-sorted at the district offices, may be at once delivered by men already on the spot.

Thus it appears that, supposing these arrangements to be brought into successful operation, time will be saved in several different ways; and I confidently expect that the combined effect will be the completion of the delivery throughout London by the early hour named above, viz.: 9 a.m.

Public  
co-operation  
requisite for  
rapid sorting.

To secure so great an advantage, it is perhaps not unreasonable to hope that the public may be willing to give its ready co-operation.

The whole plan of acceleration in the delivery of the General Post letters depends upon the first assortment being effected previously to the arrival of the Mails.

As London will for postal purposes be in effect divided into ten towns, it is essential to the complete working of the plan, that the letters should be directed accordingly. For this purpose it would suffice, if to the address there were appended initial letters indicating the district, as N. for the Northern, S.W. for the South-western, &c., the public of course first receiving the necessary information, and all other aids being given.

To enable provincial correspondents to act on this suggestion, little more would be necessary than for London residents to append the initial letters, as above, to their own addresses. In many instances the address thus given would be shorter than at present. Thus, "Liverpool Street, Bishops-gate," might be reduced to "Liverpool Street, E.C." (Eastern Central District); and "Hill Street, Berkeley Square," to "Hill Street, W." (Western District).

Map of London  
District.

In the Appendix is a Map of the London District divided in accordance with the foregoing plan.

Duplicate  
names of  
streets.

This advantage might be greatly extended should the Metropolitan Board of Works, in the exercise of one of its powers, see fit to remedy the evil pointed out in the first

Annual Report on the Post Office,\* so far as to get rid of duplicate names when found in the same district.

In Edinburgh and Manchester the delivery of letters has been accelerated by the use of carriages for conveying the letter-carriers to the more distant parts of those cities. Accelerators.

During the past year 69 additional towns were provided with Day Mails either to or from the metropolis, and some of these with Mails in both directions. Day Mails.

By an acceleration of the Night Mail on the Great Western Railway, which took place last spring, an earlier arrival and later despatch of the London Mail were obtained for Plymouth, Falmouth, and other towns in the west. Accelerations.

In connexion with this measure a direct night communication (via Gloucester) was opened between the West of England and South Wales; and the uncertainty of the Aust Ferry passage across the Severn, the delays by which had given rise to frequent complaint, is avoided.

By means of additional sorting in the London Office during the night, and by the use of an early express train from Euston Square, colonial and foreign letters arriving in the night are conveyed several hours earlier than heretofore to Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester.

In June last an important acceleration was effected of the Night Mails between London, and the North of England, Ireland, and Scotland. By this measure a large addition was at many places made to the interval for replying to letters, an addition amounting at Dublin, Liverpool, Newcastle, Sheffield, and York to more than two hours; at Carlisle and Dumfries to more than three hours; at Edinburgh, Greenock, Perth, Aberdeen, and Inverness to more than four hours; and at Glasgow and Dundee to about five hours. Mails between London, the North of England, Ireland, and Scotland.

The exertions made by the various railway companies to perform their engagements with respect to the new and higher speed, were attended, at first, with much success. A reference to the mail guards' time bills for the month of June last shows that, under arrangements which insure a reasonable limitation of the weight of the train, it is perfectly practicable to maintain a satisfactory working of the Night Mail at the accelerated speed. Unfortunately, however, as the tide of passenger traffic incidental to the season of the year set in to the north, the correct working of these trains gradually fell off, until at length the arrival of the Night Mail at the principal towns in Scotland became so irregular

as to require from the Post Office serious and repeated remonstrances.

A long correspondence ensued between this Department and the London and North Western, Lancaster and Carlisle, and Caledonian Companies; that on the side of the Companies consisting in assurances that no exertions should be spared by them to improve the working of the trains and to restore regularity; and it is but just to state that, short of adopting the suggestion of the Post Office, that a second night passenger train should be established throughout between London and Edinburgh and Glasgow, for the purpose of relieving the Mail train of the excessive traffic, these promises have been faithfully kept.

As the end, however, still remained unattained, the Department renewed its proposal, either that the Night Mail train should be run *special* (without passengers) or that the number of carriages in the train should be strictly limited.

To the former of these arrangements the conditional assent of the three companies concerned was ultimately given; and I hope that this improvement (for which the Post Office is of course prepared to give fair remuneration) will shortly be brought into operation.

With a light train, whether special or limited, I confidently expect that the promised speed will be fully attained, and that with regularity and safety.

Mutual penalties for preventing irregularities.

Reference was made in the last Report to a proposal to certain railway companies, in order to ensure greater regularity in the arrival of the Mails, to establish a system of mutual penalties, under which, according as the cause of delay in any case rested with the company or with this Department, the party in fault should pay a fine to the other; an inducement to enter into the covenant being held out by the offer that for every punctual arrival the company should receive, in the way of premium, a payment beyond that which had been fixed as a fair remuneration for the service. At the time the Report was presented, however, the proposal had nowhere been accepted; but the North British Railway Company having since signified their acquiescence, measures are in progress, as regards their line, for carrying the plan into effect.

North of Ireland, and south-west of Scotland.

An improvement has been made in the postal communication from the north of Ireland to the south-west of Scotland; thereby affording increased facilities in relation to the large iron and coal trade between those districts.

Allusion was made in the last Report to measures in progress for improving the Mail communication with the Isle of Man and on the Clyde. The first of these improvements has been carried into effect, but the measures with reference to the Clyde have not hitherto become permanent, owing to the inability of the contractors to perform their engagement.

A contract has just been entered into for the regular conveyance of the Mail by steam to the Orkney Islands, the packet to run daily in summer and thrice a week in winter, in lieu of occasional steam communication supplemented by a sailing boat.

Increased use has been made of several of the railways.

By means of the establishment of an additional express Mail train from London to Dover, of the reduction in the time allowed for the sea-service, and of an acceleration of the Mail train from Calais to Paris (an arrangement which met with the ready co-operation of the French Post Office), a much later dispatch from London of the Day Mail to France has been afforded, the time being now as late as 1.30 p.m.

This change, besides affording to the merchants of London the opportunity of replying the same morning to letters from France received by the Night Mail, admits of letters from Scotland, Ireland, and the north and south-west of England, which arrive in London by the Day Mail, being sent forward by the Day Mail to France, instead of being detained as previously for the Night Mail.

In connexion with the express train to Dover the Day Mail to towns on the South Eastern Railway has been rendered more convenient to the public.

An arrangement has been made for improving the postal communication between Waterford and Cork, Limerick, and other towns in the south-west of Ireland; and measures of a yet more important character are under consideration for accelerating the Mails between that kingdom and England.

Experience having confirmed the advantages to be derived from the use of travelling Post Offices, several additional offices of this kind have been provided. Much greater use also has been made of the apparatus for exchanging Mail bags on railways.

Exclusive of conveyance by steam-vessels and boats, and not counting the walks of letter-carriers and rural messengers, or the carriage of the Mails from Post Offices to railway stations, the whole distance over which Mails are now conveyed within the United Kingdom is nearly 59,000

Isle of Man and Clyde.

Orkney Islands.

Increased use of railways.  
Improved Day Mail to France.

Irish Mails.

Travelling Post Offices.

Conveyance of Mails.

miles per week day, being about 2,000 miles more than at the end of 1854. This increase is wholly in railway conveyance. It will be seen, however, by the subjoined table, that more than half the duty is still performed by coaches and Mail carts.

	Mails conveyed by Railways				Mails conveyed by Coaches, &c.			
	Number of Miles per Week Day.	Average Charge per Mile.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Number of Miles per Week Day.	Average Charge per Mile.	Maximum.	Minimum.
ENGLAND - -	21,069	s. d. 0 9½	s. d. 4 10	d. ½	19,371	d. 2½	s. d. 0 10½	d. Exemption from Tolls.
IRELAND - -	2,503	1 5½	4 6	½	7,293*	2	0 8	½
SCOTLAND - -	3,537	0 8½	3 2	½	5,003	2½	0 6½	½
UNITED KINGDOM	27,109	0 10	4 10	½	31,667	2½	0 10½	Exemption from Tolls.

Much misapprehension apparently prevails with regard to the effects produced upon the Post Office service by railways.

Postal effects  
of railways.

Undoubtedly great advantage has arisen from the employment of railways in respect of rapid conveyance. Between districts which, even in the best days of the Mail Coach system, were, postally speaking, two days apart, the letters now pass in a single night.

The facilities thus afforded to commerce, and to the business of life in general, can hardly be exaggerated, nor is there any doubt that they have tended largely to increase the amount of postal correspondence; while in return cheap postage has equally tended to increase railway traffic.

Again, the service has been most materially promoted by the introduction of travelling Post Offices, i.e., carriages in which the Mail bags are opened and made up, the letters being assorted while the train is in progress; an arrangement which not only obviates the necessity of the stoppages which would otherwise be required at certain "forward" offices, but has greatly tended to reduce the number of Mail bags and accounts, and to simplify the whole system.

Against these great advantages, however, there is an important set-off in increased expense; for, strange as it

\* The corresponding number of miles in the Report for 1854, was, by an error, much overstated.

may seem, that change which to the public at large has so much reduced the charge for the conveyance, whether of persons or of goods, has had precisely the reverse effect as respects the conveyance of Mails.

No doubt this result is attributable partly to the necessity for running certain Mail trains at hours unsuitable for passenger traffic; but even when the Post Office uses the ordinary trains established by the companies for their own purposes, the rate of charge, especially considering the regularity and extent of custom, is almost always higher than that made to the public for like services.

It is important that these facts should be correctly understood,—especially by those who may have to arbitrate between the Post Office and the railway companies,—because from time to time great efforts have been made to represent the service as underpaid.

The total payments to the Companies for the year 1854 were 392,600*l.*, which, it may be observed, exceeds by 83,000*l.* the 5 per cent. passenger tax for the same period.

The above points are fully discussed in an able Report by Mr. Edward Page (Inspector General of Mails), which will be found at page 45 of the Appendix.

To this Report I would also refer for an investigation of the claims frequently made by the railway companies for compensation, on the ground of alleged injury by the Book Post. The Report clearly shows:—

1st. That the service which is alleged to be an injury, is, in reality, a benefit.

2nd. That, even if it were otherwise, the law relieving newspapers from the compulsory stamp must have had the effect of transferring from the Mail bags to the companies' vans a weight of newspapers many times exceeding that which the Book Post is erroneously alleged to have withdrawn from the companies' vans to the Mail bags.\*

In reference to the general question of payments by the Post Office for railway service, I think it well to call attention to a fact mentioned by Mr. Rowland Hill, in his evidence in the early part of the year, before the Committee of the House of Commons on Irish postal arrangements;

Holyhead  
Railway.

---

\* As nearly as it can be estimated it appears that while the whole number of Book Packets conveyed annually by the Post Office is probably overstated at three millions, the number of newspapers passing through the Post has decreased by about 25 millions, or by more than eight times the number of all the Book Packets. Besides this reduction in number there has been a decrease in the average weight of the newspapers sent through the Post, and the combined effect of these changes has been to reduce the total weight of the newspapers by an amount more than nine times as great as the total weight of all the Book Packets.



viz. : that at least one half of the sum of 30,000*l.* per annum, paid to the Chester and Holyhead Railway, is in excess of the sum which would probably be awarded by arbitrators; and is given in accordance with a Treasury minute on the subject, made at the time this railway was projected, to facilitate the intercourse with Ireland.

### Number and Weight of Letters, Newspapers, &c.

Number of  
Letters.

The following table shows the number of chargeable letters delivered in the United Kingdom during the last year, with the rate of increase, and the proportion of letters to population.\*

	Number of Letters in 1855.	Increase per Cent. on Number in 1854.	Proportion of Letters to Population.
ENGLAND - - -	368 millions.	About 2½	About 19 to each person.
IRELAND - - -	42 "	" 2½	" 7 "
SCOTLAND - - -	46 "	" 4½	" 15 "
UNITED KINGDOM -	456 "	" 3	" 16 "

As compared with last year this number shows an increase of 13 millions; and as compared with the last year before the introduction of the Penny Postage (1839), an increase of 380 millions, or exactly six-fold.

During the last five years the rate of increase in letters as compared in each case with the number in the preceding year, has been as follows:

	per Cent.
1851 - - -	4
1852 - - -	5½
1853 - - -	8½
1854 - - -	8
1855 - - -	2¾
Average about	5½

Valentines.

The number of Valentines passing through the Post Office every year, as shown by the increase in the number of letters

\* This table is to some extent an estimate, being the result of a calculation founded on a record of the actual number of letters delivered in one week of each month in the year. At page 56 in the Appendix will be found a statement of the number of letters in each year since 1838.

in Valentine week, is upwards of 800,000. The largest proportion is in England and Scotland, and in both these parts of the kingdom the number is increasing, but in Ireland it is on the decrease.

Of the whole number of letters nearly a quarter are delivered in London and the suburban district; and counting those also which are despatched, nearly half the letters pass through the London Office.

The number of letters given in the foregoing statements includes colonial and foreign as well as inland letters; though even in the aggregate the colonial and foreign letters delivered in the United Kingdom form but a small fraction, not more than about one fiftieth, of the whole number of letters.

Of the increase of 13 millions last year in the number of letters, about 300,000 were in letters from Australia; about 150,000 in letters from the East Indies; about 70,000 from Canada; about 340,000 from France; and about 340,000 also from Prussia; owing chiefly in the latter case to the letters from our fleet in the Baltic coming through Prussia.

In the letters from the United States there was a decrease of more than 500,000, owing probably to the diminished frequency of postal communication caused by the withdrawal, for the purposes of war, of some of the mail packets. The increase in the number of letters from Canada might seem scarcely consistent with such explanation; since the less frequency of postal communication applied to both cases. In that of Canada, however, there was a large reduction in the rate of postage, while there was no such reduction as respects the United States.

Reference was made in the last Report to the large number of letters passing between our soldiers on the shores of the Black Sea and their families and friends at home; but great as was the number in 1854, it was still greater last year, as will be seen by the following Table; which is exclusive of ship letters and of letters from persons engaged in the Transport Service:—

Correspondence  
with the Army  
and Navy.

LETTERS *vid* FRANCE.

Year.	To the Army and Navy.	From the Army and Navy.	Total to and from the Army and Navy.
8 months, 1854 -	282,000	325,000	607,000
12 months, 1855 -	762,858	1,198,853	1,961,711

Thus it appears that last year, through France alone, nearly two millions of letters passed between the people of this country and Her Majesty's Army and Navy in the East; a number greater than that which passed during the same time between the United Kingdom and the East Indies or Australia, or any foreign country, except France, and the United States; the inhabitants of these latter countries, with the English families residing there, being the only people who last year exchanged with us a larger number of letters than our Army and Navy in the East.

With reference to the number of returned, mis-sent, or re-directed letters, Mr. Scudamore, Chief Examiner in the Receiver and Accountant General's Office, makes, in his able Report, the following statement:—"In the year 1838 the postage on returned, mis-sent and re-directed letters amounted to  $4\frac{1}{4}$  per cent on the gross revenue of the Post Office of Great Britain. In the year 1841 (the second after the adoption of Penny Postage), it had fallen to  $2\frac{1}{4}$  per cent.; in the year 1852 it had fallen to one per cent, and in the year ending 31st March 1855 it was only three quarters per cent. on the gross revenue of the Post Office of Great Britain for that year. It is but fair to say, that the reduction in the number of returned, mis-sent and re-directed letters, is mainly due to the improvement of the system, though it may be due partly to the increased intelligence of the writers, and partly to the fact, that letters are not now (as in the days of heavy postage) written merely to be looked at, and refused by the parties to whom they are addressed."

Returned Letters.

Last year the number of returned letters, that is, of letters which were sent to the Dead Letter Office and returned to the writers in consequence of the attempts to deliver them having failed, was nearly 2,400,000, or about one-half per cent. on the whole number of letters posted.

The number of newspapers sent to the Dead Letter Office last year was nearly 600,000.

The population in the Colonies being more scattered and less settled than that of the mother country, the proportion of returned letters there appears to be much greater than with us. Especially does this seem to be the case in Victoria; for while the whole number of letters sent to that Colony last year was about 350,000, more than 42,000, or about 12 per cent., were returned, as undelivered and not applied

for. This is the more remarkable, as nearly 40,000 of these letters had been pre-paid, and nearly 1,500 had even been registered.

Of nearly 2,000,000 letters sent to the United States last year, more than 103,000, or about five per cent., were returned; but of these the great majority had been posted *unpaid*.

Of about 2,300,000 letters sent to France last year, 37,000, or about one and a half per cent., were returned; about two-thirds of them having been posted unpaid.

The proportion of letters sent in envelopes is still increasing, and is now, as respects Inland letters, as much as 93 per cent.; and even in the case of Colonial and Foreign letters, 71 per cent. Envelopes.

Excluding official packets, the average weight of an Inland letter, or packet paying the full letter rate, is between a quarter and a third of an ounce; that of a Colonial letter rather more than a third of an ounce; and that of a Foreign letter rather less than a quarter of an ounce. Weight of Letters.

The abolition of the stamp duty on newspapers, and the substitution of a postage charge, have caused a decrease of about one-fourth in the number of newspapers posted; nevertheless (retransmissions included,) there are still posted about 71 millions of newspapers per annum, or nearly 200,000 every day. Of these much the larger portion still bear the impressed stamp. Newspapers.

It appears by information obtained from the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, that about 93,000*l.* was received between the 30th June last (when the compulsory newspaper stamp was abolished) and the 31st December for impressed stamps to enable newspapers to pass free through the post; and during the same time about 25,000*l.* was received for postage labels employed for the same purpose. These sums, which together amount to about 118,000*l.* for the half year, or to 236,000*l.* for a year, show a loss, as compared with the amount of the former newspaper stamp duty, of about 242,000*l.*; or of rather more than one half.

The average weight of the newspapers which pass through the Post Office is now about three ounces each; this average having decreased, since the abolition of the newspaper stamp, by about half an ounce.

**Book Packets.**

The number of book packets, exclusive of newspapers, which now 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. Concurrently, however, with this increase in number there has been a decrease in the average weight per packet from ten ounces to four and a half ounces; so that the increase in the total weight is less than 70 per cent.

To a considerable extent the book packets consist of tradesmen's circulars and catalogues; which, when more than half an ounce in weight, can now be forwarded most cheaply as book packets. This term is used to comprehend all printed matter, except newspapers bearing an impressed stamp.

As already stated, about half the letters of the whole kingdom pass through the London Office. As London is the chief place of publication, it is probable that a yet larger portion of the book packets pass through this Office; but, assuming the proportion to be the same as with letters, the whole number of book packets posted in the United Kingdom is now at the rate of about 3,000,000 per annum.

The great increase in number is chiefly attributable to a large reduction in postage made last summer; the present charge being only one penny for four ounces; but in part also to the extension of the Inland Book Post to the British Forces engaged in the war, and to the Foreign Legion stationed at Heligoland.

**Money Orders.****Money Order  
Offices.**

Including five branches in large towns, 63 new Money Order Offices were opened last year, making a total of 1,935.

Ten years ago there were only 1,280 Money Order Offices in the United Kingdom.

**Number of  
Money Or-  
ders, &c.**

The subjoined tables show the number of Money Orders issued during the year, with other particulars.\*

---

\* In order to avoid the delay which is necessary for completing, in all particulars, the financial accounts of the year, the sums given in this Report, whether relating to Money Orders or to the General Revenue and Expenditure, are, in part, the result of estimate; but it is believed that any error which may exist is so slight as to be scarcely appreciable. At page 59 in the Appendix is a statement of the number of Money Orders issued in each year since 1839.

—	Number of Money Orders issued.	Amount.			Increase per Cent.	Profit after deducting Expenses.	Proportion of Money Orders issued to Population.
		£	s.	d.		£	
ENGLAND and WALES	4,901,316	9,403,104	5	6	5	20,514	1 to about 4 persons
IRELAND - - -	444,720	753,560	2	8	9	Loss 957	1 " 14 "
SCOTLAND - - -	461,376	852,615	4	0	4½	695	1 " 7 "
UNITED KINGDOM -	5,807,412	11,009,279	12	2	5½	20,252	1 " 5 "

ANNUAL INCREASE in the Amount received for MONEY Orders issued in the last Five Years, as compared in each case with the Amount received in the Year preceding.

Year.	ENGLAND and WALES.	IRELAND.	SCOTLAND.	UNITED KINGDOM.
1851	About 4½	About 4½	About 1½	About 4½
1852	" 7½	" 1½	" 1½	" 6½
1853	" 5½	" 1	" 4½	" 5½
1854	" 5½	" 4½	" 8½	" 5½
1855	" 5	" 9	" 4½	" 5½
	per cent. increase.	per cent. increase.	per cent. increase.	per cent. increase.

Total Profit or Loss in each of the last eight years :—

	Profit.	Loss.
	£	£
1848	- - -	- - 5,745
1849	- 322	
1850	- 3,236	
1851	- 7,437	
1852	- 10,689	
1853	- 14,149	
1854	- 16,167	
1855	- 20,252	

It appears that while the number of Orders issued in Ireland has increased, the number paid in Ireland has diminished ; also, that the Orders granted in Ireland are generally for larger sums than heretofore. Changes in Ireland.

These facts afford additional evidence of the greater facilities now existing in that part of the empire for obtaining lucrative employment, and of the consequently diminished tendency to seek employment in England.

Increased facilities have been afforded for obtaining Money Orders by dispensing with certain precautions which experience has shown to be unnecessary. Increased facilities.

How far it may be owing to these greater facilities I cannot say ; but it appears that the number of Money Orders

issued in the last quarter of 1855 was not only greater than that in any previous quarter of this or any other year, but showed a more rapid rate of increase than at any previous time.

Extension of  
Money Order  
system to  
Army in the  
East;

In the latter part of the year arrangements were made for extending the Money Order system to our Army in the East, so as to give our soldiers a ready means of sending money to their families; but as yet there has scarcely been time for remittances to arrive.\*

and to Navy.

Arrangements have also been made, and will shortly come into operation, for enabling all sailors on foreign service to send money home by means of Money Orders obtainable through the paymaster of the ship in which each man may be serving.

Great increase  
in number of  
Money Orders  
at certain  
towns in  
England.

So great has been the increase of Money Order business at some towns, that at Liverpool nearly twice as many Orders were issued and paid in the single month of December last, as in the whole of the year 1840, while at Birmingham the corresponding increase is even fourfold.

Payments in  
London.

One-tenth part of all the Money Order payments in England and Wales in December last was made at the Chief Office in London.

Lapsed Orders.

A curious illustration of the pertinacity of a careless habit in individuals is afforded by the fact, that while of the ordinary class of Money Orders issued, only 1 in 837 is allowed to lapse from neglect in presentation, nevertheless, of those orders which, though being too late in the first instance, are renewed for a certain period on the payment of a second commission, 1 in 39 is again overlooked, and allowed to lapse.

Improvements  
in Chief Office.

In concluding his report, Mr. Jackson, the Controller of the Money Order Office states as follows:—

“ With reference to the alterations in the system of Money Order accounts recommended by the Commissioners, and which commenced 1st January 1855, I beg to say that they have been fully carried out, and it is with much pleasure I am enabled to state they have in every respect answered; and although these changes have been accompanied by a steady and constant increase in the business of the Office, the work has proceeded most satisfactorily.”

The alteration in the system of accounts referred to by Mr. Jackson, dispensed with the labour of 21 clerks, and

---

\* March 17th. The system has now been in operation about eight weeks, and the money received in this country already amounts to more than 13,000*l*.

this after previous simplifications originating in the department which had produced a saving of labour equal to that of 75 clerks.

Owing, however, to the constantly increasing business of the Department, improvement, even when it economises labour, is not attended with the painful duty of discarding officers. The difficulty is met by simply omitting to fill up vacancies.

### Colonial Posts.

During the last year the low uniform rate of Postage Reduced Postage. between the mother country and the colonies has been applied to Tasmania, Sierra Leone, and Turk's Islands, and on the 1st of February it will be extended to the East Indies.

The Government of the Cape of Good Hope has not yet signified its acquiescence in the measure; but as its attention has again been drawn to the subject, I hope that before long the correspondence of that colony will participate in these advantages.

In May last, it was ascertained that the Government of Victoria, which, it was understood, had adopted the measure, had not really carried it into effect; that a heavy inland rate was still levied in the colony upon all letters forwarded to England; and that no steps had been taken towards the collection of the postage due to the mother country upon unpaid letters despatched to the colony.

It became necessary, therefore, to re-impose the former rate of postage on letters for Victoria, and to collect it in advance. Subsequently, however, information was received that the Colonial Government had adopted the proposed arrangements, and in November the low uniform rate of postage, with optional prepayment, was re-established.

In a few days the uniform postage of 6*d.* the half ounce, on letters to or from the mother country, will extend to all the colonies, except the following :—

Ascension.	Mauritius.
Cape of Good Hope.	Natal.
Falkland Islands.	New Zealand.
Gambia.	Vancouver's Island, and
Labuan.	Western Australia.

The colonial Book Post has been extended to South Aus- Book Post. tralia, Sierra Leone, and Western Australia, and a Book Post between colony and colony (so far as relates to the



colonies under the postal control of Her Majesty's Postmaster General) will commence on the 1st April next.

The following colonies have not yet availed themselves of our offer to establish a Book Post with the mother country :—

Victoria.	Gambia.
Tasmania.	Labuan.
Natal.	Turk's Islands, and
Falkland Islands.	Vancouver's Island.

The privileges of the Book Post to the colonies have, in several respects, been assimilated with those of the Inland Book Post, and thereby extended.

**Australian  
Mails.**

The General Screw Steam Shipping Company having relinquished their contract for the conveyance of mails to Australia, and the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company having suspended the branch service which they had contracted to perform between Australia and Singapore, owing to several of their ships being required by Government for the conveyance of warlike stores, a communication twice a month with the Australian colonies was maintained last year by clipper ships, the owners of which entered into contracts to perform the service in a given number of days, subject to penalties for delay of sailing or for excess of time on the voyage.

Similar contracts have been entered into for the present year, but only for the outward Mails, as the contractors declined to undertake the regular conveyance of those homeward. The latter Mails, however, the Colonial Postmasters will be able, without difficulty, to forward (though probably not at fixed times) by private ships.

The contracts are terminable at any time on six weeks' notice, so as to allow the Imperial Government, in conjunction with the Colonial Governments, to conclude arrangements for the re-establishment of steam communication between the United Kingdom and the Australian Colonies, in accordance with the principles laid down in a Treasury Minute on this subject, given at page 61 in the Appendix.

At first the contracts by sailing clippers were for the conveyance of a Mail once a month only, but about seven months ago an arrangement was made for dispatching the Mails twice a month.

**Cape of Good  
Hope.**

Measures are in progress for re-establishing steam communication with the Cape of Good Hope.

The sea postage for the conveyance of letters between two British colonies or a British colony and a foreign port has, with few exceptions, been reduced to a uniform charge of 4*d.* the half ounce.

Reduction in Postage between colony and colony.

The heavy charges made by the railway company for the conveyance of newspapers across the Isthmus of Panama, have rendered it necessary to raise the postage upon all newspapers sent by that route; but negotiations are in progress for the purpose of obtaining a reduction of these charges.

Isthmus of Panama.

I hoped to be able to include in the present Report a series of returns on the postal improvements in the colonies, like those in the last Report, showing the improvements in foreign countries; but, although the requisite forms were sent out to all the colonies, in what seemed ample time, in many cases the returns are not yet made.

Postal improvements in colonies.

## Foreign Posts.

The reduction made, in the beginning of last year, in the postage on letters between this country and France, has been followed by a large increase of correspondence, amounting, exclusive of the augmentation of letters during the Great Exhibition in Paris, to about one-fourth of the whole.

Reduction in French Postage.

Towards the end of the year an agreement was made for extending the advantage of low rates of postage between this country and France to books, newspapers, and other printed matter. The plan adopted is for the government of each country to charge such postage as it may think proper on all printed matter sent therefrom, and to retain the money so collected, but to pay to the Government of the other country a certain moderate rate per pound on the weight in bulk of the printed matter so dispatched, the packets on reaching their destination being delivered without further charge.

French Book Post.

This arrangement came into operation on the first of this month, and has already led to a considerable increase in the number of books transmitted, although not, as yet, to any material alteration in the number of newspapers, the public being probably not yet fully alive to the fact that, as a general rule, the postage, now wholly paid in advance, is less than the former postage paid chiefly on delivery.

New conventions with Belgium, German Postal Union, and Spain.

New postal conventions, having for their object a reduction and simplification of charges, are in progress with Belgium, the German Postal Union, and Spain.

A proposal has been made to the Government of Portugal, with a view to a reduction in both the British and

Reduction in Postage to Madeira.

Portuguese postage on letters between this country and Madeira.

General Reduction of Foreign Postage.

I know it is your Lordships' desire, and it is one in which I fully concur, that the postage between the United Kingdom and every foreign country both on letters and printed matter should be moderate; but of course the arrangements necessary for the complete attainment of this desirable end, depend in a great degree upon the assent and co-operation of other Governments.

Indian Mail accelerated.

By the completion of the French Railway to Marseilles, the Mails to Turkey, the Crimea, the Levant, and India have been accelerated.

American Packets.

The British contractors for the North American Mail Packets, who had been obliged to reduce their service from once a week to once a fortnight, in consequence of several of their steam ships being required by the exigencies of the war, have been enabled to restore the former footing, and Mails will henceforth be despatched every Saturday from Liverpool by steamers proceeding alternately to New York and Boston; but the Mails to South America, which before the war broke out were forwarded every fortnight, are still sent only once a month.

### Staff of Officers.

Number of Officers.

The number of officers and servants of the Department, exclusive of 171 in the colonies, and of agents in foreign countries, is as follows:—

Postmaster General	-	-	-	1
Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, and	}			5
Secretaries for Ireland and Scotland				
Surveyors	-	-	-	13
Other superior Officers; <i>i. e.</i> Heads of	}			17
Departments, Chief Clerks, &c.				
Postmasters	-	-	-	10,498
Clerks, &c.	-	-	-	1,519*
Guards	-	-	-	180
Letter-carriers, Messengers, &c.	-	-	-	10,314
				<hr/>
				22,547

Of the above staff about 2,800 are attached to the Chief Office in London.

\* This number is exclusive of persons whose time is partially occupied in the service of the Department, but who are not regularly appointed officers, being engaged at the discretion of the Postmasters, to whom an allowance is made for that purpose.

So far as the test of time has yet been applied, the new system of appointment and promotion recommended by the Treasury Commissioners—concurred in by my predecessor, and adopted by your Lordships about a year and a half ago,—has operated very beneficially; so beneficially indeed, that the Commissioners are entitled to the gratitude of the whole Department; and I may add that indirectly they have conferred an important benefit on the country at large.

*New system of appointment and promotion.*

Complaints have, indeed, been made, notwithstanding the liberal manner in which the change was effected; but many of these complaints have come from persons who, under the present improved plan of appointment, would never have been admitted into the service, and whose withdrawal would certainly be a great relief. Still, as it would be cruel to dismiss them, however unfortunate may have been their original appointment, I purpose to retain them in the service, excepting of course any that may forfeit their claim to consideration by misconduct.

In some instances, voluntary resignation has followed the loss of all hope of obtaining preferment except by merit.

Erroneous reports having appeared in some of the newspapers regarding the London letter-carriers, I have inserted in the Appendix\* a copy of the reply which under my directions was made by the Controller of the Circulation Department to such of the letter-carriers as signed the memorial respecting alleged grievances.

*London Letter-carriers.*

The general effect of the new system has been greater energy and increased efficiency.

*General effect of new system.*

In the Circulation Department there has not yet been time to give the new arrangements (which involve a reconstruction of the classes according to qualification and efficiency) a fair trial; but the following statements will shew the working of the system in other departments:—

Mr. Scudamore, Chief Examiner in the Receiver and Accountant General's office, addressing the head of his department, says, "The Cashier and the Book-keeper have desired me to add to my own their expressions of satisfaction with the conduct of the officers in our respective branches. Last year your attention was drawn to the officers employed in the examination of Postmasters' accounts, and to the great mass of work performed by them, and also by the officers in the Book-keepers' branch. It is needless for me to add that the same amount of work

\* Appendix, page 72.

“ is still performed by them ; but I wish to direct your  
 “ attention to certain items of the work performed in the  
 “ Expenditure branch and in the Cashier’s branch.

“ In the expenditure branch upwards of 13,000 Payment  
 “ Warrants (exclusive of Salary Warrants) and each having  
 “ a corresponding account, were prepared and issued in the  
 “ year 1855.

“ In the Cashier’s branch upwards of 118,000 remittance  
 “ letters were received from Postmasters in the year 1855,  
 “ being an increase of about 10,000 on the letters of the  
 “ previous year.

“ It is, of course, well known to you that the amount of  
 “ money which passes through the Expenditure and Cash  
 “ branches of this office on Revenue and Money Order  
 “ account is quite independent of the Gross Revenue of the  
 “ Post Office, and that changes which do not increase the  
 “ Revenue, but only hasten the collection of it, very greatly  
 “ increase the work of this Office.

“ As an evidence of the amount of work performed in  
 “ certain branches of your Office, and of the increased  
 “ activity of those who collect and distribute the Revenue,  
 “ I will add that in the year 1854 there passed through  
 “ your Office, on Revenue and Money Order accounts,  
 “ upwards of 4,685,000*l.*, and in the year 1855 up-  
 “ wards of 4,986,000*l.*, being an increased circulation of  
 “ 301,000*l.*”

Mr. Jackson, Controller of the Money Order Office in  
 London, states:—“ My own endeavours have been ably  
 “ seconded by those of my chief clerk and the first-class  
 “ clerks; and indeed the whole body of officers have shown  
 “ the utmost zeal and industry throughout the year. Much  
 “ good has already arisen, and I feel confident the best  
 “ results may be expected from the present admirable  
 “ system of promotion, which so fully provides for the  
 “ advancement of those who merit it, and there can be no  
 “ doubt that the preliminary examination to which can-  
 “ didates are subjected, has supplied a more efficient  
 “ class of probationary clerks than was the case pre-  
 “ viously.”

Mr. Long, Accountant in the Dublin Office, reports:—“ I  
 “ am strongly of opinion that the efficiency of this Depart-  
 “ ment under the present arrangements will permit hereafter  
 “ an increase of business to be performed without an addition  
 “ being made to its present force.”

In a subsequent part of his report Mr. Long speaks more specifically of the good results of the plan of probation before appointment, of the re-arrangements of the classes according to efficiency, of an augmentation of the salaries, and of the adoption of the principle of promotion by merit.

Mr. Lang, Controller of the Circulation Department in the Edinburgh Office, states:—"It affords me satisfaction to be able to add, that the revision of this Department, which took place in April last, has been attended with success and manifest advantage to the public service. Also, that the system of promotion by merit, then introduced, has animated officers of all grades with a measure of zeal which has contributed greatly to their efficiency."

Mr. Beaufort, one of the English Surveyors, reports:—"The great feature of the past year is the new system, comprising appointment by examination of candidates, progressive payments, and promotion by merit; although but partially carried out at present, its effects are already strikingly apparent, in giving a higher tone to the service, inducing steadiness and good conduct, and inciting men to an honourable rivalry."

"The appointment of officers of merit to the higher Postmasterships has been attended with very beneficial results in my District, and the employment of Postmasters in establishing and regulating subordinate offices,—duties formerly done by the Surveyor in person,—is found to work well in every respect where the Postmasters are competent men."

Of 22 candidates for Clerkships in the London Office, last year, 11 were, on examination, appointed, and 11 were rejected; and of 8 candidates in Dublin, 4 were appointed and 4 rejected. Examination of candidates for Clerkships.

Of 431 candidates for the situation of Letter Carrier in London, 313 were appointed and 118 rejected; and there was a similar proportion in Dublin; but in Edinburgh the proportion of rejections was larger, although the examination there is not at all more strict. Letter Carriers.

The arrangement for allowing provincial Postmasters to appoint their own Clerks having been found to work satisfactorily, in securing the selection of better qualified officers, and rendering it practicable and just to hold the Postmasters to a higher degree of responsibility, it is my intention to take another step in the same direction, by giving to the Clerks appointed by provincial Postmasters.

Postmasters of the larger towns the choice of their Letter Carriers.

Preliminary Reports.

Before the appointment of any Clerk under this arrangement is confirmed, the Postmaster is required to make a written report on the candidate's age, character, and qualifications, accompanied with a specimen of his writing and power of calculation, together with a medical certificate respecting his health and constitution; and I shall lay down a similar regulation with regard to Letter Carriers. As respects both provincial Clerks and Letter Carriers also, I intend to make the appointment, in the first instance, probationary only, to depend for ultimate confirmation on the receipt of a satisfactory report at the end of six months; as is the case in the Metropolitan Offices.

Letter Carriers' Uniform.

The Letter Carriers, in several of the larger provincial towns, have been dressed in uniform, like those in London; an alteration which has been found not only to promote their general comfort, but to prevent loitering and neglect of duty.

Revision of Post Offices.

The revision of the offices in Edinburgh and Dublin, and at Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol, and Glasgow, mentioned in the First Annual Report, has been carried into effect; and similar revisions have been completed at Bath, Birmingham, Gateshead, Hull, Nottingham, Plymouth, Sheffield, and other towns. Considerable progress also has been made in revising the other chief provincial Post Offices.

Irregular applications for increase of salary or promotion.

In accordance with the rule that experience had shown to be necessary in the Customs and Inland Revenue Departments, it is now a regulation of the Post Office that no person in its service shall make an application for increase of salary or promotion except through his immediate Official Superior; with a provision, however, that if an officer have good ground for believing that his application has not been duly considered, he may write direct to the Postmaster General.

Officers who infringe this rule will be liable to punishment. It is most important in every way to make the officers of the department feel that they must rely entirely on their own exertions and merits for advancement, and that no interest, except that which is felt in a deserving man by those charged with his superintendence, will be of any avail.

Medical attendant.

Early last year it was determined to appoint, as a regular officer of the department, a medical gentleman to take charge

of the health of the large number of Letter Carriers attached to the Chief Office, to examine candidates for admission to the service, and to perform other medical duties. I know that it was Lord Canning's intention to nominate to this office Dr. Gavin, whose assiduity and success in the performance of similar duties during the cholera epidemic of 1854 were spoken of in the last report; and this intention would have been acted upon but for Dr. Gavin's untimely death whilst on temporary absence to assist in the organization of the military hospitals in the East. The post was subsequently conferred on Dr. Waller Lewis; a gentleman who, like Dr. Gavin, had given much previous attention to the means of improving the sanitary condition of large bodies of men.

Dr. Lewis' first periodical Report will be found in the Appendix;\* and your Lordships will be glad to perceive that the general health of the officers since his appointment has on the whole been very satisfactory; although he is of opinion that there are causes in existence, particularly such as relate to the condition of the dwellings of many of the Letter Carriers, which prevent the health from being so good as it might be.

Health of  
Officers.

The general freedom from disease which seems to be enjoyed by the occupants of the model houses that have been erected in the last few years affords ground for hoping that immunity from sickness to a similar extent might be enjoyed by the Letter Carriers if their dwellings were equally good; an object which might in some degree be attained by the erection in the neighbourhood of the Post Office of suitable buildings, available, on the payment of a moderate rent, to such of the Letter Carriers as might desire to live there.

Improved  
dwellings for  
Letter Carriers.

Such an arrangement would be beneficial to the men not only by affording them better dwellings, but by saving their time and labour in walking to and from the Office; while to the Department much convenience would be given by the opportunity of speedily summoning an increased force on the arrival of any large Mail from abroad.

I do not propose that such buildings should be put up and maintained at the cost of Government, as I think the undertaking is more suitable to a public company; but the Department might afford aid by securing to the company

---

\* Appendix, page 74.



its rents, deducting the same from the wages of such Letter Carriers as become tenants.

Life insurances.

Reference was made in the last Report to some measures which had been taken (by payments of part of the premiums) for encouraging the officers of the Department to insure their lives. This measure has proved very acceptable, and many have already availed themselves of it, as will be seen by the following extract from the Report on the Receiver and Accountant-General's Department :—

“TABLE showing the AMOUNT and NATURE of the Aid in Payment  
“ of Premiums on Life Insurances afforded to Officers of the Post  
“ Office of the United Kingdom in the year 1855.

—	Policies not exceeding 50 <i>l.</i>	Policies not exceeding 100 <i>l.</i>	Policies not exceeding 150 <i>l.</i>	Policies not exceeding 200 <i>l.</i>	Policies not exceeding 250 <i>l.</i>	Policies exceeding 250 <i>l.</i>	Total number insured.	Per centage of the insured on the employed.	Amount paid in aid of Premiums.
ENGLAND -	15	193	15	131	9	338	701	4½	£ 959 s. 4 d. 7
IRELAND -	—	11	2	15	—	52	80	} rather more than 3 nearly 7	} 142 15 11
SCOTLAND -	9	47	5	32	3	75	171		
	24	251	22	178	12	465	952		1,314 19 0

“TABLE showing the AGES on which the various Officers  
“ enumerated in the foregoing Table insured their Lives.

Ages.				England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.	United Kingdom.
	Under 20 years	-	-		3	—	7
20	years and under 30	-	-	131	34	8	173
30	” 40	-	-	292	81	29	402
40	” 50	-	-	183	34	28	245
50	” 60	-	-	72	16	12	100
60	” 70	-	-	19	3	3	25
	TOTAL	-	-	701	171	80	952

It is difficult to determine how many of these insurances were effected in consequence of the aid given by the Department (equal to one-fifth part of the whole premium), but it is believed that about one-third of the policies in England and Scotland are due to this aid, and about one-half in Ireland.

It had been the practice among the General Post Letter Carriers, on the death of any one of their number, to make a collection to pay the cost of the funeral, and to furnish the widow with a temporary fund for the support of the family. The contributions were 1s. or 2s. from each man, according to seniority, every one being expected to give with reference partly to the time he had been in the service, and partly to the official age of the deceased Letter Carrier. Funeral Money.

The sum thus raised on the death of a Letter Carrier varied generally from about 25*l.* to 45*l.*; but owing to the union of the two corps of Letter Carriers, an apprehension arose that the collection of "funeral money" would gradually fall into disuse, and consequently that the families of those who might continue their contributions would reap no benefit.

Under these circumstances my predecessor received a memorial from the General Post Letter Carriers, asking for assistance in support of a fund to which many of them had long contributed, and which they had looked forward to as a means of affording relief to their families at their death.

On examination it was found that if, instead of engaging to pay funeral money, each of the memorialists, when he entered the service, had insured his life, even for 50*l.*, in some regularly constituted Insurance Office, he would not have had to pay more in the form of premium than he had had to contribute in funeral money; while his position would have been safe from all danger such as that which had given rise to the memorial.

Proceeding on this fact, Lord Canning gave directions that every Letter Carrier who had hitherto paid funeral money should be permitted to insure his life for 50*l.* in a regular Office, on the understanding that the difference between the rate of premium which he would then have to pay, as compared with what would have been demanded at the time he entered the service, should be defrayed by the Department; the money to be taken from the fund which your Lordships had kindly placed at the disposal of the Postmaster General for promoting life insurances.

I am glad to be able to state that about 300 Letter Carriers, not included in the preceding table, have thankfully availed themselves of Lord Canning's offer, and are in course of completing their insurances.

## Revenue and Expenditure.

The following are statements of the Gross Receipts, Expenditure, and Net Revenue of the Department during the year 1855.\*

Gross Revenue.

GROSS REVENUE.

<i>Letters, Book Packets, &amp;c. :</i>		£	£
England	- - -	2,244,000	} 2,620,000
Ireland	- - -	189,000	
Scotland	- - -	187,000	
<i>Commission on Money Orders :</i>		£	
England	- - -	83,000	} 97,000
Ireland	- - -	7,000	
Scotland	- - -	7,000	
Total		-	£2,717,000

Apparent increase, but real decrease.

This sum shows an apparent increase of 15,000*l.* on the Gross Revenue for 1854, which was estimated at 2,689,000*l.*, but which actually reached 2,702,000*l.* Virtually, however, the receipts in 1855 instead of being larger than those of 1854 were somewhat less.

Discrepancy explained.

The discrepancy is thus explained; until last year the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, under whose direction the Postage Labels and Stamped Envelopes are manufactured, paid over to this Department only the net produce of the Stamps and Envelopes after deducting the cost of paper and manufacture; but now our accounts are on the one hand credited with the gross produce, and on the other hand are debited with the expense of paper and manufacture.

As compared with the year 1854, the gross revenue of 1855 is further increased by an addition, for the first time, of a charge for the conveyance of Newspapers.

As already stated, the greater portion of this charge is received for impressed Stamps by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and is not brought into the Post Office accounts; but that which is collected for Postage Labels, amounting to between a fourth and a fifth of the whole (being about 25,000*l.* out of about 118,000*l.* for the half-year since the abolition of the Newspaper Stamp), is carried to the Postal Revenue, and forms part of the foregoing sum of 2,717,000*l.*

The virtual diminution in the Gross Revenue of the Post Office, notwithstanding the addition just named, and the increase of letters is thus explained :—

\* At page 57 in the Appendix a statement is given of the Receipts and Expenditure in each year since 1837; also a comparative return (Appendix, page 58) for the last two years of the amount of postage collected in many large towns.

1st. The diminished number of English Mail Packets between this country and the United States last year, owing to the war, not only reduced the correspondence, but transferred a large portion of the remainder from the British to the American Packets; thus causing a decrease of not less than 35,000/. in our share of the postage; to which must be added about 16,000/. for loss, caused in the same way, in the receipts for letters to Canada.

2nd. Notwithstanding the increase in the number of letters to France, consequent on the reduction of postage, already referred to, there was in this branch also a loss last year of more than 19,000/.; but I think it not impossible that this loss will quickly diminish, and that before many years have passed, the amount of French postage may be as large as before.

I entertain similar expectations also, and a yet speedier realization, with regard to the recent reduction in Colonial postage; and am supported in these expectations by the results already arrived at.

EXPENDITURE.*				£	Expenditure.
Salaries, Pensions, &c.	-	-	-	813,000	
Buildings	-	-	-	25,000	
<i>Conveyance of Mails:</i>				£	
By Railways	-	-	-	401,000	} 577,000
„ Coaches, Carts, &c. and	-	-	-	161,000	
Wages of Mail Guards	-	-	-	15,000	
„ Packets †	-	-	-	15,000	
Manufacture of Postage Stamps, &c.	-	-	-	32,000	
Miscellaneous, including the conveyance of	Mails in Colonies under the postal direction of the Postmaster General; the conveyance of the Mails through Egypt; the cost of the Army Post Office; clothing for Letter Carriers and Guards; rents, taxes, law expenses, &c.			} 144,000	
Mails in Colonies under the postal direction of the Postmaster General; the					
conveyance of the Mails through Egypt; the					
cost of the Army Post Office; clothing for Letter Carriers and Guards; rents,					
taxes, law expenses, &c.	-	-	-		
Total	-	-	-	£1,591,000	

\* The entries under this head show the expenditure properly appertaining to the year, not the payments actually made.

† The Packet service is for the most part under the superintendence of the Admiralty, and is borne on the expenditure of that Department; the Contractors for the several lines being subject, in most cases, to conditions framed with other objects than the efficiency of the postal service. The above sum does not include the payments made by the Admiralty.

The omission in the expenditure of the Post Office of such part of the cost of these Packets as may fairly be chargeable to that Department, is more or less counterbalanced by the omission (under the head of Revenue) of the charge for the transmission (inland) of stamped newspapers.

The sum after deducting 32,000*l.* for the manufacture of Postage Stamps, (an item which, as already explained, appears in the accounts for the first time,) shows an apparent increase on the expenditure of 1854 of 146,000*l.*; but £28,000 of this is owing to the circumstance of the charge for railway conveyance in the year 1854 not having included sums which, while really belonging to that year's expenditure, were not paid till the year had closed. In the account for 1855, however, the sum stated shows, as nearly as can be ascertained, the real expense incurred without regard to the time of payment; and this course will be adopted in all future accounts.

Actual increase  
of Expendi-  
ture.

Thus corrected, the actual increase in expenditure last year over that for 1854 was about £118,000, or about 8 per cent.

Chief causes  
of increased  
Expenditure.

The following have been the chief causes of increased expenditure:—

1st. An increase in the number of Sorters and Letter Carriers in the London Office, required chiefly on account of the holiday now allowed to these men; the adoption of a higher scale of salaries for Sorters and Letter Carriers; and an enlargement of the pensions granted to these officers in old age.

2ndly. An addition to the salaries of most other officers in the London Office, resulting from the more general provision of an annual augmentation made in the scale of salaries recommended by the Treasury Commissioners.

3rdly. The revision, as already mentioned, of the Post Offices in Dublin and Edinburgh, and of some of the larger provincial towns. This revision is not yet complete, but it has already had the effect of increasing the number of Clerks and Letter Carriers, and of raising the salaries of many who were already in the service; producing in the aggregate an enlarged annual expense of about 32,000*l.*; to which sum must be added about 5,000*l.* for uniforms, supplied, for the first time, to the Letter Carriers in Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester, Bristol, and Birmingham, and to a certain class of Letter Carriers in London.

4thly. Increased use of Railways, accelerations of Mails, and enlarged Postal accommodation generally; amounting in annual cost to more than 20,000*l.*

5thly. Increased expense of the Army Post Office.

In the last Report it was stated that there would probably be a very considerable increase in the expenditure of the year 1855 as compared with that of 1854; and I expect a further considerable increase in 1856.

## Net Revenue.

The total Net Revenue was 1,126,000*l.*, being a decrease of 150,000*l.*, or more than 13 per cent on the Net Revenue of 1854 ; a decrease sufficiently explained by the foregoing statements. Net Revenue.

The system of accounts recommended by the Treasury Commissioners, and adopted with great advantage in the London Office, as mentioned in the last Report, has been extended to the Offices in Dublin and Edinburgh, and it will be seen by the following statements that the result has been highly satisfactory. Simplification of Accounts.

Mr. Long, Accountant in the Dublin Office, reports:—  
“The change thus effected has been attended with considerable advantage ; the three departments (now combined) were each engaged in matters of account, all having the same object in view, but conducted and controlled by separate chiefs and distinct staffs, dependent, to a certain extent, upon each other’s transactions, but divided in responsibility upon the whole.

“By the new arrangement, this has altogether ceased. The one department guides and manages the whole ; and a system has thereby been introduced which facilitates the public business, harmonizes the working of the account branch, and conduces much to the benefit of the service.”

Mr. Marrable, Accountant in the Edinburgh Office, states:—  
“In June, the great improvement of the year, so far as the accounts of the department are concerned, took place, whereby the ‘Account Branch’ of the Edinburgh establishment was re-organized, the separate offices of the Receiver General, Accountant, and Money Order, being amalgamated under that appellation.

“The system thus introduced and carried into effect under Mr. Scudamore’s able superintendence is uniform, or nearly so, with that pursued at London and Dublin, and the simplification in conducting the Revenue portion of the account business, as compared with the old system, is in the highest degree satisfactory.

“The measure, while it has effected such manifest improvements in the mode of conducting the business, has been productive of considerable saving of labour.”

## Miscellaneous.

With reference to the short history of the Post Office, which appeared in the First Annual Report, the Bishop of History of the Post Office.

Llandaff, in a letter to Mr. Rowland Hill, called attention to the following curious extract from the correspondence of Archbishop Parker:—

“ Archbishop Parker to Sir W. Cecil.

“ Sir,

“ According to the Queen’s Majesty’s pleasure, and  
“ your advertisement, you shall receive a form of prayer,  
“ which, after you have perused and judged of it, shall be  
“ put in print and published immediately, &c., &c.

“ From my house at Croydon, this 22nd July 1566, at  
“ 4 of the clock afternoon.

“ Your honour’s alway,

“ MATTH. CANT.”

“ To the Right Honourable Sir W. Cecil,  
“ Knight, Principal Secretary to the  
“ Queen’s Majesty, and one of Her  
“ Privy Council.”

*(Indorsed by successive Postmasters.)*

“ Received at Waltham Cross, the 23d of July, about 9  
“ at night.”

“ Received at Ware, the 23rd July, at 12 o’clock at  
“ night.”

“ Received at Croxton, the 24th of July, between 7 and  
“ 8 of the clock in the morning.”

So that his Grace’s letter, leaving Croydon at 4 in the afternoon of July 22nd, reached Waltham Cross, a distance of nearly 26 miles, by 9 at night of the 23rd; whence, in three hours, it seems to have advanced 8 miles to Ware; and within eight hours more to have reached Croxton, a further distance of 29 miles; having taken nearly 40 hours to travel about 63 miles.

In the Appendix\* are some extracts from an interesting paper by Mr. Lang, Controller of the Circulation Department in Edinburgh, containing much historical information on the Post Office in Scotland.

New code of  
Rules.

The new Code of Rules for the guidance of Postmasters, mentioned in the last Report, has been completed, and will shortly be issued.

Postal Guide.

A Postal Guide also, containing such information as will be useful to the public, including a table showing the rates of postage to the Colonies and foreign countries, is in a forward state, and will speedily be published; arrangements being also made for the periodic issue of a revised edition.

Measures are in progress, under the direction of the Regulation of  
Clocks. Astronomer Royal, for regulating the clocks at the Chief Office at St. Martins-le-Grand, and at the Branch Office in Lombard Street, by means of telegraphic communication with the Observatory at Greenwich.

Notwithstanding repeated warnings on the subject, and Money sent in  
unregistered  
Letters. in disregard of the facilities afforded by the Money Order system, as well as of the comparative security which can be obtained by registration, culpable heedlessness is often displayed in sending coin and bank notes in letters; in the case of bank notes even the simple precaution of cutting them into halves (withholding the second halves until the receipt of the first has been acknowledged) being often omitted. This precaution should be taken even when the letter is registered; nor should it be necessary to add that the packet containing such enclosure ought always to be sealed. In one case which occurred lately in Ireland, a considerable sum of money was sent in a letter *open at both ends* like a book or a newspaper.

Whenever coin is sent by the post, special care should be taken to see that the packet is securely fastened. Sometimes, for want of such care, coins fall out even of registered letters.

If the only result from carelessness in the transmission of money were occasional loss to those in fault, the matter would be one of little moment; but, as has before been pointed out, the most serious evil of the practice is its tendency to undermine the honesty of officers of the Department, and especially of the Letter Carriers; the latter have necessarily opportunities beyond all power of observation to tamper with the letters intrusted to their care; although, by the measures adopted, repeated thefts generally entail detection.

Some instances, such as those referred to in the last Report, are given at page 81 in the Appendix, of unfounded Unfounded  
complaint of  
irregularities  
in the Post  
Office. complaint against the Post Office respecting alleged loss of unregistered letters. At the same place also will be found an extraordinary case, reported by the Head of the Missing Letter Branch, of a series of acts of deception, relative to the posting of letters, practised by a young lady at school.

As evidence of the extent to which the non-delivery of Letters posted  
without Ad-  
dress. letters is attributable to the carelessness of the writers, it may be mentioned, that between seven and eight thousand letters were posted, last year, without any address.



Notice at each  
Post Office.

At every Post Office a notice is now exhibited, showing the hours for closing the Letter Box, and, at the larger Offices, the times of the arrival of the principal Mails, with other useful information.

Improved ar-  
rangement at  
certain Post  
Offices.

An experiment has been made of providing some of the larger Post Offices with a room for the public, fitted up in some degree like the public room of a bank; counters being substituted for the mere apertures through which business had previously been transacted; and this alteration has been found so convenient and satisfactory that I shall give orders for its extension to other of the larger Offices.

Secure mode  
of sealing  
Letters.

Attention has lately been drawn to the most secure mode of sealing letters. In the great majority of cases, even when moral considerations may be inoperative, the person through whose hands a letter passes can have little or no motive to pry into its contents; where it is important to guard against such a proceeding, the most effectual way, in the opinion of the practical officers of the Department, is first to wafer the letter, and then to seal it with wax; care being taken, if the letter have to pass through a hot climate, to use the kind of wax specially prepared for that purpose.

Circular to  
Surveyors.

In order to give increased energy to the mechanism of the Department, to anticipate as far as practicable all real cause for complaint, and speedily to remove defects, a circular, of which a copy will be found at page 82 in the Appendix, was sent last spring to the surveyors, pointing out more clearly than before the nature of some of their duties, and the means of enforcing and maintaining the responsibility of Postmasters.

I have the honour to be,  
My Lords,  
Your Lordships' obedient Servant,  
ARGYLL.

*General Post Office,  
30th January 1856.*

# APPENDIX.

---

## APPENDIX (A.)

---

EXTRACTS from a REPORT to the SECRETARY of the POST OFFICE,  
by a COMMITTEE of OFFICERS, on the Question of establishing  
District Sorting Offices and Hourly Deliveries in the Metropolis.

General Post Office, 4th July 1855.

1. WE beg leave to report that, in obedience to the directions contained in your minute of the 21st of December last, and under the instructions from time to time received from you, we have attentively considered the subject of the improvements which you contemplate making in the postal service of London and its environs, by the adoption of certain measures originally submitted by you to the Commissioners of Post Office Inquiry in 1837, and to the Select Committee of the House of Commons on postage in 1843; viz.:—the division of London for Post Office purposes into several distinct Districts, with a separate sorting office for each, and the establishment of hourly deliveries (during 12 hours of the day) in London, to be made conjointly by the General Post and the London District Letter Carriers.

2. By a careful examination of the general principles of this plan we became satisfied that arrangements might be based upon them which would tend, in many important respects, to promote the accommodation of the public, and to increase the efficiency and usefulness of that branch of the Department which the question concerns.

3. It appeared to us that the following are amongst the immediate advantages which may be expected to result from the proposed measure.

1st. The public would gain a direct and material benefit by the establishment of two additional deliveries in London; which deliveries, it seemed probable, by uniting and carefully applying the services of the two corps of Letter Carriers, might be given at a comparatively small increase of expense.

2d. The establishment of a continuous series of hourly deliveries would facilitate the observance of a punctual despatch of the Letter Carriers for the first or General Post delivery, at a fixed hour of the morning, say at 7.30 A.M.; inasmuch as instead of the delivery

being retarded on the occasion of Mails arriving late, or of heavy arrivals from abroad, all letters not ready at 7.30 might be reserved for the next delivery, which would quickly follow.

3d. The distribution of that large portion of London District letters intended for delivery near to the place of posting, (and which we subsequently found to amount, on the average, to about one-fifth of the whole number of London District letters collected) might be much accelerated in the outer parts of the Metropolis, by stopping those letters at a local sorting Office (instead of sending them as at present to one Central Office for all London,) and arranging for the delivery to take place soon after the time of making the collections.

4th. The circulation of letters in London generally might be expedited by employing the Letter Carriers at District Offices to assist in the stamping and sorting duties, and thereby shortening the time which those duties occupy: an arrangement not practicable at present, *as a rule*, owing to many of the Letter Carriers being stationed, for the purpose of delivery, at a distance from the Central Office, where the sorting duty for despatch is now exclusively performed, as well as a great part of the sorting for distribution.

5th. In many cases, the Letter Carriers by starting with the letters for delivery from Offices judiciously placed in the proposed Districts, could arrive more quickly than they now do on the ground they have to serve.

6th. The distribution of the duties of the London District Branch of the Department amongst several sorting Offices would, moreover, relieve the Chief Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand, (now so much crowded and deficient in space,) of a large portion of business; and would thereby tend to prevent confusion and ensure greater regularity in the performance of the duties. It would have the further great advantage of furnishing the means of bringing large numbers of the Letter Carriers under better supervision and control than can at present be maintained.

4. There are no doubt some advantages appertaining to the present system of concentrating at one Office the sorting duty for all London, which may be diminished or partially lost under the proposed plan; but it appeared to us that the above considerations clearly determined the question in favour of adopting the scheme of District Offices.

5. We, therefore, proceeded to inquire in what particular plan of arrangements the scheme would assume the most favourable form; it being evident that, by varying the different details, a large variety of results, more or less affecting the success of the measure, might be obtained.

6. We have given the most careful attention to this part of the subject, examining many different plans, and making numerous calculations bearing on the subject, not perhaps necessary to describe at length; and we are decidedly of opinion that the form of arrangement we are about to submit will afford the best means of realising the design in view, being that which, taken as a whole, offers the greatest balance of advantages to the service, whether as

regards increase of public accommodation, simplicity and uniformity of character, or capability of being worked with convenience and regularity.

7. Its main features may be described as follows:—

I.—We propose that London be divided into ten Districts, each with a distinct sorting Office, viz.: two central and eight out Districts;—the out Districts stretching through the environs of London, and beyond, until they reach the 12 mile circle by which the present London District is bounded.

II.—The collection, sorting, dispatch, and delivery of all London District letters should be made through the agency of these District Offices, each as regards its respective district.

III.—Hereafter, when the machinery is matured by practical working and experience, the operations of the offices may be extended to the assisting in the receipt and dispatch of the Provincial Mails; to which end, in respect to the Mails inwards, a preliminary sortation to the Districts on the several lines of railway (or some analogous arrangement) is perhaps essential. But in the meantime, and as part of an introductory and temporary state of things, we consider it expedient that the great morning delivery of General Post Letters, and the dispatch of all Provincial, Foreign, and Colonial Mails should be made from the Chief Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand, as at present.

IV.—We propose that in those parts of London (with some few exceptions) which now have the ten deliveries, there shall, besides the first morning delivery, be eleven distributions of letters daily from the District Offices, making in all twelve deliveries in the course of the day. The partial General Post deliveries now made within certain narrow limits, at 9.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. respectively, of Foreign and Mid-day letters, will of course be discontinued.

V.—Previously to each delivery, a collection of letters should be made from all the Town Receiving Houses and from the District Offices themselves.

VI.—The letters thus collected should be sorted at the District Offices, and those intended for other districts immediately despatched. Every District Office should send a bag to and receive one from all the other Offices.

VII.—The communications should be made by mail cart; the carts from the three outer districts on the western side of London should run to the Western Central Office; and those from the other five to the Eastern Central Office. As soon as the two Central Offices receive the despatches from the outer Offices, they should send on, one to the other, by a cart from each Office, all the bags going forward to the other side of London; and when this exchange is effected, each Central Office should dispatch the carts, with the return bags, to their dependent outer offices. By these means letters will circulate (counting from the time of collection) between all parts of London, within the town limits, in about one hour.

VIII.—Immediately on the receipt of the bags inwards, the letters should be sorted and sent out for distribution. In one respect, the course of delivery will be different at the outer Offices

from that at the two centres. At an outer office, within a few minutes time of the letters brought by the cart and those already in the office being ready for the Letter Carriers to take out, another collection will be brought in from the District Receiving Houses, and such of the letters contained in this collection as are intended for *local* delivery should be at once selected and sent out by the letter carriers who are on the point of starting. This arrangement will effect to the utmost possible extent, that acceleration of 'local' letters, which, as we have thought from the outset, the plan of District Offices is so especially adapted to produce.

IX.—Letters arriving from the country parts of each out District, and intended for delivery in the town parts of the same district, will participate in this acceleration, and letters going from the *Town* to the *Country* parts of the same out-district, may be posted later than at present.

X.—At the two Central Offices, the letters from the other districts will of course be received sometime before the arrivals will take place at the out District Offices. At those two Offices, consequently, the Letter Carriers will be ready to go out earlier, and before the next collection is brought in and sorted. It would be unprofitable to retard the delivery (for about 20 minutes), for the sake of including the local letters contained in the next collection; therefore, those letters will not be distributed so rapidly in the two centres as in the other districts, but must wait for the next delivery. On the other hand, the letters from the surrounding Districts will go out for distribution more quickly.

XI.—All Provincial Letters brought by Mails arriving late, or by Day Mails, and all Foreign and Colonial letters not in time for the first morning delivery, will fall into one of the subsequent deliveries.

XII.—In addition to the eleven collections already mentioned, the present collection of General Post Letters at 5.30 p.m., the partial newspaper collection at 5 p.m., and the night collection at 10 p.m. for the Morning Mails outwards, and for the first morning delivery, should be continued.

XIII.—With the exception of the Money Order business, which we think it undesirable to extend to the District Offices, at least for the present, they will be available for affording the public all the accommodation usually given at superior Post Offices, and also for transacting much of the business of inquiry and control now carried on in the Chief Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand. The Money Order duty can, with ease, be superadded hereafter, if that course be found expedient.

8. Having thus stated the chief features of the scheme we recommend, we proceed to report in detail on the various parts which require separate explanation, and on the results to be produced.

#### *Denomination and Formation of the Districts.*

9. The two Central Districts may be termed the Eastern Central, and the Western Central:—the eight outer Districts may be called respectively the Northern, the North-eastern, the

Eastern, the South-eastern, the Southern, the South-western, the Western, and the North-western Districts.

The dimensions proper for these several Districts have been very fully and carefully considered.

\* \* \* \* \*

The two Central Districts, we have thought, should include such an area, having the River Thames for a southern boundary, as will admit of all the Letter Carriers reaching the points at which their deliveries will commence in about ten or fifteen minutes from the time of leaving the District Office. The boundary lines of the outer districts will radiate from those of the two centres until they reach the 12 mile circle.

10. In determining the district boundaries in London itself, we have endeavoured, where practicable, to select main streets or roads, which present clear and well defined lines: we have likewise aimed at keeping together the several parts of any locality which has a connected and peculiar character; and care has been necessary so to arrange the ground that no part shall be at too great a distance from a District Office.

11. In defining the boundary lines which will divide the outer Districts one from the other, we have, after quitting London itself, followed the existing limits of the country deliveries of the London District Post except in a few instances—preserving, to a great extent, the present routes of the mail cart service. We have been able, in so doing, to observe a tolerably correct geographical distribution of the ground, in harmony with the designations given to the proposed Districts.

\* \* \* \* \*

50. The business of sorting would be much facilitated and simplified if the public, as you propose to suggest, would assist in the process by adding the name of *the District* to that of the street or place in the addresses of their letters. We recommend that the advantages attending such a practice be brought to the public notice, and that outline maps and lists of places within the several districts be prepared and circulated for general information.

---

## APPENDIX (B.)

---

REPORT by MR. EDWARD PAGE, Inspector General of Mails, on some points connected with the relations between the Post Office Department and Railway Companies.

General Post Office,  
29th February 1856.

SIR,

In the first Annual Report of the Postmaster General, presented to Parliament last year, it is stated by Lord Canning as one of the reasons for instituting such a report, that “many misapprehensions arise from an imperfect knowledge of matters which might, without any inconvenience, be placed before the public.”

That such misapprehensions do exist as to several matters connected with the railway branch of the Post Office Service has lately been exemplified in an address by Mr. Robert Stephenson, M.P., on his election as President of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

In that address Mr. Stephenson (no doubt without any intention whatever to mislead) puts forward, in effect, the following statements which I believe to be inaccurate :—

1st. That the scheme of penny postage, to the extent to which it has so far been developed, would have been impracticable, or, if practicable, unremunerative, but for the facilities afforded by railways for conveying bulk.

2nd. That Railway Companies, instead of being liberally treated by the Post Office, are called upon to perform the service of that department at a rate of remuneration which affords little or no profit.

3rd. That the Post Office has lately entered into a competition which is injurious to Railway Companies, by conveying books and other parcels at very reduced rates.

My object in this Report is to direct your attention to the facts on which, in my opinion, the Post Office is entitled to rely in opposition to the above allegations, the last of which has likewise been recently adopted in the Report of the Committee of Consultation of the London and North Western Railway. It may perhaps be the desire of the Postmaster General to furnish, in his Report for the current year, some correction of these misconceptions, the more especially as Mr. Stephenson states, in the very outset of his address, that his chief object is to suggest topics for communications and discussion at future meetings over which he may have to preside. Such a correction is the more necessary, because there is reason to apprehend that these and other similar opinions which have been at various times promulgated have, by being made the ground for claiming special additional payment for the Mail service, affected to a certain extent the arbitrations between the Post Office and Railway Companies, and have thus acquired practical importance.

On the first point, (taking the subjects in the order in which they are named above) it is hardly to be wondered at that the public generally should be led to form erroneous impressions, seeing how imperfectly the details of the Post Office are usually understood. But it will not be difficult to prove that the conclusion arrived at by Mr. Stephenson cannot be supported, and to show that the increase which has taken place in the weight of the Mails would have presented no difficulty to their conveyance by Mail coaches, and that since the transfer of the Mails from coaches to railways, the cost of transmission has increased in a *far greater degree* than it would probably have done had railways never been constructed.

I should premise that it has been ascertained from returns kept by the department, that while the whole number of chargeable letters delivered in the United Kingdom has increased about six-fold, the increase has been about nine-fold with respect to letters *to and from London*; and the same remark applies, although the increase is in a somewhat different ratio, to newspapers and book parcels. If,

therefore, it can be shown that the weight of Mails at present despatched *from London* (which greatly exceeds that of Mails brought *to London*) could have been carried by Mail coaches, it follows that no difficulty would have arisen with the Mails in other parts of the country, where the increase of weight has not been so large.

The actual increase in the weight of the Mails has been much less than is generally believed. It is often supposed that, because the whole number of letters has, since the introduction of Penny Postage, increased six-fold, therefore the whole weight of the Mails has also increased six-fold. But when it is recollected that by far the larger portion of the Mails has always consisted of newspapers, which were not in any way affected by the scheme of Penny Postage, it will be obvious that it would require a very large increase in the weight of the small or letter portion of the Mails before the total weight would exhibit more than a small per centage of increase.\*

In 1838 the gross weight of the Night Mails despatched from London in a single evening was about 4 tons 6 cwt. 1 qr. At the present time the total weight of the Night Mails despatched in a single evening may be stated at about 12 tons 4 cwt. 3 qrs. It will be seen, therefore, that the total increase in the weight has been only 183 per cent., or less than three-fold.

Mr. Stephenson correctly states that in 1838 the number Mail coaches leaving London each evening was 28, giving an average load for each coach of 3 cwt. 9 lbs., supposing the weight to have been equally distributed, which I am far from assuming was the case. Taking the present weight of Mails, and assuming that these 28 Mail coaches were still running, the average load for each coach would be 8 cwt. 3 qrs. Now a reference to the Third Report of the Select Committee on Postage in 1838, pages 48 and 50, will show that according to the testimony of the Post Office witnesses,† (the general tendency of whose views was certainly not at that time favourable to the practicability of Penny Postage), a weight of bags amounting to 18 cwt., or more than double what the present average load would have been, was sometimes carried on one Mail coach, and that a load of 15 cwt., in addition to the usual limited number of passengers and luggage, was by no means too high a maximum to fix for Mail coaches generally.

Admitting, however, that the weight was not equally distributed over all the Mail coaches, and recollecting, at the same time, that this average load of 8 cwt. 3 qrs. would be above the average ordinary load on any other than weekly newspaper nights, when it would no doubt be higher, the inference is still a fair one that the greater part of the Mail coaches would have borne the increase of weight without

---

\* It appears, from the Third Report of the Select Committee on Postage, 1838, page 49, that in the Mails dispatched from London at that time, the chargeable letters formed only 7 per cent. of the whole weight. An increase in the number of those letters to nine-fold, or by 800 per cent., would therefore advance the total weight of the Mails by only 56 per cent., or little more than one-half, even if the average weight of a letter had continued the same. That average has, however, been considerably reduced.

† The evidence more particularly referred to is that of Mr. Louis, the Surveyor and Superintendent of Mail coaches, who had a thorough knowledge of the details of the service under his control.



any difficulty, although there can be no doubt that, on some of the lines, additional coaches would have been required for a portion of the distance.

But the result which the above calculations justify is a great deal more favourable than is at all necessary for the purpose of disproving Mr. Stephenson's argument, that the expenses of carrying out Penny Postage would have been so large as to have entailed a certain loss.

Let us suppose that, partly to meet the increase of weight, either daily or on the heavy newspaper night only, and partly to provide for the establishment of additional Day Mails, (they were already in existence on some of the lines,) the number of Mail coaches would have been doubled, all over the kingdom, and that their cost would also have been doubled, (an improbable supposition, considering the increase in the number of passenger coaches which must in the absence of railways have necessarily taken place to meet the increase of traffic.) The expenditure of the department for Mail Coach service would in that case have been advanced from 155,000*l*.\* to only 310,000*l*. per annum, while the present expenditure for the Railway and Mail Coach service of the department is 443,000*l*. of which sum 400,000*l*. is paid to Railway Companies alone. Not only, therefore, would Penny Postage without railways have been both practicable and remunerative, but it would have been even more profitable (assuming the existing increase of letters) than it now is.

In order to show the impracticability of carrying out the Penny Postage system without the use of railways, Mr. Stephenson states, while speaking of the Mails now carried by the London and North Western Railway, that "not one Mail coach alone, but 14 or 15 " Mails would have been needed to carry on with regularity the " Post Office traffic." It is probable that Mr. Stephenson is not very far wrong in this assumption, although he deduces from it the erroneous conclusion that Penny Postage must have entailed a certain loss. The facts of the case are, that in 1838, twelve or thirteen Mail coaches from London *were actually employed to carry the Mails which now leave London by the London and North Western Railway*; so that, on Mr. Stephenson's own estimate, only 2 or 3 additional Mail coaches would have been required for forwarding those Mails, which, it may be observed, constitute about one-half of the whole of the Night Mail leaving London.

The Mail coaches which formerly carried the Mails now leaving London in a concentrated form by the London and North Western Night Mail train, were as follows:—viz.,

London and Edinbro'	Night Mail.
London and Leeds	"
London and Halifax	"
London and Holyhead	"
London and Liverpool	"
London and Manchester	"
London and Glasgow	"

\* This amount includes the cost of the inconsiderable extent of railway Mail service at that time in operation.

London and Carlisle		Night Mail.
London and Derby		"
London and Birmingham		"
London and Birmingham	}	"
(Dublin Express)		
London and Hull	}	"
London and Worcester		

In alluding to the advantages which have been conferred by railways, Mr. Stephenson is unfortunate in putting forward as an illustration, the cheap transmission of the printed proceedings of Parliament. Under the old postal system, and during the existence of Mail coaches, Parliamentary reports and proceedings *were conveyed by Post free of all charges*. On the introduction of Penny Postage, a postal charge for their conveyance was imposed, and this charge has continued up to the present day.

Referring to the relations between the Post Office and Railway Companies as to the remuneration for Mail service, I should observe, that under the old Mail coach system, the Post Office was protected from undue demands for the transmission of its Mails along the public highways of the kingdom by means of *competition*. The principle of free trade in locomotion operated as a safeguard against extravagant charges. Coach proprietors, who had established themselves on any road, were prevented from taking advantage of their occupation of the line to levy unreasonable charges for either passengers or Mails, by a wholesome fear of opposition. The result was, that by constantly offering its contracts to public competition, the Post Office ensured the performance of its service on terms which afforded only a fair and moderate profit to the contracting parties.

The introduction of railways practically destroyed competition, and placed large monopolies in the hands of a few private companies; but, to compensate for this, Parliament took the precaution of ensuring moderate charges for passenger conveyance, by special provision in each Railway Act. Strange to say, a similar provision as regards the remuneration for Post Office Service was omitted, and it was deemed sufficient to specify that the remuneration should be "reasonable;" a most indefinite term, and one which has given rise to infinite variety of opinion.

It is true that, failing an amicable settlement, provision is made for a reference to arbitration; but, in the absence of any general principles to guide the arbitrators or umpire in their judgment of what is or is not reasonable, the question resolves itself into one of individual opinion, and the consequence has been that the most conflicting decisions have been arrived at in cases which, if not identical, have been so nearly alike as to render it impossible to reconcile the strange variation in the rates awarded.

Without, however, dwelling upon the uncertainty of arbitration, which is by no means its least objectionable feature, it can readily be

---

\* Only a portion of the bags which these Mails formerly carried is now sent by the London and North Western Railway.

shown that this mode of determining payments has led to results very different from those implied by Mr. Stephenson, who states that for trains put on to suit the Post Office Service, very little remuneration is allowed beyond the absolute outlay which the service entails, and that the Post Office insists on the right of travelling at the mere actual cost.

It can hardly be necessary to point out that the Post Office has no more power than a Railway Company has to fix any particular rate, or to insist upon any principle of its own in regard to payment. The Department can do no more than give expression to the views which it believes to be fair and just, leaving the final decision to the umpire. But that those decisions have allowed to Railway Companies the mere actual outlay, with little or no profit, is a misapprehension which a brief examination of some recent awards will suffice to remove.

It fortunately happens that Mr. Stephenson furnishes in his address the data for checking his own accuracy on this particular point. He says that locomotive expenses on railways do not on an average exceed  $9\frac{1}{2}d.$  per mile, and that the cost of running a train may be assumed in most cases to be about  $15d.$  per mile. Compare this with some of the rates actually paid by the Post Office to different Companies at various periods within the last few years, amounting, it will be seen, in one instance to the enormous price of  $4s. 6d.$  per single mile:—

	s.	d.	
Chester to Birkenhead - - -	2	0	per single mile.
Dublin to Drogheda - - -	2	0	„
Leeds to Selby - - -	2	0	„
London to Bristol and Gloucester -	2	0 $\frac{1}{4}$	„
Ipswich to Colchester - - -	2	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	„
Ely to Yarmouth - - -	2	1	„
Peterboro' to Grimsby - - -	2	2	„
London to Dover - - -	2	3	„
Londonderry to Strabane - - -	2	4	„
Arbroath to Aberdeen - - -	2	6	„
Lancaster to Carlisle - - -	2	6	„
Southampton to Dorchester - - -	2	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	„
Perth to Dundee - - -	3	0	„
Dublin to Galway - - -	3	0	„
York to Berwick - - -	3	0	„
Dundee to Arbroath - - -	3	1	„
Preston to Liverpool - - -	3	1	„
Dundalk to Castleblayney - - -	3	2	„
Parkside to Preston - - -	3	6	„
Exeter to Plymouth - - -	3	7	„
Grange Court (near Gloucester) to			
Haverfordwest - - -	3	7	„
Drogheda to Dublin - - -	3	9	„
Drogheda to Dundalk - - -	4	0	„
Dublin to Cork - - -	4	6	„
Limerick Junction to Limerick - -	4	6	„

In these cases it will be seen that the rates paid by the Post Office for the use of only a fraction of the train exceeded the whole cost of running, as calculated by Mr. Stephenson himself, by from 60 to 260 per cent. But these rates, while they no doubt include in some cases special elements of expense not covered by the average of 15*d.* per mile, are independent of the receipts obtained from passengers, parcels, and in some cases from goods, earnings which, added to the Post Office allowance, have in many instances rendered the Mail train one of the most profitable trains on the line.

It should be mentioned that the rates of payment quoted above applied, in some few of the cases, to trains which were running as passenger trains before the Post Office employed them for the Mails; the times of departure and arrival, places of stopping, &c., being adopted by the Post Office almost exactly as the Company had arranged them for their own convenience. In these instances the extravagance of the charge for the Mails becomes of course the more remarkable.

I should imagine that the Post Office Department would be well satisfied if those Mails, the hours of which are absolutely fixed by notice, were conveyed at rates based on Mr. Stephenson's estimate of the actual running cost, making some allowance, on the one hand, for the benefit derived by the Company from the train, and adding, on the other hand, compensation for any special extra expenses to which the Company may be subjected by the requirements of the Post Office, together with a full allowance for profit. I believe that some basis such as this has long been considered a desideratum by this Department, and it is to be hoped that Parliament may see fit ere long to place the question on a footing of this nature.

It may not be inappropriate to mention here, in further refutation of Mr. Stephenson's charge of illiberal treatment, that although the Law Officers of the Crown have given an opinion that Government can claim exemption from toll on railways, such claim has for many years been abandoned by the Post Office. The arbitrators acting for the Department always consider the Railway Companies both as carriers and proprietors of the road, and frame their calculations accordingly. It may also be observed, that the strongest desire is usually evinced by Railway Companies to obtain the conveyance of the Mails, a desire which is certainly incompatible with the assumption that no profit is allowed for that service, and strangely at variance with Mr. Stephenson's theory that Railway Companies are indifferent to postal traffic.

Before dismissing this branch of the subject, I must refer to a description of postal service by railway, which has now become very extensive throughout the kingdom. I allude to the cases in which the Post Office sends a certain weight of Mail in charge of the Companies' guards, by an ordinary train, over the working of which no control whatever is claimed by the Department. For a service of this nature, the payment awarded under arbitration has, in a recent case, amounted to the exorbitant sum of 7*d.* per single mile, the weight of the Mail averaging for the whole line not more than

1 cwt., or about half that of a second-class passenger and his luggage. For this trifling weight of Mail the Post Office was thus made to bear very nearly half of the whole cost of running the train; while it has been ascertained that the average charge made by various Railway Companies for ordinary parcels carried beyond short distances very little exceeds one halfpenny per cwt. per mile, the average charge for ordinary goods being of course even less.

I may add that although, in a few cases, Railway Companies have been induced to accept moderate sums either for the use of one or two passenger trains, or for the general use of all their trains, it constantly happens that the Department is prevented from increasing postal facilities by the refusal of Companies to accept rates equal to, and often exceeding, the charges made to the public for the occasional transmission of a corresponding weight of such ordinary light goods as are frequently sent by passenger trains.

At page 7 of his address, Mr. Stephenson gives the total earnings of railways from passengers, for the year 1854, at 9,170,000*l*. The sum paid to Railway Companies by the Post Office during the year was about 392,600*l*., or about  $\frac{1}{23}$  part of the gross earnings of all the passenger trains. He estimates the gross weight of passengers conveyed during the year at 8 millions of tons; while the gross weight of Mails for the entire kingdom (including guards, clerks, &c.) was considerably under 20,000 tons, a large portion of which was not conveyed by railways at all. Assuming, however, that the whole of it had gone by the railways, it would appear that the Post Office paid  $\frac{1}{23}$  part of the total earnings for the conveyance of less than  $\frac{1}{100}$  part of the total weight.

In connexion with this branch of the subject, it may not be immaterial to mention, that in the Finance Accounts printed by order of Parliament last year, the gross amount of the passenger tax paid to the Government by Railway Companies in the preceding year is stated to have been 309,000*l*. As the amount paid by the Post Office to Railway Companies for the Postal Service of the year 1854 was 392,600*l*., it follows that the Government paid to Railway Companies for the carriage of the Mails very nearly one-third more than it received from them in the shape of passenger tax.

The third allegation of Mr. Stephenson is that the Post Office has lately entered into a competition which is injurious to Railway Companies, by conveying books and other parcels at very reduced rates.

Without stopping to inquire whether Railway Companies (most of whose Acts of Incorporation are of a later date than the Penny Postage Act, and several of whose lines have been opened since the commencement of the Book Parcel regulations,) have any legal or equitable right to the monopoly of parcel traffic, it may be sufficient to state, that with very trifling exceptions it is only to books and other printed matter, (the general circulation of which is so intimately connected with the diffusion of knowledge and the promotion of education) that any reduction below the ordinary postal charges for letters has been applied. Now, even assuming for a moment that every book parcel that the Post Office carries is abstracted from

parcels which would otherwise be conveyed by railway, it is obvious that the Companies would not sustain any loss by such parcels becoming part of the Mail, if the Post Office paid to the Companies for its Mails rates only as high as the booksellers pay them for their parcels, in which, for the most part, such books would be conveyed, if they were sent at all. But it is a matter of fact, that the general rates paid by the Post Office to Railway Companies are largely in excess of those paid by the booksellers for their parcels. It follows, therefore, that the Companies, instead of being injured, would be benefited by any such abstraction, seeing that, besides receiving a higher rate of remuneration for the carriage of these book parcels, they are entirely relieved of the cost of collection and delivery, a cost which, as Mr. Stephenson shows, renders goods traffic less profitable to Railway Companies than passenger traffic.

But a more careful consideration of this question will establish good grounds for the opinion that by far the larger portion of the book parcels which the Post Office carries would not be sent at all but for the peculiar facilities offered by the extensive organization of the Post Office, contrasted with which the facilities which Railway Companies can of themselves afford sink into insignificance.

As bearing strongly upon this comparison of facilities, I may mention the somewhat remarkable fact, that copies of the very report of the Committee of Consultation of the London and North Western Railway, in which the Post Office is represented as unduly competing with Railway Companies for the carriage of books and parcels, were *extensively circulated to that Company's shareholders through the medium of the Book Post*, not merely to towns and villages at a distance from their Railway, but even to Liverpool, to which the Companies' own trains might have carried them without any charge whatever. When it is recollected that there are about 10,500 Post Offices scattered throughout the United Kingdom, that there is scarcely a village without a Post Office, and scarcely even a hamlet without a regularly established official means of communication with a Post Office, and that consequently persons even in the most secluded districts can communicate by Post with all parts of the kingdom with tolerable certainty, and with very little trouble or expense, it will readily be seen that such facilities as these must lead to the transmission of books and documents which otherwise would never be sent.

In fact, the Book Post service is one so different in its character and objects from that to which the parcel arrangements of the Railway Companies are adapted, that it may fairly be assumed it would hardly exist at all, but for the extensive facilities for its development which the Post Office possesses. The evidence given before the Select Committee on Conveyance of Mails by railways (1854), especially that of Mr. Charles Knight, the eminent publisher, is very decided on this point. He says (3872) that the cases in which books are sent by Post may be nearly all considered as exceptional cases to the ordinary commercial operations of publishing; and again (3870 and 3892) that the Book Post may be looked upon as a mere auxiliary to the conveyance of parcels by other means, and (3860) that if the

existing regulations were stopped, the public would not be able to derive the same advantages through any other channel. The Select Committee, in their Report, admitted their conviction that "a large proportion of the parcels would not be sent but for the facilities offered by the Post Office in their distribution."

Following, however, another line of argument, let us again assume for a moment that all the book packets conveyed by Post have been abstracted from the Companies' vans. It can, on the other hand, be shown, that the imposition of a postal charge on Parliamentary proceedings,—the limitation as to size of packets passing through the Post,—and lastly (the most important alteration of all), the abolition of the compulsory Newspaper Stamp,—are changes, the combined operation of which must have been to give to the Companies a far greater weight of parcel traffic than the weight of the whole of the book packets passing through the Post Office. It has been ascertained, with regard to the Night Mails from London, by which by far the largest proportion of books is conveyed, that the reduction in the number and total weight of newspapers conveyed by these Mails since the alteration in the Newspaper Stamp Act is more than *six* times the total number and weight of *all the book parcels*. To show the extent to which weight has thus been abstracted from the Mails, I may mention that the number of carriage loads of bags sent from the General Post Office to the Euston Square Station on Friday nights, has, since the recent Newspaper Stamp Act took effect, been *five* less than previously; and that the average nightly reduction of weight of newspapers despatched from London is upwards of *two tons and a half*. At the same time it is beyond doubt, that the effect of the Act in question has been largely to increase the newspaper circulation of the kingdom, and consequently to add still further to the earnings of the Railway Companies.

If, as Mr. Stephenson states, uncertainty, irregularity, and delay are observable in the service at the Post Office, they result to a great extent from the irregularity which often occurs in the working of the Mail trains by the Companies, and not from any difficulties experienced at the Post Office in dealing with its vastly and rapidly increasing business.

Admitting, however, that slight detentions do occasionally occur from pressure of Post Office work, it is right to mention that the Post Office has long since urged upon the principal Companies the adoption of a plan by which they and the Post Office shall be mutually bound to pay certain penalties for delay from whatever cause; the Post Office further offering to pay in addition a premium to the Companies in every instance in which the prescribed time is not exceeded. This proposal was, however, rejected at the time by every Company to whom it was submitted, and since that date (1854) it has only been agreed to by one of the Scotch Companies. It should be mentioned, that the Post Office offered in each case to re-open the award, and to re-adjust the payment by an arbitration, in which the proposed agreement for fines and premiums should be taken into consideration, the object being to render the arrangement as equitable as possible to the Companies. I believe that the Department is

Before concluding this Report, it is but just to record a brief admission of the points in regard to which railways have, to a material extent, improved the Postal communication of the kingdom.

The vast advantages comprised in these two improvements can scarcely be overrated; but, having briefly acknowledged them, it hardly devolves upon me, in the present Report, to dilate upon them at any greater length.

*To Rowland Hill, Esq.*  
*&c. &c. &c.*



## APPENDIX (C.)

NUMBER, as nearly as can be estimated, of Chargeable Letters delivered in the United Kingdom in the Year immediately preceding the first general Reduction of Postage on the 5th Day of December 1839, and in each complete Year subsequent thereto; also (in the first Year) the Number of Franks.

Year ending 31st December.	England and Wales.						Total England and Wales.	Increase per cent. on the previous year.	Total Ireland.	Increase or decrease per cent. on the previous year.	Total Scotland.	Increase per cent. on the previous year.	Total United Kingdom.	Increase per cent. on the previous year.
	Country Offices.	Increase per cent. on the previous year.	London, Inland, Foreign, and Ship Letters.	Increase or decrease per cent. on the previous year.	London District Post.	Increase or decrease per cent. on the previous year.								
Estimated No. of letters, 1839	—	—	—	—	—	—	59,062,520	—	6,381,904	—	7,023,146	—	75,907,572	—
Estimated No. of franks, 1839	—	—	—	—	—	—	6,172,234	—	1,054,508	—	336,332	—	6,563,024	—
Estimated No. of letters, 1840	88,071,306	—	23,550,835	—	20,372,332	—	132,003,525	120	18,210,642	110†	18,554,167	143†	168,768,344	122†
"	103,395,677	17	27,946,722	18†	23,108,722	13†	154,471,121	17	20,794,997	14†	21,294,772	14†	196,500,191	16†
"	111,115,489	7†	29,386,232	5	23,389,942	1†	163,800,715	6	22,325,154	7†	23,215,583	4†	208,434,451	6
"	117,704,474	6	30,906,743	5†	24,861,410	6†	173,464,627	5†	23,492,463	5†	23,473,216	5†	220,450,306	5†
"	129,096,023	9†	33,575,936	8†	26,060,460	8†	189,632,419	9†	25,937,188	10†	26,503,077	13	242,061,684	9†
"	147,227,431	14	36,067,711	7†	30,928,456	14†	214,153,628	13	29,357,968	10†	29,669,168	8†	271,410,789	13
"	162,624,024	10†	39,993,681	10†	33,261,050	8	235,878,755	10†	32,572,947	14	31,135,060	8†	299,536,762	10†
"	175,023,407	7†	43,757,540	9†	34,630,317	4	253,411,754	7†	35,473,316	9	35,261,163	6†	322,146,243	7†
"	180,716,102	3†	46,991,163	5	33,672,747	2† Dec.	260,350,002	2†	34,887,481	1† Dec.	33,563,101	1	338,830,184	2
"	187,352,329	3†	45,945,683	† Dec.	33,960,398	†	267,188,410	2†	35,463,913	1†	34,746,876	3†	337,399,199	2†
"	192,508,628	2†	44,856,170	2†	38,887,944	14†	276,252,642	3†	35,338,966	† Dec.	35,427,534	2	347,069,071	2†
"	199,746,304	3†	47,819,469	6†	40,535,962	4†	288,151,755	4†	35,982,782	1†	36,512,649	3	360,647,187	4
"	212,633,733	6†	51,171,483	7	40,468,207	† Dec.	304,208,363	5†	37,446,953	4	37,843,183	3†	379,501,469	5†
"	232,504,177	9†	54,402,023	6†	42,816,314	6	329,732,514	8†	40,419,665	8	40,675,310	7†	410,817,459	8†
"	254,922,907	9†	57,186,169	5	46,191,569	8	358,300,666	8†	41,254,506	2	44,114,009	8†	443,640,901	8
"	263,037,927	3†	59,647,549	4†	45,844,963	† Dec.	368,530,340	2†	41,832,534	1†	45,853,002	4	466,316,176	2†

## APPENDIX (D.)

AN ACCOUNT showing the Gross and Net Post Office Revenue, and the Cost of Management, for the United Kingdom, for the Year ending the 5th of January 1838, and for each subsequent Year; excluding from the Account, whether of Gross Revenue or Cost of Management, any Advances that may have been made by the English to the Irish Post Office, and advances to the Money Order Office; also disregarding, in the Return for each Year, any Old Debts written off, or Postage remitted, or any other Deductions which relate to previous Years.

Year ending	Gross Revenue.*			Cost of Management.†			Net Revenue.			Postage charged on Government Departments.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
5th January 1838	2,339,737	18	3½	687,313	10	7½	1,652,424	7	7½	38,523	12	0
" 1839	2,346,278	0	9½	686,768	3	6½	1,659,509	17	2½	45,156	0	11
" 1840‡	2,390,763	10	1½	756,999	7	4	1,633,764	2	9½	44,277	13	4
" 1841	1,359,466	9	2	858,677	0	5½	500,789	8	6½	90,761	3	2
" 1842	1,469,418	10	11½	938,168	10	7½	531,249	11	4½	113,255	15	10
" 1843	1,578,145	16	7½	977,504	10	3	600,641	6	4½	122,161	8	9
" 1844	1,620,867	11	10	980,650	7	5½	640,217	4	4½	116,503	1	0
" 1845	1,705,067	16	4	985,110	13	10½	719,957	2	5½	109,232	13	5½
" 1846	1,887,576	13	11½	1,125,594	5	0	761,982	8	11½	101,190	19	0½
" 1847	1,963,857	9	9½	1,138,745	2	4½	825,112	7	5	100,354	19	0
" 1848	2,181,016	16	0½	1,196,520	1	6½	984,496	14	6	121,290	13	9
" 1849	2,143,679	19	6	1,403,250	13	2½	740,429	6	4	115,902	13	7
" 1850	2,165,340	17	9½	1,324,562	16	10	840,778	0	11½	106,923	18	0
" 1851	2,264,684	5	3½	1,460,785	13	10½	803,898	11	5½	109,523	13	7
" 1852	2,422,168	4	1½	1,304,163	12	8½	1,118,004	11	4½	167,129	3	7½†
" 1853¶	2,434,326	16	7	1,343,907	3	1½	1,090,419	13	5½	124,977	11	10
" 1854	2,574,407	15	2½	1,400,679	15	10	1,173,727	19	4½	134,112	8	11***
31st Dec. 1854	2,701,862	14	0½	1,506,556	4	2½**	1,195,306	9	10	173,451	13	5
" 1855	2,716,420	0	4½	1,651,364	0	0	1,065,056	0	3½	159,906	17	11***

\* Namely, the Gross Receipts, after deducting the Returns for "Refused Letters," &c.

† Including all payments out of the Revenue in its progress to the Exchequer, except advances to the Money Order Office. Of the Sums under the head "Cost of Management," 10,307l. 10s. per annum is for pensions which have no relation to the service of the Post Office.

‡ This year includes one Month of the Fourpenny Rate.

§ This includes a payment of 196,088l. 5s. 1d. for the conveyance of Mails by Railway in previous years.

|| This includes a payment of 192,975l. 13s. 11d. for the conveyance of Mails by Railway in previous years.

¶ The revenue and expenditure of the North American provinces, amounting for the last complete year to 96,164l. 2s. 2d. and 71,171l. 13s. 4d. respectively, no longer appear in the Accounts of this Department, except that the present year's accounts include one quarter's revenue and expenditure for Canada.

\*\* This includes a payment of 128,000l. for the conveyance of Mails by Railways in previous years.

†† This includes the sum of 31,599l. 16s. 2d. chargeable against the Census Office in the year.

\*\*\* This includes the official postage charged on the General Post Office and on the East India Company, which was excluded from the Return in former years.

## APPENDIX (E.)

AN ACCOUNT of the Amount of Postage, &c. collected at the under-mentioned Cities and Towns of the United Kingdom, including Postage Stamps sold by this Department, and by the Office of Inland Revenue and its Agents, during the Years 1854 and 1855.

	1854.*	1855.
<b>ENGLAND.</b>		
London	£. 822,985†	£. 817,338‡
Bath	14,049	13,765
Birmingham	36,812	35,695
Bradford, Yorkshire	11,820	11,824
Bristol	29,479	28,510
Cheltenham	9,291	9,691
Coventry	4,566	4,365
Derby	7,818	8,202
Exeter	9,641	10,118
Hull	16,190	16,575
Leeds	19,917	19,525
Leicester	6,805	7,227
Liverpool	91,909	92,842
Macclesfield	1,949	2,015
Manchester	74,736	78,121
Newcastle-on-Tyne	17,231	18,434
Norwich	10,626	11,229
Nottingham	10,426	10,528
Plymouth	10,252	10,197
Portsmouth	9,744	10,858
Newcastle, Staffordshire, and Potteries	5,617	4,507
Preston	6,352	6,736
Sheffield	13,947	14,509
Southampton	10,772	12,228
Wolverhampton	7,373	8,086
York	9,447	9,904
<b>IRELAND.</b>		
Dublin	53,676	48,499
Belfast	9,682	10,352
Cork	10,183	10,465
Drogheda	1,934	2,084
Limerick	6,971	7,364
Londonderry	4,099	4,299
Waterford	3,179	3,039
<b>SCOTLAND.</b>		
Edinburgh	41,612	41,922
Aberdeen	10,733	10,918
Dundee	7,912	8,144
Glasgow	58,136	57,788
Perth	3,720	3,725
Stirling	3,650	3,603

\* The amount of Postage, &c. for 1854 is made up to 31st December; the Stamps sold by the Inland Revenue Department to 5th January 1855.

† Including 179,451*l.* for postage charged to Government Departments.

‡ Including 159,906*l.* for postage charged to Government Departments.

# APPENDIX (F.)

Number and Amount of Money Orders issued and paid in the United Kingdom, during the Year ending the 5th January 1840, and each subsequent Year; being, as respects England, up to the 5th April 1847 inclusive, to a certain extent estimated.

## MONEY ORDERS ISSUED.

Year ending.	ENGLAND AND WALES.			IRELAND.			SCOTLAND.			TOTAL, UNITED KINGDOM.		
	Number.	Amount.		Number.	Amount.		Number.	Amount.		Number.	Amount.	
		£	s. d.		£	s. d.		£	s. d.		£	s. d.
5 January 1840	142,723	240,063	5 4	30,015	47,295	8 4	16,183	25,765	19 4	188,921	313,124	13 0
" 1841	482,764	802,827	16 8	53,507	77,167	9 2	51,526	80,980	4 5	587,797	960,975	10 3
" 1842	1,290,115	2,657,969	4 3	125,170	215,382	12 8	137,560	254,155	13 4	1,552,845	3,127,507	10 3
" 1843	1,767,626	3,709,778	12 2	169,910	295,878	8 11	174,444	331,520	14 3	2,111,980	4,327,177	15 4
" 1844	2,086,009	4,369,344	4 10	208,179	358,884	5 3	207,335	384,612	7 1	2,501,523	5,112,840	17 2
" 1845	2,339,699	4,858,885	14 9	232,525	391,692	9 3	240,539	444,817	12 0	2,806,803	5,695,395	7 4
" 1846	2,627,443	5,463,453	10 7	258,144	435,330	17 3	290,539	514,376	13 4	3,176,126	6,413,361	1 2
" 1847	2,881,699	5,926,478	13 11	299,521	519,877	1 5	333,859	624,706	0 11	3,515,079	7,071,056	16 3
" 1848	3,286,375	6,600,658	0 2	343,156	585,454	15 10	401,654	717,064	7 9	4,031,185	7,903,177	3 9
" 1849	3,468,823	6,861,803	13 0	359,043	604,192	13 8	375,785	683,298	13 0	4,203,651	8,151,294	19 8
From 6 January to 31 December 1849	3,515,839	6,880,865	11 2	358,378	594,604	14 3	374,474	679,378	12 1	4,248,891	8,152,643	17 6
" 1 January to 31 December 1850	3,677,112	7,173,622	13 11	377,436	623,792	8 6	383,165	697,143	8 2	4,439,713	8,494,498	10 7
" 1851	3,878,497	7,518,050	14 1	392,848	655,359	19 5	383,680	705,000	2 7	4,661,025	8,880,420	15 1
" 1852	4,158,753	8,061,061	1 11	393,879	656,110	15 1	395,193	721,136	0 2	4,947,825	9,498,277	17 2
" 1853	4,405,365	8,511,517	17 0	396,966	662,547	5 7	412,939	752,130	2 5	5,215,290	9,916,195	5 0
" 1854	4,621,296	8,957,135	16 1	409,625	690,809	4 7	435,323	814,466	15 8	5,466,244	10,462,411	16 4
" 1855	4,901,316	9,403,104	5 6	444,720	753,560	2 8	461,376	832,615	4 0	5,807,412	11,003,279	12 2

## APPENDIX (F).—continued.

## MONEY ORDERS PAID.

Year ending	ENGLAND AND WALES.			IRELAND.			SCOTLAND.			TOTAL, UNITED KINGDOM.		
	Number.	Amount.		Number.	Amount.		Number.	Amount.		Number.	Amount.	
		£	s. d.		£	s. d.		£	s. d.		£	s. d.
5 January 1840	124,004	208,586	2 7	47,022	71,426	5 3	17,609	31,715	1 3	188,615	311,727	9 1
" 1841	429,600	739,963	18 2	89,388	120,950	11 7	50,900	83,372	17 3	569,888	944,287	7 0
" 1842	1,268,660	2,638,060	10 11	158,651	245,887	18 8	132,399	256,147	17 1	1,560,210	3,140,096	6 8
" 1843	1,734,423	3,687,458	10 10	191,172	297,156	12 1	179,301	348,993	9 0	2,104,896	4,393,608	11 11
" 1844	2,047,603	4,323,820	18 4	232,026	355,973	6 1	216,100	411,664	12 6	2,495,731	5,091,458	16 11
" 1845	2,271,979	4,822,208	2 5	263,070	398,061	4 11	247,070	469,821	11 5	2,782,119	5,690,090	18 9
" 1846	2,540,455	5,348,411	4 4	316,814	483,339	11 3	281,757	539,977	14 3	3,139,027	6,371,728	9 10
" 1847	2,798,682	5,816,084	12 7	395,014	611,320	0 8	316,107	616,692	10 3	3,509,803	7,044,097	3 6
" 1848	3,138,010	6,425,250	15 0	545,709	806,770	19 1	345,811	666,873	5 10	4,029,530	7,898,894	19 11
" 1849	3,384,088	6,816,573	10 1	470,842	665,523	8 10	348,508	670,389	10 8	4,203,438	8,152,486	9 7
From 6 January to 31 December 1849	3,419,861	6,844,633	5 7	476,259	644,430	10 9	349,232	669,292	17 8	4,243,352	8,158,356	14 0
" 1 January to 31 December 1850	3,559,900	7,098,429	7 2	503,980	681,943	4 9	367,355	702,682	9 11	4,431,235	8,483,055	1 10
" 1851	3,743,803	7,492,163	6 2	531,514	721,713	5 0	382,126	722,366	17 9	4,657,413	8,876,243	8 11
" 1852	4,016,026	7,931,510	13 8	526,233	790,490	3 11	400,600	761,718	5 3	4,942,859	9,423,719	2 10
" 1853	4,240,704	8,339,938	2 7	551,555	778,196	7 8	420,806	802,161	19 7	5,213,065	9,920,296	9 10
" 1854	4,469,328	8,807,904	16 3	531,962	789,021	3 4	438,192	855,754	18 6	5,459,482	10,459,680	18 1
" 1855	4,789,289	9,255,642	14 11	547,917	841,270	4 9	464,083	905,464	4 9	5,801,289	11,002,377	4 5

In 1840 the commission on Money Orders was reduced as follows:

For any sum not exceeding 2*l.* from 6*d.* to 3*d.*For any sum above 2*l.*, and not exceeding 5*l.* from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 6*d.*

## APPENDIX (G.)

## POSTAL COMMUNICATION WITH THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

TREASURY MINUTE, dated 27th November 1855.

My Lords have under their consideration various communications from the Colonial Office, giving cover to despatches from the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, and reports from the Postmaster General, upon the subject of a postal communication between England and the Australian colonies.

My Lords advert to the arrangement which they sanctioned some time ago for the purpose of securing a monthly postal communication with Australia by steam-boats. By that arrangement a Mail was carried, *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope, by the General Screw Steam Navigation Company, and another by the Peninsular and Oriental Company, *viâ* Singapore, in every month alternately, so as to secure a monthly communication between the two. The former of these companies, having found itself obliged to abandon the contract, and the latter, in consequence of the demand for their vessels for the purposes of the war, having been obliged to suspend the branch service from Singapore to Australia, my Lords deeply regret that for some months past, so far as steam-vessels are concerned, this important postal service has been interrupted.

As early as the month of February last, with a view of obviating this inconvenience, my Lords requested the Lords of the Admiralty to take steps to obtain a tender for a monthly conveyance of Mails to Australia, but it is only within the last few weeks that that tender has been received by the Government; and it is one which, in its present shape, and in the position which the question has now assumed, my Lords are not prepared to accept. This tender, which has been received from the Peninsular and Oriental Company, is to convey a Mail by steam once in every month between Ceylon and the Australian colonies, in connexion with their India Mail-boats, for the sum of 84,000*l.* a year. But as the present estimate of the postal revenue with Australia cannot be computed at more than 36,000*l.*, of which 24,000*l.* can only be taken as the portion applicable to the sea service, my Lords would not feel justified in imposing upon the home Exchequer exclusively so large a loss (*viz.*, 60,000*l.* a year) as would attend the adoption of this tender.

It has been with great satisfaction that my Lords in the meantime have perused the despatches received from Sir William Denison, Sir Charles Hotham, and Sir R. G. Macdonnell, as well as the proceedings of the respective public authorities of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, upon the subject of postal communication, and my Lords have no doubt that when sufficient time shall have elapsed to enable the replies of the Governors of Van Diemen's Land, Western Australia, and New Zealand to the circular despatch addressed to them by Sir William Denison of the 16th March, inviting their co-operation with the other colonies and the mother country, in

order to place the postal communication upon a permanent and satisfactory basis, to reach this country, they will be found to coincide with the enlightened and public-spirited views expressed by those colonies already referred to in reference to the subject of that despatch.

The general tendency of all the correspondence upon this subject which has reached this Board, shows that the different colonies of Australia have become so impressed with the necessity of maintaining a permanent, certain, and rapid postal communication with England, that they are now prepared to share with this country any loss which it may be necessary to incur; but the offers of contribution, though made by those colonies from which communications have been received in a spirit of earnestness upon which my Lords place the most implicit reliance, are yet either too vague or are accompanied by conditions too contradictory and inconsistent with each other to form at once the basis of an arrangement with regard to which it is most desirable there should be no possible misunderstanding. It may therefore be convenient that my Lords should here place on record the various proposals which have been made by the different colonies, first and last, with respect to sharing in the expense of the postal service, and the conditions attached to those offers:

1. It appears that in 1846 the Legislative Council of New South Wales recommended that 6,000*l.* a year for three years should be placed at the disposal of the Home Government, in aid of steam communication *via* India. In 1852 this recommendation was confirmed, but on condition that the route should be by Torres Straits. In 1852 the Government offered a payment of 6,000*l.* for three years to the first steam company which should establish a monthly line of steamers performing the distance from Sydney to England and back in 120 days.

2. In 1849 the Governor of Van Diemen's Land reported that 2,000*l.* a year had been appropriated from the local revenue towards a line from Singapore *via* Sidney; that is, by the eastern route through Torres Straits.

3. In 1847 the Legislative Council of South Australia reported in favour of a line by way of the Cape, and promised 3,000*l.* a year for three years if the passage were accomplished within 70 days.

4. In 1853 the Governor of Western Australia reported that the Council would be willing to pay 1,000*l.* a year towards the expense of the line from Singapore to Sydney, provided the ships should call at Fremantle.

5. In the same year the authorities of Victoria, in expressing an anxious desire for a cheap postal communication with England, offered to contribute, so far as their own colony was concerned, for the necessary expenditure; but it afterwards appeared that a misconception had arisen as to the intention of the colonial authorities in this declaration.

6. In the present year an Act was passed by the Legislature of South Australia, authorizing a payment of 500*l.* to each steam-vessel delivering direct Mails, *via* the Red Sea, within 58 days, provided that such vessel had not touched at any port eastward of Adelaide, and that the Mails were delivered direct from the same ship that

brought them from the last point of land before reaching the Australian colonies.

7. There remains to be stated the substance of the communications which have taken place between Sir William Denison and the other Governors in the present year. On the 16th of March Sir William Denison addressed the circular despatch already adverted to, to Sir Charles Hotham, the Governor of Victoria, and to the Governors of the other Australian colonies, as well as to the Governor of New Zealand; in which, after dwelling in appropriate terms upon the necessity of restoring, as early as possible, a regular postal communication, he proposes that the whole of those colonies should join in defraying a portion of the loss which, at least for some time to come, must attend the establishment of a monthly steam communication between them and England; in which circular Sir William Denison divides the subject into the following three points for consideration:

1st. What should be the maximum sum to be paid for such service?

2d. In what proportion this amount should be divided between the colonies and the mother country?

3d. In what manner the contribution of the colonies should be apportioned among them?

In discussing these points Sir William Denison assumes that the maximum cost of the service would be 100,000*l.*; and he expresses an opinion that of that sum 40,000*l.*, or two fifths of the whole, should be contributed by the colonies, and the remainder by the Home Government; and that so far as regards the distribution of the contribution among the different colonies, that should be determined by the proportion of letters which each colony transmits by the Mail, and should be revised annually. The views entertained by Sir William Denison appear to have been entirely adopted by the Executive Council of New South Wales, who passed a resolution that the Legislative Council should be invited to place the sum of 15,000*l.* annually at the disposal of the Government to carry out the arrangement; as yet, however, no information has been received that that has actually been done.

With regard to the colony of Victoria, my Lords have before them several despatches of Sir Charles Hotham, addressed to the Secretary of State and to Sir William Denison, by which it appears that the authorities entered warmly into the arrangement proposed; and it appears by Sir C. Hotham's despatch to Sir William Denison, of the 4th of May, that he had caused to be inserted in the "Post Office Act Amendment Bill" a clause pledging the Legislature to the expenditure of a sum not exceeding 50,000*l.* per annum for the maintenance of steam communication between Victoria and Great Britain not less than once a month, and that the Legislative Council had given its sanction to the Act. But Sir Charles Hotham states that any contribution on the part of Victoria must be subject to the following four conditions:—

1st. That no contract should be made that does not provide for the delivery of the Mail at Melbourne in a period not exceeding



55 days from the date of leaving London ; the choice of route to rest with Her Majesty's Government.

2d. That if the overland route is adopted, the packet must proceed from Point de Galle *viâ* Cape Lewin and King George's Sound to Melbourne ; she must touch at Kangaroo Island, but to avoid a loss of two or three days, she must not enter Port Adelaide, and that she shall proceed from Melbourne to Sydney.

3d. That in case the overland route is adopted, the packet would proceed to Sydney immediately after the delivery of the Melbourne Mails ; but that on her homeward voyage she must remain at least 48 hours in the port of Melbourne, exclusive of Sundays.

4th. That preference must be given to the passengers from the colonies on the homeward route over any passengers for a shorter distance.

With regard to the colony of South Australia, my Lords have before them a despatch of the Governor, Sir R. G. Macdonnell, to the Secretary of State, giving cover to a copy of a despatch addressed by Mr. Finnis, who administered the government of the colony prior to Sir R. G. Macdonnell's arrival, in reply to Sir William Denison's circular letter ; the substance of which is, that he had sufficiently ascertained the state of public feeling in the colony as to be able to say, with some degree of confidence, that the Legislature (which was not then in session) would give its support to any plan arranged by the Home Government with any steam company by which an ocean steamer shall monthly call off Port Adelaide, outward and homeward, delivering the Mails within the same time as under the late contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Company ; remaining in the port only sufficient time to deliver the Mails on the outward voyage, but remaining 24 hours on the homeward voyage ; that to secure this advantage the Government would propose to the Legislative Council a Bill, to pay, on behalf of the colony, a contribution not exceeding 12,000*l.* a year. In respect to the cost of the whole service, the acting Governor of South Australia suggests that the colonies should pay one-half, and the Imperial Government the other.

My Lords have also read, with much satisfaction, the enlarged and liberal views taken of the proposal as a whole, in the minutes of the Executive Council of the 17th of April, as well as in the reports of the Postmaster General of the colony, of the Acting Colonial Secretary, the Advocate General, and the Surveyor General.

Sir R. G. Macdonnell, in his despatch, states that the letter of Mr. Finnis represents the views of members of the Legislature and of the general community being in favour of steamers from Point de Galle, calling off Port Adelaide.

From the remaining three colonies, viz. Van Diemen's Land, Western Australia, and New Zealand, as yet no intimation of any reply to Sir William Denison's despatch has reached this Board.

From this summary of the existing state of these negotiations, it is apparent that they have not yet assumed that clear and tangible position which would enable the Home Government to make them

the basis of an actual arrangement. The Executive Council of New South Wales has passed a resolution to invite the Legislative Council to appropriate a sum of 15,000*l.* towards the service, but no advice has yet been received that this has been adopted. Sir William Denison has stipulated for no conditions which could embarrass the arrangement; but looking to the great preference hitherto shown and embodied in the acts of the Legislature for the route by Torres Straits, by which the first arrival and the last departure would be from Sydney, it is possible the Legislature may attach such a condition to any grant it may make. In Victoria the Legislature has authorized a very liberal expenditure for the purpose, but Sir Charles Hotham has attached conditions which are inconsistent with the conditions contended for by South Australia, and, in part, such as it may be impossible to obtain. In South Australia the only Act that has really been passed offers a payment of 500*l.* to every steamer which shall deliver a direct Mail *viâ* Suez, and without first having called at any port eastward of Adelaide, that is, without having first touched at Melbourne. And the Governor now holds out hopes that the Legislative Council would vote 12,000*l.* a year in aid of a plan by which the Mail-packets on their outward and homeward voyages shall call at Port Adelaide. The acquiescence, therefore, of the colonies of Victoria and South Australia in the proposal of Sir William Denison is thus based upon contradictory conditions. With regard to the other three colonies, no engagement, as far as my Lords know, has yet been entered into, of any kind.

However, notwithstanding all the difficulties and conflicting views as exhibited in the various correspondence under consideration, my Lords are of opinion that the interests involved, both Imperial and colonial, in a speedy restoration of a monthly postal communication between the United Kingdom and the Australian colonies, are so great, that the time has now arrived when the Home Government should take the initiative, and propose for the adoption of the colonies some great and comprehensive scheme, which shall, upon mature consideration, appear the best adapted for the interests of the whole, and pending a communication with the colonies, in order to save time, to take such preliminary steps as shall secure its coming into operation as soon as possible. And my Lords are the more induced to arrive at this decision for the following reasons:—

1. My Lords cannot, after all the discussions which have taken place upon this subject, be surprised that the different colonies should view with favour, and even insist upon plans which, from the geographical position of the colonies, promise to confer peculiar advantages upon them, and that in this respect the requirements of some may be at variance with the interests of others or of the whole. And my Lords fear that a great delay would take place if they were to wait until these differences should be adjusted among the colonies themselves.

2. My Lords are convinced, from the whole tenor of the correspondence now before them, that all the colonies are now so much in earnest in their desire to see a permanent steam postal communication established, that they will be ready to sink any minor differences of

opinion, and to submit to slight disadvantages in order to secure the far greater benefits which will result from a well-considered general scheme.

3. My Lords are further induced confidently to believe that each colony will accept a general plan, prepared by the Home Government after full consideration, in the full conviction that, as it is proposed without any bias or leaning in favour of any one colony, it may be assumed as that which is the best calculated to meet the public wants.

The principle upon which the postal communication between England and the Australian colonies has latterly been conducted is, that a postage of 6*d.* for a single letter has been charged, of which 4*d.* was understood to represent the sea rate, 1*d.* for collecting or delivering a single letter in any part of the United Kingdom, and the same in any part of the colonies; so that the whole cost of sending a letter from any part of the United Kingdom to any part of the Australian colonies, or *vice versa*, should not exceed 6*d.*

As the whole cost of the packet service has hitherto been borne by the Imperial Government, the portion of the postage which represented the sea-service has been accounted for to the home Post Office, so that of the 6*d.* charged, 5*d.* has been appropriated to England, and 1*d.* to the colony receiving or despatching the letter, as the case might be.

My Lords have already adverted to the heavy charge which has hitherto been imposed upon the British Exchequer from the loss which has attended this arrangement, and to the circumstance that they would not feel justified in adopting the still heavier loss which would attend the improved service which the colonial authorities think absolutely required for their present wants. But this difficulty is happily removed by the enlightened view taken by the colonial authorities, and their willingness to defray a share of the loss which shall be incurred in securing a regular monthly steam communication. This loss, though it will be great at first, may fairly be expected rapidly to diminish by the increase of the postal revenue, consequent not alone upon an increasing population, but also upon the establishment of a more frequent and regular service. And it may also be hoped that before many years shall pass, the increased communication may enable contracts for the conveyance of Mails to be made upon considerably more favourable terms.

With a view to effect such an arrangement, there are two modes which might be adopted :

1. The present plan might be continued by which the home authorities defray the whole cost of the sea-service, receive the entire sea-postage, and might then divide the net annual loss between the Home Government and the different colonies in proportions to be fixed. Or,

2. It might be arranged, as has been suggested by Sir William Denison, that each colony should receive the postage of all the letters forwarded by it to the United Kingdom, or to either of the other colonies, and that the home Post Office should receive the postage upon all letters outward, in which case the entire cost of the

sea-service would be divided in the proportions determined upon, in place of the balance of loss; but in the adoption of this plan it would be necessary to introduce the system of compulsory pre-payment.

It appears to my Lords that the latter plan presents in many respects very important advantages. In the first place, as it may be reckoned that upon an average of the whole year about the same number of letters are sent to and received from each colony, the plan would practically amount to an equal division of the postage between the colonies and the United Kingdom, while the intercolonial postage would go entirely to the colonies. In the next place, the system of intricate accounts at present subsisting between the home Post-office and each of the colonial offices, in order to show the amounts collected for and due to the former, might be entirely dispensed with. And in the last place, it would leave the Home Government and each colonial Government free to regulate their rates of postage in any way they thought fit, within the terms of existing treaties, so far as regards foreign states. It would of course be stipulated that a letter from England should be delivered in any part of each of the colonies for the payment charged in England, and *vice versâ*, that any letter posted in the colonies should be delivered in any part of the United Kingdom, without any additional charge to that made in the colony. My Lords are therefore prepared to adopt the suggestion made by the Australian authorities on this point, to make pre-payment necessary, and that each Post Office should retain the postage collected by itself as its own proper share of the whole. It will, however, be necessary to make some provision in respect to letters which are posted in the colonies for continental or other foreign countries, and which will pass through the English Post Office. By this arrangement, the sum to be divided between the Home Government and the colonies will be the entire cost of the service, and not the net loss.

My Lords now come to consider the three points raised by Sir William Denison, viz.—1st. What amount should be expended for the entire service; 2d. In what proportion that amount should be paid by the Home Government and the colonies; and 3d. In what proportion each colony shall contribute to the share to be paid by the colonies respectively.

1st. As to the cost of the service. As the only fair and satisfactory means of determining this point, my Lords propose to give instructions to the Admiralty immediately to ascertain by public competition the lowest rate at which it can be accomplished on the conditions and plans herein-after defined.

2d. As to the proportion to be paid by the Home Government on the one hand, and by the colonies collectively on the other, Sir William Denison suggests that three-fifths should be paid by the Home Government, and two fifths by the colonies. The Executive Council of South Australia expresses an opinion that on the arrangement ceasing by which the Home Government receives five-sixths of the postage, which is now proposed as part of the new plan, the cost of the service should be borne equally between the mother country and the colonies collectively. My Lords are of opinion that there

are many sound reasons why this latter course should be adopted, namely, that one-half of the whole cost should be defrayed by the Home Government, and half by the colonies collectively. In the first place, in making this arrangement, my Lords are desirous above all things that it should be based upon principles that will prove as permanent in their operation as possible, and that will be simple and self-adjusting in the natural changes which must in the course of time take place. It is to be expected that as the Australian colonies become more and more developed, the net loss arising from a postal service will become less ; but it may be laid down as a principle, that the advantages derived from the conveyance of letters will always be equal to the people at home and to those of the colonies, as it is presumed that the same number of letters will be sent and received at each end. This equality of advantages would therefore point to an equal division of the cost. In the next place, as it is proposed that each Post Office shall retain the prepaid postage upon the whole of its own letters forwarded, and which will practically result in the colonial Post Offices receiving half of the entire postal revenue attached to the service, it is obviously fair that they should also bear half the cost. And lastly, it appears to my Lords that in a mutual arrangement of this kind, which it is essential to place upon a permanent footing, it would not be desirable, even on the part of the colonies, for the sake of the slight advantage it would confer upon them, to adopt a plan which had the characteristic of being in any degree one-sided. On the contrary, it is better for all parties that it should be perfectly fair and just. My Lords therefore propose that the Home Government shall in the first place defray the entire cost of the main service, and shall be reimbursed by the colonies to the extent of one-half.

3d. As to the proportion of the moiety of the cost which shall be contributed by each colony. It appears to my Lords that the plan proposed for this purpose by Sir William Denison, and acquiesced in by the authorities of the other colonies, so far as their views have been expressed, is a perfectly fair and satisfactory one, viz., that each colony shall contribute in proportion to the number of letters despatched annually by the steamers. It is proposed that this proportion should be adjusted anew every year, but it appears to my Lords that this would lead to unnecessary trouble, and that if an adjustment took place every two years, it would be sufficiently accurate for all practical purposes.

With regard to the entire cost of the main service, it is necessary to observe, that if upon receiving the tenders which shall be made, it shall be decided to adopt the East Indian route, an addition will have to be made to the amount paid for the service from Point de Galle to the Australian colonies, as between them and the Home Government for the portion of the cost of the existing overland service, which would fairly represent the Australian postage; inasmuch as in an arrangement made between Her Majesty's Government and the East India Company for that service, a portion of the entire cost was calculated to be borne by the former in respect to those colonies.

My Lords now come to consider the important question of the manner in which the service is to be performed, and the steps to be taken with a view to that end. Great difference of opinion has prevailed as to the route which should be adopted as the best, whether by the Cape, by Panama, or by the Indian overland route, although up to this time experience has shown that the latter is the preferable. My Lords are, however, desirous that a fair test should now be made of all these routes, and they are therefore of opinion that any tenders to be invited should be open to all alike, and that it will be for the Government to consider and decide which will be the most advantageous, taken as a whole. At present there is a contract existing with the Peninsular and Oriental Company, for the conveyance of a Mail every two months, *viâ* Singapore, upon terms that may be considered favourable to the Government; that service has been suspended for some time past, in consequence of the vessels of the Company being required for the war, and my Lords have now to decide whether they will hold the Company to the contract, or release them from it. Looking to the circumstance that the new service to be provided for will be monthly, it appears to my Lords that any arrangement for that service which could be made, if it were to work in conjunction with this contract now existing for one-half of it, would be made under great disadvantage, and that the only way by which the best terms and arrangements could be secured would be to throw the whole open to competition. My Lords are therefore of opinion that the best course will be to relieve the Peninsular and Oriental Company from their contract for that portion of the service, and to enter upon the new plan unembarrassed by an existing partial arrangement.

My Lords have already adverted to the conflicting and irreconcilable views taken by the different colonies as to the mode in which the service should be performed, and as to the route to be taken by the steamers employed; but there are two principles which are so obviously desirable to be observed that my Lords cannot hesitate to lay them down as a rule which must be for the benefit of the whole: first, that each colony shall have the benefit of an arrival and departure by each steamer monthly, and that the passage out and home, together, shall be made in the shortest possible time. Upon a very careful examination of the whole subject, and consideration of the correspondence which has taken place, my Lords are of opinion that these objects can be best attained by restricting the points at which the steamers of the main line should call to three, *viz.*, King George's Sound, Melbourne, and Sydney, and that all the other colonies should be provided with branch services fitting into the arrangements of the main service. My Lords have carefully and especially considered the difference of views upon this subject entertained by the colonies of Victoria and South Australia. The authorities of the latter colony very naturally desire that the steamer shall call at Port Adelaide, but when it is considered that vessels of the size which must be employed in this service are unable to cross the bar of the port, and are obliged to bring up at a distance from the port of 15 miles, and from the land of five miles, and often in very bad weather, and that under any

circumstances a small branch steamer must be employed, and when it is further considered that calling at Port Adelaide would cause considerable detention to the more important mails of Melbourne and Sydney if the eastern route shall be adopted, as well as a loss of time also on the return voyage, and that therefore the entire voyage out and home would be lengthened, a disadvantage which would affect South Australia as well as the other colonies, my Lords feel convinced that the inhabitants of that colony will be satisfied, upon due consideration, that so far as the arrangement above proposed may be a concession on their part, it is one which the general interests of all concerned calls upon them to make, and that they will see that the saving of time in the outward and homeward services together so obtained will be an advantage to them as well as to others.

My Lords, are, however, of opinion that in the comprehensive scheme which they are now proposing, arrangements should be made at the common cost for the branch services required to convey the Mails to and from Port Adelaide, Van Diemen's Land, and New Zealand, making Melbourne the common point of arrival and departure of those branch services. They therefore propose that arrangements shall be made on the spot for those services, and that the cost of the same shall be added to the cost of the main services and divided in the same proportions as already indicated.

My Lords advert to a condition which Sir Charles Hotham attaches to his acquiescence in the proposals of Sir William Denison, namely, that in the event of the overland route being adopted, preference should be given to passengers from the Australian colonies on the homeward route over any passengers for a shorter distance. With regard to this condition, my Lords entirely agree with the objection made by Sir William Denison in his despatch to Sir Charles Hotham, of the 18th of April, in which he urges that such a condition might be inconsistent with any arrangements which the Peninsular and Oriental Company could positively make, and that the effect of insisting upon it would be to exclude from the arrangement the advantage of the competition of that Company. Sir Charles Hotham states as a reason for insisting upon it, the fact that in the return voyages of the South American steamers the passengers from the furthest point in the River Plate have the preference over those from Rio de Janeiro; but the circumstances are not the same. The Australian steamers, if that route were adopted, would join the Indian line at Point de Galle, and if that were the extreme point of the Indian service, the cases would be parallel and the plan possible. But in place of this being so, Point de Galle is a station on the homeward route from Hong Kong, Singapore, and Calcutta, and it would obviously be impracticable to insist upon such a provision in favour of Australian passengers over those who may have come from those various points.

My Lords are of opinion that, in a purely postal arrangement, conditions in relation to passengers, however important the subject is in itself, should not be permitted to embarrass the more immediate question, and that all parties may rest satisfied that, in this respect, any Company undertaking the service will, for its own interests and

profit, make such arrangements as shall be most convenient to all parties.

The plan, therefore, which my Lords propose may be thus shortly summed up:

1. That they shall instruct the Admiralty to obtain tenders, by open competition, for a monthly postal service between this country and Australia, the vessels, outward and homeward, touching at King George's Sound, Melbourne, and Sydney, carrying the Mails for the six colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Van Diemen's Land, and New Zealand.

2. That branch services shall be established by open competition from Melbourne, as the central point, with Port Adelaide, Van Diemen's Land, and New Zealand.

3. That all letters and newspapers shall be pre-paid, and that each Post Office shall retain its own receipts.

4. That the entire cost of the services described shall be divided equally between the Home Government and the colonies collectively.

5. That each of the colonies shall contribute to the moiety to be paid by them collectively in proportion to the number of letters despatched by each, to be ascertained every two years.

In the first place, it will be necessary to obtain from each of the colonies named a duly authorized legislative acquiescence in the arrangement proposed. For this purpose let a copy of this Minute be transmitted to the Colonial Office, and request that the Secretary of State will take the necessary steps with that view. But state that as some time must elapse before replies can be received from the different colonies, and as my Lords are anxious that no time should be lost in re-establishing a monthly Mail by steam, my Lords, relying upon the correspondence now before them from the Governors of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, have decided to take immediate steps in order to secure a commencement of the service at the earliest possible time after the receipt of communications from the different colonies acquiescing in the proposed arrangements.

Write to the Secretary of the Admiralty and request that the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty will take immediate steps to procure tenders for a monthly postal communication by steam with Australia on the following conditions, and report to this Board before any contract is actually made:

1. The tenders to be delivered within two months of the date of the advertisement.

2. The tenders to specify the route and the maximum number of days between the departure of the Mail from Southampton and its arrival at Melbourne, and Sydney, and King George's Sound, respectively; and also the number of days on the homeward route.

3. That the service shall be performed under a penalty of 100*l.* a day for delay in starting, and 30*l.* a day for any time consumed in the voyage beyond the allowed maximum.

4. The contractors to state in what time from the acceptance of their tender they will be prepared (under a penalty to be agreed upon,) to commence the service.



5. The contractors to give such adequate security as to the Lords of the Admiralty may appear necessary, for the payment of any penalties which may become due, and generally for the performance of the contract, which penalties in no case whatever shall be relinquished.

6. The contract to be for five years.

Transmit copy of this Minute to the Colonial Office, Admiralty, and Post Office for their information and guidance.

---

## APPENDIX (H.)

---

### REPLY to a MEMORIAL from a NUMBER of LONDON LETTER CARRIERS.

General Post Office, Circulation Department,  
February 1856.

SIR,

I AM instructed by the Postmaster General to reply as follows to your Memorial of the 4th instant:

With regard to your complaint as to the partial discontinuance of the payment for extra work, the change has been made in obedience to an instruction from the Treasury contained in the same document which directed the recent increase of Wages. This instruction, indeed, enjoined the total discontinuance of such payments, but at the request of the Postmaster General the Treasury, in consideration of the high price of provisions, consented that for the present the reduction should be limited to one-half; the reduction in duty being of course proportionate.

Even without such instruction, it is, as you well know, in full accordance with the practice of the department, to discontinue extra work, and of course the payment thereto attached, whenever such change is thought convenient.

The alleged information given you by your superior officers in March 1855, was, as shown by the admission of your committee recently made to myself, simply to the effect that the extra payment would be continued so long as the extra duty was performed; and my circular of the same month to which you refer, limits the performance of such extra duty to the time "pending the contemplated revision of the duties of the department," and, for the future, guarantees you merely against diminution in the amount of the "*fixed wages* or salary" received under the old classification.

With full allowance for misconception on your part, the Postmaster General considers it a matter of blame that, after withdrawing your first memorial in consequence of the explanation made by myself and the admission made by your committee, you should have repeated your mis-statements in the memorial now presented.

With regard to promotion by merit, I have also to say that the instruction from the Treasury is absolute; that the rule is essential to the good of the service, and cannot be departed from. I scarcely need add, that seniority has its due advantage; since, other things equal, the man longest in the service is the first selected for promotion.

With regard to the alleged excess of work, I have first to point out to you that the recent changes, placing many of you in new walks, have unavoidably produced a temporary increase of labour.

If, however, any of your number be of opinion that their duties, after allowing for these temporary circumstances, will exceed the amount which a man of ordinary dispatch may be expected to get through in an average of eight hours per day, (after deducting one hour for every sixpence paid on account of extra work,) such persons are at liberty to report their particular cases in writing, stating their duties in detail, and affixing the time required for each—the same to be taken into consideration, with a view, if necessary, to such re-adjustment of the work as circumstances may allow.—I need not point out that in admitting these representations, the Postmaster General expects that each applicant will take care that his statements be in strict accordance with the facts of the case.\*

In replying to your memorial, (the signatures to which are almost exclusively confined to the fourth or lowest class of Letter Carriers), I am instructed also to refer to the circumstances attending its preparation, viz. :—1st, the proceedings at the meeting of the 13th ultimo, and, 2nd, the publication of the memorial—an improper step under any circumstances, but more especially so before its presentation.

As regards the meeting, I hope I need scarcely point out to you that its proceedings were of a highly discreditable character; some of the speeches, as reported, were very disrespectful towards your superior officers, and both speeches and resolutions contained statements or insinuations inconsistent with the real facts of the case, and intended, apparently, to mislead the public, and to excite a popular clamour in support of your demands.

His Grace desires me to say, that even had the prayer of the memorial been reasonable in itself, he should have found it difficult, if not impossible, to take it into favourable consideration when connected with proceedings of so objectionable a character.

His Grace is the more concerned at such misconduct, seeing that it follows close upon the adoption of various measures tending greatly to improve your condition, viz. :—improved scales of wages—gratuitous medical attendance to such at least as are attached to the Chief Office—an annual fortnight's holiday with uninterrupted full wages—greatly increased pensions for old age, without any deduction from present salary—and, lastly, pecuniary assistance in insurances for the benefit of your families at your death.

His Grace, however, willing to make allowance for errors in judgment, and even for misconduct arising out of excited feeling, desires to take as lenient a course as is consistent with due regard to the discipline of the office. He, therefore, satisfies himself with reminding those who have shared in these objectionable proceedings, that under the regulations laid down by the Treasury no annual increase of wages can be made without a certificate from the head of the department attesting satisfactory conduct during the preceding

---

\* March 19th. Although five weeks have elapsed since the Circular was issued, not a single statement has been received with reference to this notice.

year; and that in granting of such certificates, proceedings like those in question will necessarily be taken into consideration. I have, therefore to urge upon you all, and especially upon such as had any share in the offensive proceedings at the public meeting, or in the publication of the memorial, to be extremely cautious as to future conduct.

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_  
Letter Carrier.

I am, &c.  
W. BOKENHAM, Controller,

## APPENDIX (I.)

### MEDICAL OFFICER'S FIRST PERIODICAL REPORT.

#### 1.—NUMBER OF OFFICERS UNDER MEDICAL CHARGE.

SIR, General Post Office, 5th January 1856.  
IN drawing up this, my first report, on the state of health of the officers of this department under my charge, since the 1st of July 1855, and the sanitary condition of the department generally, I would premise that the statistical portion of the report will necessarily be in an unsatisfactory state, on account of the changes that have been made in the regulations for medical attendance.

Thus, during the commencement of the six months just elapsed, not only did every officer in this department, whatever might be his salary, but also all the officers attached to the Branch Offices, apply for advice when they required it.

Some time in July or August, the latter officers were informed that the medical aid did not extend to them, and early in November it was ruled that officers whose salary exceeded 150*l.* were not intended to have the benefit of gratuitous medical advice, and that Clerks whose salaries were below that amount, although they might receive advice, were to provide their own medicines.

The consequence of the above changes in the regulations is, that the number of officers in my charge, during the past six months, has varied very considerably.

From information furnished me on the 14th Nov. ult., it appears that the following was the number of clerks and other officers of whom I have the entire or partial medical charge, and who are attached to the Chief Office and the Money Order Office.

Clerks whose salary do not exceed 150 <i>l.</i> per annum	-	387
Inspectors, Letter Carriers, Sorters, Stampers, Labourers, female and other domestics	- - -	1,071
		<hr/> 1,458

Number of officers and clerks whose salaries exceed 150 <i>l.</i> per annum	- - - - -	295
---	-----------	-----

By the regulations now in force, the medical officer has *full charge* of the 1,071, partial charge of the 387, not visiting them at their own abodes, except during the prevalence of an epidemic, when he not only extends his supervision to the 295 gentlemen with the

higher salaries, but prescribes medicine and gives advice to the officers of the department generally.

This was the case to some extent in the months of July, August, and September last.

The total number of Clerks, Letter Carriers, Sorters, &c. attached to the Chief-office and Money Order Office is 1753.

## 2.—GENERAL HEALTH.

The general health of the Clerks, as of the Letter Carriers, &c., has been on the whole very satisfactory, but it will be my duty in a subsequent portion of this report to point out in what manner, in my opinion, certain diseases now rather prevalent may be considerably lessened.

## 3.—EPIDEMICS.

In the months of July, August, and September there was rather a large amount of autumnal diarrhœa. I am not able to specify what number of men were affected, as by the means I took for securing to the 22 Principal and Branch Offices in London and the suburbs a supply of large quantities of medicine adapted for the complaint in question, a very great number of officers were cured without applying to the Medical Officer directly, and in numerous instances without absenting themselves for above a few hours from their duty.

A great number of officers received immediate relief from those sources.

Independently of those who had medicine for diarrhœa from the various offices above named, 138 officers were attended by me for that complaint in the first three months of the half year, whilst during the last three months only 19 applied.

## 4.—PREVAILING DISEASES.

After diarrhœa, more of the officers, especially Letter Carriers, Sorters, and Messengers have suffered from rheumatism than any other complaint.

During the past six months there have been 76 cases of rheumatism under my care. A few of these have been second attacks, and in one case a stamper has had three distinct attacks since July.

No other disease can be said to have prevailed extensively.

There are several patients under my care suffering from consumption; six have died from that complaint in the half year just elapsed, four of whom were not attended by me.

Summary of officers attended by medical officer during six months ending 31st December 1855:—

Months.	Clerks.	Other Officers.	Total.
July - - -	59	155	214
August - - -	74	212	286
September - - -	38	106	144
October - - -	26	93	119
November - - -	16	100	116
December - - -	14	93	107
Total -	227	759	986

From this it appears, that supposing the number of officers under my care to have averaged 2,000, 986 or about 50 per cent. have received medical assistance in the six months just elapsed. Many of these, it is true, have applied for advice when suffering from catarrh, influenza, or some other complaint which had not at that time incapacitated them for duty. Anxious, however, to carry out the modern principle of preventive medicine as much as possible, I have encouraged the officers to have early recourse to medical aid, instead of allowing disease to get so strong a hold on the system as to necessitate confinement to the house.

### 5.—DEATHS.

#### (a) *Clerks.*

Mr. ———, age 25. July 19. Consumption.

#### (b) *Letter Carriers.*

TABLE showing the DEATHS in the class of Letter Carriers, &c.

Disease.	Under 30.	Between 30 and 40.	Between 40 and 50.	Between 50 and 60.	Total.
Phthisis - - -	3	—	2	—	5
Hypert. of heart - -	—	—	—	1	1
Dropsy - - -	—	—	—	1	1
Softening of brain -	1	—	—	—	1
	4	—	2	2	8

### 6 — CANDIDATES EXAMINED.

I have examined about 300 candidates for office in the half year just elapsed; of this number 21 have been rejected from physical incapacity.

### 7.—REMOVABLE CAUSES OF DISEASE.

A considerable number of officers in the class of Sorters and Stampers, suffering from catarrh, bronchitis, influenza, and cold, attribute their illness to draughts of cold air from the doors of the Inland Circulation and Newspaper Offices. I am aware that keeping the doors shut during the pressure of business would be a great interruption to the work of the office; but at the same time, if some contrivance could be adopted for preventing a direct current of cold air coming in contact with the clerks and officers engaged in sorting, it would be highly desirable. Measures are taking with a view, if possible, of remedying this evil.

I had reason to believe that a certain amount of bowel complaint that prevailed in the summer and autumn, was caused by contaminated air from the men's waterclosets finding its way into different parts of the building, and in a short report that I presented several months ago, relative to the ventilation of the establishment, I recommended that these places should be removed from under the roof to a situation where a free current of air should intervene between them and the office. This has now been done, and I have no doubt

that considerable benefit will result therefrom, and the whole atmosphere of the building be rendered purer.

Much good has lately been accomplished in preventing a stagnant state of the atmosphere in the various passages and lobbies by making openings in the walls, and erecting ventilating shafts on Mr. Watson's plan.

Some of the basement offices, particularly the bag-rooms and the Messengers' kitchens, are much in need of ventilation. From the peculiarity of their cellar-like construction, considerable difficulty has been experienced in devising a method of aërating these places that would be successful; but the Clerk of the Works is now carrying out a plan that I have suggested, which I hope will have the desired effect.

The buildings appear to be perfectly dry.

The last question that I find in the paper placed in my hands, from which my report is to be drawn up, is the following:—

8. — HAVE YOU ANY SUGGESTION TO OFFER BEYOND THOSE WHICH YOU MAY HAVE ALREADY MADE FOR IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF THE OFFICERS ?

In answer to this, I would reply, that many of the class of Letter Carriers, Sorters, &c., for the convenience of living near their work, lodge in houses in streets as contiguous as possible to the Chief Office. The great demand for such lodgings, and the great value of property in the neighbourhood, oblige these men to live in rooms for the most part small, low, with very imperfect ventilation, and in many cases totally unfit for habitation; circumstances quite incompatible with vigorous health.

Many of the houses which I have entered, to visit the patients, are in a most insanitary condition, badly lighted, badly ventilated, and over-crowded.

In some of them the officers who have lodged there have taken small pox, scarlet fever, and similar contagious complaints from the children who are generally found in these houses in considerable numbers. It is in such abodes that zymotic diseases find numerous victims.

All the cases of small pox and fever that have come before me during the last six months have occurred to officers living in such tenements.

Many of the men who do not live near the Chief Office from motives of economy, lodge at considerable distances from it; they are consequently obliged to walk, in some instances, several miles in addition to the distance required by their duty, and this tends to fatigue the men quite unnecessarily.

If under these circumstances it should become possible to obtain the erection, in the neighbourhood of the Post Office, of good lodging-houses for a large body of the Letter Carriers, (a subject which, I am aware, has been already under consideration), much benefit would, I am sure, result.

The model lodging-houses of the society for improving the dwellings of the labouring classes, show how great an amount of good may be accomplished both physically and morally in this way.

Whereas the average mortality of the metropolis is about 23 in 1000, and that of the labouring portion of it considerably higher, the average mortality of the population inhabiting the model lodging-houses is but 10 and a fraction.

I will not lengthen this report by detailing the numerous advantages that would accrue as well to the department generally, as to the officers employed, were such a scheme to be carried into execution; they will readily suggest themselves to your mind.

I am, sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
WALLER LEWIS, M.B. Cantab.;  
F.G.S.; F.S.A., &c.  
Medical Officer.

Rowland Hill, Esq.,  
&c. &c. &c.

---

## APPENDIX (J.)

---

### EXTRACTS from an HISTORICAL SUMMARY of the POST OFFICE in SCOTLAND.

To show the difficulties in the way of rapid communication at this period [1678] from the condition of the roads in Scotland, it may be stated that an agreement was made to run a coach between Edinburgh and Glasgow (a distance of 44 miles) which was to be drawn by six horses, and to perform the journey to Glasgow and back in six days. The undertaking was considered so arduous that the contractor was to receive 200 merks\* a year for five years to assist him; but the speculation turned out so unprofitable it was soon abandoned.

In 1698 Sir Robert Sinclair of Stevenson, had a grant from King William of the whole revenue of the Post Office in Scotland, with a pension of 300*l.* per annum to keep up the post. The Post Office at this time appears to have been anything but a profitable concern, as Sir Robert, after due deliberation, gave up the grant, thinking it disadvantageous.

When Mr. Anderson took office on the 12th July 1715, there was not a single horse post in Scotland, foot runners being the usual means of conveyance for the mails. In this manner direct bags were conveyed from Edinburgh as far north as Thurso, and westward to Inverary. There were three Mails a week from Edinburgh to Glasgow, and three in return; the runners set out from Edinburgh each Tuesday and Thursday at 12 o'clock at night, and on Sundays in the morning, and the Mails arrived at Glasgow on the evening of Wednesday and Friday, and on the forenoon of Monday. For his services the Post Office paid 40*l.* sterling per annum; but from the

---

\* A merk is equal to 1*s.* 1½*d.* sterling.

fraudulent dealing of the Postmaster of Falkirk, who made the payments, the runners seldom received more than from 20*l*. to 25*l*.

In 1716 the Duke of Argyll, who had then supreme control in Scotland, gave orders to Mr. Anderson to place relays of horses from Edinburgh to Inverness, for the purpose of forwarding despatches to, and receiving intelligence from, the army in the Highlands under General Cadogan. These posts worked upon two lines of roads; the one went through Fife and round by the east coast, passing through Aberdeen; the other took the central road, *viâ* Perth, Dunkeld, and Blair Atholl. These horse-posts were, however, discontinued immediately after the army retired.

In 1730 the yearly revenue of the Post Office Establishment in Scotland was 1,194*l*.

About the year 1750 the Mails began to be conveyed from stage to stage, by relays of fresh horses, and different post-boys, to the principal places in Scotland; but the greater portion of the Mails were still carried by foot runners. Before the system of relays was introduced on the North Road, the mode of conveying the Mails was very tedious. For instance, "a person set out with the Mail from Edinburgh for Aberdeen; he did not travel a stage, and then deliver the Mail to another post-boy, but went on to Dundee, where he rested the first night; to Montrose, where he staid the second; and, on the third, he arrived at Aberdeen, and, as he passed by Kinghorn, it behoved the tide, and sometimes also the weather, to render the time of his arrival more late and uncertain." In this manner the Mail was conveyed thrice a week. The communication by post between London and Edinburgh was not much better. The condition of the roads, however, in Scotland, would not admit of anything like rapid travelling. The best roads, even in the populous districts, were often to be found in the channels of streams. The common carrier from Edinburgh to Selkirk, 38 miles, required a fortnight for his journey, going and returning; the channel of the river Gala, which for a considerable distance ran parallel with the road, being, when not flooded, the track chosen as the most level and easiest to travel in. Between the principal cities, the means of travelling were little better. It took a day and a half for the stage-coach to travel from Edinburgh to Glasgow.

In the year 1757 the Mail was upon the road from London to Edinburgh 87 hours, but from Edinburgh to London, 131 hours. At this time from a representation from the Committee of Royal Burghs, such regulations were adopted, that the time was reduced to 82 hours from London to Edinburgh, and 85 hours from Edinburgh to London.

In 1763, a further improvement was made on the London Mail, by having it despatched five times a week instead of three, as formerly. Previously it had travelled in so dilatory a manner, that in winter the letters which were sent from London on Tuesday night, for the most part, were not distributed in Edinburgh till Sunday between sermons.

In 1776, the modern stage coach was introduced into Scotland; the first coach arriving in Edinburgh on the 10th of April. It



performed the journey to London in 60 hours. And in the same year, the first Penny Post in Scotland was established in Edinburgh, by Peter Williamson, an eccentric native of Aberdeen, who in consequence of keeping a coffee shop in the hall of the Parliament House, was frequently employed by gentlemen attending the Courts, to forward letters to different parts of the city. This kind of business increased so much that he opened an office and established a regular Penny Post delivery of letters throughout the city. He had hourly deliveries, and agents at various parts of the town to collect letters. The men who delivered, of whom there were four (in uniform), also collected letters, and for this purpose they rang a bell as they proceeded on their rounds, to give information of their approach.

Williamson's success soon induced others to attempt a similar undertaking; but the authorities of the General Post Office, seeing the importance of this branch of business as a source of revenue, gave Williamson a pension for the goodwill of the business, and the Penny Post was then attached to the general establishment.

A direct Mail between London and Glasgow was not established before 1788, when, on the 7th July, the first Mail coach from London arrived in Glasgow. Previously the correspondence between those cities passed through Edinburgh; where it was detained twelve hours to be sent with the Mail to Glasgow at night.

Having followed the Scottish Post Office down to the close of the eighteenth century, it may be observed that for a long time after its introduction and establishment it was conducted solely with a view to the convenience and security of the correspondence of the public, and that it frequently received assistance from the Scottish Government by pecuniary grants. And if we except the periods of rebellion, when a certain amount of *surveillance* was exercised by the agents of Government as a measure of state security, the Post Office in Scotland appears to have been conducted with great integrity and with freedom from abuse.

In April 1713 the Edinburgh Post Office was removed to the first story of a house opposite the Tolbooth on the north side of the High Street. At a later time it occupied the first floor of a house near the Cross, above an alley which still bears the name of the Post Office Close. It was removed from this to a floor on the south side of the Parliament Square, which was fitted up like a shop, and the letters were dealt across an ordinary counter like other goods. At this time all the out-of-door business of delivery was managed by one Letter Carrier. From the Parliament Square the Post Office was removed to Lord Covington's house, thence after some years to a house on the north bridge, and finally it was removed to the present office in 1821, at which period the dispatch of the Mails was conducted in an apartment about 30 feet square. This apartment was purposely kept as dark as possible in order to derive the full advantage of artificial light employed in the process of examining letters to see whether they contained enclosures or not.

## APPENDIX (K.)

## UNFOUNDED Complaints against the Post Office respecting the Loss of Letters.

IN March last an unregistered letter, containing a 10*l.* Bank of England note, posted at Macclesfield, addressed to Manchester, was stated not to have reached its destination. Full inquiry was made, but the letter could not be found. Subsequently, however, the note was presented at the Bank of England, and on being traced, it was discovered that the letter had been stolen after its delivery.

IN December last, a letter containing two 5*l.* Bank of England notes, was stated to have been posted at Leeds, addressed to a lady at Leamington, without reaching its destination; but the inquiry that was instituted by the Department caused the sender to withdraw his complaint, and to prefer against the clerk whom he had intrusted with the letter, a charge of having purloined it before it reached the Post Office.

Last spring, a gentleman at Archerstown, County Westmeath, complained of a letter, containing half bank notes and post bills, amounting to 400*l.*, addressed to Dublin, not having come to hand; but when the matter came to be fully examined, it was ascertained by one of our officers that the letter was in a drawer of the house of the very person to whom it had been directed, but by whom it had been entirely overlooked.

IN the spring of last year a young lady about 15 years of age, whose parents reside at a small town in ——shire, was sent to a school not far from ———. The mother of the young lady was suffering from illness in April last, and letters were written from time to time to the daughter at school announcing the state of her mother's health.

The young lady declared that she wrote on the 17th of April to enquire how her mother was; that letter was not delivered; and that on the morning of the 19th of that month a brown paper parcel was placed in a very mysterious manner in the hall of the house at which the young lady was at school. This parcel contained a letter which stated that her mother was dead, and that the parcel had been conveyed by a friend, which accounted for its not bearing any post-marks.

Other circumstances were related by the young lady, such as her having seen a man galloping on the road, who halted and informed her that he had left the parcel, announcing her mother's death.

On the 21st of the same month, a letter enclosed in an envelope was posted at the town in ——shire, informing the young lady that her mother was much better; but when the envelope was opened, the young lady produced another letter requiring her immediate presence to attend her mother's funeral.

The case excited great interest, and suspicion arose that a conspiracy existed, aided by some person in the service of this department, to carry off the young lady.

The papers on the subject were referred, in the first instance, to the Surveyor of the Home District; but he was unable to solve the mystery; and the Surveyor of the Western District, to whom the papers were subsequently sent, was equally unsuccessful. At length the Solicitor to the Post Office suggested that Mr. Christopher Hodgson, an officer attached to the Home District, who had displayed considerable skill in investigating matters of this nature, should be despatched to the school to make further enquiry. This was done, and on a full examination Mr. Hodgson reported it as his opinion that the whole proceedings were but a plot of a school girl to get home, as its contriver afterwards confessed to be the case.

## APPENDIX (L.)

### CIRCULAR to SURVEYORS.

SIR,

General Post Office, 25th April 1855.

I AM directed by the Postmaster General to re-issue, with some omissions and additions, the "Circular to Surveyors," dated February 1847.

1.—The Postmaster General being desirous of affording the public every possible facility for the receipt and dispatch of correspondence which is consistent with a due regard to the Revenue, and having carefully considered the means of effecting this important object, is of opinion that the success of his exertions will depend greatly on the zeal, activity, and intelligence of the Surveyors. On the earnest co-operation of these important officers his Lordship entirely relies, and with a view to their guidance he desires to explain the views which he takes of their duties and responsibilities.

2.—It appears to his Lordship, that it is the duty of the Surveyors, each in his own district, promptly to detect and remedy, or (if the authority of the Postmaster General be necessary) to suggest the means of remedying all defects in the Post Office system; to be constantly on the watch for the means of giving to the correspondence of the country increased celerity, regularity, and security, especially when this can be done without injury to the Revenue; and in short to do all that lies in their power, not only to remove the grounds of just complaint, but to anticipate the reasonable wants of the public.

3.—With a view to the accomplishment of these objects, his Lordship desires especially to impress upon you the importance of a constant attention to the following points:—

4.—The limits of the Free delivery of each Town should keep pace with the extension of buildings.

5.—The deliveries should follow the arrival of the Mails as promptly as possible; more especially the first delivery of the day, which should, when practicable, be completed before men of business leave home; say, before nine in the morning.

6.—Letters should be received at the Post Office to as late an hour as practicable, except when the dispatch of the Mails is so late

at night, or so early in the morning, that no public convenience will result therefrom.

7.—Similar advantages should be extended, as far as practicable, to each subordinate place, and with this view, the bag belonging to such place should be dispatched from the Post Town as early and brought back as late as conveniently may be.

8.—The regulation which requires every Postmaster to keep a constant supply of Postage Stamps should be strictly enforced.

9.—The posting of Letters should never be interrupted by the temporary closing of the letter-box for the dispatch of a particular Mail.

10.—The number of Town deliveries and of Town Receiving Houses should be adjusted from time to time, to the growing necessities of the public; so also should the frequency of communication between the Town and Country Offices, and the number of such Country Offices as well as to the number of other Rural Posts and of Money Order Offices.

11.—Care should be taken that the public is not subjected to any unnecessary delay or exposure to weather when applying personally at the Post Office.

12.—The Department should be prepared to employ any new railway (if expedient to employ it at all) immediately on its opening.

13.—Every important Office should be visited, as frequently as convenient, in order that it may be seen that the Postmaster exercises an efficient control; that he carefully follows his instructions, and that his duties and those of his subordinates are well performed. Any inefficiency or neglect being duly reported for the information of the Postmaster General.

14.—On these occasional visits, some of which, at least, should be out notice, you should, as far as practicable, check the receipt of Letters, and of all Fees which are carried to the Revenue.

—Any unusual or unauthorized Fees taken within your district be reported for the information of the Postmaster General.

—Every effort should be made to reduce the expenditure in district, whenever it can be done without impairing the y of the service.

As regards the important question of responsibility, the Postmaster General is of opinion that the position of the Surveyor, while clearly entitles him to the merit of success, as far as the general management within his district is economical and efficient, also necessarily throws upon him the responsibility of all defects which may be suffered to remain. The Postmaster General is also of opinion, that the Surveyor should, in turn, hold each Postmaster responsible for the economical and efficient management of his particular office. Remembering too, that the several Postmasters are now entrusted with the appointment of their Clerks, the Surveyor will hold them chargeable with any deficiencies on the part of such subordinates; and in order to make this duty felt, the Surveyor will, in his communications with the Clerks, avoid, as far as possible, every thing which may interfere with the authority of the Postmaster.

18.—The Surveyor will invite the several Postmasters to report any incompetent persons in their employment; and on the receipt of such report, if the interest of the service require it, consider it his duty to recommend the removal of such subordinate. He will likewise report the incompetency of any Postmaster in his district, and if the incompetency is such that the interests of the service require it, will in like manner recommend his removal.

19.—One important evidence of good management, whether in a particular Post Town, or in the district at large, will be the absence of well-founded complaints on the part of the public.

I am, sir, &c.

ROWLAND HILL.