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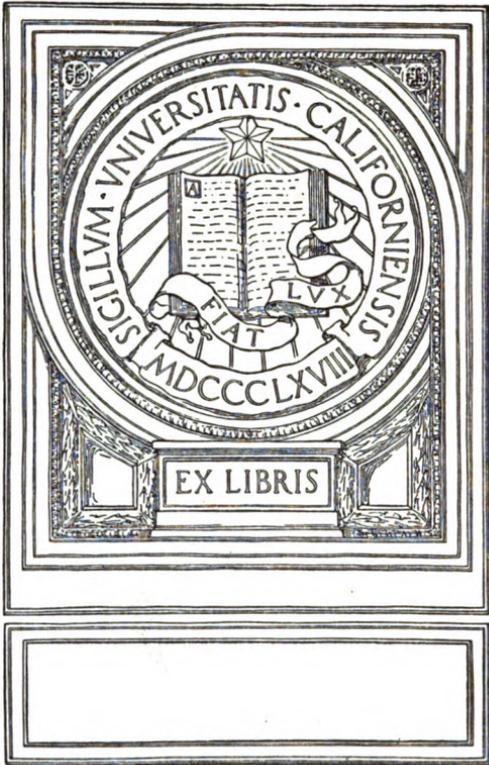
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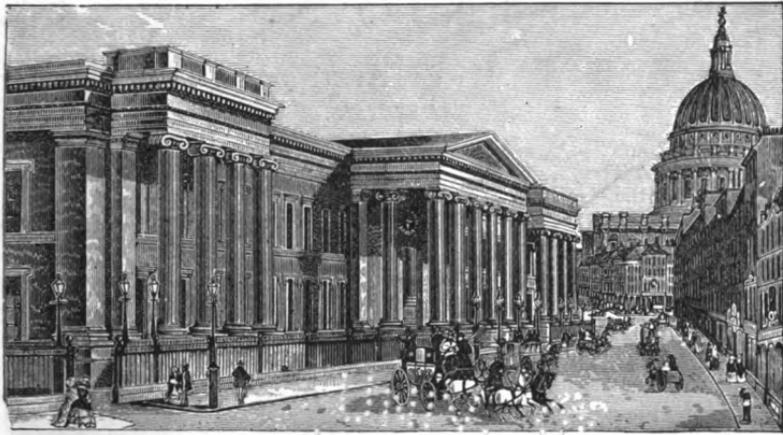


SIR ROWLAND HILL, K.C.B., D.C.L., F.R.S.

BORN 3RD DECEMBER, 1795.

(From a lithograph by J. A. Vinter.)

ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND.



ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND, 1837.

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ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND.

JANUARY, 1896.

Notes of a Journey in the Gold Coast Colony.

WE were to start at seven o'clock in the morning, and when my "boy"—as a servant is called in West Africa—brought me my early morning cup of coffee, I knew from the babel of tongues in the yard below, that the hammockmen and provision carriers had arrived, and that everything was in train for our departure.

My "objective" was what is known as the Krobo Mountain, and included a visit to the kings of the three countries of Akwapim, Eastern and Western Krobo. Upon the summit of this mountain had been conducted from time immemorial by the Fetish priests of the two Krobo tribes certain heathenish rites and ceremonies, the further continuance of which appeared from common report to have become a scandal. There, also, had taken place the burial of the dead of both tribes with the result, so it was said, that the mountain had become so insanitary as to necessitate the prohibition in the interests of the people of further burials upon it. It was to make enquiry on the spot into both these matters that whilst administering the Government of the Gold Coast, I had decided to undertake the journey.

For three days I had been staying in the Government Sanatorium at Aburi, which is 26 miles distant from Accra. Perched on one of the highest ridges of the first chain of hills reached after leaving the coast, Aburi possesses all the natural features of a health station; and, but for the solid monotony of life there, and the difficulty of obtaining an adequate supply of food suitable to invalids, affords a fair chance of recovery to government officers

saturated with the ever present malaria of Western Africa. The village lies close to the Sanatorium—town it is called by the natives—and with some reason inasmuch as the Government has lighted its streets by means of imposing street-lamps, has raised it to the importance of being under the supervision of an inspector of nuisances, and has brought it into telegraphic, and at times telephonic, communication with the seat of Government at Accra.

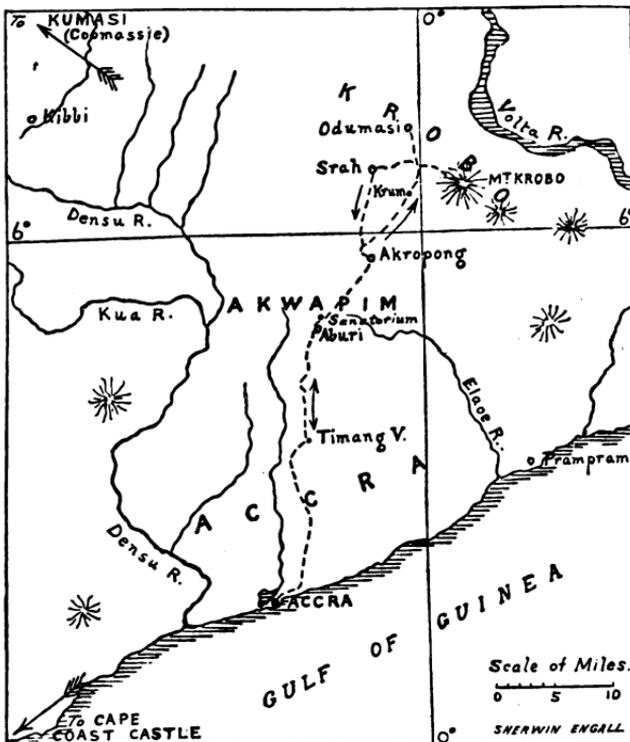
From Accra to the Sanatorium I had travelled along the excellent road, constructed some ten years ago by the Government. I had been conveyed to the foot of the hills in a go-cart, which in the towns of Accra and Cape Coast is fast becoming a common means of locomotion. Of somewhat stronger and heavier build than the Japanese "ricksha," the Gold Coast go-cart is otherwise similar in character to it with the exception that a pole and cross-bar take the place of shafts. It is propelled by Krooboys one of whom, usually the senior, holds the pole at the crossbar and guides the cart, and two push behind by means of a rail fitted at the back for the purpose. These lads—natives of the Kroo Coast—of whose industry and many excellent qualities, much has been and could be written, bowl along with the go-carts at very fair speed, and I made the village of Timang, which lies at the foot of the hills a distance of some 17 miles, from Accra, in a trifle under four hours.

At Timang a hammock was in waiting to take me up the hill. The road winds through the forest of trees growing on the slopes, and at certain places the view of the underlying plain from Accra, on the one side, to Pram Pram and away towards Addah on the other, with the occasional glint of a river winding its way to the sea shining in the distance is glorious in the extreme. Travelling in a hammock up-hill is not, however, pleasant, and I was not sorry when, after passing through the village of Aburi, I reached the recently established Government plantation which marks the confines of the Sanatorium.

For my onward journey from the Sanatorium the entourage consisted of twenty-five Government Krooboys as hammockmen and carriers, a native interpreter, and a small escort of half-a-dozen Hausa constabulary; the latter being taken for the purpose of making the necessary show so dear to the native mind.

The journey to Akropong, the principal town of Akwapim and the residence of the king, is devoid of interest beyond the fact that along the whole route are numerous clearings planted with coffee—

coffee farms as the natives grandiloquently call them—showing that already the Government plantation at Aburi, started for the purpose of encouraging the cultivation of other economic products than those which at present form the staple exports of the Colony, had borne good fruit by being the means of reviving the coffee industry commenced years ago in that locality by the Basel Missionary Society. Upon the subject of this revival, and as to the future of the coffee industry on the Gold Coast much could be written, but these are not matters to be dealt with here.



Some few miles from Akropong a messenger had been sent on to inform the king in accordance with native etiquette, of my impending arrival. On reaching the outskirts of the town we were met by some of the king's officials who had been directed to express his pleasure at my visit, and to say that his European house was at my disposal. The streets were thronged with natives. It takes very little to attract a crowd in the main street of an African town, inasmuch as all buying and selling take place in the open

thoroughfare, and the occurrence of any unusual incident is as attractive to the African mind as the appearance of a strolling circus to the English bucolic.

Before the door of the king's house the crowd became denser, for the king's band was performing in honour of his guests. There were three drummers and two horn blowers working at their respective instruments as if the safety of their heads depended upon the extraction of the greatest possible amount of sound. Of harmony there was absolutely none, at any rate to the ear untutored to native music. It was, however, with a smiling and appreciative face that I emerged from my hammock as the Hausa escort presented arms, and the king's secretary advanced to meet me. The king's secretary is a modern innovation amongst the officials of a native court. Belonging to the class of English educated natives, on him devolves the duty of translating to the king and his council the letters addressed to the king by the commissioner of the district, or by the Government direct from head-quarters; and of acting as interpreter as occasion requires. He is the outcome of the more active rule of the Government of the Protectorate.

"The king bids you welcome," said he in English bowing to me, "and desires you to make use of his house during your visit. He would be glad to pay his respects to you without delay."

"Tell the king," I replied, "that I wish to remain the night at Akropong, accept with pleasure the use of his house, and will be pleased to see him at once."

In the meantime the carriers had put down their loads which were being taken upstairs by the king's servants to the rooms prepared for my use, and the hammockmen, having propped the hammock on end against the front of the house, were already, after their nature, talking at the tops of their voices as only Krooboys can talk.

The king's premises are extensive. They front an open square at the opposite end of which is a large and ancient banyea tree under which have been held from time immemorial all the more important councils of the Akwapim people. With this tree I was to make acquaintance later. The front of the premises is occupied by a well-built "adobe" house of two stories roofed with corrugated iron. The upper story, consisting of three rooms opening one into the other, had been furnished by the king with English furniture and stocked with glass and every requisite for a short stay. Behind this house is a courtyard flanked by small native huts thatched with coarse dried grass, one of which was the official residence of the King's Secretary.

In the rear were many similar huts purposely arranged without regard to symmetry so that only the occupants might know the means of ingress and egress. These latter huts were the quarters of the king, his wives and family, and of the numerous relatives and hangers-on who under the patriarchal system of life existing among the African tribes have more or less to be supported by the head of the family. In one corner of the compound could be seen three or four bamboo poles each displaying a small piece of coloured cloth; these were fetishes intended to guard the kingly presence from the advent of evil and malicious spirits. The superstition and credulity of the uneducated African is very great, and for charms against assassins, snake-bites, evil-eye, and poison large sums are paid to the Fetish priests who concoct and vend them. The charms are usually placed in small bags about an inch square and a quarter of an inch thick, made of leopard or crocodile skin and appended to bracelets of the same kind. It is by no means unusual to see six or seven of these bags appended to one bracelet, each bag containing a charm against a specific object.

The tramping of many feet upon the wooden staircase leading up to my temporary quarters announced the approach of the king and his suite. Kwamin Fori is a man of kingly presence whose features have, however, been marred by small-pox and the loss of one eye. Of middle height, and dressed in rich silk cloths, the upper of which according to native custom was worn after the manner of the Roman toga, his feet covered with sandals of native tanned leather ornamented with bosses of pure gold, the king advanced towards me with outstretched hand. Upon his arm were many charms, and on his wrist bracelets of the purest native gold finely and curiously wrought.

Kwamin Fori is a man of character, he rules his country, and for a native African king who on the one side has to satisfy the exigencies of the English Government, and on the other to respect the peculiar idiosyncracies of his people, he rules it well. He is a success, and merits the trust reposed in him by the Government.

After the usual enquiries into the state of each other's health and a friendly chat, the king stated that he would be glad if I would hold a palâver under the palâver tree that afternoon as all his chiefs—chiefs from the neighbouring towns had arrived in Akropong. In West Africa, every kind of negotiation from a wrangle over a petty trade transaction to the conduct of an important diplomatic question is called a palâver.

To the king's request I readily assented, and Kwamin Fori left to give the necessary directions.

In less than an hour all was ready. The king's band had been reinforced with the royal war drums, drums of carved wood upwards of three feet in height and in shape like an elongated barrel, their sides being ornamented with skulls and thigh bones, relics of a past barbaric custom. On the march these drums are carried lengthwise on the heads of natives, and the drummers marching behind ply their drumsticks with great effect. The drumsticks are crooked pieces of stick, the crook at right angles to the stick being about two inches in length, and the stick itself about 18 inches long. The drummer holds a stick in each hand and gives sharp staccato blows on the drum with the end of the crook. The noise is hideous and apparently monotonous; but the drum in African hands is capable of a varied expression and can be made to emit sounds representing joy, hatred, grief, and all the passions flesh is heir to.

Under the banyea tree had been placed chairs for the King and myself. On either side and behind were to be grouped the chiefs and headmen of towns and villages placed according to rank. In every African tribe precedence is strictly defined, and any deviation, however slight, constitutes a mortal offence. Already behind the chairs stood the king's umbrella bearers, the umbrellas open to shade the king and his guest on their arrival. Native umbrellas range from 6 to 10 feet in diameter, and are constructed of broad rows of different coloured velvet or satin, the whole being edged with a heavy gold fringe. Each umbrella was ornamented at the top either by a native carved leopard, or by a hideous representation in miniature of a human face covered with beaten gold.

The scene from the balcony which commanded the square was one of much interest. Each chief preceded by his stool-bearer carrying his official stool and followed by his principal officers took his prescribed place. A greater activity on the part of the drummers announced the near approach of the king. His sword-bearers, six in number, each with his sword of office, the court criers each wearing his badge—a disc of beaten gold suspended round the neck by a white cord—the message stick bearers with their wands, and the several junior court functionaries had arrived on the scene and formed a lane for his majesty to pass through to his seat under the banyea tree.

The babel of tongues was at its height when the king, preceded by his linguists and accompanied by the "keeper of the king's conscience," the purse-bearer, public executioner (an office now devoid of duties, for no king within the protectorate is allowed to exercise the power of life and death) and other chief officers advanced to his seat. As soon as the king was seated each chief left his place and filed past him in an inversed order of precedence—the lesser chiefs having to content themselves with a bow, while the principal chiefs had the privilege of touching the king's hand, and in some cases gripping it. During this march past the king remained seated. At its conclusion, I left the house and took my seat when a similar ceremony was performed in my behalf. Then the drums ceased playing and the king's principal linguist stepped forward to express his master's pleasure at my presence in his country, and mentioned one or two matters with regard to which the king was desirous that the Government should take action.

The court criers, during the linguist's remarks, were maintaining order and silence by occasional sonorous cries of the equivalent to our word "silence" and performed the same friendly office for me when I rose to address the assembly. At the conclusion of my remarks which closed the business of the palâver, the chiefs, and this time also the king, again filed past us and the bowing and hand-shaking recommenced. This was the signal for the king's band to strike up once more and in honour of the visitor for some of the principal chiefs to dance.

This native dance consists of a shuffling movement of the feet accompanied by a waving of the arms and hands, and varied by an occasional turn of the body. It is neither elegant nor graceful.

Finally the king himself, in order to show his appreciation of what had been said at the palâver and his regard for the head of the Government danced before me. His principal chiefs stood around him with their right arms uplifted and the two forefingers of the right hand extended as if in the act of "blessing" the king. This practically is what the action signifies, being a sign of regard for the king and appreciation of the honour which he was showing to his visitor. At the conclusion of the dance the assembly dispersed. The king later in the evening came to my quarters and over a friendly pipe and glass of whisky discussed the affairs of his country.

The next morning after an early breakfast and a good-bye visit from the king I started for Odumasi, the capital of Eastern Krobo, and the residence of King Sakité.

Soon after leaving Akropong the road passes over the Krobo range of hills, which are so covered with forest trees and undergrowth as to prevent any extensive view of the plains lying at their foot. On reaching the village of Krum I halted for luncheon. Here the chief, Thomas Adadi, a well-educated and exceedingly intelligent native, placed his house at my disposal. A stroll through the village while luncheon was being got ready enabled me to chat with the natives, and watch the process of spinning by hand the native grown cotton into the coarse thread used by the weavers. The work was done with great dexterity and rapidity.

Upon the neck of a little girl I noticed necklaces of native ironwork which, on enquiry of Adadi, I learnt had been made at the village forge. They consisted of "S" shaped links alternated with "new moons" some three inches in length. Thanks to the practical education imparted to the natives by the Basel Missionary Society, whose work more especially lies in the countries through which I was travelling, every village of importance has its forge or forges, where very fair blacksmith's work is turned out. Odumasi was reached late in the evening, the Government District Commissioner meeting me on the outskirts. Here, as at Akropong, a rest-house for Europeans has been built and furnished by the king. Everything had been prepared for my use, and almost immediately after my arrival the king, with his brother and suite, came to bid me welcome. The town nestles at the foot of a range of hills, and has far more the appearance of an English village than any place I had as yet come across in West Africa. Almost in the centre of the town and close to the king's quarters stands the Lutheran church, an imposing edifice erected by the Basel Missionary Society, which here, as at Akropong, has an European staff conducting the excellent work of civilizing the people.

The Krobos are an agricultural race and fairly industrious. Those living in and around Odumasi have farms on the hills where they cultivate cassava, plaintain, coffee, and in some cases cotton, and during a great part of the year the people leave their homes and reside on their plantations. Thither proceed the Basel Missionaries, gathering the people together as far as possible, and telling them the simple truths of the Christian faith. It is uphill work, and rendered more difficult by the great influence exercised by the Fetish priests who have their stronghold on the neighbouring Krobo mountain. The priests have far more practical power over the people than the king himself, and yet King Sakité is a striking person. Upwards of six feet

in height, and possessing aquiline and almost English features, he impresses all who meet him with his quiet dignity and calm demeanour. For his loyalty during the Ashanti war of 1873-4, when he placed a large native contingent of Krobos in the field, he received a sword of honour, and a silver chain in character like the chain of a provincial Mayor. He was the recipient also of the Ashanti medal, and when I visited Odumasi some two years previously, and was present at a durbar, Sakité had worn these emblems of loyalty, of which he is justly proud.

At the time of my present visit to Odumasi the district commissioner was conducting an enquiry into a murder which had been committed on one of the Krobo farms. The victim was a native of Kwahu, one of the countries included in the Protectorate, and it was suspected that he had been murdered in order to give the murderers a skull and thigh bones for use in connection with the heathenish rites annually performed on the Krobo mountain, about which I was then on my way to make enquiry.

Early the next morning I started for the Krobo mountain accompanied by the commissioner. For some distance from the town, the king, seated in his state palanquin, and attended by his horn-blowers, rode with us. Our route at first lay through a forest of palm trees, a source of revenue to the people of Odumasi, and thence, after fording a stream, we emerged on to the open plain, the path lying through coarse grass upwards of six feet in height. In front of us lay the Krobo mountain, standing altogether apart from any range of hills and rising abruptly from the plain, with precipitous sides, presenting with its flat table land on the summit the appearance of a vast fortress. Mountain, however, it is not, for its extreme height cannot exceed 900 feet.

As we reached the foot of the mountain we saw coming towards us along another path a party of six men, four of whom were carrying on their heads what appeared in the distance to be a palanquin. The party, which proved subsequently to be a funeral party—the palanquin being really a wicker basket containing the body of a dead Krobo for burial on the Krobo mountain—on seeing us halted, and hid themselves and their load in the grass.

Leaving our hammocks and hammockmen behind us in charge of the Hausa escort, the District Commissioner and I commenced the ascent accompanied by my Hausa orderly and two Krooboyes. The pathway was evidently one made by nature, and was in fact the bed of one of the principal watercourses which had hewn

for itself a way over the solid rock in the rush of water from the summit. It was dry when we made use of it. The ascent was fearfully hot work, our course lying over smooth boulders and up steps of irregular height already scorched by the rays of the morning sun. It was not until we had nearly reached the summit that there was any undergrowth or shade to speak of.

The path which we had chosen, and which, by the way, reeked strongly of rum and palm-wine, spilt no doubt by the natives when scrambling over the boulders, led us directly to the dancing ground of the girls of the eastern Krobo tribe. This dancing ground, formed of solid rock as smooth as a billiard table, consists of a large natural platform with a background gradually sloping upwards, where the spectators sit to watch the dances which, with some modifications not altogether of a decorous character, resemble in movement the dances which the King of Akwapim and his chiefs performed in our honour at Akropong. Resting awhile on this natural arena we were amply repaid for all the fatigues of the ascent, by the glorious panorama of the surrounding country which lay unfolded at our feet. The plain, dotted here and there with native villages, just discernible in the fast disappearing mists stretched away on the one side to the river Volta, a silvery streak winding in and out of the forest growth as far as the eye could reach, and on the other to the range of hills which we had quitted in the morning, and which formed a fitting background for the tropical brilliancy of colour and light.

Close to the dancing ground was a native village from which soon emerged groups of girls attracted by curiosity, for the white man had been an unfrequent visitor to this stronghold of the Fetish priests. Having made known our wish to see the priests, it was not long before two of them made their appearance. Each of them, besides wearing the usual toga and sandals had a hat, made of smooth straw and in shape very much like the conventional English straw hat without a brim, perched on the back of his head.

It was soon evident that, notwithstanding the comparatively early hour, one of these right reverend instructors and guides of the Krobos was drunk, so drunk that he preserved his balance only with difficulty. The other priest fortunately was sober, and what was more to the point, communicative. By him we were conducted to the priests' "compound." Within this "compound," which was fenced round with matting and neatly paved with hardened mud, were four low circular wattled huts thatched as usual with coarse dried grass. In front of one of these huts four priests were seated

on the low wooden carved stools peculiar to the country. They were dressed like the priests we had already interviewed, and with one exception were in more or less advanced stages of drunkenness.

The chief priest rose with difficulty to receive us. To him, through the District Commissioner, who knew the language sufficiently to interpret, I made known my wish to see the shrine of "Nadu," the god of the Eastern Krobos. By this time the "compound" was packed with men and women, and the excitement among them when my request reached their ears was intense. They clamoured for non-compliance, and I felt certain that the priests would dissemble. After much argument among themselves the sober priest was told off to conduct us to the shrine, and we started escorted by all the resident population talking at the tops of their voices. As I expected, we were taken to what there was no difficulty in recognizing as a fetish enclosure, which is common enough in African villages. It was certainly not the shrine. Taxed with the fact, the priest, after a further appearance of dissimulation, admitted that the priests had instructed him on no account to reveal the temple of the god, and I knew that in the presence of the crowd of people surrounding us it would be useless to appeal to his cupidity. We had therefore to retrace our steps, not however until I had confirmed and added to the information with regard to the Krobo tribal customs and method of burial, about which I had made the ascent.

The table-land of the mountain is divided between the two Krobo tribes, each having its own god and priests but identical rites and ceremonies; Kotoklo being the god of the Western Krobos and Nadu of the Eastern Krobos.

With both tribes the principal "custom" is what is popularly known as the "tail-girl custom," so called from the dress of the girls while taking part in the function. The dress, if it may be so described, consists with the exception of a few ornaments on the neck, arms, wrists, and ankles, of a dingy white linen cloth tied round the waist in such a manner that one end of it falls down about one foot in front and the other a similar length behind. Excepting for the tail in front it has somewhat the appearance of a "Liberty" sash tied round the bare brown skin.

Every Krobo girl must successfully pass through the "custom" before she is considered eligible for marriage, and indeed she can make no marriage among her own people unless she has passed the "custom." Were she to do so she would be an alien and outcast. The "custom" is a very costly affair for the relatives. It implies a

lengthy residence of the girl on the mountain, and large payments to the priests, and presumably also to the priestesses by whom she is taught the dances and folk lore of her people. Few reside a less period than one year and the longer the residence the more importance attaches to the girl on her return to her village.

As soon as a sufficient number of girls have assembled on the mountain the ceremony of matriculation is commenced. The relatives and friends are all present and have brought with them a good supply of goats, sheep, provisions, and last, but not least, rum and palm wine. It is opened by the priests with a sacrifice of goats and sheep. Then each girl has to submit to the revolting practice of having her head covered with the fat of a goat, and her waist encircled with a girdle of goat's entrails. Rum and palm wine are drunk in some profusion, the girls dance the dances which they have learnt from childhood, and feasting and rioting reach long into the night.

Revolting as this custom is, it is not to be compared in degradation and heathenism with the rites annually performed in honour of the gods "Nadu" and "Kotoklo." After the usual sacrifices and libations to the gods, the Krobo youths engage in dances. Each has to hold in his hand a human skull or thigh bone, and each with shouts of defiance proclaims the so-called prowess which made him the owner of his ghastly possession. Frenzy reigns supreme; the skulls filled with rum or palm wine pass from one to the other, and the scene quickly changes into a vast orgy. It is this revolting "custom," which renders murder a virtue, treats drunkenness and vice as of no account, and keeps an otherwise fine race of people in poverty and degradation, that has more especially to be dealt with. Drastic measures appear to be necessary. It may be that as in days of old so now; the groves and images should be broken down, and the priests dealt with, not perhaps in the rough and ready manner rendered familiar to us by the bible, but in one of the more humane methods which the resources of civilization have made available.

On our return from the mountain we found the Hausas in charge of the burial party. Seeing us ascending the mountain, and imagining the coast to be clear, the party had come on only to fall into the hands of the Philistines.

A burial on the mountain is considered to be the only fitting end of a departed Krobo. The body, wrapped in cloths and tied tightly in a wicker basket, is carried to our drunken friends the fetish priests and, after copious libations and the customary gifts, is either buried in the two feet of earth which covers the rock of which the mountain

is formed, or taken to the edge of a ravine which runs across the mountain where it is somewhat unceremoniously pitched down to find its resting place as best it can with the other bodies which have preceded it. To put an end to this insanitary state of things, cemeteries have been established close to the principal Krobo towns and the people instructed to bury their dead in them; but it is difficult to wean the people from their ancient custom, especially as the priests, in order not to lose their fees, counsel opposition.

The funeral party having been sent back to their village—fortunately close at hand—in charge of two constables, detailed to see the order obeyed, we wended our way to Srah, the capital of Western Krobo and the dwelling place of Akrobetto the king of that country. Here, after a hurried luncheon, an important palâver had to be held for the purpose of making known to the king and his chiefs the views of the Government with regard to the position of one of the latter, who claimed to be independent of the king. This palâver lasted the whole afternoon, and it was getting late when, leaving the Commissioner to return to Odumasi, I resumed my homeward journey.

I pushed on to Akropong, where I again occupied the king's house, and the next evening found me once more at Aburi after a journey which, although fatiguing, was thoroughly interesting and not without result.

F. M. HODGSON,
Colonial Secretary of the Gold Coast.

[NOTE.—The journey described in these notes was taken in January, 1892. Before the close of that year the legislature had passed an Ordinance for the suppression of the native customs referred to; the sacred groves on the Krobo mountain had been cut down; the shrines of the gods “Nadu” and “Kotoklo” effaced; and further access to the mountain closed. The fetish priests also had been dispersed, and King Sakité having died was succeeded by his nephew Mati Kolé—a Christian—in fact the first Christian king of Eastern Krobo.—F. M. H.]

Random Reflections

OF OUR CAPTIOUS CONTRIBUTOR, AT THE SMOKING CONCERT OF THE POST OFFICE CRICKET CLUB.

[The fourth annual smoking concert in connection with the Post Office Cricket Club was held on Wednesday evening the 4th December, at St. James's Hall, Regent Street, and was very largely attended, among those present being Mr. G. W. Smyth, Mr. Lewin Hill, Lieut.-Col. Cardin, V.D., Mr. C. D. Lang, Lieut.-Col. Mitford, V.D., Mr. R. B. Hughes, Mr. J. Manson, Mr. J. Philips, Mr. J. C. Badcock, Mr. Bateman, &c., &c. Mr. G. W. Smyth took the chair until the arrival of the Duke of Norfolk. The Postmaster-General, who wore the Garter ribbon and star, arrived about nine o'clock, and was received by a guard of honour, furnished by the Post Office companies of the Civil Service Rifles, under the command of Major Hillier; Lieutenants Brett and Neales being also on duty. Speeches were made by Mr. Spencer Walpole and the Duke of Norfolk in favour of the spread of athletic exercises and games among the staff of the G.P.O.]

PRESS REPORT.]

THREE-HEADED Power of Cannon Row!

That preys on hapless mortals—
Like the grim beast that croucheth low
By Pluto's gloomy portals—

Reform your antiquated code,
By which the Nation suffers!
The Service groans beneath its load
Of intellectual duffers!

Abase the insolence of Mind!
Exalt the modest Muscle!
The men we want are of the kind
Who best know how "to hustle." *

Pierian springs are well enough
For the ignoble million;
But shandy-gaff's the proper stuff
To cheer the true civilian.

For what avails the feeble torch
Of Learning?—useless lumber!
'Twon't help a man to "do a scorch"
To Ripley, on a Humber.

* American idiom = to be energetic.

(The metaphors are somewhat mixed,
 But so are my emotions ;
 'Tis hard to get ideas fixed
 Midst music, smoke and "lotions.")

Beware the Academic hood—
 Most specious of disguises !
 Unless the wearer's record's good
 Upon the Cam or Isis.

And if he pulls a decent oar—
 Knows all about aquatics—
 What need has he of classic lore,
 Or crabbed mathematics ?

And shun the wretch, devoid of taste,
 Alumnus of no college ;
 Who yet his leisure hours doth waste
 In quest of so-called knowledge.

Think of the reading he appoints
 For mis-spent nights in winter !
 The oil he burns, that, rubbed in joints,
 Might aid him as a "sprinter !"

Let poets take a backward seat ;
 Until the path of cinder—
 Its whirling wheels, and flying feet—
 Inspire a modern Pindar.

Philosophy, of course, is "off ;"
 Unless the cult athletic
 May class the votaries of golf
 As new Peripatetic.

Nor suffer vandals to defile
 Our chaste official papers
 With spurious ornaments of "style,"
 And Addisonian capers.

Such sprites St. Martin promptly locks
 In his most cramping fetters ;
 For 'tis the Postal paradox
 To ban all men of letters.

Some such we had, who earned the smile
 Of Fame, but—more's the pity!—
 We did not make it worth their while
 To linger in the City.

* * * * *

And as for me—unhappy wight!
 Too late, alas! I'm learning
 Why, in the shades of outer night,
 A meagre crust I'm earning!

Had I but burnt my "Hundred Books"—
 No profits these, but losses—
 I might have met with sweeter looks
 From my athletic "bosses."

The dreamer, I am well aware,
 Most futile of all men is;
 Yet I could never join the fair
 In tournaments of tennis.

And games I never could endure;
 Of sport I am no lover;
 I should not have the heart, I'm sure,
 To "bowl a maiden over."

I never wore a jersey bright,
 Nor donned the knickerbocker,
 To taste the violent delight
 Of "Rugger," or of "Socker."

All this, I know, is very sad;
 I blush in the confession;
 But I would say to any lad
 Who enters our profession,

With buoyant heart, and sanguine hopes
 Of earning quick promotions:—
 Divert your mind from twining tropes,
 And study "Sporting Notions."

Learn up the latest cricket score,
 And keep a football journal;
 Be sure to join the Rifle Corps
 Of which your chief is colonel.

Avoid *St. Martin's Magazine* ;
 Likewise the men who pen it ;
 For some there are, who rue, I ween,
 The blandishments of Bennett.

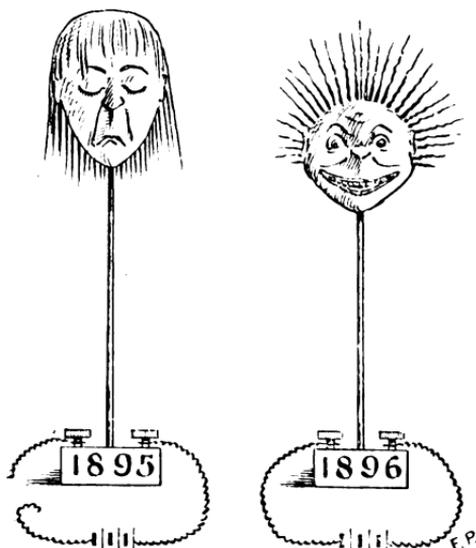
Esthetics are an unclean thing,
 Life's limpid current tainting ;
 Be like our good Bœotian King,
 "Hate boetry and bainting."

The Fruit of Knowledge, in Eve's clutch,
 The primal bliss did shiver ;
 Prometheus proved that knowing much
 Is not good for the liver.

So, if you'd 'scape the rock and chain,
 And eke the hungry vulture,
 Flee from a quest so rash and vain,
 And practise body-culture.

To this high aim before you set
 Be steadfast—never vary ;
 And you'll be a Controller yet ;
 Perchance a Secretary.

TALBOT THYNNE.



A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU !

The Battle of Hadley.



EARLY in the sixties, as some of my former colleagues will recollect, Her Majesty's volunteer force, in Metropolitan and Suburban London, included two very distinguished regiments—the Civil Service Rifles, some companies of which had been raised in the Post Office; and the 2nd Administrative Battalion of Middlesex Rifles, in whose ranks, for several years, I shouldered the regulation “Enfield.”

With generous candour, of which even the ex-military heart is capable, I hasten to concede that there were possibly other regiments in London to which this description might apply: but I do not mention them, because they took no part in the event which these pages seek to chronicle. Even the praises of that famous corps, the 24th Middlesex, or Post Office Regiment, must remain unsung; largely for the reason that in the very early sixties its time had not come—its rank and file, for the most part, were as yet unborn.

As the heart and soul of volunteering in the Post Office, there arose in those days an able official, a soldier in every fibre of his being—shall I name him as the gallant and strenuous Captain Markby de la Fontaine, who has since secured distinction in many ways? In military matters, as was proper, he carried all before him. Six solid hours at the official desk left his vigorous physique fresh, and his fancy free for almost as many more hours in the saddle, as an acting field officer; for service afoot in the Tower Ditch, as superintendent of drills; or for paper work in the orderly room, as a commander maturing fresh schemes for advancing the volunteer cause.

To him, one fine summer's morning, came a cartel from a little country corps, a section of the 2nd Administrative Battalion which, waxing bold, bade him and his following defiance. They would lie in ambush in the waving woods of the Middlesex village of Monken-Hadley, or were ready to meet him in the open, on the green sward of the table-land otherwise known as the common. Any

early Saturday, after official hours, was left for his selection; no invading force, he was told, would be too numerous for defeat. Never was valorous foe more disposed to accommodate its opponent.

The village of Hadley, twelve miles from London and a little north of Barnet Town, with which it commingles, is quite classic ground. Here was fought, on Easter Day, in the year of grace, 1471, what is still described as the Battle of Barnet. There the curtle axe of Warwick and the good sword of Montague availed them no longer, for Edward left them both stark and pale, hard by what is now the Highstone. Here again, east of the old battle site, was to be fought—De la Fontaine willing—the modern battle of Hadley.



HADLEY COMMON—EAST OF THE CHURCH.

Right rear of Edward IV.'s position at Barnet Field, 1471, and centre of defending force at the Battle of Hadley. (*From a photograph by Maxwell, Barnet.*)

That warrior, to be just to a friendly foe, was more than willing. To him the smoke of an engagement was as the whiff of the fragrant Havana; the thunder of many guns not less cheering than the hammering of a full battery of stampers defacing the post-labels of the down night-mail; to him the rattle of musketry as the cheery patter of "Wheatstone" perforation; the roar of artillery, no more overwhelming than the bang of a Savings' Bank ledger.

His reply was swift and to the point. He conveyed the idea that—to employ the suave diction of the over modest Zulu—the spears of his young men had not been washed for many moons; an Impi, by special train (return tickets, thanks to Great Northern liberality, at

single fares!) would speedily wipe out the Barnetoni; the smoke of their burning kraals, and a line in the army list, should alone attest the fact that they had ever existed at all.

This perhaps was more than we had bargained for, but the die was cast; there could be no retreat from the coming contest. An American humorist justly boasted that he had sacrificed his father-in-law and wife's uncle to the cause of the union and was prepared to throw in a cousin or two, if needful, with the same sacred object. We, for our purposes, were ready to go further and take the gloss off De la Fontaine's bayonets (it was an anachronism to talk about spears for his infantry, none having been issued from the Tower for many years, except to lancer regiments) by enlisting in the forlorn hope the tradesmen of the locality, especially those whose accounts were outstanding. As for our uncles-in-law and cousins, whether twice or thrice removed, he was welcome to them all.

By the expressive pronoun "we," it is proper now to explain that I mean a military corporation known to fame in the old days as the 12th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers, of which the head-quarters were at Chipping Barnet, and the recruiting-ground that township, Hadley, and the villages round about. As I commenced this article by a fitting tribute to my own engaging candour, I will own, by way of living up to it, that the title of the Twelfth would have been expressed with stricter accuracy by the "Twelve." Except on high occasions—on the hint, perchance, of peril to the county at the Butts; or when a Beloved Sovereign required assurance of our existence by an attendance in Hyde Park—a modest dozen was usually the tale of attendance on parade. I think we once ventured on a field-day with six men; I am quite sure we should have been ready to receive the whole brigade of Guards with sixteen.

The usual formation of the British army is, all the world knows, two deep; a second row stands behind the front row. This was to us at Barnet a rule more honoured in the breach than the observance; we put habitually all our eggs into one basket—all our men into the front row, regardless of the Queen's Regulations. To muster by special effort a dozen men and put six of them out of sight behind the others was so obvious a waste of force and effect as not for a moment to be thought of; it too woefully reduced our frontage.

Sometimes, certainly, we were compelled to double our ranks and when Lord Radstock came down to attest us, in the Barrack Square, under the eyes of military lookers on, our fine muster of twenty or

thereabouts had to be cut in two and ten were lost to sight, however dear to memory, behind the foremost ten.

It was especially necessary to do so when we were required to give a general salute to one who knew what taking "open order" was. When we supposed that our visitor did not do so, a ghostly behind-rank, visible only to the mental eye of the drill-sergeant, stepped back two paces, our officers marched to the front and waved their swords, and from a distance the display was fully as effective as if we had wasted half our men on a back row.

Salutes are, of course, important matters, but probably no one notices very closely how they are done. At any rate, I have never received the recognition justly due to an original salute of my own. When the Princess Alexandra arrived in London, I was posted as a volunteer sentry, at a point on the line of route through one of the parks, with orders, I suppose, to salute Her Royal Highness as she drove by. Carried away by enthusiasm and loyalty, and determined to do the thing handsomely, I brought, as the gracious Princess passed me, the firelock to the "shoulder" with the right hand, and gave the shako-salute with the left one: a method of recognizing Royalty which ought to have impressed, and possibly did impress, the military cortege attending Her Royal Highness.

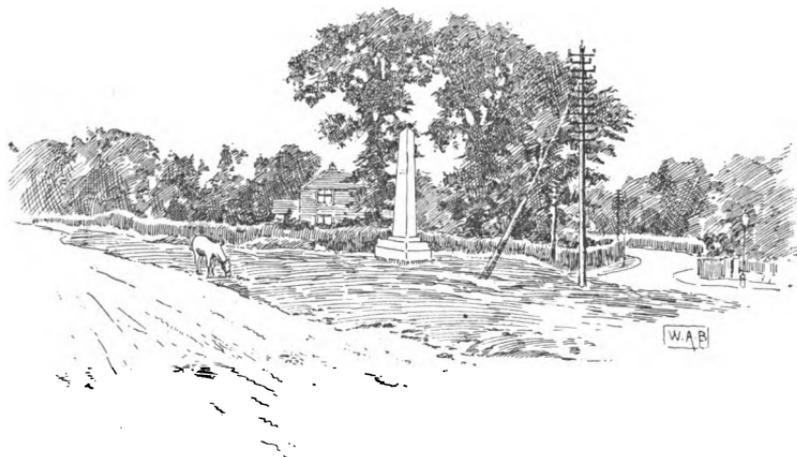
As soon as we received De la Fontaine's acceptance, we went apace with our preparations. Of course, every battle-field needs a description, so here is one of ours:—The theatre of operations was to be a great enclosed triangular space eastward of Hadley Church, half-a-mile broad at the western base, and tapering to a point on the east. It began with a huge cricket-ground or open common, level as a bowling-green.

Here, where the carnage was likely to be as thick as anywhere, but clear of the actual fighting ground, we roped off enclosures, and decked them with flags, as vantage-ground for the youth and beauty of the neighbourhood, arriving as spectators.

After the cricket-pitches came broken ground, and then thick woods, stretching for two miles to the vanishing point, at Cockfosters. The defending forces were to assemble on the common, facing east. In the hollow, a mile off, and mid-way to Cockfosters, the Great Northern Railway cuts through Hadley Wood at right angles. Here, the attacking force was to arrive, and, looking westwards, was to assail us on the southern flank, by a bridle-path, and in our left centre, by a direct advance through the wood.

If the historian is not impartial, giving credit where it is due, of what

use is he? So I hasten to say that our foe honourably observed this understanding. All being fair in war, as in another interesting phase of life, he had but to make a slight diversion in order to bring us to utter grief. Had he detrained his men at East Barnet Station, instead of taking them on to Hadley Wood, he could have marched through Barnet (left all undefended), looted the jewellers' shops, carried off from our armoury last year's British *Postal Guide*, and the current month's railway time-table : then, taking us in rear, he might have made the whole force prisoners, youth and beauty looking on, as well as the fighting-men, without firing a shot.



HADLEY HIGH STONE, OR BARNET PILLAR.

Showing the York Road to the right hand and the old Liverpool and Holyhead Road to the left.
(From a photograph by Maxwell, Barnet.)

However, there is honour amongst Volunteers. That quality is not limited to, as it is occasionally associated with, another active class of society. The enemy came up by the bridle-path, and through the woods, as per agreement, and conformed to the schedule with a scrupulous exactness.

Here I must turn aside to record a deed of valour. De la Fontaine had brought with him his charger ; but he could not detrain it in Hadley Wood ; it had to be ousted from the horse-box at East Barnet Station. From that point there was no road by which it could be taken to the Wood, except by way of Barnet, three miles round, and through hostile lines. But when the hour comes, there also comes the man, and, as young Midshipman Maxse volunteered,

on the landing of the allied forces in the Crimea, to ride on horseback, after the battle of the Alma, round the flank of the Russian position, and carry a despatch to the fleet, so did that gallant and lamented colleague of the past (who had himself served in the Crimea), whose cheery voice and genial presence were so well-known for many years at the South Western District Post Office, volunteer to take the post of danger. He rode De la Fontaine's prancing steed through Barnet and Hadley, and then, as he came on our hindmost squads, clapped spur to its side, and dashed through our stronghold like shot from a catapult.

It is thirty years since that day, but I have, as I write, a vivid recollection of this assistant army-postmaster, in full uniform, sword smiting his charger's flank, Crimean medal flashing on his breast, steed at a hard gallop, riding in full enjoyment of the situation; the public looking on delighted, and taking it in as part of the programme, our Colonel rather mystified by the appearance of a strange uniform, some old soldiers in our ranks desiring to open fire upon the foreigner, cavalry thirsting for the word to pursue—the blue sky, the green sward, the waving woods, the flying horseman, the general hilarity, and then the hushed expectation :

“'Twere worth some hours of office life,
One glance at that array.”

The Field States of the sixties, I fear, are not preserved. The exact force which De la Fontaine concentrated on Hadley Wood I have never been able to ascertain; even our own Barnet records are not now available, and, as it is well known that in estimating numbers, especially where large bodies of men are concerned, the tendency of the inexpert is to take an exaggerated view, I feel it to be a matter of conscience not to run the risk of error by computing the forces on either side. Our opponent had the Civil Service at his back, and, by wiles undisclosed to this day, had withdrawn from their allegiance to us the Tottenham Fencibles.

We, on our side, were strengthened by detachments from Enfield Lock, led by the lamented Captain David Hopkins—a skilful young officer, who subsequently lost his life while on duty on the West Coast of Africa—we had our Cadet Corps, and the Herts cavalry were staunch to a man. They were not numerous, it is true, but even four men,

“ When their steeds are stout
And their swords are out,
Can soon make lightsome room.”

A distant puff and the scream of a shell, or certainly of a steam-whistle, announce the detrainng of the enemy a mile away. We throw the Cadets well forward into the brushwood which skirts the bridle-path. They open fire on the recreant Tottenhams, whom De la Fontaine had prudently put in front. The Fencibles could expect no quarter from us and would be sure to fight with desperate valour. Their leader—I see him now, cigarette in mouth, receiving volleys, directed towards his manly chest, with superb indifference as though bullets could never find their billet in his martial form—waiving his men on, sword in hand, came up by the bridle-path; while De la Fontaine threw his right wing in extended order into the sharpshooter swarming woods.

The beetles, the field-mice, the small birds, the rabbits, had a hard time of it that day; so great a turmoil had not been heard since Harry, Elizabeth, or James, swept through the Middlesex forest with hound and horn; such crackling of rifle-fire, such shouts, the hoarse word of command (no word of command is worth the paper which records it unless hoarse), the cries of the soldiery, the galloping of horses turned out to graze, of cattle, tail in the air, which ought to have been similarly employed; the unenlisted male youth of the neighbourhood simulating the shot-down; the scene was more than animated, the upshot not less than doubtful.

At last De la Fontaine drove us out of the wood, out of our advanced position, out even of our cherished earthwork, on to the open, before the eyes of such of the populations of Europe as were assembled in the enclosures.

Then, indeed, it seemed as though victory fanned her golden wings on the invaders' side. Were there no Twin Brethren to ride with us against the ranks from town, and raise our cavalry from four to six. Would no Herminius come amain to our western battle; was there nothing to hope for but the sable pall of night, or the arrival of the refreshments?

War, however, like whist, cricket, and the law, has its glorious uncertainties. Suddenly, as avalanche from mountain top, the Enfield Lock, long hidden in the woods, on which our northern wing had rested—lying there in ambush, so as to turn De la Fontaine's flank—now sprang to their feet, "Up Guards, and at 'em," and flung themselves on the foe. The Herts cavalry prepared to charge, their leader drew his sword, Excalibar:

"Take for your oriflamme to-day
My shako's topmost plume."

Advancing columns rushed into square; the horse galloped at the levelled bayonets; out flashed withering volleys raising the dust, which all might bite who would; the final grapple of hostile bands, inflamed with the flush of battle, impended. When lo! the gentle reign of peace was magically restored; the silver bugle of our amateur savings-bank trumpeter blew "Cease firing." "Bring up the bread, the beef, and beer," sang out the mellow voice of the chief of the commissariat. As by a common impulse, all warfare ceased, the sometime snorting steed once more cropped the verdant lawn, the smoking rifle cooled its ardour locked in the four-fold group, the trenchant blade regained the peaceful scabbard. Awhile, cadets produced the furtive apple; the men-at-arms, the seasoned pipe. Wellington and Blucher bent across their saddle-bows and exchanged the grasp of amity, the swift-turned spigot gave out the foaming malted hop. Soon eventide drew on, the moon flooded the field with light, camp-fires sent a cheerful blaze skywards, the venerable beacon on Hadley Church, hard by, awoke and clinked its ancient sides. The town-band forgave the absence of the trombone at Mill Hill, took to its heart the cornet from Potter's Bar, and tuned up a lively strain. The burning cartridge was succeeded by the incandescent bird's eye, and the Battle of Hadley belonged to the Echoes of the Past.

F. E. BAINES.

Bournemouth.

Wanted, a Sense of the Ludicrous.

[The following is a Lecture given by the Author at Marchmont Hall. It is published very nearly as it was delivered, and an apology is consequently offered for the colloquial tone *and* for the chestnuts.]

HERE are, so our school-books tell us, five senses— hearing, smelling, seeing, taste, and touch. They are what may be called the primary senses. You may thank God if you possess the whole five in all their unadulterated fullness, but there is nothing, I assure you, to brag about before your fellow-men, because you happen to be endowed with the proper complement of an ordinary healthy animal. If you visit the cattle show you will find plenty of companions who are ready to glory with you in the possessions of these gifts, and who, moreover, have made fuller and more beneficial use of one or more of them than you have done or are ever likely to do. The phrase “in vulgar health” is so often a painfully correct one as applied to a human being. For these offensively healthy people are almost necessarily lacking in many of the little refinements of life, refinements which are only born out of suffering, and as the result of the martyrdom of experience. It is less trying to some temperaments to live with an invalid than with a person who can drink bitter beer at any hour of the day and whose idea of a square meal is an underdone steak. Such a person is always three-fourths an animal, and the remaining one-fourth only a being of large discourse looking before and after. And there are many human beings who walk this queer world of ours, who possess the whole five senses in irritating opulence, and yet who for want of some sixth sense are often scarcely able to rise above the brute stage, and whose point of view, whose outlook on human life, is similar to that of a character in one of Peacock’s novels whose range of ideas was said to be “nearly commensurate with that of the great King Nebuchadnezzar when he was turned out to grass.” Indeed, I wrong the brute creation by saying as much as this, because there are recorded instances of dogs and monkeys and blue jays having

seen and appreciated a joke, while it has been my lot to know people who have lived to a green old age and who have died without evidently having once ever caught a glimpse of the ridiculous side of things. Of course I am not limiting my wanted sixth sense to the sense of humour. It would be a libel on many great and noble souls who have possessed the religious sense, the sense for poetry and the artistic temperament, to say that they are three-fourths animal and only one-fourth divine. Still I do venture to say that without this sense of humour these same individuals have suffered perhaps in a more tragic way than those who have had no sixth sense at all. It is the tragedy of the might-have-been which strikes us as we read their lives or their works. Shelley was a great poet, and much of his poetry will live as long as the English language endures, but what Matthew Arnold called "his inhuman want of humour" ruined his life, seriously affected the quality of his poetry, spoilt him as a dramatist, and made him altogether a waste force as a reformer. Think too of the twaddle and childishness which we are obliged to associate with much of Wordsworth's poetry, and consider whether a sense of humour would not have materially added to the poet's reputation, though it might have reduced the size of his volumes. Could or would a humorist have perpetrated the *Excursion*? So many men have just missed the topmost peak of Parnassus simply for want of this same rare sense. The presence of it half explains Shakespeare's peerlessness, Chaucer's readableness, even in *his* strange uncouth tongue, and Browning's extraordinary insight into the human heart.

Miss Agnes Repplier, one of the most cultured and clever of American critics, says, indeed, that we English people are distinctly deteriorating in the matter of humour. Here is one of the evidences she brings. "There is no stronger proof of the great change which has swept over mankind than the sight of a nation which used to chuckle over *Tom Jones* absorbing a few years ago countless editions of *Robert Elsmere*. What is droller still, is that the people who read *Robert Elsmere* would think it wrong to enjoy *Tom Jones*, and that the people who enjoyed *Tom Jones* would have thought it wrong to read *Robert Elsmere*, and that the people who, wishing to be on the safe side of virtue, think it wrong to read either, are scorned greatly as lacking true moral discrimination."

But this gift to mortals which may carry with it such boundless possibilities is of all senses the most wayward and uncertain.

Aristocrats become politicians and essayists, but they rarely develop into humorists. Prosperity is a bad soil for the nurture of the joker. If you want to laugh heartily, or to produce laughter in others, you must have first known what it is to be thoroughly miserable; and if at any time you have almost cried your heart out, one result will be a greater piquancy and richness in your humour. This is why prosperous and well-conditioned folks are often such terrible bores; it also explains why 'bus conductors and waifs and strays are often such delightful humorists. Humour is no respecter of persons; the London cabby possesses it more frequently than the Piccadilly masher he may be driving. "Where did you learn that dreadful language?" asked a shocked minister of religion of a London workman. "Learned it!" answered the workman, with scorn, "I never learned it, it's a bloomin' gift." Surely as much may be said of his humour.

Do not mistake my meaning. When I speak of this sense I am not limiting my meaning to the mere capacity to see a joke. Looked at in its wider aspect, I should define my wanted sense as a perception of the incongruous, an instinctive appreciation of the fitness or the unfitness of things; in short, it implies in those who possess it an exquisite sense of proportion. You may, indeed, possess the sense, and yet have never perpetrated a joke in your life; the sense, though, has saved you hundreds of times from appearing ridiculous to other people. For instance, the conceit of some men is colossal, stupendous, a thing to make angels weep, and devils rejoice. And, underlying that conceit, is almost invariably this same obliquity of mental vision. The daily prayer, on the other hand, of every humorist is, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

And with this larger view think of what the absence of this sense means. It was Thackeray who said, "The wicked are wicked no doubt, and they stand and fall and come by their deserts, but who can tell the mischief which the very virtuous do." Superficial observers often put down the crimes of religious people to their religion; let us go further and say rather they are more often due to the want of a sense of the ludicrous, and that the Christian religion has very little to do with the matter at all. These people would make exactly the same blunders if they were Agnostics or Buddhists. Take the case of Professor Tyndall. I cannot help thinking that the many mistakes and extravagances of his life, and even the illness which prematurely ended his career, were due to his want of humour. Professor Huxley said of him, that it was of no use to introduce him to

the subtleties of a joke—he simply misunderstood you, and Herbert Spencer has made the same complaint with regard to his old friend. Here are Mr. Spencer's own words.

“Twice I had experience of this. When, after an injury received while bathing in a Swiss mountain stream, he was laid up for some time, and, on getting back to England, remained at Folkestone, I went down to spend a few days with him. ‘Do you believe in matter?’ was a question which he propounded just as we were about to bid one another good night after a day's continuous talking. Ever since a nervous breakdown in 1855, over my second book, talking has told upon me just as much as working, and has had to be kept within narrow limits; so that persistence in this kind of thing was out of the question, and I had to abridge my stay. Once more the like happened when, after the meeting of the British Association at Liverpool, we adjourned to the Lakes. Gossip, which may be carried on without much intellectual tax, formed but a small element in our conversation. There was almost unceasing discussion as we rambled along the shore of Windermere, or walked up to Rydal Mount (leaving our names in the visitors' book), or as we were being rowed along Grasmere, or when climbing Loughrigg on our way back. Tyndall's intellectual vivacity gave me no rest; and after two utterly sleepless nights I had to fly.”

And Mr. Spencer rightly thinks that it was his inability to indulge in gossip, to change the subject from grave to gay, his intense over-seriousness, which first brought on the Professor the insomnia which ultimately made him the wreck he was in his later years. And surely to the same cause was due also the harshness of his judgments on men and women, the bitter intolerance of his language, the cruel slanders he aimed at men who were as single-minded as he was himself. The high wall at Haslemere he built to keep the thought of his neighbours from his mind was a standing monument of his want of a sense of the ridiculous. For humour is the kindest thing alive, and no humorist was ever known to want to permanently escape from contagion with his fellows.

Most curious of all types of men and women is the individual who has his sixth sense developed indeed, but will never allow himself to be the object of other people's humour. He is a sorry spectacle for gods and men. It is a test of nobility of character and of freedom from the worst form of self-consciousness, as well as a test of his sense of humour, how a man enjoys a laugh against

himself. No one laughed more heartily than Carlyle at John Morley's witticism that it took him thirty volumes in which to compress his gospel of silence. And we know from Mr. Matthew Arnold's letters, just published, that the apostle of culture enjoyed the parody of himself which appeared in *The New Republic*, as well as a parody of his poetry which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*. The instances to the contrary in literary history are unfortunately numerous. In official life they meet one at every turn. Every editor's letter-bag is full of them, even that of the editor of *St. Martins'-le-Grand*, and whenever they occur they are deplorable and unworthy of anybody who cares at all for the humorous side of things.

I have said enough to indicate to you how true it is that this sense lies at the root of all that is best in our natures. Unlike wit, it is nearly always kind; it is nearly always tolerant; it is almost necessarily just. Why is it, I often ask myself, that the majority of English women are deficient in this sense? American women, Irish women, and many French women possess it in abundance, but the fact remains that to a very large proportion of our sisters the subtleties of a joke are incomprehensible. I think that the reputation for unfairness and pettiness, especially among one another, which many of them possess, is due to this cause. Laurence Sterne's domestic life was not a particularly happy one. In a well-known passage he admits us into his confidence, and we partially understand the why and the wherefore of his troubles with his wife. She had no sense of the ludicrous. She could not for all the efforts he made see his jokes. Poor man! Poor Sterne! most whimsical and rare of English humorists, to be chained for life to such a being; no wonder he was bored with her at times and ran after other sweet Dulcineas. Max O'Rell says, there is one state in the American Union where a woman can get a divorce from her husband if he snores, and a man can get one if his wife cannot see a joke. I am afraid, from the point of view of the sanctity of the institution of marriage, it would be dangerous to adopt such a law in this country.

It is a sort of axiom with some people that Scotch people are deficient in this sense. The charge generally comes from insular-minded people whose idea of humour is limited and is restricted to their own particular national view. For the Scotch possess a grim and sardonic outlook on affairs which in itself pre-supposes the possession of a humour of their own. It is perhaps a fact that that they are slow of perception, and are therefore not a witty people. And they certainly

take themselves too seriously. Theodore Hook was once walking down the Strand, and he met a gentleman coming along the street, a perfect stranger to him, but who was carrying himself with an air of importance and personal assertiveness, which tickled Hook so much that he stopped the man and said, "Excuse me, sir, but are you anybody in particular?" I have been sorely tempted to put this same question in Prince's Street, Edinburgh, more so than in any other thoroughfare in the world. At the risk of inflicting you with a chestnut, I must relate the following anecdote. A Scotchman and an Englishman were out walking together one day in Scotland, and they came to a part of the country where the floods were out; presently the road along which they were walking became impassable, and at last it was lost completely in the water. But a thoughtful Scotch local authority had put up a notice board to instruct the wayfaring man how to proceed. The notice ran thus: "Walk out west for a quarter of a mile; then turn to the north, and you will get into the road again. Those who cannot read, ask the way at the blacksmith's." The Englishman went off into shouts of laughter at this naïve and delightful notice, and irritated the Scotchman extremely, who had read the notice with a thrill of pride running through his veins at the enterprise of the local authorities. He read and re-read the notice to find out what it was the Englishman was laughing at, until the latter, after having said "Don't you see?" until he was nearly black in the face, gave up the business in despair. That night they slept together in a double-bedded room, and about 2 a.m. the Englishman was aroused from a refreshing slumber by shouts of laughter from the Scotchman's bed. With some bad language the Englishman asked testily what was the matter. "I see it," said the Scotchman, "I see it now; it is capital—splendid—oh, it *is* good!" "What do you see?" said the Englishman. "Why, of course," said the Scotchman, "the blacksmith might be oot!"

I am sure after you have heard this story you will never say Scotchmen don't see things; you have only to give them time for reflection and they do. At any rate they see something, and it is not everyone who can do as much as that. It is desirable sometimes to remind the Londoner that there are other kinds of humour than that of 'Oundsitch. Carlyle told John Morley to beware of two things, the ambition to write poetry, and to become a London wit. And Carlyle, if he had nothing else, had a sense of humour. When a stern Caledonian was told of Sydney Smith's remark that it required a surgical operation to get a joke into a Scotchman's head, he shook

his head sadly and thoughtfully, and said that "the operation wid dae a Scotchman nae guid." "The joke," he remarked, is a thing metaphysical, whereas a surgical operation is phesical, and therefore useless in the circumstances."

In my opinion the French as a nation are far more wanting in this sense than the Scotch. They seem to have a positive knack of placing themselves in undignified and ludicrous positions. And they take themselves quite as seriously as the Scotch. It is really an interesting problem, which arises out of the fact that the wittiest people, such as the French and the Irish, are sometimes terribly lacking in the perception of incongruity which lies at the root of all humour.

It is curious to note how humour delights to take up its dwelling in the most incongruous places. The poet Cowper, in his sadness and misery of soul possesses it, while his greater contemporary Burke can never raise a smile. Cowper was a born trifler, and yet at the same time the most serious-minded of all English poets. As we read him, at one moment we are thinking of him as crushed to the earth in deepest melancholy, and what he writes in such circumstances is a real cry of pain, and in a moment we turn to another page, written perhaps not very long after the first, and we think of Cowper as the soul of playfulness and humour. Surely it is these varying moods which made him so beloved by his friends and so delightful a companion, while his melancholy and moroseness were but evidences of his sensitiveness to every influence which visited him. You would hardly think it could be the same man who wrote a terrible verse like this—

Man disavows and Deity disowns me,
Hell might afford my miseries a shelter,
Therefore Hell keeps her hungry mouths all bolted against me ;
and shortly afterwards could sit down and write some of the most playful and humorous letters in the English language.

And humour has an unmistakeable liking for cathedral closes and country parsonages. Who are among our greatest humorists? Why, Dean Swift, Laurence Sterne, and Sydney Smith, all of them ministers of the Christian religion, and the Ingoldsby Legends and the Brown papers have in our own day proceeded from Christian clergymen.

That we have had so many clerical humorists, and that there is such a speciality as clerical humour, is due of course to the intermingling of sacred and secular views of life in their profession which develop the perception of incongruity.

Father Faber used to say that a sense of humour was the most valuable aid to the religious life which he knew. In a clergyman it almost pre-supposes the possession of his most valuable gift, if he only knew it, viz., the gift of toleration. I knew a rigidly orthodox clergyman whose creed was in itself terrible in its exactingness, and in its inflexibility, yet who was a thousand times better than his creed, simply because he had his sixth sense keenly developed. He told me one day that the greatest treat of one old bed-ridden woman's life was to take the communion with him. I am afraid she misunderstood the origin and meaning of the sacred rite. For she always took the cup from the vicar's hands and, "Your good 'ealth, sir," was her habitual response to the comfortable words. The vicar told me sadly, half reproachfully, that he sometimes regretted he had never had the heart to correct her: he hoped that even in this mutilated form the act might be counted to her for righteousness. I knew of a delightfully absent-minded clergyman who occasionally prayed for the maintenance of wickedness and vice, and the punishment of Thy True Religion and Virtue. Our perception of the incongruous is always somehow tickled when we see a Bishop or a member of a serious profession playing the fool.

Many of you will remember a very witty extract from one of John Oliver Hobbes' novels, concerning a Professor who was supposed to be a great man and who was rarely known to unbend.

"I should like Lady Bassett better than I do, if I thought she had a heart: no woman with a heart could have married Sir Benjamin."

Sir Benjamin was the great Professor and scholar.

"Did you know him," said Sophia. "No," said De Boys, "but everyone says he is the most disagreeable man in the world, so forbidding, and curt and unapproachable."

"I thought so once," said Sophia, "till one day when I was a child I heard him talking to Lady Hyde Bassett; I suppose they thought I was too little to understand them. They were walking in the garden and he asked her whether she would rather be a pussy cat or a catty puss, and she pinched his arm, and said he was a good little thing, and it was a pity some of the old fossils he knew could not hear him. And he said very solemnly, 'God forbid,' and she kissed his hand and said he was an angel, but she wished he would buy a new hat, although he could only look lovely if he wore pyjamas and a billy-cock. And he said, 'for God's sake don't talk so loud.' And then they began to talk about Aristotle."

It is perhaps commonplace in a lecturer to say that there are a good many people who would be all the better citizens if they put to themselves oftener the question, Which would I rather be, "a catty puss or a pussy cat?" and less frequently such questions as What am I? Whence came I? Whither am I going? What is our aim in life? For nature herself is just what a healthy man or woman should be, a being of many moods and versatile temperament, neither all sunshine nor all clouds, and she has an infinite capacity of mirth as well as of sorrow. People who are deficient in the perception of the incongruous are in reality wanting in true sensitiveness and in delicate sensibility. Outwardly being apparently so serious they perhaps strike you as people of great feeling, but it is not so. It is obvious that the person who laughs with you the most heartily is the person who will weep with you most readily. They owe this fact to their delicate sensibility.

The perception of the incongruous is surely the touchstone of a person's character. I sometimes think it is quite incapable of being acquired; it is the possession of the child as much as of the adult. I saw in a paper the other day a story of a lady who was visiting the house of a prominent politician, and being one of those delightful characters who are always preaching to other people she took occasion to talk seriously to the politician's eldest little boy. She said to him, "Now Johnny, I hope you don't worry your father, he has to mix in great affairs, and is always busy and full of important schemes, and I hope you are kind and thoughtful and helpful to your mother, and that you don't worry her for things you cannot have. And you must always be good and helpful to your younger brothers, and not tease and worry them." But here the poor and wearied child broke in with, "Damn it, I'm only five!"

Charles Lamb once said to a friend, "I have been to a funeral and I am thoroughly ashamed of myself; I made a pun; I could not help myself." And it is a fact with which we are all familiar, that the most solemn scenes of our lives are often the most trying to our sense of humour. It is nature's safety valve; it keeps some of us out of the mad-house.

In Mr. Tollemache's *Safe Studies* is to be found the following exquisite death-bed story. It follows suitably in this connexion: "A certain profligate was on his death-bed, and after confessing many misdeeds he seemed to think that they were outweighed by one meritorious act, he had converted a Jew. It was in this wise: I was in a shipwreck, and as many of us as could leapt into a boat and rowed

away. We passed by an unfortunate Jew who was struggling in the water. He implored us to take him in, but on my asking him whether he would turn Christian he refused, and we let him sink. He soon rose to the surface, and on the question being repeated he again refused. Once more he rose, and this time, being thoroughly exhausted, he consented to abjure his errors. It might have been dangerous to take him into the boat, so I pushed him away, and he sank for the last time. *But he died a Christian.*"

In the larger affairs of life I often think how, if our sense of the ludicrous were more keenly developed, some of our most cherished customs and habits would disappear. How very ludicrous war appears! I don't think it will ever be done away with from a sense of the horror of the thing! Men are not cowards, and are rarely deterred from what they conceive to be duty, because the doing of it is accompanied with pain. They are much more sensitive to ridicule. And surely the spectacle of some thousands of men who have only one life each to dispose of, meeting together on a field, and blowing, as Carlyle has picturesquely put it, the souls out of one another, because of some wretched diplomatic quarrel between men who won't themselves do the fighting, is one of the most ludicrous sights in the world. Christianity has possibly failed to abolish war, because it has used the wrong means; it has constantly denounced war, but mere denunciation rarely succeeds in accomplishing anything except the self-satisfaction and spiritual conceit of the denunciator.

Do you know Southey's poem, "After Blenheim"? There is a fine humour in the way old Kaspar is full of the glory of the great victory, but cannot for the life of him say what it was all about or why they killed each other at all. And there is a real suggestiveness in the horror of the child at it all, and his anxiety to know the why and the wherefore, before he had become like his grandfather, sophisticated by education and habits. Dean Swift, in that wonderful book of his, *Gulliver's Travels*, has, by merely reducing the size of his men and women, and by investing them with our ideas and customs, made them appear ridiculous. I think we have only to adopt his method on a large scale in this country to find a great many things, against which politicians and religious men have been raving in vain for centuries, fall by the weight of their own silliness.

I will not introduce the note of contention or political feeling into this lecture by mentioning the institutions which would necessarily

fall with a keener developed sense of the ludicrous. I will not even tell you whether I think the House of Lords could survive the ordeal, or whether party government, Newcastle programmes, landed proprietors, nonconformist consciences, or established churches are in themselves ridiculous or not. The time is, I fear, too remote when the body politic will be struck of a heap as they say with this sixth sense. In the meantime you can prepare for the better state of things I see before us in the distant future by cultivating within yourselves the sensibility to the incongruous.

And just as it is a terrible mistake for a nation, or an individual to take itself too seriously, or for you or for me to take politics, or life itself in a too serious spirit, so it would be a regrettable mistake if my hearers took me too seriously. I am a quack and as is the case with all quacks the medicine I advertise is stated to cure everything from heresy and schism down to a torpid liver. It is the necessity of my position as a lecturer to unduly accentuate the effect of my remedies, and I can only beseech you not to attempt to carry out too literally my system. I want no testimonials from you. For if any one of you were to be so much impressed with the truth of what I have been saying, as to begin in his unfortunate family circle to carry out my recommendations and to construct a rule of life on my methods, I should feel that I was responsible for having plunged another man deeper than he was before in that slough over which is printed the warning, "Wanted : A sense of the ludicrous."

I have much more hope of the man or woman who is listening to me, and is at the same time saying to himself or herself. "The lecturer is an ass to talk to us as he has done. His remedy is worse than the disease. He himself can have little sense of humour if he does not see the futility of his position. For, if everybody, or even if a larger portion of humanity were to attain to a truer perception of the ludicrous, fewer ludicrous things would be done; in time nothing ridiculous would ever occur, and the sense itself would disappear from sheer want of exercise."

And so it comes to this, that the less you cultivate this sense the more is it likely in the end to flourish in our midst, and the grand proposition with which I started is thus reduced to the sublimity of a paradox, and to quote the language of the late Mr. Euclid, "is absurd." If you see this result clearly, I have no doubt that you possess a sense of humour.

EDWARD BENNETT.

Savings Bank Department, G.P.O.

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J. G. ELLIOTT.
(Postmaster, Deniliquin.)



R. BUCKLEY.
(Telegraph Master, Deniliquin.)



W. O'NEILL.
(Postmaster, Newcastle.)



F. G. DAVIES.
(Postmaster, Goulburn.)



C. A. MIDDLETON.
(Telegraph Master, Goulburn.)

Some New South Wales Officials.

IN earlier numbers of *St. Martin's-le-Grand* portraits have appeared of some of the principal officers in the Postal and Telegraph Service of New South Wales.

Until recently the two Departments (Postal and Telegraph) were under separate permanent heads, though controlled by the same Minister.

For many years, however, all but a few of the largest of the Branch and Country offices have been amalgamated, and the number of these few is gradually diminishing as opportunities offer for combining the duties, which in several cases are conducted in buildings some little distance apart. Amongst the towns at which this policy has been carried out during the last few years may be mentioned Armidale, Mudgee, and Wagga Wagga.

Those where the duties still remain unamalgamated (seven in number), although perhaps not *all* entitled to rank amongst the seven most important towns from a Postal and Telegraph point of view, are Albury, Bathurst, Broken Hill, Deniliquin, Goulburn, Newcastle, and West Maitland, and a few particulars regarding them, with portraits of some of the Postmasters and Telegraph Masters and views of the offices, are given in this issue. Taking them in alphabetical order

ALBURY

(386 miles S.W. of Sydney), which aspires to become the Federal city of Australia, comes first. It possesses a population, according to the census of 1891, of 5,447. Being the principal town on the southern border of the Colony, and situated on the main line of railway connecting Sydney and Melbourne, it holds an important position in connection with Intercolonial communication. The wines produced in this district have established a name throughout the world for the excellence of their flavour. The Postmaster, Mr. C. E. Dale, a native of Bathurst, entered the Postal service in that city in 1872, and has since held appointments as Postmaster at Liverpool,

King Street, Oxford Street, and Mudgee, receiving promotion to his present position in 1890. The Telegraph Master, Mr. W. J. Parsons,



ALBURY POST OFFICE.

was appointed to the Parramatta office in 1866, and graduated to his present position through the Armidale, Tenterfield, West Maitland, Sydney, and Wagga Wagga offices.

BATHURST

(145 miles west of Sydney) has a population of 9,162 persons. The district is now chiefly an agricultural one, although in former years immense yields were obtained from its alluvial gold fields. Owing to its high elevation English cereals and fruits are largely grown, and thrive well. Mr. W. G. Thompson, the Postmaster, is the fourth son of the late Mr. William Thompson, who held the position of Postmaster at Bathurst for thirty-three years. The subject of our sketch entered the service as an assistant to his father in 1863, and on the latter's retirement three years later succeeded him as Postmaster.

He is now the senior Postmaster in the Colony. As a citizen he has taken an active part in matters affecting the general welfare and advancement of the district, and while an alderman he was instrumental in obtaining the attractive promenade which adorns the centre of the city, and a view of which is given on another page.

The Telegraph Master, Mr. K. A. H. Mackenzie, was appointed a probationer in the Head Office in 1862, and prior to his appointment to Bathurst in 1876 was employed as an operator at various country stations.

BROKEN HILL, *

with a population of 19,789, a district almost uninhabited up to a few years ago, is perhaps to-day, owing to the extent and richness of its silver mines, one of the best known towns in the Empire. Situated near the western border of the Colony, its position is unique as regards mail communication with the Metropolis, inasmuch as the most expeditious service is by way of Melbourne (Victoria) and Adelaide (South Australia), a distance of 1,392 miles by railway, the New South Wales Railway terminating at a distance of 300 miles from Broken Hill. The Postmaster, Mr. W. M. Weatherall, entered the service at Wagga Wagga in 1879, and, on the discovery of gold at Ternova in the following year, was selected to fill the position of Post and Telegraph Master, which he held until the rush of miners to that district abated a few years later. The experience which he gained on this gold-field eminently fitted him for the still more important position of Postmaster at Broken Hill, to which he was appointed in 1888. Mr. Francis Whysall, the Telegraph Master, entered the Head Office as a probationer in 1875, and was in the same year appointed an operator, remaining in the Head Office until 1888 (the last three years as Night Officer-in-Charge), when he was promoted to Broken Hill, the most important Telegraph Station in the Colony, outside of Sydney.

DENILQUIN,

Although a town containing less than 3,000 inhabitants, is the centre of a large pastoral district, and being the terminus of a (private) railway line connecting with the Victorian system, is the principal office of exchange for Inter-colonial and Foreign mails for the south-western district of the Colony. The distance from Sydney, via Hay, the terminus of the south-western line of railway, is 534 miles, but the quickest course of post is by rail through Victoria. The Postmaster, Mr. J. G. Elliott, was born at Penrith, and received his first appointment in 1876 as Assistant at Albury, from which he was promoted to his present position in 1890. Mr. Robert Buckley,

* A view of Broken Hill Post Office appeared in the last number of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, p. 412.



DENILIQUN POST OFFICE.

the Telegraph Master, entered the service at Yass in 1862, and after serving in the Young, Braidwood, and Goulburn offices, was promoted to Deniliquin in 1875.

GOLBURN,

134 miles from Sydney, on the railway line to Albury (population 10,916), is the centre of one of the oldest and most extensively



GOLBURN POST OFFICE.

settled districts of the Colony, and the climate favours the production of almost every variety of English fruits which are largely grown. Mr. F. G. Davies, the Postmaster, entered the head office as a clerk in 1869, and received his present appointment in 1888. The Telegraph Master, Mr. Cecil A. Middleton, who was born at Morpeth on the Hunter, is the youngest son of the Rev. G. A. Middleton, one of the earliest of the Church of England ministers of the Colony. He joined the telegraph service at West Maitland in 1861, and after serving in various capacities at Sydney, Hay, and Wagga Wagga, was appointed to the position he now holds in 1878.

NEWCASTLE,

a seaport, 102 miles north of Sydney by railway; is chiefly known as the great coal depot of Australia. The coal-mining industry has made the city, which has a population of 13,000, second only to Sydney, and the shipping trade has grown to very large dimensions, although it has recently met with a temporary check through constantly recurring strikes amongst the miners. Mr. William O'Neill, the Postmaster, was born in Carlow, Ireland, and arrived in Victoria in 1852. Entering the Postal Service of New South Wales in 1875, he was appointed a clerk in the following year, postmaster Parramatta Street, in 1877, Mudgee in 1878, and Newcastle in 1888. The Telegraph Master, Mr. T. G. Croft, a native of Kent, England, entered the New South Wales Telegraph Service in 1861 as a clerk in the head office, and having been for short periods in charge of the Penrith, Camden, Wellington, Gunnedah, and Braidwood offices, was transferred to Newcastle in 1880.

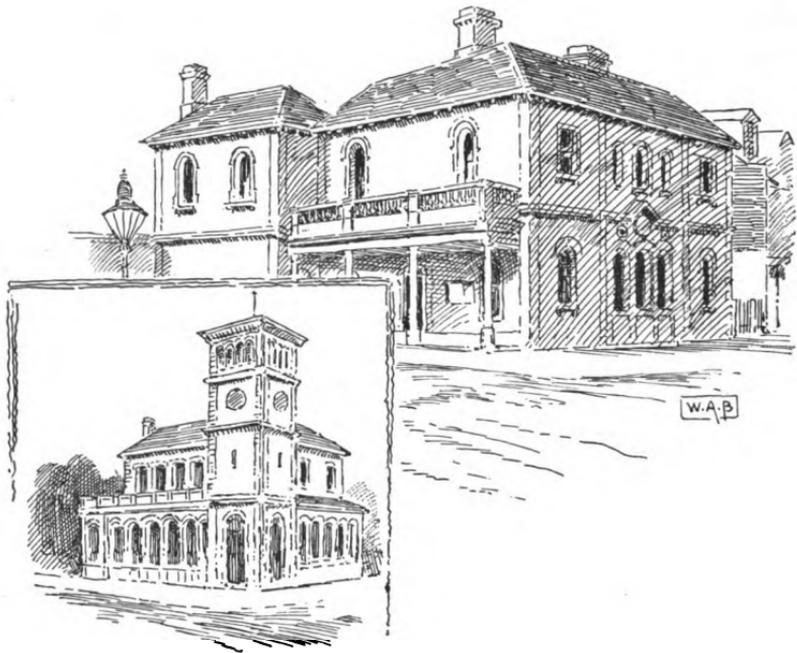
WEST MAITLAND,

a town of 7,295 inhabitants, is situated 118 miles north of Sydney on the railway line to Brisbane, and is the centre of an extremely rich agricultural district. The town being built on the low banks of the Hunter river, has several times suffered severely from floods which threaten in time to sweep it out of existence.

Mr. W. C. Johnson, the Postmaster, entered the head office in 1857, and since 1864 has been in charge successively of the Yass, Goulburn, and West Maitland offices, having held his present position for over 11 years. The Telegraph Master, Mr. Percy Claye, entered the Victorian Telegraph service in 1865, and having become an expert operator was in 1874 offered inducements to come over to New South Wales.

The offer was repeated the following year, when Mr. Claye joined the Sydney office where he soon gave evidence of his superior capabilities as an operator.

Having been employed on one of the busiest lines almost continuously for 10 years, the strain told upon his health, and he gladly accepted the offer of an exchange with the Telegraph Master at West Maitland in 1884.



WEST MAITLAND POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICES.

Old Times in the Telegraphs.

THE messengers' lobby in the old Southampton Telegraph Office about 27 years ago:—a spiral staircase in the middle leading to the instrument room above; a door on one side through which you approached Mr. W. H. Preece's offices, and another opposite opening into the counter; under the window a bench for the messengers; on the fourth side their cupboards, and, on the top of these, two of the old drop handle, double-needle instruments. Such was the messengers' lobby and "learners' room" at the time I speak of. I was then the only and I believe the last "learner" in the Electric and International Company's service at Southampton, before the transfer. In those days, in addition to the learners, the messengers in their spare moments also practised and learned the instrument working, and in the fullness of time were either "bounced" or appointed clerks, as Providence and their own conduct directed. The office itself formed a corner of the L. & S. W. Railway yard, adjoining the station.

As a learner I remember I was in clover and had a great deal more pocket money than I afterwards had as a newly appointed clerk; for what with sixpenny, shilling, and eighteen-penny portage messages, boat messages with 5s. or 7s. 6d. paid for delivery to yachts and other vessels (and I could hire a skiff from the boat yards for three months for two shillings and sixpence!), I was really the "most favoured" messenger instead of a learner; and indeed, had I not made up for it by practising in the evenings, I should never have learnt at all. I may say here that the counter clerk in most of these cases required his commission on the profits, and sometimes drove a hard bargain. I think there never was an instrument that (so to speak) appealed to the affections of a telegraph clerk like the old fashioned double needle. Was a man on his holidays? However much he enjoyed himself, he always had the feeling of having lost something, and when he returned and grasped the two familiar handles it was like shaking hands with a dear old friend, and he knew at once what it was he had missed. Old Electric men will, I am sure, recall how they one and all shared this queer feeling. Charles

Dickens has laid it down as an established fact that whenever a waiter is given a holiday he immediately goes away and lends a hand to a waiter at another establishment. Similarly, in the old days, I never knew a telegraph clerk who had any time to wait at a railway station that boasted a telegraph office who did not immediately fraternize with the railway clerk and send his messages for him; nay, more, the refreshment room bore witness to his gratitude for the privilege granted. Use is second nature, and the nature of a thoroughbred telegraphist, even in these days, is to poke his nose into, and take an intense and inexplicable interest in business that does not concern him in the least, whenever the sight of a needle dial or the click of a sounder arrests his attention. So, in a country town like Southampton, when a man was on day duty, say from 8 to 5 (nine hours was a day's work then), he would go home, have his tea, and the usual "wash and brush up," and then go out again, perhaps to promenade the High Street, perhaps for a walk elsewhere; but it was a hundred to one that before the evening was over he turned up in the messengers' lobby (which thus became a kind of club), and once there nothing could keep him from drifting upstairs for a few moments, just to see "how they were getting on," and send a message or two if his luck favoured him with the opportunity. The clerks' off-duty rule was not so rigidly enforced then as now.

One of the "big" men then in the service was the Superintendent under Mr. Preece, Mr. Langdon, and he was a very strict disciplinarian, in fact a real martinet. Should this description meet his eye now, it is probable he may feel surprised at it, perhaps even grieved, but that was the opinion we had of him then. I remember on one occasion, when the "club" was fuller than usual, one of the members had brought a set of boxing gloves, and a very lively little mill was in progress in the lobby when a messenger rushed in with the news that Mr. Langdon was on the station platform. Gloves and clothes were bundled into the cupboards in a twinkling, and we dashed into the station yard and into an empty truck immediately opposite Mr. Preece's office windows. It was an intensely frosty night; nearly all of us were in our shirt-sleeves, and there, shivering and coatless, we watched Mr. Langdon leisurely write one or two letters, while the big Newfoundland dog that appeared to belong sometimes to him, sometimes to Mr. Preece, and at other times to the office (for he divided his time between the three according to circumstances), stood at the door, growling like a little thunderstorm whenever we stirred to try and warm ourselves. I shall never forget

our sufferings that night. One of that pugilistic group died, but as it was in Egypt and some years afterwards Mr. Langdon cannot be held responsible.

Upstairs in the instrument room one side was occupied by the old embosser printers and one solitary single current inker to LY (Lothbury); the other side contained the needle instruments, double and single, and these not only carried the "Electric" commercial work but did all the Railway service work as well, even including the train signal messages. The latter were called "TA's," and as they were of course of paramount importance everything had to give way to them. In the middle of a message to Woking you would be suddenly interrupted with "TA," and until Basingstoke had sent his train signal to Micheldever you had to stand clear. Messages then were sent in code turn, but an "SP" instead of being a press message as now, was an urgent Railway service, and took precedence of the others irrespective of code, except of course "TA's"; and when a man at a Railway office was waiting for his dinner or otherwise in a hurry, he sometimes had no compunction in making his ordinary service an "SP" and so getting rid of it quickly. Dishonest alteration of codes was also common, and altogether if some of the irritable young gentlemen who in these days occasionally get into trouble for "obstructive working" had to take a busy circuit now under those conditions, it would be a revelation to them.

Salaries were very, very small, and on the principle that "to him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath," most of the punishments took the form of fines; and when a clerk had been unusually indiscreet, the stopping of two days' pay seriously inconvenienced him at the end of the week. Perhaps this induced reflection and reform, perhaps it did not; for taken as a body, a more jovial, reckless, happy-go-lucky, devil-may-care set of men than the majority of the Company's servants in any large town could scarcely be found, only equalled perhaps by a man-of-war's crew on liberty ashore.

As we did the Railway work, we had the privilege of a pass on the line during holidays and on other occasions, one of which was the annual dinner. Our district (Mr. Preece's) comprised offices as far distant as Exeter and Brighton on the south coast, and extended northwards to Waterloo Station. We have our divisional dinners at TS at the present day, where cordiality and harmony exist to perfection, but to compare the divisional dinner to the old district dinners is to compare water to wine. The boisterous greetings from

men whose duties separated them by scores of miles, from men who had known each other for years, worked to each other for years, and perhaps had not met for years, beggar description and made a veritable pandemonium that nowadays would drive the Criterion to distraction and despair. Men who had never met except by wire asked for each other, and occasionally a funny *contretemps* such as this would occur—

Stranger (bursting into group), "Where's Smith? Somebody introduce me to Smith."

Smith (prepared and coming forward), "Here I am! Are you Brown from Woking?"

Brown (regardless of grammar), "That's me, old fellow!" Gruff voice from behind: "Oh! you're Brown from Woking, are you? Well, I'm Robinson, and you ought to be poleaxed for that report you sent to Guildford yesterday."

A shout of laughter, most likely led by Robinson himself, dispelled all idea of ill-feeling, and that Saturday night was a night to be remembered long after the visitors had travelled back on Sunday, to be ready for duty on the Monday morning. Talking of these same railway passes reminds me of one or two men who, being in disgrace, were refused passes for their holidays. They were all going to London and they held a consultation. They paid their single fares to the Metropolis, and on the last day of their leave calmly walked into Waterloo office and announced by wire that they were unable to get back, as they were without funds. It is needless to say their passes arrived by the next train, and they travelled down chuckling to think "they had done 'the old man' one way anyhow."

Practical jokes were the order of the day. The Osborne circuit was a printer on one side of the office, but was one and the same wire as the Hurst Castle single needle opposite, so that only one of these stations could work at one time. By taking off the drop handle of Hurst Castle and screwing it on again in a horizontal position it formed a printer key, which would produce marks on the Osborne apparatus. If any greenhorn happened to be on hand while the Court was at Osborne, he would be called up one evening by means of this improvised key, and a message from the Queen to Prince somebody in Germany would be sent, of which a word like "Schlanenzerwünschen" would be mild, and after floundering through about a hundred and fifty such amazing specimens of imitation German, he would find a pause and then "please cancel." Then he would look round at the Hurst Castle circuit, and then—

This Hurst Castle is or was merely a signalling office on a spit of land running into the sea opposite Freshwater and the Needles, and is almost solely used for reporting the steamers that pass for Southampton. This is necessary, not only for the dock officials' information but also for the Post Office to be prepared for the mails. The Hurst Castle clerk led, perforce, a Robinson Crusoe sort of life. He had no society except an old watchman and a dog, and when he took his holidays something wrong was sure to happen. A man from Southampton was always sent to relieve him, and if that man had not been there before he was certain to make one mistake. The "ships that pass in the night" are identified by the coloured lights they show. Opposite, on the island, was a house with a window of coloured glass, and the first night the new man was at



Hurst Castle and this window happened to be lit up, he would immediately report a North German Lloyd steamer passing for Southampton. On receipt of this information the mail agent, in a red coat resplendent with gold braid, and a "tail," of several porters and trucks, would, after allowing the usual time to elapse, go down to the dock jetty and sit, perhaps in a pouring rain, waiting for a vessel that never appeared, until his patience was exhausted, when he would walk back into our office and relieve his feelings by some cursory remarks on telegraphists in general and the man at Hurst Castle in particular.

Lights and shades alternate in Telegraph experiences as in other phases of life. On the stormiest day I ever remember I once took

a reply-paid telegram (addressed to a Captain of the 60th Rifles or Rifle Brigade, I forget which) to Marchwood Powder Magazine, which lies on the opposite side of Southampton Water. It was so rough, even on that land-locked bay, that no boat could be obtained from any of the yards, and it was only by mortgaging the whole of the portorage money that I induced a partially sober wherryman to take me across. How many times we tacked and how long it took us to ratch across that two miles of water I am afraid to say, but we accomplished it at last and I reached the Officers' quarters with the telegram, which was an invitation to a ball at Winchester, just as



the unfortunate addressee was carried in with his neck broken, having been thrown from his horse as he was entering the village. The solemn hush as I handed his brother officers the telegram, and the time it took them to collect their wits and concoct anything like an intelligible reply under such circumstances I cannot describe. The Armoury Sergeant and his assistant, of the local Volunteer corps, left for the same place for ammunition ten minutes after us and were capsized and drowned within a few hundred yards of the quay.

Racing work was our privilege and our pleasure. Southampton and Brighton made up the staff for all the southern race meetings,

such as Epsom, Ascot, Goodwood, &c. This was before Mr. Johnston's Special Staff was formed, and we had neither the work nor the pay our successors came in for. Four single current inkers, two up and two down, sufficed for Epsom, Ascot and Goodwood in those days, and three shillings per diem expenses were allowed to the racing staff. The work was hard, but we got through it; the living and lodging precarious and rough, but we enjoyed it; and when after a hard day at Ascot we got back to Reading at night for dinner, and our Superintendent, Mr. Tubb, reared his six feet five (more or less) inches over the table and said grace, it would have been difficult to have found a happier party in Huntley & Palmers' town.

Among the many queer incidents that have happened at race meetings, the following stands most prominently in my recollection. The Ascot office was a little lodge at the corner gates of the stand grounds. It had a thatched roof, and when we smoked, which we had a bad habit of doing in those free and easy days, a species of West India beetle, such as were then worn in pins and brooches, used to drop from the top, and we used to work with our hats on and coat collars turned up. On one occasion part of this roof collapsed altogether and a general stampede of the officials resulted. The two receiving clerks had just finished the addresses of two telegrams when the accident occurred, and the supervisor, after using language as to leaving the circuits (although he was the first to fly), picked up the slip and handed the texts to the two receivers. Unfortunately he got them mixed, with the consequence that a Quaker corn merchant living some distance away got a commission to back a horse for the Royal Hunt Cup, while a bookmaker in the ring got a condensed report of the Mark Lane corn prices. There were two reports, and an immense amount of correspondence before the affair was settled, the Quaker gentleman insisting that it was a studied insult on the part of the postmaster, who had appeared to have entertained a prejudice against him ever since he had lived in the neighbourhood. This was hard, as we did all the delivering from the stand during the races, and the postmaster had no more to do with the matter than the man in the moon.

The years that have flown by since these old times have produced changes such as can be chronicled in no other department or institution than the Telegraphs. Twenty-five years ago I performed an hour's extra duty for taking a message by sound. Looking at the work at the present day, I ought to have that hour reckoned with

compound interest and added to my service, if I should live to be pensioned. Telephones, duplexes, quadruplexes, multiplexes, and other things calculated to perplex the poor telegraphist, have been piled up on him with crushing weight; and the technical examination he has to undergo now before obtaining promotion would most assuredly make some of the old time "engineers," as they were called, "sit up." The Civil Service examination, no doubt, has brought a superior class of clerks into the service, but in spite of the competitive system there is a large want of that general intelligence and all round, if somewhat superficial, knowledge which goes so far to make a thoroughly good telegraphist. When we find a youth who has satisfied the Civil Service Commissioners as to his ability punching the information that "Two new steel cruisers have been ordered by the *Almighty*" instead of Admiralty, and transforming a reporter's Li Hung Chang to Sir Henry Charing, you soon realize that the real Intelligence department is the manipulating room, and not the news' distributors' province, so long misnamed the "I.D."

What the next quarter of a century may bring forth is an unknown quantity, but if the Central Office shows such changes as it has witnessed since LY became the modern TS, it is difficult indeed to anticipate or even faintly imagine what another 25 years will present. Meantime, those of us who served in the old companies' times—and our number is dwindling every year—may be excused for being prosy over old memories and keeping a warm corner in our hearts for Auld Lang Syne.

C.T.O., G.P.O.

F. PRESTON.

Proposed Canonization of Rowland Hill.



IR,—The subjoined cutting may possibly be of interest. It appears that there is a sect, other than the Comtist, which solemnly canonizes those who are considered by its votaries to be benefactors of the world. With a praiseworthy caution this sect has borrowed the institution of the *Advocatus Diaboli*, whose duty it is to show cause why a given man should *not* be canonized, and the present cutting is the report of the speech of such an advocate before a conclave assembled to discuss the projected canonization of Sir Rowland Hill in this the centenary year of his birth.

Probably it would be quite safe to let such a speech invite its own condemnation from such a circle of readers as that to which *St Martin's-le-Grand* appeals, but, nevertheless, for my own gratification, I dissociate myself publicly from its style and its sentiments alike. The style is not only hopelessly disfigured by the Advocate's odious trick of indiscriminate quotation, but is also rendered abominable to the refined understanding by the turgid and vaporous rhetoric which seems to have been borrowed from Henry George. The sentiments are so sweeping as to be absurd. The Advocate does not attack us for our failures, but for our success. His *bête noire* appears to be the very perfection of the system of which we are proud. If our Post Office were less universal and less efficient it would apparently disgust him far less. And therefore it is that we may take his dithyrambic abuse to ourselves as our consolation, to which end I have asked you to reproduce it here.

Yours faithfully, HERBERT DE WINTON.

December, 1895.

SPEECH OF THE ADVOCATUS DIABOLI.

BROTHERS! we are met this day to consider whether the aureole of the world-benefactor should rest upon the brow of Rowland Hill: whether we may add yet one more to the bright band of Saints whom we delight to honour. Ye have heard his praises, and I have sat by in silence. Ye have heard it told how the father of the penny post is the father of its scions also: how the Telegraph and the

Savings Bank are but rays beaming from the lamp which Rowland Hill set shining. Be it so. Give him the glory of all of these, but give him their shame also. Yea, verily, their shame, I say; for mine is the duty of showing you cause why you should not canonize this man. Ye have made me your *Advocatus Diaboli* that I may without fear or favour hold up the mirror to the evil that the dead hath done, that liveth after him, lest haply ye canonize also the evil-doer, to your own exceeding hurt; for truly well saith the Blessed Bacon, "*Pessima res est errorum apotheosis.*" I will show you that these three things, the Post, the Telegraph, the Savings Bank, are no blessing to the world but rather a curse: that they are a millstone to drag down the man, about whose neck ye would hang them as a chaplet of honour, to the nadir of the execration of mankind.

What of the Post? I hear men say that by the Post cometh the diffusion of knowledge, the spread of social intercourse, and the growth of commerce. Let it be so.

Knowledge comes by means of the penny post, but what is knowledge worth in comparison with the happiness of man? "Many shall run to and fro," said the prophet, and "knowledge shall be increased," and verily, in the days of the railway and the steamship, the knowledge, and the thought that shakes mankind increase and multiply, but they bring no happiness in their train. I cite against the prophet the experience of his own time, when it is written that "one post ran to meet another," but they brought knowledge of calamity, even of the fall of Babylon the Great. For even such is the nature of knowledge: it is of good and of evil, but of evil for the most part. This is no paradox of mine and mine only. "Knowledge comes but wisdom lingers" repeats the poet twice over, as though he had found some aphorism of great price, as indeed he has—true aphorism since the day when the fruit of the tree of knowledge was first culled. How often has the recipient of a letter grown indeed in knowledge by the perusal thereof, but has sorrowfully shaken his head thereafter when he realized that ignorance was bliss. This is the answer which a weary world would return, in the days of light, to an assertion that Rowland Hill deserves canonization because he has increased the diffusion of knowledge.

And what of social intercourse and social amenity? Are we blind followers of Comte that we should think we have opened the gates of paradise by such a phrase as the "*Esprit d'ensemble*"? We are told that "the triumph of social sympathy is the first necessity of

civilization," and doubtless Rowland Hill has set the bounds of social sympathy more widely open. It may be that the ramifications of the Post have hastened the day when "Man to man the world o'er shall brothers be for a' that," but were not Cain and Abel also brothers?

Are the relations of the great organizations of men so friendly that we should bless the man who made those organizations possible? If the "Parliament of man" is nearly met, and the "federation of the world" nearly made, by means of the intercommunication of states, are the "battle flags furled" thereby, and does the "war drum throb no longer"?

And, if not, why are we met here to consider the canonization of Rowland Hill on the ground that he has quickened the sense of social unity? Surely, when the morning paper circulates through the post telling of rumours of wars abroad and social strife within, it is no time for you to affirm that by means of the Post "the affection of the family would broaden to the love of humanity."

Hear the lament of one of our great writers over the result of the intercommunication of nations. "The South Sea Islander must leave his canoe carving, his sweet rest, and his graceful dances, and become the slave of a slave: trowsers, shoddy, rum, missionary, and fatal disease—he must swallow all this civilization in the lump, and neither himself nor we can help him now." Silence is golden, and silence is the negation of Rowland Hill; and as the written word remains, while the spoken word passes away into space, so is the former the worse of the two. In the Post we have the most fatal realization of the monstrous figure which earth brought forth to spite high heaven—mighty rumour with her myriad tongues, her height that reaches the clouds, her nightly flight and her daily watching; and, as her most terrible characteristic, it is written that she held fast to falsehood and to wrong, even as also she bore tidings of the truth. Such is the power of the Post—surely to be execrated by the sons and daughters of men for evermore.

Turn we now to commerce. Commerce has increased by reason of postal extension, but commerce is itself an evil. I speak not only as the æsthete speaks, to denounce a sordid race of calculators: I speak with the voice of the latter day socialist. "Commerce has created the propertyless proletariat throughout civilization. The profit market is a hideous nightmare where the function of Government is to keep the ring while the strong are beating down the weak; commerce to her favoured children sets forth the motto, 'Live on others.'"

We canonize no saint for services to commerce. Knowledge, intercourse, commerce—these are the works of Rowland Hill, and these are evil.

And now let me pass on to that *Temporis partus maximus*, of which the world has been so proud,—the electric telegraph. You boast that you have annihilated time and space, that you have brought the nations of men face to face with each other, and you honour Rowland Hill as the founder of this your system. But open your ears to the crying of the weary nations, how they call woe upon the telegraph. Give us back “time the All-healer,” and there would be less war; give us back the absence that once made the heart grow fonder and the distance that lent us enchantment. Is it not over your deadly wires that :—

“ Fate bestows at once
Her double gift of victory and death,
Mingles the shout of joy, the wail of woe ” ?

And hath it not been written that it is expedient that there be a limit set to the knowledge of man ?

“ Farewell, O secret of to-morrow,
Fore-knowledge is fore-sorrow.”

Those curse the telegraph who have known the bitterness of hope deferred; those who have known the sorrows of the watcher at a far-off sick bed until the final message of doom.

“ Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead.”

And these see your wires throbbing day by day with the sorrows, the falsehood, and the swindles of the world, and will pay no honour to the spider that spun their fatal web around the globe.

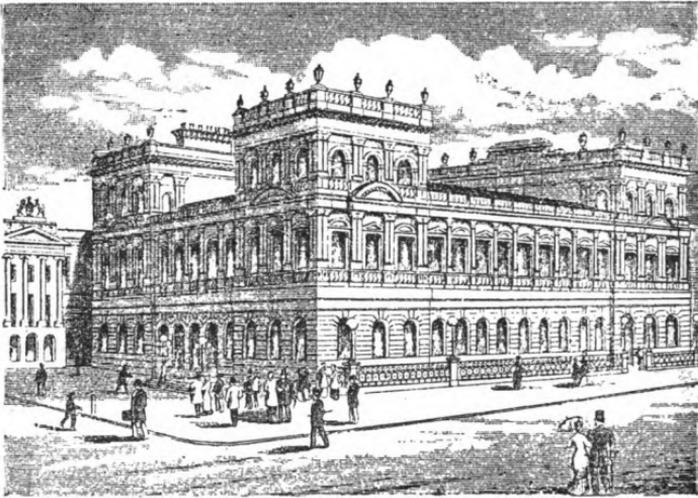
And the Savings Bank, with its watchword “Thrift.” Let materialists praise it, but I praise it not. Hard unlovely thrift! Have you never read the “Cry of the Children,” that you must needs bid them from the cradle take strict heed unto their pennies that interest may accrue therefrom? Better far the apple and the peppermint with the spirit of the child. But no! they must save, and save, and save, and let the bird “Pleasure” fly away unchased, and ye call it thrift and praise them. “Crescit amor nummi!” and ye make a nation of misers, whose conscience is locked up in their bank book, and then,—then ye shake your heads over a materialistic age, and what is the end thereof? Even if smug prosperity be your all-hallowed aim, ye are blind and ye see not how ye miss it. The social missionary, whose heart is in his work, is your accuser. “These things,” he says, “in spite of their benevolent appearance, are really

weapons in the hands of reactionaries, having for their real object the creation of a new middle class made out of the working class at their expense; the raising, in short, of a new army against the attack of the disinherited." It is too true: under the specious name of giving the poor a "stake in the country," you are giving them the opiate which will keep them fixed to their chairs when the mighty army of the down-trodden goes up to the battle of Armageddon to divide the spoils of the well-to-do.

By these things, therefore, judge ye Rowland Hill. I have been fair towards this man, malignant as his influence has been. I have been mindful of the maxim "abusus non tollit usum," and I have treated of the Post as though it compassed its ends without failure and without obstruction.

But the reality is far otherwise. Behind the mail bag lurks the thief; by the telegraph instrument sits the fraudulent bookmaker; and, glaring with the eye of envy at the savings bank depositor, hovers the domestic forger. "These be thy glorious works" we may say to the spirit of the Post Office.

Thus by the evils, brethren, that have been wrought among us by the baneful invention of the penny post, "that direful spring of woes unnumbered,"—by the tears that the telegraph has caused to flow,—by the deep demoralization of thrift,—I charge you, reject this day the motion now before you, and let the dead lie still "unhonoured and unsung."



GENERAL POST OFFICE, EDINBURGH, 1866.

Early Post Office Days.

I.—“A YOUNG MAN FROM THE COUNTRY.”

SOMEONE has said that if a man wants to get on in the world, he must somehow contrive to be born north of the Tweed. I not only managed this, but I managed also to be brought up in the very heart of the Louis Stevenson country, and to come under the influence of the great romancist's grandfather, one of the leading lights of the Church of Scotland in those days. But what has this to do with the Post Office? some may be inclined to ask. Well, just this: in the same country-side there lived at that time one of the great officials of the Edinburgh Post Office, whom I always regarded with admiration and wonder, as he passed through our village; and whose career seemed to me, even in those boyish days, to be worth emulating. This was none other than that fine strapping fellow Fred Godby, Chief Clerk of the Edinburgh Office about 1850, whose son, Mr. H. A. Godby, occupies a prominent position in the Surveying Department to-day. I remember Mr. Godby was a magnificent skater, and as he passed through our village morning and evening on the frozen surface of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Canal, he was the cynosure—nay, the envy of all the boys in the neighbourhood.

Alas! he died at the early age of 36, just 40 years ago. But there is another circumstance which connects that village with my early Post Office aspirations, although I was unaware of it at the time. Only a few months ago, a Secretary's Office man, now retired some years, called on me in Hastings, and in the course of conversation I asked him a question which I might have asked any time these thirty years, viz., whether his father, an Edinburgh lawyer, had ever lived at such and such a place. "Of course he did," was the prompt reply, "and our next door neighbour was one Parson T." Now this same Parson T. was a very good friend of mine, and was, in fact, the means of my entering the Telegraph Service. That village is a kind of "Sweet Auburn" to me, and I can see now the stream which lazily flowed at the foot of the Parson's garden,



FREDERIC GODBY, 1850.

which Horatio MacCulloch, the great Scottish painter, has immortalised under the title of "A Lowland River," and which Robert Louis Stevenson has no less immortalised in his delightful volume entitled *Memories and Portraits*. There is yet another reason why I should connect that village with my early Post Office aspirations. I was on the most confidential terms with the old woman who delivered the letters in the neighbourhood, and it is getting on for half a century since I helped her to concoct her first "explanation." Poor old creature! she literally flew round with the letters, and I shall never forget the indignation with which she spoke of the "bit laddie" who was sent out from Edinburgh on one occasion to "test" her. She couldn't write—at least, not much—and I was always in doubt whether she could read writing.

But this I know: she never made a mistake in her delivery, and I believe it was at her hands I received my nomination to a Clerkship in the General Post Office, London. Our village Post Office was a very primitive affair, and I have often wondered how it would have passed through the ordeal of a modern survey, with its 40 or 50 questions in the Postal section alone. I know, for one thing, that the stamping pad was not in "good order"; for it used to stick to the stamp, and the stamp in its turn used to stick to the letters, and the letters in their turn used to stick to the fingers of those receiving them. I don't know what was the nature of the "composition" used in those days, but it was certainly "adhesive," to use a familiar official expression. The Postmaster was a kind of chemist, and was very short sighted; and it was the oddest thing in the world to see him cutting up penny stamps with a pair of scissors just as though they were so much sticking plaster. Yet another circumstance connects that village with my early Post Office aspirations: the Caledonian Railway runs through it, and I assisted at the making of that railway, which is now one of the great mail lines of the Kingdom. One of the engineers was a great friend of mine, and he used to take me for rides on the ballast engines, so that I not only assisted at the making of the railway, but was one of the earliest passengers over it. When it was opened for Mail Service, I used to gaze in open-mouthed wonder at the "Caledonian T.P.O." as it shot past with its load of letters bound for far-away London, which was but a dream to me in those days. These were the good old times of the T.P.O., when only Clerks were allowed to handle letters "in motion," and when, unless my memory serves me badly, I have seen these gentlemen sorting in "lavender kids," and lolling against the door of the "Carriage" in the most dilettante fashion! I wonder if Mr. Blakeney, now of Bath, would resent this mild insinuation. Or, was it the Silks, of whom I think there were two in the T.P.O.? I always meant to ask my good friend, John Willdey, about this, but the opportunity never occurred, somehow, and he died in Hastings a year or two ago.

If I have never served the Post Office in my native country, it was not for want of trying to do so. My best of friends, the late Lady Stuart, of Allanbank, was a friend of Mr. Francis Abbott, Secretary in Edinburgh for many years, and to him she sent me, armed with a letter of introduction, some time in the late fifties. I remember the visit well. The Edinburgh office was then in the old building in

Waterloo Place, which is now, I think, a temperance hotel. It was a curiously dark, stuffy sort of place, very different from the palatial structure which now holds the Secretary for Scotland and his staff. Mr. Abbott, than whom no more dignified official ever occupied the secretarial chair in the Scottish metropolitan office, received me very kindly, but, unfortunately, he could do nothing for me. Civil Service examinations had been introduced by that time, and, although the competitions were limited, nomination by the Postmaster General was a condition precedent of admission to competition. Mr. Abbott, however, very kindly passed me on to the head of the Inland Revenue Department for Scotland, in the hope that matters might be somewhat easier in that quarter. These were the good old days, when the head of the Inland Revenue was not a mere clerk from Somerset House, but a fine old Scottish gentleman, in the person of Mr. Angus Fletcher, of Dunans. Mr. Fletcher must have thought rather well of me, for he recommended me to try for an assistant surveyorship of taxes straight off. But I did not feel quite equal to an undertaking of that kind at the age of 18, or thereabouts, so I bridled in my ambition, and waited for some years until I could "get at" the Postmaster-General of the day. This was Lord Stanley, of Alderley, of whom my friend Lady Stuart knew something, and very soon I was under the harrow of the Civil Service Commissioners. I "swotted," to use a modern school-boy expression, a good deal over that examination, only to find that the second candidate was some hundred or two marks behind at the finish. The "crammer" had not been invented in those days, and it has always seemed to me that the plan of nomination, with limited competition, had a good deal to recommend it, especially in view of the absurd extent to which open competition is carried now-a-days, when what the *Saturday Review* calls "Civil Servant Factories" have been established in most examination centres. One of the last public demonstrations I witnessed in Edinburgh, before proceeding to London to take up my appointment, was the laying of the foundation stone of the new Post Office by the late Prince Consort. I remember the event very well, and I remember, too, the outrageously long prayer offered up by one of Her Majesty's Chaplains for Scotland, which was said to have been indirectly the cause of the serious illness by which the Prince was seized almost immediately afterwards, he having stood uncovered during the whole time. Almost my first act, on reaching London some two months later, was to attend a memorial service for the Prince, whose

lamented death took place in December, 1861. The chaste and classical building where the Edinburgh Post Office is now carried on, was opened five years later. It occupies the site of Shakespeare Square, and took the place of the old Theatre Royal, where the great Murray used to perform, and where I saw my first play in which the renowned Vandenhoff was the principal actor. The play was "The Wandering Boys," and I was soon to become a wandering boy.

I wonder how many men in the Edinburgh Office to-day remember the old apple woman who used to have a stall at the east corner of the North Bridge and Princess Street, where the office now stands, and who was only dislodged as the building approached completion. She was built out in fact. I wonder, too, how many remember "The Box," where newspapers used to be sold, which also had to give way to the exigencies of a department which carries newspapers by the million, and loses by every one of them. I have said that the Edinburgh office is a chaste and classical structure, but it did not take this form until after the battle of the sites and the battle of the plans had been toughly fought. The Office of Works, with its customary love of economy, so-called, would have palmed off a building of the nondescript, regulation pattern upon the citizens of "mine own romantic town." But the Lord Provost and Corporation of the City would have none of this, and flatly refused the finest site in the finest city in the Kingdom unless they had their say, and a good big say, in regard to the plans. They carried their point, as the Scotch always do in matters of the kind, and the result was a building worthy of the site, and worthy of its opposite neighbour, the Register House. Sometime after the office was opened it was visited by Lord Stanley of Alderley, then Postmaster-General, who was shown round by, amongst others, the then Controller, Mr. T. B. Lang. Bursting with importance, as was his wont, the Controller pointed out to his Lordship the long rows of mahogany sorting tables (they were only common deal in London), with their engraved brass labels (they were only printed paper in London), and a variety of other "appointments," indicating rather a princely banking house than a mere place for the sorting and despatch of such commonplace things as letters and newspapers. With an air of triumph the Controller awaited the verdict of the great chief, who (so the story went at the time) turned upon him with a withering look, and the crushing remark: "The grossest waste of public money I have ever witnessed." But times have changed since then, and even the Office of Works is beginning to realize

that fittings may please the eye without unnecessarily straining the pocket—that, in fact, the best things are always the cheapest in the end. The office has been very considerably enlarged in recent years, but I imagine—for I haven't seen it for a year or two—that its external features remain much the same, and it may be hoped that these will not be dwarfed or maimed in any way by the threatened erection of a howling railway hotel at the opposite corner of the street.

Quitting Edinburgh, I reported myself for duty to the Controller of the Circulation Department, on *Boxing Day*, 1861, for there were no Bank Holidays at that time, or not in the Circulation Office at all events. I was not greatly taken with London after Edinburgh. It was a dirty place, I thought; it had no Castle, or Calton Hill, and you could not see Arthur's Seat from the top floor of St. Martin's-le-Grand, as you can from the top floor of the G.P.O., Edinburgh. But I was cheered when I was carried off to an august official bearing an undoubted Scotch patronymic, seated in a long narrow room on the ground floor at the north end of what is now called the G.P.O. East. He was an ancient looking individual, with an Anglo-Indian type of face, and bushy penthouse eyebrows, from beneath which he peered at me with a not over kindly expression. Having looked me up and down for a minute or so, he remarked, "A young man from the country, I suppose?" "No, sir," I replied, "from the city of Edinburgh." He raised his penthouse and fairly glared at me, and from that moment I felt that my fate was sealed. "You'll be attached to the Registered Letter Division," he continued, "and you'll have to attend from five in the morning till eight, and from five in the evening till eight." A feeling of faintness came over me at this announcement, and I began to wonder whether I had dreamt that the hours of a Government clerk were from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. But I was soon hurried from the presence of the Deputy-Controller, and escorted to the Registered Letter Division, which was then situated about the centre of the building between what was then the Eastern Central Office and the "paid window." The chief officers of the division were Josiah (always called Joe) Leal, lately retired from the postmastership of Leeds, and John Topping—"honest John"—who retired some years ago from a Superintendentship of the Inland Branch, and since dead. Leal was a great authority on fittings, and might be seen most days with a foot-rule in his hands, measuring up some table or other. Topping was the slowest, gentlest creature imaginable, and universally esteemed. He came of the "Statesman"

class of Cumberland or Westmoreland folks, and always seemed rather out of his element in a bustling workshop like the Post Office. The staff at that time bore ample evidence of the recent Postmaster Generalships of Lord Lonsdale and the Marquis of Clanricarde, and I should imagine the educational test could not have been very severe prior to the establishment of the Civil Service Commission. But it did not appear to me that a great deal of education was needed to enable a man to write the address of a registered letter on a slip of paper, and enclose it in a bag, although care and integrity might be indispensable. Only clerks were entrusted with registered letters in those days before the "hand to hand check" was introduced, but even this distinction did not reconcile me to the generally uninteresting character of the work, and the most unearthly hours. Now and then Topping would appear on the scene, and in the mildest manner possible, would ejaculate: "*Tay-ping, gentlemen, Tay-ping.*" I wonder how many of the readers of these notes can recall that, less than thirty years ago, every registered letter was tied round with green tape—not to increase its security, but simply to indicate that it *was* registered. The sight of fifteen or twenty young fellows, who had passed a Civil Service examination, seated round a table, and gravely tying up the letters with tape, always seemed to me too funny for anything. I often meet a pensioner down here who declares that he recommended the use of a blue pencil long before it was adopted, but I have no doubt there are other claimants of so obvious an "invention."

The most interesting personality in the Registered Letter Division at that time was old Dexter, the stamper. He was a gentleman stamper, and the first and the last of the race. He was a dapper little man, always well groomed, and looked out on the world through unmistakeable gold spectacles. Off duty, in frock coat and shiny hat, he might have been mistaken for a well-to-do retired tradesman of the better class and a holder in the Funds. On duty, with an amplitude of shirt front, and spotlessly white apron protecting the same, he both looked and meant business. With Dexter, stamping was not simply a perfunctory marking of the letters, it was an art. He always knew exactly where he was going to strike, and he struck with that delicate force and precision which alone can secure a good "impression." He would strike a single letter first, take it up and examine the stamp all round to see if it were perfect. If it did not satisfy his critical eye, he would try another, and if need be he would even reset the stamp, rather than

show even the appearance of slovenliness in his work. He was a small man with a big voice, and part of his duty was to announce the different mails as they reached the office. He was great at Foreign Mails, and his "French and Prussian" was always given with peculiar unction. But his most welcome announcement was "All over!" which resounded through the building, and which indicated that all the registered letters for that night's despatch had reached the Division. Dexter was a man in a thousand—civil without being servile, and self-respecting without the slightest trace of superciliousness. I have often wondered whether he got a pension, and whether he lived to enjoy it; he certainly deserved to do so.



ANDREW KINGSMILL, 1862.

A great friend of mine in the Registered Letter Division was one Andrew Kingsmill, as handsome a young fellow as I ever set eyes on. He was not exactly a glutton for work, and nothing seemed to please him better than to wander about the Inland Branch with a book under his arm, in which were entered the handful or so of registered letters for places for which special bags were not made up. These were signed for by the sorters at the "Roads," and despatched with the ordinary letters. The book in which they were entered was called the "B. Country Book"; but why "B," I never could make out, as there was no "A" book that ever I heard of. Kingsmill was the soul of good nature, and a most amusing young fellow. But he was too good for that sort of work, and soon obtained an appointment in the Bank of England, which led up to his being appointed Manager of one of the Scotch Banks in London. Most of the London Postmasters of to-day were, I think, in the Registered Letter

Division at one time or other. I certainly can recall Mr. Somerville, of the South-Western District; Mr. Carver, of the North-Western; Mr. Cooper, of the South-Eastern; Mr. Lorrain, of the Eastern; and Mr. Naylor, of the West-Central. When the Division became a Branch, after the introduction of the "hand-to-hand check," I became an Assistant Superintendent, the Superintendents being Messrs. Davies and Kelly, both of whom retired to Hastings, I believe. Mr. Ardron, now of the Secretary's Office, was also at that time connected with the Branch. Going back to earlier times, I recall that the Inland Branch was presided over by an august official called the "Superintending President," who sat in a great pulpit at the north end of the building. There were generally two of them on duty together, and there was no reason, in these pre-pressure days, why they should not have relieved each other in a nap, especially on the early morning duty. They had a true sense of their dignity, and seldom descended from their perch until the assurance reached them that all the mails had been despatched, when they would walk round the office with a self-satisfied air, and a high sense of duty performed. I think the awfulest moment of my life, up to that time, was one morning when, about half-past five, I ascended the pulpit steps, with trembling knees, to sign the "Late Book," which the President always kept by his side. He looked daggers and said nothing, which convinced me that my doom was sealed. But I soon found out that these great men were just like others, and sometimes "more so." One had a great fad about boots, of which it was said that he kept about a dozen pairs, all carefully numbered in accordance with the thickness of their soles and other peculiarities. Before venturing forth of a morning (the President slept at the office when on duty late and early), he would send his messenger out to report as to the state of the weather and the pavements, and on his return there would be a lengthened consultation as to whether number one, or number five, or some other number, should be the boot of the day. He was a podgy little man, with that air of self-importance which characterises little men generally; and as he stepped forth, you would have concluded that he was "too big for his boots" had you not been aware of the anxiety which had been displayed in the selection of his "understandings." Another gentleman of this class would appear in patent leather boots on the muddiest of days, and I am not sure that I haven't seen him on the floor of the Inland Branch in pumps. He was an exquisite in many ways, and a constant study to some of us youngsters. His conversation, if animated, was

not very profound; and the only remark of his that I can recall is "Don't you know?" with which his observations were plentifully interlarded.

There were two "Fathers" in the Branch—Father Pitt and Father Pennington. The latter was big and burly, the former little and lithe. Father Pennington presided over the "Paid Window" when it was really a window and little more, and I suppose his fatherhood consisted in the authority which he exercised over the British Public resorting to the Office. The story is told of one of his subordinates who, when a foreigner came to the window, always slammed it in his face with the exclamation, "*vis à vis!*" "Father" Pitt earned the distinction in many ways, for he took a most paternal interest in his men, and his long service in connection with



THOMAS MITCHELL.

the Benevolent Fund entitles him to the gratitude of all concerned in that institution. A more alert officer never trod the floor of the Office, and in the old days, when Foreign Mails brought shoals of unpaid letters, it was a treat to see him engaged in "taxing" them, as though every penny were destined for his own pocket. I believe he is still in the enjoyment of a well-earned pension; long may he remain so! Who that remembers the old days cannot recall William Smallwood, better known as "Chips," the best-hearted, most boisterous, most beloved of men. If he could only have been got to remember Talleyrand's warning against too much zeal he would have been a perfect officer. As it was, no man ever devoted himself heart and soul to the duties of his office more than Smallwood, and no man ever deserved better of his brother officers, whether superiors,

inferiors, or equals. As one of the former, I owe him a debt of gratitude for an amount of devoted, disinterested service, rarely experienced by a junior from a senior. Like Topping, he was a Westmoreland man, but the likeness stopped there. Another Westmoreland man of the "Chief Officer" class was Thomas Mitchell, than whom no one was more respected in the Inland Branch; respected, because always self-respecting, and always ready to do a kindness. Alas that all three should have passed beyond the reach of either praise or blame! I forget whether it was Topping or Mitchell, who, when asked one Christmas season whether he had read the portly annual volume of instructions for dealing with the work, replied, with the most delightful unconsciousness, "Oh! I'm keeping that till the pressure is over." It was certainly one of them, and Topping for choice—he was so very honest.

I recall another extraordinary character, a tall, unkempt, weird-looking creature, with a shock head of jet black hair, who usually affected *blue* spectacles. He was an inventor, and was generally deep in logarithms, or such like, when he should have been tying up registered letters. His inventions concerned the Admiralty, with which he was in constant communication; but he never seemed to me to get any "forrarder" with my Lords. I was one of the very few who took a sympathetic interest in his inventions, but it was all I could do to maintain my gravity when, on one occasion, he communicated to me, in the most confidential manner, a scheme for blowing the navies of the world "clean out of the water." He was called by the extraordinary name of Hitt; but I'm afraid there were more "misses" than "hits" in his career of invention.

It was a curious scene in the Inland Branch on the early morning duty. Everybody was half asleep, some were only half dressed, and not a few bore evidence of having come through great tribulations before reaching the office, as well they might, seeing that they had covered some four or five miles on foot before five a.m. The sleepy ones kept themselves awake by the copious use of snuff; the half-dressed ones descended to the "Clerks' Kitchen," and there completed their toilet; while the others indulged in huge basins of coffee, or a liquid which passed by that name, and hot cakes of a more or less savoury character. For a wretched dyspeptic like me there was nothing but resignation. It was an awful life, I thought. Always going to work when other people were sound asleep in bed; always going home when other people were leaving home; always leaving home when other people were arriving there; and always returning

home when other people were preparing to go to bed. I recalled my dream of "ten to four," and sank down in despair almost. Everybody was trying to get into a "Mid-day" office, and some were even willing to go to "the Dead," as the Returned Letter Office was called in those days. Some *did* go, and there they are to this day. When a man was late, it was always the alarum that was to blame. One man used to shy his boot at the alarum, as it began to go down, and I would gladly have done the same but for prudential considerations. Another, who used to regularly "sleep through" the alarum, poised it exactly over his head, so that the weight would strike him on the nose if he did not arrest it in time. He *did* arrest it, and then went to sleep again, as though nothing had happened. *He is not in the Service now!* I remember one morning, when two or three of us who lived together were running to the office, we were overtaken by a policeman, who evidently thought that we had been engaged on some "put up job" or other. I turned fiercely upon him with the inquiry how he dared interfere with "Her Majesty's Servants" in the execution of their duty? Whereupon he coolly turned on his heel, with the insolent remark, "Oh, we're all under Government!" From that moment I realized that there are Civil Servants and Civil Servants—Policemen as well as Post Office Clerks.

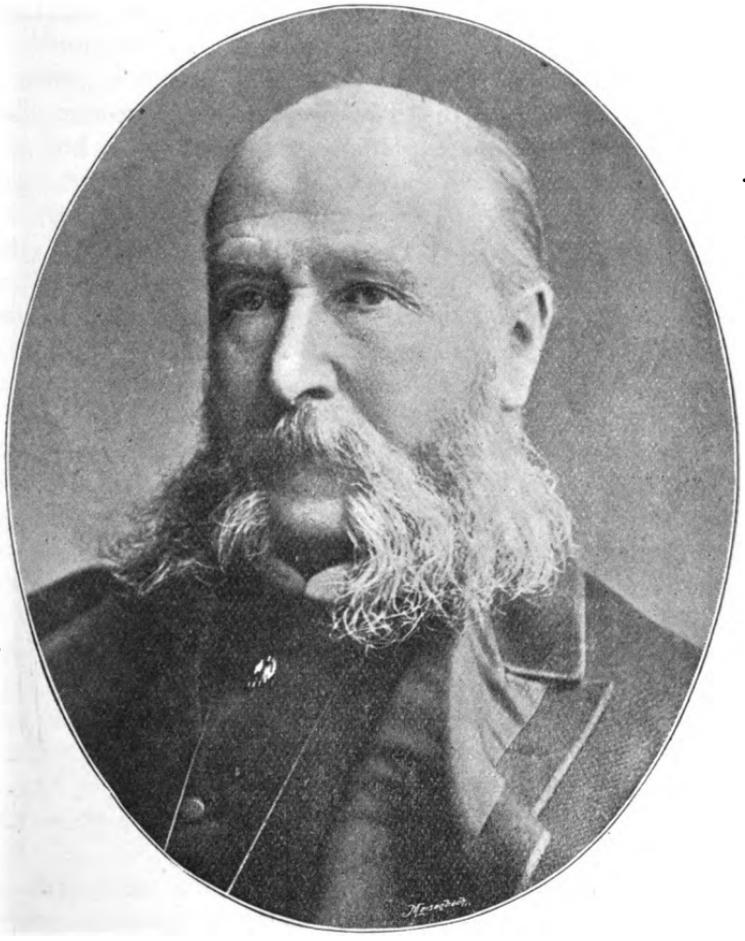
R. W. J.

(To be continued.)

The Retirement of Mr. Rich.

TO have been fifty-three years in the public service is almost sufficient reason why a man should receive the many congratulations of which the late Postmaster of Liverpool has recently been the recipient. For, as Civil Service careers go, fifty-three years is a very long time indeed, and few among us can expect to beat so formidable a record. Fewer still, even if the length of service were attained, can hope to leave behind us such a record of good work and of pleasant relations with our brother officers as Mr. Rich is able to do. He combined the best elements of the ancient and modern type of official, and so strongly was this fact known at headquarters, that when the time came for him—in the ordinary course of events—to retire at 65 years of age, the Postmaster-General, with the concurrence of the Treasury, took advantage of a recommendation made by the Ridley Commissioners, and embodied in an Order in Council, permitting a department to “extend an officer’s employment for a further period, in no case exceeding five years, on being satisfied that such officer’s retirement at 65 would be detrimental to the interests of the public service.” In this way Mr. Rich’s services were retained to the very latest date permissible. In these latter days the impression a stranger formed of Mr. Rich on first being brought into contact with him was that he saw before him a fine type of an Englishman of the old school. He struck one as a survival from “other times and other manners,” and those who were most impatient with him because of the tenacity with which he held to the traditions of the past were at the same time quite conscious that the present generation is very little the better for having freed itself of the influence of the *ancien regime* in postal matters. Of his services to the Post Office all the newspapers have been eloquent. Briefly stated, the following has been his career. Six years a clerk and superintendent in the Bristol Post Office (1842-1848), six years chief clerk at Bath (1848-1854), ten years chief clerk or Controller (he carried both titles) at Manchester (1855-1865), ten years controller at Liverpool (1865-1875), twenty years postmaster of Liverpool (1875-1895).

THE
LIFE OF
J. D. RICH



J. D. RICH.

THE
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
PRESS

The years covered by his career have been, as everybody says and knows, momentous ones in the history of the Post Office, and Mr. Rich has taken no inconsiderable part in furthering the many reforms and improvements which have taken place. Indeed, he himself has been the author of several of these improvements. No official has been more often consulted by his superiors on matters of policy and discipline, and his vast experience has been always at the disposal of subordinate as well as chief. In Liverpool he introduced letter boxes with moveable tablets which showed the hour of the next collection, and this improvement is now in use over the United Kingdom. At Manchester he introduced what is known in the service as restrictive sorting. Under the old system, even at offices where the number of letters posted was large and the force employed considerable, the letters when collected were handed indiscriminately to officers to be sorted, and when complaint was made of a letter having been delayed or lost there was difficulty in finding out the officer who dealt with it and in fixing responsibility. The new system introduced by Mr. Rich met this difficulty. Mr. Rich's claim to our regard does not however rest on this aspect of his career. To us it seems rather an anti climax to lay, as many newspapers have done, so much stress on a great administrator's achievements in initiating comparatively small reforms such as these. One can hardly hold a high position for a long period without having many opportunities to perform like services, and if this were all that could be placed to the credit of Mr. Rich, he would not merit the notice the public have taken of his career. Nor does he himself ask us to remember him on these grounds. We print in full his manly and touching farewell to his brother officers, and we like his letter quite as much on account of its omissions as on account of the reasons he gives for his pride of office.

“MR. ROBINSON,

“In obedience to orders from the Postmaster General the Liverpool Post Office and District are placed in your charge, and will remain so until my successor enters on his duties.

“There comes to most men a time when ‘good-bye’ must be said. That time has come to me.

“No man living has been longer in the Postal service than myself. Few remain of those who were on the Liverpool establishment when I came amongst them thirty years ago, these few know better than the rest how great the changes have been during this period.

“I have tried, as did my immediate predecessor, to raise the Liverpool office to the first position among provincial offices, and I

have done so because I have thought its duties more onerous and trying, the quality of its work higher, its business, as a whole, of greater consequence than elsewhere. If results have not always been in proportion to efforts the blame of failure does not attach to the capable officers who have assisted me to the utmost of their power.

“Whatever may be the fortunes of the Liverpool office in the future, I fervently hope that all those whom I leave behind, and also all those who may enter later, will bear in mind the importance of their duty; will remember that no department of the State ministers so largely to the wants and interests of the community; and that they will not forget that the Liverpool Post Office has a character which it behoves everyone to do his utmost to maintain.

“I tender, through you, to the officers of every rank and class my sincere thanks for the loyal efforts which have been so willingly put forth, especially on occasions when strength and energy have been severely strained and it has been necessary to call upon one section or branch to help another, and for both to join hands and work as one for the reputation of their office and the good of the service.

“It is not possible to bid farewell to the whole of a large scattered force, and it would distress me to pass over a single member of it. I must therefore ask you to take the course which you may deem best for making my last words known, and that, as the present head of the Liverpool Post Office District, you will for all under your control receive my assurance that I carry away none but kind and grateful thoughts for every one who has been associated with, or has served in any capacity under, me.

“J. D. RICH.

“25th Nov., 1895.”

He could have told us of his services to Post Office servants in other ways. In 1858 a Bill was before the House of Commons, the chief provision of which was to confer certain benefits with regard to pensions on Metropolitan officials only. Mr. Rich, who was then Chief Clerk at Manchester, organised a movement among provincial Postmasters, and, as a result of his action, the benefits were extended to the provinces. But for his timely action, and for the zeal and enthusiasm he put into the agitation, the provinces might still be outside the provisions of that Act; and we are surprised that so little notice has been taken of this particular good deed of Liverpool's Postmaster. He may be assured that there are many retired officials (some of whom have written to us on this subject) whose gratitude to him is none the less because it is not proclaimed on the housetops.

Mr. Baines in his new book, *On the Track of the Mail Coach*, tells the following characteristic story of Mr. Rich:—“The advent of Christmas cards was very sudden in Liverpool, and altogether unexpected. One Christmas Eve—a Sunday—Mr. Rich, who was then controller, paid a visit to the Post Office, and to his surprise

found the staff overwhelmed by an avalanche of cards. It was not possible then to obtain more force. But the chief was equal to the occasion. He took off his coat, tucked up his shirt sleeves, and set to work—an example which electrified the men, who threw such extraordinary zeal and enthusiasm into their duties that the despatch of the night mail was saved, and every missive went forward.” Mr. Baines adds—and he knows what he is writing about—“I doubt if even the Department knows, and I am quite sure the public in Liverpool do not know, half that Mr. Rich has brought about.”

Mr. Rich, metaphorically speaking, took off his coat for the last time in November last, but not because he was weary of toil, or because he was anxious to seek the rest which is every Civil servant's birthright. He is simply a victim of an Order in Council, which had already been stretched to its fullest extent in his favour.

We have said very little of the high esteem in which he is held in Liverpool, but the expression of this fact almost goes without saying. If evidence is required, it is sufficient to say that he has been placed on the Commission of the Peace for the City. In intimating this appointment to Mr. Rich, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster observed, “I feel sure the nature of your long public services in connection with the City of Liverpool will cause your fellow citizens to place full confidence in you as one of their Magistrates.” Civil honours do not, as a rule, overwhelm the Civil Service, and we are pleased to notice that the State recognises its obligations to an old servant.

We offer Mr. Rich our best wishes in his retirement, and our grateful acknowledgments of the high example he has set his old colleagues, all of whom part from him with many regrets and kindly recollections.

[Since the above was written, we have heard with great regret of the death of Mrs. Rich, which occurred on the 27th December. We offer Mr. Rich and his family our sincerest sympathy.—EDITOR.]

The American Mails.

The *Times*, of the 24th December, in publishing the second of two letters from its well-known correspondent, Mr. G. W. Smalley, also publishes a leading article in which the position taken up by its correspondent is by no means maintained. Mr. Smalley is an old opponent of the contract system for the American Mail Service,* and this is not the first time he has attacked the British Post Office for its conduct in respect thereto. We here reprint the *Times* article:—



SECOND letter from our New York Correspondent on the subject of the American mails, which we publish this morning, directs attention to one of the many matters in which our interests and those of our Transatlantic cousins happily are identical. Upon whatever points we may happen from time to time to differ we are agreed in a desire to receive our correspondence as speedily as steam can carry it. We are both business nations, and as such we keenly appreciate that in business time is money. Our predilection for rapid communication is not, however, by any means confined to commercial transactions. It has probably a commercial origin, but we have grown so used to have it gratified, that we habitually regard any delay in the delivery of our correspondence, even when it is not intrinsically urgent, as in the nature of an individual wrong. Both for business and for social purposes the American mails are of exceptional importance, and our Correspondent complains that in regard to them the British Post Office perversely inflicts a continuous wrong upon the British and the American communities. He puts his case with the point and clearness which distinguish him, and with the fire and spirit of one who has long writhed beneath a personal grievance. There has never been a good mail service between the two countries, he declares, and there is not now. There is not, and there never has been, a regular, efficient system of postal communication by the fastest ships making stated trips across the Atlantic.

* See *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, Vol. II., p. 52.

Such is the charge, and the chief responsibility is fastened without hesitation upon the British Post Office. The method of transmission from New York to England is, on the other hand, he tells us, admirable, and the British postal authorities have only to adopt it in order to secure results of a similarly satisfactory kind. The service from New York to England is, he affirms, more than twice as good as the service from England to New York, and the difference between them is due to the incompetence of St. Martin's-le-Grand and to the commercial rivalries and selfish interests which that institution has proved itself unable or unwilling to control. A good deal of our Correspondent's first letter is taken up with an account of the bygone ineptitudes of former Post Office officials. They are many and grievous, and illustrate in a fashion at once instructive and humorous the exasperating operations of "the post-official mind." So far as they are concerned, however, we may perhaps adopt the advice of the American poet and let the dead past bury its dead. It is most natural that those who some years ago frequently lost four days in their "round" correspondence between New York and London because the incoming liners missed the train by 5 minutes at Queenstown, should yet smart under the poignant memories of those irrecoverable hours. It is right, too, that the Post Office should have its old sins cast in its teeth. Occasional reminders of the inveterate character of its offences may tend to create a wholesome sense of abasement eminently conducive to repentance and reform. Still, the practical matter in the living present is the present state of the service, and to that we may confine ourselves.

The indictment against the Post Office contains two counts of different degrees of importance. The Department is charged, first, with wilful and persistent adhesion to a bad system, which provides a service twice a week, sometimes fast and sometimes slow, when it might if it chose secure a fast service, three if not four times a week; and secondly, with allowing the Cunard Company to leave Queenstown on Sundays several hours before their contract time, thereby making it necessary for the London public to post at noon on Saturday instead of at 6 o'clock. The root of the mischief, in our Correspondent's opinion, is the adoption of the contract system by the Department. There are five leading lines of steamships between British ports and New York, which own between them 17 fast steamships. The British Post Office confines its contracts to two of these five—namely, the Cunard and the White Star—owning

between them six of these fast ships. Eight fast ships at least would be required, it is further contended, for an efficient bi-weekly service. As a consequence of the present plan a slow ship sometimes sails on Wednesday and a fast ship on Saturday, with the result that the two mails are delivered in New York about the same time. The American Post Office works on a totally different system. It has no contracts. It puts the mails on board the fastest ships available from day to day, and our Correspondent says that it does so irrespective of their nationality. This is the plan which he proposes for our imitation. Its apparent advantages are so marked and so obvious as to suggest to the cautious reader that some reason better than mere official pedantry must exist to have prevented its adoption long ago. An examination of the letters which have appeared in our columns on the subject shows that, whatever the merits of the American system as applied in America, it is not altogether clear that the same system would afford the same satisfactory results in this country. Sir John Burns, writing in the interests of the great company of which he is chairman, meets by a direct denial our Correspondent's assertion that a good service between the two countries does not exist. The existing service, he points out, has repeatedly given a 14 days' course of post between New York and the United Kingdom. That certainly is not a bad achievement, involving, as another correspondent points out, 6,500 miles of ocean travel at 23 statute miles an hour. No other country, Sir John Burns affirms, and doubtless correctly, can furnish any similar service of its own ships. It is, he contends, because the United States have not hitherto relied on their own ships, that they have been able to dispense with contracts. They have been able to use the mail services created by others, and they have been able to use them on their own terms. The British and other European liners which had come out under contract had to go home with or without the American mails, and accordingly it has paid them to carry those mails at whatever rates the American Post Office chose to give. But the American method, Sir John declares, would never have created the services which the American Post Office employs. They owe their existence largely, at least, to the system of contracts, and, as an "Ex-President of the American Chamber of Commerce," writing from Liverpool, says, the American system threw the whole carriage of the mails into non-American hands, until the Americans themselves undertook to pay to an American line more than three times what the British Post Office pays to the

Cunard and the White Star companies. The fears of the writers of these letters as to the possible effects of the abolition of the contract system on our existing services may be exaggerated, but most Englishmen will think that those effects are of too grave a kind to be lightly faced. The supremacy of our mercantile marine is a matter of deep imperial interest, quite apart from the value of the possession of such vessels as those of our great subsidized lines in the event of war—a point to which many competent authorities attach high importance. Upon the question of regularity of winter service in the absence of contracts our Correspondent and Sir John Burns are again at issue. We secure it under the present system. Our Correspondent thinks we should secure it without. Sir John Burns thinks we should not. Another point made by Sir John is that the geographical conditions of despatch on the two sides of the Atlantic are wholly dissimilar. Practically all mails to Europe have to pass through New York, and therefore the New York Post Office can distribute them from day to day amongst the outgoing ships. But in England there is no such common centre. Many of the great business towns are in the North and the Midlands, and the seat of our cotton industries is hundreds of miles from the capital. To send the American mails from these places to London would be to cause an initial delay which it might not be easy to make up on the rest of the journey.

Such are the chief points of the reply adduced in defence of the British system against the main contention of our New York Correspondent. An answer to his second charge is also forthcoming. It is said that the alteration in the time of posting on Saturdays, of which he complains, was really made in the interests of the public. The hour, it is admitted, has been advanced from 6 to 2 and 2.30 at the Post Office and to 4 at Euston; but it is argued that, as business in the City on Saturdays ends practically at 1 o'clock, little general inconvenience is caused, while the earlier start from Queenstown on Sunday makes it possible to deliver the letters in New York in time for reply by the following Saturday. Prudent persons will perhaps refrain from pronouncing very definitely upon the merits of the controversy in its present stage. It seems clear that the Americans do succeed in getting a better service than we do and at a cheaper rate; but it cannot be said to be established that we should improve our existing service by the sudden abolition of the system under which it has grown. Doubtless the best thing that could happen would be for

our great companies still further to increase the number of their fast steamships. The best vessels in their fleets are already the best in the world. Possibly it might prove to be the best policy and the truest economy for them in the long run to improve their other ships to the same level. Even then some further distribution of the mails according as they come from the north and the south might prove ultimately to be desirable, but the best answer to those who contend that subsidies ought to be abolished is to demonstrate by deeds that our subsidies give us the best service in the world.

Mr. Baines' New Book.*

*"And in his calling let him nothing call
But Coach! Coach!! Coach!!! Oh! for a Coach, ye Gods!"*

T is written that the Bagman's Uncle "being very fond of coaches, old, young, or middle-aged," went once out of his road to look at the old mails. "There might be a dozen of them," explains the Bagman, "or there might be more—my uncle was never quite certain on this point, and, being a man of very scrupulous veracity about numbers, didn't like to say,—but there they stood, all huddled together in the most desolate condition imaginable. The doors had been torn from their hinges and removed; the linings had been stripped off, only a shred hanging here and there by a rusty nail; the lamps were gone, the poles had long since vanished, the iron work was rusty, the paint was worn away; the wind whistled through the chinks in the bare wood-work. They were the decaying skeletons of departed mails." But the Bagman's Uncle slept, and a clock struck, and lo! "the mail-coach doors were on their hinges, the lining was replaced, the ironwork was as good as new, the paint was restored, the lamps were alight, . . . guards were stowing away letter-bags. . . . horses were put to; in short, it was perfectly clear that every mail there was to be off directly."

And as it was when the clock struck in the day of the Bagman's Uncle, so is it when the wand of the late Inspector-General wakes the memories of the old mail-coaches: like Kehama, they drive furiously "at once on all the roads," and the old times live again.

It is doubtless true, as Mr. Baines remarks, that if he is "acquainted with one part of England better than another, it is surely the first twelve or fifteen miles of the London and Holyhead road from the General Post Office," but there is virtue in the "if." The reader of his lively pages doubts whether there is one yard of the roads of England over which he has not made his legs his compasses, one ancient inn whose ample stables he has not explored, one hedgerow where he has not heard in his dream the clank of the spectral irons of the knight of the road on his gibbet.

* *On the Track of the Mail Coach*; being a volume of reminiscences, personal and otherwise, by F. E. Baines, C.B., sometime Inspector-General of Mails, Editor of *Records of Hampstead*, Author of *Forty years at the Post Office*. London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1895.

And, wherever Mr. Baines goes, he remains the Inspector-General of Mails. To some of us the town of Kingston-upon-Hull is the town whence the "Eldorado" sails for Bergen: to some of us it is the arsenal whose gates were shut by Hotham in the face of Charles I.; but to Mr. Baines it is the town which prized its only postman Dickey Sagg, in 1798—the town whose next postman had only one leg—the town whose mayor had a daughter who married postman Jarvis.

Penzance is the port which once possessed a Postmistress who ruled her office with a hand of steel, assisted by postwomen fully six feet high; Gravesend is the place where a shipper of Mails harpooned them like a whale. And every town speaks to Mr. Baines of duty done. Here a Postmistress seals her last bag and lies down to die on the floor; here Mr. Beaufort, in our own time, signs his last account the day he dies; faithful to their bags the mail guards of early days struggle through the snow, and Mr. Baines has made their names to live for ever. He himself gropes in a railway tunnel for a fault in a telegraph wire, and so, over all his pages, we see writ large the maxim "duty first."

We are to be excused if we say little of his really valuable notes of the mail coach routes, their difficulties and their distances. Plying among his reminiscences, like Mr Brooke of Tipton, Mr. Baines gives us so many stories, and so much to read, that we look not on him as a compiler of a road book or a chronicler of statistics. He is the historian of the Mail Coach, and he tells us what was never in print before, and yet we seem to know it well. History begins with myth and romance and facts follow after. The Mail Coach began with legend, and ends with true history. And yet, what chance has the history against the myth? Mr. Baines may tell us of the Guards and the Coachmen, of the Knights of the Road, and the Old Inns which actually had their being, but supreme in our memory live their greater antitypes.

I, myself, who live by the Dover Road, at the foot of Shooter's Hill—when in my waking dreams the whizz of the bicycle turns to the roll of the coach-wheel, and the patter of my terrier to the gallop of the highwayman—surely, it is not of the veritable heroes that I think, but of Jerry Cruncher, who galloped from Temple Bar after the Dover Mail in which sat Jarvis Lorry. I learn much of the Northern Mails as I read Mr. Baines' book; I know that I ought—by virtue of my office—to be measuring the distances to Alconbury Hill or Wetherby; but the fact remains that when my Northern Mail goes by, the passengers are Mr. Squeers and Nicholas Nickleby.

In the moments of enthusiasm I also break into apostrophe, and cry, but not of Dickey Sagg, "O memories of Samuel Pickwick, of Alfred Jingle, and the shepherd-led-widow-marrying-Weller!" Ye are my companions along the road.

It is the merit of the new book that it gives us a foundation of fact for the legends of our youth. We had a sort of fear they might be phantoms; now we know that they are real. And, more than this, we know that we may claim them for our own. Perhaps many of us had not appreciated the connexion between our Post Office and the Mail Coaches of which we read such wondrous tales. Mr. Joyce had told us how Palmer, backed by Pitt, had set them rolling; some of us have even seen Mr. Nobbs, the old Guard, in the flesh; but yet we did not realize that the Post Office, even our own predecessors, had provided the materials of the legends. Mr. Baines has put this right, and shot the web of the office with the bright lines of romance.

We can fancy him now, in his retirement, filled with his day dreams of the great Department he served with such enthusiasm. In spirit he reviews the long lines of the coaches. Not one face of guard or driver but calls up for him some tale of derring do, or wit, or elopement; not a way-bill of which he is unable to tell the meaning; not a letter over whose transmission he has not watched with a lover's eye.

In spirit again he mounts on the leading coach and journeys to the nearest port where he can look forth upon all the four seas of Britain. There, before him, as before Xerxes of old, ride all the ships of all the world, all carrying the letters of the peoples, all chartered by an all-pervading Post Office.

Then, maybe, he looks up to heaven and sees the lightning carrying the voice of every man to his neighbour over one vast web of telephone wires. Our brains may reel, but not the brain of the late Surveyor-General of Telegraphs. A few thousands of millions of messages are nothing to him, as he stands prophetic at the end of his book, and looks around at the deserted villages, as they take on new life and bless the Post Office.

Yea! verily! and let his faith remove mountains, and let his writing of books go on, and let him continue to cover our Post Office with an exceeding glory.

H. S. C.

After Office Hours.

To my Readers.

IN addressing the readers of *St. Martin's-le-Grand* in the capacity of a newly-appointed Editor, my first duty is to thank all those who in this country and other parts of the world have responded so heartily to the appeal I made to the Department a few weeks ago. There was some danger that the short interregnum which the magazine went through might not only be prejudicial to the editorial succession, but might also injure the journal in the matter of circulation. All such fears are now over, and I have only to endeavour, with the assistance of Mr. Engall, to prove to my colleagues that the confidence they have reposed in me is not without justification. In one sense it is a very easy task to succeed Mr. Beckley; in another sense it is about the most difficult thing I could have undertaken. It is easy because owing to his power of organization, his enthusiasm, and his untiring energy, he made the Magazine so valuable to the Post Office that a blank cheque would have been given to any editor who was prepared to continue its publication. And Mr. Beckley, by his mastery of every detail of the work of the Magazine, and by his skilful management of its commercial side, had made all this portion of the business comparatively plain sailing to his successor. I never succeeded to any position where it was easier to take up the threads and go on. But on the other hand it is most difficult to succeed him, because I am conscious I have few of the qualifications which he possessed for the post. I am not so much in touch with the whole Department as he was, and because of this failing I shall look to my readers especially to supply what is wanting. Nor am I able to give quite so much time to the Magazine as Mr. Beckley was able to do. I don't think anybody in the Post Office completely realizes the work he put into the Magazine. It is enough to mention that, beginning with a circulation of only a few hundreds, he retires at the end of five years having raised that circulation to between 3,000 and 4,000. That has meant good solid work, and it also means the appreciation of his services by the Department. If we seek his monument we have only to look in hundreds of post offices all over the United Kingdom, in post offices all over the Colonies, in India, and on the Continent, and the yellow covers bear witness to his work. His successor may well feel some trepidation in stepping into his shoes. Were it not for the fact that he knows his colleagues are anxious at all hazards to keep the Magazine going, he should not have ventured on the work he has undertaken.

And now a word as to my future action. It will be my object first and foremost to make *St. Martin's-le-Grand* the magazine of the Post Office. I do not mean that I shall exclude matter which does

not immediately relate to the history or work of the Department, but the Office will always have the preference. As regards the non-official element, I think it is desirable to cultivate it a little: its presence will give variety to the Magazine, and will please those of our readers whose zeal for their work is kindled rather than spoiled by relaxation, and by occasional lapses from grave to gay. All that I think I need insist upon is, that for the sake of our readers we do not become the medium of publishing matter which would not be accepted by any outside journal, and which is only sent to us because the writer is in the service. And it is also my wish to avoid what is called log-rolling. I am quite sure that if any of the numerous Post Office men who write books find their work noticed in our columns, they will value what is written all the more, if they know the Editor is trying to do his work in a spirit of independence. If everything in the shape of malevolence or spite is avoided, I am quite confident that fair criticism will be welcomed rather than censured. I want my readers to understand that it is my earnest wish to maintain the Magazine on independent lines, to show no special favour to any class of men or to any single individual, to speak fairly and reasonably of everybody, and to avoid criticism on current questions affecting policy and discipline. If in spite of my good intentions it can be shown that I am wounding anybody's susceptibilities, or that I am pursuing a course which is impolitic, unfair, or unseemly, I can but give an assurance that, in spite of advancing years, my capacities for reform are still practically illimitable.

The Letters of Keats.*

LOVERS of poetry are under a debt of gratitude to Mr. Buxton Forman for the way in which, by his researches and criticisms, he has helped them to understand Keats as a man. The knowledge of the poet's private life and of his ways of thinking and acting may not in the least degree affect our enjoyment of the "Ode to a Nightingale," but it is, to say the least, a pardonable curiosity on our part to know more of the man who has so interpreted for us the beauty of life. I confess I do like to know something of the man who is for the time being talking or singing to me, and it is men like myself to whom the researches of labourers such as Mr. Forman are especially a source of enjoyment and undying interest. We are, perhaps, conscious all the time that we are actuated by an unworthy curiosity, but so long as Mr. Forman continues his work, so long shall we buy his books without a murmur, and read them with eagerness. We do not wish to be led into temptation, but if Mr. Forman *will* publish these things, we mean to read them. Speaking for myself, all that I ask him is that while he retains his hero-worship, which is always delightful, he will not allow it to affect his criticism. For I think, with regard to the whole of Keats' letters, Mr. Forman

* *The Letters of Keats*: Edited by H. Buxton Forman. Reeves & Turner.

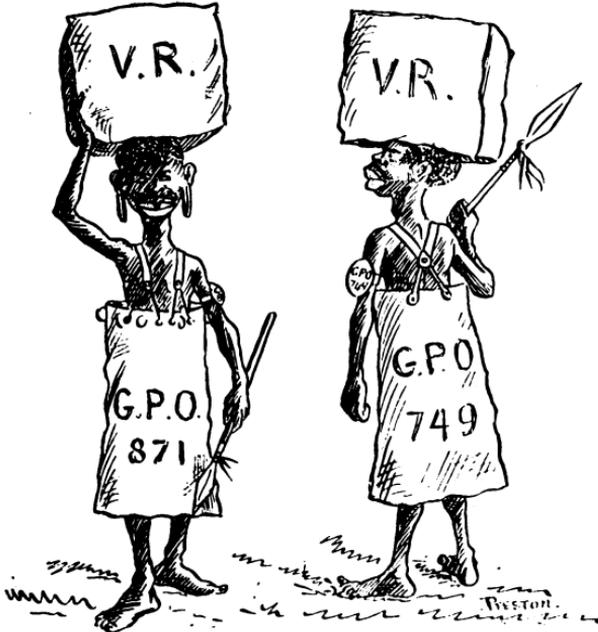
claims a great deal too much in his preface. There are surely few of us who will value these letters because they are "true, interesting, attractive, witty, humorous, idealistic, realistic, speculative, discursive, and gossipy in turns." No, we only read them because they are the letters of Keats, and we think that on the whole the poet was a very ordinary letter writer. They do not strike us as belonging to literature at all. I miss the light touch—in a word, the magic, which is the hall-mark of the great letter writer. I like Mr. Forman's preface better than any other bit of prose in the book, and I like it none the less because his criticism is in my opinion weak, and saturated with the "personal estimate." He tells us he came in for much censure because he published Keats' love letters, and he also tells us he has received an equal amount of praise for his conduct. I am not surprised, because on a question of this kind we all naturally take sides according to our own particular temperaments. Of course, I too have a strong opinion upon the matter. I remember that Cassandra Austen, on the death of her sister Jane Austen, burnt all the latter's love letters, as well as every scrap of evidence bearing upon her love affairs. She was her sister's literary executrix, and this is how she interpreted a portion of her duty. The people who have praised Mr. Forman for publishing the letters to Fanny Brawne are the people who regard Cassandra Austen as an incendiary, and who have quite recently been bemoaning the conduct which lost us so valuable a guide to the great novelist's private life. Owing to Cassandra's bonfire we know nothing whatever of Jane Austen's love affair; we only know there must have been an affair because it is certain there *was* a bonfire. I have always thought that Cassandra showed her love for her sister in the very best and nicest way possible by her action, and that she deserves honourable mention in a department of literature where biographers of Carlyle, Shelley, Keats and Byron have more or less sinned against the light. Perhaps one would think differently if these letters to Fanny Brawne were works of art—were, in fact, delightful letters. Love letters of great men have before now crept into print and we would not willingly let them die. But Keats' love-letters leave a nasty taste in the mouth: they are morbid, maniacal, and terribly unhealthy. Their publication is the result of that feeling which is so widely prevalent that every single relic and word a great author leaves behind him is public property. To pander to that feeling is, I think, a mistake, and I am sorry Mr. Forman is still evidently unrepentant. Thomas Carlyle called Dean Stanley "the body-snatcher," because of the Dean's fondness for burying big men in the Abbey, and preaching funeral sermons over their coffins. The gibe possessed truth, because the Dean's enthusiasm was often pushed to ridiculous extremes. But there are "body-snatchers" also in literature, and poor Carlyle himself suffered at the hands of perhaps the greatest of their number. He was kept out of Dean Stanley's clutches, only to fall into the hands of Mr. Froude. If Mr. Forman sins, he sins in distinguished company.

Mr. Raikes as a Poet.

SEVERAL of our readers have pointed out to us a rather amusing error in Mr. Johnston's article on Mr. Raikes as a Poet which appeared in our last number. Editors are as everybody knows omniscient, but now and then they are caught napping, and especially so when trusted contributors, whose proofs they have got into the habit of passing without correcting, give them away. It seems that the late Mr. Raikes left a number of poems in MSS., which his son, with perhaps more filial piety than discretion, determined to edit. Among them was apparently one containing eighteen lines copied out of "The Essay on Man," which Mr. Raikes evidently intended as a text for some lines of his own which follow. The editor, however, did not detect this intention, though in printing the lines he explained that they were found on a sheet pinned to the back of some others which he also publishes. It is evident the son had some little doubt on the matter, but with a delightful belief in his parent's powers, he gives his father the benefit of the doubt, and publishes the two sheets together as one poem, entitled "Pope." Then Mr. Johnston comes along and his loyalty and affection for his old chief forbid him also to be sceptical, and he prints the lines from "The Essay on Man" as specimens of Mr. Raikes poetical powers. Next Mr. Beckley, my predecessor, comes along and his belief in Mr. Johnston is so great that he delegates the correction of Mr. Johnston's proof to Mr. Johnston himself and does not read the article. Finally, I come upon the scene as the new editor and I find myself face to face with letters from gentlemen whose zeal for the memory of Pope is quite touching. Personally, I see no reason why Mr. Raikes should not be allowed to be credited with some of Pope's good work. Pope produced so much that was good, and Mr. Raikes so little, that my generous disposition would have induced me to say nothing. But then these terrible pedants worry me so that I am now obliged to take steps to restore the extract from "The Essay on Man" to the position from which Raikes Junior not wisely, but with a loving hand had withdrawn it. And I blame nobody. I wonder how many of my readers detected the error. How many I wonder said "poor stuff" to the extract from "The Essay on Man," as they may have also said to the genuine extracts from Mr. Raikes' poems. We are all such hypocrites in these matters. It is only a small few, "a transfigured band"—I believe Mr. Birrell calls them—"who are able to take their Bible oaths they have read their *Faerie Queen* all through." The same applies to Milton—I don't suppose there are many of even Milton's admirers who can dare take an oath they have read *Paradise Lost* or *Paradise Regained* from cover to cover. I know that I shall probably go to my grave without being able to do so, and yet who dare say I do not love Milton? And the same may be said of Pope, even of the immortal Shakespeare. A Post Office Clerk in a provincial town once sent me a story by Charles Dickens, and I promptly published it as a story by that Post Office Clerk. But I am always proud of

the letter I wrote to him accepting the story. I told him I thought the story showed great promise and was the best thing that I had seen of the kind for some time. I never declined Dickens with thanks as other editors might have done. Surely I have now made my peace with the pedants. I am inclined to believe they come out of the business the worst of anybody. No man with a heart, even though he be not a father, *can* blame Raikes Junior. It is perhaps a wise son who knows his own father's poetry, but you can have wisdom without reverence and affection, and the latter qualities are those which we prefer. Nor can we blame Mr. Johnston, unless there is anybody among us who is without sin in these matters and can throw the first stone. Mr. Johnston not only believed in Mr. Raikes but also in Mr. Raikes' son. It is pleasant to find a chief inspiring such confidence that it becomes hereditary. Besides, it must always be placed to the credit of Mr. Johnston that he detected merit in the extract from "The Essay on Man." Though he ascribed the authorship to Mr. Raikes, he especially stated that the lines are "well worth quoting." And Mr. Beckley believed in Mr. Johnston. It is a touching tale of confidence between man and man all the way through. It is only the pedants who find out these horrid discrepancies who have no faith and reverence. They don't even believe in me or my honesty. One of them writes, "If you have not the honesty to render this simple act of justice to Pope you condemn yourself as a peace at any price man, and I will expose you in *The Civilian*." Of course after this I prefer war.

E. B



THE ASHANTI WAR.—It was quite a brilliant idea on the part of the War Office to apply to our Postal Stores Department for 10,000 postmen's badges for the use of the negro porters engaged in carrying stores from the coast. But our special war artist and ever helpful friend, Mr. Preston, has a still more brilliant idea. Why badges only? Why not a complete postal uniform that shall satisfy alike the requirements of modesty and art? The sketches show the original crude idea and the finished article, and we commend them to the attention of the responsible authorities.

St. Martin's Letter-Bag.

In Memoriam.

SIR ROWLAND HILL, K.C.B.,

Born Dec. 3rd, 1795,

Died Aug. 27th, 1879.

WE make no apologies for beginning the present volume with a portrait of Sir Rowland Hill. No one can say that the modern Post Office man neglects Sir Rowland's memory, although it is a fact that *St. Martin's-le-Grand* has hitherto refrained from noticing his personality or career in any special way. The occasion of the great man's centenary seems, however, to us a fitting moment in which to recall to our colleagues' minds his once well-known features, and his immortal work.

Proposed Fast Mail Service to Canada.

THE so-called Mail Steamers plying between this country and Canada are so slow as to be almost useless for postal purposes; and almost all the mails to and from the Dominion are sent *viâ* New York. For many years the Colonial Government has been endeavouring to establish a more satisfactory direct service, but hitherto without success. The question, however, entered upon a new phase at the Inter-Colonial Conference, held last summer at Ottawa, where a magnificent scheme for a Mail Service between England and Australasia by way of Canada was propounded. A fleet of ships, equal to the best Cunard or White Star Liners, was to perform the voyage between England and Canada in about four days, the train service on the Canadian Pacific Railway was to be accelerated, and fast steamers on the Pacific Ocean were to carry the mails between Vancouver and Australasia, so that mails might, it was estimated, reach Sydney in 28 days after leaving London, that is to say, more quickly than they do at present *viâ* Suez. The Canadian route would, it was urged, be much less liable than the Suez route to interruption in case of a European war, and the service would be British throughout. As to the cost, it was estimated that a subsidy of £300,000 a year would be required; but to this sum Canada undertook to contribute £175,000 if the Imperial Government would give £75,000 and Australasia £50,000.

Lord Jersey, the Imperial representative at the Congress, was incited to recommend the scheme; and the late Government

referred it for examination to the Inter-Departmental Committee on Mail communication with Australia and the East. It has not transpired what were the Committee's recommendations; but the result appears to be that the Government has expressed sympathy with the idea of a Fast Mail Service on the Atlantic, and without making any definite promise of a subsidy, has proposed that Canada should test the cost of such a service by publicly inviting tenders for its establishment. If the steps thus taken are successful, a great defect in the communication between Great Britain and her Colonies will be remedied; and, with some improvement in the existing service between Vancouver and Sydney, a very useful alternative route to and from Australasia will be established.

Foreign Parcels.

THE Foreign Parcel Post continues to develop. On the 1st of January it will become possible to insure parcels for France and for some of the countries to which parcels are sent through France. Special arrangements have been made for the conveyance of parcels addressed to the outward bound mail packets at Brindisi and Naples. Such parcels formerly either arrived at the port of destination too late, or lay in the Post Office unclaimed until the steamer had left. That the post is becoming increasingly useful, is shown by applications recently received from some large firms of tea merchants, to be allowed to export tea from bonded warehouses by the Parcel Post without payment of duty. A course of procedure has been arranged between the Customs Department and the Post Office, and the arrangement will come into operation in the new year.

The Troubles at Constantinople.

OUR colleague, Mr. Cobb, at Constantinople is having a trying time. It must be bad enough to have to live in the midst of alarms and butcheries; but the Head of a Foreign Post Office has of course special anxieties. For some days it was even necessary to close altogether the Branch British Post Office at Stamboul, which appears to be in the midst of the Armenian quarter. Not only was business at a standstill, but the Armenians composing the staff were themselves in danger. The office has since been reopened; but the fear of fresh disturbances still continues.

We hope that all our readers have seen the "Sketches from Constantinople," which appeared in the *Daily Graphic* of the 18th and 19th December last. By the courtesy of the proprietors we reproduce one of the illustrations and a portion of the letterpress which accompanies them. The nature of two of the remaining illustrations is sufficiently indicated by the titles,—“The Sultan's Spies and the British Post Office: The arrest of one of the Postal Messengers at Constantinople,” and “Armenian Mail Porters and their Armed Escort.” They bring vividly before the mind the peculiar difficulties that beset the path of the British Postmaster and his men.

“The British Post Office at Constantinople, which attracted attention through the arrest of the postmaster (Mr. Cobb) a few months ago, and the ill-treatment of an Armenian postman* has again provided an ‘incident’ at a time when Sir Philip Currie’s hands must be quite full enough of grievances requiring his attention. A messenger employed at the British Post Office was summarily arrested the other day by spies employed specially by the Sultan to carry out the extraordinary system of government necessary to keep Abdul Hamid on the throne. The man in question is an Armenian from Sivas, one of the devastated districts. He seems to have been hurried off to the Stamboul Police Station without any reason, a moment having been chosen when he was without his letter bag. He was, however, immediately released by the regular police officers, who, though obliged to attend to the ‘cases’ trumped up by the Sultan’s spies, have a proper dread of falling foul of the servants of foreign Powers. A sad interest attaches to the man, who is one of the many hundred worthy Armenians of the poorer class who are kept without news of the fate of their relatives in Asia Minor.



The Post Office slate and sealing wax.

(From a block kindly lent by the Proprietors of the *Daily Graphic*.)

* See *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, Vol. V., p. 129, "A Peculiar Incident at Constantinople."

“One of the most interesting sights connected with the Post Office is the large crowd, mainly consisting of Armenians, which assembles round the door on the arrival of the daily mail from Europe. So great is the throng outside that the door has been provided with an iron bar which keeps it ajar and only allows one or two at a time to enter. I noticed on the wall a large slate, upon which was written, ‘Prohibited—*Standard, Daily News, Graphic*’—which, by the way, has not been allowed to enter for the last four weeks—a list which varies from day to day. Whenever the newspapers contain unpalatable reports or criticisms upon the action of the Sublime Porte, instructions are sent to the Postmaster through the British Ambassador prohibiting their circulation in Turkey. It is satisfactory to learn that a petition has been presented protesting against this petty despotism.”

The Queensland Post Office.

THE report for 1894 shows that, in spite of the depression of trade, the Queensland Post Office had the most prosperous year on record. The postal revenue was higher than the previous year by nearly £8,000, while the expenditure was lower by £6,500. The telegraph revenue, however, which has diminished steadily since 1888, showed a falling off of £9,000 on the year.

One of the most striking things in the report is the account given of the results of reducing the letter postage from Queensland to countries beyond Australia, from 6d. to 2½d. per ½ oz. According to the theory of many postal reformers, such a reduction may entail an immediate sacrifice of revenue, but the loss is soon made good by the growth of correspondence. In Queensland, however, the revenue from foreign correspondence, which was £9,300 before the reduction, has fallen every year since, and in 1894 was only £3,700. Moreover, the number of letters, &c., despatched from Queensland, actually fell off considerably during the years 1893 and 1894. These results appear to confirm the opinion of those who think that the state of business in a country, frequency of communication, &c., have quite as much to do with postal development as low rates of postage.

One duty of the Post Office in Queensland appears to be to issue forecasts of the weather, to give by telegraph warnings of coming floods, and to collect and disseminate meteorological information generally in the colony and even in New Caledonia and the New Hebrides. The Chief Meteorologist claims to be a very successful prophet; and if so, his services to the colony, dependent as it is upon farming of various kinds, must be invaluable.

The Ordeal of Chicago.

THE *POSTAL RECORD*, published at Washington, is “A Journal for Postal Employees,” and is therefore a much esteemed contemporary of our own. A little while ago that delightful paper did us the honour to reproduce an article which had appeared in *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, and appended its views thereon.

We would do the like if we could spare the space, nay, we would even reproduce the whole of the 111th number of Vol. VIII., for it fairly breaks any record we have ever made, or heard of.

It seems that one day the people of Chicago went about asking, "What's the matter with Postmaster Hesing?" and it also seems that he was'n't "all right." And no wonder, for this is what had happened:—A paper, called the *Times Herald*, suddenly published an article explaining that 42 secret agents from Washington had been in Chicago for 28 days, shadowing all the letter carriers; that the entries of these excellent but thirsty public servants into various saloons had been chronicled, and so also, unfortunately, had their coming out, and the interval between the two events; that "rotteness" had been ferretted out, that 176 men had been suspended, and that the news would come to Postmaster Hesing like lightning from a clear sky. But Postmaster Hesing sat in his sanctum enveloped in "a stillness which could be almost felt," until at last he ejaculated, as he glared about the room, "Preposterous! Malicious! A lie! A scandalous, revengeful lie!" And then he supplied lots of copy to the newspapers, just as the Washington officials had done before him, and they slung ink at one another until it ran out at the heels of their boots, and they talked about the President of the Ananias Society, and about Judas, and the mark of Cain, and the spirit of "Sunset Cox;" and the First Assistant Postmaster-General actually went so far as to say, "that it would not be dignified or proper in him to have a newspaper discussion with a subordinate," and the Department could not "view with unconcern public interviews by such officials in which they criticize the Department, and attempt to throw suspicion upon its action."

And then, in the next number, Postmaster Hesing "is happy," for the fair fame of Chicago was vindicated, and all the result of the enquiry of 42 agents for 28 days was, that "16 carriers were removed, 90 carriers suspended, and 64 carriers reprimanded and exonerated." No wonder that Postmaster Hesing was proud of his force, and resented the slightest imputation upon their surpassing virtues; no wonder that the *Chicago Inter-Ocean* boasted that "it is highly gratifying to know that Uncle Sam has such a splendid body of men employed in the delivery of the mail in this city."

It is not for a mere Englishman to comment on this marvellous transaction; let us wonder awestruck at the methods of Washington, at the discipline of Postmasters, and the standard of virtue among Chicago postmen; and, above all things, let us implore *The Postal Record* to oblige again at an early date.

A Fruit and Vegetable Post.

THE Post Office represents the *willing horse* upon which every one seems bent upon laying additional burdens. The last proposal in this direction is that the carriage of agricultural produce should be undertaken by this Government department, so that fruit and vegetables could be delivered at our houses with the morning

mails. We fear that the scheme is impracticable, but as some genius may arise who will be able to put it some day into workable shape, we gladly give the matter mention. We have had an abundant harvest. Trees were bowed down with their weight of fruit, and vegetables were decaying for want of cheap carriage rates; at the same time the price of both in our cities and towns was exorbitant. One correspondent in advocating this new postal scheme, writes thus: "Penny postage was at one time deemed an absurdity. It needs no defence now, and I should not be surprised if, in the course of a few years, a sack of potatoes or a hundred-weight of fruit was delivered anywhere between John o' Groat's and the Land's End for the natty sum of sixpence."—*Chambers' Journal*.

"Buy and Buy."

ATTACHED to the Chippenham Office are two brothers named Buy, Arthur and George, both of whom are established Rural Postmen; their walks adjoin; George, having a six-day post, acts regularly as the alternate Sunday substitute for Arthur, the wives of both are sisters to each other, they live next door to one another, and there is even tube communication between the two houses, which by the way are owned by their father-in-law.

The Buys are uncommonly ingenious and industrious young men. Arthur is quite an admirable Crichton in his way, being regularly one of the largest prize takers at the local Horticultural Exhibition every year, for collections of flowers and vegetables, and has had numerous prizes for various ornamental devices exhibited. He is a skilled amateur fret-worker, and recently at a *conversazione* he won first prize in a man's competition for trimming ladies' hats. On the other hand, George is in great request as a picture framer, and most of his time out of official hours is filled up by that occupation. Probably it would be difficult to find a parallel to these brothers elsewhere in the service.

F. TAYLOR.

The 10th of April, 1848.

OWING to that inexorable "65" rule, probably few, if any, of the present staff of the Post Office were on duty there on the 10th of April, 1848. But many on the retired list can, no doubt, well remember that day. A day it was, in fact, never to be forgotten. On the continent, throne after throne had been toppled over, and Demos reigned supreme. King Mob in England hoped to do the same, and that 10th of April, was to be the settling day. But our government was wise and strong. The Iron Duke, without making any show, had ample forces ready to act at a moment's notice, and as soon as the leaders of what was intended to be a crushing revolution became aware of this, they displayed "the better part of valour," and their legions melted away like Simple Simon's roasted snow-ball. Every precaution had, however, been taken to quell what was feared might be a serious outbreak. Cannons were posted on

the bridges, most of the large churches were filled with soldiers, and every government official was sworn in as a special constable, with strict orders to remain at his post all night, if necessary, and bravely protect it from all assailants. Every man was supplied with a stout truncheon of oak or ash; short preliminary drills were improvised; all were looking forward to the fray. But, about five o'clock in the afternoon, a message was received from head-quarters, that the rioters had dispersed, and that consequently the services of the special constables would not be required further for that day. Of those therefore who were not wanted for ordinary official duty, some retired quietly to their homes, others adjourned to the neighbouring taverns to celebrate their bloodless victory.

At that period a stalwart Caledonian, the late lamented Mr. Daniel Tod, was President of one of the Branches of the old Money Order Office, then situated in the midst of three unsavoury churchyards in Aldersgate Street. Considering that the events of that memorable day ought to be chronicled in deathless verse, this gallant officer instructed one of his henchmen to write an Epic for the occasion. The command was promptly obeyed, the result being the following:—

SILIAD.

*Arms and the men I sing who, urged by fate
 And low-born Chartists' unrelenting hate,
 For long long hours were forced to undergo
 The fumes mephitic of the G.P.O.,
 Till, chafed and frantic, like the hunted boar,
 From limbs yet warm the reeking flesh they tore,
 Then fiercely sucked the frothy foaming tide—
 The pungent juice their thirsty entrails dyed—
 Till all decorum under foot was trod:

†Not such their Sovereign's wish, nor such the will of Tod.

‡Say, sapient muse, if can by thee be said,
 What direful cause to such a sequel led.
 Warned by the woeful precedent of France,
 Resolved to be of treason in advance,
 A vast supply of horrid arms was sent
 To all its servants by the government,
 §Bayonets and pikes and blunderbusses dire,
 The first to poke withal, the last to fire.
 Well might the lawless, shirtless, blackguard mob,
 Who hoped to plunder, pillage, ransack, rob,
 At such a promised warm reception fly,
 Nor care such hospitality to try.

* "*Arma virumque cano,*" etc.—VIRGIL.

† "*Such was the sovereign doom and such the will of Jove.*"—POPE'S HOMER.

‡ "*Musa, mihi causas memora,*" etc.—VIRGIL.

§ "*Gorgons and hydras and chimeras dire.*"—MILTON.

No sooner scattered was the rabble rout
 Than raised the stalwart clerks an awful shout,
 "The rogues have fled; let's drink the evening out!"
 Hail, streams nectareous, spirits, swipes and wine,
 Of power the soul to cheer, the heart refine,
 Till stupid man becomes a gifted swine!
 Most noble quadruped, alas! alas!
 Man, vinous man, will even thee surpass;
 Thy loudest note, compared with his, is mute;
 The biped boozier far outgrunts the brute,
 But, when a herd their throats united ply,
 Disheartened and amazed the vanquished porkers fly.
 So did they fly, what time was heard the roar
 Of Bacchus' sons on great *St. Martin's* shore,
 When burst the thunder from a thousand tongues,
 A thousand brazen, beer-becrusted lungs,
 Till, hoarse with bawling, or with drink o'ercome,
 Each sodden warrior sought his distant home:
 The porcine legions then might venture nigh,
 And seek repose, like them, within the fragrant sty.

SPERABENE.

Pills and the Post.

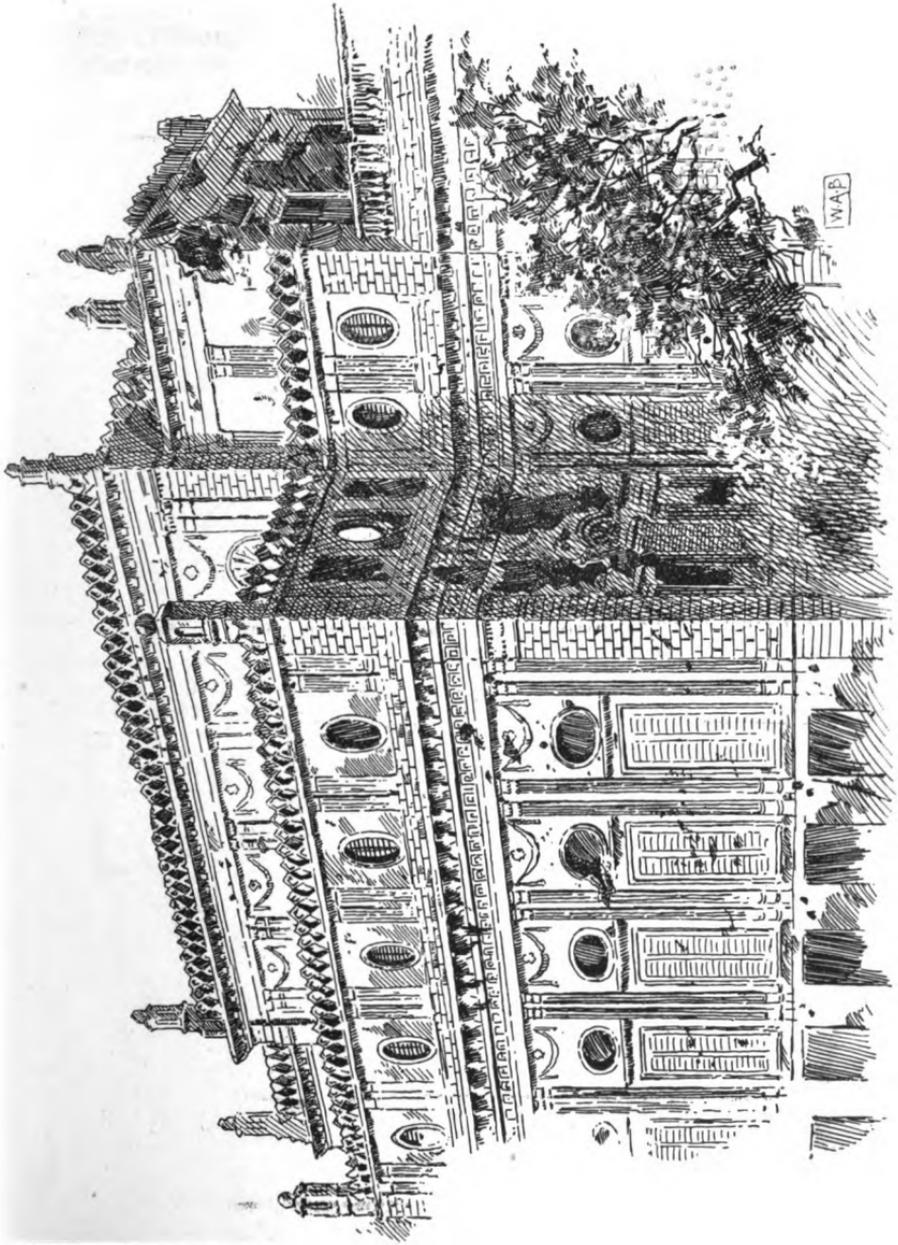
THE following reaches us from a small town on the Circassian littoral of the Euxine. Among the employés of a local manufacturer at this place is an English mechanician—a married man, whose wife remains at home in England. This lady, it appears, manifests a tender solicitude for the health of her spouse, and is in the habit of sending him pills of her own special preparation. These she forwards in an ordinary letter, after first flattening them for the greater convenience of their postal carriage. Some short time ago the hard substances within one of the "pilled" letters were remarked by the sorting clerk at the station of delivery, and the suspicious epistle was opened. The flattened pills were at first a mystery. At last, one of the officials confidently declared that the little hard and pasty discs were nothing else than dynamite cartridges! This pronouncement was generally accepted, the police were communicated with, and they too suspected dynamite. The English addressee of the confiscated letter was summoned to the postmaster's sanctum, the chief of the police being also present. The letter and its contents were placed upon a table, and the mechanician invited to explain. The Britisher, a simple sort of fellow, looked first surprised and confused at the official interrogator, and then, observing the flattened pills, exclaimed, "Well I'll be hanged, that's the rumpus, is it?" and without more ado picked up the "cartridges," swallowed them, and incontinently stalked out. The officials were too astonished to utter a word. Then the interpreter was sent after him, and the matter explained. Our correspondent adds that the postmaster and the chief of police are still a little shy of meeting their British townsman.—*Daily News*.

The Duke of Norfolk and the Postman.

WHEN Mr. George Lane-Fox, speaking to the members of the Wimborne Habitation of the Primrose League, at St. James's Hall, commenced to tell a story about a "walking policeman" to whom the Duke of Norfolk had rendered an act of kindness, someone stopped him with a reminder that he had "got hold of the wrong end of the yarn." The facts, as subsequently narrated, to the amusement of the knights and dames, over whom his Grace, as ruling councillor of the habitation, presided, were these: In a certain rural district a "walking" postman, who kept, for his own purposes, a pony and trap, thought he would like to utilise these in the service of the Post Office instead of going his rounds on foot. On the ground that such a course was contrary to established custom the authorities objected and withheld the necessary permission. But the matter came to the knowledge of the Postmaster-General, and, regarding the refusal as unreasonable he promptly gave the peripatetic employé leave to use his cart and horse. The vice-chancellor of the league mentioned this incident by way of illustrating, as he said, the fact that the Duke, unlike most Postmasters-General, was not tied up in a quantity of red tape from which even Maskelyne and Cook would be unable to extricate him. So overcome was his Grace by these remarks that, in rising to address the assembly, he said he did not know whether to speak to them as a Primrose Leaguer, a postman, or a policeman, but he was, nevertheless, glad to have the opportunity of acknowledging what the League had done for the unity of the Empire and its interests at large, and he deemed it a high honour to have been elected ruling councillor of that important habitation.—*Daily Telegraph*.

Memorials of the Mutiny.

MR. J. C. DANNENBERG, of Mussoorie, India, a photographer of pre-mutiny days, has published a remarkable album of 68 rare photographs taken at Lucknow and Cawnpore just after the mutiny. Only a few copies were printed then, as the head of a large firm in Calcutta was so struck with the vivid scenes that he begged leave to take them to England and get a number of copies printed off there. It is only a short time ago that the owner has been able to get the negatives back. They have lain in England and were believed to have been lost. It is a matter of congratulation that Mr. Dannenberg has been blessed with a life sufficiently long to render this last service to the country of his adoption. The album can be welcomed on national grounds, and forms a beautiful and most affecting memory to some of the most glorious chapters of the mutiny:—the pathetic incidents connected with the tragedies of Cawnpore, and the heroic deeds performed during the siege and relief of Lucknow. This remarkable album speaks for itself with a sacredness which all Englishmen cannot but fervently feel when turning over its pages. There are the buildings as they appeared, riddled with holes and battered,



THE BEGUM'S KOTI, HUSRUTGUNG (LUCKNOW), NOW THE POST OFFICE.



just after the struggle. The intense realism of some of the pictures defies description. In the graphic scene of Sir Hugh Wheeler's entrenchment there are skeletons and vultures on the ground; and in the one of his charred and shattered barracks where he was mortally



FL..N.O L N O

MM.SE.AM.MM.R+KN.T

R. A. B. Johnston. War Master.

*"The Dear Jesus send His help soon
and deliver us not into the enemy's
hands."*

J. W. Roach 17 June 1857.
Post master Cawnpore..

!E7LJ:YΓΛHΛV<VKIT:F:IH:
ΓLΛI:H,,7HΛI VΓF:4F.VIA
L<I:IK7IH,7V/, JIH;Y/H,
7,IVL<I:7T,-,H.

R. A. B. Johnston,

War Master



The Writing on the Wall in Sir H. Wheeler's room at Cawnpore.

wounded, the holes produced by shot and shell recall suffering too deep for words. Perhaps the most vivid scene is "The Chamber of Blood" at Cawnpore, where our women and children were massacred. One almost becomes spell-bound contemplating

the marks on the walls, the broken pots and pans, the shoes and garments of women, which recall that frightful tragedy. There are six different views of the Baillie Guard and Neill's gate, where that hero fell. I have obtained permission for the reproduction of two of the pictures in *St. Martin's-le-Grand*. One is "The Writing on the Wall in Sir H. Wheeler's room at Cawnpore." There the general lay with his little garrison of men, and his large charge of women and children around him, waiting for the succour which never came. The mystic symbols can be read by the initiated, and there is solemn pathos in the writing of Mr. Roach, postmaster, Cawnpore:—"The dear Jesus send His help soon and deliver us not into the enemy's hands." The other picture is "The Begum's Koti, Husrutgung (Lucknow), now the Post Office." Single views are sold at R. 1, each, and large albums containing the whole set are Rs. 100. I shall be glad if these few lines induce any of the readers of *St. Martin's-le-Grand* to patronize Mr. Dannenberg, and thus help to brighten the remaining years of a life which has furnished such rare memorials of the brightest and at the same time the saddest chapter of our rule in India.

ANGAREION.

Our Friends at Johannesburg.

FOR the past six months (writes R. E. H.), the telegraph staff at Johannesburg has been worked for all it is worth, which at any time is by no means little. Circumstances have brought much to the front and have proved, among other things, that Mr. Taylor Fox (sub-Director) is one of the most popular officials in the service. His assistance and friendship have been highly appreciated by his colleagues, a fact which they testified recently when between 70 and 80 telegraphists, under the presidency of Mr. R. H. Pitt (Director), turned up at Long's Hotel, to present Mr. Fox with a recognition of their esteem and regard. Before the presentation took place the first part of a capital musical programme was gone through, Mr. G. J. L. Smith presiding at the piano. During an interval Mr. A. Browne, vice-chairman, welcomed the new men, Messrs. Clutterbuck, Attridge, and Carr; after which the chairman, in a few well-chosen words, presented Mr. Fox, on behalf of the staff, with a gold watch and chain, and in his remarks referred to the great worth and popularity of the recipient. Mr. Fox, in reply, said he accepted the gift as from telegraphists to a telegraphist. He was proud of the Johannesburg staff and he always worked with them as man to man. Although they were as strangers in a foreign land, the Government, through their amiable chief, Mr. Van Trotsenberg, had done everything in its power for them, thereby making their branch of the service second to none. After the second part of programme had been gone through a hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Pitt for presiding. Amongst those present were Messrs. J. Paton, G. W. F. Morton, W. J. Smythe, Cosgrove, Dingwall, and Harrison.

[At the moment of going to press, everybody is anxiously awaiting news from Johannesburg, and we can assure our friends out there of their colleagues' sympathy, and our hope of a happy issue out of their present troubles.—EDITOR.]

Song Favours.*

OUR readers, we feel sure, will heartily join in welcoming the delightful little volume of verse, entitled *Song Favours*, which comes from the pen of Mr. C. W. Dalmon, the Sub-Librarian of the G.P.O. Library. The strains are mainly Anacreontic; they deal lightly and playfully with Cupids and love tokens; sometimes they have a Bacchanalian ring in them, and sometimes they try vainly to hide their natural and irrepressible gaiety behind a mask of seriousness. This is the very book for an idle hour and a mind without cares! And whoever reads, let him note the careful construction of the pieces and choice of words, and the simplicity of the diction. For our own part we prefer those of them which, as we have said, have an element of seriousness in them; and among these *Nimuë*, *An Autumn Elegy*, and *An Autumn Allegory* are especially pleasing. Here, for example, is a cutting taken from *An Autumn Allegory*:—

“Come, our old mate, come back to us again;
 Too long, too long you linger in the town!
 The hazel nuts are slipping in the lane;
 And in the holt the chestnut-burs are brown—
 Come, our old mate, both old and young complain!

“We tapped a cask of cider yesterday;
 To-morrow we shall thrash the walnut tree.
 O, we will feast you, if you come this way,
 On pies, and cakes, and cream and frumenty;
 And give you all our shares
 Of luscious Harvest plums and William pears.”

In the matter of rhymes, the author is not very strict. We find “sward,” for instance, taken as an assonant to “Joyous Gard.” But on the other hand, great credit is distinctly due to him for having evolved an entirely new and perfectly correct rhyme to “self.” How many poets must have sighed painfully over “elf,” “shelf” and “pelf,” all equally impracticable! And here let us pause for one moment and take the opportunity of hinting, or mildly expressing a wish that some kindly *Doctor Musarum* would invent or bring into currency a few new words which would rhyme to certain other words we know of. How we should welcome a new rhyme to “world”! ’Tis a good word in itself to end a line roundly with; but it necessitates the inappropriate operations of curling, hurling, or furling in the previous or subsequent lines. Now why not construct and establish some new word like “smirled,” meaning “crooned happily”? Similarly, something like “jaughter” (a rippling melody), “orow” (patience exercised in vain), and “harling” (the tickling feeling produced on a man’s cheek by a touch of a stray wisp of hair) would be incalculably useful in combination with our indispensable trio, laughter, sorrow, and darling.

* *Song Favours*, by C. W. Dalmon. London: John Lane, 1895. Price 3s. 6d.

Now Mr. Dalmon has evidently had his eye upon this matter, for, in addition to the new rhyme to "self," he gives us a new one for "chimes" and a new one for "coo." The latter is to be found not (as the reader might hastily assume) in *Cuckoo Day*, but in *The Sussex Muse*.

Cuckoo Day itself is one of the brightest and best of the poems, in Mr. Dalmon's lighter vein. It describes most vividly and concisely the coming of the Cuckoo on the Weald downs, at daybreak, in the month of sweets, with everything promising a wonderful fruit year. The beech buds have turned green, and the love-sick girls of the village go forth—

A-roaming the meadows and holts until
The cuckoo shall call over Highden hill,
For so many times as they hear him call,
When they hear him first, must the acorns fall,
Must the Yule log burn, must the lambkins play
Ere the joy bells ring on their wedding day.

"Cuckoo! cuckoo! cuckoo! cuckoo!"
"Four years?—four years are nearly never!"
"Cuckoo! cuckoo!"—"Stop, cuckoo, stop,
Or we shall all be maids for ever!"

The Post Office Cricket Club.

THE fourth annual smoking concert of this Club was held at St. James's Hall on the 4th December last, when the banqueting room presented a very bright and animated appearance, being filled to the doors with members and well wishers.

Mr. Smyth occupied the chair until the arrival of the Duke of Norfolk. The proceedings commenced with a brilliant pianoforte solo by Mr. Twyford, who was followed by Mr. Kirkley Campbell, the possessor of a beautiful tenor voice, which was heard at its best in Sullivan's "Distant Shore." Mr. Long recited in his usual finished style, and Mr. Berry, who made his first appearance at these concerts, at once established himself in the favour of his audience, and had a double recall. A clarinet solo played by Mr. Price was much appreciated. Mr. Sydney Beckley sang the Toreador's song from "Carmen," and a pretty quartet, rendered by Messrs. Hollamby, Wood, Lewis and Woodman, ended the first portion of the programme.

After the customary interval the Duke of Norfolk, who was accorded a most hearty welcome, took the chair. The second part was even better than the first, and the pianoforte playing of our former colleague, Dr. J. M. Ennis, who was very warmly greeted, and the singing of Messrs. Ambrose Thorne, Louis Bradfield (now appearing in the "Artist's Model"), Sydney Beckley, and Kirkley Campbell were most keenly enjoyed. Mr. Raynold's humorous sketch was also highly appreciated.

The vote of thanks to the chairman, which was proposed by Mr. Spencer Walpole and seconded by Mr. John Philips in felicitous terms, was acknowledged by the Duke (who seemed very pleased at the warmth of his reception) in an interesting and humorous little speech, and the more formal proceedings terminated shortly afterwards. Mr. Lewin Hill subsequently alluded briefly to the great services Mr. Lang has rendered to the Club, his remarks, needless to say, being most cordially endorsed by all present. The financial result of the concert was most satisfactory. That it would be an artistic success the names on the programme placed beyond all question from the first.

J. F.

Electric Athletic Association.

ON Friday, November 15th, this Association held its annual *conversazione*, in connection with the distribution of prizes, at the Holborn Town Hall. The company was a large and brilliant one, and a guard of honour, formed of the Post Office 24th Middlesex Volunteers, was in attendance. The Duke of Norfolk, who distributed the prizes, was supported by Mr. Spencer Walpole, Mr. Lamb, Mr. Preece, Mr. Fischer, Mr. Badcock, and others; and amongst those present were Messrs. Langton, Hookey, May, Barlow, J. T. Hill, Eames, and Fleetwood. Before the distribution took place, Mr. G. C. Newbury, the Hon. Sec. and Treasurer, expressed the warm thanks of the Association to the Postmaster-General for his attendance, and informed his Grace that the Association consisted of several hundreds of the employees of the central and other telegraph offices, its aim being to provide means for counteracting the baneful influences of the sedentary life usually passed by those who are occupied in clerical work. The Duke then presented the prizes, at the conclusion of which a vote of thanks was passed to him, on the motion of Mr. Spencer Walpole, who remarked that the Postmaster-General's presence was an assurance of his sympathy with the great staff over which he presided, and was particularly welcome on that account. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fischer, who upon rising was greeted with vociferous applause.

In reply, the Duke of Norfolk said that it gave him great satisfaction to be present, and that it afforded him the opportunity of meeting a very large number of those over whom he had been suddenly called to preside. He felt that no gratitude was due to him. He supposed there were very few present who did not wish that all post office work was of so pleasant a character as that which was being performed that evening. He entirely felt the force of what had been said, that those who had to undertake sedentary work should avail themselves of every possible means of outdoor and active exercise. By doing so, not only did they keep themselves in health, but they enabled the postal and telegraph work of the country to be much better performed. Never, he thought, had it been his lot to present prizes of a more useful and suitable kind than those which had just been given, and he heartily congratulated

the prize-winners on their success. As it had been stated that the principal officers of the department might become honorary members, he must ask them to allow him to have that privilege. He was especially pleased to see so many of the Post Office Rifle Volunteers present. It seemed to him that if ever the country was invaded no one would get his letters delivered, unless the ladies of the service carried them from door to door. He had no doubt that their patriotism was equal to the task. It was a very good sign that nearly every man connected with the Post Office seemed to think it his first duty to learn how to handle a carbine. It was not for him to forecast the future and say how long he would remain at the Post Office; but whether they met now or on any other occasion, it would not be his fault if an affectionate feeling between the officers and himself did not exist.

The exhibits included several telegraph instruments, showing the latest improvements and inventions, and in full working order, and also some obsolete instruments, kindly lent by Mr. Lamb. A centre of attraction and interest was the electrophone, "the latest wonder of the age," which, by the kindness of the National Telephone and the Electrophone Companies, communicated with the Drury Lane, Lyric, Prince of Wales' and other theatres.

Mr. F. M. Hodgson, C.M.G.

MR. HODGSON, an article from whose pen appears in another portion of our columns, is an old Savings' Bank Officer. He entered the service of the General Post Office in June 1868, as a clerk in the Savings' Bank Department. He was permanently appointed after a competitive examination, in February 1869. He was employed in the Secretary's Office in connection with the transfer of the Telegraphs to the State, and was appointed to the third class in that office without further examination in August 1876. In August, 1880, he was promoted to the second class. In January, 1882, he was appointed Postmaster-General and head of the Government Telegraphs in British Guiana: he was made Colonial Secretary of the Gold Coast in September 1888, and administered the Government of that Colony from June 1889 to February 1890; June to December 1891; and September 1893 to March 1894. He was made a C.M.G. in 1891. He held a commission in the 24th (Post Office) R.V. from February, 1869, to July, 1882, retiring upon his transfer to British Guiana as senior captain, having held the command of the A (or E.C. District) Company for several years. He was appointed Captain in the British Guiana R.V., in August, 1886, but resigned upon transfer to the Gold Coast in July, 1888. He raised two companies of native volunteers at Accra (Gold Coast), and was appointed Captain Commandant in September, 1892; he also raised two companies at Cape Coast and an additional company at Accra, and was appointed Major commanding Gold Coast Volunteer Corps in January, 1894. This corps, which is officered

by Europeans, is armed with the Martini-Henry carbine. This is what the *St. James's Gazette* said about him a few weeks ago:— Mr. Hodgson, though fate has condemned him to the actual use of nothing more dangerous than a quill, is a man of pronounced warlike instincts. There must be many gentlemen in St. Martin's-le-Grand who remember him as senior captain of the 24th Middlesex



MR. F. M. HODGSON, C.M.G.

(Post Office) Volunteers. Since he has been on the West Coast he has raised a force of negro rifle volunteers, of which he is captain-commandant. In the government of the Gold Coast he is now a very important personage. Sir Brandford Griffith pays him a lavish compliment in the last Report on the colony; and as Mr. Hodgson has many friends and a thoroughly English belief in himself, he will one day attain the dizzy glory of a colonial governorship.

A Telegraph Veteran.

WHEN a man celebrates his completion of fifty years' service, and his 73rd birthday, together, the circumstance is worthy of something more than a mere passing notice in the newspapers of the day. Such a "Double Event" happens to very few men in any walk of life, and it would be quite impossible in the Postal service, where even an "Indispensable" has to shuffle off the official coil at the comparatively early age of 70! But in the outside Telegraph

Service they order things differently, and hence it was, that, towards the end of November, last, Mr. W. T. Ansell, Traffic Superintendent of the Eastern Telegraph Company, received the congratulations of his numerous friends at a banquet given in his honour at the Holborn Restaurant. The chair was occupied by Mr. J. Denison Pender, Managing Director of the Eastern Telegraph Company, and amongst those present were: Sir Henry Mance, Professor Hughes, Mr. C. E. Spagnoletti, Mr. H. C. Forde, Mr. A. Le Neve-Foster, and Mr. J. W. Wilkins. The Post Office, or rather the old Telegraph Service, was represented by Mr. W. H. Preece, C.B., F.R.S., Mr. J. Hookey, Mr. J. Gavey, and Mr. J. Jenkin. Mr. Pender, in proposing the toast of "Telegraphy," acknowledged the "courtesy and assistance" which the Cable Companies invariably received from those who held positions under the Government, with whom



MR. W. T. ANSELL.

the Companies had daily dealings; and the veteran Professor Hughes, who spoke for Scientific Telegraphy, generously recalled the services of that much neglected Scotsman, Alexander Bain, who "early showed them how to transmit and receive *over one thousand words a minute*," although the inherent qualities of their lines did not allow of this speed even at the present time. Mr. Preece proposed "the Guest of the Evening," and as his speech practically covered the whole of Mr. Ansell's career, it may be quoted here:—

"It was, he said, exactly 44 years since he (Mr. Preece) made acquaintance with a fine, bold, splendid Roman hand, whose memoranda and notes used to be deciphered without any difficulty by him in the small office in the West Strand. From a note which he received on the previous day he had been pleased to see that there was not a trace of faltering in that fine Roman hand. Mr. Ansell commenced his career before he (Mr. Preece) did, but for 44 years their careers had run side by side. In 1845 Mr. Ansell commenced with that *alma mater* of all

telegraphists, the old Electric Company, incorporated in 1846, and from 1846 to 1856 he remained in a position of trust and responsibility, acting as one of those pioneers who succeeded in establishing telegraphy in this country on a sound financial basis. The Chairman had remarked that science and capital must always be found in this enterprise. That had been so. He could speak from experience of it. In the south of England he was the scientific fellow, and Mr. Ansell was the capital fellow. Mr. Ansell remained the same capital fellow, but he himself lost his science on a memorable evening 39 years ago, when he was informed that the time between Southampton and Berlin had gone back nearly two hours. His career as a lecturer had thus been cut short. He never knew the culprit, who, however, had acknowledged himself that night (referring to an incident recounted by Sir H. Mance). He was one of those who believed that the finest incentive to progress was opposition, as illustrated by the great struggle they had had in this country to push on telegraphy, telephony, and the electric light. Unfortunately, in the time of progress, Mr. Ansell's health broke down, and he retired for a short time to the Greek Archipelago, and took charge of the cables in the Levant; but that only led, with a slight interruption, to his subsequent entry into the service of the Eastern Telegraph Company—that great octopus, whose feeders were found all over the world. He was sure they would all join with him in wishing long life and prosperity to Mr. Ansell. With all his faults—they were very few—they loved him still. He had a kind heart, he was a cheering companion, and if there was anyone in discomfort or distress, and wanting assistance, he had only to go to Old Bill Ansell, and with that impetuosity which they had no doubt all seen, he would help a friend out of the greatest difficulty.”

Mr. Ansell, in replying, referred to the incorporation of the old Electric Company in 1846, when the muster roll, of which he had a printed copy, contained the names of 84 men. Of this devoted band, who were “the pioneers of telegraphy of the world,” five were still living, but he (Mr. Ansell) was the only one in harness. Mr. Wilkins, however, was his senior in telegraphy, although he had been for many years unconnected with the profession, and to him the public were indebted for the “very first line of telegraphs in the world.” Mr. Ansell paid a high tribute to his “honoured Chairman,” Sir John Pender, who, in 1847, first associated himself with telegraphy in connection with the British Electric Company, and to whom the world was indebted for “the greatest civilising boon that had yet been seen.” Fifty years ago, before the days of ocean steamers and of the Suez Canal, it took six months for a merchant in London to get a reply to his letters, and to know that his orders for a shipment had been executed. Of course, everything was dear, the merchant's capital was locked-up for months, and, naturally, the consumer suffered. They now found that what formerly took six months, only took *six hours*, and this was due to

the man (Sir J. Pender) to whose "indomitable pluck, perseverance and prescience, the world was indebted for what no man yet could properly appreciate."

It is getting on for 40 years since I first met Mr. Ansell in Edinburgh, and perhaps it may be permissible for me to quote what I said about him in one of my papers on the "Early Telegraph Days":—

"The transition from double needle to double current printing was attended by many curious incidents, but by none more comical than the following, I should imagine. On the double needle circuit, between Edinburgh and York (Newcastle intermediate) being converted into double current printing circuits, the needle coils had been left in circuit at Newcastle for a short time. A travelling Officer, who was styled the "Secretary's Eyes," visited the Newcastle Office during this time, and his attention was at once attracted, as it well might be, by the erratic and incomprehensible movements of the needles. He took out his pocket book and pencil, stretched out his lengthy legs, and stood in front of the oscillating needles for about ten minutes, when he ejaculated, in a manner which will be familiar to many when I disclose his name: 'Here are two d—ls who have been fighting for the last quarter of an hour, and never got a word off.' That officer was none other than the genial W. T. Ansell, now Traffic Superintendent of the Eastern Telegraph Company, and probably, one of the oldest telegraph officers in the country. A finer fellow, either physically, or as an officer, could not be, and I was rejoiced to see from an official paper which passed through my hands the other day, that his handwriting is as bold and firm as ever, and that he keeps up the good old custom of the Companies of endorsing papers in the corner, and styling the person addressed as 'Esqr. '; instead of plain 'Mr.' as in our more prosaic service."

Only the other day I had a letter from Mr. Ansell, in which the "Bold Roman" referred to by Mr. Preece is still as characteristic as ever—a wonderful "fist" for a man of 73. Nor would it appear that the veteran's career is yet ended, for he was greeted with cries of "No! No!" and "You have not done yet," when he spoke of retirement, and the Chairman, in presenting him with a handsome testimonial "from all parts of the world," said they all congratulated Mr. Ansell on having arrived at 50 years' service, and in being in a hale and hearty condition to undertake, he hoped, *many years' further work!* To all which, Mr. Ansell's old colleagues now in the Postal Service will, I am sure, respond with a hearty "Amen!"

R. W. J.

Mr. E. C. Sampson.

ON the 9th December last the death took place at Clevedon of Mr. Sampson, who retired at the end of 1891 from the post-mastership of Bristol, which he had held for twenty years. Mr. Sampson was one of the "veterans." He entered the service as far back as 1837, several years before the introduction of penny

postage. Born in Bristol, he was first employed at the Bristol office, and within a period of three or four years became chief clerk there. In 1865 he was transferred to Manchester, but six years later accepted the postmastership of his native town, rendered vacant by the retirement of Mr. T. Walton. During the period of his association with the Bristol office, Mr. Sampson witnessed an immense development of postal work. In 1837 the staff consisted of five clerks and twelve postmen only; in 1891 there were nearly 700 in-door and out-door officers.

In an obituary notice of Mr. Sampson which appeared in the *Bristol Times and Mirror* we learn some interesting particulars of the Bristol office. There was a post office in Bristol as long ago as 1671, but the site of it is unknown. In 1748, however, a house was built in All Saints' Lane, "for the conveniency of a post office," but it was taken down in 1758 or 1759, and the business removed to Small Street, on the site now occupied by the Assize Courts. Another change took place in 1784, when the basement floor of large premises on the west side of the Exchange was taken possession of by the postal authorities—the building now being known as the Post Office Tea Warehouse. The business increased so that, by the year 1868, it was decided to come back to Small Street, the house on the corner of Corn Street having sufficed, with small additions, for 120 years. But since the removal of the Post Office to Small Street it has been necessary to nearly double the original accommodation, so largely has the work increased, and owing also to the many additions to the postal side of the establishment. The present spacious buildings cover an area of about 560 square yards, with three letter boxes, open day and night, to receive the correspondence of the public. In 1771 there was one postmaster, but no clerk, and perhaps no postman; but now, of course, one postmaster remains, and in addition there are nearly 300 clerks and in-door servants to wait upon the public, and about 400 out-door servants to deliver letters, parcels, telegrams, &c. Mr. Sampson kept well abreast of his duties as they increased, and was known favourably throughout the service, where his death will be heard of with sincere sorrow."

Mr. Sampson always took great interest in the fortunes of the Post Office Magazine, and in the days of *Blackfriars* was himself a frequent contributor. His portrait appears in vol. II. of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, p. 156.

Mr. John R. Edwards.

BY the death of this gentleman, which took place at the end of September last, the Engineering Branch of the Telegraph Department has lost a most able and devoted official, and the Service generally a most genial and kindly man. Although Mr. Edwards' service in the Post Office only dated from 1870, he was one of the "old brigade" of telegraph men who helped to lay the foundations of the system, having joined the Electric Company's service in

Glasgow so far back as the year 1855. He and I were "boys together" in Edinburgh nearly 40 years ago, and when, in 1861, he quitted the Electric service for that of the United Kingdom Company, I quitted the same service for that of the Post Office. Mr. Edwards took an important part in the erection of telegraph lines for the United Kingdom Company, and otherwise in assisting to establish the "Uniform Shilling Rate," which was the *raison d'être* of that Company. Afterwards, he became Telegraph Superintendent to the Bridgwater Trust, which position he occupied until May, 1870, when he joined the Post Office service as Superintendent of the Chester section of the North Western Engineering Division, then under the control of the late Mr. Edward Graves, who subsequently became Engineer-in-Chief. In 1878, when the districts were rearranged, Mr. Edwards was appointed Superintending Engineer of the North Wales District, with headquarters in Liverpool, which position he



MR. JOHN R. EDWARDS.

held until his lamented death. Mr. Edwards displayed early in his career a leaning towards the Engineering Branch of the Service, and was always well in front in regard to technical matters. To the last he interested himself greatly in the science of telegraphy, and was especially devoted to the study and improvement of the Telephone, regarding the development of which, in the near future, he had the highest hopes.

That Mr. Edwards was as highly appreciated as a man as he was valued as an official was evident from the number of his colleagues who assembled round his grave in the little churchyard of Roby, near Liverpool. Mr. Preece was there, as also was Mr. Gavey; while amongst his more immediate colleagues were Mr. J. Doherty, Superintending Engineer, Manchester; Mr. F. E. Evans, Superintending Engineer, Birmingham; and Messrs. Ismay, France, and Batho of the Liverpool Telegraph Office. Mr. W. Whittingham, late Chief Clerk at Liverpool, a very old Telegraph official, was

also present, and a very touching tribute was paid to the deceased by the linemen and mechanics of the District, who carried his body to the grave. Mr. Edwards was born at Bangor in 1837, and it is just 25 years since I spent a few days with him at his paternal home on the beautiful Menai Straits, and visited the far-famed slate quarries at Bethesda, where his brother was doctor. He came of an old Welsh family which had rendered the State some service, and the distinguished General Rowlands, V.C., was a cousin of his. He was one of the simplest and kindest of men, genial and ready witted, and ever on the look-out for his little joke. Once when we met in Wales, noticing the initials on my portmanteau, he greeted me with the remark, "Ah! Regular Wandering Jew." The Service will greatly miss John Rowlands Edwards, but not more than his personal friends, of whom he had troops.

R. W. J.



W. J. DAVISS.

Bravery.

IT has been our pleasure from time to time to announce heroic actions on the part of postmen and others, but the brave fellow whose portrait we give above is worthy to take front rank amongst them.

William John Daviss, who is employed as a postman at Rotherhithe, London, S.E., was born on the 28th April, 1867, and when but 15

years of age, rescued a child from drowning in the Grand Surrey Canal. Before reaching his 18th year he had saved the life of a lad of 11, and also rescued a man who had fallen from a barge into the middle of the same canal. During the next two years, three more lives stand to his credit, and the Surrey Canal was again the scene of two of the rescues. We next hear of him in India, where, as a soldier, he assisted a comrade in rescuing another soldier from drowning. In 1892, at Fort William, Calcutta, a soldier named Jarman was seized with cramp whilst swimming, and Mr. Daviss, who was fortunately at hand, saved his life. In the following year at Jullundur, India, his own life was in serious jeopardy, owing to a comrade, during an attempted rescue, clutching him by the throat. On the 29th February, 1894, he saved a lad 11 years of age from drowning, and this time the Surrey Canal was again the scene of his operations. The last of his heroic acts (up to the time of writing this account) took place on the 5th April last, when, at great risk to himself, he recovered a lad from drowning. This latter case having been reported to the Royal Humane Society, it is pleasing to record that Mr. Daviss has received the Society's Testimonial.

* * *

ON the 7th August last, Mr. William Proctor, a postman at the Bramley Post Office, Yorkshire, risked his own life in saving a little lad from drowning in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Kirkstall. Mr. Proctor, who was on his annual leave, was fishing in the canal, and hearing cries for help some distance away, ran in the direction from which they proceeded and found a little lad struggling



W. PROCTOR.

in the canal locks. Without a moment's hesitation Proctor dived in, and succeeded in getting the lad safely to the bank. The locks are some fifteen feet deep, and the smooth stone sides make it very difficult for any one to get out. But for Mr. Proctor's bravery the lad would certainly have been drowned, and we are glad to hear that the Royal Humane Society has awarded the rescuer its silver medal.



MISS C. HORSLEY.

A Rural Postwoman.

MISS CATHERINE HORSLEY is a rural postwoman, whose beat is from Longniddry to Seton Castle, in Scotland. She holds an established appointment dated 1st February, 1884, and has two good conduct stripes. The Postmaster of Haddington, under whom she serves, informs us that she gets through all the duties required of her with care, and with the confidence of her chief. She performs two rural deliveries, together with apparatus and station services. The photograph which we have much pleasure in publishing, represents her attired in the official overcoat and cape.

Sergeant Fawke.

OUR veteran soldiers and sailors have attracted no small share of interest and sympathy lately. Conspicuous amongst them is Sergeant Fawke, a town sub-postmaster in the quiet little town of Bromsgrove, Worcestershire.

Sergeant Fawke is a man of splendid physique, and is renowned for his feats of strength, skill and dexterity in the use of the Indian club, the sabre and the scimitar. Born on the 22nd of January, 1833, Fawke joined the 2nd Dragoons, Royal Scots Greys, at the age of 19, and took part in the famous Balaclava charge. For his services in the Crimea he was awarded the Crimean medal with three clasps (Balaclava, Inkerman, and Sebastopol), and also a

Turkish medal—a reward none too great for a soldier who received seven wounds in that memorable war. Fawke retired from the army with the rank of drill sergeant in 1864, and has since acted as a drill master, besides teaching calisthenics, boxing, fencing, swordsmanship, and other of those accomplishments which so delight the



SERGEANT FAWKE.

heart of "Young England." Fawke stands over six feet in height, and is in the enjoyment of robust and vigorous health. Although nearly 63 years of age, he can still sever the carcase of a sheep at one blow. Quite recently he gained the first county prize as a crack shot in Lord Windsor's Troop of Worcestershire Hussars.

"In Praise of Philately."

WE freely confess that we have never yet felt the "true unqualified collector's joy," of which our poet, Leo Wolfe, sang so feelingly not long since. Our pages bear sad evidence of the fact that philately has failed to touch our hearts or kindle our imagination. Indeed, a sensitive timbrologist, who was persuaded by his well-meaning Post Office friend to study *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, has declared (in confidence) that he was compelled to find relief in tears after searching in vain through the entire five volumes for even the faintest trace of a correct perception of the true "inwardness" of philately.

Bearing all this in mind, we were quite unprepared for the very pretty things that were said about us by the two leading organs of the philatelic world, at the time when the continued existence of the Magazine was thought to be imperilled. Such heaping of coals of fire on our head could not fail to have a powerful effect, and by way of penance for our sins we feel constrained to reproduce the words which have burnt down deepest.

From *Stanley Gibbons' Monthly Journal* :—

"We greatly regret to learn, from an announcement in the last number of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, that there are some doubts as to

the future publication of that magazine. The trouble, it seems, does not arise from want of support, but from the difficulty of finding a member of the Post Office staff who is both able and willing to devote the necessary time to the work of editorship and management. The gentleman who has so ably conducted it for the last five years finds it necessary, we gather, to ask that some other hand shall carry it on, and we sincerely trust that, before any long interval has elapsed, an equally able hand may be found to do so.

"We would express our thanks to the past Editor and Hon. Secretary for his kindness and courtesy in permitting an outsider to see this most interesting periodical. We have, from time to time, made allusion in these pages to matter of philatelic interest contained in our contemporary, and can only wish that the opportunities for such allusion had been more frequent; for it is but too seldom that stamp collectors see the Post Office side of certain questions, in which the Department has an interest as well as the philatelist."

The Philatelic Journal of Great Britain, in wishing us continued success, says:—

"The Post Office, as we have had reason to remark on another occasion, is so well-known a nursery of English literature that one naturally turns to these pages for evidence that the old spirit of St. Martin's still lives. Nor were we disappointed; and although a notice on the cover of the volume before us warns us in stout capitals that it is 'Sold to Post Office Subscribers only,'* we venture to express a hope that in the near future the outer public who benefit so greatly by the official services of these gentlemen may be allowed to profit by reading the pleasing result of their labours after office hours."

Odds and Ends.

AN Assistant Surveyor writes:—Allow me through you to congratulate postmasters on the abolition of the antiquated and inconvenient system of calling upon postmasters—in cases where they did not occupy "Crown Offices"—to provide, fit up, and maintain their offices. The system sometimes inflicted great hardship, and I have often heard recently appointed postmasters express their regret that their applications had been successful. I have never known a member of the surveying staff who approved of the arrangement, and I believe every member of it at the present time will rejoice at its disappearance. * *

WE are glad to see that Mr. T. S. Pengelley, now Chief Clerk at the Tiverton Post Office, has recently given another of his illustrated lectures on Post Office history. The wish we expressed some time ago that his example were more generally followed will bear repetition. The lecture in question was given in the Wesleyan Schoolroom, Tiverton, before a large and appreciative audience, and nearly 100 pictures were shown by means of the magic lantern. At the close cordial thanks to the lecturer were expressed by Mr. W. H. Snell, the postmaster, who presided.

[* This restriction is now removed.—*Ed.*]

A LETTER recently mailed at Stamboul, Turkey, and addressed "To my Heavenly Father, U.S.A., Holy, Holy, Holy, Washington," was forwarded from New York to Chicago for trial. There is a humorist in the New York Post Office.

* *
* *

MR. A. H. NORWAY'S *History of the Post Office Packet Service, 1793-1815*, which Messrs. Macmillan will issue early in January, will deal with a generally forgotten and deeply interesting chapter in naval history. The Post Office for over 150 years kept up a fleet of armed ships, and there were stations for the vessels at Dover, Harwich, Holyhead, Milford, and Yarmouth. Falmouth, however, was the chief station, and there were packets there solely under Post Office control from 1688 to 1823. Many a stiff fight were they in during last century's wars and those of the opening years of the present century. From 1812 to 1815, for instance, no less than thirty-two actions with American privateers were fought by Falmouth packets. Seventeen of the engagements were entirely successful, and even the defeats seem to have been "moral victories." Mr. Norway has been given access to official records, and his record of the valiant deeds of the Post Office skippers and sailors should make a very attractive volume.

* *
* *

AN interesting pamphlet entitled *Falmouth and Flushing a Hundred Years Ago* has been written by Miss Gay, of Falmouth, whose father is still remembered as a Surveyor, and whose grandfather long occupied the post of Packet Agent at Falmouth.

Miss Gay's object is to help the movement which has been set on foot in Falmouth for erecting a memorial of the Packet Service which may keep in mind the gallant actions performed by Post Office servants in the old days of war; and to this end she has collected from the *Autobiography of James Silk Buckingham*, and from other sources, many curious details of the Post Office establishment in Falmouth, which are not accessible elsewhere.

Copies of this pamphlet can be obtained through Mr. A. H. Norway, Secretary's Office, General Post Office; or from the publisher, Mr. F. L. Earle, the Quay, Falmouth, price 1s., in addition to postage.

* *
* *

PLEONASM. A clerk in a Provincial Post Office, having been called upon for his written explanation of some trifling "irregularity," after several pages of "deep regrets," wound up with the assurance; "It shall not re-occur again any more in future!"

* *
* *

IN the January number of *The Minster*, which comes out under entirely new conditions, there is an excellent short story by Mr. W. W. Jacobs, of the Savings Bank Department, entitled *The Skipper of the Osprey*.

IN the Deposit Books of the Youghal Trustee Savings Bank which has lately closed its doors is to be found the following aphorism, which we doubt not has alternately encouraged and consoled depositors according to whether they were engaged in making deposits or withdrawals.

“He that gets all he can and saves all he can spare will certainly become rich if that Almighty Being who governs the world to whom all should look for a blessing on their honest endeavours doth not in his wise Providence otherwise determine.”

* * *

WE noticed a few weeks ago a letter in *The Civilian* in which an attack was made on the Cricket Club committee for allowing a Guard of Honour to be in attendance at the Smoking Concert at St. James's Hall, on the 4th December last. The writer stated that the Duke of Norfolk himself seemed upset by the military display. The incident reminds us of an event in Savings Bank annals, which may serve as a warning to those who recklessly employ our Volunteers at pacific gatherings. A distinguished Austrian was being taken over the premises of the Post Office Savings Bank, and the first room he was to enter contained a number of Volunteers who it so happened on that particular day had brought their rifles to the office with them. The idea occurred to one gentleman in that room, who shall be nameless, to stack these rifles together just inside the door. Then everybody watched with interest the entrance of the distinguished Austrian, and nobody who witnessed that sight, who saw the distinguished Austrian start, pull up, and then go back two or three paces, will ever forget the look on his face and the terror in his eye. We do not know, but we suppose that history repeated itself in the Duke of Norfolk's countenance as he climbed St. James's Hall stairs on the 4th December.

* * *

WILL subscribers, at offices where Christmas Cards are issued, kindly send us a copy? We have already received a few, and shall hope to say something about them in our next number.

* * *

ALL Post Office men were delighted to find that Mr. H. C. Fischer had been included in the list of New Year's Honours, and that he is now entitled to place C.M.G. after his name. Telegraph men, especially, who have read Mr. Fischer's evidence before the Commission now sitting, must be glad that their chief's services have been recognised by the Government. We offer him our congratulations.

Subscriptions from Abroad.

UP to the time of going to press we have received the following subscriptions from abroad:—Auckland (6); Constantinople (2); Bermuda; Dunedin (7); Christchurch (6); Oamaru (4); Thames, N.Z. (2); Malta (17); Napier and Quetta.

Promotions.

LONDON.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Secretary's O. H.M.B.	Cockerell, H. ...	Senior Inspector ...	Pr. Kr. S.O. Reg., '74 ; In. H.M.B., '86
„ Registry	Bushnell, F.H.D.	Deputy Registrar...	Boy Cl. S.B., '74 ; Sup., Registry, '85 ; Asst. Registrar, '90
„ „	Francis, E. A. ...	Asst. Registrar ...	Cl., L. Div., S.B., '83 ; 3rd Cl. Cl., Sup. T. Est., S.O., '94
„ „	Mills, H. ...	1st Cl. Pr. Kr. ...	1874 ; As. M.L.B., '82 ; 3rd Cl. Pr. Kr. Reg., '82 ; 2nd Cl., '86
„ „	Lorns, W. J. G. .	2nd Cl. „ ...	Tel. T.S., '80 ; 3rd Cl. Pr. Kr. Reg., '85
Sur.'s Dep. ...	Merrefield, G. N.	Sur. Cl. (S. Wales Dist.)	2nd Cl. S.C. Manchester, '84 ; 1st Cl., '93
„ ...	Bond, A. B. ...	Sur. Sta. Cl. (S. Wales Dist.)	S.C. & T. Bridgwater, '87
„ ...	Powney, J. T. ...	Sur. Sta. Cl. (S.E. Dist.)	2nd Cl. S.C. Shrewsb'y, '93
R.A.G.O., C.H.B.	Miss E. Silver ...	Prin. Cl. ...	1873 ; 1st Cl. Cl., '84
„ „	„ M.E. Aylward	1st Cl. Cl. ...	1882
„ „	„ K. E. Barrett	„ ...	1882
„ „	„ C. E. Bare ...	„ ...	1882
„ P.O.B.	„ E. E. Elliston	„ ...	S.B., '83 ; P.O.B., '83
S.B.D. ...	White, G. E. ...	Prin. Cl. ...	1863 ; As. Prin. Cl., '92
„ ...	Grene, R. G. ...	As. Prin. Cl. ...	1867 ; 1st Cl. Cl., '92
„ ...	Kennett, J. ...	„ ...	1866 ; 1st Cl. Cl., '92
„ ...	Hawkins, E. P. .	1st. Cl. Cl. ...	1869 ; Hr. Grade 2nd Div., '90
„ ...	Wilkins, W. ...	„ ...	1868 ; S.B., '70 ; Hr. Grade 2nd Div., '90
E. in C.O. ..	Stockwell, T. H.	1st Cl. Technical Off.	1870 ; 2nd Cl. Technical Offr., '82
„ ...	Stewart, D. M. ...	Sup. En. ...	1871 ; In., '91 ; As. Sup. En., '92
„ ...	Catley, E. ...	As. Sup. En. ...	Elec. Tel. Co., '67 ; Tel. York, '70 ; In. E. in C.O., '81
„ ...	Hewitt, T. O. ...	1st Cl. En. ...	Mag. Tel. Co., '64 ; U.K. T. Co., '64 ; In. E. in C.O., '84

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
E. in C.O.	Brown, T. D.	1st Cl. En.	Elec. Tel. Co., '67; Tel. Newc.-on-Tyne, '70; Relay Cl. Lr. Sec. E. in C.O., '78; In., '85
"	Chapman, J.	"	Tel. T.S., '76; 1st Cl., '86; In. E. in C.O., '87
"	Jarvis, P.	2nd Cl. En.	Tel. M'chester, '79; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '82; Senr. Cl., '90
"	Youngs, C. J.	"	S.C.&T. King's Lynn, '81; Hull, '83; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '85; Senr. Cl., '93
"	Farrand, E. H.	"	S.C. & T. Chesterfield, '81; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '85; Senr. Cl., '93
"	Stannage, G.	"	S.C. & T. Belfast, '79; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '85; Senr. Cl., '93
"	Price, H. C.	"	S.C. & T. Brecon, '73; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '85; Senr. Cl., '93
"	Brighton, W. G.	"	Elec. Tel. Co., '66; Tel. Bristol, '70; Relay Cl. E. in C.O., '87
"	Chapman, A. E.	"	Tel. T.S., '82; Relay Cl. E. in C.O., '91
"	Kennedy, W.	"	Tel. Kilmallock, '87; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '89
"	Pollock, W.	Senr. Cl.	Tel. Belfast, '82; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '85
"	James, E. L. C.	"	S.C. Glasgow, '83; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '87
"	Walby, C. P.	"	Tel. Belfast, '83; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '87
"	Cawood, S. D.	"	Tel. Glasgow, '84; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '88
"	Bennett, H. W.	"	Tel. Nottingham, '85; Ju. Cl. E. in C.O., '92
"	Pollock, S. A.	Draughtsman and Shorthd. Writer	Tel. Belfast, '89; E. in C.O., '94
"	Richardson, J.	2nd Cl. Ju. Cl.	Tel. Glasgow, '85
"	Renshaw, A. S.	"	Tel. Manchester, '87
"	Brodie, C. C.	Ju. Cl.	Copyist, '81; As. Cl., '93
"	Schramm, W.	"	2nd Cl. Tel. T.S., '88
"	Jelf, F. H.	"	2nd Cl. Tel. T.S., '92
"	Gill, B. J.	"	2nd Cl. Tel. T.S., '88
"	Booth, A. C.	"	2nd Cl. Tel. T.S., '88
C.T.O.	Eames, A. E.	As. Contr.	Elec. Tel. Co., '58; Sup., '81
"	Willshire, J.	1st Cl. Cl.	U.K.T. Co., '65; As. Sup., '86; 2n. Cl. Cl. C.O., '95
"	Dunford, V. M.	2nd Cl. Cl.	1881; Senr. Tel., '92; 3rd Cl. Cl. C.O., '95
"	Machlachlan, J.M.	Sup. (Hr. Scale)	1870; Sup. (Lr. Scale) '87
"	Adams, A. J. S.	Sup. (Lr. Scale)	1872

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
C.T.O.	Frost, W. M. ...	1st Cl. As. Sup. ...	1870; 2nd Cl. As. Sup., '90
"	Donaldson, R. ...	"	1870; 2nd Cl. As. Sup., '90
"	Seddon, J. ...	2nd Cl. As. Sup ...	Mag. Tel. Co., '57; Senr. Tel., '85
"	Pedrick, J. H. ...	"	L.P.T. Co., '68; Senr. Tel., '86
"	Douglass, B. ...	"	Elec. Tel. Co., '65; Senr. Tel., '86
"	Tyrrell, J. G. ...	"	1871; Senr. Tel., '86
"	Ward, A. W. ...	"	Elec. Tel. Co., '66; Senr. Tel., '86
"	Morgan, F. ...	"	1870; Senr. Tel., '86
"	Paffard, A. C. ...	"	1870; Senr. Tel., '86
"	Culmer, H. W. ...	"	1874; Senr. Tel., '86
"	Sampson, E. A. ...	"	1872; Senr. Tel., '86
"	Ives, W. ...	Senr. Tel. ...	1873; 1st Cl. Tel., '85
"	Green, F. C. ...	"	1874; 1st Cl. Tel., '85
"	Gamlin, R. E. ...	"	1874; 1st Cl. Tel., '85
"	Mitchell, C. H. ...	"	1874; 1st Cl. Tel., '85
"	Butler, W. H. ...	"	1874; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Drake, J. W. ...	"	1874; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Phillips, H. T. ...	"	1874; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Gill, H. D. ...	"	1874; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Geary, J. N. ...	"	1874; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Barfield, F. ...	"	1875; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Murray, J. B. ...	"	1875; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Twyman, G. H. ...	"	1874; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Underwood, G. T. ...	"	1875; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Johns, C. P. ...	"	1873; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Frew, A. A. ...	"	1875; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	West, N. ...	"	1876; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Fisk, J. W. ...	"	1875; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Hearn, D. E. ...	1st Cl. Tel. ...	1883
"	Knight, H. R. ...	"	1883
"	Pond, H. ...	"	1883
"	Wood, W. G. ...	"	1883
"	Jellie, A. J. ...	"	1883
"	Kindon, C. A. ...	"	1883
"	Campbell, C. ...	"	1883
"	Lock, E. T. ...	"	1883
"	Boddington, M. F. G. ...	"	1883
"	Kings, A. E. ...	"	1883
"	Peel, T. E. ...	"	Newcastle-on-Tyne, '84; T.S., '85
"	Bell, H. E. P. ...	"	1885
"	Lovelock, T. E. ...	"	1885
"	Poole, E. F. ...	"	1883
"	Barker, J. ...	"	1883
"	Bell, A. H. ...	"	1883
"	Northmore, S. J. ...	"	1883
"	Chambers, P. A. ...	"	1883
"	Fisher, F. ...	"	1883
"	Devereux, J. T. H. ...	"	1883
"	Miss J. M. Giltro	As. Sup. (Hr. Sec.)	L.P.T. Co., '65; As. Sup., Lr. Scale, '85

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
C.T.O.	Miss I. C. Atkins	As. Sup. (Lr. Sec.)	1870; 1st Cl. Tel., '83
"	" M. A. Bickford	" "	1871
"	" F. G. Billings	1st Cl. Tel.	1883
"	" M. E. Stone	"	1884
"	" J. Bond ..	"	1884
"	" A. Salter ...	"	1884
"	" F. Stuart ...	"	1884
"	" A. Wood ...	"	1884
"	" L. M. Hicks	"	1884
"	" C. E. Lor-kin	"	1884
L.P.S.D.— Contr.'s Off.	Browne, E. A. B.	2nd Cl. Cl.	S.C., B'hm., '82; Cl., '90; 3rd Cl. Cl., C.O., L.P.S.D., '91
"	Thomas, R. E....	3rd Cl. Cl.	S.C. & T., Merthyr Tydvil, '82; 2nd Cl.S.C., Cardiff, '84; 1st Cl., '87; Cl., '93
"	Culling, E. ...	"	2nd Cl. T., T.S., '88.
"	Lock, W. E. ...	"	2nd Cl. Cm. & T., E.C., '82; 1st Cl., '90
"	Langsley, H. J...	1st Cl. Sr.	2nd Cl., '90
Circn. Off.	Pascall, R. ...	Asst. Sup.	Cl., L. Div., S.B., '80; C.E.B.'85; 3rd Cl. Cl., C.O., L.P.S.D., '87; 2nd Cl., '90
"	Perry, W. H. J...	3rd Cl. Cl.	2nd Div. Cl., S.B., '88
"	Daly, C. E. G....	"	2nd Cl. Sr., Cir. O., '91; Contr.'s O., '94
"	Bryden, W. J. ...	Inspector	1870; 1st Cl. Sr., '82
"	Harris, R. J. ...	Overseer	1876; 2nd Cl. Sr., '79; 1st Cl., '87
"	Slade, W. G. ...	1st Cl. Sr.	1881
"	Clarke, Alfred ...	"	1881
"	Quartermaine, J.	"	1882
"	Cheese, D. L. ...	"	1882
"	Wilkins, G. H....	"	1881
"	Bolton, F. W. ...	"	1882
"	Lopez, J. W. ...	"	1882
"	Cooke, J.	"	1882
"	Jones, Wm.	"	1882
"	Appleby, G.	"	1881
"	Carr, H. A.	"	1881
"	Tucker, Edwin ...	"	1880
"	Taylor, C.	"	1882
"	Moles, G. M.	"	1882
"	Loxston, W. T....	"	1881
"	Harden, N. C. ...	"	1882
"	Wyles, F. W. ...	"	1881
"	Florence, H. G....	"	1886
"	Samuel, C. W. ...	"	1880
"	Caplen, J. C. C..	"	1886
E.C.D.O.	Wells, J.	Senr. Cm. & T. ...	1872
"	Manning, W. H.	1st Cl. Cm. & T. ...	2nd Cl., '85

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
E.C.D.O.	Grant, H. J.	1st Cl. Cm. & T.	1882; S.C. & T., Cheltenham, '85; E.C., '87
"	Burgess, E.	"	2nd Cl., '87
"	Miss C. M. Rolt.	Supr., Cl. IV.	2nd Cl. Cm. & T., '76; 1st Cl., '84
"	" E. F. Gentry	1st Cl. Cm. & T.	2nd Cl., '85
"	" M. Jennings.	"	2nd Cl., '85
"	" E. A. Hartley	"	2nd Cl., '85
W.C.D.O.	Bucknell, F. W.	1st Cl. Cm. & T.	1873; 2nd Cl. Cm. & T., S.W., '85
"	Engster, F. W.	1st Cl. Sr.	1887
"	Long, F. R.	"	1874
"	Fear, C.	"	1880
"	Gooch, W. T.	"	1882
N.D.O.	Moffatt, R. A.	Clerk	2nd Cl. S.C., M'chester, '90
E.D.O.	Brennan, J.	"	T., 2nd Cl., L'pool, '78; 1st Cl., '88
"	Frizell, W. M.	"	Cl., 2nd Div. M.O.O., '86
"	Atkins, E. D.	1st Cl. Overseer	1870; 2nd Cl. Over., '86
"	Russell, R.	2nd Cl.	1878
S.E.D.O.	Owen, W. W.	Clerk	Boy Cl., S.B., '85; Cl., 2nd Div., '87
"	Horsfall, A. E.	1st Cl. Sr.	1886
"	Butler, C. T.	"	1882
"	Webb, L. G.	"	1887
"	Madden, J.	"	1887
"	Artis, W.	"	1883
"	Muir, J. J.	"	1887
"	Hutchings, G. A.	"	1883
"	Halls, G. R.	"	1876
S.W.D.O.	Adams, W. A.	Clerk	2nd Cl. Tel., T.S., '85
"	Balson, A. J.	1st Cl. Sr.	1883
"	Grant, A. W.	"	1884
"	Hendra, F.	"	1882
"	Rourke, J.	"	1883
"	Collins, G. A.	"	1883
Wandsworth	Collins, G. A.	"	1883
W.D.O.	Cox, L. V.	Clerk	Customs, '87; Cl., 2nd Div., R.A.G.O., '91
"	Matthews, H.	1st Cl. O.	1861; 2nd Cl. O., '87
"	Creber, W.	"	1871; 2nd Cl. O., '88
"	Batt, C. A.	2nd Cl. O.	1877; 1st Cl. Sr., 90
"	Cosgrove, J. H.	"	1879; 1st Cl. Sr., 90
"	Miller, W.	"	1874; Lobby Officer, '88
Paddington	Wallwork, A.	Clerk	2nd Cl. T., M'chester, '87
"	Hood, C.	Supr. (Lr. Sec.)	1862; O., '79; In., '80
"	Stevens, R. B.	Inspector	1867; O., '80
"	Devall, Jas. (Jun.)	1st Cl. Sor.	1887
"	Thompson, W. G.	"	1885
"	Morrice, C.	"	1887
"	Chapman, J.	"	1885
N.W.D.O.	Pledger, T. W.	"	1874
"	Shave, F. P.	"	1878
"	Strike, W.	"	1879
"	Hutchings, W. T. H.	"	1875

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
PROVINCES—ENGLAND and WALES.			
Accrington ...	Myers, J. B. ...	Cl.	S.C. & T., '76
Birmingham ...	Thomas, T. J. ...	2nd Cl. As. Sup. (P.)	2nd Cl. S.C., '81; 1st Cl., '85; Cl., '89
" ...	Laughton, F. S.	Cl. (P.)	2nd Cl. S.C., '83; 1st Cl., '89
" ...	Perry, H. T. ...	1st Cl. S.C.	2nd Cl. S.C., '85
" ...	Maguire, B. ...	"	2nd Cl. S.C., '85
Bletchley Stn. ...	Franklin, G. ...	Ch. Cl.	S.C. & T., '82; Cl., '91
" ...	White, J. ...	Cl.	S.C. & T., '82
Bournemouth ...	Atkinson, E. ...	"	1882; 1st Cl. S.C. & T., '91
" ...	Miss K. L. Dunn	1st Cl. S.C. & T.	2nd Cl., '91
Bradford, Yks. ...	Culloden, P. ...	1st Cl. T.	2nd Cl. T., '76
" ...	Owens, J. P. ...	"	2nd Cl. T., '76
Brighton ...	Dunstone, W. F.	As. Sup. (P.) ...	Sr., '78; S.C., '80; Cl., '91
" ...	Köhler, H. E. ...	Cl. (P.)	2nd Cl. S.C., '82; 1st Cl., '86
" ...	Bishop, J. E. ...	"	Lewes, '81; 2nd Cl. S.C., B'ton, '84; 1st Cl., '87
" ...	Tupper, G. ...	1st Cl. S.C.	1885
" ...	Agate, W. D. ...	"	1886
" ...	Packham, T. ...	"	1880; 2nd Cl. S.C., '87
" ...	Elliott, A. ...	"	Ashford, Kent, '76; Brighton, '87
Bristol ...	Gray, A. E. ...	"	1885
" ...	Miss M. E. Lane	1st Cl. T.	2nd Cl., '85
" ...	" E. W. George	"	2nd Cl., '85
Cardiff ...	Keenor, H. A. ...	Cl. (P.)	Malvern, '84; Cardiff, '85
" ...	James, A. ...	"	1st Cl. S.C., '87
" ...	Morgan, U. J. ...	"	2nd Cl. S.C., '85; 1st Cl., '91
" ...	Barrett, J. E. ...	1st Cl. S.C.	1888
" ...	Barrett, J. E. ...	1st Cl. T.	1885
Crewe ...	Asher, W. D. ...	Cl.	S.C. & T., Rhyl, '86; 2nd Cl. S.C., Shrewsbury, '92
Exeter ...	Hallett, F. G. ...	As. Sup. (P.) ...	2nd Cl. S.C., '78; 1st Cl., '86; Cl., '91
" ...	Lusty, J. W. S. ...	Sup. (T.)	Elec. Tel. Co., '58; As. Sup., '91
" ...	Terrill, T. L. ...	As. Sup. (T.) ...	Elec. Tel. Co., '62; Cl., '91
" ...	Treglown, R. ...	Cl. (T.)	1870
" ...	Julian, H. ...	1st Cl. T.	2nd Cl., '82
Hastings ...	Miss C. Bray ...	1st Cl. S.C. & T.	2nd Cl., '91
Hull ...	Willcocks, E. ...	Ch. Cl.	1872; Cl., '85; As. Sup., '91
" ...	Kemm, G. ...	As. Sup. (P.) ...	1867; Cl., '86
" ...	McNamee, J. ...	Cl. (P.)	1869; Hull, '72; 1st Cl. S.C., '83
" ...	Catron, J. ...	1st Cl. S.C.	2nd Cl., '84
Leeds ...	Lowrey, R. ...	1st Cl. T.	2nd Cl., '82
Liverpool ...	Thompson, J. ...	1st Cl. As. Sup. (P.)	1871; Cl., '84; 2nd Cl. As. Sup., '92

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Liverpool	Perreyman, T.	2nd Cl. As. Sup. (P)	1877; Cl., '90
"	Wills, T. E.	" "	1877; 1st Cl. S.C., '85; Cl., '90
"	Huddart, W. S.	" "	T., '71; Cl. (P.), '86
"	Jones, R. G.	Cl. (P.)	1877; 1st Cl. S.C., '86
"	Green, J.	"	1874; 1st Cl. S.C., '86
"	Bowen, W.	"	1880; 1st Cl. S.C., '87
"	Powell, E. J.	"	1878; 1st Cl. S.C., '86
"	Burgess, T.	1st Cl. S.C.	1886
"	Mills, T.	"	Nottingham, '82; L'pool, '86
"	Amson, W.	"	1886
"	Camm, A. E.	"	2nd Cl. S.C., '86
"	James, H. (1)	"	2nd Cl. S.C., '86
"	James, H. (2)	"	T., '85; S.C., 2nd Cl., '86
"	Benson, L. M.	Cl. (T.)	1871
"	Christian, G.	1st Cl. T.	2nd Cl., '82
"	Molloy, E. J.	"	2nd Cl., '84
"	Borlase, T. H. R.	"	T., Newport, '81; Bir- kenhead, '82; Liver- pool, '85
"	Johnson, L.	"	1882
"	Williams, W. C.	"	1882
"	Evans, B. G.	"	1882
"	Evans, J. G.	"	1883
"	Jones, J.	"	1883
"	Lesser, A.	"	1883
"	Caton, W. H.	"	1884
"	Miss M. A. Brassey	"	S.C. & T., Birkenhead, '85; Liverpool, '85
"	" A. C. Clarke	"	2nd Cl., '86
Manchester	Madeley, H.	Sup. (P.)	1861; 2nd Cl. As. Sup., '80; 1st Cl., '90
"	Davies, C. J.	1st Cl. As. Sup. (P.)	1870; Cl., '81; 2nd Cl. As. Sup., '91
"	Branthwaite, Wm.	2nd " "	1876; 1st Cl. S.C., '85; Cl., '88
"	Jackson, R. J.	" " "	1876; 1st Cl. S.C., '85; Cl., '88
"	Ford, R.	Cl. (P.)	2nd Cl. S.C., '78; 1st Cl., '85
"	Drew, W.	"	Burton-on-Trent, '75; Manchester, '82; 1st Cl. S.C., '86
"	Miles, D. G.	"	2nd Cl., '80; 1st Cl., '87
"	Darbyshire, J.	1st Cl. S.C.	2nd Cl., '85
"	Lucas, J.	"	2nd Cl., '85
"	Beech, J. E.	"	2nd Cl., '85
"	Miss E. Holt	1st Cl. T.	2nd Cl., '85
N'castle-on-T.	Carr, D. R.	"	2nd Cl., '82
Northampton	Griffith, H. W.	1st Cl. S.C.	Stafford, '70; North- ampton, '74
"	Hight, J. B.	"	1872
"	Ridgway, W.	"	1877
"	Blackwell, E.	"	1882
"	Ashby, F. W.	1st Cl. T.	1877

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Northampton	Dalton, A. W. ...	1st Cl. T. ...	1882
Pontypridd	Harris, J. B. ...	Ch. Cl. ...	Llanelly, '82; Newport, Mon., '89; Pontypridd, '92
"	Jones, W. ...	Cl. ...	1888; Pontypridd, '90
Portsmouth	Hatchard, G. J. ...	As. Sup. (T.) ...	Elec. T. Co., '66; Cl., '86
"	Weeks, A. E. ...	Cl. (T.) ...	1873; 1st Cl. S.C. & T., '86
"	Miles, A. J. ...	1st Cl. T. ...	2nd Cl., '84
Preston	Halliday, T. S. ...	"	S.C. & T., Barrow-in-Furness, '76
Richmond	Richardson, H. T. ...	As. Sup. ...	Elec. T. Co., '65; S.C. & T., Richmond, '70; Cl., '87
Rochdale	Blomley, C. ...	Cl. ...	S.C. & T., '83
Stoke-on-Trent	Johnson, W. ...	Sup. ...	1873; As. Sup., '91
Stourbridge	Whittingham, E. ...	Cl. ...	S.C. & T., '86
Taunton	Culverwell, H. J. ...	1st Cl. S.C. & T. ...	Sr., '69; S.C. & T., '74
"	Rowswell, C. ...	"	Sr., '70; S.C. & T., '74
"	Allen, J. W. ...	"	1874
"	Durdan, H. L. ...	"	1877
"	Hooper, T. E. ...	"	Mag. T. Co., '63; S.C. & T., '77
"	Lapthorne, J. ...	"	1874; S.C. & T., '78
"	Pole, A. G. ...	"	1878
"	Keate, G. R. ...	"	1879
Tiverton	Pengelly, T. E. ...	Cl. ...	2nd Cl. S.C., Exeter, '82

SCOTLAND.

Dundee	Stewart, J. D. ...	1st Cl. T. ...	2nd Cl., '81
Edinburgh	Watson, J. ...	1st Cl. T. ...	2nd Cl., '83
Inverness	Ross, C. F. M. ...	1st Cl. T. ...	2nd Cl., '82
Glasgow	James, S. A. ...	Ch. Sup. (T.) ...	Elec. T. Co., '60; U.K. T. Co., '64; Sup., '90
"	Cameron, D. ...	Cl. (T.) ...	1874
"	Miller, D. ...	1st Cl. T. ...	2nd Cl., '84
"	Moffat, W. ...	"	2nd Cl., '84
"	Miss J. Mathieson	As. Sup. ...	1871
"	" M. Miller ...	"	1871
"	" L. S. Miller	1st Cl. T. ...	1885
"	" J. Doig ...	"	1885
"	" E. A. McRae	"	1885
"	" J. Johnstone	"	1885

IRELAND.

Limerick	Miss H. O'Keefe	1st Cl. T. ...	2nd Cl., '85
"	" E. Sproule ..	"	2nd Cl., '85
"	" E. Rice ...	"	2nd Cl., '85
Londonderry	O'Donnell, J. R.	1st Cl. T. ...	2nd Cl., '90
"	Wallis, G. W. ...	"	S.C. & T., Strabane, '91; Londonderry, '93
Strabane	McNally, C. ...	Cl. ...	S.C. & T., '87
Waterford	Newenham, W.H.	1st Cl. T. ...	2nd Cl., '70

Retirements.

LONDON.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
S.O. (Registry)	†Chattin, G. C. ...	Deputy Registrar...	C.D., '56; As. Reqr., '80; Deputy Reqr., '94
R. & A.G.O. ...	Harris, E. W. ...	2nd Div. Cl. ...	1872; 3rd Cl., '79
,, (C.H.B.)	Miss C. Blenkhorn	Cl. ...	1881
,, (P.O.B.)	*Miss E. G. Quarmby	2nd Cl. Sr. ...	1887
M.O.O. ...	Brookes, J. ...	2nd Div. Cl. ...	R.A.G.O., '66; M.O.O., '69
S.B. ...	*Miss S. E. Saville	Cl. ...	1891
R.L.O. ...	Millerd, H. ...	Supg. As. ...	1855; R. L. O., '67; Supg. As., '89
,, ...	Gayford, W. C. .	1st Cl. As. ...	1867; 2nd Cl., '73; 1st Cl., '81
E. in C.O. ...	Naylor, J. E. ...	As. Supg. En. ...	B. & I. Mag. T. Co., '55; 1st Cl. In., E. in C.O., '70; As. Supg. En., '94
,, ...	Reid, T. ...	Cl. ...	1858; E. in C.O., '70; Cl., '78
C. of S.O. ...	Drury, W. ...	Supr. ...	1870; Supv., '92
C.T.O. ...	Wroath, W. J. ...	Senr. Tel. ...	1873; 1st Cl. T., '85; Senr. T., '94
,, ...	*Smith, G. E. ...	2nd Cl. T. ...	1891
,, ...	*Radding, H. E. .	,, ...	1886
,, ...	*Frost, A. A. ...	,, ...	1886
,, ...	Miss E. J. Worsley	1st Cl. T. ...	L. P. T. Co., '59; 1st Cl., '71
L.P.S.D. (Circn. Off.)	Judkin, S. ...	O. ...	1855; Sr., '61; O., '80
,, ...	Coppin, F. ...	1st Cl. Sr. ...	1859; 1st Cl., '65
,, ...	Furneaux, W. ...	,, ...	1873; 1st Cl., '86
,, ...	Green, J. ...	,, ...	1857; Sr., '60
,, ...	Sinfield, C. ...	,, ...	1860; Sr., '73
E.C.D.O. ...	*Miss L. O. McAlpine	2nd Cl. Cm. & T. ...	1893
S.W.D.O. ...	Miss F. G. Blunt	1st Cl. Cm. & T. ...	1881; 1st Cl., '89
,, ...	,, L. Padfield.	,, ...	1876; 1st Cl., '90
Paddington	Flanagan, F. ...	Supr. ...	1855; O., '67; In., '77
Norwood...	*Miss C. F. Walls	1st Cl. Cm. & T. ...	1881; 1st Cl., '89

*Awarded a Gratuity.

† Retires under the provisions of the Order in Council of 15th August, 1890.

ENGLAND and WALES,

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Bradford, Yks....	Scott, W.	Cl.	1874; 1st Cl. S.C., '85
"	Emsley, S. R. ...	1st Cl. S.C. ...	1875
Cardiff	*Lewis, D.	2nd Cl. S.C. ...	1887
Gainsborough...	Harrison, W. ...	Pmr.	1851; Pmr., Ulceby, '65; Gainsborough, '73
Leeds	Hird, R. M.	1st Cl. T.	1877; 1st Cl., '91
"	Miss H. Hayward	2nd Cl. S.C. ...	1878
Liverpool	†Rich, J. D.	Pmr.	Cl., Bristol, '42; Ch. Cl., Bath, '48; Ch. Cl., M'chester, '55; Ch. Cl., L'pool, '65; Pmr., '75
"	Cook, H.	As. Sup. (T.) ...	Elec. & Intl. Tel. Co., '53; 2nd Cl. As. Sup., '71; 1st Cl., '90
"	Caton, T.	2nd Cl. S.C. ...	1852; Sr., '59
Manchester ...	Constable, W. F.	Supr. (P.)	1856; As. Sup., '72; 1st Cl., '80; Sup., '90
Stourbridge ...	Malpass, A.	Cl.	S.C., '75; Cl., '85
Whitby	Miss Jefferson ...	S.C. & T.	1871

SCOTLAND.

Campbeltown...	Lang, A.	S.C. & T.	1883
Glasgow	Midgley, G. H...	Sup. (T.)	Elec. Tel. Co., '48; Sup., '71
"	Reay, G. H.	1st Cl. T.	2nd Cl., '84; 1st Cl., '94
"	Goudie, W.	"	1872; 1st Cl. T., '92
"	*Miss M.B.Meikle	Ret.	1886

IRELAND.

Drogheda	Morris, T.... ..	Pmr.	Cl., Dungannon, '57; Londonderry, '59; Pmr., Dundalk, '74; Drogheda, '76
Dublin, Acct.'s Office	Ashe, E. D.	2nd Div. Cl.	1851; 2nd Cl. Cl., '55; 2nd Div. Cl., '90
"	*McDowell, R. ...	"	1886
"	*Twohig, J.	2nd Cl. Tr.	1887

* Awarded a Gratuity. † Retires under the provisions of the Order
in Council of the 15th August, 1890.

Deaths.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Sec's. Office (Registry)...	Pink, J. W. ...	1st Cl. Ppr. Kr. ...	1867; Registry, '69; 1st Cl., '80
E. in C. O. ...	Edwards, J. R. ...	Sup. En. ...	1870; Sup. En., '78
C.T.O. ...	Hind, F. P. ...	1st Cl. Cl. ...	Elec. Tel. Co., '61; 1st Cl. Cl. Contr. Off., '95
" ...	Kessel, C. F. H.	1st Cl. T. ...	2nd Cl., '81; 1st Cl., '91
" ...	Halfpenny, H. P.	2nd Cl. T. ...	1884
" ...	Hawkins, F. ...	" ...	S.C. & T., Ashford, '86; C.T.O., '91
" ...	Thorpe, A. N. ...	" ...	1884
Circn. Office ...	Capper, T. W....	1st Cl. Sr. ...	1877; 1st Cl., '90
" " ...	Darby, W. H. ...	" ...	1879; 1st Cl., '89
" " ...	Fincham, J. T. ...	" ...	1882; 1st Cl., '90
" " ...	Mulvey, W. D. ...	2nd " ...	1887; Sr., '92
W.C.D.O. (Charing Cross)	Chivers, W. ...	In.-in-Ch. (Lr. Sec.)	Elec. T. Co., '63; In. W. Strand B.O., '89
Cardiff ...	Pepperell, W. S. ...	1st Cl. T. ...	2nd Cl., '85
Crewe ...	Wilson, T. ...	Clerk ...	S.C., '71; Cl., '82
Huntingdon ...	Gwilliam, W. ...	" ...	S.C. & T., '83; Cl., '93
King's Lynn ...	Reek, T. ...	S.C. & T. ...	1880
Liverpool ...	Helsby, G. ...	1st Cl. As. Sup. (P.)	1873; 2nd Cl. As. Sup., '92; 1st Cl., '94
" ...	Corbett, H. ...	Cl. (P.) ...	1863
Manchester ...	Powell, S. ...	" ...	2nd Cl. S.C., '81; 1st Cl., '87; Cl., '93
Edinburgh ...	Weston, J. S. ...	1st Cl. T. ...	1872
Oban ...	Miss I. M. Rowan	S.C. & T. ...	1892
Dungannon ...	Miss B. Collins...	" ...	1894
Enniskillen ...	Ritson, A. A. ...	" ...	1884

Postmasters Appointed.

OFFICE.	NAME.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Carlisle	Twiss, A. E....	Cl., M.O.O., Lon., '67; S.O., '70; Pmr., Lincoln, '91
Braintree	Cocks, A. ...	Elec. Tel. Co., '64; S.C. & T., Ipswich, '70; Pmr., Monmouth, '86
Bury, Lanc.	Stewart, N. D. ...	Sortg. Off., Edin., '73; Sur. Cl., '85
Durham	Bennett, J. ...	Cl., Nottingham, '64; Sup., '88; Pmr., Wellington Salop, '91
Huddersfield, New St. (Sub Office)	Schooling, C. W....	Mag. Tel. Co., '64; Luton, '71; Bolton, '77; S.C. & T., Leamington Spa, '84
Leeds	Vinall, A. J....	Cl. S.O., '54; Cl., S.B., '62; Sur. Cl., '65; Pmr., Cheltenham, '73; Portsmouth, '92
Lincoln	Beckley, S. J. ...	S.B., '70; R.A.G.O., '74; 2nd Div. Cl., '85; Pmr., Kingston-on-Thames, '92
Liverpool	Salisbury. F....	Temp., S.B., '66; Est., '67; Sur. Cl., '73; As. Sur., '85; Sur., '91; Pmr., Leeds, '94
Monmouth	Smith, F. J. ...	Copyist in various Govt. Depts., '81 to '85; S.O., G.P.O., '85; Asst. Clk., '93.
Ramsgate	Thompson, H. ...	Elec. Tel. Co., '54; As. Sup. (T), Edin., '91; Pmr., Bury, Lanc., '92
Stroud... ..	Kempself, K. ...	1863; As., M.L.B., '69; In., H.M.B., '84
Ware	Applegate, J. E. ...	S.C. & T., Enniskillen, '82; Cl., '92
Kirkcaldy	Shannan, A....	Elec. Tel. Co., '66; 2nd Div. Cl., A.O., Edin., '82
Wellington (Salop) ...	Knight, T. W. ...	Cl., Sth. Shields, '75; Pmr., Morpeth, '79

ABBREVIATIONS.

As., Assistant; Cl., Clerk; Cm., Counterman or Counterwoman; En., Engineer; Ex., Examiner; In., Inspector; Ju., Junior; Ms., Messenger; O., Overseer; P.C., Principal Clerk; Pn., Postman; Pmr., Postmaster; Pr. Kr., Paper Keeper; R.C., Relay Clerk; Ret., Returner; Sr., Sorter; S.C., Sorting Clerk; Sup., Superintendent or Superintending; Supr., Supervisor; Sur., Surveyor; T., Telegraphist; Tr., Tracer.

TO OUR READERS.

THE Summary of Annual Subscriptions given at page 512 of our last number is sufficient evidence that the circulation of the magazine has continued to increase. Some of our readers have pointed out that vol. v., when bound, looks thinner than vol. iv. This is entirely due to the use of paper of a slightly thinner but not inferior quality. As a matter of fact there are 40 more pages in our last volume than in its predecessor, and the number of illustrations is considerably in excess of any previous year.

We shall hope to announce a further increase in the circulation during the present year, but this of course will depend entirely on the exertions of our friends and well-wishers. At present we are somewhat in the dark, as not only have some subscriptions still to come in from the United Kingdom, but those from the majority of our Colonial friends have not yet had time to reach us. It is pleasant to record that many of our local agents have given practical proof of their interest in the magazine by gaining fresh subscribers in their own and neighbouring offices. In several instances orders have been received for two, three, and even four times the number of copies supplied last year. This is very gratifying and encouraging. We have also to thank numerous subscribers for letters of encouragement and support. It has not been found possible in every instance to acknowledge them separately.

It is necessary to draw pointed attention to the circumstance that *several hundred subscriptions are still due from various offices in the United Kingdom.* The sooner they are forwarded the better, as it is of the utmost importance that we should know how we stand financially. We can only again repeat that the size of the Magazine, the number of its illustrations, and to a large extent its general excellence, depend on the number of our subscribers. The future of the Magazine rests with them. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to MR. A. F. KING, and should be crossed "London and Midland Bank, Newgate Street, E.C."

There are still many head offices in the United Kingdom where the Magazine receives no support whatever. Will our readers make a special endeavour, during the present year, to remedy this unsatisfactory state of affairs? Specimen copies will be sent to anyone who will undertake to introduce them to the notice of his colleagues.

As we have previously announced, the Magazine is an amateur one, and we depend on our readers to furnish us, not only with money, but also with news, articles and illustrations. Our Colonial subscribers will no doubt bear in mind that we shall be pleased to insert photographs of the leading officials and of places of postal and telegraphic interest. Articles for publication, newspaper cuttings, drawings, photographs, notices of events, should be sent either to the Hon. Editor, EDWARD BENNETT, or to SHERWIN ENGALL, c/o Messrs. Griffith & Sons, Ltd., Prujean Square, Old Bailey, E.C.

We are requested to state that the accounts for the fifth volume of this Magazine are not yet completed, but that it is hoped to have them audited in time to appear in our April issue.

Should any subscriber fail to receive his copy in due course, he should at once communicate with MR. ENGALL.

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[W.A. Pittswooth] AFTER A WATERCOLOUR DRAWING BY R.G. FLEARD

THE BAY OF BEYROUT, SHOWING POST OFFICE AND CONSULAR BUILDING.

ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND.

APRIL, 1896.

A Glimpse at Beyrout, its British Post Office, and its Surroundings.



Someone is reported to have said, but whether poet, prosier, or personally-conducted tourist, I am unable to vouch, that Beyrout reminded them of Paradise. The ordinary mortal is obviously not in a position to contest this statement; but the fact remains that, whether it be like Paradise or not, Beyrout, as it rises from the sea in the rosy glow of a spring morning, presents a spectacle that for loveliness could scarcely be surpassed. Although of harbour proper there is little or none, a picturesque promontory jutting out into the bay affords, with the aid of an extensive mole, anchorage for a considerable amount of shipping. Conspicuously placed on this promontory is a group of yellow stone buildings with vivid red-tile roofs, which strike a brilliant and effective note of colour in the foreground. Beyond them the town of Beyrout stretches for a considerable distance along the shore, its sunlit houses and terraced gardens rising steeply upwards beneath a canopy of vine and mulberry, the chief source of its prosperity and a fitting contrast to the snowy heights of Lebanon above.

The sight might have gladdened even the hearts of the 800 pilgrims who were returning from their Easter pilgrimage to Jerusalem had they been in a position to enjoy it; but they, poor souls, were packed on the maindeck like herrings in a barrel, and, to judge from their appearance, the ecstatic exaltation in which they had been revelling during the past week had entirely vanished before the more mundane and possibly more real sensations of seasickness.

For Englishmen in particular this bay possesses a special attraction, as it is one of the several spots in which our patron saint killed his famous dragon, and his name has clung to it ever since.

With commendable zeal, my first enquiry, after I had reached the shore and summoned up sufficient courage to address the magnificently-attired individual introduced to me as my dragoman, was "Where is the British Post Office?" My zeal was wasted. The gentleman evidently attributed it solely to a desire on my part to become possessed of certain letters, not altogether of an official nature, which should be lying there, and with an air of condescension truly impressive he gave me to understand that I must wait. People who have not travelled in the East usually imagine a dragoman to be a superior sort of servant hired to act as guide and factotum. A brief experience dispels this illusion. You speedily discover that the supposed servant is master, and a hard master too, who drags you hither and thither whether you wish it or not, and, when you are thoroughly worn out, accepts a diffidently offered cheque in return for the favours he considers himself to have bestowed. All the same, a dragoman in Syria is an undoubted convenience. He can and probably does protect you from the rapacity of all but himself; he is able to dodge the red-tapeism of Turkish officials, and, if anything goes wrong with your commissariat or travelling arrangements, you at least have the satisfaction of knowing it is not your own fault. A party of travellers, who prided themselves on doing without a dragoman, hired for the journey to Damascus a carriage and horses to all appearances as good or as bad as those provided for ourselves, but we afterwards discovered them mournfully sitting by the roadside, many miles from everywhere, with a broken-down conveyance and no prospect of repairing the damage for hours to come. I then began to think that perhaps, after all, our gorgeous dragoman was a treasure; and this impression continued until he contrived to palm off on me some of the worst cigarettes it has ever been my fate to taste.

The treasure at length announced himself ready to go to the British Post Office. After proceeding two or three hundred yards along a fairly broad, clean and European-looking street, we turned down to the left, and found ourselves in front of the conspicuous yellow and red building which had formed so marked a feature in the prospect from the sea. It was a shock to be told that this was the British Post Office, as the French flag was ostentatiously waving

from the roof; but a wide doorway with "British Post Office" above it in large white letters left no room for doubt. On passing through the gateway of the building, known as the Khan Antun Beg, one enters a courtyard of some size, open in the middle but protected at the sides by a roof jutting out from the wall and supported on wooden pillars. The building contains not only the British, French, Austrian, Russian and Turkish Post Offices, but also the British and French Consular Offices, the Agencies of some of the principal Steamship Companies trading with the Levant, and other commercial establishments, the whole being suggestive of a limited liability association, where all one's business—I had almost said "shopping"—can be done under the same roof. Viewed from the standpoint of convenience and also of security the arrangement has doubtless much to recommend it. There is not, however, great reason to fear the fanatic onslaughts of an excited populace. Armenians are not numerous in Beyrout, and intending visitors need not follow the example of a certain sportsman who recently gave up a shooting expedition to Dalmatia on account of its proximity to the scene of the well-known atrocities. The termination "ia" was apparently quite sufficient guarantee of the proximity of the two countries!

In this imposing edifice the British Post Office is the proud lessee of one room, of fair size, divided in two by a counter stretching from wall to wall. The front part is open to the public, while the portion behind the counter, with windows overlooking the bay, is reserved for the staff and privileged visitors. It is here that Mr. Carabet, the courteous chief clerk, with the able assistance of his sister, and a messenger, conducts the business of the Post Office. The appointment of British Post Office Agent is held by Mr. R. Drummond Hay, Her Majesty's Consul-General, and I cannot mention his name without testifying to the kind reception and hospitality we met with both from himself and from other members of his family in the East. The Consular Offices adjoin the room occupied by the British Post Office. This room was taken possession of in 1883, the activity of the office having outgrown the somewhat dismal accommodation provided on its establishment in 1873. Some idea of the amount of business now transacted may be gathered from the fact that, notwithstanding a considerable reduction of postage rates, the sale of stamps in 1894 amounted to over £931, as compared with about £316 in 1874, while the number of mails despatched had risen from 80 to 681, and the number of those received from 52 to

334. Parcel Post business was extended to the office in 1888. An increase of postal traffic is but a natural result of the growth of Beyrout, with its 100,000 inhabitants, not only as a commercial centre itself, but as the Port of Damascus, access to which has now been greatly facilitated. The French flag waving triumphantly over the British Post Office is but one of many indications that French influence or French capital has contributed greatly to the present prosperity of the town. To the ordinary traveller, probably not to the resident, there is a certain sense of disappointment in finding a distinctly European gloss over the whole of Beyrout and its inhabitants, the East as portrayed there being but little more Oriental than the India of Earl's Court. This sense of disappointment accompanies one up to Damascus. It is almost annoying, though undeniably convenient, to find a magnificent metal road extending the whole distance, over seventy miles, to the very gates of that patriarch of cities; and the feeling is intensified on discovering the most conspicuous feature in the approach to Damascus to be a brand new barrack, of undoubted French construction, with an aggressive red tile roof.

The mail coach, which starts from Beyrout every morning and evening, performs the journey to Damascus in about fourteen hours. This represents a considerable rate of speed, as the road crosses



W.A.E.

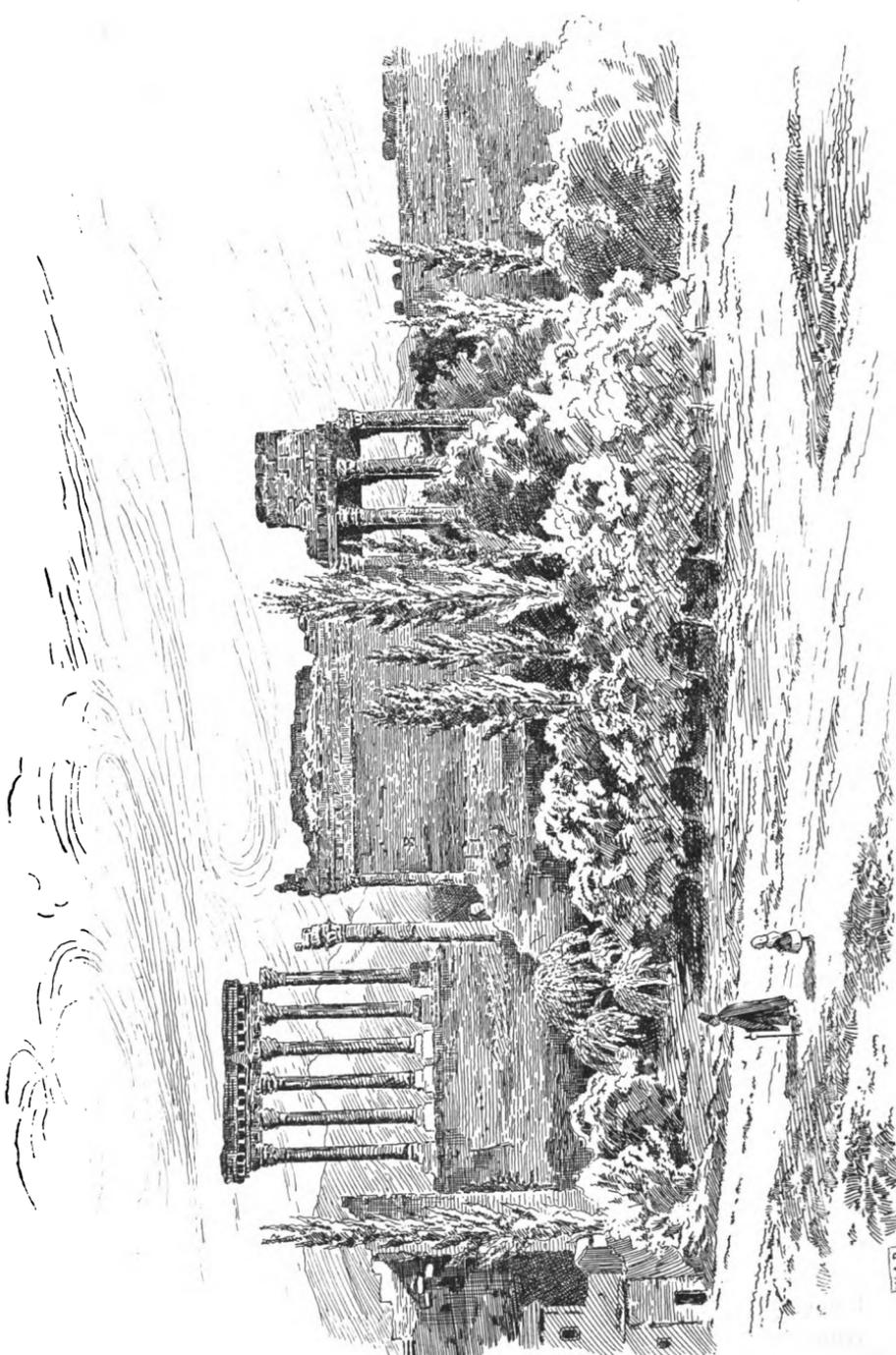
AFTER A WATERCOLOUR
DRAWING BY A.G.FERARD

MOUNT HERMON.

two ranges of mountains, and actually commences with a long ascent from the level of the sea to the top of the Lebanon pass, a height of over 5,000 feet. It afterwards proceeds for a good distance over bare and somewhat uninteresting slopes until it descends to the fertile plain of Shtora, beyond which rises the still more imposing range of Anti-Libanus crowned with the snowy dome of Hermon. The accommodation for passengers afforded by the coach is not of the most comfortable description, and the company, to say the least, is mixed. Travellers who can afford the luxury of a private carriage usually adopt that mode of conveyance and spend the night in the somewhat primitive inn at Shtora. From here a branch road leads up the valley of the Litany to the remains of the ancient city of Baalbec or Heliopolis. One soon becomes painfully aware that this road is not of French but of Turkish construction. It is doubtful which suffers most, the horses, the carriage, or its occupants; but some dire convulsion must be expected in so rapid a transition from the East to the West. For at Baalbec there is nothing to remind one of the Orient. It seemed as if some genie of the Arabian Nights had suddenly transported us to the plains of Attica, with their exquisite girdle of mountains and monuments of the mighty past.

The ruins of the Temple of the Sun—reputed to be on the site of a still more ancient temple of Baal—and of the Temples of Jupiter and Venus on the Acropolis of Baalbec bear no likeness to the indestructible temples of Osiris, to the mosques of Mahomet, or the shrines of immortal Buddha; but in their classical grandeur and sublime elegance they rival, if they cannot surpass, the glories of ancient Athens or Rome. The pillars of red granite, brought from the quarries of Assouan far up the sacred Nile, and other stones sculptured on the spot are of gigantic dimensions, some of them measuring over 63 feet in length, with proportionate thickness. The secret of the contrivances by which these stones were moved and fitted together without cement seems likely to remain for ever hid, unless laid bare by some generous and still to be discovered mummy hugging in his Theban tomb a papyrus illustrating the whole process.

Our magnificent dragoman having contracted a violent cold, elected to spend the day by the fire, and we gratefully seized the opportunity to explore these marvellous ruins at our own time and leisure. His activity speedily returned. All too soon we were again toiling up mountain slopes with faces turned towards Damascus. On Anti-Lebanus vegetation is scanty and the road somewhat exposed



RUINS OF BAALBEC.

W.A.B.
AFTER A WATERCOLOUR DRAWING BY A. C. FERARD.

until it descends towards the plains on the east. An attenuated belt of trees unexpectedly met with proves to be the commencement of luxuriant verdure, which, watered by a rushing torrent, and at first confined to its banks, gradually but persistently widens until it covers the whole mountain side with pasture, orchard and wood, and finally encircles the city with a garland of green and gold. No wonder that the Arab from the desert has been wont to regard this spot as a terrestrial paradise. It is very beautiful even to eyes not accustomed to gaze on a limitless expanse of sand, and the charm is certainly not diminished by the presence of numberless streams, rippling in all directions through gardens ablaze with roses and spread with divans inviting to refreshment or repose. These rivulets are offshoots of the famous rivers of Abana and Pharpar, whose cool and tempting waters, as they pursue their rapid course, make one conscious of a lurking sympathy with Naaman of old for preferring to take his bath there rather than in the mud-discoloured stream of Jordan. In Damascus itself, since the destruction of the great Mosque by fire, the chief attraction lies in the bazaars, where the motley throng displays the usual violent contrasts of the East. Wealth and poverty, squalor and magnificence, dirt and dirt that masquerades as cleanliness, all jostle each other to make room for the interminable strings of camels perpetually filing through the vaulted arcades. Not the least noticeable feature is the crowd of Turkish soldiers, with shabby boots and buttonless uniforms bearing witness to the impecuniosity of the Government or to the greed of the officials who should provide for them.

At Damascus, as at Beyrout, silk weaving is the chief industry ; but whereas the products of Damascus, usually containing a considerable mixture of wool or cotton, are of the vivid colouring so dear to the Oriental eye, those of Beyrout are more adapted to the European markets for which they are intended. The mulberry plantations are carefully tended for the sake of their foliage, the trees being cut back year by year so as to throw out only young shoots with tender leaves.

The bazaars of Damascus also boast of a very tempting array of sweetmeats, but the far-famed Damascene blades are practically no longer to be had. Here and there one may be found by chance in the stores of the street that is called and does not belie its name of "Straight," but only persons of well-nigh inexhaustible patience are likely to become the possessors of them. The dealers in such articles, as well as those having goods of a far less choice nature to

dispose of, are perfectly prepared to sit down on their heels and spend unlimited time over a bargain, so that before you obtain the coveted object at a reasonable price you will very probably have lost all desire to possess it. Should you at once accede to the demands made, the man looks upon you as a fool and considers himself defrauded of a pleasant and legitimate means of getting through the day. Whether time will ever have an appreciable value for the Oriental remains to be seen, but, protect himself as he may behind a barricade of prejudices, the tide of western civilization is slowly but surely advancing. One more step in this direction will ere long have been achieved by the completion of the Lebanon Railway, and the time will come when the hard-worked officers of our department, with their characteristic energy and only a month to spare, will regard a flying trip to Damascus and back, with a hasty peep at the Pyramids and Jerusalem on the way, as quite an ordinary excursion. They should not forget to take with them a tin of Keating's Powder.

A. G. FERARD.

Secretary's Office, G.P.O.

The Indian Value-Payable Post.

VALUE payable, or V. P., is the term applied to the system under which the Indian Post Office undertakes to deliver an article and recover from the addressee the amount specified by the sender, and to pay this amount to him, after deducting commission. When the business was started in December, 1877, its application was restricted to parcels posted at disbursing offices (head offices). All parcels were then registered, as unregistered parcels have only been accepted since 1st August, 1895. In 1879 the system was extended to registered book packets, and a year later the area of posting was greatly enlarged, so as to include all Money Order Offices. On the 1st August, 1880, the rate of V. P. commission was reduced by one half (*i.e.*, from two per cent. to one per cent.), and assimilated to the rates of commission charged on Money Orders. In October, 1882, the scheme was extended to registered letters, and on 1st October, 1885, to unregistered packets, both paid and unpaid. Prior to the latter date the cost of the registration fee, coupled with the necessity for the prepayment of postage, proved a practical bar to the use of the system for light books and pamphlets. The removal of these impediments was immediately followed by the transmission of more than 50,000 unregistered V.P. book packets, during the six months succeeding the relaxation of the rule. A further extension was made in January, 1886, by the acceptance of railway receipt notes. This was described by the Director-General in the following paragraph.

For some years the method of transmitting railway receipt notes as value-payable letters has been largely followed, one firm alone having sent goods, in a single year, to the value of Rs. 20,000, the price of which was recovered from the purchasers under the value-payable system. Endeavours were therefore made by this Department to facilitate general resort to a convenience which the public itself had spontaneously adopted. The main objection to this

measure consists in the ease with which the delivery of goods can be obtained on indemnity bonds, the production of the railway receipt being dispensed with altogether. It sometimes happens that consignees, having once received their goods, evade payment by not taking delivery of the railway receipt notes sent through the post as value-payable registered letters. All that the Post Office therefore demanded was, that the production of the railway receipt should be made an absolute preliminary to the delivery of the goods. After a lengthy and protracted correspondence this point was conceded on certain railway lines, and rules were issued in January, 1886, providing for the transmission of railway goods and parcel receipt notes under the value-payable system.

The following year a further change was effected under which the sender addresses the goods to himself, endorses the railway receipt to the individual for whom the consignment is intended, and then makes over the receipt to the Post Office for transmission to destination under the value-payable system. The object of this change was to free the railway company from the risk of incurring pecuniary responsibility by inadvertently delivering the goods in anticipation of the production of the receipt. Now that the packages are directed not to the real recipient but to the sender, this risk is reduced to a minimum, and the sender can rely on his money being realised by the Post Office before the goods are parted with by the railway company.

Special measures had next to be taken to put an end to an abuse in connection with unregistered book packets, which were posted in large numbers by obscure booksellers and publishers, to persons who had not ordered them. Many were unwittingly accepted and paid for, and these were sufficient to make the business a profitable one, as on a packet being refused the loss was only the postage, which was ordinarily $\frac{1}{2}$ anna. Not only did the abuse cause annoyance to the public, but the Department had to return to the senders without further remuneration those packets that were refused. The new rules introduced on the 1st April, 1889, made it compulsory to pay the money order commission on registered packets in advance by the sender, and this was not to be refunded if the packet was refused. Also all V. P. articles had to be accompanied by a certificate that they were sent in execution of a *bonâ fide* order. By making the prepayment of the commission compulsory, no injury was caused to *bonâ fide* tradesmen, for the amount prepaid is always included in the sum specified

for recovery from the addressee. These new rules soon put an end to the abuse referred to, as it became no longer a profitable speculation sending a number of articles on the chance of a few being accepted, and further there was the risk of prosecution for giving a false certificate.

This brings us down to the present state of the business which deals with the articles mentioned below :

1. Parcels (Registered).
2. Registered Letters.
3. Book Packets (Registered and Unregistered).
4. Railway Receipt Notes.

A person wishing to send a V. P. article has to present it at the Post Office with a form duly filled in. The forms are supplied *gratis*, and are rather formidable looking documents, but all the entries on one side are made by the Post Office. There are two different kinds of forms: one printed in red for unregistered book packets, and one printed in blue for all other kinds of V. P. articles. With V. P. unregistered packets, the money order commission on the amount specified for recovery from the addressee must be prepaid by affixing postage stamps to the space provided in the form, and no receipt is given to the sender; but a receipt is given for all other kinds of V. P. articles.

The mode of delivery must now be described. All unregistered book packets are delivered, just like charged letters, by postmen at the addressees' residence, on payment of the amount recoverable, no receipt being required. Parcels, registered letters, and receipt notes, if the sum to be recovered does not exceed Rs. 10, are delivered in the same manner through the postmen; but the addressee has to sign a receipt on the blue form at the place marked, "Signature of Addressee." When the amount to be recovered exceeds Rs. 10, parcels, registered letters, and receipt notes are delivered only at the Post Office, and not through postmen. On arrival of the article at the office of destination the lower portion of the blue form, which contains the "Intimation to the Addressee," is cut off and delivered. The addressee has to sign on the reverse of this intimation, and to present it at the Post Office with the amount entered on the form of receipt, before the article is made over to him.

As soon as an article is delivered payment is made to the sender by means of the money order, which forms the upper portion of the blue and red documents already referred to.

The amount to be recovered must not be less than 4 annas, nor exceed Rs. 1000, neither must it contain a fraction of an anna.

Legal documents, bonds, policies of insurance, promissory notes, railway goods and parcel receipts, bills of lading, or ordinary bills for collection may be sent as value-payable articles, provided always that they are sent in compliance with a *bonâ fide* order.

Parcels and registered letters may be insured, and it is not necessary for the insured value to correspond with the amount to be recovered from the addressee. For example, if a watch is returned after repairs, the amount to be recovered would be only the cost of repairs, whereas the sum insured might represent the value of the watch.

A person sending goods by railway, can book the goods in the ordinary manner at a railway station, but should address the consignment to himself at the station from which delivery is to be taken. He then signs the railway receipt note, endorses it to the consignee, and presents this receipt note open at the Post Office for delivery to the consignee by V. P. Post.

The consignee, after getting the receipt note from the Post Office, signs and sends it to the railway station for his goods. The following example is given in the Postal Guide :—

“Messrs. Brown & Co., Lucknow, wish to despatch certain articles to J. Smith, Calcutta, under these rules; Messrs. Brown & Co. should address the consignment thus :—

‘Messrs. Brown & Co.,
Calcutta,’

and sign the Railway Receipt-note, which should then be endorsed to ‘J. Smith,’ and presented *open* at the Post Office (accompanied by the prescribed form in which the amount to be recovered should be stated) for transmission to J. Smith.”

The Post Office will not deliver up the Railway Receipt-note without payment by J. Smith of the amount specified by Messrs. Brown & Co., and the Railway Administration will not grant him delivery of the goods without production of the Railway Receipt-note as evidence of his right to the consignment addressed to Messrs. Brown & Co.

The Post Office does not take cognisance of any disputes between the senders and addressees of V. P. articles as to the nature of their contents, except when a complaint of fraud is made by the addressee, then the Postmaster of the office of delivery has to

detain the issue of the money order and to report the case to the Postmaster-General for orders. Of late years there have been very few complaints of cheating by means of the V. P. Post.

The system has created a new kind of retail business, and several large firms have sprung up at the Presidency towns which trade with constituents mostly residing in the country. Prior to the introduction of the V. P. system, a firm doing a ready-money business was almost limited in its operations to the single town in which the concern was carried on. The extensive organisation and numerous agencies of the Department are now so utilised as to enable a firm to extend its operations with almost equal facility to the whole of India. The advantages are reciprocal, for it allows persons in the country to reap the convenience and benefit of direct dealings with all ready-money concerns. The Director-General in the last annual report remarks :—

“Two-fifths of the entire business of the year was transacted in the Bengal circle, and practically the whole business of that circle originated in Calcutta. Out of a total of 644,742 articles sent by the Value Payable Post in the whole of the Bengal circle, 619,786 were posted at the Calcutta General Post Office and its town sub-offices; and of the 70·4 lakhs of rupees recovered from the addressees of Value Payable articles posted in the Bengal circle, nearly 68 lakhs were paid to tradesmen in Calcutta in return for articles sent by post to their constituents in the interior under the system of payment on delivery.”

In conclusion, I need but quote the following figures to show the great popularity and progress this convenient system has attained in India :—

Year.	Articles sent under the V. P. System.	Value declared for realisation.	Commission.
	No.	Rs.	Rs.
1877-78*	413	6,721	195
1878-79	7,408	1,32,109	3,942
1893-94	1,596,952	1,76,14,628	3,19,561

Quetta.

ANGAREION.

* Four months only. December, 1877, and January, February, and March, 1878.

A Sliding Scale.

“Any inconvenience occasioned by the irregularity is regretted.”—*Extract from an official letter.*

WHEN I received your letter, I regretted
 The circumstance of which you had complained,
 But the extent of my regret depended
 On how much inconvenience you sustained.

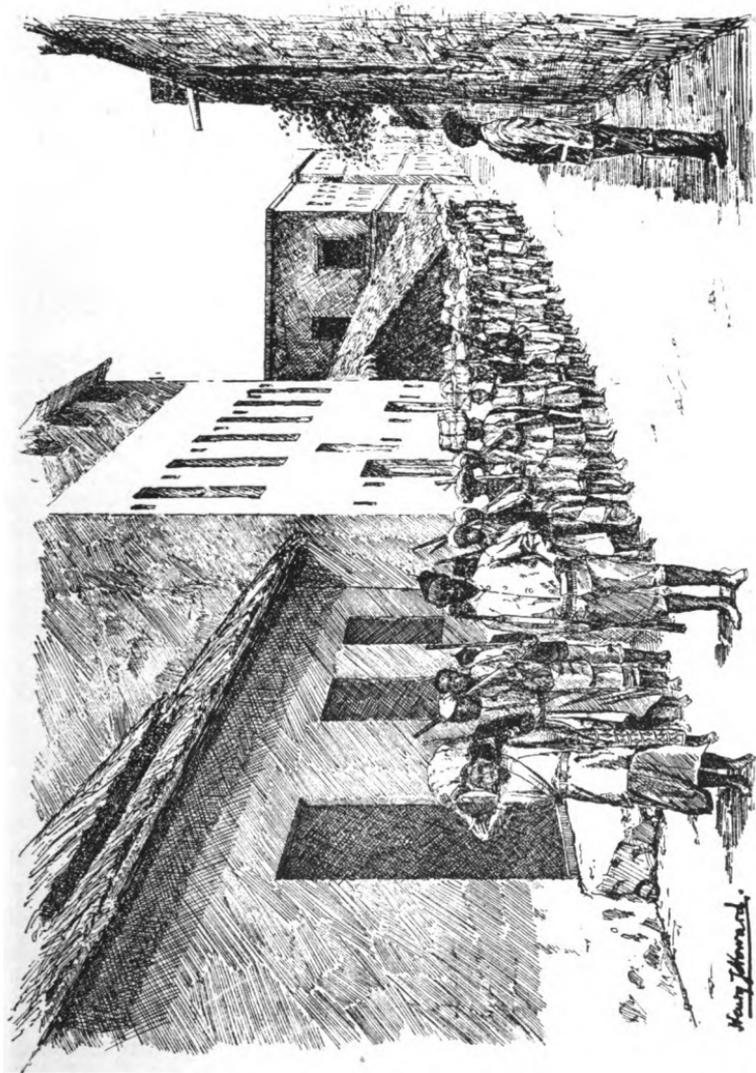
You did not say what were the consequences
 Of the irregularity, and yet,
 However grave or slight they were, I harboured
 A suitably commensurate regret.

If they were merely trivial, unimportant,
 Hardly worth mentioning, I in my turn
 Felt a proportionately slight disturbance,
 No more, in fact, than a polite concern.

If they were moderately irritating,
 I grieved all day, and very likely cried ;
 If they were painful to exasperation,
 No doubt I shrieked, howled, fell down, foamed, and
 died.

Thus my regret, though past, is still elastic,
 Ready to have been great or small, at will,
 But as you do not say *how much you suffered*,
 Its true dimensions are uncertain still !

LEO WOLFE.



THE UGANDA MAIL STARTING FROM MOMBASA.

The foremost man is the mail-bag carrier; the following nine are guards; the others carry food and clothing for the journey.

The Post Office in Time of War.

IN England the smooth and easy working of the Post Office is occasionally upset by accidents or stress of weather, but luckily we have never hitherto had to face the complete disorganization consequent on the occupation of the country by a hostile army. In France, however, which has been the theatre of so many struggles, internal as well as with foreign foes, the history of the Post Office has many stirring episodes of war and revolution, some of which I propose to recount briefly for the benefit of the readers of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*.

In 1814 as the Allies approached Paris the Count de Lavalette, Napoleon's Minister of Posts, fled after having done all in his power to interrupt the Postal Service. In 1815, on the return from Elba, Lavalette again took possession of the *Hôtel des Postes* in the name of the Emperor, but after Waterloo he was arrested and thrown into prison on a charge of treason. He was sentenced to be guillotined, and in vain begged to be shot. Louis XVIII was inflexible, even when at the last moment the Countess, having gained admission to the Palace, threw herself at his feet and begged for mercy. "I share your sorrow, but I have a public duty to perform," said the King. One hope of escape alone remained. Madame de Lavalette was carried to the prison in a sedan chair, accompanied by her daughter and an old servant. When they reached the condemned cell to say their last adieus, the gaoler moved by pity left the family alone for a few moments. When he again opened the door Madame de Lavalette overwhelmed with grief was almost carried out by her daughter and the servant. A few moments later when the gaoler looked into the cell the Count was lying on his bed,

wrapped in a large cloak, with his face buried in his hands. Some time later the gaoler entered the cell, and then found that he had as prisoner Madame de Lavalette. The Count was by that time safely concealed in the house of a friend in Paris. Later on he escaped, disguised in an English uniform, and reached England in safety.

During the Revolution of 1848 M. Étienne Arago was nominated to take charge of the Post Office. He found that most of the officials had fled, and that all the approaches to the *Hôtel des Postes* were blocked by barricades. The mails were, nevertheless, carried out on the backs of the officers who remained, and were despatched from Paris as usual. The Indian Mail from London was carried through the barricades of Paris under an escort without delay, a service which earned the thanks of the British Government.

But the most exciting stories of adventure are found in the history of the war of 1870-71. On the 4th September, 1870, the Republic was proclaimed, and M. Steenackers was nominated Director General of Telegraphs. It is from a book of his that the following stories are mostly taken. His first work was to connect the Forts outside with the centre of Paris, and then he left to take part in the Government of National Defence. His chief difficulty was to obtain Telegraph materials. Wire was bought in London and apparatus in Switzerland; but the Swiss Government objected to its exportation as being war material. The services of smugglers had therefore to be used to get it into France. M. Steenackers' next effort was the laying of a cable between Rouen and Paris along the Seine, and this was successfully done. A little later the Germans dragged the river and destroyed the cable. He then called upon inventors to come to his assistance to devise new means of communication with the besieged capital.

Many attempts were made by messengers to carry concealed letters into Paris. Sometimes the letters were hidden in the soles of their shoes; sometimes in the rim of a hat, or the seams of clothes. Hollow cigars, knife handles, and piano keys were all used. One lady succeeded in concealing a message in a hollow tooth, afterwards carefully stopped with gold. These brave messengers all carried their lives in their hands, and it is said that out of two hundred who attempted to enter or leave besieged places only fifteen were successful. The others were shot by sentries, killed by cold and exposure, or executed as spies. The simple record "missing" covers the tragic fate of many others.

Attempts were made to float hollow zinc spheres down the Seine into Paris with despatches, but the Germans soon learned to intercept such messengers. No piece of floating wood even was allowed to pass without being broken up into splinters. To elude the vigilance of the enemy hollow balls were constructed which would float down stream at some depth below the surface, and then at a fixed time a clockwork apparatus caused them to rise to the surface and display a little flag to attract friendly eyes. Several of these balls were successfully used, but then the Seine became frozen and some other expedient had to be found. Five dogs which had been used to bring cattle into Paris were carried out in a balloon, and then with collars filled with despatches were turned loose to find their way back to Paris. What became of them is not known, but none arrived there.

The most successful service was the Pigeon Post, a mode of communication that was probably antique when the dove brought to Noah the tidings that the flood was stayed. At first each bird could carry very short messages only, written out as finely as possible on very thin paper. But it soon occurred to an inventive chemist that many more despatches might be sent if the originals were reduced by photography and afterwards enlarged on receipt. The despatches were printed before being photographed on to both sides of very thin sheets, and by this means as many as 30,000 to 40,000 messages could be carried by a single bird. The tiny sheets were tightly rolled together and inserted in a small quill less than two inches long, which was fixed on the tail feathers of the pigeon. Sometimes entire numbers of the *Journal Officiel* were conveyed in this way. On receipt the contents of the little skin sheets of despatches were projected by means of a magic lantern on to a screen, and thence transcribed at length.

Towards the end of the siege the Pigeon Post became more uncertain. Many birds were shot by the invaders, or fell victims to the hawks which they let loose. Prince Frederick Charles was especially noted for his success in harrying the pigeons. One only did he spare, and sent it as a present to his mother in Germany, who placed it in her aviary. Four years later the door of the aviary was left open by accident, and the patriotic bird at once took flight, to arrive some hours later at its dovecote in the Rue de Clichy, Paris. A naval officer suggested the use of a Chinese device to protect the pigeons from birds of prey. In China reed whistles are fixed to the backs of pigeons, and their flight makes the whistles sound so as to drive away hawks. This device was not, however, tried in Paris.

It is said that no one who was not in the Siege can realize the emotions of the crowds which used eagerly to watch for the arrival of the birds. Hundreds of men, women, and children used to gather in the severest weather round the Government dovecots in the Rue de Grenelle. One day a pigeon was seen to alight on the Arc de Triomphe, and was eagerly hailed by the expectant crowds as an omen of victory. Superstition and romance quickly gathered round the birds, and the most lively feelings of gratitude were expressed towards them. A suggestion was even made that a pigeon in flight hovering over the storm-beaten ship of the State should be added to the Arms of Paris. Alas; such feelings soon passed away, and some time later the Government disposed of all their faithful pigeons at from 1 fr. 50 c. to 2 fr. apiece.

Most of our readers will remember tales of the adventures of the aeronauts who endeavoured to leave Paris with despatches during the Siege. At first only professional aeronauts were employed, but afterwards sailors and volunteers had to act as substitutes. Two sailors, Louis Paul and François Jahn, who had gone from Paris in a balloon, succeeded in making their way back on foot. Disguised as cattle dealers they entered the German lines, but were betrayed by a malicious compatriot. They were confined in a hut on the banks of the Seine, and about to be shot as spies. One of the sentries, a Pole, took pity on them and lent them a chisel, with which they made good their escape. By swimming the Seine they succeeded in reaching Paris with their concealed despatches in safety. The same feat was repeated by some other sailors, but many more perished in their attempts. Many of the balloons sent out were also destroyed. Of sixty-five which were sent from Paris two were never heard of, two landed in Holland, three in Belgium, one in Prussia, and one in Norway. Three were captured by the enemy. One balloon was loaded with dynamite, which was urgently required by the cartridge factories, and could not then be obtained outside Paris.

The Telegraph Service also furnished many examples of devoted patriotism. Perhaps the most notable is that of Mademoiselle Dodu, who kept the Post Office at Pithiviers. That place was occupied by the Germans, and she promptly concealed her telegraph apparatus. She was turned out of her office by the invaders, and forced to live in an upper room. Outside her window ran a main line of telegraphs in full use by the enemy. In the dead of night she brought out her instrument and managed to connect it with the wires so as to tap them. She then read a message detailing an

important plan of attack on the army of Aurelle de Paladines, and next day she contrived to have it conveyed to that General. He thereupon blew up a bridge and moved his force, so as to totally upset the German plans. A servant betrayed Mademoiselle Dodu's daring deed to the enemy, and she was condemned to be shot. Prince Frederick Charles, however, pardoned her, and she lived to be decorated with the Legion of Honour. Another letter receiver, Mademoiselle Lix, of Lamarche in the Vosges, left her office and shouldered a rifle in the ranks of the local *francs-tireurs*, in whose battles she took a most daring part.

A. M. OGILVIE.



From an envelope kindly lent by MR. R. C. BULL, Postmaster, Tenbury.



WILLIAM BOKENHAM, 1862.

Early Post Office Days.

II.—THE CONTROLLER'S OFFICE.

WHEN, at length, employment was offered me in the Controller's Office, I not only accepted, but jumped at it. The mere prospect of being able to work during rational hours outweighed every other consideration with me, and so to the Controller's Office I went some time in 1862. The then Controller was William Bokenham, a fine, bluff, hearty Englishman, of six feet or more, who strode through the clerks' office to his own room with a step as firm and soldier-like as though he had been a major-general. His military bearing was, no doubt, due to the fact that he was a captain in that crack corps, the Honourable Artillery Company, of which several of the officials were members. Indeed, it used to be a joke amongst the men, "If

you want to get on, you must join the H. A. C." Mr. Bokenham almost invariably turned up of a morning with a rose in his buttonhole. He lived at that paradise of rose-growers, Cheshunt, and was a very successful cultivator, judging from the specimens he brought to the Post Office with him. I have a theory—so, I think, has Dean Hole—that a man must be something out of the common if he can grow roses successfully. I have been trying to do so all my life, and am only just beginning to succeed. But climate has something to do with it, has it not? Mr. Bokenham was a solid man, not only in build, but in his method of transacting official business. He neither wrote nor spoke a great deal, but when he did either the one or the other, you always knew exactly what he meant. He realised, indeed, that it was the duty of a Controller to control, just as it is the duty of an Opposition to oppose, and of an Archdeacon to perform archi-diaconal functions. He took special interest in Missing Letter Work, and I fancy John Gardner could tell many a good story about certain "cases" which have been discussed between them in that inner sanctum. He (Gardner) was a pretty regular visitor to the Controller's room during the forenoon, and I fancy he was an equally regular participant in that pinch of snuff with which the Controller almost invariably commenced the discussion of serious matters. In the illustration which heads this paper I have been careful to reproduce the snuff box—a presentation one—which was really part of the man. Occasionally, even at this distant period, I have a pinch out of that identical box, which is now carried by Mr. T. C. Bokenham, Assistant-Controller of Stamps at Somerset House, who, like his chief, Mr. Lacy Robinson, Deputy-Chairman of the Inland Revenue Board, is a frequent visitor at Hastings, or rather at St. Leonard's. The Controller used to be visited at regular intervals by two mysterious individuals, concerning whom I was greatly exercised for some time. One was a huge fellow, bigger even and broader than the Controller himself, whose stride was quite as masterful, if not so military, as that of the chief. The other was his complete antithesis—a mild, close-shaven little man, who sidled, rather than walked, through the room, and whose movements were as stealthy as those of a cat after a mouse. The two men had this in common: they made straight for the Controller's door, without exchanging a word, or even a look, with any of us fellows in the outer office, and they returned in the same manner after the briefest audience of the Chief. When my curiosity was satisfied about them, they proved to

be Messrs. Payne and Fredericks, the officers in charge of Indian Mails through France, whose duty, or pleasure, it was to report themselves to the Controller after each journey, whether eventful or otherwise. I wonder if this pleasing ceremony is still maintained? I greatly doubt it. At regular intervals the Controller used to hold a meeting of the principal officials in his room, which a certain wag used to dub the "Board of Green Cloth." I wonder if the snuff box came out on these occasions? I should think it did, for the Controller was a man who despised conventionality. These were leisurely days, when "pressure" was unknown, when the seven-hour day had not been dreamt of, and when the Controller would be on his way to Bishopsgate soon after four o'clock, *en route* for his pleasant place in the country, there to prune or plant his rose-trees. What changes a generation has brought, for it is just thirty years since William Bokenham retired, and nearly twenty since he died. With him passed away the old order of things in the Circulation Department, which included "London and twelve miles round," although a very different London from the London of to-day.

In the Controller's Office I renewed my acquaintance with the elderly gentleman of the penthouse eyebrows, who had received me into the service a few months before. I never quite made out whether he forgave me for disclaiming his description of me as "A young man from the country." He was a man of few words, and those generally uttered *sotto voce*; and as he was utterly wanting in animation, it was difficult to tell whether he was pleased or not when he addressed you. But it was not so difficult to tell when he was displeased, and nothing put him out so much as to be sent for on the stroke of four o'clock. The story was told how, on one occasion, he was sent for at that hour, and after being kept hanging about until six o'clock, he mildly suggested that to-morrow would do for him, if the Vice-Controller didn't mind. But the Vice-Controller *did* mind, and so he was kept hanging about for another hour. His idea of punctuality was to grasp the door handle at 3.59 p.m., and to be well into Little Britain before the clock had finished striking the hour. Thence he would pursue a tortuous course until he emerged into the straight line for the West-end somewhere in the neighbourhood of St. Sepulchre's Church; and ill-natured people used to say that he did so in fear of being called back. He was the sort of man with whom you might sit in the same room for half a century and never be any "forrarder" in the

way of friendship ; and he seemed to have as few friends outside the Office as inside. He was great on the advantages of early retirement as applied to people other than himself. There was a very ancient lobby messenger, who practically lived at the Office, and who looked for all the world like an animated mummy, upon whom he exercised his persuasive powers on a certain memorable occasion. The messenger listened with rapt attention to the glowing description of retired bliss, and gave all the external signs of admiration and approval. But when the story was ended he turned on his heel with the remark, "Very well, sir ; if you think a pension is such a good thing, why don't you apply for one yourself, as you're an older man than me." This was a great blow to our chief, but I don't think it hastened his retirement, although he must have "enjoyed" a pension for many years, as I noticed his death only a few months ago, almost a nonagenarian.

Ours was a long room, and it required two chiefs to look after it. The "other one" was, I think, the most spectral object I ever saw to be a man. He was tall and gaunt, with a shock head of black-grey hair, through which he passed his long, skinny fingers so frequently in the course of the day, that it became almost electrically excited. He took snuff copiously, not to say continually ; and he was not contented with a mere "pinch," as most people are ; but he would insert his forefinger into the box, bringing out a whole train of snuff, which he would rub in with an energy seldom displayed by him at other times. He wrote the most extraordinary hand probably ever seen ; certainly the most extraordinary I have ever seen. It was not simply unreadable, for that is true of a great many hands which are considered "good" even in these days of Civil Service examinations. It was incomprehensible, not only as regards the sense, but as regards the method by which it was produced ; and I can only liken it to the marks on a sheet of paper produced by a fly whose legs have been immersed in a pot of ink. The joke was that he was quite hurt when one of us youngsters asked him to read over the reports which it was our misfortune to be asked to copy at times. Fortunately these were not very numerous, for our Chief had a true sense of his dignity, and felt that his business in life was to direct rather than to do. It was said of him, indeed, that he thanked Heaven every morning of his life—and it was a long one, I fancy—that he belonged to the "Upper Ten," although you would not have believed it to look at him. But appearances are deceitful, and so are men, sometimes. He kept a

good stock of "Cases" by him, which he trotted out faithfully every morning; but I fancy they were of the sort which Col. Maberly described on a certain memorable occasion as "twopenny-halfpenny." The last I heard of him was that he sent up, from the scene of his retirement, to an erstwhile colleague a credit note on the Stores for $7\frac{1}{2}$ d., asking him to return dried haddocks for the amount. But that was "A many years ago," as "Leo Wolfe" would say.

In that same room sat John Fletcher, late Controller of Stores, who was the statistician of the department. He kept what were called the "Number Books," although there was an irreverent youth who called them "books of fiction." Fiction or no fiction, they were most admirably kept, the letters posted being figured in black ink, those delivered in blue, and the "forward" in red. Fletcher threw his whole soul into the work, and I am afraid he did not always receive the reward which was his due. Figures have an awkward way of not proving all that is desired, or of proving more; and the art of counting letters had not reached that state of perfection which we see to-day. Fletcher was not to blame for that, and as we all know, he made a most admirable Controller of Stores. That he is enjoying a well-earned pension was obvious from his appearance at St. Leonard's on a comparatively recent occasion. May he long live to visit these shores!

Another member of "Ours" was a study in his way. I rather think he was called by a female nickname—Sarah, or Nancy, or something of that sort. But I will not commit myself to any definite statement on that point. He was always up to the hilt in matters of the gravest import, and usually went about on tiptoe, with his forefinger to his lips, as though he should say: "Don't ask me any questions." At times, especially when he was detained after four o'clock, he would assume an air of injured innocence, which became him well. Generally he was uncommunicative; always he was intensely preoccupied. He was the most strictly official man I have ever known, and never relaxed under any circumstances whatever. Once a dear old Postwoman came up from Hounslow, or some place in the West, to see about her pension. When matters were settled, she offered our friend her portrait in full official uniform, but he declined it rather freezingly, much to the poor woman's distress. He probably thought he would have to forward it to the Treasury with the pension papers if he accepted it. As soon as the old lady had quitted the room, I

ran after her and begged for the portrait, which she gave me joyfully. That portrait I have kept by me for nearly five-and-thirty years, and here it is :—



OLD POSTWOMAN, LONDON DISTRICT, 1862.

Other occupants of the long room were Edward Smith, lately retired from the Postmastership of Paddington, one of the kindest and most conscientious of men, and Frederick Hill, who succeeded me in the Postmastership of the North Western and Western Districts, and who died the other day within a few months of his retirement from the Postmastership of the South Western District. Hill was a most genial fellow, ever ready to listen to, or to tell, a good story ; and I know of no man in the early days who was better liked. He was one of those who performed what was called the "London Through Duty" on Sunday nights ; and I remember his telling us how, on the occasion of a very foggy Sunday, he walked for two hours under the impression that he was on his way to Euston, to find himself only a dozen yards away from his own door. I have a very interesting reminiscence in connection with Hill, because he

and I may be said to have helped to start the Stores when it was as yet only the "Post Office Supply Association" or hardly even that. Between us we weighed out the first chest of tea ever distributed amongst the clerks—weighed it out in official scales, and tied it up in official paper—"cartridge," I believe! These were the early days of Post Office co-operation, when Freeling Lawrence, William Howard, Joe Slade, William Rushton, and others led the van, and the business was done in the Controller's office. But it was confined to tea, and when sugar was demanded, because the local grocers wouldn't supply it to those not purchasing the more expensive article, a move was made to Bath Street, to a small shop conducted by one "Wackett," who, I think, had been a sorter. These were hardish times. Salaries were low; living was high—that is to say, dear; and coals were at a ransom. Indeed, I can remember when applications for increase of salary were based on the "high price of coals," and other commodities! Hence the Stores, which it is important for present-day men to remember were of purely Post Office origin, and started by men most of whom have either passed away altogether, or have passed out of the Service.

But this is a digression, and I am recalled to the fact that there are still one or two men belonging to the old Controller's office who merit notice at my hands. In an upstairs room, presided over by William Henry Grey, then Sub-Controller of the London District Branch, and later Sub-Controller of the Registered Letter and Foreign Branches, were several men who helped to make the history of the early days. Grey himself was a notable man in his way; an excellent scholar, and author of several hand-books to literature, especially a "Key to the Waverley Novels," which I have often found exceedingly useful. He was a great traveller, and used to regale his friends, of whom I was one, with a record of his experiences in foreign parts, accompanied by an itinerary of all his journeys. I have heard this production sneered at as "Grey's Elegy," but that was absurd, as it was wholly in prose, and very good prose, too. Grey's predecessor in the Foreign Branch was James Lovett, who knew the work when it was much more difficult than it is now, "down to the ground," and who was an enthusiast, as well as an authority on all matters relating to Foreign Mails. But here, again, I am digressing, for it is of the Controller's office that I would still speak. Among the London District men was John Clarac—John Sylvester Clarac, to be perfectly accurate—who was a general favourite with the staff, in

spite, or perhaps because, of his many peculiarities. He was a man of good presence, and of a cheery disposition, besides being a bit of an actor, and full of apt quotation and allusion. He would come in of a morning rubbing his hands, and saying, "I give you good morrow, gentlemen;" and when he left of an evening he would make some little speech about "quitting the gay and festive scene," or something of that kind. He was the most methodical man I have ever known, and had a regard for precedents which was quite touching. He kept piles of memorandum books, in which he recorded nearly everything he did, and set down all the precedents with the most thoughtful care. Once it fell to my lot to relieve him for his annual holiday, when he handed over all the memorandum books to me, with strict instructions to consult them on all occasions. Thus, under the head of "Pillar Boxes," it was laid down how the box was to be ordered; how the site was to be selected and submitted for approval to the local authorities; how the lock and keys were to be ordered; how the Clerk of the Works was to be set in motion; and how the first collection was to be arranged for. It was all as plain as could be; but life being short, and the seven-hour day not then having been introduced, I was fain to trust to my memory and the little common sense I had been endowed with, and leave the memorandum books in the drawer. When Clarac returned from his leave, he came up rubbing his hands in the familiar style, and remarking, "Well, I hope you've got on all right with the memorandum books?" Of course there was the inevitable confession on my part, and the natural look of dismay on his. He evidently thought that the department must suffer irretrievably through such a woeful neglect of the precedents; and it was not until we met as colleagues in the Telegraph Branch some years afterwards, that the old feeling was restored between us. Poor Clarac! he was a thoroughly good fellow, if a trifle old-fashioned, and I cherish the kindest thoughts for his memory.

I recall another man of the methodical type, whose first act after coming on duty daily was to address an envelope to "Sir Rowland Hill, K.C.B., &c., &c., &c.," containing the Morning Duty Report, as it was called. He wrote a small pin-point hand, just like a woman's, but he regarded it with as much admiration as though it had been the boldest of Roman hands, and he evidently thought the Secretary was much honoured by being so addressed. He spent most of his day writing the words "Attended to" on the Removal Notices referring to the whole of London, and yet he was a full-grown man with a bald head,

and the other evidences of age and experience. Will it be believed that these Removal Notices, after being signed on behalf of the Controller, were all forwarded to the Secretary for disposal! I wonder how many hundreds of thousands of them must have been signed by Henry Mellersh and Daniel John Ely, as they sat in that inner room leading out of what was called the London District Branch? Now and then our methodical friend would come across a difficult question, such as those relating to the treatment of letters for a bankrupt, or a deceased person. This he invariably called a "knotty point," and he would march straightway to the Secretary's office to take instructions. This is what he called "consulting heads of departments," and I used to think he got a bit of Mr. George Hardy's mind on these occasions. I suppose he would have been considered a fossil, even at that time of day; but he was an amiable fossil—crusted, without being crusty.

What shall I say of my especial friend, William Parker White, who was my "opposite" on the Registry duty, and one of the most sprightly fellows in the Office. Pale and delicate of countenance, with a shock head of jet black hair, and the daintiest of hands and feet, he had quite a professional look. He was, indeed, a most excellent musician, and played the castanets "like a native." He had a gay laugh, and a merry twinkle of the eye, and not even the man of the penthouse eyebrows, or he of the spectral countenance, could depress him. He could either laugh at, or with, his fellows, and was altogether a most engaging personality. He was a great favourite with the seniors, and was, in fact, the chartered libertine of the Office. Beside Henry Mellersh, he looked a pigmy, so small and slight was he. Yet have I often seen him cracking a joke with that stately official, as though they were on all fours, and still oftener with George Tuck, who dearly loved a good story, with which Parker White was always ready. Poor White! he got into bad health latterly—suffered much, I fancy—and died too soon for the Office, and for those who loved him. He was a son of William Lewis White, at one time of the Secretary's office, and a brother of George E. White, of the Savings Bank, whom I remember as Librarian in the early sixties.

There were three gentlemen who sat in this upper room at a round table, whom White and I used to call the "Knights of the Table Round." They were David Bolton Raw, Harry Wilson, and Jonathan Oakeshott, the surveying officers of the then London District. Raw was a big, professional-looking man, much bejewelled,

and a most excellent flute player; Wilson rather inclined to the horsey style of dress, broad-toed boots, jockey collar, and tight-fitting trousers, and was a man about town, I fancy; Oakeshott was a plain, solid Englishman, who could check a Receiver's accounts or transfer an office with the best of them. I believe, indeed, in earlier days than those to which I am referring, it was the duty of these officers, or their predecessors, to collect the remittances all over London and bring them in to the chief office daily. Raw used to tell a good story of a balance of a penny being due on the final account of the Receiver at Barking, which he offered to pay out of his own pocket rather than make a journey to the Essex Marshes to collect the amount. But such an unofficial proceeding could not be allowed for a moment, and to Barking he had to go, in the dead of winter, to collect that blessed penny. He retired soon after, and no wonder! Wilson became Postmaster of the Northern District, and has long since retired; and Oakeshott, after being Postmaster of the North-Western District for a short time, finished his official career at Sunderland, where he succeeded Mr. Yeld. He (Oakeshott) was a man of iron constitution, and I think he still survives.

George Tuck, to whom I have referred incidentally, was in charge of the East Central office more years ago than I can reckon at this moment of writing. I forget whether he had been a "Twopenny," although Tuck and Twopenny go well together. And this reminds me of the contempt which the men of the Penny Post dispensation had for the "Twopennies," a thing which I never could understand, seeing that twopence is a more respectable sum than a penny any day. But so it was, and no adjective was too opprobrious to combine with the word "Twopenny," when speaking of the men who had been associated with the dearer post. Later, Tuck was employed upstairs as a kind of boss, and used to examine the work of the men who endorsed the cases for the Secretary. Once I had written something on a case which I considered rather smart, which Tuck spotted at once, and up he came to me, holding the case close to his blind eye, as was his wont. "Look here," he said, "this won't do. It's very smart, and all that sort of thing, but the Secretary don't like smart things, and you had better paste it over." Thus was my budding genius blighted in the very springtime of official life, and it has never recovered! Tuck afterwards became Postmaster of the Western Central District, from which he retired a good many years ago. He lived at Windsor, of which he was Mayor for a year or more, and he was the possessor of a most interesting collection of curios relating

to the Royal Borough. I owe him the service of having introduced me to that celebrated hostel immortalized by Dickens as the only place he knew of where the roast beef of old England was to be had in perfection, washed down by the generous wine of La Belle France. Tuck loved a good dinner and a good glass of wine, and you could get both at Carr's in St. Clement Danes in the early sixties. He was succeeded at E.C. by Frank Salisbury—"Old Sarum," as I have heard Scudamore dub him—whom I, in turn, succeeded as Postmaster. Tuck was a most genial kindly man, and possessed of a rare fund of dry humour, which used to bubble up in the oddest way.

It remains now to speak of an institution of the early days, which must have passed out of most men's memories, the Marine Mail Service. A corps of officers attached to the Foreign Branch went abroad with the mails—some to America, others to Canada, others to Alexandria, and others, I think, to the West Indies—the object being to sort the homeward mails on board ship, and so land them in London ready for delivery or despatch. The idea was excellent, but the results, I fancy, were not up to expectations, and the service was abandoned after some years. Of the men who formed this corps, I can recall Douglas Fisher, Uniacke Ronayne, Henry Lovett, Horace Lee, Ben Perkins, Tom Mounsey, and last, though by no means least, Dick Sweeney, who was of "Claimant" proportions, and must have raised questions of ballast when he went aboard. It was said, indeed, that on one occasion when he was taken ill between Alexandria and Malta, he had to be landed at the latter port by means of the ship's crane! One, whom I do not personally remember, named Nash, was lost in the "Hungarian," and I fancy there was another fatality somewhere in the West Indies. Connected with this subject, although not a case in which a marine officer was on board, was the wreck of the "Colombo," from which a large portion of the mails (Australian, I think) was fished up. They arrived in London in a sad condition, mostly pulp, indeed, and the letters were "toasted" for days on a huge gridiron erected in front of the huge fireplace in the Clerks' kitchen. The stench was intolerable and penetrated to the furthest corners of the Office. It was sad to see money and trinkets drop from the letters as they were handled, but there was a general patching-up and sealing, when they were sufficiently baked, and away they went to their several destinations, stamped on the front with the words, "Saved from the wreck of the 'Colombo.'"

From this to the Dead Letter Office is an easy and natural transition. This Office was part of the Circulation Department in the early days, and was presided over by G. R. Smith, whose service, I notice, dates back to 1839, and who only retired a very few years ago, one of the veterans of the Service. He was an accomplished man, an expert photographer and etcher, and wrote a splendid hand up to the very last. Although the Office is now called the Returned Letter Office, the word "Dead" still sticks to it, and letters are said to be "made dead," or even to be "deaded," in defiance alike of grammar and elegance. But I suppose it would hardly do to speak of a letter as being "killed." The Office used to be flooded with valentines in the early days; now it is flooded with Christmas cards. The valentine season was the only one in which "pressure" was experienced in the old days, and Robert Southey, writing eighty years ago, left it on record that on Valentine's Day the receipts of the twopenny post in London alone were wont to be doubled; while by the time that people had grown accustomed to penny postage, the habit of sending valentines had become almost universal in England. Now, there is scarcely one to be seen, and the 14th of February is no longer a Red Letter Day in the Post Office Calendar. The Returned Letter Office has led a wandering life during the past twenty or thirty years, and one is never quite sure where to find it. I see the latest move is to *Phoenix* Place, not a bad locality for a department concerned with resurrections!

One of the features of the early days was the meteoric rise and fall of the Mail Office, which has almost passed out of memory. I used to wonder, as a mere junior, ignorant of official precedence, whether the Secretary or the Inspector-General of Mails was the greater official, so important and all-pervading seemed the latter to a mere outside observer. I wonder, now, where space could have been found for so great an official between the Secretary and the Controller of the Circulation Department. Yet there were some notable men connected with the Mail Office in its palmy days: John West, who became Surveyor of Travelling Post Offices when the Office was abolished, and afterwards Postmaster of the West Central District; William Rushton, who became Chief Clerk of the Circulation Department; John Willdey, who became Postmaster of Paddington; Alexander Shillingford, who became Postmaster of the Northern District; and J. A. Duesbury, the present Postmaster of Hull. The Juniors, too were an energetic lot. I remember one

coming over in great excitement to the Circulation Department to report that he had seen, on his way to the Office that morning, a notice in a Marine Store dealers' window :

“ OLD MAIL BAGS FOR SALE.”

This looked so alarming that an Inspector was despatched in hot haste to take the offending dealer red-handed. But on closer scrutiny the notice was found to read—

“ OLD NAIL BAGS FOR SALE.”

R. W. J.

(To be continued.)

NOTE.—Amongst several gratifying communications which I have received with reference to these notes, none has been more welcome than one from Robert Fowler Pitt, who encloses his photograph, taken in his 78th year, which I have the pleasure of reproducing for the benefit of such of his friends as still remain in the service, or, having retired, are readers of this magazine.

R. W. J.



“ FATHER ” PITT, 1896.

Two Snow-Storms in the South of Scotland, 1831 and 1895.

1831.—ANNANDALE.



IN the 1st of February, sixty-five years ago, the four-horse mail-coach left Dumfries, at half past ten in the morning, on its usual run to Edinburgh, a distance of seventy-two miles, with the mails and two lady passengers. In those days the mail bags were made of brown leather; a brass plate, affixed near the middle, bore the address, and the mode of fastening the neck was not unlike the present. The writer regrets that he cannot state the number of bags carried on the occasion; but from the information in his possession there seems to be no doubt that the total weight must have been not less than 100 lbs.

Snow had been falling for some hours before the coach started, and appearances indicated that an eventful journey was before the travellers. The road to Edinburgh was divided into eight stages, so that at least thirty-two horses were required to haul the coach the entire distance. The resting-places were at Burrance, Moffat, Tweedshaws, Crook, Broughton, Noblehouse, and Penicuik. The average distance between the resting-places was nine miles, but the actual distances varied from seven to ten. In hilly districts from six to eight miles was considered far enough. The worst part of the road was between Moffat and Tweedshaws, the distance being seven and a half miles. The next stage was ten miles in length, but the road was much easier.

Before resuming the journey, it may be well to explain that the mail coaches in use about the year in question weighed, when empty, about a ton. During very stormy weather, or when the roads were covered with snow, it was customary to attach two additional horses, particularly on such stages as between Moffat and Tweedshaws. With six horses, and a postilion on the near leader, fairly good time seems to have been kept, though there were times when even six horses were unable to drag the coach along at anything like the contract speed. The horses generally performed the

“double stage,” as it was called, by returning the same day with the up-mail, and, in order to keep the animals in a fit state for their work, they were allowed to rest every second day.

The shoe-drag was a necessary appendage of every coach, and it was the duty of the guard, who occupied a circular seat behind, to jump off and place the drag in front of the nearest wheel whenever the driver stopped on the brow of a dangerous declivity. A modified form of the old shoe-drag is used by carters at the present day in hilly towns. It is believed that the hand-brake, which superseded the drag, was introduced by the late Mr. John Croall, of Edinburgh, a man whose gigantic business as a stage-coach proprietor was probably unequalled in his day. As it was not necessary to stop the vehicle in order to apply the brake, the time saved on long journeys by the invention must have been equal to an “acceleration” of the mails.

The guard wore a scarlet coat, a yellow band encircled his tall hat, and, as he was entrusted with two loaded pistols for the protection of the mails, he had to be a man of courage and muscle.

One of the few surviving stage-coach drivers of the pre-railway days recently informed the writer that, when he was employed as driver of the Carlisle and Hawick coach, good horses could be purchased at the very small price of £10 to £15 each. Nowadays, notwithstanding the great extension of the railway system throughout the country, coach-horses cannot be bought under about £35. At the latter rate it would cost a contractor about £210 to provide six horses for a service which, in the days referred to, would have involved an expense of something like £80 or £90 only.

The drivers and guards of the Dumfries and Edinburgh coaches travelled all the way, as “through” guards of trains do now. James McGeorge, the guard, was a man of forty-seven years of age, tall, muscular, of ruddy complexion, and inflexible will. John Goodfellow, the driver, was a few years older than his comrade, about six feet in height, powerfully built, and a splendid driver. Both men were well fitted, physically and otherwise, for the arduous nature of their duties.

Considering the state of the weather, the journey from Dumfries to Moffat, a distance of about twenty-one miles, must have been performed under difficulties; but the real trouble commenced and ended on the stage beyond Moffat. The arrival of the mail-coach was always an event of some interest to the inhabitants of the town, which at that time was a place with a population

of 2221. On this particular day people gathered near the Spur Inn to see the coach come in, as there was palpable evidence from the mountains of snow in the streets, and the unchecked fury of the tempest, that away up among the Ericstane hills there was danger, and perhaps death, for man and beast. The town is in Upper Annandale, and stands at an elevation of about 350 feet above the sea. In 1831 there were two roads to the north as far as



MOFFAT.

Tweedshaws, but the older one was rarely used on account of the steepness of the ascent from Meikleholmside farmhouse to the Devil's Beef-Tub. For two miles and a half this old road runs along the side of the river Annan, and at the farm named it is only about 120 feet higher than Moffat. The rise to this point is so gradual that to the eye the road appears to be level all the way. About Meikleholmside, however, it leaves the river, and winds up the Ericstane Braes to the Rock, or Rocky Hill, where it attains an elevation of 1,285 feet, or a rise in two miles of 815 feet. This wind-swept height was the terror of drivers, and in stormy weather the danger of disaster was so great that men were on almost all such occasions despatched from Moffat to hold the coach down by means of ropes tied to the sides. Ropes for this purpose were always carried in the coach.

In 1820, however, a new road from Moffat to Tweedshaws was made. A short distance from the town this road parts company with the old road, and is carried over the river Annan at an elevation of 360 feet. The ascent to the Devil's Beef-Tub begins at the bridge, and, though continuous, it is not by any means so difficult as the climb from Meikleholmside. Instead of being carried over, the road winds round the face of the dreaded Rocky Hill, and, approaching the very edge of the "Tub," follows the contour of the hill until it crosses the old road at 1,286 feet. The distance from the cross-roads to Tweedshaws is about a mile and a half, but the rise does not exceed 50 feet. From Tweedshaws the road descends into Tweeddale by easy gradients, following the line of the infant Tweed, and in the ten miles to Crook it drops to 748 feet, being a fall of 586 feet from a point in the vicinity of the Rocky Hill. These details seem to make it clear that even under the most favourable circumstances the stage from Moffat to Tweedshaws must have been a difficult one. In the five miles from the Moffat bridge to the "Tub" the road rises 926 feet, and in the eleven miles beyond it descends 586 feet.

Annandale is about fifty miles in length, and from fifteen to eighteen in breadth. The high lands are grassy, virtually treeless, silent, but not forbidding. The Devil's Beef-Tub is referred to in Scott's *Redgauntlet* under the name of the "Marquis's Beefstand," and the Laird of Cummertrees describes it to Alan Fairford as follows:—"It looks as if four hills were laying their heads together to shut out daylight from the dark hollow space between them. A d—d deep, black, blackguard-looking abyss of a hole it is, and goes straight down from the roadside, as perpendicular as it can do to be a heathery brae. At the bottom there is a small bit of a brook that you would think could hardly find its way out from the hills that are so closely jammed round it." It is an immense hollow, of horse-shoe shape, the open part looking down the Valley of the Annan towards Moffat. It is formed by three hills. On one side there is the Rocky Hill (1,285), at the back another (1,566), and on the other side the Great Hill (1,527). The Annan is seen like a streak making its way from a depression in the sky-line, down to the bottom of the "Tub," and thence through the opening. It is difficult to form an opinion as to the probable dimensions of the "Tub," but in depth it may be about 600 feet in the centre, and five eighths of a mile across at the top. In appearance it is more like a big quarry than any tub the writer has ever seen. Shortly after the time to which this narrative refers a cottage was erected at the roadside, and on the edge of the

hollow. It was inhabited by a roadman, who was bound by the conditions of his tenancy to keep one room ready for the accommodation of travellers seeking refuge from the tempest ; but after the opening of the Caledonian Railway in 1847, it was allowed to fall into ruins. The Devil's Beef-Tub is believed to have been used in olden times by the Rob Roys of Annandale as a place of security for stolen cattle—hence the name.



THE DEVIL'S BEEF-TUB.

On that memorable day in February so long ago, many a wistful glance must have been bestowed on the coach, as the six horses were urged through the gathering snow-drifts in the streets of Moffat. The storm was one of the wildest that had ever been experienced in Annandale. Out in the country the wreaths were numerous, and of ever increasing dimensions. But John Goodfellow never flinched. The ascent was about fourteen feet in every hundred yards. About two miles on the road a drift more formidable than the others blocked the way, and though a wild dash was made at it, the horses, up to their bodies in the snow, were utterly unable to reach the other side. The coach itself was borne into the middle of the drift and could not be turned. With the assistance of some roadmen the horses were unyoked, and the guard having explained to the ladies the futility of attempting to proceed farther with the coach, requested

the roadmen to ride back to Moffat for a post-chaise to take the ladies back to the town. As night was coming on, the guard and driver lost no time in removing the mail-bags, preparatory to setting out on horseback for Tweedshaws, where they were hopeful of obtaining means to force their way through to Crook Inn. The roadmen endeavoured to dissuade the courageous men from attempting to perform a task beset with so many dangers, but to no purpose. Leaving the coach embedded in the snow, the guard and driver started their perilous journey on horseback, and were quickly lost to view in the driving snow.

As soon as the news reached the town, Mr. Cranstoun, of the Spur Inn, got some of his men together without delay, and set off in a post-chaise to the rescue of the two ladies. Ere, however, his conveyance reached the spot, it, too, stuck fast in a drift, and the party had to make their way on foot to the embedded coach, which by this time was nearly covered with snow. With great difficulty the imprisoned passengers were got out and carried in the arms of the men to the post-chaise. Such was the severity of the storm that one of the ladies remained unconscious from the time the rescuers arrived at the coach until she was placed before a fire at the Spur Inn.

As to the guard and driver, it appears from trustworthy information that, though mounted on good horses, their progress was very slow. The drifts became heavier as the men approached the Devil's Beef-Tub. The horses, confused by the blinding snow, and agitated by the roar of the tempest, plunged and floundered as they were forced into the obstructions. Still the men urged them on. Finally both horses succumbed. The men in charge of the mails saw that the animals could be neither coaxed nor compelled to go a step farther. The bags were accordingly removed and placed on the snow, near where the road sweeps round to the left under the beetling brows of the Rocky Hill.

Up to this point both men had been equally determined to continue the journey, but seeing his horses rendered useless for further service, John Goodfellow very properly suggested that the attempt to go on should be abandoned. This reasonable course was also strongly recommended by a man who had come upon the scene, probably from some cottage down the valley. McGeorge would not, however, listen to the proposal, and expressed his unalterable determination to face the storm on foot at all hazards. It was well known that the guard was a man of dauntless

courage, and the nature of his calling had so hardened his constitution that no considerations of weather would deter him from doing what he conceived to be his duty. Goodfellow was quite as resolute, but the traditions of his occupation seemed to place limits to his action which did not, perhaps, apply with equal force to McGeorge. The one was in charge of the coach, the other of the contents of the coach, and so their views of duty at this crisis were not in harmony. Still nothing short of an extreme and exaggerated sense of responsibility would have impelled a man to risk his life in a further attempt, which was almost certain to prove abortive, to convey the mails to the next stage. It is regrettable to find from local sources of information that McGeorge was labouring under a sense of injustice at the hands of his superior officers at headquarters. In explanation of his firm resolve to struggle on, even on foot, he informed his friends that on a previous similar occasion he had been found fault with for not doing what no human being could have accomplished.

The scene on the windy heights of Ericstane was surely one of the most pathetic in the annals of the service. The bags weighed, as already stated, about 100 lbs. Let any one try to lift two 56 lb. weights and he will have some idea of what this heroic man was prepared to do. When Goodfellow hesitated, McGeorge threw the bags over his shoulder, and said that he would go on alone. Goodfellow wavered no longer. "No! James," he exclaimed, "I neither can, nor will leave you; give me half of the bags." The load was divided, and the men started on their last journey together, for no human eye ever saw them again alive.

What afterwards occurred is hid in the storm and the darkness of that night, for no one ventured forth with the men into the snowy wilderness. The road was obliterated, and at intervals huge drifts rose like billows in their path. Anyone who has experienced the rapid drain on the physical powers, when battling with a choking storm of wind and snow in a mountainous country, will be able to form some idea of the untold hardships these men must have endured before reaching the solitary post in the desert of snow. The distance was little more than from the Waverley station to Haymarket at Edinburgh; a walk of twenty minutes on a good road; not more than 2,200 paces; yet the effort cost both men their lives.

Next day the bags were found securely fastened to a snowpost, the last of the line from Moffat, and about a mile from the Rocky Hill. This indicated the last act of devotion to duty

on the part of the two heroic men. The driver's hat was found near the post, and, a few days later, his lifeless body was discovered nearly half a mile further on. His pallid, upturned face bore an expression of peaceful repose, and it was believed that this and the appearance of the body implied that James McGeorge had remained by the side of his friend until the chivalrous driver breathed his last. About a hundred yards nearer Tweedshaws the body of McGeorge was found, in a half-erect position. His mouth and chin were free from the hard snow which covered the rest of his body, and the searchers came to the conclusion that he must have remained alive for some time after he fell from supreme exhaustion. To the last his indomitable spirit had fought death, while the falling snow was weaving his winding-sheet. The fact that, after the death of Goodfellow, he was unable to drag himself more than a hundred yards nearer the sheltering walls of the not far distant Tweedshaws Inn. speaks all too forcibly of his condition when he renewed the struggle for life—the last thing that a man gives up. He seems to have continued the fight as long as his mind retained a glimmering sense of his dreadful situation, and when at last exhausted nature compelled him to pause he only dropped on his knees. In this attitude he kept watch from a distance over the dead body of his self-sacrificing friend until his spirit passed away. Thus perished two brave men long ago, but to this day their names, and their fraternal devotion to each other, are cherished by the good people of Annandale.

Their bodies were interred in the churchyard of Moffat, and the two tombstones erected to their memory bear the following inscriptions:—

On one,

“ Sacred to the memory of
JAMES McGEORGE,

Guard of the Dumfries and Edinburgh Royal Mail, who unfortunately perished, at the age of 47, near Tweedshaws, after the most strenuous exertions in the performance of his duty during that memorable snowstorm, 1st February, 1831.”

On the other,

“ In memory of
JOHN GOODFELLOW,

Driver of the Edinburgh Mail Coach, who perished on Ericstane in a snowstorm on 1st February, 1831, in kindly assisting his fellow sufferer, the guard, to carry forward the mail bags.

Erected by subscription in 1835.”

A stump marks the spot where the snowpost stood, and a few stones the places where the bodies were found.

In the humble opinion of the writer devotion such as this merits the erection of a more enduring memorial on the site of the snowpost to the two heroes of Ericstane.

The writer's friend, Mr. John Kelso Kelly, of Edinburgh, has been good enough to write for this paper the following vividly expressed ballad on the death of the two men. Some readers may be acquainted with Mr. Kelly's book of stirring historical ballads, entitled, *A Home of Heroes*.

J. B. HEGARTY.

Surveying Staff, Scotland.

[The writer is indebted to the *Dumfries and Galloway Courier*; Miss Grieve, Postmistress of Moffat; Miss McVitae, Castle Douglas; and others, for the facts. At the date of the occurrence Mr. Grieve, grandfather of the present Postmistress, was the Postmaster of Moffat.]

(*To be continued.*)

Ericstane: A Ballad of '31.

There's death to-night in the whirling snow
That drifts through Annandale,
But leal are the hearts of the men who go
With the Edinboro' Mail.

'Twas James McGeorge, the dauntless guard,
Who spake to his comrade true,
"The coach is wreathed, and the mails are late,
And I needs must ride; Will you?"

They ride in the face of the blinding snow,
O'er the braes of Ericstane,
And deep and deeper the dread wreaths grow,
And wilder the winds complain.

And ever and ever the mountain road
Sinks deep and deeper down,
And the men who ride through the wilds to-night
Will never reach a town.

From the throat of the corrie there comes a voice,
“Go back!” it seems to say;
The horses’ bodies are deep in drift—
But McGeorge will walk the way.

John Goodfellow wavers a moment’s space,
“’Tis madness, Jim, forbear!”
“Go back, if you will, to Moffat town,
But the danger I must dare!”

“Nay, God forbid that I leave you thus!”
Said the driver brave and true;
“’Tis perilous, Jim, but death or life,
I’ll stick by the mails and you!”

A roadman implores the resolute men,
“For God’s sake, lads, don’t try!”
But they sling the bags o’er their brave shouldèrs,
“We’re going!” they make reply.

They’re gone; no thought of turning now,
They heed not the roadman’s cries;
They reckon not whether their act be mad,
Or the roadman’s warning wise.

On foot, alas! and a horse’s load
On each bent back they bear
Through mountains of snow with never a road,
And a piercing and pitiless air.

On, on to the last snow-post that stands
On the rim of the desperate way,
With failing strength and with stiffening limbs
And an agony of delay!

They have gained at last the spectral post
That looks o’er a world of snow;
They have hung the precious bags on high,
And now with a weight of woe,

With creeping death in every limb,
And a love of life grown strong,
They strive to reach the only house,
The snow-bound hills among.

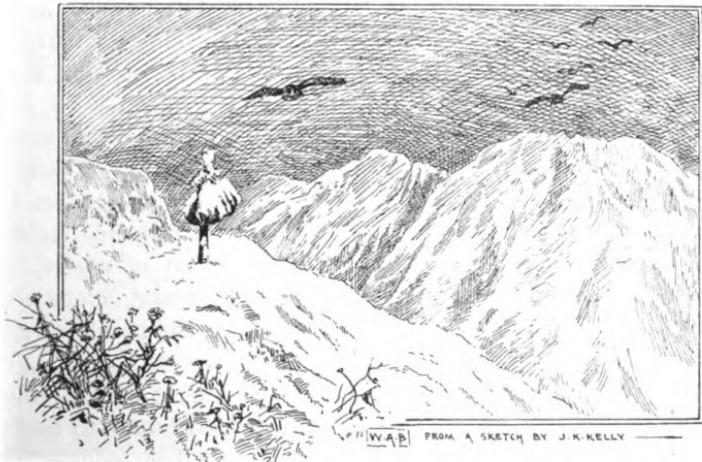
But the death-sleep comes, John Goodfellow sinks
Down, down in the dreary snow ;
The greatest love that men can learn
Is the love that has laid him low.

Brave James McGeorge has bent beside
His comrade's bed of death ;
His arms are nerveless, his sense benumbed,
And panting and scant his breath.

His friend is dead ; must he leave him there ?
O God ! but life is sweet ;
With a bitter pang he turns away
And strives with staggering feet,

With a little strength, some place to gain,
Ere the fatal sleep shall press
His eyes, and he too sink and die
In the wild, white wilderness.

'Tis vain ; yet ere the death-king comes,
He turns his face to his friend,
And half-erect, in his snow-made shroud,
His duty is at an end.



Epitaphs and Epitaphs.



EPITAPHS are of various kinds. There is the epitaph which is intended purely for local consumption, specimens of which may be found in countless numbers in all the churchyards in the kingdom. These vary from the mild inanity of "Afflictions sore long time he bore," to the ill applied ingenuity which sets forth in pompous Latin periods the countless virtues and the innumerable benevolences of some local Barry Lindon, or some harmless, though stupid, foxhunting squire.

Such productions, interesting neither on account of their authors, nor of the persons commemorated, may be dismissed in the closing lines of a famous poem:—

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Nor draw his frailties from their dread abode;
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

"Let no man write my epitaph," said Dr. Lucas before his execution, "until my country take her place among the nations of the world!" And to this day his tomb in St. Michan's churchyard, Dublin, is a plain slab of stone. Yet these words, graven on the hearts of his countrymen, are far better remembered than any inscription on the stone itself would have been. In more senses than one they are likely to prove *are perennius*. Not far off, in St. Patrick's Cathedral, may be read an epitaph on Dean Swift, written by himself, which avers that he has gone *ubi sæva indignatio ulterius cor lacerare nequit*, a line which has provoked the severe but true remark that the dire indignation from which he suffered ought to have been levelled at his own conduct, not at that of others. To come to more recent times, the late Louis Stevenson wrote some excellent lines which have served as an epitaph on himself, whether so intended or not.

Our third and last class of epitaphs (there are, of course, others, but we do not pretend to be writing an exhaustive treatise) shall be those penned by one famous man about another, compositions

which thus have a twofold human interest. Shakespeare had no equal, and did not write an epitaph on himself, so it naturally fell to the "mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies" to do this office for him. Milton in turn was the subject of an epitaph by glorious John Dryden. Both these were written to be placed, not on tombs, but under pictures or engravings of their subject. Nevertheless, they may be regarded as epitaphs in the wider sense of the word. Neither Rochester nor Charles II. was a great man, but they were both interesting men, and there is a singular fitness in the epitaph in which the Earl gave his candid opinion of his Sovereign while the latter was still alive to answer him.

Having thus considered the principal classes into which this form of composition may be divided, it seems natural to consider who should write them. "Oh," says Macaulay's perky school-boy, "a poet of course." Quite so. But what is a poet? A bibulous person on being told that a certain inn sold bad ale, corrected his friend, saying, "There is no such thing as bad ale. Some ale may be better than other ale, but none is bad." That was before the days of Kop's ale, of course. Similarly we may say that there is no such person as a bad poet. A man may have a large poetic vein or a comparatively small one, but as long as he has a streak, however thin, and uses it, he is a poet. If he has it not he is no poet at all, merely a stringer together of rhymes. In rhymes he lives, moves, and has his being, without them he would cease to exist.

"O, if billows and pillows, and hours and flowers,
 And all the brave rhymes of an elder day
 Could be furled together this genial weather
 And carted and carried on wafts away,
 Nor ever again trotted out—ay me!
 How much fewer volumes of verse there'd be."

As Horace remarked in a lecture he once gave on the art in which he was so proficient, we may put up with an indifferent lawyer or even a stupid member of the legislature, but a bad poet is detested both by gods and men, and by Barabbas of Paternoster Row as well.

". . . . Mediocribus esse poetis
 Non homines, non di, non concessere columnæ."

And a little further on he remarks—

"Si paulum a summo decessit, vergit ad imum,"

by which he is understood to imply that if once a genuine poet goes to the bad, he goes a "regular mucker," like Mr. Buchanan.

Still, there are poets and poets. There are small poets as well as great ones, and the one class is no less genuine than the other.

Readers of this magazine have been introduced from time to time to several genuine if not great poets. There was John Hyslop, of Kilmarnock, who wrote at least one poem which should live, and there is J. D. Hosken, formerly a Postman, who has produced two volumes of considerable promise. But the best known of *our* poets is undoubtedly Edward Capern, of Bideford, whose death we recorded in July, 1894. As we said at the time, much that he has written has about it the mark of true poetry. His native wood-notes, if wild, are often very charming, very fresh and very pleasing. His merits did not entirely escape recognition, and for many years before his death he enjoyed a pension from the Civil List. Perhaps this last fact accounts in some measure for the mournful facts which we are about to relate, just as the "fatal gift of beauty" brought on Italy a "funeral dower of present woes and past."

We learn from a recent issue of the *Times* that a committee has been formed to erect a monument over Capern's grave. Had it fallen to our lot to be a member of the committee, we should have suggested that perhaps the following lines, written by Mr. William Watson in memory of Longfellow, would have formed an appropriate epitaph:—

"No puissant singer he, whose silence grieves
To-day the great West's tender heart and strong;
No singer vast of voice: yet one who leaves
His native air the sweeter for his song."

It is, we know, not considered quite right to appropriate, even with the author's leave, verses meant for another; and we should cordially sympathize with that view as long as it seemed possible to obtain a brand new epitaph of real merit. At any rate we should have much preferred the above lines to those actually written for Capern's grave, which read thus:—

"O lark-like poet! carol on,
Lost in dim light, an unseen trill!
We, in the heaven where you are gone,
Find you no more, but hear you still."

Matthew Arnold has remarked of Tennyson that the ideas which he had to express were hardly equal in merit sometimes to the way in which he expressed them. On the other hand, the profound thoughts of Browning's verse were undoubtedly in many cases obscured by the uncouth form in which they were enunciated. Now

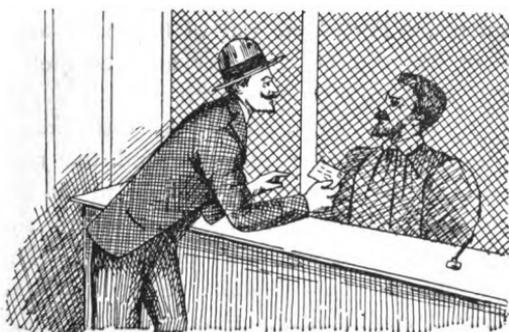
no one who reads the above composition will for a moment dare to say that it is by any means smooth travelling. Far from it. The ruggedness of the road in the Grammarian's Funeral is as nothing to the boulders which strew the path of those who try to understand those last two lines, though such verses as

“Image the whole, then execute the parts—
Fancy the fabric
Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from quartz,
Ere mortar dab brick !”

are not lines to be read as one runs.

So much for the form. As to the substance, the idea underlying the epitaph is a trite one, and would need all Tennyson's glamour of word-power to make it more than tolerable in an epitaph. But Mr. Alfred Austin, to whom we—or rather the committee—are indebted for the lines, is not a Poet, though he is now the Laureate. We should advise them to stick to Mr. Watson after all. If he could be induced to do it, he could easily cap—nay, bonnet—Mr. Austin's extraordinary effusion.

K. T. L.



— Cette lettre est trop lourde, il faut encore un timbre.

— Merci, pour qu'elle pèse davantage !

(From a French Calendar, "Drolatiques Illustres.")

Some Compensations of My Official Life.

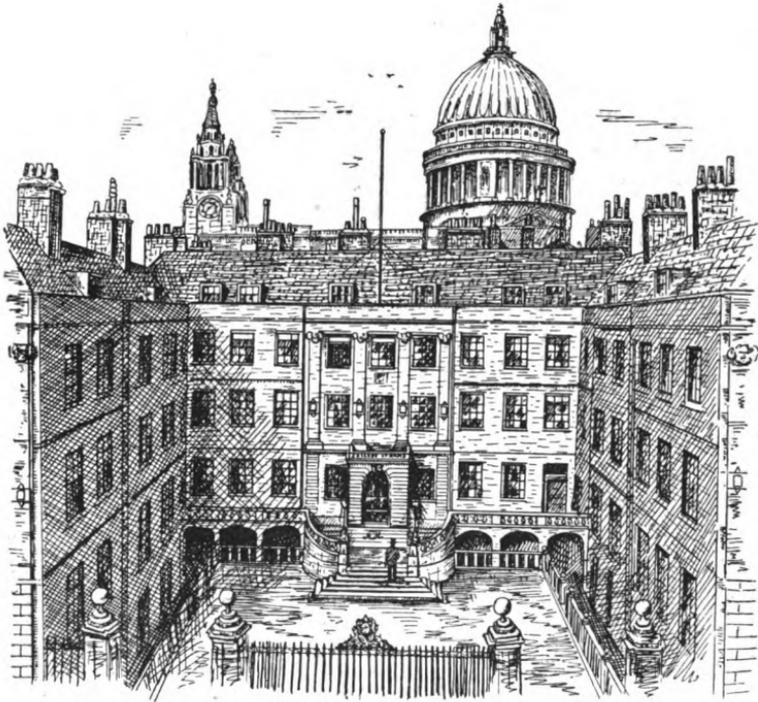
THE spectacle of a Civil Servant talking of the compensations which his career affords, will, in the eyes of some people appear equivalent to a confession of disappointment in the choice of his profession. And in a certain sense this is so. Especially so is it in the case of men who have only known Hobson's choice in the matter, or who were too young at the time when the choice was made to realise what they were doing, or for what they were especially fitted. But the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb, and though every succeeding year the mistake of such a man's life becomes more and more apparent, the life itself becomes endurable because of its compensations. The Civil Service is not, as so many people imagine, a field which provides scope for a variety of different characters and temperaments. Forty-nine out of fifty posts are posts which are of a more or less routine character, and the men who succeed are either men whose minds move with ease in a groove, or they are men who, by long practice and severe discipline, have trained their minds to act with the precision and the regularity of a machine. Some of the most successful men in the lower branches of the service when promoted to positions where some initiative and diplomacy are required, are ludicrous failures. The very name of "permanent official" is with some people a bye-word for red-tapism, obstinacy, circumlocution, and want of imagination, and this is often due to the fact that owing to their training in the lower branches, so many of these men belong to the types of individuals who make excellent servants but indifferent masters. We all know such men, with whom what we call officialism lies in the very tissue of their being. They have allowed it to grow upon them until it has sucked up every trace of healthy

originality or variety they may have formerly possessed; and though they be promoted to high places and attain large salaries, with sorrow we admit it, they too often bring the service to discredit in the eyes of the public. It is not because they do not possess sufficient zeal; it is rather because they are righteous overmuch. And so bad is this complaint with some of these men that the very title of my paper is to them a stumbling block. For does not the compensation of life itself, from their point of view, lie in the fact that they are in the Civil Service? They have no ear for any music which is played outside the four walls of their own little office. They only really live from 9.30 to 4.30; at 4.30 they are no longer successes, they are fish out of water, and the older they grow the more unendurable they become apart from their own especial environment, for without a profitable use of the compensations which our career affords, the tendency, the almost inevitable tendency, of our training is to turn out monstrosities who are fit companions for neither man nor beast.

It is not too much to say that with me it is a daily struggle to contend against the depressing and deadening influences which surround me, and which but for my struggle would long ere this have unfitted me for anything whatever in life, except just the small corner of official life I so unworthily fill. And I do not deny that I avail myself to the full of all my compensations. Let me touch upon a few of these. I leave the office at 4.30; it used to be 4, but 4.30 is better than 5, and in old and terrible days of evil memory I was often, night after night, compelled to stay until 7. There is also the luncheon interval—I am precluded by departmental regulations from calling it the dinner hour; there are pay day and annual leave; and there is, besides, the Queen's Birthday, the one holiday in the year which the Civil Servant enjoys without having to share it with bank clerks, shop assistants and artisans from Battersea. These are the compensations which belong to every Civil Servant.

In addition to these are the compensations which are peculiar and individual, and which arise out of the circumstances in which each officer is placed. For instance, I sit at a window in Queen Victoria Street. What that window means to me on the credit side of my life is incalculable! Let me do my work at a window, and if it only looks out on a mews, I could even calculate interest at two and a half per cent. with some degree of emotion. *My* window, however, is in a quite exceptional position. Immediately

in front of me is the Heralds' College, a building of no great beauty, but as it bears upon its walls the stamp of another age, it is interesting on that account. Behind the Heralds' College, shutting out quite two-thirds of the blue sky which would otherwise be in my line of sight, rises St. Paul's Cathedral, and many and beautiful are the effects upon the dome of the curious atmospheric changes we experience in the City of London. Until quite lately between the Heralds' College and St. Paul's Cathedral there swung day after day an impudent sky sign, bearing the words "Hartridge's Whiskies,"



THE HERALDS' COLLEGE.

(From a photograph taken by Montague Wheeler.)

unsettling the mind on the search after higher things. This appeal to the appetite is now, owing to the action of the authorities, no longer allowed to tempt or disturb us as the case may be, and the appeal to the soul, in the shape of the Cathedral, is made to you direct, and the appeal is certainly in no way diminished by the character of what is the foreground as seen from my window.

The Heralds' College interests me extremely. It is a leisurely, aristocratic institution in the midst of a busy, bustling street, and the

contrast presented by its life and that of the conditions which prevail outside is perpetually interesting. What one sees going on within the walls is more typical of the Civil Service of the past than of the busy life, say, of the Post Office of to-day. Leisurely routine would appear to mark each day's proceedings. The slightest deviation from the daily round puts the college out. Engrossed so with the past and with genealogical trees, the eminent officials must find considerable difficulty in keeping in touch with modern events which are happening outside. I have often felt, on special days of rejoicing, or of celebration of some civic or national event, a desperate desire to run across and tell the porter the time of day or what is occurring. It is no uncommon occurrence for this functionary to wake up at about noon, and discover that the German Emperor or Lobengula is going by, or is expected in a few minutes, and that no flag is flying. On a Lord Mayor's Day, when all the street is alive with bunting, I have seen no stir of life or outward manifestation of civic loyalty on the part of the college, until, perhaps, the cathedral bells have struck up ringing, or somebody in the street has shouted, more loudly than usual, "Ere they come!" Then there is a sudden awakening of those in authority, almanacs are apparently consulted, a man on the roof is seen tearing frantically at a battered old flag, which he is vainly trying to unfurl, and he may or may not be in time for the passing of the show. Never mind, the Heralds have recollected what is due from them, and one or two may afterwards be seen at their windows gazing patronisingly and with a languid interest at the ungartered and mushroom notabilities who pass by in their carriages. Sometimes, I am sure, days of note are completely overlooked, for I can account in no other way for the uncertain appearances of the flag. When one of the Dragons passed away the flag was half mast high on the day of the death as well as on the day of the funeral, but when Prince Henry of Battenberg was buried no notice was taken of the event, although the Garter King-at-Arms himself was at the funeral, and occupied a place of honour in the procession. It is, however, rumoured that the Garter King-at-Arms had omitted before starting to sign the authority necessary for the hoisting of the flag, and that there was no precedent for such hoisting on the authority of a junior King or a mere Herald.

This may sound ridiculous to a lay mind, but a Civil Servant can appreciate to the full the condition of things out of which such difficulties arise. I myself can remember the case of a colleague in

my own department who was taken very ill at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and whose face bore unmistakeable evidences of suffering and disease, yet whose own immediate chief was unable to at once release him from his work ; and the poor unfortunate man, whose face was visibly swelling, had to interview two other chiefs in two different buildings before he could leave the office. And it was poor consolation to be told by his own immediate chief, in his severest official manner, that if he had been taken ill at 3.30 instead of 3, he, the chief, would have had power to let him go. Anyhow, with such things to record against ourselves, we have no right to ridicule the red-tapism and circumlocution peculiar to other establishments.

The gate of the Heralds' College is closed at 4. The gate-keeper's watch is as reliable as the Cathedral clock. For years the porter closed the gate with his own hands. Lately a new porter has been appointed with higher ideas, and it is his invariable rule to ask the first man in the street who may be passing at the time to assist him in his labours. He rarely gets a refusal, so full is London of Good Samaritans, but he is never of the slightest assistance himself. From my window I can see that the pulling is done by the other man. Such a porter is worthy of the leisurely and aristocratic college which he serves. Perhaps the greater activity of his predecessor bored and worried the Heralds, and hence his departure. However this may be, the present man "partakes," as Lamb said of the clerk in the India House, "of the genius of the place." You often wonder what work it is which is being done inside the College, how many rooms in the big building are occupied by busy clerks, but you learn little in this way from my window. Sometimes when a dark cloud or a thick fog suddenly envelops the City and lights have to be as quickly lit, you can form some judgment as to the number of rooms which are occupied, but even this guide may be misleading, and the almost complete absence of light, except in one or two rooms, may be due to temporary causes. For if it takes time for the Heralds to realize that a Lord Mayor's Show is going on outside, it is unreasonable to suppose that they will be quicker at recognizing a fog.

I have often wished that we could have a flag flying over the Savings Bank Department, even if its display were limited to State occasions. At present, when the King of Portugal, Ameer Secundus, or other potentates go by, the rival displays at the Herald's College and the Salvation Army divert the Royal attention from our own far greater and more beneficial institution. A piece of red cloth on a

front window sill is scarcely a sufficient set-off against such attractions, even though the particular window is filled with secretaries, assistant secretaries, and controllers. I have noticed that it is only the members of a Royal suite who allow their eyes to wander along the windows on the route, and it is apparently beauty rather than bunting that their eyes are in search of. Besides, a flag over our building would give to our depositors an additional feeling of safety. It would be an outward and visible guarantee of Government security. There is a poster to be seen at every Post Office headed "Advantages to Depositors," and these advantages are carefully numbered. They amount to eighteen, neither more nor less. The eighteenth is that "additional information can be obtained of any local Postmaster, or by application free of cost at 144A, Queen Victoria Street, E.C." How useful a guide a flag would be to those who were seeking to avail themselves of the eighteenth advantage! As matters stand the only indication that we are "On Her Majesty's Service" at all is at those times when a guard of honour of messenger boys is stationed at the private entrance to the building on the occasion of a chief entering or leaving the Department. And even this little bit of ceremony, which we possess and cherish, is liable to be misunderstood by the public who, attracted by the display, are often to be seen patiently waiting for results. You see that, unlike the Civil Servants of some Continental nations, the chiefs of the General Post Office are not attired in attractive uniforms, although I am not aware that their shortcoming in this respect is due to any unwillingness on their part to be so decorated. But the fact remains, that what the passers-by see are only civilians in ordinary costume, and so our one little bit of ceremony bewilders rather than impresses them. With a flag, however, and perhaps cocked hats, all would be intelligible. In time we might even attain to a nineteenth advantage.

I have mentioned Lord Mayor's Day, and, of course, situated as I am, the day is one of my compensations. The Show passes my door, and the result is I have seen every Show since the year 1874. But for the fact that I can see it from my window I should with malice aforethought have missed every Show since that date. Still, if the Show itself is trivial and vulgar, the life in the street and the humours of the crowd are always interesting. The Show has never been quite the same thing since Sir John Bennett ceased to go round with it. He was the only celebrity whose features were known to the public; nobody knew why they cheered him, or

whether he had done anything to merit the applause, but he had a fine presence, a beautiful head of white hair, and a winning manner. Moreover, there was a suspicion on the part of the public which they also entertained with reference to Sir Roger, that " 'e was a pore man 'oo was bein' kep' out of 'is rights." And so we all cheered him, bravely, stupidly, and inconsistently, as only a London crowd can. For reasons quite my own I confess I felt some gratitude to the old man for giving notoriety to the great name he shares with me. But Sir John has gone, and we cannot honestly cheer the Aldermen.

There are Fixed and Moveable Feast Days at my office window. Lord Mayor's Day is a Fixed Feast Day, so also is Stock-taking Day at the Stores. The spectacle which I witness twice a year of disappointed hopes in their effect on various individuals who have come to buy in the cheapest market, and who find that market closed against them, is a pleasing one to the cynic though somewhat disturbing to the shareholder. I watch these angry mortals, after having inspected the notice and then the bolts and bars, pull themselves together, and with revenge in their hearts make tracks for the New Civil Service Stores, which also can be seen from my window. These are busy days at the New Civil Service Stores, and if I were not a shareholder in the Association I should admire the enterprise they display with their new customers.

Sale Days at the Stores are Moveable Feast Days, and on the first day of any one of the sales there is abundance of amusement to be obtained, both outside and inside the building. There is no mistaking the appearance of many of those determined-looking females who are to be seen in Queen Victoria Street at an early hour en route for the Stores with various kinds of receptacles in their hands. They have come for bargains, and they are not going away without them. And as they come out it requires no great knowledge of physiognomy to separate those who have, as they triumphantly think, "done" the Stores, from those whom the Stores have unmistakably "done." But I understand that the entertainment I enjoy is not to be compared with the wild delights which go on within. Indeed, I myself have seen two ladies seize hold of a bargain in the shape of a garment, one of one portion and one of the other, and a sort of French and English tussle has ensued, following on a declaration of war, such as "My bargain, if you please." In the end the question has been solved for them in the old way we associate with Solomon, and each has been left with half of what was once a bargain.

My window is close to the Salvation Army head-quarters, and the thoughtful man will find much food for reflection, between his cases, in watching the efforts this great organization is perpetually making to command the attention of the thoughtless. I am only concerned with the Army in its artistic aspect, and I may point out that they have now one of the best instrumental bands in London. They constantly play within my hearing, and what was once an outrage on the human ear has now become one of the compensations of my life. The bands of the regular army are occasionally passing and re-passing, but the Salvation Army need not be afraid of comparison.

One might go on to an indefinite length describing the scenes in the street that I am privileged to witness. They must be taken as read, the cab accidents, the arrests, the fights, the greetings, even the courtings which go on in Queen Victoria Street. Tragedy and comedy, there they are, spread before my eyes every day, sandwiched as it were between the treatment of my official cases, keeping me always closely in touch with the heart of man, and in their infinite diversity and complexity for ever shaking me out of the fatal tendency, peculiar to every Civil Servant in the lower branches, to regard himself as a machine and the world outside as apart from his lot or future. Who would not sit at my window!

I am afraid I am leading my readers to think that in my work itself there are no compensations. This would indeed be to foul the nest and to misrepresent my own position. I have already said that the larger part of the work of the Civil Service is done best by men who have no special aptitude for initiative or independence of action. But decision of character and the capacity to unravel problems which would be insoluble to greater minds often go along with the inferior mental equipment of the average Civil servant. And in spite of the fact that many eminent officials have reached high positions without possessing a glimmer of it, I still think that even a Civil servant will do his work better if he possesses some knowledge of human nature and of *l'homme sensuel moyen*. You cannot treat even depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank solely according to the Regulations, any more than you can arrange your own life simply on the principles of political economy. What are the uses of Regulations in the case of the following correspondence? A depositor died and it was found out that although married she had opened the account in her maiden name. Her legal representative who claimed the money gave the following explanation of her conduct when asked to do so by the Department. "We are informed it would be best to

tell you why she has it in her maiden name—because she had got a set of false teeth and there was a little trouble about them at the time.” Some of the acutest minds in the Department were set to work on the interpretation of this letter without avail, and in the end it was decided to ask for a fuller and more definite explanation of the late depositor’s conduct. This was readily and courteously given by the legal representative: “She had got some teeth and they did not fit and she had paid for them; but she had sent them back, so she was frightened the man would keep the teeth and the money. That is all she told me.” As an explanation of the use of the depositor’s maiden name at the Post Office the statement would seem to be still inadequate, but it was the only explanation the Department ever obtained.

If a correspondent misunderstands us we too readily assume he is the fool. For instance, I ask the following question of a man who writes to inform the Department that he requires the deposits of John Smith, who is dead. “State in what circumstances your application is made,” hoping in this way to get some idea of the relationship John Smith bore to the claimant and who is his next of kin. Who can blame the man for the following reply: “Out of work and rent owing”? Again, with a sharp eye on the Death Duties, I ask the following clear and lucid question of an agricultural labourer—it is one which the Department advisedly asks in all cases of deceased depositors—Does the total property (real or personal and settled or not settled) passing on the death of the deceased, including the deposits, after deducting debts and funeral expenses, exceed £100 sterling? The agricultural labourer, with a delightful variety in his spelling, promptly replies, “It is a personal probertry, and all his property settled.—David Davies.” Gentle reader, can you do better? And if you cannot calculate to a certainty how a correspondent will take the application to his case of any Regulations under which you may be acting, there is also a refreshing variety sometimes in the decisions of your superiors and in their treatment of identical cases. I have known instances in which the only alteration in a draft letter was the substitution of the word “enclosed” for the word “accompanying;” and on the following day, when, profiting by this lesson in the English language, you promptly adopt the word “enclosed” into your official vocabulary, you find that “accompanying” is coming into favour again. I am not complaining of this; on the contrary I regard “the bump of alteration,” when it appears in a chief, as a distinctly hopeful sign; it gives variety to the

daily round, and prevents the higher officials themselves becoming set, or giving themselves up to the terrible abominations known as "usual letters."

To say that marriage is a compensation would be out of place, because it is not a necessary condition of a Civil Service career. But if my official work were of a more engrossing or interesting character, I should probably not be so fond of my home as I am. If I tore myself away reluctantly at 4.30 from my work, my eagerness to reach my own fireside would thereby be diminished. This is a compensation which it is possible may not be shared in by my wife, though I am half inclined to attribute to the dullness of my official life the fact that although the new Act relating to Married Women has been in operation some months, my wife has not yet availed herself of its provisions to live apart from her husband at his expense. I have heard of the wives of highly-placed and much occupied officials wishing their husbands back in inferior positions. Promotion has its drawbacks; it sometimes improves your salary at the expense of your soul. So many men toil and moil, and scheme, and plot, and agitate themselves into a condition bordering on insanity, just for an extra shilling, or for a higher position, that when promotion does come the struggle has unfitted them for decent society. They have lost the capacity to be either pleasant or straightforward. This is the consolation I offer to those who are in the ranks. It is distressing to read in the biographies of so many great men of the worry and excitement experienced by them over struggles their own greatness of mind ought to have saved them from. A man such as Mark Pattison, who was, in a sense, the most cultured man of his time, seems to have fumed and fretted and worried for years of his life because he did not attain promotion as early as he expected. And the constant dwelling upon his grievances made him spiteful and mean and almost contemptible. What good had all the learning of the ages done this man if he was still the slave of a miserable ambition! I do not want to open the vexed question of the wisdom of Mr. Purcell's *Life of Cardinal Manning*, but this much I may say in the present connection, that the "Life" brings out into clear daylight the manner in which Cardinal Newman bore the years of neglect his great talents underwent in the Church of his adoption. This man at any rate possessed nobility of soul, and the pettiness and littleness which often accompany the struggle to better one's self were absolutely foreign to his nature. He was willing to accept the responsibilities of greatness when they fell to him; but life for him was

independent of the gaudy tinselries of fame and position, and he would have smiled to hear himself called a disappointed man.

And in our own ranks official life to many men must be one long discipline in disappointment if they set their ambition too high or start determined "to get on" at all costs. Indeed, one of the consolations in being at the bottom of your class is that promotion need not enter into your calculations at all. A little French boy once told his father that he was *bien placé* in his class at school. His father was delighted until he found out afterwards that his son was at the bottom of the class. The well-placing referred to the position his son occupied in relation to the stove. The fact that the nearer he got to the top of the form the farther he was from the stove acted, no doubt, as a damper on the boy's ambition. So, in official life you are sometimes *bien placé*, even though at the bottom of the class. Metaphorically speaking, you may be nearer the stove, more sympathetic, and in a better position to take life intelligently, easily, and with a good humour. True it is that you must needs be poor, with, perhaps, the "rent owing;" and I should be a Pharisee indeed were I to write on the compensations of poverty. The subject has been so ably dealt with by archbishops, ground landlords, and philanthropic millionaires, that the experiences of a poor man would be out of place. Dr. Johnson, who spoke with some experience on this matter, said, "Clear your mind of cant and never debauch your understanding." "As money means independence and enjoyment, get money and, having got it, keep it." There is a breezy straightforwardness about this kind of moralising which is better than all the rubbish that has been talked on the subject. And yet—and yet—Dr. Johnson was a poor man himself, and who of his day was greater than he! So true is it, so consoling is it, so compensating a circumstance is it, that the wealthiest man is he who has the fewest needs.

And this moralising brings me back to my window in Queen Victoria Street. For it is there, in the intervals which occur between the treatment of my cases, that my thoughts on men and things are formed. For many years I worked from 10 to 4, and in these latter days, when a more exacting government takes it out of me from 9.30 to 4.30, I find the habit of years difficult to shake off. Even now, at odd absent-minded moments, I find myself washing my hands at 3.50. On the majority of days, however, I manage to splutter on to 4.30, but not without casting envious glances at the gentlemen of the Heralds' College, who are leaving

at the good old time. There is one of these officials who for years has lighted his cigarette daily on the very same flagstone, wind and weather permitting. We Civil Servants for ever tend to the mechanical performance of the duties of life. I have even heard of very official chiefs who endeavoured to start attendance-books and discipline-papers in their own homes for the use of their servants, but open rebellion prevented the successful carrying out of the idea. For it is only after long years of training that the human mind can get reconciled to such things. One of the compensations of life itself is that you can get used to almost everything. A poor woman was telling her minister that her daughter had just married a Mr. Brown. "But I thought your daughter disliked that man so," said the clergyman. "Oh yes, she 'ates 'im," replied the woman; "but then, sir, yer know, there's always a summat." I often think of this story when I sign on.

EDWARD BENNETT.

S.B.D., G.P.O..

Post Office Improvements in 1895.*

LTHOUGH the British Post Office has not yet succeeded in gratifying every publicly-expressed desire, it has continued during the past year the policy of judicious improvement and gradual expansion. No startling or revolutionary change has been made in any of its departments, but, nevertheless, a series of alterations have been quietly effected which cannot fail to add to the immense public convenience afforded through the medium of our vast postal system.

One of the most memorable records of 1895 is the fact that it witnessed the completion of the *last link* in the chain which, by the agency of the Postal Union, brings every nation of the civilized world into direct connection. Thus within twenty-two years the Berne Congress, convened by invitation of the German Government, has amply realized the anticipations of its promoters. The Cape of Good Hope has been the last territory to enter the Union, but its actual acceptance of the treaty of October 9th, 1874, had for several years been practically anticipated in the arrangement which permitted the Cape to enjoy the same rates of postage as the countries definitely included within the Postal Union. Under the treaty referred to the dominant principle acted upon is that each signatory country or State shall retain as its own revenue, subject to payment of transit charges through intermediate countries, the postage on all outward correspondence, and the great benefit of the Union is seen in the simplification of accounts relating to rates which have to be shared in varying proportions by different Governments.

Two simple but useful alterations have been introduced in relation to the *redirection or return of postal matter*. On the one hand the Department has extended to post cards, newspapers, book packets,

* Reprinted from the *Times* of January 6th, 1896.

and sample packets the practice—which, up to the beginning of last year, had applied only to communications posted at letter rate—the facility of *free redirection*, from which parcels alone are still excepted. This change is undoubtedly one which the public value, although it was coupled with an alteration by which the system of returning to the sender all undeliverable postal matter has been to a certain extent abandoned. In a very large number of cases it was of no advantage whatever to senders that they should ever see again the post cards and book packets which they were in the habit of regularly sending out in the course of business, and the Post Office has therefore acted with due appreciation of public feeling in deciding no longer to encumber itself with the thankless and unnecessary task of returning to the senders undeliverable post cards and book-post matter on which not more than one halfpenny has been prepaid. Therefore, unless there is upon the face of a post card or a packet bearing a halfpenny stamp the distinct request that it shall be returned to the sender (an intimation which may be taken to show that the return is worth the payment of a second postage) it is destroyed after all attempts to trace the addressee have failed. No doubt these two improvements have been carried out at very little cost to the revenue, inasmuch as the extra labour involved by more extensive redirection is fully counterbalanced by the saving effected in the work involved by the return to senders of an enormous amount of matter which was in most cases immediately consigned to the waste-paper basket. All postal matter on which more than one halfpenny is prepaid is still returned to the sender in the event of it being undeliverable.

An advance in another direction which is little less important from the point of view of public convenience is seen in the new arrangement whereby a definite time is fixed during which business is to be transacted in all *provincial post offices*. Previously the hours varied considerably in different parts of the country, especially as regarded money order and savings bank transactions; but now throughout the provinces business of every kind can, on weekdays, be conducted in all provincial post offices between the hours of 8 in the morning and 8 in the evening. In this respect the provinces have been ahead of the metropolis, but in London the introduction of the same system no doubt presents difficulties which are not so much experienced in the country. It is believed, however, that the advantages of a universal rule in the matter are fully realized by the authorities at St. Martin's-le-Grand, and that in course of time the

boon which such an arrangement confers will be shared by the inhabitants of the metropolis equally with those of the provincial towns.

It was on the 6th of April last that the earlier despatch of the *American mail* on Saturday was inaugurated. Formerly the latest time of posting for this mail at the General Post Office was 6 o'clock in the evening, but in order to expedite the delivery of the letters in New York, the latest time of posting was altered to 2.30 p.m. with an extra fee, and up to 4 p.m. at Euston. By this means the outgoing steamers of the Cunard Line are able to leave Queenstown early on Sunday morning, and the letters which they carry can be delivered in New York on the following Friday night or on Saturday morning, in time for replies to be made where necessary by the steamer returning from New York on the latter day. Our New York correspondent has challenged the policy of the Post Office in respect to the American mails, but the arrangement here mentioned at least suits the convenience of most firms in the City of London who regularly contribute the bulk of the correspondence to New York, while it is still more serviceable to Liverpool and Manchester, which are the other centres of the American trade in this country.

A desirable modification has been effected in the regulations of the department governing the work of *postmen in rural districts*. At one time, although allowed to collect letters, the rural postmen were not permitted to deliver them until they had passed through the district office, even though in carrying them thither the postmen might have to pass the residence of the addressee. This rule was eventually relaxed so as to enable letters posted at district offices to be straightway delivered by the carriers on their walks, and now the arrangement has been extended to sub-district offices, so that all letters posted in rural districts are collected and delivered by what is really one operation, the carrier himself obliterating the stamps as he proceeds on his journey of distribution. This practical method is further associated with an understanding that the rural postmen are at liberty on their rounds to deliver light packets of medicine, and this has been found to be a considerable boon in rural districts.

Another interesting feature in the new postal work begun during 1895 is seen in connection with the *express delivery service*, which has already proved to be of great public utility. The carriage of live animals and liquids through the post was up till quite recently rigorously forbidden, but the corps of express messengers are now

allowed to carry both live animals and liquids, always provided, of course, that they are not subjected thereby to personal injury. Permission has also been given to the same boys to act as guides, and although the public generally are apparently not aware that such a convenience has been officially extended to them, the cases are by no means isolated in which the valuable aid of these active cicerones has been much appreciated, especially by ladies. For the services of boy guides the ordinary express messenger fee of 3d. per mile is charged, and out of this amount they pay all their own fares, except when the person whom they are conducting desires to hire a cab, in which case the messenger's fare must be covered.

Among the miscellaneous alterations carried out during the year in the *letter post* mention must be made of the increased facility which has been afforded for *post restante* business in London. Letters can now be obtained on week days at any branch post office whenever it is open, and as some of these offices conduct telegraph business until 11 o'clock at night, the new arrangement is a distinct advantage where recourse is had to the *post restante*.

The only development of importance in the *money-order system* during the past year has been in its extension to Bosnia and Herzegovina on April 1, and to Finland on November 1.

In accordance with the resolution adopted by the House of Commons on February 19th last, nominations to *minor postmaster-ships*, formerly in the gift of the Treasury, are now in the hands of the Postmaster-General, and this will no doubt tend to the more efficient working of the service. The Committee on Post Office Establishments granted by Mr. Arnold Morley on May 17th last met for the first time on June 24th, since which period it has taken a considerable amount of evidence as to the pay and conditions of Post Office service throughout the country. It has been arranged that the public sittings of the committee shall be resumed after Parliament meets.

A matter of more than departmental interest coming within a review of 1895 is the successful effort which has been made to add to the usefulness of the *Postal Guide*. The entire volume has been rearranged, the index carefully revised and extended, distinctive headlines have been introduced where they were obviously much needed, and the table of mails to and from London has been enlarged as well as simplified. A slight change is contemplated in the uniform of postmen, the object being to secure a smarter appearance than the existing regulations permit. . . .

Several alterations affecting the *parcel post* are also to be recorded. The system of insurance, having worked so well in other directions, has been extended to parcels going to Beirut, Constantinople, and Smyrna, *viâ* the sea route, as well as to parcels for Bermuda. At the same time a revised rate, coupled with an extension of the weight limit, came into operation for parcels addressed to France and Italy and to French possessions. An extension of the size limit followed in the case of parcels for Italy, and the overland parcel post to Constantinople and Smyrna has secured the double favour of a larger weight limit and a reduced rate. The *maximum* weight of parcels for Switzerland has been increased from 7lb. to 11lb., and later in the year the rate for parcels going to Canada was reduced from 10d. to 8d. for the first pound, and from 8d. to 6d. for every additional pound. These modifications in the weight and size limits and in the postage rates have doubtless contributed, as suggested in *The Times* article on "The Christmas Season at the General Post Office," to the very large expansion of the foreign and colonial parcel traffic recently observed. The convenience of the parcel post has during the year been given to Bulawayo and other places in South Africa, to Japan, to Hawaii, and to German South-West Africa. There have been several improvements directed to provide for the constantly growing parcel traffic centred in the metropolis; but these are mainly in matters of detail.

A further augmentation has been made in the number of *parcel coaches* running throughout the year from London, and there is now no important metropolitan main road without a service of this kind. The latest extension has been to Guildford, and it has involved the employment of a main coach drawn by four horses, with connections from Guildford to Farnham, Aldershot, Farnborough, and Camberley, from Guildford to Woking; and from Guildford to Godalming and Haslemere. At the latter place the service is further subdivided—one cart traversing the Midhurst and Petworth road, and the other proceeding to Liphook and Petersfield. An additional parcel van has likewise been started from London to Richmond, Teddington, Twickenham, and Kingston, and these places, therefore, now have a parcel post delivery three times daily.

A Visit to the Grand Chartreuse.



WELL appointed bachelor banquet at which I had the good luck to be present was drawing near its close. A dream-like sensation of happiness and contentment—the product of dry champagne and delicately prepared food, existed over me its subtle but delicious influence. I gazed fondly at the liqueur of yellow chartreuse in the fragile little glass at my side. How beautiful the colour, how rich the bouquet! I raised it to my lips, sipped, tasted it. How soft, how soothing—what mingled sweetness and strength! A nectar such as the Pagans knew not, and their gods dreamt not of. I held the half finished glass before me, and gazed for a few seconds on its contents with half-closed dreaming eyes.

“You like chartreuse, sir?” said a sharp matter-of-fact voice, quickly awakening me from my short reverie. The voice came from a sharp, matter-of-fact looking man seated opposite to me, a guest to whom I had said little during dinner. I hate matter-of-fact people (at dinner time), and always endeavour to avoid them. “I like chartreuse, sir,” I replied shortly. “Is the taste an uncommon one?”

“Oh, no! not at all,” exclaimed the sharp man, with a very unpleasant accession of sharpness. “Do you happen to know where it comes from?”

This was alarming. The time was after dinner, my wits were far away in the realms of illusion, and here, suddenly, was I menaced with a sort of Civil Service examination regarding the origin and history of the liqueur I was drinking. Such things ought not to occur at well-appointed dinner tables. How could my host have extended his hospitality to so rude a guest? What had the fellow been

doing all dinner time that he could find it in his heart to start off in this fashion? He had not avoided the dry champagne—of that I was certain. But there are some people that even the best of wine and the choicest of viands can never educate up to understanding that the time for asking other people questions, with a view to displaying their own knowledge, is not after dinner. However, the question was asked and the answer expected. I could see that the other guests, who were not under examination, were already interested in this little conversation.

“From a monastery, does it not?” I answer, with a fine affectation of carelessness, endeavouring at the same time to pull myself together and to dissipate the thick cloud of pleasant reverie in which wine and happiness have enshrouded my understanding.

“Quite so. *What* monastery?” says the relentless sharp person.

“The Chartreuse,” I reply, triumphantly.

“The *Grand* Chartreuse, you mean. I suppose you know where it is?”

“In France, of course.” I know I am right this time, and begin to feel more confident. The sharp person smiles. I do not like that smile.

“Yes, France; but then France is rather an extensive order—what part of France?”

I am in doubt about this, but *toujours l'audace*. “North Western France,” I answer boldly.

Alas! the moment of my humiliation is come. A gleam of triumph flickers in the sharp person's eyes, a look of conscious superiority rests on the faces of the other guests, who take their cue from the sharp person, and I feel that I am offered an unwilling sacrifice on the altar of the sharp person's superior knowledge.

“Not a bad guess,” he simpers, with his hateful smile. “Had you said South Eastern France, or exactly the reverse of what you did say, you would have been about right.”

I did not continue this conversation, and it left a rather disagreeable impression on my mind. I resolved that I would discover the Chartreuse for myself, on some future occasion, and avoid any risk of being a second time worried in this way over a post-prandial glass of my favourite liqueur.

Having found a friend like-minded with myself, we started together to discover the Grand Chartreuse. For however well a place or a fact may be known to others, if *you* do not know it you discover it when you first make its acquaintance.

We found no trouble, my friend and I, in discovering the Grand Chartreuse. The Continental Bradshaw had been before us in our search, and we had only to follow its precise directions. There are doubtless several ways of reaching most places in the civilized world, but we venture to think that the way which we selected in order to discover the Chartreuse was as pleasant as any. We went first to Paris, and thence by express train to Aix-les-Bains. This is a long journey—about twelve hours—but one can stop at Fontainebleau, Macon, or Dijon *en route*, and Fontainebleau at least, with its magnificent historical palace and its immense forest, is well worthy a visit. Once at Aix-les-Bains you have touched the realm of lake and mountains. You are in high Savoy, the cradle land of the Royal House of Italy. At your feet embosomed in high hills sleeps the Lake of Bourget, and on its banks is the Monastery of Hautcombe, where, with the ripple of the lake washing against the walls of their mortuary chapel, repose the ashes of King Humbert's ancestors. France has now for more than thirty years ruled in this pleasant land, but the gray Monastery of Hautcombe is still the cherished possession of the Princes of Italy. Many are the excursions to be made from Aix, but space would fail me should I endeavour to enumerate them. They are easily discovered on the spot. Then, at night, for those who care for them, are the two casinos, with their good dinners, good music, crowded theatres and high card playing. The latter is exciting, even to watch, but it is not safe to play, unless one can afford to lose.

From here it is quite practicable to proceed by coach to the Grand Chartreuse, but it is a long journey, and although it can be done in one day, two days should properly be allowed, a night being spent at the monastery. This, however, is not the best way of visiting this celebrated spot. The *best* way is by train from Aix *viâ* Chambéry to Grenoble. This is a short and cheap journey, though the mountainous character of the line makes it a slow one. But there is no weariness, for the line is beautiful. After leaving Chambéry the scene is one of ever increasing grandeur and magnificence. Slowly you creep along a mountain pass which narrows as you near Grenoble. The swift Isère rolls through it, and near the single line of rails you have corn and vines and fruitful fields. But the strip of cultivation grows less as you proceed. The hills come nearer to you. Their sides become steeper, till you wonder how the inhabitants of the one or two daring chateaux, that perch like eagles on the heights, can ever contrive to come down and mingle with the

common world below. And then, beyond these nearer hills, which act as their advanced guard, are the mighty summits of the giant Alps of Dauphigny, bearing poudly heavenwards their glittering diadem of snow. There is no anti-climax in this beautiful journey. Its magnificence culminates at Grenoble—Grenoble surely among the most beautiful towns of beautiful France! The mountains, many of them snow-crowned, stand round about it. The turbulent Isère foams through it, tightly clasped in splendid quays and spanned by handsome bridges. France, too, has taken good care to safeguard this ancient town. On the spurs of the mountains, and fully commanding the city, rise fortress after fortress, in secure and frowning strength. The chief fortress is called La Bastille, and strangely reminds one of its grim, old prototype.

Grenoble is a lively town. It is strongly garrisoned, and the military element imparts colour and life to every street and "*place*." See it on a Saturday night when the best of the regimental bands parade the thoroughfares and squares, preceded by torch bearers. They stop at the clubs of their officers, and before the residences of others whom they delight to honour, and blare forth their military music to the great satisfaction of the bock-consuming customers of the surrounding cafés. It is a pretty sight, and the martial din on a fine summer's night is almost as exhilarating as the coffee and cognac which you sip in front of your café as you listen after dinner.

Grenoble has its fair share of places of interest—a cathedral, ancient churches, a splendid mediæval Palais de Justice, and last, but not least, a monument to the Chevalier Bayard, that princely man, and first among knights whom a querulous and fault-finding world could only describe as "*sans peur et sans reproche*."

Many things may be "done" from Grenoble. The wonderful caves of Sassenage may be explored, the heights of the snow-crowned Belle Donne may be ascended, the Monastery of the Grand Chartreuse may be visited. We set out to visit the latter at six o'clock one Sunday morning. All the public conveyances start early, for the journey is a long one. Although we left Grenoble at six we did not reach the Monastery until mid-day. The journey to the Chartreuse from Grenoble makes a circular tour—you go one way and return another, and it is necessary to be careful to go and return by the routes that show the scenery to the best advantage. It is usual to travel by way of Saint-Laurent-du-Pont, and to return by way of Sappey, both these places being villages in the neighbour-

hood of the Chartreuse. The price by public conveyance varies somewhat, but a return ticket by coach should be obtained for about ten francs. It is well to secure a seat next to the driver, or, failing that, one of the corner seats on the benches behind him. The best scenery is on the right-hand side as you proceed, and unless you have corner seats, the awning which is spread over the char-à-banc to exclude the heat of the sun is apt to interfere somewhat with the full effect of the view. We were favoured with beautiful weather for our excursion. Our char-à-banc was quite filled with a voluble company of French people. We only represented the ubiquitous "Anglais." Early as the hour was, the sun already had considerable power, and the shelter of our awning was grateful. We crossed the Isère by the newest of the three bridges, and leaving Grenoble behind us, proceeded north-eastward down the valley where the Isère, now united with the impetuous Drac, makes a mighty murmuring among the hills as it rushes onward. After following the Isère valley for some miles we turned sharply off to the right and began to penetrate into the heart of a mountainous district by a steep hill road. Our horses advanced so slowly that we dismounted and walked for some miles in front of them. The scenery on this hilly road was very fine, and ever and anon one lighted on a little village, planted by some foaming mountain torrent, where the rush of hurrying water, and the clear noted bell of the tiny church, as it summoned the villagers to early mass, were the only sounds borne upon the still mountain air. At last we found ourselves at Saint-Laurent-du-Pont, and the excitement increased. We were nearing the wild mountainous ravines called "the desert," at the head of which we should discover the Chartreuse. We entered a gorge cleft in the mountain sides, thickly wooded and enlivened by the music of a rushing river called the Guiers.

We had proceeded but a short distance along this wild road when our attention was arrested by a sweet odour as of something familiar—surely the scent of yellow Chartreuse!—and the next moment we saw before us the unpretending building which forms the world-renowned distillery for that celebrated liqueur. This is at Fourvoirie, a little spot which has for ages served as the workshop of the Monks. It is supplied with water-power from the Guiers, and similar mountain streams. Here for centuries were the Carthusians accustomed to work in iron; here they have cement works; and here, as we have seen, is their famous distillery. The latter is not shown to the public, and the secret of the manufacture is jealously guarded.

Three kinds of liqueur are made—green, yellow, and white. The green is much stronger than the yellow, and the white is weaker than either. The latter is a very agreeable liqueur, though seldom seen in England. A Brother at the Monastery informed me that the "*Liqueur Blanche*" was fit only "*pour les mesdames*," but I cannot help thinking that "*les Messieurs*" would also find it very pleasant were it only more widely known.

The liqueur is understood to be distilled by some secret process from flowers and herbs which are found in "the desert" of Chartreuse. On leaving Fourvoirie the exceeding grandeur of that so-called "desert," quickly forces itself upon the imagination. A desert it must have been once before the marvellous mountain roadway was constructed, which enables us to penetrate its secret recesses. A desert it still is in its aspect of lonely, solemn magnificence, but it is a desert that teems with life, vivid, intense picturesque. Words cannot convey any adequate conception of the splendour of this weird valley. Imagine a roadway forced along the rocky side of these Alpine heights of Dauphigny. Sometimes the rock is tunnelled, sometimes it is blasted; but by one means or another the road creeps onward and upward through the narrow gorge. Far below it foams and rushes the Guiers. Far above it tower the stern rock built mass of mountain tops that hem it in and overshadow it with fantastic outlines. And all around it, clinging tenaciously to the steep sides of the mountains, and climbing almost to their rocky peaks, are endless woods of fir, oak, beech, and many another goodly tree. It is one vast forest, which at times broadens out and affords glimpses of majestic heights above, and dark, mysterious depths below. One passes onward, hearing incessantly the hum of myriad insects that people the forest deeps, and watching rare butterflies that flutter listlessly over rarer flowers. The great Rousseau, who was no mean botanist, visited the Chartreuse in 1775, and, on leaving, recorded his impressions of the Monastery and the desert in a few words of delicate appreciation—" *J'ai trouvé ici des plantes rares et des vertus plus rares, encore.*"

We arrived at the Monastery gateway at noon, and surely never, even in mediæval times, did more famished pilgrims entreat the hospitality of the kind-hearted fathers and brethren. We had breakfasted hurriedly in Grenoble, at half-past five, on a cup of coffee and a morsel of roll, and since then had tasted nothing, while the keen mountain air had helped to make us ravenous. Most of our French friends had left us *en route*, but the few who did come

all the way had wisely carried their luncheons with them. A rosy-cheeked porter, clad in the voluminous white flannel robes of the order, received us in the doorway, and after bidding welcome handed us over to the *Frère Hôte*, the brother charged with dispensing the hospitalities of the community. Of him, in the very best and politest French we could command, we asked if we might remain at the Monastery until the next day. Yes, certainly, was his reply. Would we kindly give him our visiting cards? He was a young monk of rather goodly presence. "*Vous êtes Anglais?*" he inquired, glancing at our cards. "*Nous sommes Ecosseis,*" we replied, knowing well that the "Ecosseis" has always the preference over the "Anglais" in a Frenchman's estimation. He smiled and asked if we would like *dejeuner*. Would we like it? Certainly! and we were quickly supplied.

Plain food, served on the plainest and coarsest earthenware, was set before us. But it was well cooked, and by famishing mortals like ourselves was more appreciated than the most sumptuous of banquets. We had no flesh food, it is against the rule of the Order to offer it, but a simple kind of soup, followed by a savoury omelette, and that, again, by a course of bread and home-made cheese and butter. If you add to this a dessert of wild strawberries and as much red *vin ordinaire* as you desired to drink, you will see how the monks feasted us. Towards the end of the dessert the servitor came round to each guest, and asked if we desired "green" or "yellow," and immediately poured out for us what must have represented about two-thirds of a sherry wine-glass full of delicious liqueur. So we sipped our Chartreuse in its native halls, as it were, and felt comforted after our long fast. I rather think the servitor gave us a second supply, but we kept faithfully to one colour. After luncheon we were taken round the Monastery, or such parts of it as the public are permitted to see.

The Order of the Chartreuse, or the Carthusian Order, was founded by Saint Bruno in 1084. Saint Bruno was, unfortunately, a native of Cologne, although, as his Carthusian Chronicler* is careful to inform us, he was much more of a Frenchman than a German. He made a great name for himself fighting for the freedom of the Church from State interference; but when the Church was about to reward him by bestowing upon him the mighty Archbishopric of Rheims, he declined the splendid distinction, and

* *La Grande Chartreuse*, par un Chartreux, Auguste côte, Lyon 1889.

suddenly renounced all his ecclesiastical preferments, being persuaded that he was directed from Heaven to pass the remainder of his days in solitude and retirement. Nothing could shake his determination, and having selected six companions he journeyed with them towards Grenoble to take counsel with the Bishop there as to the place of his retirement. The night before the arrival of his illustrious visitor, St. Hugo, Bishop of Grenoble, had a strange dream. He dreamt, and lo! seven stars appeared before him and fell down at his feet. Then the stars rose again and went forth, and the Bishop followed them. The stars passed across the wild mountainous country, floated through the little village of St. Pierre de Chartreuse—which was destined henceforth to give its name to the great Carthusian Order—and entered the wild desert in the mountains beyond it, the good Bishop still following them. There were no engineered roads through the desert in those days, but in a dream one does not miss such things, and when the stars had led the Bishop nearly to the summit of the Carthusian desert they sank to the earth and vanished. Immediately on the spot where they had vanished there appeared a vision as of angels building a house, and then the Bishop awoke.

While St. Hugo was wondering in his heart whereunto this dream tended, lo! the seven illustrious strangers knocked at his palace gates, seeking advice as to the place of their solitude, and the meaning of the vision was rendered plain to him. Thus, by the miraculous dream of the Bishop of Grenoble, was the saintly founder guided to the site of the first Carthusian Monastery. On this site arose the splendid Carthusian Order—an Order which shook the mediæval world in the days of its greatness, had mighty establishments all over Europe, including our own "Charter House," and possessed great wealth, which it used for beneficent purposes. Only after a renowned and useful career, through long ages of prosperity and grandeur, did it sink at last in the revolutionary storms at the close of the eighteenth century. It remains now the mere shadow of a shade of its former greatness.

But a strange pseudo halo of modern greatness has arisen round the tomb of its ancient glory. The Chartreuse is still famous. Its name is known to the whole commercial, wine-bibbing modern world because some of its lay brothers have discovered the secret of manufacturing a liqueur which suits the fastidious taste of the gourmet. Shade of St. Bruno, has it come to this! Is this the end of all your care? Have your rules of abstinence, of fasting, and of abnegation, your numerous "offices," your acts of charity, your

praises and your prayers, left as their legacy to mankind the green and yellow Chartreuse?

Yet there is a grim consolation for St. Bruno after all. The brotherhood make very large profits from their alcoholic manufacture, and all these funds are devoted to pious and beneficent uses. Thus, from the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table, from part of the surplus wealth which the alchemy of their distillery extracts from his pocket, the monks become masters of a fund which feeds the hungry and clothes the naked, and fulfils generally the purposes of a Christian society. Looked at from this point of view, it is the duty of every kindly disposed man to drink his share of Chartreuse, and so contribute his quota to the good work carried on by the successors of St. Bruno.

The buildings of the present Monastery of the Grand Chartreuse date for the most part from the seventeenth century. Before that time they were on several occasions destroyed by fire. They are heavy and substantial, but not wanting in picturesque effect. Within they are noteworthy for their scrupulous plainness combined with scrupulous cleanness. The pure white-washed walls with the grey stone facings round the diamond-paned windows are most pleasant to behold. The Chapter House is adorned with pictures of the long procession of generals of the Order, and the Chapel, which is very beautiful, is the only decorated part of the building. The inhabitants of the monastery are of two classes, the lay brothers or *fratres conversi*, and the *patres*, or priests. These latter live according to the strict rule of St. Bruno. They keep to the solitude of their cells, observe the rule of silence, divide their time between solitary work and meditation, and are only to be seen in chapel when they recite or chant the offices. The *fratres conversi* have more freedom, and it is with them, or a few of them, that the visitors come into contact. One of them, a pleasant visaged monk and very good natured, conducted us over the monastery. He was addressed endearingly as "*mon frère*" by the French visitors, who worried him with all sorts of questions on all sorts of subjects, to which he answered laughingly but discreetly. He finally conducted us to a room where a brisk trade was carried on in souvenirs of the monastery. We bought some rosaries, which, through the kindness of one of the visitors, a good Catholic, were afterwards specially "*benits*," or blest by a father of the Order.

After this our French friends with whom we had journeyed in the morning, departed again for Grenoble, and we, who had chosen to

remain over night at the monastery, roamed in the mountain forests until dinner time. It was a very interesting ramble through wild woodland glades, and we visited, among other places, the memorial chapel to St. Bruno, which is erected on the spot where stood the first buildings of the monastery. This is not far from the Grand Som, or summit of the highest mountain enclosing the desert, where, at a height of 6,668 feet, a magnificent view may be obtained. The Rhone valley, the hills about Chambery, the peaks of the Jura, the lake of Bourget and many another smiling prospect greet you on every side. Near the monastery there is a small dependence or house in charge of nuns where ladies may be boarded, but no woman is admitted within the gates of the monastery proper.

We dined at eight o'clock. There are two dinners for visitors, one at six o'clock, and the other at eight; and two *dejeuners*, at eleven o'clock and noon. Meals are not served at other times. Our dinner was very much the same as *dejeuner*, and we had liqueurs and wine as before. The servitor asked us if we desired to be present at the "*office de nuit*." This is one of the services in chapel at which they seem pleased that strangers should attend; and on our signifying our intention to be present he took a note of our names, in order that we might be summoned from our chambers or cells at the proper hour.

After dinner I retired to my cell to meditate, as seemed fitting in a monastery, and to write letters. A cell in very truth it was. A small bed, the linen scrupulously clean, but yellow and coarse. On the whitewashed walls, hanging above the bed, was a crucifix, and on a deal table was a small hand-basin, and a ewer about the size of a large breakfast-cup filled with water. This, with one small chair, completed the furniture. No looking-glass or mirror. That would have savoured too much of luxury and vanity. There was neither pen nor ink, and I did not observe any bell by which a servitor might be summoned. So I wrote my letters with pencil by the light of a miserable candle, and listened as I did so to the ceaseless splashing of a fountain in the grassy courtyard below, the sound reaching me through the open window. Later on I walked with my friend beside the fountain in the court, and gazed at the stars and the mountains till the time drew near for the "*office de nuit*." We had some difficulty in discovering the stranger's entrance to the chapel, and plunged about long silent corridors, lighting our way with our very mildly effulgent "*dips*," until at length we found what we sought. Then we blew out the candles, left them at the

church door, and entered the stranger's gallery or tribune. Weird and solemn was the scene presented before us, if that may be called a scene which was scarcely visible. The darkness of night enfolded the church, the altar and the stalls. Two twinkling oil lamps suspended from the roof served only to make that darkness visible—

Sullen like lamps in sepulchres they shone,
And lightened but themselves.

In the stalls, far below us, were "the Religious," reading the office by means of a kind of dark lantern which threw a little light upon the choir books, but on nothing besides. But if invisible, the monks were very audible. There was no organ, for they despise sensuous aids to devotion as heartily as does the strictest Presbyterian. But their voices rolled forth sonorously as they chanted in unison, though not always in tune, using a strange rude form of melody and modulation belonging to a fashion in music long since departed. Harsh it seemed and barbaric to the modern ear, yet not without a solemnity and grandeur of its own. Heard in the darkness of the echoing church, the solemn midnight cry of these poor solitaries from their lonely watch tower in the Alpine wilds, could not but powerfully arrest the attention and touch the heart of even a careless listener. From age to age for eight hundred years, far removed from the abodes of men, borne heavenwards on the towering heights of their desert home, generation after generation of the "religious," have assembled together at each returning midnight to bid adieu to the expiring day, and to hail the new birth of the morrow, in the solemn orisons of the Catholic church. Different this, how different, from midnight Paris, midnight London! The garish light, the whirl of mad excitement, the intoxication of feverish pleasure—all banished. And, in their place, the still solemnity of night, the starry heavens, the soaring mountain tops, peace, grandeur, calmness, and an awful silence, broken only by the sound of chanted prayer and praise ascending to the heavens that seem so near.

I wished to "assist" at the celebration of the mass, which took place at seven in the morning. The midnight matins and lauds had been sufficient for my friend, and he did not accompany me, but by a strong effort of the will I rose at seven o'clock and presented myself a few minutes afterwards at this the highest service of the Catholic Church. It was a great contrast to the service of the preceding midnight. The beautiful church was full of summer sunshine, the priest at the altar was arrayed in the bright coloured

chasuble, and the chanting was a shade less *triste* than previously. At the elevation of the Blessed Sacrament the monks seemed to bend until their foreheads touched the pavement. I could see them now in the strong fresh light of day. Some old, some young. The older faces in many instances ascetic, pale, devout, keen, telling of the fire of passionate devotion that burned within the shrunken frame; the younger more phlegmatic, rosy, good natured, almost jolly in one or two instances. The rule of silence must tell heavily, one would think, on those who live by it. The chronicler of the monastery records the joyous ecstasy with which the fathers and brethren join in the uncouth chanting of the offices, and one cannot but imagine, apart from considerations more distinctly religious, what relief and happiness they must feel in throwing aside for a little the heavy spell of enforced silence which is ever spreading its gloomy wings over their solitary cells. It cannot be an easy matter to be a good monk, and the perfect specimen of the genus must be the resultant of a tremendous exertion of moral force in the direction of self-repression and self-discipline. "Greater is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" is the ancient declaration of wisdom, and surely if this be true there is something to be said for the monastic ideal of life. If the monk appears to the worldling, whose whole life is steeped in sensuous pleasure, as a ridiculous and fantastic phenomenon, one almost shudders to contemplate in what light the worldling must appear to the monk, whose whole life has been one sustained and painful effort to preserve his inner vision clear and free from the many hued illusions of sense, and to bring his awe-struck spirit into touch with the reality of the things not seen. But there are surely few monks like this, or the history of monasteries in Europe has been written in vain. The communities, except in some isolated instances, cannot live up to their own ideal; the ordeal is too severe, the pressure upon our common humanity too great.

No breakfast to be had at the Grand Chartreuse until eleven o'clock, and we had commenced the day at seven! It was in vain to repine. The sun might sooner go out of his course than the regularity of events at the Chartreuse. Hungry as hawks we sat down to the now familiar meal of soups and omelettes at the appointed hour, and drank a bottle of the good red wine followed by a draught of the *liqueur blanche*.

Shortly afterwards we took leave of our kind hosts, to whom we handed the small charges usually made to those who are able to pay

for the hospitality accorded them. We drove back to Grenoble by way of Sappey. A beautiful drive, but our poor horses were terribly annoyed by "*les mouches*"—large flies—about six times the size of what in Scotland are known as "cleggs," and venomous blood-suckers. We dined comfortably that night in secular fashion, at the Hotel Monnet in Grenoble, having previously made some purchases of gloves, for which article this bright little town has a well-deserved reputation. But as night drew on our thoughts, as if by some magnetic and irresistible impulse, wandered back to the home of the Chartreux in the wild desert we had left behind us, and we heard once more in imagination the sad wailing chant of the *office de nuit* ascending to the silent stars.

Edinburgh.

E. D. T. .



The Post Office Packet Service.*

MR. NORWAY'S book has been an obvious success. It has been widely read and favourably reviewed : reviewed in many cases with such lavish use of scissors and paste that its good stories are becoming familiar to those who never saw it, and have but little understanding of its theme. And just for this reason it is difficult to treat it as it deserves in *St. Martin's-le-Grand*. It is not for us to regard Mr. Norway as merely another Captain Marryat, telling tales of pikes and of boarders, of privateer schooners and of chain shot ; nor can we pretend that our heart burns within us at the thought of the narrow streets of Falmouth, or of the entrance by Pendennis. We are shut out, on the one hand, from the easy task of copying detached yarns, and on the other hand from saying by the space of three pages "Great is Falmouth of the Cornishmen." Perhaps Mr. Norway has himself shown a little bias towards the fame of his own loved county, and a little pride in the ocean warriors of Celto-Punic Cornwall, which he would not feel if they were mere Angles and Jutes, like the men of Harwich and of Dover ; but this criticism is merely accidental, and only intended to pave the way to the assertion that the interest of the book for the readers of this magazine ought to be postal, not naval ; official, and not patriotic.

The History of the Packet Service takes its place with the works of Mr. Joyce and Mr. Baines, as evidence of the care which is now being bestowed upon the Archives of the Post Office. Happy—in a sense—may be the Department, like the Board of Agriculture, which has no history, but surely it is somewhat inglorious. Reposing for all these years in the vaults of St. Martin's-le-Grand have been the books and the papers which are now yielding the tales which the historians of the Post Office have so well begun to publish ; it is to be hoped that they will be consigned to forgetfulness no more, but will bring forth fruit abundantly for yet other gleaners.

In 1688, the year of the glorious Revolution, as Mr. Norway tells us, the Postmasters-General selected Falmouth as the port of the new Spanish Mail Service, and so created the town. It seems unreal to us : we have no Packet boats now in the days of contracts,

* *The History of the Post Office Packet Service*, between the years 1793-1815. Compiled from records partly official, by Arthur H. Norway. (Macmillan & Co., London and New York, 1895.)

and we are not called off from our papers to decide on the pattern of a 9-pounder or the cut of a jib ; but so it was in the olden time ; we ran our own Packets, and we had to find a port for them, so we chose Falmouth for the South and West, and made our home there ; embarking and landing mails, and landing also smuggled goods and loot. Our two cable ships of the present day are but a poor substitute for our fleets of clippers that whitened with their sails the harbours of Falmouth and Harwich ; our contracts with all the ocean greyhounds that fly the Red Ensign are unromantic by the side of the commissions of our own old captains.

Having, then, our Packets, we sent them out to carry the Mails, and they carried them as they could ; but unfortunately the politics of nations did not stand still to watch the Post Office, and the normal occupation of a Packet seems to have been to dodge or fight the enemies that were looking out for her—generally in the shape of French and American privateers.

Putting at once behind one's back the evil day when Packets surrendered without a fight in order to swindle the underwriters ; when private trade stood in the place of official duty ; and when mutiny led to exile from Falmouth ; one finds oneself entering upon a series of stories of sea fights. They seem rather paradoxical, but Mr. Norway must be the best judge of the trustworthiness of his authorities. Our Packets were built for speed, but they were generally overhauled by privateer schooners : they pounded away with big guns at half-pistol-shot distance for hours together, and the butcher's bill amounted to one boy with a scratched face ; they waged battle with a ship of the Royal Navy, and called it quits : in fact they always did what one would not expect.

In the fight—which is, perhaps, the best told of Mr. Norway's stories—between the Packet "Townshend" and the two American privateers "Tom" and "Bona," we find a battle going on for three hours ; the Packet shot to pieces and sinking, and yet only one man was killed and six were wounded. *C'est magnifique*, but one is tempted to add the rest of the quotation.

It is sad that when Mr. Froude wrote of the "Bow of Ulysses" he had not before him the account of the salvation of Dominica by the "Duke of Montrose" Packet, while her protectress—a ship of the Royal Navy—looked on idly. It is only part of the general paradox of things in Mr. Norway's story, but what an illustration of the famous account of the dealings of the Imperial Government with the West India Islands would such a tale have been.

Readers of *St. Martin's-le-Grand* are not to hope that stories like this are to be culled for them ; they, at least, should read the whole book, and time would fail me to tell how Packets bluffed privateers by pretending to be Men of War, and how they took prizes under the command of their boatswain. They did all manner of strange things, and not the least strange were their efforts to foil Napoleon's continental system and land Mails in North Germany through Heligoland. It would add a little amusement to official life if we had to sit down now and cudgel our brains to determine what we should do with the accumulated Foreign Mails of many months, laid up in the sorting office ; if we could then call up one of our own captains and tell him to see if he could not find a smuggler somewhere in Germany to look after them and deliver them. But alas ! we have no such tasks. And, somehow, it didn't seem to matter in the good old days, when commerce was made to flourish by war. Even when a pair of lovers, waiting for parental approval, "trembled lest the French privateers should take the packet-ship by which the precious letter was conveyed," it is not recorded by their biographer that they wrote to the *Times* to explain that if the Post Office was managed in a business-like way, and was not ruled by permanent officials, the French privateers would abstain from capturing Packets.

It may come to fighting again some day. A successor of the Mahdi may yet send out his privateers from Suakim to chase the P. and O. boats when they have passed the shelter of Aden. The Controller of the Post Office Packet Service may yet hold a court to decide whether his captains fought to the bitter end before they admitted that there was no God but Allah, and that Mohammed was his prophet ; and if it be so, let us hope that our Packets of the future may come through the ordeal as well as did our Packets of the past, and that a worthy successor of Mr. Norway may arise and call their captains blessed.

For the tale that Mr. Norway has told we take the credit to ourselves. The Post Office provided the heroes, and the Post Office wrote down, in official papers, a record of their deeds. But for the style in which Mr. Norway has performed his task it seems almost necessary to assign all the credit to himself, so far as it removed from the officialese which we teach and practise. He has erected a worthy monument to Falmouth and to the Packet Service, and we, at least, shall hold them in remembrance.

H. S. C.

The Life and Times of Ralph Allen.

IN the annals of the Post Office there is no more illustrious name, and none more truly deserving of respect, than the name of Ralph Allen. It is, therefore, with extreme interest that we turn to his latest biography, written by an author already known as a local historian of the antiquities of Bath, and dedicated to the living representative of the family of Ralph Allen. The writer, moreover, claims to have had at his disposal the Allen family papers, among which one would expect to find some interesting memorials by the hand of the great Allen himself, written in the careful and lucid style found in the papers of his which survive in other quarters. Readers whose chief interest is in postal history will, however, be greatly disappointed in this respect with Mr. Peach's work. Little or no new light is thrown on the history of Allen's great postal enterprise. This may be because no unpublished records remain among the family archives, but we prefer to think that it is because to a local biographer there seem to be so many other notable circumstances which claim more especially the grateful memory and respect of the citizens of Bath.

Perhaps the most interesting features of the new *Life** are the illustrations. A good portrait, presumably that painted by Hoare at Prior Park, is reproduced by photogravure as the frontispiece. Allen is represented in a full wig and in full dress sitting on a chair of state. A certain conventionality has been given to the features, but still much of the character of the man is shown in the breadth of brow, in the large clear eye, the firm mouth, and clear cut features. Another interesting picture is that of Allen's house in the North Parade, Bath, where he carried on the business of the Cross Posts after 1727, when the old post office in Bath Street was given up. The local post office was then transferred to a separate office in

* *The Life and Times of Ralph Allen*, by R. E. M. Peach, author of *Bath, Old and New*, &c. London, David Nutt, 1895. Small 4to., 7s. 6d.

Lilliput Alley. The North Parade house was a handsome structure, with a pillared front and two substantial wings. Mr. Peach states that it was used for postal purposes until 1785, although in another part of his book he says that on Allen's death in 1764, the management of the Cross Posts was transferred to London. At the beginning of this century the right wing was pulled down to make way for the new York Street, and the other parts were surrounded by houses. The centre part of the house is standing at the present time, but is in a very dirty and neglected condition.

Some good views are given of Prior Park, the mansion built by Allen to show the qualities of the Bath stone hewn from the famous quarries of which he was proprietor, and from which he drew much of his wealth. In one of the pictures we see also the extensive tramways which connected the quarries with the river Avon. It will probably surprise many persons to find that tramways were in common use then, when they think of the badness of the ordinary roads and the long interval before the construction of steam engines and railways. The house was built in a classical style, or rather in a mixture of styles, with a large pillared portico, said to be the largest ever built on a private house, connected by a curved arcade with two wings of offices. It is said that in the foundations no less than 30,000 tons of stone were used. It was begun about 1737. When we remember that Allen was then only 43 or 44 years of age, and that he was already known for his munificent charities, we get a striking evidence of the rapidity with which he had acquired substantial wealth. He had been appointed Postmaster of Bath less than twenty years before.

Perhaps the most serious defects in the work now before us are a want of proportion and arrangement, and a certain obscurity and vagueness in the statement of facts. No less than forty-two pages, or about one-sixth of the book, are occupied by an account of the history of the manor of Lyncombe, in which Prior Park is situated, in Saxon, Norman, and later times before the eighteenth century. To the local antiquarian this account will no doubt be of great interest, but it is hardly required in a life of Ralph Allen. Prior Park, as made famous by him, was essentially a creation of the eighteenth century, and there is perhaps no period in our history when the past and its traditions were so little valued or regarded as in that century. For the purposes of illustrating the life of Allen, this antiquarian account of Lyncombe is therefore useless. Another defect in arrangement is the large number of notes. Many of them

contain interesting matter which might with much better effect have been embodied in the text. There is also a certain want of precision in the statement of facts. For instance it is said in one place of the house in Lilliput Alley, that the basement and first stories were used for local postal business, "while the upper portion was the residence of Philip Allen, who, though not officially connected with the Post Office, was in this, as in all other operations, his brother Ralph's worthy coadjutor."

Later on we are informed that after Ralph Allen's death, in 1764, Philip Allen discharged the duties of local Postmaster until his death in 1765. From these two statements it might have been surmised that long before then the local Postmastership had been handed over to Philip, and this surmise is rendered more probable by the fact that in a list of appointments made in consequence of Ralph Allen's death, apparently taken from some official record, the appointment to the Postmastership is not mentioned. Instead of an effort to explain the facts, our author gives the merely vague statement which we have quoted above. The same vagueness and a tendency to substitute inconsequent surmise for a necessary interpretation of facts is seen in several notes in which the author passes from statements reflecting on the badness of the Postmasters-General of Allen's time to statements as to the present time which can hardly be considered pertinent to the point under discussion. For instance, after saying that the Postmasters-General of Allen's time "appear to have been prompt and efficient in nothing except receiving a large salary, paid quarterly," he passes in a footnote to the remark that "even now it needs the penetration and wisdom of a Postmaster-General to say why printed matter may go at the cheap rate, whilst type-written matter cannot. The matter may be identical, but only the intelligence of a Postmaster-General can see why the poor type-writer is to pay a penny for an open letter and the printer a halfpenny." We fear this note will not add much to the author's reputation among readers who value accuracy of statement or clearness of thought.

The facts of Allen's relations with the Post Office are not much elucidated by Mr. Peach. In the main he relies on the chapter on the subject in Mr. Joyce's *History of the Post Office*, of which, we are glad to see, he shows a proper appreciation. He appears, however, to be under the misapprehension that Mr. Joyce, in writing of Allen, had access to full records of his work in the Post Office Archives, and that, therefore, no further research in that direction

was necessary. He does not know that few of such records exist at the Post Office, and that Mr. Joyce's material was mostly gathered by painstaking enquiry in other quarters.

Ralph Allen was born in 1693 or 1694. Probably, Mr. Peach says, before his father settled at St. Blazey (or St. Blaise), in Cornwall, as no entry of his birth is to be found in the Parish Register. His father, Philip Allen, was landlord of the "Duke William" Inn. "This was one of the old-fashioned Inns of those days which were models of comfort and respectability; and Philip Allen was one of the typical landlords of the roadside posting-houses of that day. He was, from the few glimpses we get of his character, a clear headed, well educated man, who wrote a good hand and who, if we may judge from his two sons, Ralph and Philip, and his several daughters, took infinite pains to train them practically, wisely, and well." Ralph, as a boy, was put under the care of his grandmother, who was postmistress at St. Columb. Accounts vary as to the manner of his transfer to Bath. One account says that the surveyor was struck by the accuracy of his work and obtained his promotion. This statement is made on the authority of the Rev. R. Graves, author of *The Spiritual Quixote*, written about the year 1800, who also gives many other particulars of Allen's life. The same author is responsible for the statement that Allen first became known to General Wade by communicating to him in 1715 news that a waggon-load of arms was being conveyed from the West of England for the use of sympathisers with the Stuarts. Allen was then a clerk in the Bath office. On this story, which is accepted by Mr. Joyce, our author throws some doubt, but apparently without any reason except surmise. In 1719 the Postmaster of Bath, named Quash, died, and was succeeded by Ralph Allen. In 1718 he had married Miss Earl, a natural daughter of General Wade, and probably with her received a considerable dowry, so that in 1719 he was able to make an offer to the Government to take a farm of the "Cross and Bye Posts," which was granted to him in 1720. This was a most extraordinary undertaking for so young a man. Its conception implied intelligence and energy of an unusual kind, and the payment to the Post Office of £6,000 a year, in addition to all working expenses, involved the control of a very large capital. It is possible that this was guaranteed by General Wade, who is best known in the present day by the epigram on his success as a roadmaker in Scotland—

"If you'd seen these roads before they were made,

You'd have held up your hands and blessed General Wade."

Wade had a practical mind, and it is quite possible that he may have had an early perception of Allen's genius. The friendship between the two lasted until Wade's death in 1748, when a much greater equality had arisen in their relations. For many years previously Allen had been Mayor of Bath, and the guiding spirit of the Corporation which then returned the local Member of Parliament. He had besides acquired great wealth by his Postal Contract, and by the judicious and energetic working of his stone quarries. His position easily enabled him to secure to General Wade the representation of Bath in Parliament for many years. The same position gave Allen the friendship of the elder Pitt, who also represented Bath in Parliament.

Whatever may have been the lucky accident which gave Allen the opportunity of carrying out his postal scheme and of developing the Bath stone industry, there is no doubt that the credit of both enterprises is due in an unusual degree to his unique qualities. A firm amiable temper, a clear and active intelligence, an unfaltering energy, and a desire to live at peace with his fellow men, and to confer every benefit in his power upon them, gave Allen a leading position in Bath, and placed him on a footing of equality and of friendship with the greatest men of his day. Pope, Fielding, Gainsborough, and Garrick were all numbered among his friends, besides Bishops Warburton, Sherlock, and Hurd. For Bath he built bridges and hospitals, and endowed numerous charities. He gave the stone for building St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London. His whole career is a wonderful instance of the union of public usefulness and goodness of disposition with worldly success of the best and highest kind, and it is hardly possible to find terms strong enough for its right description. Even when the material monuments of his activity have decayed, Allen's memory will be cherished by the student of humanity as an example of genius combined with the highest personal character, and without the slightest taint of unsoundness.

EDITORIAL NOTE.—We hope to publish in an early number a hitherto unprinted account, which is among the Home Office papers in the Record Office, of Allen's Postal Contracts, written by himself about 1760. A short account of Allen's life, with some accounts relating to his Post Office Farm, was published in Vol. III. of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, p. 160.

After Office Hours.

An Appeal from Mr. Cobb.

[I have received the following letter from Mr. Cobb, and I have only to say that I shall be most happy to receive any subscriptions which his friends and well-wishers desire to place in his hands to further the work of charity upon which he is engaged.—E.B.]

CONSTANTINOPLE, March 9th, 1896.

MY DEAR BENNETT,—

WHEN you told me last October that you had accepted the interesting post of editor of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, I think I sent you my thanks for ensuring its continuance, but affairs here were then too troubled to permit of my forwarding an article with my subscription. It is not very easy to live in a political powder magazine, and maintain the dignified composure which is suitable to a semi-official publication, and possibly a hasty expression—and Heaven knows there has been and is provocation enough for any amount of strong language—might have fired a train from here to London, with the awful result that the Ottoman officials in Bryanston Square would have got *St. Martin's-le-Grand* added to the glorious list of magazines and newspapers considered unfit for circulation. Now to commit murder and suicide by one and the same act would be unpardonable, so I remained silent. But now I am going to beg a corner in your April number, that I may ask your readers, at least as many of them as are my old friends, to help me in a matter that is not at all official, and perhaps, therefore, strictly speaking, has no claim to be introduced through your pages.

I want some money! Yes, as much as my friends can spare. At the request of some English ladies, I undertook a month ago to organize a working party at our British Institute. These ladies, young and old, of all nationalities and speaking many tongues (some of them volubly), meet every Thursday afternoon, from 2 till 5, and make a very pretty picture, plying needle and scissors and sewing-machines to assist in clothing the unfortunate survivors of last autumn's events. At the first meeting there were eighteen, and they have gone on increasing till now thirty attend, and material has to be got ready for them. Of course, it is only cheap stuff that they make up, but the quantity is getting large and I want funds.

Here people are willing to give, and do give both time and money, but all such efforts have to be made secretly, and no mention of any work for these sufferers is allowed to be published. Still, it gets known—to-day I was stopped in the street and asked if I wanted money, and an hour ago I received an entirely voluntary offering from a poor Armenian servant (whom I do not know) of a lira (18s.). Now, if my *St. Martin's-le-Grand* friends will send me some help

they will have the satisfaction of knowing that their money will be economically and practically utilised, and if you will let me I will send for your July issue an account of what has been done with it.

To me it seems when I ask Englishmen for help that I am asking them for conscience money, but whatever the view of this terrible disaster, there can be no man or woman unwilling to do a little towards alleviating the misery of many thousands of utterly helpless victims. So, my dear Bennett, I ask you and your readers to lend a hand in the good work, and speedily, for the people are perishing.

Yours, &c., F. S. COBB.

Tintagel.



OLD POST OFFICE, TINTAGEL.

(From a Photograph by Mr. A. H. Roper, Exeter.)

ALL visitors to Cornwall must be familiar with the cottage which is the subject of our illustration. To Post Office men the cottage should be of interest, more especially so at the present time, because an effort is being made by a body of artists, with whom it has always been a favourite, to save the building from destruction. A lady last September at great personal expense saved it for the time being, and in order to reimburse her, and to put matters on a satisfactory basis, a sale of pictures was held at Miss Helen Thorneycroft's studio on the 28th and 29th February last. The cottage, independently of its connection with the Post Office, is supposed to have had a stirring local history of its own. Wreckers at one time inhabited it, and to this day it is fitted up with conveniences for the use of smugglers. It has a fire place which is so constructed that the inhabitants could sit round the fire without being betrayed by the light to passers-by. The cottage also rejoices in a spiral stone staircase, and a remarkable solid stone porch. Moreover it stands in Tintagel, a village dear to every student of English literature, and perhaps dearer still to the lover

of the picturesque. Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, and Swinburne, in their several styles, have all sung of the glories of Tintagel, and of the way in which it is for ever associated with the legend of King Arthur, with the beautiful story of Tristram and Iseult :

“ That first Iseult, princess bright,
 Chatting with her youthful knight
 As he steers her o'er the sea,
 Quitting at her father's will
 The green isle where she was bred,
 And her bower in Ireland,
 For the surge-beat Cornish strand,
 Where the prince whom she must wed
 Dwells on loud Tyntagel's hill,
 High above the sounding sea.”

And it is “loud Tyntagel” still. At no point on the British and Irish coasts, not even on the iron-bound coast of the County Clare, does the Atlantic come thundering in with such remorseless energy as it does here. The roar can be heard ten miles inland, and to people who have stayed three miles from the shore “it has seemed the roar of a hungry caged-beast ravening at its bar for food.”

And from Tintagel right away to Hartland the coast-line itself is far and away the finest in the British Isles. There are caves innumerable, and no one who has been in these parts wonders at the legends and wild tales of the county of Cornwall. Tintagel Rock is crowned with the ruins of the stronghold of King Marke, whose wife became the mother of the renowned King Arthur, and it is here that Arthur was born, and where Tristram and Iseult are buried. Mr. Baring Gould has described it as “a scene well suited to be the cradle of the hero of the British myth—a tremendous crag, standing out of the sea, which has bored a tunnel through it, and races in and dashes in subterranean passages under the crumbling walls which sheltered Arthur.”

I passed three of the pleasantest days of my life in the little inn at Tintagel, and I can recommend no more delightful place to anybody who is in search of rest for brain and body. Those who rush every year to South Coast or East Coast watering places with the idea that in doing so they will enjoy the sea, are rather foolish people. The chops of the Channel and the Atlantic rollers are both within easy distance of London, and he who really loves the sea will have no difficulty in deciding where she is to be found at her best. I have seen the Atlantic on this coast in a storm, and I have seen it with only just a gentle swell disturbing its bosom, and the latter effect is infinitely the more beautiful. For the big roller is whole and perfect until it touches the rock, and the ultimate collapse is correspondingly grander and more beautiful. At Tintagel the sea has the grand manner; her voice and tones are Miltonic; whereas on the South Coast her voice is distinctly that of the minor poet.

English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century.

IF any of my readers are at all in doubt as to the policy of the Government in increasing the Navy estimates, I should advise them to read at once Mr. Froude's *English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century*. I do not say that the book justifies the large estimates, or indeed that it refers to the matter in hand at all, but it contains a story which is calculated to help you to make up your mind one way or the other. So far as my own experience goes it will probably put you in a fighting mood. You will want to go for somebody, and you will find that, on the whole, it is safer in these degenerate days of raiders' prosecutions to do your fighting by proxy, which it is to be presumed the naval policy of the Government will help you to do. In other words, Mr. Froude's book is a live book from start to finish, and it is the most readable thing of the kind that has been published for many a long day. It is not necessary in order to enjoy the lectures to agree always with the author in his glorification of the English Reformation, or in his enthusiasm for King Henry VIII. We are accustomed to regard his opinions on these subjects as the necessary ingredients in any repast he places before us, and we take it all *cum grano salis*, just as we do Macaulay and his dear friends the Whigs, and Mr. Matthew Arnold and his special enemies the Protestant Dissenters. I am rather disposed to think that a very desirable possession of a historian from the ordinary reader's point of view is a belief on his part in some theory or doctrine, a belief which is held so strongly by him that his facts are necessarily selected in order to bolster it up, or which causes the facts to be grouped round the theory in such a way that the story of one little corner of human history is at any rate made plausible. That is the sort of history which the ordinary reader, as distinguished from the mere seeker after truth, likes. He is especially delighted to be told that such and such a thing happened "that it might be fulfilled" by the nineteenth century prophet. He is impatient at the rudderless and sailless conditions under which the impartial and unimaginative historian thinks we should take our history. Mr. Froude accepts boldly all the responsibilities his theories commit him to. Hawkins and Drake were raiders and filibusterers of the first magnitude. They looted and massacred, took prisoners, and bought and sold slaves quite regardless of the fact that their country was not at war. All through Mr. Froude's vivid and picturesque narratives we are conscious somehow that plunder and avarice were at the bottom of these adventurous exploits, but it is no less certain that Queen Elizabeth winked at the misdeeds, especially when the wrongdoers remembered to give her a handsome percentage of their takings. What a terrible indictment De Silva, the Spaniard, brought against our nation in an address to the Queen. "Your mariners," he said, "rob our subjects on the sea, trade where they are forbidden to go, and fire upon our ships in your harbours." Even the clergy were as bad as the raiders, for he goes on to say, "Your preachers insult my master from your

pulpits." What was the reply he obtained from the Queen? "Elizabeth listened politely to what De Silva said, promised to examine into his complaints, and allowed Hawkins to sail." And the actual matter in hand was another filibustering expedition. Time after time when our superior moral sense is inclined to rebel at these doings, Mr. Froude interrupts his specious narrative to beseech us to clear our minds of cant, and to remember that though these men lined their own pockets they saved our national religion and laid the foundation of our Empire. There was, however, plenty of romance and excitement of a disinterested kind in these voyages. Unlike our own times, there was a "Great Unknown" on our own planet to discover, and there was a very well understood ambition to outstrip Spain in conquering this New World. Nowadays there is only the North Pole left to discover, and the "Unknown" is relegated by Mr. Herbert Spencer to other conditions and other worlds, and we are depressingly informed that it is "unknowable." Raiding has thus lost all possibilities of disinterestedness. Under Mr. Froude's fascinating guidance we are able to catch a little of the spirit which animated our countrymen in those far-off times. We applaud and condone their acts, we cannot help ourselves; we are told dogmatically and charmingly to do so; we are converts to the doctrine that the end justifies the means. After all, the other side were as bad as ourselves, or they would have been, if we had not outwitted them; and should you say that two blacks do not make a white, it is evident that you have not estimated at their true worth the capabilities of an imaginative historian. At any rate you will rise from the study of these lectures more conscious than ever of the irreparable loss to literature which has been occasioned by the death of the author. No living writer possesses his magic or his power. He was, perhaps, not a historian, as we moderns interpret the word, neither was he an international moralist of the modern pattern. He was simply an artist, every inch of him, and the facts of history and of morals were magnificently handled and manipulated by him from the artist's point of view. And he loved England with a love which overcame all things. He was proud of her in the way that Macaulay tells us Chatham was proud. It was the artistic aspect of Jingoism which appealed to his fancy, his was not the mere vulgar pride in the bigness of our Empire or in the extent and value of our commerce. It was the idea of this little island holding her own against the Pope, Spain, and the enemies within her gates which moved his enthusiasm. How his heart would have gone out to Mr. Goschen when the latter gloried in "our splendid isolation!" True, he would probably, if he had lived, have justified Jameson's raid; but then he might have written the story of the battle of Krugersdorf, with the result that, whether we regarded it from the point of view of style and power, or in its relations to actual fact, the like was "never seen on sea nor land." Alas! we have to content ourselves with the Poet Laureate's version of that battle.

E.B.

St. Martin's Letter-Bag.

Savings Bank Postal Orders.

THE daily and weekly newspapers have recently published details of a scheme for enabling depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank to obtain sums of 10s., 15s., £1 or £2 on demand at any Post Office in the United Kingdom where Savings Bank business is transacted. A depositor wishing to avail himself of the proposed arrangement would apply to the Savings Bank department for a book containing eight orders of any of the values named, for which he would be charged a commission of 1½d. on each order, so that each book would cost him one shilling whatever the value of the orders it contained. The orders would be payable on presentation with the deposit book at any Postal Savings Bank Office, and the Postmaster is to enter the amount just in the same way as he enters an ordinary withdrawal.

This suggestion is not new, but the present projector claims to have overcome practical difficulties which have been raised when similar schemes have been brought forward in the past. In the absence of more precise details than have been disclosed up to the present time it is quite impossible to say whether the scheme could be worked, but we should like to take the preliminary objection that there is really no need for the proposed order, and that the withdrawal of money on demand is altogether foreign to the object for which Savings Banks were instituted. It is quite true that a depositor can now withdraw money by telegraph, but we are inclined to think that withdrawals by telegraph are hindrances rather than helps to thrift. In an ordinary bank it is, of course, important that customers should be able to get their money at once, but the usefulness of Savings Banks is increased by the interposition of a slight delay and the necessity of taking a little trouble before a withdrawal can be made. A thriftless man with a book of the proposed orders in his pocket would soon turn them all into money, and when the money had been spent, and he has, perhaps, nothing to show for it except the empty covers of his order book, he would not feel very grateful to the ingenious propounder of the Savings Bank Postal Order scheme. With very little trouble and without any expense a Post Office Savings Bank depositor can withdraw money on the day following that on which his notice reaches London.

The experience of nearly thirty-five years has shown that the existing system is sufficient for depositors, and even if the present scheme is workable, a question upon which, in the absence of fuller details, we withhold our opinion, we think the projector must as a preliminary step show that there is a demand for it.

Cable Communication with South Africa.

IN consequence of recent events in the Transvaal, and the delay which for several days occurred to ordinary telegrams between that part of the world and Europe, much interest has been naturally shown in our cable communications with South Africa. The following statement, says the *Electrician* of the 10th January, may serve to remove much of the misapprehension which appears to exist on this subject. The present submarine connections under normal conditions, with South Africa are as follows:—

The original cables on the East Coast, starting from Aden, where they join the Eastern Company's system of duplicate and triplicate lines to this country and the East. The sections are: Aden to Zanzibar, Zanzibar to Mozambique, Mozambique to Delago Bay, and Delagoa Bay to Durban, where they connect with the Government land lines communicating with the interior of South Africa and Cape Town. There are two cables between Zanzibar and Mozambique, and the East Coast lines are all provided with apparatus for duplex working.

From Cape Town the West Coast cables establish communication with England by way of Mossamedes, Benguella, Loando, Accra, Sierra Leone, St. Vincent, Madeira, Lisbon to the Land's End. From St. Vincent to Lisbon the cables are duplicated, and from Lisbon to the Land's End there are three submarine lines. It will be seen, therefore, that starting from Lisbon, there is a complete telegraphic circle, forming two alternative routes, round the continent of Africa.

On Tuesday, December 24th, the cable between Aden and Zanzibar became interrupted, and at this time the Eastern Telegraph Company's cable steamer, "Chiltern," was two days out from Suez on her way to Aden, where she arrived on the Friday night, and found a telegram awaiting the ship's arrival instructing her to proceed to the repair. Having coaled with all despatch, she left on Saturday evening for the position of the break, which was caused by suspension across a submarine valley. The interruption of this cable, it will be observed, was prior to the outbreak of hostilities in the Transvaal, and before any information that they were probable had reached this country. Notwithstanding, however, that the company had no reason to apprehend any unusual pressure upon their cables, the Eastern and South African Telegraph Company, in order to save the six extra days which it would have taken their own repairing steamer, the "Great Northern," then at Cape Town fully manned, to restore the communication, chartered at considerable expense the s.s. "Chiltern." On the following Thursday, January

2nd, the ship arrived in the neighbourhood of the fault, fulfilling anticipations almost to an hour. With the second sweep of her grapnel she hooked the Aden end of the cable, and proceeded to pick up the fault. The end was then buoyed, and she proceeded to grapple for the Zanzibar end, which she was successful in securing at the first attempt. The necessary tests having been effected, the final splice was made and the cable dropped into its position at 7 p.m., London time, on Saturday, January 4th.

Meanwhile, in addition to heavy traffic in connection with the Ashantee expedition, events had arisen which are too well-known to need recapitulation, which flooded the remaining line of communication, viz., that by the West Coast, with Government telegrams sufficient to tax the cables to their utmost capacity, and as it is a provision of the International Convention that such traffic should take precedence of all other telegrams, it necessarily followed that Press and ordinary messages were excluded until the line was completely clear of official despatches. The first telegram containing information of the events alluded to was handed in at the Cape Town office on December 30th, and from that day until January 4th, when the East Coast connection was restored, not a single ordinary telegram, either Press or commercial, left South Africa for Europe of later date than December 30th. The restoration of the East Coast line, in any case, would have afforded immediate relief to the pressure; but, as hostilities had ceased, the Government traffic was not so heavy, thus affording a double relief to the West Coast route. Owing to arrangements made in London, by which the different routes were judiciously utilised, the block of nearly a week's traffic from and to the Cape is now practically cleared. There has not, however, during the whole period, been the slightest delay on the messages of any Government, British or otherwise. It should be distinctly understood that the submarine companies are only responsible for delay upon messages received at their offices on the seaboard, the land lines in this case being solely controlled by the Governments of the Transvaal and Cape Colony.

It should be borne in mind that the carrying capacity of every cable is strictly determined by the size of its conductor and its length, and allowing for the comparatively slow rate at which long submarine cables must of necessity be worked, it does not require much calculation to see that the unusually heavy Government traffic could not fail to cause considerable delay to ordinary messages. And obviously cable companies cannot be expected to expend millions of money in laying triplicate lines to provide for a contingency which may only occur once in a generation, and which was caused in this case by the most inopportune interruption of one of the existing lines of communication.

The existing cables have a great reserve of carrying capacity over all ordinary traffic, and no delay was caused by the abnormally heavy telegraphing recently in connection with South African mining.

Civil Service Insurance.

THE Civil Service Insurance Society has just issued a prospectus, or handbook, which is calculated to be of great service to intending insurers. Originally started with the object of carrying on life insurance only, the Society has launched out into fire, burglary, housebreaking, larceny, accident, and sickness insurance; and it is hoped that before long the widows' and orphans' annuity scheme will have been launched. Not yet six years old, the Society had, up to the end of last year, issued 13,500 policies, insuring *three-and-a-half millions sterling*—a success as phenomenal as it must be gratifying to the promoters of the scheme. The handbook under notice will, no doubt, tend greatly to increase the popularity of the Society, crowded as it is with information on every point relating to insurance business, and with tables of premiums containing the fullest particulars under every possible kind of policy. There are also lists of the officers, council, committee of management, district committees, and local correspondents of the society, the latter covering the whole Kingdom, and embracing nearly all departments, more particularly the Post Office. It is satisfactory to notice that Lord Welby, who, when Secretary to the Treasury, became the first president of the Society, still continues to hold that office; and that amongst the vice-presidents the heads of nearly all the departments of the State are included, Mr. Spencer Walpole being, of course, amongst them. Lord Welby not only took a warm interest in the scheme from the beginning, but secured for it the sympathy and support of the then Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), who related in a Treasury minute of the 16th November, 1890, that, "having regard to the value of the scheme as a whole, every encouragement should be given to its initiation." That the initiating stage has been successfully accomplished is very largely due to the splendid services of Sir Ralph Knox, K.C.B., assistant financial secretary at the War Office, and his colleagues on the council and committee of management.

The Cable Repairs Steamer "Mackay-Bennett."

THE *ELECTRICAL REVIEW* of January 10th publishes a very interesting article under the above heading. We give the following extracts:—

"One of the great companies, the Commercial Cable Company, owns and operates three complete submarine lines between Europe and the United States. To keep these cables in order this enterprising company has a fine steamer, the 'Mackay-Bennett,' which was built especially for the purpose by John Elder & Co., at Govan on the Clyde, at a cost of \$320,000. She is 260 feet long, 40 feet beam, and 22 feet deep, and is propelled by twin screws driven by independent compound engines, each having a high pressure cylinder 15 inches in diameter, and a low pressure cylinder 25 inches in diameter, the stroke being 3 feet. The combined horse-power of

the engines is 1,500. The gross tonnage of the vessel is 1,700, and the coal capacity is 750 tons. Her speed is 12 knots per hour."

"The steamer is fitted up with all the modern machinery for grappling, picking up, and paying out cable. It is lighted throughout by electricity, and is furnished with electric search lights so that work can be carried on during the night."

"To one not familiar with the characteristics of the electric current it seems a difficult matter to locate a fault in an ocean cable hundreds of miles at sea, but a competent electrician can generally locate the fault within a few miles. The insulation of the conductor must be maintained in a very perfect condition, otherwise the cable is rendered useless. A puncture in the insulation of the diameter of a hair is sufficient to interfere with the proper working of the cable, and to necessitate the journey of the repair steamer to the point where such an apparently insignificant thing exists. On reaching the vicinity of the fault the grapnels are thrown out and the cable lifted to the steamer, when it is taken on board and dissected and repaired, the defective section being removed and replaced by a perfect piece of cable."

"The 'Mackay-Bennett' can lay cable at the rate of six to eight miles per hour. She came on from Halifax in September last to lay cable for reporting the yacht race. The shore end of the cable was dropped at Coney Island at a point east of the Oriental Hotel. From this point it was laid to the lightship, and an extra mile was run out in great coils to enable the ship to change her position if necessary. By means of this cable reports of the movements of the yachts were instantly transmitted to New York city, so that the progress of the race was better known to observers of the bulletins than to most of the actual spectators."

Prizes Going Cheap.

THE following paragraph appeared in *The Gentlewoman* of the 25th January last:—

"A CORNER FOR CORRECTIONS.—Inaccuracies are apt at times to obtrude themselves in print even in the best regulated papers, or carefully revised books. To stimulate the diligence of our readers in noting these errors, books to the value of one guinea each week will be given for the most noteworthy correction in any paper or book. The original paragraph must be cut out and sent, except in the case of a book, with a brief statement of facts, giving such authority for the correction as the reader may possess. Competitors should take pains to verify their corrections before communicating them. . . .

"The prize of books to the value of one guinea is this week awarded to

"THE HON. V. GREVILLE, "Wellington, Shropshire, who corrects an error in a society journal. The error was in saying that the Duke of Norfolk is the first Duke who has ever held

the office of Postmaster-General. Miss Greville finds this incorrect, as her grandfather, the late Duke of Montrose, held that office."

A very moderate amount of research would have revealed the facts that:—

James, 3rd Duke of Montrose, was appointed Postmaster-General in 1804.

William, Duke of Manchester, was appointed Postmaster-General in 1827.

Charles, Duke of Richmond, was appointed Postmaster-General in 1830.

George, Duke of Argyll, was appointed Postmaster-General in 1855.

James, 4th Duke of Montrose, was appointed Postmaster-General in 1866.

As well as Henry, Duke of Norfolk, in 1895, and the present Dukes of Devonshire and Rutland before they succeeded to their Dukedoms.

In fact, the Post Office has been a regular Dukery.

A Deluge of Stamps.

SOME years ago there was an outbreak of "snowball" letters, as they were called, in various parts of England. People were requested to make copies of a letter and send them to friends, the contributions asked for being generally unused stamps in varying numbers. This fashion, started in aid of bazaars and other charities, had a brief vogue and died a natural death, but at least the request made was comprehensible. In the case of the American "chain letter" there is not even this to be said. A correspondent of the *Times*, in the course of a humorous article, describes a remarkable case in connection with the daughter of a blacksmith at Kaneville, Illinois, Miss Mattie E. Garman, who is a cripple. Some time last year a friend of hers, a young girl named Edna R. Brown, determined to make an attempt to assist Miss Garman by collecting a million used postage stamps. Such a collection Miss Brown fancied could be sold for a hundred dollars, which sum would pay for a doctor's advice. With the assistance of a friend in New York she started a chain of letters, which has since grown to so stupendous a size that the Post Office officials of America are said to be at their wits' end to know how to cope with it. The chain started in September, 1894, and within a month letters containing cancelled stamps began to pour in upon unpretending and stupefied Kaneville, and increased in number week by week until they now average over 6,000 a day. They come from Russia, Germany, Denmark, Holland, Italy, Spain, India, China, Japan, South and Central America, and especially England and Scotland. It is the most gigantic thing in the way of correspondence the world has ever heard of; its originator receives more letters in a day or week than any other person on earth receives

or ever did receive. She herself is powerless to stop the flow, the United States postal authorities can do nothing, and the letters still stream in. This is how the *Chicago Chronicle* describes the condition of Kaneville :

“ Kaneville is flooded with mail matter. Postage stamps are stacked up in farmhouses around Kaneville like wheat in a bin. . . . The opening of these letters alone is a task too much for a dozen persons. The neighbours and the country people for miles around have helped in this work, taking the letters home in sacks and waggon loads to open and sort out the stamps. These honest country folks don't know what to think about it at all. They know that letters are coming ' by the bushels and bushels.' Everybody within a radius of five miles of Kaneville has opened letters and sorted old stamps until every henhouse and corn crib looks like a post office, till every grain sheaf and corn shock and haystack looks like a mail pouch or pile of mail pouches, till every chip and rustling leaf is to their rustic minds the perforated edges and gummed backs of postage stamps. Kaneville is buried under letters and postage stamps ; postal revenues and receipts is the topic there instead of crops, and philately is studied instead of the weather indications. The Kaneville post office is swamped with letters. About 16 out of every 5,000 letters received there are for some of the other 75 or more residents at Kaneville—all the rest are addressed to Edna R. Brown.”

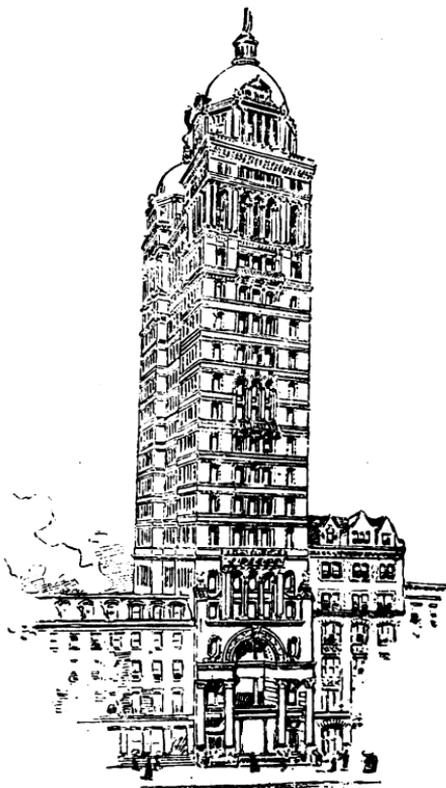
Over 2,000,000 letters and 30,000,000 stamps have already been received in Kaneville, and no one can say when the end will come.

Civil Service Honours.

A CORRESPONDENT has taken the trouble to count the number of C.B.-ships and other distinctions conferred on officials in different Government departments. Twenty-two departments share between them 121 honours in the Orders of the Bath, St. Michael and St. George, the Star of India, and the Indian Empire. In the Order of the Bath the War Office and Admiralty head the list with 30 and 13 a-piece, the Colonial Office coming next with 8, while the Foreign Office and Treasury tie for fourth place with 7. The Local Government Board and the Inland Revenue Department have each 6, the Home Office 5, and the India Office, the Board of Trade, the National Debt Office, the Science and Art Department, the British Museum and the General Post Office 4. Of the offices with four distinctions in the Order of the Bath, the Post Office alone has none above the rank of a Companion. The India Office and the Science and Art department have one K.C.B. a-piece, the National Debt Office 2, the British Museum 3, and the Board of Trade 4. In the Order of St. Michael and St. George the War Office again heads the list with 13 honours, the Foreign Office coming second with 7, the Colonial Office third with 6, the Board of Trade fourth with 3, the General Post Office and the Admiralty coming next with 2. But of the two Admiralty honours one is a K.C.M.G., while

both the Post Office Orders are C.M.G.'s. The Indian Orders are practically monopolised by the India Office and Indian Council, which together take 21 out of a total of 25.

Is the distribution of "honours"—birthday, new year or otherwise—managed upon any principle, and, if so, what may the principle be?



The Commercial Cable Company's Office, New York.

THE plans for the building which the Commercial Cable Company intends to erect in New York have been completed by the same architects who designed the Postal Telegraph Company's building, of which we gave an illustration in a previous number (vol. iv., p. 329). The latter building, with its seventeen stories, appears to a mere Englishman to be rather too high, but it will be eclipsed by the new-comer, which will boast twenty-one stories. Above these will rise two towers surmounted by domes representing the two hemispheres. The towers will be connected by a mansard roof more than 300 feet above the street level. On the domes the Old and New Worlds, joined by the cables of the Commercial Cable Company, will be shown in relief.

The Last Straw!

(*Vide Post Office Circular, February 18th, 1896.*)

φη φη φω φυμ!—NURSERY CLASSICS.

O DESOLATE! O desolate!
 Sad, sad is our unhappy state!
 Let indignation boil!
 Gone forth hath now the dark decree;
 No more across the rolling sea,
 Unto Bulgaria may we
 Despatch—*geranium oil!*

To Novi-Bazar well we know
 Pork and potatoes must not go;
 Nor sausages to Greece;
 Nor saccharin to Massowah;
 Nor ganje into Guiana;
 And now to dear Bulgaria
 —*Geranium oil* must cease!

Rise up, ye long down-trodden ones;
 Rise, rise to arms, great Freedom's sons,
 Now grovelling 'mid the soil!
 And when the long fought fight is o'er,
 And victory's won, we yet once more
 Unto Bulgaria's happy shore
 May—send *geranium oil!*

Stafford.

H. E. GRANGER.

An Impudent Thief.

RECENTLY a Mr. Hinchliffe, watchmaker and jeweller, of Heckmondwike, received a letter purporting to come from Mr. J. Martin, of Greenock, asking for a silver Waltham watch to be sent to him "on approval." He was a little suspicious about the postmark, and noticed that it bore a full stop after each abbreviated word, which is contrary to the marking of all genuine post office stamps. Acting under his advice, a dummy letter parcel was sent to Mr. Martin, and the Chief Constable of Greenock was informed of the circumstances. What followed will be seen from the following letter dated from the Police Chambers, Greenock:

"SIR,—I duly received your communication, and noticing that the envelope enclosed bore the Glasgow post office stamp I at once concluded that the writer of the letter to you was resident in that city. I accordingly had the post office here watched, and this afternoon a man, in presence of the officer, asked for a letter addressed to 'J. Martin,' got it, and was at once arrested, and is now under detention here. Important documents were found on him which show a systematic scheme of defrauding the Lieges. His true name appears to be —, his address —, in Glasgow. The following

was on him when arrested, which in its line is original, and had he got the watch no doubt Mr. Hinchliffe would have been honoured with a copy.

“ ‘ Sir,—I have received the ——. Thanks. I am a commercial traveller—here to-day, and gone to-morrow. I leave G. (Glasgow) to-night. I am a *forger*, a *thief*, and a *swindler*. The post office date-stamp on my first letter is a forgery. As for yourself—well, you are a fool. Why do you not insist on the deposit system when dealing with strangers? You will never hear from me again, but I hope this experience will do you good.—Yours faithfully,

[No signature.]”



Trop de Zèle.

OUR illustration half explains itself. A member of the surveying staff left a certain town in the eastern counties with more than the usual amount of luggage. Two portmanteaus were placed in the guard's van, and the carriage in which he travelled conveyed amongst other things an arum lily, umbrella, stick, official pouch and two books. On arrival at his destination the surveying officer asked the junior town postman, who was waiting on the platform for the day mail bags, if he would kindly assist in taking some of the goods and chattels from the carriage. This particular junior town postman is an excessively nervous and simple person, and probably has never travelled in a railway carriage or become acquainted with the luxuries of modern travel. Furthermore he is always anxious to show his best behaviour when members of the surveying staff visit his town. So it happened that while the surveying officer

was seeking the "Bussy" to take his heavier luggage from the rear of the train he encountered the junior town postman walking towards the omnibus with, not his goods and chattels, but the foot-warmer on his shoulder. In order that our readers may fully realize the lengths to which official zeal can go, we may mention that the "warmer" was only filled with boiling water about fifteen minutes before it was handled by the junior town postman.

Fawcett and Fitzgerald.

THE recently published *Letters of Edward Fitzgerald to Fanny Kemble* contain a funny account of a meeting between "Old Fitz" and Professor Fawcett. Writing from Aldeburgh on September 1st, 1882, Fitzgerald says: "I have made a new acquaintance here. Professor Fawcett (Postmaster-General, I am told) married a Daughter of one Newson Garrett of this Place who is also Father of your Doctor Anderson. Well the Professor (who was utterly blinded by the Discharge of his Father's Gun some twenty-five years ago), came to this Lodging to call on Aldis Wright: and when Wright was gone called on me and smoked a Pipe one night here. A thoroughly unaffected, unpretending man, so modest, indeed, that I was ashamed afterwards to think how I had harangued him all the Evening, instead of getting him to instruct me. But I would not ask him about his Parliamentary Shop: and I should not have understood his Political Economy: and I believe he was very glad to be talked to instead, about some of those he knew, and some whom I had known. And as we were both in Crabbe's Borough we talked of him: the Professor, who had never read a word, I believe, about him, or of him, was pleased to hear a little, and I advised him to buy the life written by Crabbe's Son, and I would give him my Abstract of the *Tales of the Hall* by way of giving him a taste of the Poet's self."

A curious revelation is this of Fitzgerald's habit of mind and of his love of capital letters. Consideration for others is constantly striving with a desire to appear indifferent to all things here below and up above. His philosophy seems summed up in the words of Omar Khayyam:

"'Tis all a chequer-board of nights and days
Where destiny with men for pieces plays:
Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays,
And one by one back in the closet lays."

K. T. L.

A Rare Chance.

THE minds of the *unco guid* across the Border are often much exercised by the question of Sunday delivery of letters, which has hitherto been as much tabooed as organs in churches. Still, the position is not as strong as it was, and the subject has been hotly debated in many a local senate. Even if the inhabitants do not wish for Sunday delivery for themselves, their keen eye for business

reminds them that summer visitors are less scrupulous, and the cases are by no means infrequent where the matter has been compromised by allowing people to call for their letters in the summer, while in the winter the office is entirely closed. Recently a town much resorted to by tourists was greatly agitated by a proposal to open the office on Sunday mornings all the year round, that sin having hitherto been confined to the summer months. The contest in the Council was bitter and long, and one Baillie at last rose and wound up a powerful defence of the innovation proposed by suggesting that men would have a glorious opportunity of proving their piety by refraining from calling for their letters on the Sabbath when they had an opportunity of doing so.

“Thus may we gather honey from the weed,
And make a moral of the devil himself.”



An Unpleasant Experience.

THE driver of the Newport to Brecon mail cart left Newport on Monday, the 11th November last, at 2.20 a.m. as usual, and should have arrived at Abergavenny by 4.40, but on reaching a point of the road on the Abergavenny side of the bridge at Llanellen, he found the river had overflowed the roadway. The water was about level with the axles, when the horses jibbed and backed the mail cart into a ditch. The frantic struggle of the horses, aided by the rapidly rising water, speedily carried the cart over the hedge into an adjoining field, and as the harness held the horses to the mail cart, both were drowned. Meanwhile the water continued to rise with great rapidity, and the driver had to clamber up to the top of the

parcels on the top of the mail cart. He shouted for help in vain until daylight came, when, owing to the rapid stream, his rescue proved one of great difficulty.

The mail bags and parcel baskets were subsequently got at—a by no means easy task—and were taken to Abergavenny. As the bags were opened the letters were taken out and spread on trays in front of large fires at the post office, by the Postmistress, Miss Bigglestone. The practice of tying the letters tightly together in bundles saved them to a great extent. In no case was the address absolutely obliterated.



Birds' Nest in a Letter-Box.

A TOM-TIT (writes Mr. Tombs) made her nest in the bottom of a Post Office Letter-Box at Winterbourne, near Bristol, laid her eggs, and notwithstanding that letters were posted in the box, and that the box was cleared by the Postman every day, the bird tenaciously held to her nest, and brought up five young Tits, two of which perished in their attempts to get out of the box by means of the small posting aperture through which their mother had squeezed so frequently, carrying with her all the materials for the nest. The three survivors flew off one day when the door of the box was purposely left open for a time by the obliging Postman portrayed in the picture.

Post Office Clerks' Benevolent Fund.

THE Annual General Meeting of the subscribers to this fund was held in the General Post Office, North, on Wednesday, the 4th March, the Duke of Norfolk, K.G., presiding.

In their report for the year 1895, the committee stated that it was their pleasant duty to notice that the officers of the department still co-operated in promoting the success of the fund, for although,

through death, retirement, and other causes, 46 subscriptions had, during the year, been withdrawn, 38 new subscribers had joined; in addition to which 30 other officers had signified their intention to become subscribers during the ensuing year. Of the new subscribers, 42 are ladies attached to the Clearing House branch. The total income derived from all sources, which showed an increase of £1 17s. 10d. over that received last year, amounted to £438 1s. 2d., of which amount £305 18s. 1d. came under the urgent distress account, and £132 3s. 1d. under the pension account. The total outlay amounted to £289 os. 6d., the sum of £140 having been disbursed under each head of the fund, and £9 os. 6d. for incidental expenses; a balance of £149 os. 8d. being carried forward. Under a liberal interpretation of Rule 6 assistance had been given to an officer of the Receiver and Accountant-General's Office, and in two instances further aid had been rendered to widows of officers who had been previously assisted. It was a question whether this rule might not with advantage be widened, and the committee, in view of the satisfactory state of accounts, contemplated suggesting to the members such an alteration of it as would enable them, in the exercise of their discretion, to afford relief in cases of exceptional distress overtaking officers still in the Service, or officers on the pension list. They had not, however, yet decided what, if any, alteration should be recommended, and it was proposed in a short time to call a special meeting to consider this point. Meanwhile individual members might desire to make known their views upon it to the hon. secretary, and thus assist the committee in arriving at a decision.

The Duke of Norfolk moved the adoption of the report, and congratulated the Society on the careful way in which its funds were distributed. Mr. Walpole seconded the motion, and expressed his regret at the absence, through illness, of Mr. Yeld, the chairman of the committee. On the motion being carried, Mr. Lewin Hill moved the re-election of the committee. He hoped that as so many ladies had joined the Society the time would soon come when they would be represented on the committee. Mr. Buxton Forman seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously. Cordial votes of thanks were passed to the auditors, the committee, and the hon. secretary (Mr. T. M. Plucknett). Sir R. Hunter, in moving a vote of thanks to the Postmaster-General for occupying the chair, said nothing conduced more largely to the popularity of a monarch than to show himself to his subjects. They were glad to know that his Grace took a great interest in the department over which he presided and the institutions connected with it. The motion was seconded by Mr. C. D. Lang, and adopted with acclamation. The Postmaster-General, in reply, said it was quite right of them to thank the committee, the auditors, and the secretary for their labours, but it was very kind of them to thank him simply for occupying the chair that afternoon. Sir R. Hunter had compared him to a sovereign, and

said it added to the popularity of a monarch to show himself to his subjects. That, however, depended a good deal upon the sovereign and whether he enjoyed the confidence of his subjects. He was glad to acknowledge that he had been met in that spirit ever since he had been at the Post Office. The restless energy of the Post Office broke out in all sorts of directions—in volunteering, in smoking concerts, and in every form of charity. The motto in the Post Office seemed to be the more work the less talk, as had been shown by the speeches at that meeting. He would not break that golden rule, but content himself with thanking them very heartily, and expressing his best wishes for the success of the fund in whose interest they had met that day.



MR. A. STAFFORD.

A Local Celebrity.

PERHAPS the best known person in connection with the service in Oxfordshire is Alfred Stafford, the driver of the mail cart between Aylesbury and Wallingford. Every night for a period of more than twenty years Mr. Stafford has driven fifty-two miles, his absences on sick leave during that time amounting to three days only. The times kept by him are really wonderful. Although there is but a margin of five minutes allowed between his arrival at Wallingford and the departure of the connecting mail cart to the apparatus on the Great Western main line, only on two occasions, if we omit exceptional periods when floods and snow-storms have disorganized the traffic, has Stafford missed the mail. On each occasion this was due to his horse having fallen. His good times are proverbial in the districts he passes through, and in out-of-the-way places so punctual is he, night after night, that persons set their clocks by him. Stafford never takes a holiday, but drives on year after year, the number of miles gone over by him being considerably more than four hundred thousand. The chief secret of the good

times kept by him is that he only uses the finest horses, and always looks after them himself. Mr. Stafford, of course, is full of reminiscences. He used to carry firearms at first, but soon left them at home. He appears to be more troubled with "ghosts" than with highwaymen, as on two occasions he has met with escaped lunatics from Stone Asylum, who, visiting the "glimpses of the moon," have been clad in nothing more substantial than their night-dresses.

Wallingford.

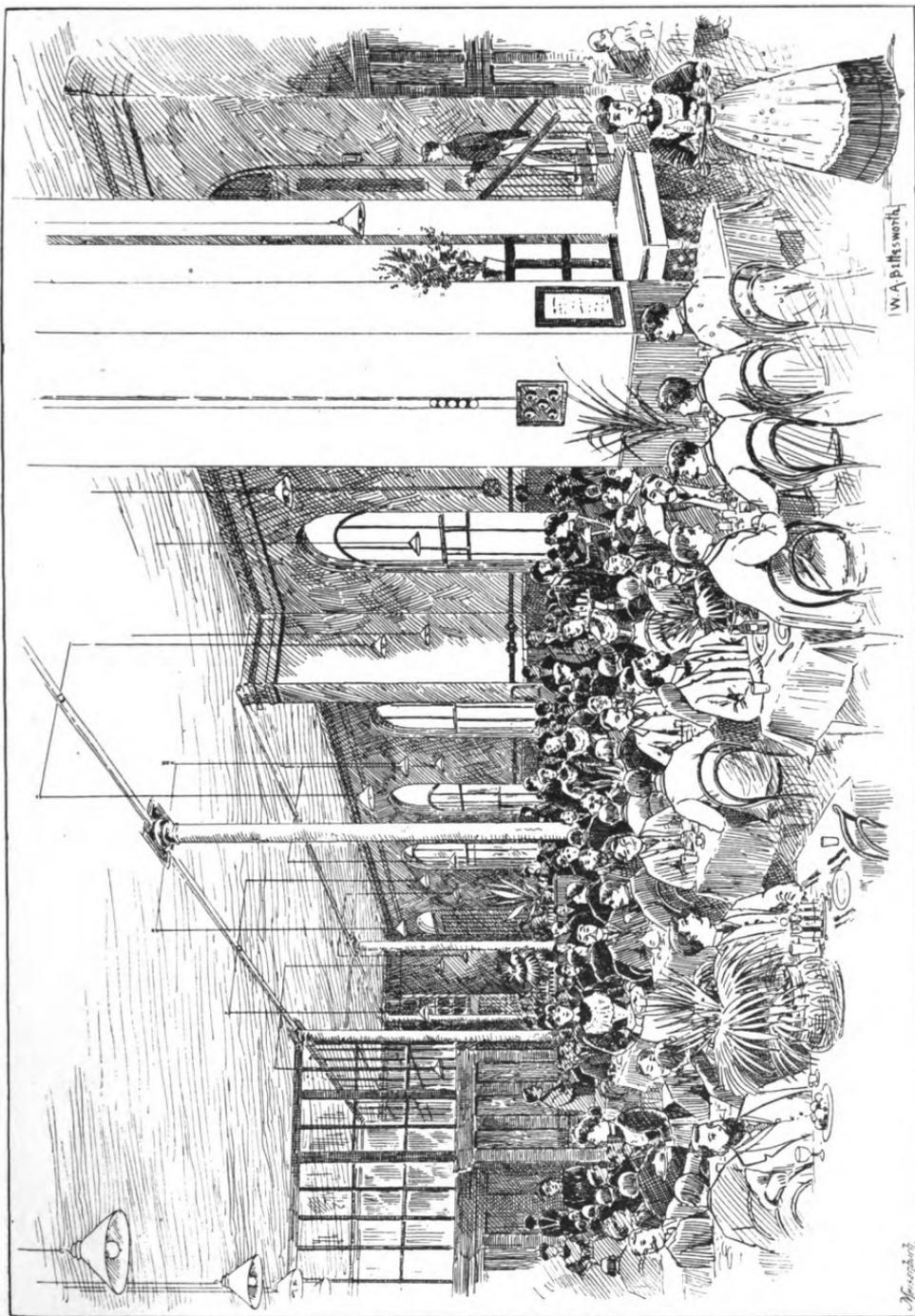
C. H. HONEYSETT.

Post Office Musical Society.

THE new conductor of this Society, Mr. Charles Stevens, of the Secretary's office, has not been long in showing us that under his guidance there will be no lack of that enterprise and good performance which we have been accustomed to expect from his predecessor, Mr. Sydney Beckley. On Monday the 10th February, Mr. J. F. Barnett's cantata, "The Ancient Mariner," was rendered at the Queen's Hall before an appreciative audience. The efficient choir and orchestra displayed a vigour of attack and careful attention to light and shade which argued much painstaking preparation. The solos were in the hands of Mesdames Annie Buckland and Annie Marriott, and Messrs. Charles Chilly and S. Beckley. A miscellaneous selection comprised the second part of the concert, not the least successful item being Mr. Arthur Payne's violin solo. Mr. Stevens is to be congratulated on the result of his efforts. Mr. Beckley was unfortunately suffering from a relaxed throat, and naturally he was by no means at his best. But everybody present was delighted with the singing of Madame Annie Buckland, who by her manner, expression and excellent voice, contributed in no small degree to the success of the concert. Among those present to support the new conductor in his first appearance in connection with the Society, we noticed Mr. Spencer Walpole, Sir Robert Hunter, Mr. Fischer, C.M.G., Mr. J. C. Badcock, and Mr. J. F. Barnett, the composer of the cantata.

A Refreshing Report.

WE give an illustration of the scene now to be witnessed daily at the new G.P.O. North Refreshment Club, the first General Meeting of which was held on the 24th of February, when between 300 and 400 members testified their interest by attending. The Report, which covered the four months up to the 31st of December last, showed that the number of members on the roll was 954, and that the daily number of luncheons and teas served was over 700. We understand that in both cases the numbers are now higher; and this shows that the institution has met a real want. The accounts for the same period showed a profit of £86, which warranted the Committee in making certain reductions in the tariff, that have evidently been much appreciated.





Altogether, we may congratulate the Committee on the evident success, from all points of view, which has attended their efforts, and which attests the skill and judgment with which the enterprise was planned and carried out. Undoubtedly, one element of this success lies in the fact that practically all the senior officers come up to lunch. This has a good effect on all, as indeed anything does that promotes personal association amongst the different classes of our brother officers.



A Country Post Office.

THIS picture of the Sub-Post Office at Cribbs Causeway, five miles from Bristol, may give our readers who are "in cities pent" a longing for a temporary sojourn in so delightful a retreat for rest of mind and body, and at the same time to have about them, in the way of dispensation of Postage Stamps and Postal Orders and the distribution of letters, some little reminder of the great department to which they are attached. This charming little Post Office has only three houses anywhere near it, but it serves a large, albeit very sparsely populated area. Its chief interest rests in the fact that it is unique in appearance and position, and owing to its having been the half-way house on the once important highway from Bristol to New Passage, for the Ferry over the Severn into South Wales. Some of our elderly readers may probably recollect it as the stopping stage of the coaches, which, prior to the introduction of the railway system, ran between Bristol and the New Passage. The Sub-Post Office, which stands on high

ground, is held by two sisters, who went to it as a health resort, from a farm in the low-lying Severn marshes. They act as Post-women, and brisk exercise and the early morning dew has brought such roses to their cheeks as would be envied by their Post Office sisters, whose fate it is to reside in smoke begrimed regions.

R. C. TOMBS.

Post Office Lecturers.

WE are always glad to hear of Post Office men who have been interesting the public in the history or work of their department. Mr. W. Thompson, of Newark, read a paper in January last at the Barnbygate Mutual Improvement Society, Newark, on "The Post Office System." He pointed out the advances made during the past few years in the postal system, both in this country and the Colonies. He also gave an account of the way letters are carried into Central Africa and the Transvaal, marvellous alterations having taken place in the latter country during the last few years. We understand the paper was much appreciated.

* * *

On the 18th February, Mr. R. G. Cove, the Postmaster of Kidderminster, gave a lecture on "The Work of the Post Office," in the Baxter Church Schools, Kidderminster. The interest in the lecture was increased by the exhibition of slides, and by electrical demonstrations and telegraphic instruments being actually seen at work in the room, and telegrams sent and received, the operators being Miss Cove and Mr. Tonkinson. The slides included representations of Sir Rowland Hill, his statue in the town, the conditions under which the letters were formerly carried, the old and new Post Offices at Kidderminster and other places, and a railway map showing the lines on which the mail trains travel day by day. The following is an extract from Mr. Cove's interesting lecture: "The present time is most appropriate for reviewing the progress of the Post Office, seeing that it was just 100 years ago in December last, that Rowland Hill, to whose persistent efforts we owe the penny postage, was born in Blackwell Street. If the time is appropriate, so is the place. Kidderminster ought to be proud of such a citizen, although in December I looked in vain for a wreath on the statue from the Kidderminster people. Not even a solitary primrose was laid at the feet of her greatest son; perhaps they were being kept for St. Beaconsfield. Even the *Shuttle* passed over the day without a tribute to his memory. But we will at any rate remember him in our talk to-night. It must not be thought that Sir Rowland first originated the Post Office! I have met people who imagine this. What he did was to invent the penny stamp and introduce a change which enabled a letter to be sent from one end of the kingdom to another for the uniform charge of one penny. Previous to that, distance regulated the charge. Like all great reforms the reduction to a penny was brought inch by inch. The people in power who considered they had all the brains were sure it would be a failure.

The result shows that you have only to propose something new and people will be found to oppose, not because they have thought the subject out, but because it is new."

* * *

A lecture on the "Post Office" was delivered in the Town Hall, Chipping Norton, on the 14th February, by Mr. J. Davenport, Postmaster of Banbury. In the course of an interesting lecture, a considerable portion of which was historical, Mr. Davenport related some good anecdotes. Here is a specimen: An old lady called at the Post Office to ask him for information respecting the marriage laws. Her daughter's husband had threatened to turn his wife out of doors, and she wanted to know if he could legally do so. Mr. Davenport recommended her to go to the clergyman who had married the couple, but the old lady said she had been there and was recommended to go to the Postmaster. He then told her to go to the Superintendent-Registrar, but she said she had been there also. At last the old lady had a bright idea: she would telegraph to Mr. Gladstone, who was then the leader of the opposition. This she did, and received a reply back informing her that Mr. Gladstone had gone on the Continent. She complained very much about this, saying, that if he wanted to go gallivanting about the country like that he should have some one to manage his business for him.



MR. GEORGE PATTINSON.

Bravery.

MR. GEORGE PATTINSON, the senior officer employed in the Telegraph Instrument Room, at Dumfries, has been awarded the Royal Humane Society's Medal and Certificate in recognition of his bravery in rescuing a child from drowning in the River Nith, on the 27th August last. We cannot do better than quote the words of Mr. Redford, who has taken an active interest in the case:—

"The river was in high flood at the time, and any one who has seen it, as I have, in that condition, will be able to fully appreciate

how terrible was the risk which Mr. Pattinson nobly undertook without a moment's hesitation. His heroism is intensified when it is recollected that one strong swimmer had already been overcome in his efforts to save the child, and was fast being swept away by the current. Nothing could be done to save this unfortunate would be rescuer, but happily Mr. Pattinson, although not particularly robust himself, succeeded in reaching the child and regaining the river bank."



MR. D. CAMERON.

Four days previously (on the 23rd August), Mr. D. Cameron, a postman, at Dunoon, risked his life in saving a lad named MacKinlay. The lad fell into the water whilst fishing from the under structure of the Dunoon pier, and but for Cameron's courage and promptitude, would have been swept away by the surge of a passing steamer. Mr. Cameron has received the Royal Humane Society's testimonial.

Christmas Cards.

IN response to our invitation we received a goodly number of Christmas cards. The majority take the form of photographs of the places from which they emanate, and there has been little or no attempt at anything like artistic work on the part of the designers. Perhaps this is as well, as all attempts we have seen to treat the Post Office artistically have been failures. Bingley beat the record in its effusiveness towards the Editor of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*. On Christmas Day it simply rained cards from Bingley. The Postmaster and Postal Telegraph Staff, the Federated Postmen at Bingley, the Telegraph Messengers at Bingley, each sent separate cards, containing different views of their town. Brentwood, Lincoln and Runcorn and Machynlleth sent us cards with pretty views of the different places. The General Factory, Mount Pleasant, produced a small album containing four views, and with the names of

the senders inscribed in the cover, and we liked this idea. The city of Gloucester Postal Staff chose as the subject for their card a portrait of Sir Charles Wheatstone, the inventor of the Electric Telegraph. Then we had cards from the Colonies, and kind wishes from individuals in other parts of the world, and we thank everybody.



MR. H. H. FLOWERS.

Mr. H. H. Flowers.

WE have much pleasure in giving the portrait of Mr. H. H. Flowers, Postmaster of Mafeking, Bechuanaland, who as all newspaper-readers know, has been an important witness in Jameson's trial. Mr. Flowers is a native of Bath, and for two years held an appointment in the Postal Telegraph Service there. He went to South Africa with the intention of entering commercial life, but, on the call to arms for Sir Charles Warren's Field Force, he volunteered for service in the 2nd Mounted Rifles, under Sir F. Carrington. At the close of the expedition, during which he acquired a good knowledge of the construction of field lines, he was placed in charge of the Setlagoli Office. Twelve months later, when the telegraphs were handed over to the British Bechuanaland Civil Administration, he was transferred to the Vryburg Office, and in 1890, upon the amalgamation of the postal and telegraph services, was appointed Postmaster of Mafeking.

Mr. Flowers, like many another Postmaster in South Africa, is a subscriber to *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, and we can also number him

among our contributors. Those of our readers, if any, who missed the first instalment of an article from his pen, on the subject of the Bechuanaland Telegraphs, which appeared in volume V. (p. 227), should turn to it now, as we are promised the remainder of it for our next number.

We hope that Mr. Flowers will enjoy his trip to the old country.

The Telephone System of the Continent of Europe.

THE book bearing the above title, by A. R. Bennett, is thick and solid, and, to judge from the vast accumulation of details in it, must have cost its author an enormous amount of trouble. The whole point and object of the book, apparently, is to show how excessive the charges for telephones are in England, how much cheaper and nicer they are abroad, and how much we should profit if we took a hint from our neighbours over the water.

To put it all in a nutshell, in London each subscriber to a telephone has to pay £20 a year, whereas in foreign parts a charge averaging from £4 to £5 is made to pay in large towns.

It is very philanthropic of Mr. Bennett, who apparently has no pecuniary interest in the matter, to take so much trouble to show how much less we ought to pay, and how much better we ought to be served. He reminds us of another philanthropist who took up the question of top-hats, and tried to persuade Londoners not to wear them. Absurdly dear they were! And absurdly uncomfortable! He pointed this out to everybody, and everybody at once admitted it, but continued to wear them.

Jesting apart, however, there can be no doubt that the charge of £20 is heavy. Nor can there be any doubt that the service is unsatisfactory. Nor is there much probability that the charge will be reduced or the service improved. And why? Because of a certain phenomenon known as "watered stock," "fattening on a hotbed of monopoly," on which any attempt at reform must break (to mix our metaphors for a finish) as ineffectually as the ripples of Father Thames against the granite legs of London Bridge.

Subscriptions from Abroad.

THE following subscriptions came to hand after our January number had gone to press:—Ottawa (16); Brisbane (33); Sydney (75); Alexandria (3); Wanganui (2); Wellington, N.Z. (8); Blenheim, N.Z. (4); Natal (45); Singapore (2); Penang and Kolding

Odds and Ends.

MR. RICH has been the recipient of many marks of goodwill on his retirement from the service. Some of his old Post Office friends gave him a pleasing souvenir in the form of a rosewood English clock, which boasts a very musical set of chiming gongs and bears a suitable inscription. The Liverpool staff, co-operating with the many Postmasters and Officers in other towns

who were formerly in the Liverpool Office, presented him with a library table and two chairs, a service of silver, four silver candlesticks, and a china dessert service. The presentation from the commercial community of Liverpool took the form of a silver salver and a cheque for 200 guineas.

* * *

A POSTMAN in a certain Midland town had received authority to obtain his uniform, whereupon the Postmaster sent to the Sub-Postmaster the following memorandum: "Be good enough to send in the tailor's account for measuring H. Jones." H. Jones has not, apparently, been trained in the school of officialism, and his reply to the request of the Sub-Postmaster was as follows: "Dear Sir,—The tailor won't charge me anything, so of course I stood him a drink; so if you stand me one, we shall be straight. Yours truly, H. Jones."

* * *

A SUB-POSTMASTER in the Home Counties lately received three separate demands at the same time to show cause why certain deliveries were not completed within the official time. In reply to the first demand he stated that "owing to a heavy yield of circulars the delivery could not start at the proper time." To the second demand his reply was: "there was a heavy out-put of matter, and the delivery was delayed in consequence"; while to the third demand he replied that "the delay was experienced by a great import of material." Clearly this Sub-Postmaster is a Gladstonian in at least one sense of the word.

* * *

WE have received the following delightful communication from the gentleman who has signed it. We congratulate him on the fact that he was not caught napping:

"When in charge at Lytham Post Office in October last, and while in attendance at the public counter one afternoon, during a period of pressure, a pleasant, unassuming gentleman, accompanied by a lady and another gentleman, walked into the office and handed to me a batch of telegrams. I read them over and stated the charges. After I had requested the sender to affix the stamps to the message forms, the lady asked: 'How is it we have to put the stamps on?' I replied, 'It is a command of the Postmaster-General, and must be obeyed,' whereupon the cheerful lady said, 'Why, this is the Postmaster-General.' I will leave my readers to imagine my surprise when I found myself confronting his Grace the Duke of Norfolk.

"Moral—let us do our duty fearlessly.

"Kirkby Stephen.

PHILIP H. WIND."

* * *

IN the Canton of Berne, near Bassecour, there is a village the inhabitants of which all bear the same surname. That surname, moreover, is the name of the place itself, namely, Montavon.

At a local Council election which has just taken place there, all the successful candidates, therefore, bore the same name. The President is Joseph Montavon, the Vice-President Victor Montavon, the Councillors are Peter, Julius, and Ernest Montavon; the local Receiver is George Montavon; the Secretary is Joseph Montavon, and the policeman is Charles Montavon. It is said that the local postman, whose name is not mentioned, but who is probably a Montavon also, complains of the difficulty of distinguishing between so many persons of the same name, some of whom are very indignant if their letters get into the wrong hands.

* *
*

OUR portrait and notice of Miss Catherine Horsley, the rural postwoman, attracted considerable notice among our contemporaries. *The Westminster Gazette* reproduced the paragraph, while *The Gentlewoman* published the portrait as well as the notice. *Sisters*, another ladies' paper, also gave an account of Miss Horsley.

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WE regret that in the list of Postmasters appointed which appeared in our last number we gave Mr. Sydney Beckley's record incorrectly. We stated that he was appointed to the Second Division in the R. & A. G. in 1885, whereas his appointment in that year was to the old Second Class, which in 1890 was absorbed in the Higher Grade, Second Division.

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*

A CORRESPONDENT writes:—The explanation of the Provincial Clerk, given in the January issue of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, under the heading "Pleonasm," reminds me of a reply which I once received from a poor old Yorkshire Sub-Postmaster in regard to some trifling irregularity for which he could make no excuse. He returned his report with the simple prayer, "Lord have mercy on me." Yorkshire Sub-Postmasters are, as a rule, genuine; their explanations are the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as the following illustrations will show. A village blacksmith, when aged 60, left the anvil to work a single needle telegraph instrument, and managed it with credit. His head office reported him for an omitted entry on a letter bill, to which he replied, "It was my daughter tried her hand for the first time and missed it." On another occasion a village mail-bag reached the head office late, and was found to be saturated with water. The Sub-Postmaster, on being called upon for an explanation, replied, "The night was foggy and dark, and on my way to the railway station, along the canal bank, I fell into the water overhead; it took me all my time to save myself and the mail-bag, so please excuse late arrival."

THE Post Office, says a correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, has beaten its record in the deciphering of strangely-addressed letters. The Rev. W. E. Clarke, the missionary who was Robert Louis Stevenson's great friend in Samoa, has been lecturing in Blackburn this week, and has just received a letter from his native congregation addressed "i a misl talati o loo i peretania." The postal authorities discovered that this was Samoan for "To Mr. Clarke, who is in England," and the rest was easy.

* *

THE editors of Brazilian newspapers do not appear to live in clover. This is what one of them writes: "Our Post Office, which we have many times consigned to perdition, has played us an abominable trick this week. The mails from Europe and from northern and southern countries of America arrived on Tuesday and Wednesday; to-day, Friday at midday, we have not yet received our letters and papers. Why? Because the postman is away on a holiday, and his substitute is ill. The authorities inform us that there is no one to sort the letters. On Wednesday the Post Office had no twenty-ries stamps. We were obliged to send our papers through the post with stamps of double the proper value. Even our telegrams are held over at the Post Office, and in order to give the news we have been obliged to borrow from friends papers published in Rio."

* *

THE following dialogue recently took place at the counter of a Wiltshire Post Office:—

Lady Customer: "I want a dog licence, but can I have one cheaper than 7s. 6d.?"

Post Office Clerk: "No; a dog licence costs 7s. 6d."

Lady Customer: "I ought to be allowed to have a licence for less than 7s. 6d., as my little dog has not grown a bit during the past year."

* *

THE Poet Laureate's disastrous quatrain on Edward Capern, the North Devon postman-poet, has encouraged a Chagford poet to try his hand. He modestly disclaims any credit for writing a more appropriate and intelligible epitaph than that of Mr. Austin:—

"In endless bounds resume thy rounds,
Delivered of earth's fetters;
The heavenly host awaits thy post,
Unlettered man of letters."

The last line at all events is pointed.

Westminster Gazette.

Promotions.

LONDON.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Surveyor's O.	Mellersh, J. G. ..	Surveyor's Clk. ...	1887; Clk, Lr. Div., R.A.G.O., '89; Clk., S.O., '94
" "	Hallowes, W. ...	" " ...	S.C., Glasgow, '88; Clk., Cir. Off., London, '92
" "	Muir, G.	Sur. Sta. Clk. (N.E. Dis.)	Tel., York, '90; S.C., '91
" "	Chambers, W. H.	Sur. Sta. Clk. (N.E. Dis.)	S.C. York, '91
R.A.G.O.,	Miss H. J. M.	1st Cl. Clk.	1882
C.H.B.	Bailey		
" P.O.B.	Miss C. L. De	Asst. Super.	S.B., '75; P.O.B., '81; 1st Cl., '84
" "	Renzi		
" "	Miss E. I. Miles.	Prin. Clk.	1881; 1st Cl., '84
" "	" M. A. Loch.	"	1881; 1st Cl., '85
" "	" R. Loch ...	"	S.B., '81; P.O.B., '82; 1st Cl., '85
" "	" K. F. Bourne	1st Cl. Clk.	1884
" "	" M. A. Waters	"	1884
" "	" M. C. Goodall	"	1884
" "	" E. I. Cook...	"	1884
" "	" M. Smith ...	"	1884
" "	" S. A. Har- rison	"	1884
" "	Miss M. I. C. Macdonald	"	1884
" "	Miss F. M. W. McIlroy	"	1884
" "	Miss E. M. Lud- brook	1st Cl. Sr.	1885
" "	Miss F. E. Darkin	"	1885
" "	" C. E. Waters	"	1885
" "	" A. E. Wood.	"	1885
" "	" H. R. H. Hunter	"	1885
" "	Miss S. F. R. Sintzenich	"	1886
" "	Miss M. E. Davis	"	1885
" "	" C. A. Biner.	"	1885
" "	" I. A. Plump- ton	"	1886

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
R.A.G.O., P.O.B.	Miss C. L. Ander- son	1st Cl. Sr.	1886
" "	Miss M. H. Vigor	"	1886
" "	" M. H. Iliff...	"	1886
" "	" S. E. Sims...	"	1888
" "	" A. M. Miller	"	1888
" "	" M. C. Fettes	"	1889
" "	" E. S. Friend	"	1889
" "	" S. L. Palmer	"	1889
S.B.D.	Walker, F. E. ...	1st Cl. Clk.	1870; Hr. Grade, 2nd Div., '90
"	Johnson, Wm. ...	"	1872; Hr. Grade, 2nd Div., '90
"	Miss F. L. Day...	Prin. Clk.	1880; 1st Cl., '82
"	" A. J. F. Wood	1st Cl. Clk.	1882
"	" M. Maynard	"	P.O.B., R.A.G.O., '82; S.B., '83
"	" F. Offer ...	"	P.O.B., R.A.G.O., '83; S.B., '84
"	" S.M.Clement	"	C.H.B., R.A.G.O., '85; S.B., '85
"	" M. M. S. Macpherson	"	1885
"	" A. Webster.	"	1885
"	" E. J. Hall...	1st Cl. Sr.	1885
"	" M.A.Tovell.	"	1885
"	" L. B. Coles.	"	1885
"	" I. Simpson..	"	1885
M.O.O.	Taylor, H. ...	1st Cl. Clk.	1872; Sur. Clk., '85; Clk., M.O.O., '85; Hr. Grade 2nd Div., '90
C. of S.O.(Tels.) E. in C.O.	Moore, H....	Ch. Foreman... ..	Foreman, '88
"	Harrison, T. ...	Asst. Supg. Engr. .	M.T. Co., '61; Tel., Hull, '70; Insp. E. in C.O., '80
"	Houston, H. ...	1st Cl. Engr....	Tel., T.S., '72; Jnr. Clk. E. in C.O., '80; Insp., '86
"	Kellaway, W. W.	"	E. T. Co., '65; Tel., Bristol, '70; Insp. E. in C.O., '85
"	Hardie, J. ...	2nd Cl. Engr. ...	Tel., Edin., '85; Jnr. Cl. E. in C.O., '91
"	Dalladay, J. G. ...	2nd Cl. Tech. Off..	Clk., 2nd Div. R.A.G.O., '81; E. in C.O., '82
"	McIlroy, R. ...	Clk.	Tel., Belfast, '85; Jnr. Clk. E. in C.O., '91; Draughtsman & Short- hand Writer, '93
"	Lewis, T. ...	1st Cl. Jnr. Clk. ...	Tel., Newport, '84; E. in C.O., '92
"	Thow, J. ...	" "	Tel., Glasgow, '84; E. in C.O., '92
"	Hoggarth, H. J..	" "	Tel., N'castle-on-T., '88; E. in C.O., '92
"	Haynes, J. H. ...	" "	Tel., Gloucester, '85; E. in C.O., '92

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
E. in C.O.	McCullagh, H. J.	1st Cl. Jnr. Clk.	S.C. & T., Killarney, '88; Tel., Belfast, '90; E. in C.O., '92
"	Mulligan, P.	" "	Tel., Liverpool, '84; E. in C.O., '92
"	Gibbins, F. E.	" "	Tel., Leicester, '85; Sheffield, '87; E. in C.O., '92
"	Wilson, F. R.	" "	S.C. & T., Ashford, '85; Grimsby, '87; E. in C.O., '92
"	Weaver, R. A.	" "	Tel., Birmingham, '90; E. in C.O., '93
"	Elliott, J. V.	" "	Stockton-on-Tees, '85; North Shields, '86; E. in C.O., '93
"	Shepperd, A. H.	" "	Tel., Belfast, '90; E. in C.O., '93
"	Cunningham, R.	" "	Tel., Edinburgh, '89; E. in C.O., '93
"	MacNamara, P.T.	" "	Tel., Limerick, '89; E. in C.O., '93
"	Pickering, S. A.	" "	Tel., Leeds, '86; E. in C.O., '93
"	Halton, R.	" "	Tel., Manchester, '86; E. in C.O., '94
"	Dwyer, J. J.	" "	Tel., Cork, '85; E. in C.O., '94
"	Cowie, F. E. W.	" "	Tel., Aberdeen, '85; E. in C.O., '94
"	Stewart, J.	" "	Tel., Glasgow, '84; E. in C.O., '94
"	Williams, J. E.	2nd Cl. Jnr. Clk.	Tel., N'castle-on-T., '89
"	Weir, A. W.	" "	Tel., Glasgow, '85
"	Richardson, G.	" "	Tel., Hull, '85
"	Powning, W. H.	" "	Tel., Cardiff, '85
"	Campbell, H. M.	" "	Tel., Inverness, '82; Glasgow, '89
"	Kennedy, D. H.	" "	Tel., N'castle-on-T., '85
"	Scott, W.	" "	Tel., Cardiff, '87
"	Patterson, T.	" "	S.C. & T., Horncastle, '87; Manchester, '89; Belfast, '91
"	Burton, G. M.	" "	Tel., Hull, '85
"	Frost, H.	" "	Workington, '85; Rochdale, '87
"	Wilson, R.	" "	Tel., Grimsby, '87
"	Teggins, R. W.	" "	Tel., Birmingham, '85
"	Cheshire, F. W.	" "	Tel., N'castle-on-T., '85
"	Pennington, W.	" "	Tel., Blackburn, '89; Belfast, '92
"	Eaton, G. J.	" "	Tel., Aberdeen, '85
"	Mears, T.	" "	S.C. & T., Wigan, '86
"	Brown, J. S.	" "	Tel., Leeds, '82
"	Herbert, T. E.	" "	Tel., Manchester, '91
"	Roche, T.	" "	S.C. & T., Ennis, '90; Waterford, '92

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
E. in C.O.	Tennant, T. M.	2nd Cl. Jnr. Clk.	Tel., Edinburgh, '88
"	Stubbs, W. J.	" "	Tel., Preston, '88
"	Best, F. W.	Relay Clk. (Lr. Sec.)	Tel., N'castle-on-T., '85 ; Relay Clk. (E. Dean), '95
"	Smith, W. W.	" "	Tel., Liverpool, '79 ; 1st Cl., '90
"	Booth, A. C.	" "	Tel., T.S., '88 ; Junr. Clk., E. in C.O., '95
C.T.O.	Eames, J. W.	Asst. Contr. (Hr. Scale)	E.T. Co., '56 ; Asst. Contr. Lr. Scale, '89
"	Miss F. A. LePla	1st Cl. Tel.	1884
"	" S. A. M. Harris	"	1884
L.P.S.D. (Circn. Off.)	Chappell, W.	Insp.	1859 ; Over., '81
"	Finch, G. F.	"	1865 ; Over., '81
"	Hepburn, E.	"	1866 ; Over., '81
"	Barnes, R.	"	1862 ; Over., '89
"	O'Connell, J.	"	1873 ; Over., '89
"	Hayes, J. H.	"	1871 ; Over., '91
"	Harre, F.	"	1871 ; Over., '91
"	Rull, J. G.	"	1870 ; 1st Cl. Sr. F.B., '82
"	Mean, G.	Over.	1873 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '79
"	Dixon, W. G.	"	1875 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '82
"	Cumming, E. A.	"	1876 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '85
"	Buckeridge, S. E.	"	1875 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '86
"	Stolworthy, E. S.	"	1876 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '86
"	Keeling, W. R.	"	1876 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '86
"	Mayes, J.	"	1876 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '86
"	Renshaw, W. J.	"	1876 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '86
"	Rose, C. F.	"	1877 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '86
"	Carney, J.	"	1877 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '87
"	Woodstack, R. E.	"	1876 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '87
"	Pettit, W. T.	"	1876 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '87
"	Skillern, C.	"	1876 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '88
"	Atkins, W. D. P.	"	1877 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '89
"	Fairhead, J.	"	1877 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '89
"	Taylor, J. E.	"	1879 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '89
"	White, J. T.	"	1869
"	Rouse, W.	"	1869
"	Blackaller, H. J.	1st Cl. Sr.	1881
"	Gilbert, W. J.	"	1881
"	Auger, R. E.	"	1881
"	Chambers, J. T.	"	1882
"	Pierotti, H. C. W.	"	1882
"	Weeks, J.	"	1881
"	Forder, A. E.	"	1881
"	Finch, T.	"	1875
"	Dean, A.	"	1882
"	Charlton, W. H.	"	1882
"	Ferguson, W. J. F. G.	"	1881
"	Mears, F.	"	1882
"	Mead, J.	"	1880
"	McQuire, J. J. B.	"	1874

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
L.P.S.D. (Ciren. Off.)	Johnson, F. W....	1st Cl. Sr.	1876
"	Barry, W. J. ...	"	1878
"	Bloomfield, J. ...	"	1874
"	Crooks, J. A. ...	"	1873
"	Doleman, W. H. ...	"	1882
"	Tucker, F. S. ...	"	1882
"	Thompson, C. P. ...	"	1881
"	Dixie, G. A. ...	"	1882
"	Glading, N. A....	"	1882
"	Ruggins, G. W. .	"	1882
"	Buckland, T. J....	"	1881
"	Tucker, F. J. ...	"	1882
"	Leaver, H. W. ...	"	1882
"	Gunter, H. A. .	"	1881
"	Lovell, W. G. G. ...	"	1882
"	Allen, E. A. ...	"	1883
"	Jarvis, A. A. ...	"	1881
"	Holloway, F. A. ...	"	1881
"	Hooper, A. ...	"	1881
"	Sturt, H. ...	"	1875
"	Funnell, F. J. ...	"	1878
"	Hardingham, C. .	"	1882
"	Drake, A. ...	"	1876
"	Carrington, C. ...	"	1871
"	Probert, W. ...	"	1874
"	Cramer, P. ...	"	1878
"	Pearce, W. S. ...	"	1875
"	Glynn, Thos. ...	"	1877
E.C.D.O.	Cutbush, T. H....	Insp.in Ch. (Lr. Sec.)	Elec. Tel. Co., 1867 ; B.O., Super., '90
"	Warwick, T. H....	Senr. Cn. & Tel. ...	1873
"	Hayman, P. B....	" " " "	1873
"	Miss L. E. Gear	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1886
W.C.D.O.	*Smith, W. H. ...	1st Cl. Over....	1872 ; 2nd Cl. Over., '87
E.D.O.	Duggan, C. ...	1st Cl. Over....	1876 ; 2nd Cl. Over., '91
"	Watts, W. H. ...	2nd Cl. Over. ...	1880 ; Head Postman, '91
S.W.D.O.	Miss A. E. Mullens	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1885
W.D.O.	Scott, C. E. ...	2nd Cl. Over. ...	1879 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '90
"	Brooker, J. H. R. ...	" " " "	1880 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '90
"	Miss E. E. Smith	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1885
Paddington	Hayward, W. ...	1st Cl. Over....	1867 ; 2nd Cl. Over., '81
"	Chiswell, I. J. ...	2nd Cl. Over. ...	1872 ; Lobby Officer, '90
PROVINCES—ENGLAND and WALES.			
Birmingham	Ellis, W. ...	1st Cl. Tel. ...	1883
"	Henson, J. ...	Storekeeper ...	2nd Cl. S.C., '87
Brighton	Gasson, J....	1st Cl. Tel. ...	Tel., Leeds, '78 ; Brighton, '85
Cambridge	Robinson, F. W.	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	Mag. Tel. Co., '68 ; Clk. (T.), '87
"	Humm, H. ...	Clk. (T.) ...	1872 ; 1st Cl. Tel., '91
"	Odams, A. E. ...	1st Cl. Tel. ...	1878 ; 2nd Cl. Tel., '84
Dover	Popkiss, F. H....	Insp. of Postmen ...	1886 ; S.C. & T., '87

* Omitted from previous issue.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Gloucester	*Allen, E. T.	Ch. Clk....	1871; Asst. Super. (P.), '91; Super., '95
"	*Allen, R. E.	Super.	1870; Clk. (P.), '82; Asst. Super., '91
"	*Durrett, W.	Asst. Super.	1865; 1st Cl. S.C., '87; Clk., '95
"	*Durrett, S.	Clk. (P.)	1873; 1st Cl. S.C., '87
"	*Minahan, J. B.	1st Cl. S.C.	2nd Cl., '83
Lancaster	Senior, E. M.	Clk.	Huddersfield, '81; S.C. & T., Lancaster, '86
Leeds	Malthouse, J.	Insp. of Postmen ...	1879; 2nd Cl. S.C., '88; Asst. Insp., '89
Leicester	Morris, H. W. C.	1st Cl. Tel.	1884
Liverpool	Ball, J.	1st Cl. Asst. Super. (T.)	Mag. Tel. Co., '61; 2nd Cl. Asst. Super., '90
"	Corbett, J.	2nd Cl. Asst. Super. (T.)	1871; Clk., '90
"	Dixon, R. W.	Clk. (T.)	1872
"	Nottingham, H. J.	1st Cl. Tel.	1884
"	McKinney, T.	"	1884
"	*Miss A. M. Jefferies	"	1885
"	*Miss E. E. Kerr.	"	1885
"	*" J. Flint	"	1885
"	" E. M. Rees.	"	1886
Manchester	*Horrocks, T. W.	Clk. (T.)	1870
"	*Hulme, E.	1st Cl. Tel.	1881
"	*Evans, J.	"	1882
"	Callagin, J.	"	1882
"	*Miss M. Ready.	"	1882
"	" E. E. Hayes	"	1885
"	Wilkinson, J.	1st Cl. Asst. Insp. of Postmen	1864; 2nd Cl. Asst. Insp., '81
"	Clough, J. J.	"	1869; 2nd Cl. Asst. Insp., '84
"	Dickinson, G.	"	1873; 2nd Cl. Asst. Insp., '85
"	Barlow, C. H.	"	1873; 2nd Cl. Asst. Insp., '86
"	Baines, C. J.	"	1868; 2nd Cl. Asst. Insp., '89
"	Wild, W.	"	1870; 2nd Cl. Asst. Insp., '91
"	Franklin, C.	"	1870; 1st Cl. S.C., '90
"	Mullinder, G. H.	2nd Cl. Asst. Insp. of Postmen	1870
"	Reeves, T.	"	1865
"	Roby, W.	"	1867
"	Staveley, W.	"	1867
"	Turner, P.	"	1867
"	Grocott, J.	"	1868
"	Holman, H.	"	1869
"	Price, P.	"	1869
"	Howarth, R.	"	1869
"	McVeigh, C.	"	1869

* Omitted from previous issue.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
		[of Postmen	
Manchester ...	Fearnhead, R. ...	2nd Cl. Asst. Insp.	1872
" ...	Prince, T. ...	" ...	1872
" ...	Brogdale, J. ...	" ...	1873
Middlesbrough.	Miss A. A. Mac- kinnon	1st Cl. S.C. & T...	1882
Newport, Mon.	Dando, E. J. ...	1st Cl. Tel. ...	1882
" "	Miss E.M. Venton	" ...	1889
" "	" E. Connor...	" ...	1890
" "	" A. Connor...	" ...	1891
Norwich ...	Holroyd, J. ...	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	1872; 1st Cl. Tel., '87; Clk., '93
" ...	Norris, W. S. ...	Clk. (T.) ...	1875; 1st Cl. Tel., '91
" ...	Minors, J. ...	1st Cl. Tel. ...	1875
Plymouth ...	Miss E.R. Coombe	" ...	1889
Wolverhampton	*Price, T. S. P. .	" ...	1880
Worcester ...	Latham, J. ...	Clk. (P.) ...	S.C., 1887
SCOTLAND.			
Aberdeen ...	Miss J. Finlayson	1st Cl. Tel. ...	1885
Edinburgh ...	Anderson, R. ...	Head Sta. Clk. (S. Dis.)	S.C. & T., Montrose, '76; 2nd Cl. S.C., Aberdeen, '88; 1st Cl., '91; Sur. Sta. Clk., '93
" ...	McConnachie, A.	Sur. Sta. Clk. (N. Dis.)	Tel., Aberdeen, '85
(Sort. Off.)	Buchanan, T. ...	Clk. (P.) ...	1876; Sr., '77; 1st Cl. S.C., '90
" ...	Watson, T. N. ...	1st Cl. S.C. ...	1880
" ...	Clingan, W. H. ...	" ...	1881
" ...	Lyall, J. ...	" ...	1881
" ...	Jardine, R. ...	" ...	1882
" ...	Cameron, D. ...	" ...	1882
" ...	McDonald, J. ...	" ...	1879
" ...	Gumley, J. T. ...	" ...	1883
" ...	Nisbet, W. E. ...	" ...	1882
" ...	Milne, F. J. ...	" ...	1883; S.C., '84
" ...	Thomson, A. ...	" ...	1883; S.C., '84
Glasgow ...	Henderson, J. P.	Clk. (P.) ...	2nd Cl. S.C., '81; 1st Cl., '87
" ...	Raine, W. G. ...	1st Cl. S.C. ...	1887
" ...	Sloan, W. J. ...	" ...	1887
" ...	Kettles, A. ...	Super. (T.) ...	Elec. Tel. Co., '57; 2nd Cl. Asst. Super., '87; 1st Cl., '90
" ...	Webster, J. ...	1st Cl. Asst. Super. (T.)	1870; Clk., '84; 2nd Cl. Asst. Super., '90
" ...	Livingstone, J. ...	2nd " "	1870; Clk., '90
" ...	Cameron, M. ...	Clk. (T.) ...	1874
" ...	Houstoun, W. ...	" ...	1874
" ...	Wilkinson, D. ...	1st Cl. Tel. ...	1884
" ...	Paxton, J. ...	" ...	1884
" ...	Miss J. C. Hin- shelwood	" ...	1885
" ...	Miss M. Crawford	" ...	1885
Perth ...	Matthews, J. ...	Asst. Super. (P.) ...	1874; Clk., '88

* Omitted from previous issue.

IRELAND.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Dublin (Sec.'s Off.) ... ,, (Sur.'s Dept.)	Donovan, M. ... Whiteman, G. A.	1st Cl. Paper Keeper Asst. Sur.	1872 ; 1st Cl. Tracer, '86; 2nd Cl. Ppr. Kpr., '87 S.B., 1870; Sur. Clk. Eng., '85
Dundalk	Savage, P. R. ...	Clk.	S.C. & T., '86

Deaths.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
R.A.G.O. (P.O.B.)	Miss A. Hood ...	1st Cl. Clk.	1882 ; 1st Cl., '90
E. in C. O. ...	Langman, A. ...	1st Cl. Engr.	Tel., Southampton, '71 ; Insp., E. in C.O., '80 ; Engr., '90
,, ...	Cobb, C.	2nd Cl. ,,	Mag. Tel. Co., '58
R.L.O.	Moran, J.	1st Cl. Examr.	C.D., '64 ; R.L.O., '67 ; 1st Cl. Examr., '88
L.P.S.D., Circ. Off.	Barrows, T. ...	2nd Cl. Clk.	1864 ; Writing Clk., '86 ; Cir. Off., '92
,,	Dawes, H. G. ...	2nd Cl. Sr.	1891
S.E.D.O....	Miss A. Degidon	2nd Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1893
Barnstaple ...	Gooding, G. H. .	S.C. & T.	1892
Birmingham ...	Banham, T. S. ...	1st Cl. Tel.	Tel., Brighton, '71 ; Bir- mingham, '76
,,	Lambert, J. W. .	2nd Cl. Tel.	S.C. & T., Wellington, Salop, '87 ; B'ham, '90
Boston	Ireson, W. C. ...	S.C. & T.	1892
Cambridge ...	Ball, S. L.	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	Elec. Tel. Co., '58 ; Cam- bridge, '76 ; Asst. Super. (T.), '91
Frome	Easterbrook, W. .	S.C. & T.	1882
Havant	Scott, G. F. ...	,,	1893
Liverpool ...	McGuire, P. P. ...	2nd Cl. S.C.	1891
Manchester ...	Bragg, H.	2nd Cl. Asst. Super. (T.)	Elec. Tel. Co., '58 ; Clk., '88 ; Asst. Super., '93
Norwich	Robinson, T. ...	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	1873 ; 1st Cl. Tel., '87 ; Clk., '92 ; Asst. Super., '94
Settle	Hook, W. F. ...	Pmr.	1879
Torquay	Sly, E. A.	S.C. & T.	1881
Edinburgh ...	Walker, D. ...	1st Cl. S.C.	1861
Glasgow	Smith, R. M. ...	,,	1887 ; 1st Cl. S.C., '94
,,	Cameron, J. ...	2nd Cl. S.C.	1894
,,	Aitken, W. B. ...	Cl. (T.)	U.K.T. Co., '66 ; Clk., '90
Belfast	Miss M. Sloan ...	2nd Cl. Tel.	1885
Dublin	White, W.	2nd Cl. S.C.	1879
Ennis	Campbell, W. H.	S.C. & T.	Limerick, 71 ; Ennis, '86

Retirements.

LONDON.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
R. & A.G.O. (C.H.B.)	*Miss M. A. Grice	Clk.	1888
„ (P.O.B.)	*Miss R. S. Bracey	2nd Cl. Sr.	1890
M.O.O.	Jackson, W. H. C.	1st Cl. Clk.	1866; 2nd Cl., '73; 1st Cl., '90
S.B.D.	Norris, F. G. S. .	2nd Div. Clk.	1867; 2nd Div., '77
„	Sommers, W. S.	„	1871; Clk., Lr. Div. R.A.G.O., '86
„	*Miss G. E. Wheeler	Clk.	1891
C.T.O.	Howard, T. ...	Ch. Insp. of Messengers.	1855; Asst. Insp., '72; Insp., '77; Ch. Insp., '86
„	*Moore, R. Y. ...	2nd Cl. Tel.	1888
„	*Eley, G. J. ...	„	1889
„	Miss S. E. Lewis	Asst. Super.	Tel., Carmarthen, '71; C.T.O., '74; 1st Cl., '81; Asst. Super, '93
„	Miss M. J. Brown	1st Cl. Tel.	1864; 1st Cl. Tel., '71
L.P.S.D. (Circn. Off.)	Payne, W. A. ...	Insp.	1853; Over., 65; Insp., '76
„	Shepherd, G. ...	1st Cl. Over....	1864; Resgd., '66; Re-appd., '67; Over., '81
„	Highman, J. ...	„	1865; Sr., '74; Over., '81
„	Loxton, J. W. ...	1st Cl. Sr.	1875; 1st Cl. Sr., '76
„	Willott, S.	„	1860; 1st Cl. Sr., '73
„	Minter, M.	„	1860
„	Wiffen, J.	„	1871; 1st Cl. Sr., '78
„	Atkinson, J. M..	„	1859; Sr., '61
„	*Keeley, O. ...	2nd Cl. Sr.	Boy Clk., '92; 2nd Cl. Sr., '93
„	*Franklin, E. J. ...	„	1892
„	Bradbury, F. J. ...	„	1876
E.C.D.O.	Elliot, G. H. ...	Insp.-in-Charge ...	Elec. T. Co., '53; Clk.-in-Charge, '71; Over., '80; Insp., '92
W.D.O.	Bray, J. S. ...	2nd Cl. Cn. & Tel. .	S.C. & T., Stranraer, '82; W.D.O., '91
„	Miss E. H. Mumford	1st Cl. Cmn. & Tel.	1881; 1st Cl., '91
„	*Bush, G.	2nd Cl. Sr.	1886
N.D.O.	*Hadley, G. ...	„	1887

*Awarded a Gratuity.

ENGLAND and WALES,

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Hayward's Hth.	Samuel, J. M. ...	Pmr.	Swansea, '67; Pmr., Arundel, '83; Hay- ward's Heath, '89
Ilfracombe ...	Stockfish, H. ...	,,	1868
Lancaster ...	Worthington, H.	Clk.	1874; Clk., '91
Lydney ...	Imm, H.	Pmr.	1851; Pmr., '68
N'castle-on-T. .	Brocking, T. H.	Super.	1859; Clk., '70; Super., '90
Plymouth ...	*Moore, W. H. ...	2nd Cl. S.C.	1893
Southport ...	*Wolsterholme, H.	,,	1893
Stock'n-on-T. .	Lowes, J.	S.C. & T.	1857; S.C. & T., '81
Swansea ...	Harris, W. R. ...	2nd Cl. Tel.	1885
Worcester ...	*Miss W. M. Smith	,,	1893

SCOTLAND and IRELAND.

Ayr	*Miss W. W. Mac- pherson	S.C. & T.	1892
Belfast	Montgomery, Wm.	1st Cl. Tel.	1883; 1st Cl., '94
Cork	E. J. McCarthy .	S.C. & T.	1882
Dublin	Miss L. M. Ma- guire	Asst. Super.	1870; Asst. Super., '91
,,	,, G. Flint ...	,,	Mag. Tel. Co., '69; 1st Cl. Tel., Dub., '81; Asst. Super., '94

* Awarded a Gratuity.

Postmasters Appointed.

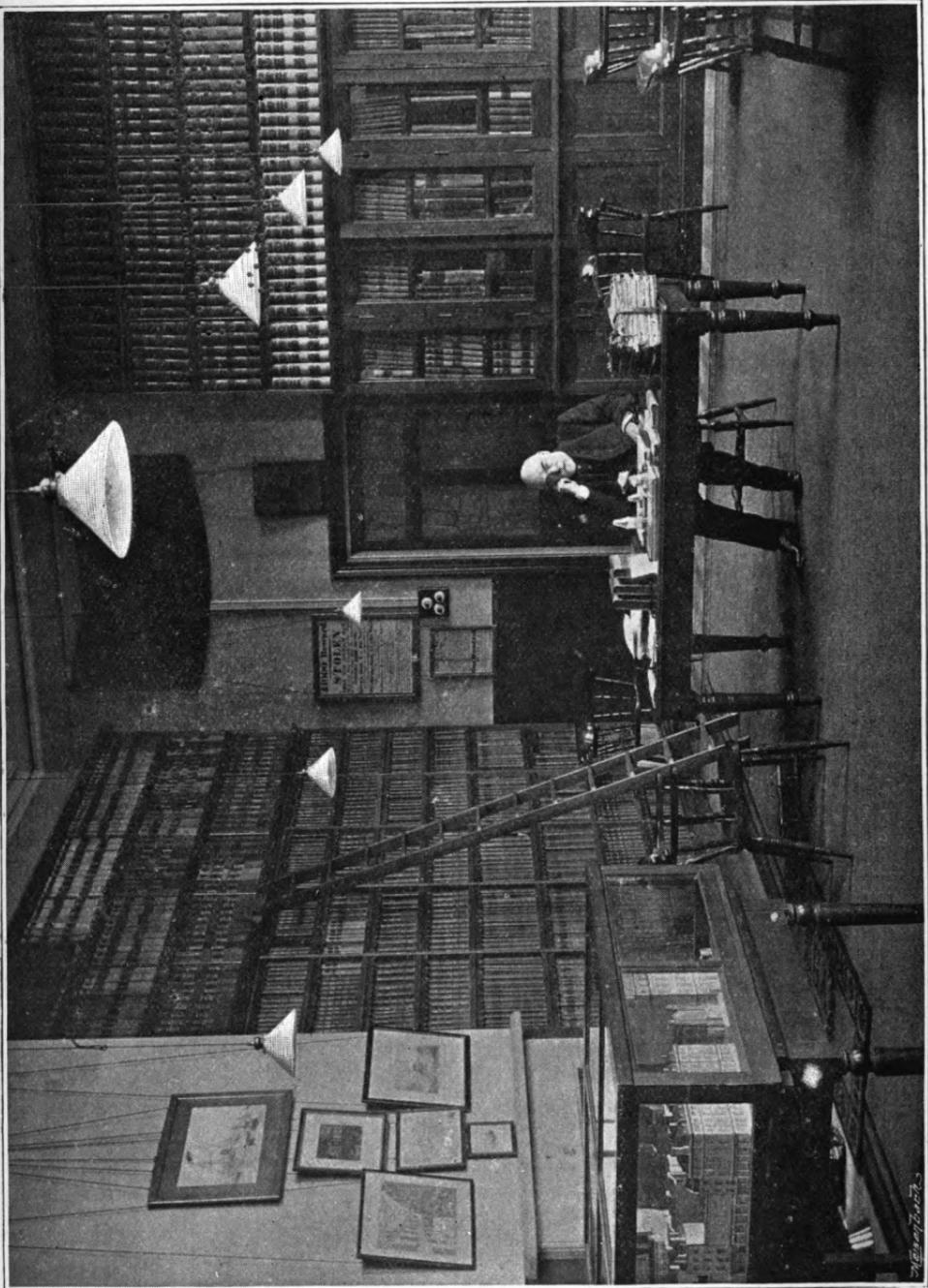
OFFICE.	NAME.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Bridgwater	Chellew, C. H. C...	Elec. T. Co., '63; Tel., Devonport, '70; Pmr., Staines, '91; Oswestry, '95
Carnarvon	Jones, John	S.C. & T., Shrewsbury, '68; Clk., '82; Asst. Super., '91; Pmr., Aberystwyth, '92
Dereham	Lowe, T. R.	Clk., Bury St. Edmunds, '64; Ch. Clk., Colchester, '78
Eye	Till, A. J.	S.C. & T., Rugby, '87; Wickham Market, '91
Gainsborough	Harrison, F. C. ...	Elec. T. Co., '64; Tel., York, '70; 1st Cl., '81; Clk., '87; Asst. Super. (T.), '91
Hereford	Oakey, H. R.	1866; Clk., Worcester, '68; S.O., London, '74; Pmr., Banbury, '77; Bridgwater, '89
Kingston-on-Thames ..	Godby, H. A.	Clk., R.A.G.O., '69; M.O.O., '70; S.O., '71; Sur. Clk., '77
Kirkby Stephen... ..	Miss E. Spence ...	S.C. & T., Kendal, '89
†Lincoln	Beckley, Sydney H.	S.B., '70; R.A.G.O., '74; 2nd Cl. Cl., '85; Pmr., Kingston-on-Thames, '92
Oswestry	Teare, J. W....	S.C. & T., King's Lynn, '73; Clk., '86; Ch. Clk., '88; Pmr., Dereham, '90
Portsmouth... ..	Adams, F. E.	S.B., '70; Sur. Clk., '77; Asst. Sur., '91; Pmr., Shrewsbury, '92
Shrewsbury	Bell, W.	Clk., Enniskillen, '59; Sur. Sta. Clk., '63; Sur. Clk., Ireland, '74; Asst. Sur., Ireland, '81
Winchester... ..	Wint, H.	1867; Asst. Registry S.O., London, '69; Pmr., Buxton, '73; Hereford, '90
Wokingham	Deen, D.	C.D., London, '63; Sr., '67; Over., '81
Cork	Sheridan, P.	Mag. T. Co., '69; Tel., Cork., '70; Clk., Sort. Off., Dublin, '83; Super. (acting as Ch. Clk.), '92
Downpatrick	Mrs. J. Morris ...	—
Drogheda	Miss E. Curtin ...	Pmrs., Wexford, '87; Wokingham, '90

† This entry is made to amend the one which appeared in last issue.

ABBREVIATIONS.

Ast., Assistant; Ch., Chief; Clk., Clerk; Cn., Counterman; Cwn., Counterwoman; Engr., Engineer; Examr., Examiner; Insp., Inspector; Jr., Junior; Over., Overseer; P., Postal; Prin., Principal; Pmr., Postmaster; Retr., Returner; Sr., Sorter; S.C., Sorting Clerk; S.C. & T., Sorting Clk. and Telegraphist; Super., Superintendent or Supervisor; Sur., Surveyor; T., Telegraphs; Tel., Telegraphist.





MR. HERBERT JOYCE, C.B., AT HIS TABLE IN THE MUNIMENT ROOM.

ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND.

JULY, 1896.

The Retirement of Mr. Joyce.

INCE the last number of *St. Martin's-le-Grand* appeared the Post Office has experienced a loss such as it is not likely to sustain again for many a year. However true it may be that there is no indispensable unit in the public service of this country, and however healthy a sign of excellent organization that truth may be, *il y aura toujours des degrés*. But although the degree of loss to the service through a man's retirement will, as a rule, prove on examination to be the measure of the man's capacity, so far is this from being a mere truism, that it is not even of general application. There are kinds as well as degrees; and there must always be men who by their idiosyncrasy or special proclivity, by the peculiar note of their character, or what not, so shape their course in the service as to leave worse blanks on retirement than those left by the mere withdrawal of their business talent and administrative energy, however great and valuable these may be. The present loss of the Post Office is heavy by whichever criterion it is measured; and long may it be before the time comes for discussing nicely whether the greater loss was caused by the withdrawal of Mr. Herbert Joyce's administrative powers and unrivalled knowledge of the history and traditions of the Department he has so long and so faithfully served, or by the removal from active service of his unique personality.

Mr. Joyce has not left us because he was in failing health, or because he or anyone else thought the time was come when the simple effect of that disease popularly known as *Anno Domini* was impairing his usefulness. On the contrary, his colleagues rejoice to think that he is not yet sixty-six years old and is in good health—body, mind, intellect, heart, all in vigour. He is retiring simply because

a certain Order in Council, representing the accumulated wisdom of the administrative mind of the country so far as regards the proper limits of service, dictates that the time has now come when, unless his Chief can declare it to be virtually impossible to carry on the Department without him, he must cease to bear his share in the burden of working the Post Office. It did so happen that there was something begun which could not be properly ended without him; and he was retained for six months after completing his sixty-fifth year; but *St. Martin's-le-Grand* for April was the last number that could call Mr. Joyce Third Secretary of the Post Office; and *St. Martin's-le-Grand* for July can only congratulate his colleagues on a certain dispensation, merciful to them and not, it is said, by any means unpleasant to him, whereby the Post Office has avoided the choice between his room and his company by securing both.

The Lords of the Treasury have awarded Mr. Joyce a pension—the usual two-thirds of his salary given to a man who has served forty years and upwards; and the Duke of Norfolk has appointed his successor. But at the same time His Grace has asked Mr. Joyce to carry on for a while the difficult but interesting work of arranging, calendaring, and generally organizing for reference, the Post Office records, lately brought together in that fine new Muniment Room on the second floor of the General Post Office North, with its three windows looking appropriately into *St. Martin's-le-Grand*. So we may hope still to see Mr. Joyce among us for some time to come. And, although his great knowledge of the history and policy of the Post Office, his intimacy with all matters affecting personal interests and class considerations, and his unequalled wisdom in dealing with affairs where, to use the late Laureate's words, there is heard "the clash of jarring claims"—though all these qualities will be henceforth missed from the councils of the Post Office, the warm heart and clear head that have been worth so much, not only to successive Postmasters General but to more than one generation of brother officers glad of advice and guidance, will still be found within the precincts of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*.

The retirement of Mr. Joyce has exercised his most intimate friends for a long while. For to them, since the passing of *the* Order in Council at all events, the lapse of time has been vocal of the loss which they assuredly had to face, whether now or four years and a half later; for, of course, all the world, or at least all the Civil Service world, knows that it is still possible in certain circumstances to retain a public servant at his post, without breach of law, until he

reaches three score years and ten. Mr. Joyce's friends have known that his own convictions are opposed to the general policy of retaining men's services so long, and that, attached as he is to the service, his own voice would have been given against himself if any question of retention till the outside possible limit had arisen.

Readers of *St. Martin's-le-Grand* may be interested to learn that, when he reached the age of sixty, and could claim relief from active service, he had carefully considered the question of doing so. It happened that on the eve of his sixtieth birthday, Mr. Joyce mentioned to the Clerk-in-Waiting for the night, who had looked into the Third Secretary's room on his way to quarters, that on the next day he might, if so minded, be free to follow his own devices instead of following those of the Postmaster General. That circumstances had induced a decision against the retirement of the Third Secretary seemed to the Clerk-in-Waiting so much a topic of congratulation that he broke out in song when he found himself alone; and when Mr. Joyce arrived at the office on the following day, he found upon his table a "Familiar Epistle" from the Clerk-in-Waiting, a functionary concerning whom it is a well-known dogma of Mr. Joyce's that, like the Queen, he "can do no wrong." We avail ourselves of an opportunity (not a furtive one) to transcribe this epistle for our readers, because it says in verse one or two things which could not be said so easily in prose.

A FAMILIAR EPISTLE TO HERBERT JOYCE, ESQ., ON HIS SIXTIETH BIRTHDAY.

All we who know you lift one voice
 In gladness that we keep you, Joyce.
 The freedom that you may not take,
 Is best untaken for our sake,
 Who cannot let your sixty years
 Be made the inexorable shears
 Your daily life from ours to sever
 And cut you off from us for ever.
 For who, if you should turn your face
 To seek repose, could take the place
 You fill as counsellor and friend,
 On whose ripe judgment we depend?
 Or who, if you your cable slip,
 Shall steer the ricketty old ship?
 For some there be who "watch and pray,"
 What time the load and heat of day
 Is borne by shoulders less exalted;

And others who too long have halted,
 Not as a soldier halts, for wind,
 But as they halt who are halt and blind ;
 And some who find essential victuals
 In shows and fire-works, " beer and skittles,"
 Regardless how their squibs and crackers
 Offend, blow up, or singe their backers.
 But not among this dangerous crew
 Shall " those who know " e'er number you ;
 And distant far shall be the day
 When men of sense are bold to say,
 Back-gazing at our history's sequel,
 They have found Herbert Joyce's equal.
 Therefore, as is but fit and due,
 Our heartiest wishes turn to you,
 Whose courtesy and warmth of heart
 Are of your gifts the counterpart,
 Whose subtle strength in all sage redes
 Your modesty alone exceeds,
 And whom, for reasons sound and weighty,
 We hope to hold until you're eighty,
 No matter how they frame their Orders
 To vex our souls and trim our borders.

Whose, you may ask, the " awful cheek "
 For all his fellows thus to speak ?
 Who pours his penny whistle's noise in
 As poet laureate *συμφορῶν*,
 Attempting so to give authority
 To his own single-voiced minority ?
 Thus might you pertinently put
 The question ; yet I'd budge no foot :
 Nay, I'd advance another yard
 And hoist you with your own petard :
 For scores of times, unless I've erred,
 By you yourself it's been averred,
 One judgment here brooks no debating.—
 The judgment of

THE CLERK-IN-WAITING.

It will be observed that the gloomy and highly figurative forebodings of that Clerk-in-Waiting on the subject of steerage were uttered at a time since which many changes have taken place ; and less than six years have sufficed to relegate the document to the realm of ancient history—some will say, perhaps, heathen mythology.

It was inevitable that something in the nature of a testimonial should be got up on the occasion of Mr. Joyce's retirement from the post of Third Secretary ; but there has been something unusual

in the character of the movement which has, in fact, taken place to do him honour. As the 30th of April, the last day of his active service, drew near, a few of his old friends at head quarters awoke to the probability that there must be many fellow officers throughout the country who would wish to unite in presenting him with some tangible record of the high esteem and sincere regard in which he is held by all who have been privileged to know him personally, and many who have not enjoyed that advantage. A committee, formed to consider what was best to be done, came to the conclusion that, while an appeal of a general kind from them would be out of place, they would be wanting in the duty of comradeship if they kept the intention to get up a testimonial unknown but to a few men at St. Martin's-le-Grand. They therefore communicated it to certain colleagues and former colleagues, both in and out of London, of ripe enough years to be reckoned among Mr. Joyce's old friends.

The result of this limited and very guarded appeal was a sufficient sum to buy a service of plate not unworthy of the occasion. There was no public presentation, the committee being aware of circumstances which would have made anything like a function painful to Mr. Joyce. There was simply an exchange of letters between the committee and Mr. Joyce; and as these tell the rest of the story of the testimonial, they are here reprinted from a circular sent to the subscribers.

22nd April, 1896.

DEAR JOYCE,

In view of your approaching retirement from the post of Third Secretary, a few of your old friends, whose names are signed below, formed themselves into a Committee to consider what would be the most acceptable way of commemorating an event which, while painful in itself, recalls memories pleasant in no ordinary degree. The sincere respect and affection in which you are held, are such as few men have been so fortunate as to inspire in their colleagues so long, so widely, or so consistently; and we felt a strong wish that you should not leave the service without taking away something to recall us to your mind.

When we came together, we found ourselves unanimous in the conviction that it would be selfish to attempt to keep to ourselves a thought which must be in the minds of many of our colleagues in and out of London. We therefore communicated by post with a limited number of men sufficiently advanced in years to be among

your old friends, desiring each to use his discretion as to the number of his companions to whom he would impart the purport of our letter.

As the intention was but to offer you a spontaneous memento of respect and regard, we fixed a modest limit of subscription, and deprecated any form of solicitation. The number of persons who have asked to be allowed to join in offering you a memento is, as you will see from the enclosed list, 217; and the amount subscribed is £160. It now only remains for us to obtain your permission to apply this sum to the purchase of some tangible object or objects such as will serve to remind you of the esteem and affection which you have done so much to merit, and with which you are so widely regarded; and we feel sure that your kindness of heart will not let you deny us this pleasure.

We are, dear Joyce,

Most faithfully and sincerely yours,

(Signed) LEWIN HILL (*Chairman*).

J. C. BADCOCK.

JAMES J. CARDIN.

H. C. FISCHER.

H. BUXTON FORMAN.

ROBERT HUNTER.

J. C. LAMB.

CHAS. D. LANG.

JOHN PHILIPS.

W. H. PREECE.

ARTHUR H. WILSON.

MARK ROCHE, *Hon. Sec.*

23rd April, 1896.

MY DEAR KIND FRIENDS,

I am at a loss for words to express what I feel at all the kindness that is being shown to me on my retirement. Kindness indeed is no new thing to me at the Post Office. I have long experienced it, and on more occasions than I can number. And yet that you should have made my retirement the occasion for banding yourselves together and writing me such a letter as that I have received from you, expressed in terms at once so delicate and far beyond my deserts, and accompanied by so magnificent a Testimonial, touches me deeply.

It grieves me in one sense and, I need hardly add, gives me pleasure in another to see how widely spread are those who have combined to do me this honour, and that I may reckon my friends in even the remotest parts of the country.

I see also—and to see them revives many pleasant recollections—the names of not a few who have anticipated me in

retirement and of others, also, no longer among us, whose connexion with the Department was only short or indirect.

I beg that you will accept yourselves and convey to all those who have contributed to this splendid Testimonial, the expression of my warmest acknowledgments and thanks.

It will remain in my family, together with the letter which accompanies it, as an enduring monument of sympathy and kindness, to a sense of which I can give only feeble expression, on the part of those with whom I have felt it an honour to work, and whom it grieves me beyond measure to leave.

Believe me, My kind Friends,
Yours most sincerely,

(Signed) HERBERT JOYCE.

LEWIN HILL, ESQ.,
and the other Members of the Committee.

The largest piece of plate, a silver tea-tray, bore the following inscription :—

“PRESENTED TO

HERBERT JOYCE, ESQUIRE, C.B.,

BY HIS FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES,

To mark their sense of the beneficence of his long and honourable career, and of the loss sustained by the Service through his retirement from the appointment of Third Secretary to the Post Office.

April, 1896.”

When the service was shown to subscribers in the Record Room, on the 14th of May, one of them asked whether there was any peculiar significance in the choice of the somewhat unusual term “beneficence.” There was. It is well known that for a great number of years before he became Third Secretary Mr. Joyce was head of the Discipline Branch of the Secretary’s Department, and that up to the end of his service he took the most active interest in the administration of that branch. It is not necessary to explain here all that is meant by “discipline” in this particular connexion. It is not the mere framing of rules and apportionment of rewards and punishments for observance and non-observance; but of course these are matters which come within the purview of the branch. Those who have been in daily intimacy with Mr. Joyce know not only how unsparing of his own time and attention he was in considering every one of the personal

questions which thus constantly came before him, but how hard it was for him to make—as he was often compelled to do in the widest interests of the service—recommendations injurious to individuals. Only those who know him well are aware how every possible plea in favour of an offender was considered to the uttermost; how every result, direct or indirect, was carefully scanned; how much more influential with him was the abstraction Mercy than the abstraction Justice; and how bitterly he felt the stern necessities of a service which from time to time demand the casting-off of worthless men, and, as an inseparable effect, the punishment of their innocent wives and children. With all this he has loyally taken on his own shoulders whatever repute for severity has been awarded by the unthinking—and the unthinking blame all who are concerned in the infliction of punishments. It would not have been difficult for a man in that position so to frame his utterances and adjust his silences as to leave with the Postmaster General or the Secretary the onus of all decisions appearing harsh, and accept any credit that might be forthcoming on account of acts conspicuous for leniency. Mr. Joyce, knowing well that leniency is praised by the vulgar, and justice blamed as cruelty, scrupulously avoided any dissociation of himself from the acts of the Postmaster General; and perhaps it was the feeling that the head of the Discipline Branch was by general tradition associated with the severer acts which made him somewhat retiring.

A tale is told—let the reader take it for no more—how a head of that branch, in days before Sir Arthur Blackwood came from the Treasury to the Post Office, drew attention to the hardship which he underwent in having to bear the odium of some measure of severity carried out contrary to his advice and convictions, and that he received the brusque reply, “That’s what you’re paid for.” There is a certain saturnine sagacity in this epigram, if it be interpreted widely enough—we are all paid, *inter alia*, for not prejudicing the policy of the department by pre-occupation with our own concerns and reputations. But it is quite certain that when the time comes for setting up the image of Herbert Joyce in its proper niche of St. Martin’s temple of fame, the image will not be that of the man who was paid for taking the blame when harsh decisions were made, but that of the man who gave an undivided loyalty to the best interests of the service, and whose whole career was beneficent in this sense—that he knew the working value of mercy, of leniency, of considerateness, of courtesy, and knew it by long experience.

Ralph Allen's Bye-Posts.

[The following narrative was written by Ralph Allen in 1761, in support of his application for the renewal of his contract for a seventh time. The renewal was granted in 1762, but the contract became void on Allen's death in 1763. This narrative is now printed for the first time from a manuscript among the Home Office papers of 1761 in the Record Office. The spelling and punctuation of the original have been faithfully followed. We are indebted to Mr. A. M. J. Ogilvie for the discovery and transcription of this interesting document.]



NARRATIVE of Mr. Allen's transactions with the Government for the better management of the Bye-way and cross-road Posts, from the year 1720 to the year 1762, whereby it will be seen how much he has been the instrument of increasing the Revenue; and encouraging the Commerce of this Kingdom, during the whole of that long interval.

First of all then, it may be proper, in order to shew to what degree Mr. Allen has been the means of this benefit to *both* to give a succinct account of the condition of the *Bye-way and Cross-road Posts*; and of the several ineffectual attempts both of the Legislature and Administration to reform and to prevent the general abuses under which that Branch of the Revenue had long labour'd, before Mr. Allen had formed his Plan and offered his assistance, for its' regulation.

In the Year 1710, and in the ninth Year of her late Majesty Queen Anne, an Act passed for the Establishment of a General Post Office thro' out all Her Majesty's Dominions: in which act it is expressly declared, "that divers Deputy (or Country) Postmasters did then collect great quantity's of Post Letters, called *Bye or Way Letters*, and, by clandestine and private agreements amongst themselves, did convey the same, in their respective Mails or Bye Bags, according to their several directions without accounting for the same, or endorsing the same on their Bills, to the great detriment of her Majesty's Revenue."

In order to suppress this scandalous abuse the said Law enacts, "that whoever, after the passing thereof, should be found guilty of embezzling the Postage of any *Bye or Way Letters*, to the prejudice of the Revenue, should forfeit and pay five pounds for the Postage of every Letter so embezzled; and one hundred pounds for every week in which he or she continued in such inequitable practice."

But this was the least part of the evil, which the Legislature had in their view to redress by this penal clause. The unsafe, the uncertain, and precarious conveyance of these Letters was, by the perpetual interruption of Correspondence, of infinite hurt and detriment to Trade and Commerce. And as the negligent and absurd manner of conveyance served to cover the embezzlements, so the Embezzlers took care that, that negligence and absurdity should go on and increase, in proportion to the amount of their unjust gains.

To give a slight idea of the nature of this conveyance: *The Bye and Way Letters* were thrown promiscuously together into one large Bag, which was to be opened at every Stage by the Deputy, or any inferior Servant of the House, to pick out of the whole heap, what might belong to his own delivery, and the rest put back again into this large Bag, with such Bye letters as he should have to send to distant places, from his own Stage. But what was still worse than all this, it was then the constant practice to demand and receive the postage of all such Letters before they were put into any of the Country Post offices. Hence (from the general temptation of destroying these Letters for the sake of the Postage) the joint mischief of embezzling the Revenue and interrupting and obstructing the commerce, fell naturally in, to support and inflame one another. Indeed they were then risen to such a height, and consequently the discredit and disrepute of this conveyance grown so notorious, that many Traders and others in divers parts of the Kingdom, had recourse to various contrivances of private and clandestine conveyance for their speedier and safer Correspondence; whereby it became unavoidable but that other branches of the Post Office revenue should be greatly impair'd, as well as this. Such then was the state of things when the Act of the ninth of Queen Anne came in aid of the Crown and the Public.

And, in pursuance of the intention of this Law, and to enforce due obedience to it, Sir Thomas Frankland, and Sir John Eveling her Majesty's then Postmasters General, ordered the above recited penal clause to be inserted in the printed directions for the conduct

of their Deputy Postmasters; and dispersed them throughout the Kingdom; with their commands to affix this clause in frames, in every Country Post Office: and at the same time took such other measures as occur'd to them, most conducive towards rendering the Law effectual. But the careless and injudicious method of receiving, and conveying these *Bye and Way Letters* continuing still the same, very few of the Deputy Postmasters were induced, by the severity of those penalties, to give a just account of the produce of these Letters. On the contrary, much the greater part of them not only, continued, but, for the reasons above given of temptation and opportunity, greatly improved themselves in this iniquitous practice, during the remainder of those Gentlemen's government of the Post Office.

On the accession of King George the first to the Crown, Lord Cornwallis and Mr. Craggs were made Postmasters General: who soon after their entrance into the office, appointed six Surveyors, and sent them into the several different parts of the Kingdom and especially into the great Manufacturing and distant parts of it, furnished with their long Instructions to examine minutely into the true state of the Post Office concerns, in all it's Branches; but to have a more particular attention to the proper conveyance, and faithful accounting for the produce of the *Bye and Way Letters*.

These Officers, after they had spent a considerable time in the several parts to which they were assigned, returned to the Postmasters General, with their various reports; some of them very Voluminous; but none of them pointed out the least shadow of a reform for the safer conveyance of the *Bye and Way Letters*; or for the suppression of the frauds committed in accounting for the produce of them: as may appear from the said Reports themselves, yet preserved amongst the papers of the Post Office.

And it was no wonder: for till a proper check could be contrived, a *Check* of one Country Post Office upon another, things were still to be left to the consciences of the several Deputy's: and the consciences of the fraudulent go on pretty much at the same rate, (only with more or less caution) whether under penaltys, or under none. These checks Mr. Allen first conceived and rendered practicable: and as they were the means and sole means of *securing* that revenue to the Public, which his other regulations had enabled him to *raise and increase*, it may not be improper to mention how they were formed. He so contrived, that every Postmaster on the same Road, and in all the Branches in the same Road, should check

and be checked, by, every other: nay further, this security against fraud was extended even to operate reciprocally between the Postmasters on different Roads and on the different Branches of different Roads, by means of certain Regulations which he kept in places where these different Roads are intersected by Cross-road Branches; and which for this reason, he chose to call *Key Towns*. These are all supported and kept in vigour by the constant tho' occasional, inspection of Surveyors sent as Mr. Allen discovers or apprehends a cause, with Instructions to transmit to him an exact state of the Case in question, with all its appearances; by which he may be enabled to suppress the very first attempts towards fraudulent practices. And what full employment he finds in first discovering and then Speedily, as well as effectually suppressing every rising abuse, in so extensive and intricate concerns, is much easier conceived than explained, in the narrow compass of a general Narrative.

Now these Checks, thus invented and ever since practised with so much success to the Public and to himself, did, as we say, detect every considerable fraud; and was necessarily attended with this further, and, indeed, most material advantage, the removing all the usual interruption of Correspondence, by rendering the conveyance of the *Bye and Way Letters* safe, constant, and expeditious. For the imposition of this Check required the removal of all that absurdity and unskilful practice in the conveyance of these Letters, which occasioned the mischiefs so long complained of, and then judged to be without remedy after these six Surveyors with all their Volumes of Reports, had made the matter appear still more desperate than they found it.

In this condition was this Branch of the King's Revenue, when Mr. Allen of Bath (who had been Deputy Postmaster of that place from the year 1710) formed his Plan for the safe conveyance of the *Bye-way and Cross-road Letters*; and for the *faithfull* accounting for the Postage thereof to the Public. And in the Year 1719 he waited on Lord Cornwallis and Mr. Craggs, with an account of what he had done, and of the time and pains he had employed in bringing, as he believed, his scheme to some tolerable degree of use and consistency.

He was heard with the greater candour and attention, on account of a circumstance then pretty singular, which was this, One of the Surveyors mentioned before, in whose department it fell to visit the Post Office at Bath, had, on the strictest examination and by the

clearest accounts, found that Mr. Allen, from the entering on his employment to that time, had faithfully accounted to the Government for the postage of all the *Bye and Way Letters* which had been committed to his care: And this truth that Surveyor was even forced to report to the Board: the evidence of which he believes, is still existing in the Surveyor's general Report then delivered into the Office.

But the proposal being of so extraordinary a nature, no less than to reform a pernicious evil, which had been adjudged desperate, the Postmasters General desired a particular explanation of the scheme. This Mr. Allen with good reason declined: but to give them the best satisfaction he could in prudence, he desired to be informed what the clear produce of that Branch of the Post Office revenue did then amount to. He was told, that it produced four thousand pounds a year. Whereupon, to manifest the reality of a certain reform and improvement, to be seen immediately, he offered to advance it two thousand pounds a year, that is, to make the four thousand, six, for a term of seven years; and to support all the expenses belonging to the management of his Plan.

This offer, after mature deliberation at that and the Treasury Board, was accepted: And a contract entered into, and executed, with a Proviso, in consequence of Mr. Letchmere's advice, the then Attorney General, to make it voidable on the King's demise; it being his opinion that as this was part of the Civil List, all sorts of alienations on how advantageous terms to the Revenue soever made, must immediately revert to the Successor.

Some time after the execution of this Contract it appeared, that, by an error in the Accomptant-General of the Post Office, in omitting several contingent expenses, that the *Bye-way and Cross-road Letters* before the commencement of the Contract, really produced, (instead of £4,000,) no more than £3,700 a year, for which deficiency Mr. Allen had no redress, he having contracted to pay £6,000 a Year in consequence of his proposal to augment the Revenue of that Branch £2,000, and of his receiving the Post Office account of £4,000, as an exact one.

But this was the least of the discouragements he had to encounter on the entering upon the execution of his Plan; some of the less able Surveyors sent into the several Countys, for the purposes aforesaid, did, together with many of the Country Deputy's who had been most guilty in defrauding the Revenue, combine in a false and malicious representation to the Postmasters General "that tho'

indeed, it was true, that Mr. Allen's Plan would when executed be very beneficial to the *commerce* of the Kingdom, yet that they, from their pretended knowledge of the whole affair, were very certain that it could not be so to the King's Revenue; Mr. Allen's Plan not being to be supported without injury to the Produce of the *Country Letters* to a much greater sum than the rent amounted to, which he had advanced upon the *Bye-way and Cross-road Letters*; and consequently that the Revenue, on the whole, instead of being really improved would be considerably lessen'd: now it is to be observed, that by *Country Letters* is meant such letters as are sent from one Post Office in the Country to another thro' London, and Taxed double there.

The principal person, and he was most busy in supporting these false suggestions and malicious misrepresentations, was one Mr. Bell, afterwards made Comptroller of the Inland Office; and at length dismissed from that service, and publicly prosecuted in the High Court of Chancery for damages, in reparation of notorious frauds by him committed, which frauds his very office was erected to prevent.

These suggestions being transmitted to Mr. Allen, He replied, "that this Plan was calculated not to injure, but to support and to augment the produce of the *Country Letters*, as well as of the *Bye and Cross-road Letters*: But that he had reason to say on this occasion, that he too had himself his apprehensions of danger in his own private concerns, as well as the Postmasters General in the concerns of the Public; for, that this very corrupt combination, which had alarmed them with damage to the *Country Letters*, has in order to suppress Mr. Allen's undertaking, actually begun to make a vile use of the intricate boundary's of that Branch, by sending the *Bye and Cross-road Letters*, in the distant parts of the Kingdom thro' London."

To defeat therefore this iniquitous Cabal, which had alarmed the Postmasters General by false suggestions, and had alarmed Mr. Allen by a corrupt abuse of their trust, Mr. Allen (after trying several expedients, by more explicit descriptions of the various parts of these two interfering branches, which tho' serviceable, did not sufficiently answer the intire purpose) proposed, that an exact enquiry should be made into the produce of *Country Letters*, for 14 years preceding the commencement of his Contract; that this space of time should be divided into two equal parts, whereby it would be clearly seen, whether the produce of the *Country Letters*

was at this time in an improving, or a declining state: If an improving, it might reasonably be supposed, it would continue to improve, in the common management of the Post Office; but if in a declining, it would shew the absolute necessity of securing it, by some new management from its sinking to nothing.

This proposal was comply'd with; and, on examination it appeared, by proper Vouchers (which Mr. Allen hath now to produce) that the *Country Letters*, for the last seven years of the fourteen, which underwent this examination, were one Year with another, sunk about nine hundred pounds a year; a sufficient evidence of the dangerous condition in which this branch of the Revenue then lay. This was no false alarm like the other; and therefore it readily disposed the Postmasters General to hearken to a new offer, Mr. Allen then made them, for the final determination of all dangers and suspicions in this uncertain state of their affairs, taken up by the Office on the false suggestions of the corrupt Deputy Postmasters, and more reasonably entertained by Mr. Allen on his detection of their iniquitous practice.

The offer he made to set things right was this, to engage himself, by a new agreement, to support the produce of the *Country Letters* during the term of seven years (for which term the produce of the *Bye-way and Cross-road Letters* were farmed to him) at the sum to which it then amounted; Upon condition, that he should be entitled to all exceeding such sum should he be able to improve that Branch likewise, during the continuance of his lease. All this was judged to be so right and equitable that it was directly approved of and a new Contract was drawn up to be executed by the parties, called an *Explanatory Contract*.

The Postmasters General *was* satisfied, because the suggestions of the Cabal, which insinuated, that Mr. Allen would turn the profits of the *Country Letters* into his own Branch, were effectually obviated, by securing a certain produce for these Letters: And Mr. Allen was secure (and could by no other means have been secure) from the ruin these Men meditated against him, by their turning the *Bye-way and Cross-road Letters* into the *Country Branch*: for now the exceedings in the produce of the *Country letters*, being by the *explanatory Contract* granted to him, that iniquitous perversion of one branch into another was become ineffectual to their purpose.

This much was necessary to shew, how Mr. Allen's Plan of reform and improvement was traversed on his first setting out: tho' he set out with all the assistance that the Postmasters General could

give him. It is not the purpose of this narrative to give a detail of the incredible pains and labour he underwent before he could subdue that system of fraud and peculation which had spread thro'out the whole country, by this combination of corrupt Deputy's. But it may be easily apprehended what time, attention, and perseverance was necessary to bring the Administration of this branch of the public Revenue under a better management.

To proceed,—A considerable time having been spent in settling this *explanatory Contract*; when it was now agreed to, another obstacle started up, to obstruct the execution of it. For during the course of this transaction it appeared, that the *Country Letters* had considerably increased; and the Postmasters General expected that the terms of this new Contract should operate only from the day in which the writing should be executed: On the contrary Mr. Allen remonstrated, that as this was only an *explanatory Contract*, to secure the Government and himself from the dangers they were both apprehensive of, from the imaginary suggestions, and from the real transgressions of corrupt officers, it could not answer this purpose unless it commenced and ended with the other Contract for the management of the *Bye-way and Cross Road Letters*.

While this point was in suspense, Mr. Craggs died, and Lord Cornwallis was removed to another employment. In their stead, Mr. Carteret, Uncle to the present Earl Granville, and Mr. Galfridus Walpole, Brother to the late Sir Robert Walpole, succeeded to this Office; who, finding, on their entrance upon it, this new Contract unexecuted, and being apprehensive of danger to the Revenue of the *Country Letters*, from the renewal of the old suggestions, (which did not fail to appear on all occasions when they were likely to work their designed mischief against the Contractor) pressed for the speedy execution of this new Contract. And Mr. Allen having made them acquainted with the cause of the delay, they agreed to the reason of it, and to the justness of his expectations; and consented that the new *explanatory Contract* should operate and have force from the date of the old one; But, at the same time, they took notice that Mr. Allen had given a good security for six thousand pounds, the rent in the old Contract, for the *Bye and Cross road Letters*, and therefore thought it but reasonable that an additional security should be given for his true performance of the new Contract. To which Mr. Allen told them he had no objection; only he observed them, one material difference between the old and the new Contract: In the first, the revenue was alienated, and received

by him, so that it was but reasonable he should give good security for the rent he was to pay to the Government in lieu of it: but in the second Contract, there was no alienation; all the receipts for the *Country Letters* being still to continue under the collection of the Office, and to be paid into it, so that all which, in this case, was to be provided for, was a contingent *deficiency*, which, they might understand, it was his, Mr. Allen's interest to make as little as possible, since for every Letter which he should divert from the Branch of the *Country Letters*, to carry into the *Bye-way and Cross-road* Branches, he must pay a double postage to the Government; and could only receive from the people, a *single* postage for himself.

This the Postmasters General admitted to be reason; but being just entered upon a new Employment, they held it but prudent to consult Mr. Lowndes, an old experienced officer in the Treasury, for his opinion of what was fit to require for this additional security, who answered, *a Year's produce*. When this strange and unexpected answer was brought to the Post Office, Mr. Allen, at first, imagined that the great difference between the nature of the two Contracts had not been properly or sufficiently explained to Mr. Lowndes: But when he was assured, by a Person of integrity, that they had been properly and sufficiently explained, and that Mr. Lowndes' opinion was founded on the intricacy in the boundaries of these two interfering Branches, and the power Mr. Allen had of throwing the conveyance of both branches into which of them he thought proper, He, Mr. Allen had nothing to do but adhere, as has been *always* his practice to the reason of the thing.

He admitted, that he had the power which Mr. Lowndes objected to him; but he desired the Postmasters General to consider how false such an absurd exercise of it must needs prove to himself. He was obliged, by this *very explanatory Contract*, to make up all deficiencies to the Government for the *Country Letters*, when they did not amount to the sum of fifteen thousand four hundred and thirty three pounds, nineteen shillings and sevenpence: now supposing him capable of the perversion Mr. Lowndes would guard against, because it was in his power to commit it, and the consequence would be this, Mr. Allen would have £15,433, to pay to the Government of the *Country Letters*; and to discharge this debt, he would have just half this sum to receive from the produce of the *Bye-way and Cross-road Letters*.

Here he left it; for to say more on so clear a case would have only tended to obscure it.

What was merely personal in it was of so singular a nature that he cou'd not forbear, at the same time just to represent it to those Gentlemen who were disposed to hear reason; I mean the Postmasters General.

He said, his case was a very uncommon one. He was a Young Man, just entering into the world, and willing to push his fortune, neither at the expence of *Particulars*, nor of the *Public*; but in the execution of a *Plan* beneficial to both; for the improvement of the two branches of his Majesty's Revenue then under extreme bad management. To facilitate that purpose, he had already procured, on his personal character alone, (notwithstanding all the powerfull misrepresentations mentioned before, of the mischiefs and impracticability of the scheme) a full and undoubted security of £6000, for the true performance of his Contract; by which his friends were not only bound (as in the security for the common receipts of the revenue) for the payment of all such Public Moneys as he, Mr. Allen, should actually receive into his custody, but, in effect, they likewise engaged for his singular abilities in improving a Revenue (which had so long without success, been attempted to be improved) to such a degree as should enable him to pay this large rent, together with all expenses attending the management of so extensive and intricate a concern. After this, for him to renew his application to these Gentlemen for a *further* engagement, whose only motive for their *post* was the generosity of their friendship, was what no motives of Lucre or self interest should ever prevail with him to think of. It was true, he said, that this further engagement was without the least hazard, since there was the best grounded expectations to conclude, that the annual sum in question, instead of being lessened, would be greatly improved, and, consequently, that, at the end of the Contract, he, Mr. Allen, instead of having Money to pay to the Government on this account, would have a very considerable sum to receive for himself; but this was one reason the more with him for declining to make the request; for an unreasonable demand upon *him*, could never justify him in making it upon others.

But to shew the Postmasters General there was nothing of obstinacy in his conduct, he offered to go as far as even any shadow of reason could allow him: He offered to deposit as an additional security for his performance of this new Contract, a sum double to the deficiency of any one of the fourteen years which had been examined into, for the former produce of the *Country Letters*.

This offer, and these reasonings, the Postmasters General were very attentive to, and always disposed to comply with, had not Mr. Lowndes' opinion still stood obstinately in the way.

On the whole, when Mr. Allen found that Mr. Lowndes was not likely to alter his way of thinking, and that without that the Postmasters General did not hold themselves at liberty to accept his Proposal, he told them he had nothing further to offer on that embarrassed point; first started by themselves; and as there was no immediate danger to the Revenue, that article, for the present at least, might remain unsettled.

Accordingly, on this foot the matter rested to the end of the first contract, when, upon an examination into the Accounts of the *Country Letters* for that period, it appeared, that instead of any sinking, as was apprehended, this branch was increased on the whole £7,835 2s. 7d., which sum Mr. Allen was equitably entitled to, because it was the produce of his own care and circumspection; and what he must have received had the *explanatory Contract*, agreed upon been executed: but that not being done, tho' by no fault or neglect on the part of Mr. Allen, the Postmasters General did not deem themselves empowered to consent to him receiving the same; nor, what appeared indeed still harder, even to make allowance for the Accountant General's mistake in overrating the *Bye-way and Cross-road Letters* £300 a year (as taken notice of above) which in the Seven Years of the contract amounted to £2,100. Thus near £10,000 became lost to Mr. Allen, solely by the mistake and unreasonable obstinacy of others.

(*To be concluded.*)

The Rigour of the Game.

*And grant the bad what happiness they would,
One they must want, which is to pass for good.*

ONCE upon a junction platform I was pacing to and fro,
Talking to a Postal colleague from the State of Weissnichtwo.

In that far-off State, he told me, there was no such thing as shame,
No such thing as truth and honour, people merely played the game.

Played to win without a scruple—not as we in London play—
For the stakes were all their object—lighter work and heavier pay.

No such thing as willing service, for the rule was “nought for nought,”
Zeal was but a dream of dotards, far remote from modern thought.

But they rested not from labour, day and night they studied hard,
Doubting, wondering, deciding, which should be the winning card.

One would stand to win promotion by his own loud trumpet’s blast,
Advertising all his virtues, and the way his life was passed.

One would seek to gather secrets, snare a colleague in the toils;
From a grateful chief expecting Private-Secretarial spoils.

Some, in agitation banded, played to win by bluffing high,
Prated of the force of numbers till men wearied of their cry.

Some would play in gentler fashion, play with many a wily sob
On the sympathetic softness of an ill-instructed mob.

Some, he said, “in act more graceful,” stepping from their classic
shade,

Boldly laid a claim to winnings on the score of “higher grade.”

Some agreed to be “unselfish,” played each other’s cards by turns,
Each to back his toiling brother with a hackneyed tag from Burns.

And the shibboleths, he told me, of this somewhat artful plan,
Were "the dignity of labour," and "the manhood of a man."

Then the train was at the platform, and I stood and watched him go,
Turned away, and thanked high heaven we were not as Weissnichtwo.

For I knew that on our conscience there was nothing to repent,
Knew that—were we discontented—then divine were discontent.

If we sought for better wages, 'twas to save the State from blame,
And to bear each other's burdens was our combination's aim.

All the Pharisee within me snorted with superior scorn
As I thought of all the virtues that an Englishman adorn.

Yet perhaps . . . and then I doubted, after all I hardly know ;
Cant was made for home consumption ; Therefore, scorn not
Weissnichtwo ! H. S. C.



POST OFFICE, NEWCASTLE, N.S.W.

(See page 41.)

Two Snow-Storms in the South of Scotland.

1895. — GALLOWAY.

ABOUT five o'clock in the morning of Wednesday, the 6th February, 1895, snow commenced to fall over the stretch of country in the South-West of Scotland known as Galloway, or which the natives thereof love to describe, with a sweep of the hand, as from "Maxwelltown Bridge to the Braes of Glenapp." A biting north-easterly wind prevailed, and the dry powdery flakes, driven hither and thither, soon filled up doors and windows in the towns, and uneven surfaces in the country. Brooms were plied in vain to keep the pavements clear, and as for the carriage-ways the task was beyond the resources of the cleansing authorities. The cold was intense, 10 degrees of frost being registered in the neighbourhood of Castle-Douglas in the afternoon. The wind increased in force to the strength of a gale, and the storm was generally described as of the nature of a blizzard. All day the snow continued to fall; and at midnight 37 degrees of frost were recorded. Next day the mercury rose to 25°, or 7 degrees of frost, but about bed-time it dropped to 3 degrees below zero. On the following day—Friday—snow fell at intervals, but on the Saturday there was a short respite. On Sunday, however, the lowest temperature ever recorded in the district was marked, and in all conscience it was low enough to satisfy a native of Greenland, being 10° below zero, or 42 degree of frost. On the morning of the same day the Observatory thermometer at Glasgow is stated to have marked the lowest point reached during the previous thirty-six years, namely, '4 above zero, or about 10½ degrees higher than that recorded at Castle-Douglas. Readings a few degrees below zero were telegraphed to the newspapers from several other places in the south of Scotland, and for a few days towns and villages seemed to vie with each other for the honour of breaking the record, regardless

of the hardships which the extreme frost entailed. It was a surprise to people acquainted with the Esk valley to find the pretty border town of Langholm putting in a claim for the lowest reading, and it is to be hoped, for the sake of its reputation as a snuggerly in Eskdale, that the instruments available at the time were not quite faultless. The lowest temperature recorded during the long spell of cold weather, which characterised the winter of 1895, was at Braemar, in the north, where, on Monday, February 11th, the thermometer marked 17° below zero, or 49 degrees of frost.

The oldest inhabitants everywhere were unanimous in stating that such intense cold had never in their recollection been previously experienced in Galloway, and, though this was but cold comfort to a shivering population, it did not abate the enthusiasm of the rival communities to go one better for next morning's newspaper. After all, however, the only people who really enjoyed themselves during the prolonged frost were the plumbers, over whose faces sardonic smiles played, as, one after another, the distressed householders related the familiar story of the frozen water-pipe, or the gas that refused to burn, or the door bell that remained as dumb as a stone-dog; or the kitchen boiler that emitted dreadful noises, and threatened to blow the roof off the house. Ill-natured people are often down on the plumber, and some individuals, after an experience of this kind, might even charge him with being a husbandman who sows in summer and reaps in winter. Such, however, would be a most unfair accusation, and probably it would be more correct to attribute the inconveniences which arise from a spell of hard weather to the parsimony of owners of property, and the carelessness of tenants.

The frost was bad enough, but, if anything, the snow was worse, as before nightfall on the Wednesday referred to, roads and streets were in many places impassable. Drifts from four to eight feet in height filled the streets of Castle-Douglas; and from Dumfries to Stranraer the country was overspread with snow, which in many places completely obliterated the roads, and changed the aspect of the land. Fortunately the railway line between Dumfries and Castle-Douglas was kept open, but beyond that place it was blocked from the first day of the storm.

The 3.40 p.m. train from Stranraer to Dumfries, to which the Galloway post office sorting-carriage is attached, ran into a huge snow drift near Creetown, and remained fast all night. On the same day the line from Stranraer to Girvan became blocked near Pinwherry, and thus the two routes to Stranraer were, for the time being, closed.

This was a rather serious matter for the north of Ireland, as it is by the Larne and Stranraer steamers that the mails between Great Britain and a considerable part of Ireland are conveyed on week days. The Princess May was the steamer on the station at the time, and the difficulties of the situation on land were increased by the terrific storm which occurred on the Wednesday, compelling this magnificent vessel—one of Denny of Dumbarton's masterpieces—to run for shelter to a small bay in Loch Ryan in the course of her morning trip from Stranraer to Larne. No tidings of the ship could be obtained for a time, and the greatest anxiety for her safety in such weather was felt at both ports. The people of Stranraer are proud of the sister boats, Princess May and Princess Victoria, and they have good reason to be so. The ancient town, though very interesting to visitors, is not by any means a second Brighton, as so many other seaside places claim to be—for what reason it seems difficult to find out—and the departure and arrival of the Irish mail steamers are always events of interest to the townspeople, as the vessels can be seen from almost any part of the town. The non-arrival of the Princess May on the occasion referred to was, therefore, known in all probability to nearly every individual in the place; and when 6,193 people are thinking of the same thing at the same time, the interest in that thing is bound to be very keen.

At such times the public flock to the Post Office for the latest news, and the officials at once assume a droll look of sympathetic-knowingness, as if they were on the point of divulging some terrible secret, when a spectral hand, pointing to a printed notice headed "Secrecy," warns them of the traitors' doom. Up to the hour of closing the Stranraer post office for the night, no word of the overdue steamer had reached the town, but in the quiet hours of the early morning the quick ear of the lightly-sleeping Postmaster caught the "click! click!" of the telegraph instrument in the office downstairs, as it kept "a-calling" him to arise and receive the good news that the Princess May had reached Larne in safety. The overjoyed Postmaster considered that, early though the hour was, he ought to make an effort to struggle through the snow-wreaths to the residence of the agent of the Company, in order to deliver the message. It may be true that good news will keep, but Mr. Little is not the man to keep back good news, however much the labour to impart it may cost him. Notwithstanding the danger of journeying alone in a dark stormy

night, through streets blocked by immense drifts, he set out with the telegram at four in the morning. Before going far he came to grief several times, and found himself up to the waist in snow in what appeared to be the streets of a strange town, instead of those of his own "Thick-Nose" (or "clumsy projection"), which some authorities—who may yet be found!—aver is the Gaelic for Stranraer. Nothing daunted he struggled on, and was rewarded by espying a friendly light in a window. "Any port in a storm" probably crossed his mind at that moment, for when he reached the light he found himself within the precincts of the Police Station. Once there, he felt he was safe, though thoroughly exhausted. The telegram having been entrusted for delivery to one of the constables, the Postmaster was accompanied back to his home by another member of the Force, who, no doubt, observed that a rather portly gentleman like Mr. Little would be none the worse of company in his midnight ramble over hillocks of snow, and in a storm that made the strongest men reel.

When the Princess May returned to Stranraer on the following morning, after another protracted voyage, the captain found instructions awaiting him to proceed at once to Ayr, to which port all the Irish mails had been forwarded as soon as possible. Without waiting to clear the decks and rigging of the enormous accumulation of frozen snow, which lay in hard masses in every nook, and clung to the deck-houses, Captain George Campbell started for Ayr without a moment's delay. Mr. Redford, the Surveyor of the Southern District, was on the spot to see the mails, for the conveyance of which he had made all the arrangements, placed on board the vessel; and he afterwards informed the writer that, when the steamer was seen coming round the Heads of Ayr, a moving mass of white glittering in the brilliant sunshine of a clear blue sky, the pretty picture attracted a crowd of people to the shore. A nearer view of the ship afforded ample proof that she had encountered weather which is rarely experienced in this country, and that hearty Captain Campbell must have come through something akin to the experiences of Transatlantic liners in severe winters. A large number of sacks of mails and of parcel baskets having been placed on board, the vessel left for Larne, with her decks and rigging still covered with ice and masses of snow.

While the minds of some people were occupied with the question of providing Ireland with an emergency service of mails, and with the dangers of the sea, a few individuals here and there throughout

the district affected by the snowstorm were peppering the surveyor with telegrams about the "atrocious," and "monstrous," state of postal affairs in the rural districts under his control. In some cases the remonstrances were rather comical, as the rural postmen could not reach the complainers to deliver the letters, and the latter would have required a balloon to fetch them themselves. Exasperated by the isolation, one gentleman demanded that the Post Office should forthwith compel the county authorities to cut the drifts, and open communication; but probably the authorities were themselves snowed-up, as, like brer fox, they "lay low and said nuffin'"; and when it was hinted that there were a few ten-foot wreaths about, they "continued to say nuffin'."

The annoyance of the public was perhaps excusable, as the state of the roads was known only to the very few individuals who were obliged to be abroad in such weather. When the storm abated, and the cold became less intense, people ventured out to witness the novel sight. All irritation soon vanished, and in its place there was nothing but thankfulness that the rural postmen had escaped with their lives. A few extracts from most interesting accounts written by some of the postmasters and the rural postmen will, no doubt, be appreciated by the readers of this magazine.

Mr. Weir, the Postmaster of Dumfries, describes the rural postmen starting from his office in "good spirits," eager to do battle with the snow to the bitter end; and returning in the afternoon, "worn out with their exertions, covered from head to foot with snow, and with icicles two to three inches in length hanging from their beards and upper lips." The icicles, it seems, could only be removed by the men holding their faces over a large fire on reaching home. Mr. Weir is not given to drawing the long-bow, but he might have cut half-an-inch off these icicles without any qualms of conscience. It is just possible, however, that the wearers of the strange ornaments considered that it would be a pity to spoil the one experience of a lifetime by docking the pendants before showing them to their wives.

The rural postmen suffered great hardships in the execution of their duty, one man being so severely frost-bitten that he was obliged to go off duty for several days. The mail-cart drivers, of whom there are several in the district affected, did their work well. Mr. Weir mentions the case of the driver of the Dumfries and Southwick mail-cart as deserving of notice. It seems that on the first day of the storm this man performed his duty to Southwick and

back under great difficulties, but in fairly good time. Next morning he found the drifts were much heavier than on the previous day, and about a mile from Dumfries he was compelled to give up the struggle. Determined not to be beaten, he returned to the town for a lighter conveyance, and again setting out he forced his way through to New Abbey, a distance of about seven miles; but the road becoming worse, he wisely decided not to attempt the remaining nine miles. He was about to return to Dumfries, when a gentleman, who had also made his way as far as New Abbey, and had still some miles to drive before reaching home, taunted him with want of pluck, and called upon him to follow *his* lead. The driver, nettled, retorted that he thought the gentleman, though he had a very good horse, was afraid to go on alone; and added, "I'll tell you what—you drive on, and I'll follow; for if you can go, I can too." The challenge having been accepted, both started; but they had not proceeded far when the first conveyance slid into a ditch, and but for the assistance of the mail-driver in the rear a serious accident might have occurred. Once more on the road, the two battled on for a distance of about two miles, when, in negotiating a wreath from ten to twelve feet high, the leading horse, machine, and driver, became embedded in the snow, and the rear-guard had again to come to his leader's rescue. After much difficulty the conveyances were got clear, and both men agreeing that it would be madness to continue the attempt, the retreat was sounded, and tracks made for New Abbey and Dumfries, the plucky mail-driver chuckling the while. On the third day the mail-driver managed to pass the drift and reach Preston, about two and a half miles from Southwick. His horse being very tired, he resolved to attempt the remainder of the journey on foot, with the belated mails on his back. He succeeded in reaching his destination after a great struggle. He had to scramble on the tops of walls, from which he several times fell, over head and ears in the snow; and, leaving the road at places, he made his way across fields, and over fences and ditches—all the time with the mails on his back.

One of the rural postmen in the Southwick district, who has a circular walk of only nine miles, went out, as usual, on the Friday, but was unable to return until the Saturday, by which time another day's mails had arrived. When asked if he would rest for a short time, and start again with the Saturday's mail, he replied, "Na, na; I'll pit it aff till Sabbath; as, bless me, I canna gang twa days rinnin' up tae the neck in snaw!"

At Kirkcudbright there was great difficulty in effecting the deliveries, and Mr. Finlayson, the postmaster, sends in a number of reports which afford most interesting reading. A few sentences from one or two may be quoted, though the writer would like to be able to make more copious extracts.

John Houston, the rural postman to Borgue, says :—" On the afternoon of Wednesday I had great difficulty on my inward journey, as the wind and snow were in my face all the way, and it took me an hour and twenty minutes longer than usual to do the journey. I may state I was the only person that got through either to or from Borgue that night, as the carriers had to turn back and remain in Kirkcudbright from Wednesday until Saturday night. On my



JOHN HOUSTON, BORGUE RURAL POSTMAN.

arrival I was all coated over with ice, and was photographed in the street in my trap on my way home. On Thursday, as the storm was still raging, it was impossible to venture out, but on Friday and Saturday, having procured a suitable horse for the task, my pony being too short of leg, as the snow all the way was from three to eight feet deep, I went on horseback, and found great difficulty, so much so that I had to take to the fields part of the way. On Friday I had to leave the horse at the Free Manse, one mile from Borgue, but managed all the way on Saturday."

Mrs. Maizland, the sub-postmistress of Borgue, reports that she had much trouble in arranging for the delivery of telegrams, as

messengers were most unwilling to venture beyond the village alone, and in several cases she had to pay another person to accompany the messengers charged with the delivery of portorage telegrams.

William Hannay, the rural postman to Dundrennan, describes the bewildering character of the snowstorm, and says that he had to leave his horse and cart behind on starting to return to Kirkcudbright. Several times he was obliged to take shelter behind walls and hedges, as the strong wind blew the snow in blinding showers in his face. He took four hours to walk eight miles. Next day there was no mail, and on the Friday he tried to do the work on horseback, with the assistance of a man on foot. After going about four miles the horse had to be dispensed with, and the two men continued the journey through fields on foot. Both returned to Kirkcudbright at eight in the evening, quite worn out.

Mrs. Copland, sub-postmistress of Dundrennan, states that no horse would face the storm, and that the postmen in speaking of the dangers of the journey said it was an "awesome job," as they were sometimes blown into ditches full of snow, or had to roll over some of the wreaths to reach the other side.

James Murphy, the Whinneyleggate rural postman, and David Davidson, town postman, also send Mr. Finlayson very readable accounts of their personal experiences.

Miss McVitae, the Postmistress of Castle-Douglas, forwards a budget of interesting matter from her district. Robert McGuffoy, the rural postman to Laurieston, who appears to have spent some years of his life in the north-west of Canada, speaks of the storm as a veritable blizzard. He says the snow "came through your clothing where there was the smallest opening," and that it froze on "hair and whiskers, and filled up your ears." He himself looked like a "moving lump of hard snow." He gives an account of an amusing incident which occurred to James Carmichael, another postman. He says, "A man who was riding up the road offered Carmichael a seat behind him. After a good deal of hoisting, I managed to get him on the horse's back, but the first step the animal took James's centre of gravity collapsed, and, slipping over the tail, he was lost to view. Nothing would induce him to mount again." At one place he "thought that all the snow in the parish was gathered there," and how he "got through was an exploit to be remembered," for he "just forced his way with both hands, like swimming." As he had a private bag to deliver at one place he braced himself to accomplish his purpose, the road being

“filled up from wall to wall.” He tried “many a dodge” to reach the gate, at times walking Blondin-like on what he believed to be the top of the wall, and at one place he had a disagreeable experience through slipping down a bank, “over the head, among slushy snow.” Where there was a wire railing on the top of a wall he “got on first-rate by holding on to it.” At the entrance



KING STREET, CASTLE-DOUGLAS.

to another house, the road being blocked up, he “just tried the swimming, and after a lot of swooping got the letters into the box.” Farther on, the public road “was filled up from bank to bank for about 1,000 yards, and getting through was a tough job.” He did not “see the Dornal letter-box for ten days, as it was completely covered with snow all that time.”

In order to reach the Free Church Manse, near the end of his delivery, he had to borrow a spade and dig his way up to the house, and to several others. Mr. Kirkpatrick, of the Townhead Sub-office, states that when the postman arrived there he was so completely covered with snow that he could hardly be got into the office, but that willing hands soon set to work to rub him dry, and give him hot tea. Being worn out with the fatigue of his outward journey, he was kindly treated by Mr. Lawson, the schoolmaster, who gave him a bed for the night.

Mr. Campbell, of the Laurieston sub-office, says that too much praise cannot be bestowed on Robert McGuffoy for the courage he displayed in facing the storm after a fall of snow which continued without a break for thirty hours. The piercing wind, which made the face tingle when one attempted to look out, must have caused him much discomfort. No one expected the postman on such a day, but he "staggered into the office at three o'clock, having evidently been in snow-wreaths up to the neck, and thoroughly exhausted. After a little breathing space he started and delivered the letters in the village. Any one who passed along the road, as I did days afterwards, and saw where he had pulled himself through wreaths by holding on to the wires running along stone walls, must have appreciated duty performed under such difficulties and dangers."

The James Carmichael referred to also writes an account of his experiences, and in alluding to his first lesson in horsemanship says: "I never did ride a horse in my life; but this was an offer not to be refused in such circumstances." When pressed to re-mount he says he thanked the man for his kindness, and said he preferred to walk; and walk he did to good purpose. On arriving at Greenlaw, "the gallant Colonel was both surprised and delighted to see me," he continues, "for he did not think that either the mail train or the post would be able to come through such a storm. He ordered tea to be provided for me, and advised me to go no farther; but after the inner man was replenished I felt quite strong, and started off afresh. But here the difficulties of my journey commenced. Mountains of snow blocked my way on all sides; one drift, fifty yards long, and eight to ten feet in height, lay right across my path. I considered for a minute what to do, and, having resolved to go ahead, with the aid of my shepherd's crook (such as shepherds use in the lambing season) I tunnelled my way through, crawling on all fours, for a distance of fifteen feet. I reached the other side in safety, but a good picture for an artist, had he been able to use his brush in such

regions. I then got on the top of an old stone dyke, and crawled on my hands and knees for a considerable distance. Then through fields, over gates and fences, until I reached Valleyfield, where I also received great kindness. After resting a little I resumed my journey to Ernambrie and Halferne, the road being completely blocked, and only the tops of the hedges visible. These, however, were a good guide to me as far as Clarebrand. By the time I reached that place the storm had become worse, and the day being far advanced, and my strength beginning to fail, I turned my steps homewards, having finished my delivery with the exception of two houses over one mile farther on. The road home from Clarebrand to Castle-Douglas was the worst with blocks of snow of any in the district, the most of it being filled up to a height of five or six feet. On passing Maxwellfield cottages a woman looked out and said to me, 'I widna like to be your wife this nicht, Postie! Hoo will ye get hame?' I believe she never expected I would reach home in such weather. About a mile from Castle-Douglas I met a gentleman who had lost his hat in the storm. He was walking home from the station, and I learned afterwards that it took him five hours to walk the four miles home. I wish I may never encounter another such storm as long as I am a rural postman."

Mrs. Henderson, of the Auchencairn sub-office, remarks that "for two or three days the rural postmen did not know whether they were walking on the roads, the dykes, or hedges, the snow was so deep." One gentleman in the district "sent his coachman to fetch the letters from Castle-Douglas, as there were no letters coming, but the man was compelled to turn after going about a mile." About a mile from the Auchencairn office the drifts were so high that of two telegraph poles it appears only the tops were visible. The height of the poles is not given, but this is immaterial.

J. B. HEGARTY.

Surveying Staff, Scotland.

(To be concluded.)

Some Annual Reports.

I.—THE UNITED STATES, 1895.

THIS book of 760 pages contains a really surprising amount of important and interesting information. No adequate notice of it could be written in the space available; but two or three points may be specially referred to.

The deficiency on the working of the Department in the year under review was nearly ten million dollars; but, as the Postmaster General cheerfully remarks, if the Post Office were paid for the work it does for other Government Departments, the balance would be on the other side. He estimates that the recovery of trade will lead to more satisfactory results next year; but it is pretty clear that so long as the existing regulations as to the transmission of newspapers and periodicals, known as "second-class matter," continue in force, not only will there never be equilibrium between postal revenue and expenditure in the United States, but the development of the postal service will always be hampered. Two-thirds of the whole of the mails are estimated to consist of this "second-class matter"; some of it is carried free, and on the rest the postage is one cent per pound. Seeing that the cost of handling and conveyance is said to be eight cents a pound, one is hardly surprised to learn that the total loss to the Department is reckoned at eighteen and a half million dollars, or more than one-fifth of the whole postal revenue. Such a state of things does not encourage a relaxation of the newspaper post restrictions in this country.

Not much progress seems to be made in the arrangements for the free delivery of letters, &c. The number of free delivery offices has not been increased, an experimental service in forty-six towns and villages is said to have proved a failure, and a sum of 20,000 dollars voted by Congress to test the possibility of free delivery in rural districts was not expended, apparently because the Department could not decide where to begin. It is argued with some force that a facility of this kind should be granted throughout the country, if it is to be granted at all; and the cost of an universal free delivery is

estimated at thirty million dollars annually. If the people's representatives will vote the money, the Post Office, the report says, will be happy to do the rest.

The organization and control of the staff of postmen appears to be giving the Administration a good deal of trouble. Having apparently nothing corresponding to our surveying staff, the head office seems to have relied, as to the number of postmen required and the work which they were doing, entirely on the statement of Postmasters, most of whom, it will be remembered, hold office as the reward of political services and have had no training in postal work. When the present Administration came into office, it found an accumulation of claims from postmen for overtime amounting to upwards of a million and a half of dollars; at the same time there were frequent complaints of the evasion of the law restricting the hours of labour to eight. An active correspondence with Postmasters showed that the Department was losing at the rate of half a million of dollars per annum in "undertime"—the employment of superfluous men, bad arrangement of duties, &c.—and, as some offices showed no disposition to mend their ways, a force of detectives was organized and sent all over the country to collect information as to the real condition of the out-door service. We published in a former number an account of the "row royal" which the doings of these "spotters" excited in Chicago; and one does not wonder at the consternation which their visits caused in many places. But it is easy to see that something of the kind was absolutely necessary. Out of 151 offices visited in the year under review, at 60 no irregularities were discovered; at the remaining 91, 55 postmen were dismissed, 500 were suspended from duty, and 200 reprimanded. The Administration claims to have improved the service as well as to have made considerable savings by the measures which have been taken.

The United States Post Office has discontinued the issue of postal orders; on the other hand, 900 offices, which are not full money order offices, have been authorized to issue money orders up to \$5 each. The result has been that the number of inland money orders issued increased by more than half, and almost equalled the total number of money orders and postal orders issued during the previous year. A new and handsomer form of money order has been adopted.

Some of the most interesting pages of the report are those which relate to the detection of crime. Apparently any use of the mails for dishonest purposes can in that country be punished as an offence

against the Post Office; and accordingly Departmental detectives are largely occupied with cases of swindling, which in England would be dealt with by officers from Scotland Yard.

There are, it appears, gangs of men who send out circulars offering to sell counterfeit notes, not to be distinguished from genuine ones, at one-tenth of their face value. Purchasers find that what purports to be a packet of such notes consists of newspaper or sawdust with a genuine note on the outside. A very ingenious dodge was practised by one of these gangs: the circulars were not sent through the post, which would have been an infringement of the postal law, but were placed in addressed envelopes stamped, obliterated, and torn open. These envelopes were then dropped about the streets in likely places. The finder of one of them would thus suppose that it had been lost by the recipient, and that a lucky opportunity of obtaining something for nothing had accidentally fallen in his way. In this case Post Office detectives got into correspondence with the swindlers, arranged a purchase, and effected a capture. In another case a detective, in treating with a gang of sharpers at Chicago, personated a hog dealer from Iowa. His rustic simplicity quite won their hearts; they affectionately called him "uncle," and humoured him as he drove a hard bargain with them before he would part with any of the proceeds of his pigs with which his wallet was stuffed. Alas, for the trustfulness of human nature! As soon as he had effected a purchase, he produced a revolver, called in his associates, and marched his confiding relatives off to gaol. These men are often desperate characters, and a good deal of revolver appears to be sometimes required to effect a capture.

The expedient described below is worthy of the late lamented Sherlock Holmes:

"A young attorney sent an obscene letter through the mails to a lady. He was suspected by her husband, who called on the attorney in relation to the matter. He was invited into a private office, and the attorney having locked the door and displayed a revolver, tauntingly admitted having written the letter, well knowing that he could not be convicted on this evidence if he chose to offset the same by his own flat denial in court. Inasmuch as the case was a specially aggravating one, a novel and rather expensive plan was devised for securing the necessary evidence. A miniature telephone was constructed, the transmitter of which was hid away in the top of the silk hat to be worn by the husband at an interview to be specially arranged for with the attorney. It may be mentioned that the attorney was not averse to such interviews, but always insisted that the same be held in his private office behind locked doors. When

all arrangements had been perfected, the husband and a Post Office inspector repaired to the office of the attorney. The transmitter of the telephone was neatly concealed in the top of the husband's hat and a delicate battery was in his vest pocket, while the receiver was in the custody of the post office inspector. These three parts were connected by an almost invisible insulated gold wire, and thus a perfect and most sensitive telephone was produced. When the husband and the attorney retired to the private office there was a swift but noiseless unreeling of silk bound gold wire, and when the interview began behind the barred doors the electrical device was found to be in perfect order, and thus by means of this delicate and almost invisible apparatus the inspector was enabled to overhear the attorney repeatedly admit his guilt. When confronted by the inspector with a statement of what he had overheard and an exhibition of the means employed, the attorney at once made a full confession."

But even successful detectives have their disappointments. A series of robberies of post office safes was at last traced to a gang of desperate men, who were surprised in a low saloon by three armed detectives, and lodged in one of the New York gaols. Soon after their imprisonment they were allowed to shave and otherwise alter their personal appearance for the purpose of avoiding identification at their trial; and one morning a little later they covered their keepers with revolvers, which they had obtained in some mysterious manner, and escaped without firing a shot, to the great disgust of those who had had the trouble of catching them.

The time fails to tell of the experiments which are being made in the direction of transmitting mails between head and branch post-offices by pneumatic tube, the organisation of travelling post-offices on the tramways, and other matters; suffice it to say that the general impression which this report gives is of a great department with enormous difficulties, both natural and political, to contend with, but alert, enterprising, and, on the whole, successful in its efforts to meet the needs of what we should call "the public," but what the report habitually speaks of as "the patrons of the postal service."

II.—INDIA, 1894-95.

Again the annual report of the Indian Post Office records great prosperity and progress. For the first time the revenue exceeded the expenditure, in fact, the Department appears to be about three times as well off as it was two years before. In every item of postal work, except foreign money orders and savings bank operations, there has been an increase—in some cases a very large increase. As

regards foreign money orders the decrease is confined to the exchange with countries having a gold currency, the service with silver-using countries showing a remarkable development. The falling off in the operations of the savings banks was due to a reduction in the rate of interest, which checked deposits and increased withdrawals.

Attention is called to the growing popularity of the post-card in India; in some provinces more post-cards are sent than letters. Possibly the superior illegibility of the native languages affords ample guarantees for the privacy of communications made therein, or possibly with the Hindu such privacy "is no object."

Very curious is the difference of popular feeling in various parts of the country as to the necessity for prepaying postage. While in Madras about one letter in twelve is posted unpaid, in Burma one letter in three is left to be paid on delivery.

The statement that 500 mail bags full arrive from London every week gives an idea of the demand for English books and newspapers in India.

We also learn that Anglo-Indians, like people in this country, are importing largely cigarettes from Egypt through the post. Postage stamp collectors will notice that newspaper wrappers have been introduced into India, and also that there has been an issue of one rupee stamps overprinted "O.H.M.S."

Why should persons in the ruby trade be especially addicted to telegraphic money orders? We do not know, but we learn that 44 per cent of the number of such orders for the whole of India were issued in Burmah, and that the payments there were also exceptionally large.

The following case is said to be without precedent in India; but we think the Confidential Enquiry Branch in London could easily supply a parallel:—

"One, Ganpat Singh, presented himself before the branch postmaster of Walipur with a 'parwana,' purporting to be signed by the inspector of the sub-division, and appointing him to act for the village postman of that office. The permanent village postman had not applied for leave, nor had any orders whatever been received concerning him. The branch postmaster foolishly enough allowed Ganpat Singh to relieve the village postman without inquiry, and the former absconded with R41 2a., the value of three money orders, and has not since been heard of. Needless to say the 'parwana' in question was a forgery. The case is still pending."

That last sentence appears to us to have the true official ring about it; and with it we take leave of a very interesting report.

III.—STRAITS SETTLEMENTS, 1895.

The following figures show the rapid increase of postal business since the Straits Settlements were raised into a Colony :—

Year.	Number of Articles passed through the Post.	Revenue.	Expenditure.	Amount of Money Order Transactions.
		\$	\$	\$
1870, ...	776,400	79,690	60,521	...
1880, ...	1,463,600	69,223	46,219	22,797
1890, ...	4,561,900	148,001	110,708	395,834
1895, ...	5,756,940	200,947	204,105	811,159

It is true that the past year reveals an excess of expenditure over revenue of about \$3,000, but it seems that this was due to the payment of arrears for 1892 and 1893 (amounting to no less than \$25,000) in respect of "Foreign Postage." With no arrears there would have been the respectable surplus of \$22,000. "Foreign Postage" is evidently a bugbear. It represents the sums received in payment of transit correspondence for places beyond the Straits Settlements. "About 90 per cent. of such postage has to be paid away for the outward transmission of the correspondence, whilst the whole amount is subject to the tax of 17½ per cent. incident to the Military Contribution, so it is obvious that this class of business can only be done at a loss." Such a state of affairs renders enthusiasm for the further development of transit correspondence an impossibility. "It is not my intention to encourage it," says Mr. Trotter. Nevertheless, "situated as Singapore is, as a kind of Clapham Junction for steamers in the East, there is absolutely no Administration with which we exchange mails, which does not find it convenient to avail itself of the services of this Department in this matter, and it would, therefore, be impossible to abolish transit correspondence from our mails without displaying a regrettable want of appreciation for that comity of obligingness which happily exists between postal administrations."

We are glad to see that the Chinese Sub-Post Office continues to prosper.

IV.—NATAL, 1894-95.

A balance on the right side, however small, is satisfactory. For the twelve months under review there was an excess of earnings over

expenditure of £871 13s. 1d. This was an improvement upon the previous year, when there was a considerable balance against the Department.

The following extract from the report shows that the philatelic fever has not yet run its course:—"The supply of halfpenny postage stamps running short in March, the Commissioners of Stamps found it necessary to procure an overprint. A revenue stamp of old date, of the duty of 6d., was employed, and its issue caused much sensation among stamp collectors and others, who at once bought up the the entire issue. After the exhaustion of the stock it had been decided to issue, the ordinary penny postage stamp was overprinted, and this also was bought up at such a rate as to render it highly probable that the large supply available would be expended before the new stocks on the way from England could arrive. As the purchases were altogether abnormal, and evidently made for speculative purposes, the Government deemed it well to issue a notice warning the public that unlimited supplies of overprinted stamps would be procured and issued. This had the effect of arresting the unusual demands. The overprinted revenue stamps had reached very high prices, half sheets being stated to have been bought at as much as £6 10s. and over."

V.—CAPE COLONY, 1895.

Probably the most important piece of news chronicled here is the statement that a draft convention for consideration by the states and colonies forming the South African Postal Union, designed to replace the numerous cross-conventions of a more or less obsolete character at present in existence, has been drawn up and submitted to the Administrations concerned. Should its provisions meet with general acceptance, an important step will have been taken in the direction of uniformity in postal matters throughout South Africa.

The annexation of British Bechuanaland to the Cape, on the 16th of November last, brought with it a reduction from twopence to one penny of the letter rate of postage between the two countries. When Natal and the Transvaal have made a corresponding reduction, "South African Penny Postage" will almost be an accomplished fact. Mr. French has sanguine hopes that at no distant date this desirable result will be attained; but he points out that the Bechuanaland Protectorate and Rhodesia, owing to the great expense of maintaining the mail services in those territories, cannot be

regarded as coming within the scope of the scheme for some little time to come.

It was to be expected that the immense development of the gold mining industry in the Transvaal, and the rapid opening up of Rhodesia would materially affect the Cape postal service. This has actually been the case to an extraordinary extent ; and we learn that the travelling post offices, more especially those between Johannesburg and Cape Town, have had great difficulty in coping with the ever-increasing traffic.

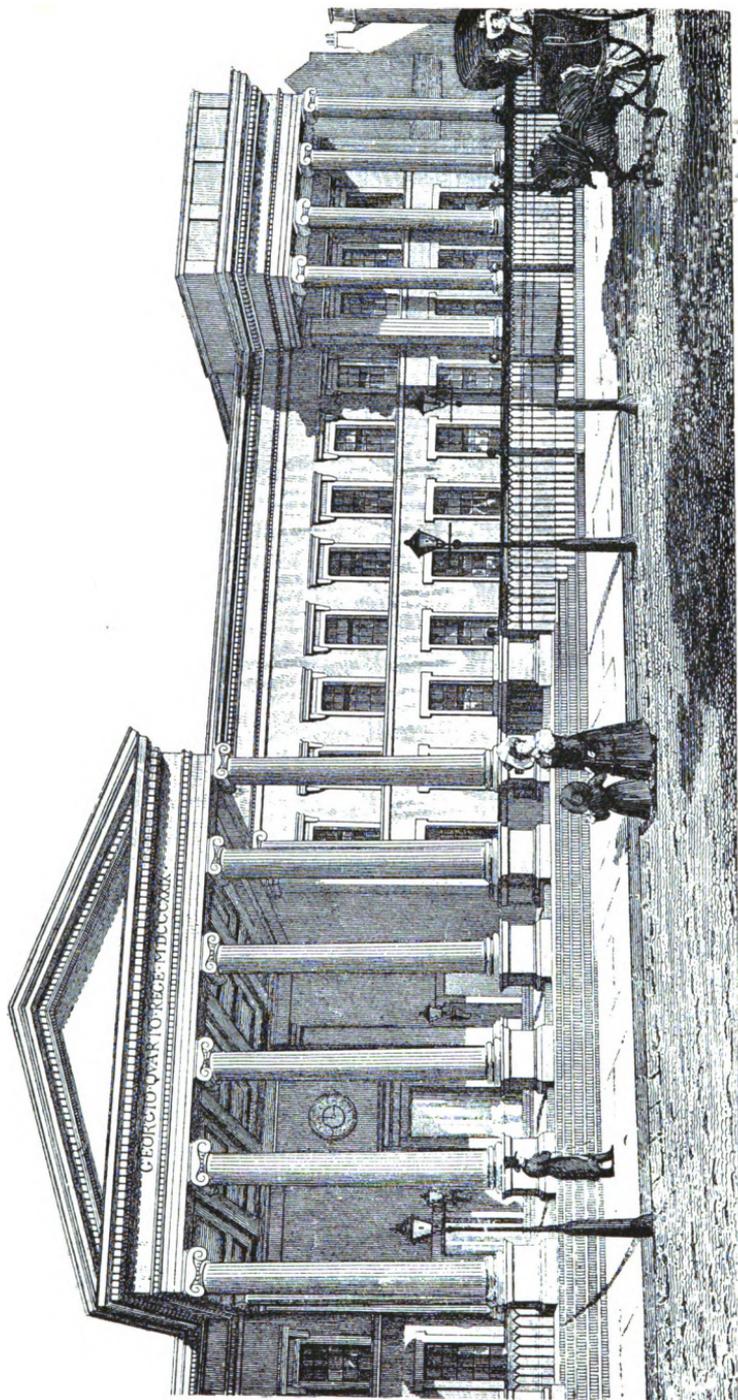
On the 1st of May, 1895, an improved mail service between Mafeking and Bulawayo was commenced. The mail coaches since that date have performed the journey twice a week instead of once ; and the average time of each run has been cut down from 183 to 144 hours, a saving of nearly two days. The coaches leave Mafeking on Sunday and Wednesday mornings, shortly after the arrival of the train from Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, and connect at Bulawayo with coaches for Salisbury, which also run twice a week, and perform the journey in three days, as compared with five days, the time previously occupied. We believe that the recent native outbreaks, serious as they have proved, have not materially affected the running of these coaches ; but for details on this point, and for an account of the effect upon the Cape postal and telegraph services of the many stirring events of the past six months, we must await next year's report. Meanwhile, the one before us reveals progress, prosperity, and buoyant hopefulness in all branches of the service.

Early Post Office Days.

III.—THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT.

FIVE and thirty years ago what is now called the "G.P.O. East" was *the* General Post Office pure and simple. Here all the Departments were carried on, except the Money Order Office; and I am not quite sure that the Savings Bank, established in 1861, was not carried on there for a few months. Now the Central Office has become very "General" indeed, having almost "boxed the compass," so to speak, and I suppose the next step will be a "G.P.O. South," although I hardly know where it will be set down unless St. Paul's is removed to make way for it. I think I can just remember when the old building was under the charge of one Fortune, as Clerk of the Works. But I remember best John Gould, in whose time the building was almost pulled to pieces and reconstructed. Originally, it was a very fine piece of architecture indeed, and it has always seemed to me ten thousand pities that it was not retained as a purely administrative block, leaving the practical departments to house themselves as best they might. Time was when the architect, Sir Robert Smirke, would not allow a brick to be removed unless in his own presence, and when the external features, at least, of the structure were regarded with some degree of respect, if not of sacredness. The first serious departure from this position was when the great central hall was closed and the space thrown into the Sorting Office. The hall was a most imposing feature of the building, with its noble Corinthian pillars, and the fine staircase leading to the Secretary's Office. The posting-boxes, under the control of the great Partington, were on the left side from St. Martin's-le-Grand; and the "Paid Window" and Telegraph Office—the former under the control of "Father" Pennington, and the latter at one time under that of Mr. Baines—were on the opposite side. The hall was, besides, a public thoroughfare, and nothing ever astonished me more than the indifference with which its closure was regarded by the general public. I believe there was a kind of feeble protest on behalf of the City authorities, but it came to nothing, and the work of destruction proceeded practically unchecked. Somehow, although my associations with the building were at that time of the feeblest, I looked on with a feeling of personal injury as this fine feature of the

original design was gradually blotted out; and I felt that it was probably only a matter of time when the whole character of the noble structure would be altered. And it has been altered with a vengeance. Often have I remarked to John Gould, when inspecting the lower regions in his company, that he would pull out the wrong brick some day and bring the whole building down about our ears. Much as he did in the way of alterations, more has been done by his successors, and more, probably, remains to be done. The place has been practically disembowelled, and what has been taken out of the bottom has been placed on the top, with the result that an absolutely pure design has been converted into a nondescript of the most extraordinary character. No indignity that can possibly be heaped on the poor old thing can add to its disfigurement, and this is a comfort. The worst of it is that it is, apparently, as far from being a satisfactory Sorting Office as ever. Was it not the Postmaster of New York who characterised it, a year or two ago, as "disgraceful," carefully including his own office—a comparatively modern one—in the same category? And did not the chief medical officer state before the Tweedmouth Committee the other day that it was hardly fit for a "factory" in point of sanitary conditions? The fact is, the building was never calculated for a large sorting office, however admirable it would have been as a purely administrative block; and the altered conditions of Post Office work would seem to point to decentralisation as the only remedy in the very near future. St. Martin's-le-Grand, as a centre of letter distribution, belongs to the mail coach era. The coaches could be brought to the letters, and as "the City" was nearer the centre of London than it is now, centralisation seemed a natural if not a necessary arrangement. But the railways have changed all that, and as the great termini are rather towards the circumference than the centre of the metropolis, the natural result must follow one day. The pity is that we can no longer look on the early home of the Post Office in the condition in which it left the hands of the great Smirke. Since his time the Department has not been particularly happy in its architects, and we all remember how, at the memorial stone laying of the G.P.O. West, the Ædile of the Office of Works, Mr. A. S. Ayrton, spoke of the building as inaugurating a new style of architecture—"Post Office style" to wit. He would have been a good deal nearer the mark if he had described it as "Office of Works style," a style which has become only too familiar in these days.



THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, 1850.



In recent years the Letter and Newspaper branches of the service have monopolised the whole of the building known as the G.P.O. East, and the "London Postal Service Department" has taken the place of what was known as the Circulation Department. Originally the Circulation Department, or "C. D." as it was generally called, comprised the whole of London. There were ten Districts at that time, each presided over by a Deputy Controller, and the area extended from Romford in the East to Ealing, Hanwell, and Richmond in the West, and from Barnet and Enfield in the North to Croydon and Chislehurst in the South. Subsequently two Districts were lopped off—the North-Eastern on one side of the river, and the Southern on the other—and by and by the remaining Districts, except the East Central, were formed into Postmaster-ships, and placed under a Surveyor of the "Metropolitan District." The first Surveyor was A. M. Cunynghame, who retired from the Secretaryship for Scotland a year or two ago, and the Headquarters were at the Western District Office, in Vere Street. I was detailed for duty there when the change took place, and I remember Anthony Trollope superintended the arrangements for constituting Postal London into so many separate towns. His method of attacking work was rather odd, and I have seen him slogging away at papers at a stand-up desk, with his handkerchief stuffed into his mouth, and his hair on end, as though he could barely contain himself. He struck me as being rather a fierce-looking man, and a remark which he made to a postmaster on one occasion did not appear to me to savour either of courtesy or kindness. This poor fellow, who had probably seen thirty years' service, and who was wedded to the old system of working the districts, was fretting terribly at the prospect of becoming a postmaster and of being left to his own resources, so to speak, when Trollope turned round on him with the remark: "Why don't you pay an old woman sixpence a week to fret for you?" In the recently published autobiography of Sir William Gregory—one of the frankest and *honestest* books I have ever read—I find the following reminiscence of Trollope in his Harrow days, which perhaps shows that his roughness was only external:—

"It was when I was turned down that I became intimate with Anthony Trollope, who sat next to me. He was a big boy, older than the rest of the form, and without exception the most slovenly and dirty boy I ever met. He was not only slovenly in person and in dress, but his work was equally dirty. His exercises were a mass of blots and smudges. These peculiarities created a great prejudice

against him, and the poor fellow was generally avoided. It is pitiable to read in his autobiography, just published, how bitter were his feelings at that time, and how he longed for the friendship and companionship of his comrades, but in vain. There was a story afloat, whether true or false I know not, that his father had been outlawed, and every boy believed it was the duty of a loyal subject of the Crown to shoot, or otherwise destroy, 'Old Trollope' if possible. Fortunately, he never appeared among us. I had plenty of opportunities of judging of Anthony, and I am bound to say, though my heart smites me sorely for my unkindness, that I did not dislike him. I avoided him, for he was rude and uncouth, but I thought him an honest, brave fellow. He was no sneak. His faults were external; all the rest of him was right enough. But the faults were of that character for which schoolboys would never make allowances, and so poor Trollope was tabooed, and had not, so far as I am aware, a single friend. He might have been a thoroughly bad young fellow, and yet have had plenty of associates. He gave no sign of promise whatsoever, was always in the lowest part of the form, and was regarded by masters and by boys alike as an incorrigible dunce."

I have said that the first Surveyor of the Metropolitan District was A. M. Cunynghame, and I find in an interview he granted to the *Scottish Leader* (since defunct) on the occasion of his retirement in January, 1894, some reminiscences of Trollope. One of his (Trollope's) great peculiarities was the power of taking sleep at any moment, and of waking up in a few minutes thoroughly refreshed. Once, during a long walk in Cumberland, when he was "dead tired," he went to sleep on the top of a milestone, and in ten minutes he "woke like a giant refreshed." "Trollope," says Cunynghame, "was an excellent man of business, he wrote splendid reports, and was an indefatigable worker. On hunting mornings he used to get up at four o'clock and begin writing at a novel he had on the stocks, always doing a certain number of pages before breakfast. His reminiscences make a delightful book, though he had a faculty for embellishing, which prevents their being always accurate. You remember the story about his upsetting a bottle of ink on Colonel Maberly's waistcoat? Sir Arthur Blackwood told me one day, after he had heard Trollope tell the story, that there was no truth in it. The fact was Trollope had told it so often that he came to believe it himself, just as George IV. believed he had been at Waterloo. But he was a delightful companion all the same." Edmund Yates, too,

came within the scope of Cunynghame's recollections. "He never made a good clerk, too fond of writing in the papers. He was above me at first, but I soon went above him." Then follows this rather good story: "I remember I was bathing with him at Dover once. I could swim very little, and stayed in my depth. Yates was swimming fifty yards further out. Suddenly he raised his head and called to me, 'I say, Cunynghame, come out here and make a vacancy!' I needn't say I didn't go." Cunynghame didn't at all relish his retirement, didn't like to be treated in this respect "like a clerk or letter-sorter," and would have liked to stay on to see certain pending matters safely through. He would have been glad to see the Scottish Savings Bank business transferred from London to Edinburgh, and tells how it was the Postmaster of Wick, in far-away Caithness-shire, who suggested the plan of withdrawing money by telegraph, although it had, "curiously enough," been *almost* already adopted at head-quarters. He tells, too, how Mr. Bryson, then chief clerk at Inverness, and now Postmaster of Greenock, suggested the plan of the Express Messenger Service, which was "pigeon-holed at the Treasury for ten years," and only brought out when the hands of the Post Office were forced by the act of private speculators. The late Surveyor-General did not believe in the Post Office collecting charges on parcels on delivery, because he found it "a strong incentive to fraud on the part of tradespeople." Once, at Nice, his wife had a tailor-made dress delivered in this way, which was not discovered to be an "entire misfit" until after the money had been paid, and the tailor had "bolted to Paris" owing to the earthquake! Pressed for further reminiscences of his official career, Cunynghame remarked: "I'm afraid I want to keep them to myself. I hope to write some of them for our magazine, *St. Martin's-le-Grand*. This is it—the editor is a very clever fellow, and we have some really good pens in our service." One for our noble selves!

Cunynghame only remained two years as Surveyor of the Metropolitan District, viz., from 1866 to 1868. He was popular with the Staff, and I believe I owe my first important promotion to his kindly recommendation. He was succeeded by George E. Stow, son of a former official, and nephew, I think, of Frank Ives Scudamore. About this time the headquarters of the Metropolitan Surveyor were removed to Adelaide Street, Charing Cross, the accommodation at Vere Street having become too limited for the increasing staff. Edward Finch was Chief Clerk; and subsequently Assistant Surveyor. His service dated back to the remote period of 1839,

when he entered as a clerk at Rochester. Oddly enough, several of the men of the Early Days hailed from Rochester, and there used to be a small joke—a very small one, it must be admitted—about the “Rochester Row Brigade.” It is getting on for *sixty years* since Finch was a clerk in a branch of the General Post Office of which very few present-day men have ever heard, the Ship Letter Office; and he still survives, although I regret to hear his sight has failed somewhat. But when a man has looked out upon the world for the best part of eighty years his eyesight is not likely to be over “gleg,” as they say in my country. Finch was the youngest old man I have ever known, and retained his juvenility to the last day of his service, which terminated in the East Central District. I fancy he “scorned delights” whether he “lived laborious days” or not. He was of a bookish turn, and I have often met him in Holywell Street, in years gone by, scanning the windows of the second-hand bookshops. Other men connected with the Metropolitan Surveyor’s Office were John Philips, Head of the Confidential Enquiry Branch, who joined in 1867, and Edward Smith, B. Nowell, and A. H. Powell, all of the London Postal Service Department, which, python-like, swallowed up the Metropolitan District in or about 1882.

I have already mentioned most of the district Postmasters of the Early Days—Tuck, of the West-Central; Wilson, of the Northern; Smith, of the South-Eastern; and Oakeshott, of the North-Western. A Controller’s Office man I forgot to mention—Charles Potter—was the first Postmaster of the Eastern District, and died there, I fancy. He and W. H. Grey disputed for the supremacy in the old Vice-Controller’s Office, but it was a very good-natured rivalry, I always thought, and usually ended in “a bit of lunch” in the early forenoon. No record of the Early Days would be complete without mention of the first Postmasters of the Western and South-Western Districts, John Milton and “Tom” Angell. I was associated with Milton for a short time in 1866, and, curiously enough, I succeeded him in 1887, twenty-one years later. He was a short, thick-set man, with a good head, a masterful expression of face, and very small watery eyes. He reminded me of Lesseps, of Suez Canal fame, especially when he displayed his powerful jaw; and he was a man of determination, every inch of him. He was a fighting man, but only once did he and I come to blows. I had been transferring an office down (or is it up?) Notting Hill way, and used a çab, as seemed befitting so important a function. But Milton considered

an omnibus should have sufficed, and argued that if a clerk were allowed a cab on such an occasion, a postmaster should have a carriage and pair! The argument amused if it did not actually convince me; but neither he nor I ever alluded to the subject afterwards, and there was no ill-feeling about it. Milton was greatly exercised when it was decided that all the Branch and Receiving Offices should remit to the Head District Office instead of to the Chief Office, as had been the practice hitherto. He had a special table constructed, with a brass railing quite three feet high all round it, and there he sat of a morning counting piles of bank-notes and sovereigns, and looking supremely unhappy. But the arrangement did not last very long, although I believe that wonderful table is at Vere Street to this day. Milton was an officer of the old school, and one of the best of them. I don't think he ever took very kindly to the office of Postmaster, which rather conflicted with his notions of London work. But he ended a long and honourable service as Postmaster of the Western District, and I fancy he did not survive his retirement more than a year or two.

But Angell was the "bright particular star" of the Metropolitan firmament. Some few called him "Captain," because he had been "in the Volunteers"; but his intimates always called him "Tom," and it was by this name that he liked best to be known. I fancy the general impression was that he was a Londoner, but I believe he told me on one occasion that he was born in or near Leeds, although he had lived most of his life in London. Angell entered the service even before Edward Finch, viz., in 1838, and his service was a "record" one, having extended over the long period of fifty-four years, and he being somewhat over seventy years of age when he retired in 1892. He was, in fact, the *doyen* of the service, and had "troops of friends," especially amongst the London men. He was originally appointed to the Inland Office, and remained there until the outbreak of the Russian War, when he was sent to the Crimea as Assistant-Postmaster to the Forces. Soon after his return, viz., in 1859, he was appointed Assistant-Controller in the Circulation Department, and seven years later, viz., in 1866, he was appointed Postmaster of the South-Western District. Never was an official career of more than half a century summed up in fewer words. In fact, a couple of lines is all that stands against his name in the "Red Book," where, strange to say, no mention whatever is made of his Crimean service. But that service was not at all likely to be forgotten, for Angell took a very pardonable pride in it, and you

could not be long in his company without hearing of something that happened "when I was in the Crimea." He had a rare fund of stories relating to this period of his career, and even if you felt that some of them were just a trifle doubtful, you were always ready to admit that they were at least *ben trovato*. I think Mr. Baines has got one of the best of them in his first book, telling how an Irish servant of Angell's procured a goose for a "little dinner," to which he had invited a General, or some other distinguished officer in the trenches. In fact, Angell was a born *raconteur*, and when the Crimea failed as a subject, he was never at a loss, for he was a man of the world who mixed with men of the world, besides being a scholar of no mean acquirements. He had some very good official stories, too, and one of the best of them was about an



TOM ANGELL, 1885.

Office of Works man, which he used to tell with infinite gusto. One day there lounged into his room at Buckingham Gate a languid sort of individual, who drawled out, "Oh! you want a clack." "No, we don't," said Angell, somewhat nettled at the interruption. "Oh yes, you do," said the languid one from Whitehall Place, over the way; whereupon Angell fired up and declared he wanted nothing of the kind. "Oh! but you've applied for a clack," said the languid one, whereupon Angell violently rang the bell, and summoned the Chief Clerk to his aid. "We don't want a *clerk*, do we?" he asked. "Certainly not," said the Chief Clerk. Then, demanding a sight of the requisition, he found it referred to a *clock* he had asked for some weeks, or it may be months, before. The languid one was not

a little abashed when Angell thundered at him, "Why can't you say *clock?*" But he had his revenge, for that clock was not supplied until the Secretary intervened and, in fact, made a personal matter of it. I think the languid one must have been the same who arrived *on horseback* one day at the Hampstead Office to inspect a worn out tin kettle, to replace which a new one had been applied for!

Angell was wonderfully happy in the art of characterization. Once we were discussing a ponderous individual who had somehow come to the front, "Ah!" said Angell, "A wonderful example of the power of dulness." He carried the military element into his discipline, as might naturally be expected. Once, when he and I were walking in the Buckingham Palace Road, a postman lurched past rather rudely, without the customary salute. Angell said nothing, but as soon as we reached his room he rang the bell, and asked for the postman to be sent to him. "Oh!" said he, "Did I see you in Buckingham Palace Road, a few minutes ago?" "Yes, sir," was the prompt response. "Ah! I thought so," said Angell, but not another word. I thought it was the best thing I had ever seen, and I dare venture to say that that postman never forgot his salute again. Angell might have been a bit of a martinet, but he was a kindly martinet, and the men all liked him. He might appear a trifle hoity-toity and pompous to those who didn't know him, but to those with whom he was on terms of intimacy, he was ever most kindly and affable. He was a member of the Committee of Practical Officers which met at Bushey, in 1886. We were eleven, all told, but, sad to say, only four are to be found in the Service to-day, viz, Arthur Vinall, George Fardo, J. W. Hyde, and myself. With the possible exception of Sam Walliker, Angell was the oldest man of the party, and the gayest. He was always ready for a good long walk in the morning; for tennis in the afternoon; for a good dinner in the evening; and for whist till the small hours, or at least till midnight. His vitality was extraordinary, and to see him waltzing with the lady visitors at "The Hall" was an eye-opener for the more degenerate amongst us. It would have been an achievement for a man of fifty, but for one verging on seventy, it was truly marvellous. One Sunday he and I walked to St. Alban's, to attend the service at the Abbey, and he was much the fresher of the two when we arrived back in the evening, notwithstanding that I had a good twenty years in hand. He must have been an excellent singer in his time, and I shall always remember the quaint ditty with which

he was wont to amuse us on festive occasions at Bushey. The last verse was especially characteristic, and ran somewhat as follows:—

“Of this 'ere song if you should ax
The reason for to show,
Why, I don't exactly know.
But all my fancy dwells on Nancy,
And I'll sing tally ho!”

In spite of the difference in our ages, and in our modes of life, he being a man about town, and I an almost confirmed stay-at-home, Angell and I struck up a considerable friendship, and managed to see a good deal of each other. We met at intervals to discuss men, manners, and mutton chops, and on several occasions I enjoyed his hospitality at the Arts Club, of which he was one of the best known members, and of which I rather fancy he was Secretary at one time. He had the best idea of what constituted a “nice little dinner” of any man I ever knew, and he was a most admirable host. He did not leave London a great deal, and I remember he once told me, with reference to holiday plans, that he didn't care where he went to, so long as it suited the boys, as *all places were alike to him!* He used to pop down to Brighton occasionally, to spend a night with his old friend Edmund Yates; and sometimes he went to Liverpool to visit another old friend, Admiral Gough. He paid me a short visit at Manchester not very long before I was compelled to flee from that gruesome climate, and that, alas! was the last I saw of him. He died at the cottage, at Whitchurch, near Reading, which he leased chiefly on account of the delicate health of his most talented wife, and I was greatly shocked, while expecting to hear from him as to his future plans, and his possible settlement in Hastings, to receive tidings of the sad event from his eldest son, then a mere lad. Angell was a much abler man than most people had any idea of. He never quite did himself justice, and for this reason, perhaps, justice was never quite done to his abilities. He was, perhaps, too uncompromising, and a trifle too supercilious. But he was a first-rate officer, and a most excellent departmental representative. He hated to be in leading strings, and I shall never forget the scorn with which he treated the remark of a colleague, who pre-deceased him, that he was not “pliable enough.” Judged by that standard he was certainly a failure, for his ability was certainly in excess of his pliability.

The Metropolitan district owed a good deal to the old class of Inspectors, who have mostly died out, I imagine. In the Early Days there was quite a cohort of them at the Chief Office, and they all herded together in a single room, which used to be spoken of

rather slightly by its number—75, I think it was. Practical knowledge, rather than high educational qualifications, distinguished this useful body of men, who may be said to have mapped out London for postal purposes in connection with the district system. But being so highly centralised, they were not always “on the spot,” so to speak, and I have witnessed some rather amusing *contretemps* when only a map was available for the decision of a practical question. Once, I remember, it was being discussed rather hotly whether a new “Receiving House” should be placed here, or there, or where. The Chief Inspector produced his map, adjusted his spectacles, and decided forthwith that the office should be placed at a spot which he indicated with his forefinger. David Bolton Raw, who had been called into council, said that it couldn’t possibly be there, whereupon the Inspector, who was not accustomed to be contradicted on his own ground, fired up and demanded to know the reason why. Raw, who was fond of a joke, evaded the question for a bit, until he got the Inspector into a furious rage, and then coolly remarked: “You can’t have a Post Office in the middle of a cabbage garden.” Maps are excellent things in theory, but where there are blank spaces, it is always better to visit the spot, and see how the land lies. One of these old Inspectors, long since dead, once declared to me, in a moment of the most profound confidence, that he was possessed of secrets which would blow the whole place up. But whether they had to do with maps or cabbage gardens, I never made out, and I did not care to pursue so gruesome a subject. Report writing was not the *forte* of the old inspectors; they were too practical for that. One constantly wrote “inobvertibly” for “inadvertently,” which I thought a rather happy adaptation; while another once described a recalcitrant postman as a “proper bad character,” with a fine derangement of adjectives. I think this must have been the same who once spoke of an habitual late attender amongst the postmen as an “Old Practioner.” But they were an admirable class of men, the old Inspectors, and there were a few amongst them who were not deficient even in scholarship. R.W. J.

(*To be concluded.*)

NOTE.—I have been not a little gratified to receive a letter from my old friend and colleague, John Fletcher, thanking me for recalling old times in which he still feels deeply interested, and enclosing his photograph, taken in his sixty-sixth year, which I have pleasure in reproducing below. Fletcher reminds me that he was a member of the first Committee appointed to consider the question of dividing London into Districts, of which that most lovable man, the

late John Strange Baker, of the Secretary's Office, was also a member. Speaking of the retirement of Mr. Joyce, he (Fletcher) remarks: "I well recollect his first coming to the Post Office. He came from the Custom House, and was first put to assist at a Return required for the House of Commons that was being prepared by Watson, of the Secretary's Office, and myself. . . . When South broke down in health, was pensioned, and became Postmaster of Leicester, Joyce succeeded him, and became head of the Discipline Branch." That, of course, refers to "Monty" South, whom I very well remember as Postmaster of Leicester in the very early Telegraph days, and who was succeeded, I think, by Langdon Thomas George Turner.

* * * * *

I am reminded by the recent death of Thomas Mawson, late Postmaster of Sheffield, of an old Mail Office man whom I inadvertently omitted from my list of worthies connected with that department. I remember when Mawson was Inspector of Mails in Scotland, with an Office in Edinburgh. He died at the advanced age of seventy-seven, and was in the Postal Service for fifty years.

* * * * *

As I close these notes, I notice the death of another worthy of the Early Days, Charles Stewart Hartigan, one of the old Corps of Clerks in Charge attached to the Secretary's Office. Hartigan was a jovial rollicking Irishman, who, like many of his countrymen, claimed a "long descent," and it used to be said that he carried his pedigree about with him. I remember he was in charge of Worthing about a quarter of a century ago, when I happened to be staying there. Looking out for apartments, he came across a landlady who evidently smelt the pedigree, and demanded rent accordingly. But he withered her up with the remark, "Madame, d'ye think I've robbed a bank?" Hartigan was sadly afflicted with my wretched complaint—asthma, but I am consoled to see that he lived to the good old age of sixty-eight.

R. W. J.



JOHN FLETCHER, 1896.

The State and the Telephones.

PROGRESS AT THE POST OFFICE.

[An able article under the above heading, appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, of the 30th April last. It shows clearly and concisely the present position of the telephone question; and is in such marked contrast to the usual run of newspaper criticisms of Post Office matters, that we make no apology for reprinting it.]

INCE we announced in June last the completion of a trunk line of telephone wires connecting London with the Midlands and Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dublin *via* Belfast, great strides have been made in the extension of similar communications between London and the towns of the West, and between the towns of the Midlands, the North of England, and Scotland. The Post Office has already spent a million sterling on building these trunk lines and in purchasing others from the National Telephone Company, and to-night a bill authorizing an advance of another three hundred thousand pounds from the Treasury will be before the House of Commons. This money will be applied in providing further extensions of the trunk systems acquired from the National Telephone Company on the 4th instant. All the telephone trunk wires throughout the kingdom are now in the hands of the General Post Office, which makes and collects the rates of communication between one town or centre and another, while, with the exception of some half-dozen local exchanges belonging to the Post Office at Cardiff, Newport, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Hull, and elsewhere, the telephone exchanges remain in the hands of the National Telephone Company.

WILL THE STATE TAKE OVER THE TELEPHONES?

It is quite easy to see that the policy of the Government in taking over the trunk lines will lead, sooner or later, to the acquisition by the Post Office of the telephone exchanges themselves, and there is little doubt that this prospect has been present to the minds of the advisers of the Postmaster-General ever since the Telegraphs Act of

1892 was passed to enable the Department to begin the work of laying down and acquiring the trunk lines. When the complete transference will take place will depend upon circumstances. For the matter of that, the Government need not after a certain period take over anything; they can build up an entirely independent system of exchanges of their own if they wish, either before or after the expiration of the licences of the National Telephone Company and its allied companies. Such competition would not, however, be instituted during the period of the company's licence except there occurred a serious failure on the part of the company to minister to public requirements. But it cannot be too clearly understood by the public, and especially by that part of it which is interested in telephone companies, that on December 31st, 1911, the licences issued by the Postmaster-General to the National Telephone Company and the companies it has absorbed absolutely and finally terminate, and the Post Office is under no obligation to purchase a single pennyworth of the property of the company or companies. The Postmaster-General may, on the other hand, if he think fit, open a brand-new telephone system on January 1st, 1912, and no compensation will or may accrue to the company or companies for the loss of their business. It is not likely that the Department will take advantage of the opportunity which this bargain between the Postmaster-General and the companies gives it, but it is a condition of things that has to be reckoned with. There is a feeling that in taking over the telegraphs in 1870, the State paid away too much money; and this mistake will not be made with regard to the telephones. What is more likely to happen is that the Government will take advantage of the power inserted in each licence enabling them to determine the licence either on December 31st, 1897, or December 31st, 1904, on giving six months' notice, and then to proceed to purchase by arbitration. This would be the fairest proceeding to the companies (or company, for all the other telephone companies have been absorbed by the National Telephone Company). Whether the Government will take advantage of this power of purchase at one of these periods will, as we have said, depend upon circumstances, and something will also depend upon the terms of arbitration. Unlike the cases of the reversion of tramway leases to local authorities, there is no doubt that the question of goodwill would have to be taken into account in the case of the telephone undertaking, and therefore it may seem that the Post Office would have little inducement to purchase early, since

the life of the telephones will expire absolutely in fifteen years. These are questions that are engaging the serious attention of the Department, and a decision will have to be come to by this time next year. To return to

THE PRACTICAL ASPECT OF THE NEW DEVELOPMENT.

A year ago, when Mr. Lamb was giving evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Telephone Service, he stated that the Department had then completed a main line connecting Plymouth, Bristol, and the ports in South Wales, with Birmingham, Leeds, and Newcastle-on-Tyne; lines from Hull to Leeds, and from Leeds to Manchester and Liverpool; from London to Chelmsford, Colchester, and Ipswich; from London to Brighton; from Nottingham to Derby and Leicester; and from Edinburgh and Glasgow to Belfast and Dublin. Soon afterwards the main line between London and Glasgow was completed, putting London into communication with Edinburgh, Belfast, and Dublin also, and in June last these lines were opened for traffic. Since then other main lines have been completed and opened between London and Southampton, London and Bristol, *via* Salisbury; London and Plymouth, and Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and between many of the towns of the Midlands and the North. In the near future extensions are contemplated from Aberdeen round to Inverness, from Plymouth to Falmouth and Penzance, from Belfast to Londonderry, from Dublin to Cork and Limerick, and the strengthening of the trunk lines between London and Brighton and London and Southampton will have to be undertaken soon because of the large amount of business passing over the lines already laid. After the Brighton line, perhaps the greatest amount of telephonic business during the past twelve months has passed over the long line between London and Glasgow, which has been a great boon to the Glasgow stockbrokers. These continued and important extensions show that the Post Office, at any rate, is fully determined that the public shall have the utmost possible benefit from the telephone system; and the recent revision of the tariff for telephonic messages has tendered to stimulate the use of the trunk telephone lines at the expense, it may be, of the telegraphs. For the convenience of the public the provincial telephone exchanges are grouped in the case of adjoining small towns, or of small towns adjoining large ones, and a uniform charge is made over each area, or "centre" as it is called. For instance, Rotherham is in the same centre as Sheffield, Aston is in the

Birmingham centre, Birkenhead in the Liverpool centre, and so on, and the charge for a telephone message from London to Rotherham is the same as from London to Sheffield. While the trunk wires between the centres are Government property, the connecting wires, or "junction wires," between the towns in a centre are put up by the company working the exchange. London is, of course, the largest centre: it extends from Croydon across to Enfield, and from Romford to Kingston.

THE MOST EXPENSIVE TARIFF CHARGE

is 6s. 6d. for three minutes' conversation between London and Dublin; the lowest charge is that of threepence for the same length of conversation between London and St. Albans, Slough, Ware, or Watford. Where the communication is from a subscriber of the Post Office to a subscriber of the Telephone Company an additional charge is made on behalf of the company of threepence, fourpence or sixpence, according to the amount paid for the trunk wire message. A complete tariff will shortly be issued by the Department to all telephone users. It need hardly be said that the taking over of the trunk wires and the erection of others has thrown a great deal of additional work on the Post Office, already the hardest worked of the Government departments. And it is impossible that the work of the Department can diminish. *Pari passu* with the extension of the inland trunk lines the demand for extensions to the Continent is growing. The London-Paris line has been so successful that overtures have been made from Berlin for the establishment of telephonic communication between this country and Germany, and before long this extension will have to be dealt with. Like the posts and telegraphs, telephonic communication has become a necessity of the age; the demand for it must be complied with, and the public will note with approval that the Post Office is proving equal to the task.

The Harkara.

(INDIAN POSTAL RUNNER.)

IN the name of the Empress of India make way,
Oh Lords of the Jungle, wherever you roam.
The woods are astir at the close of the day—
We exiles are waiting for letters from home.
Let the robber retreat—let the tiger turn tail—
In the name of the Empress, the Overland Mail!

With a jingle of bells as the dusk gathers in,
He turns to the foot-path that leads up the hill—
The bags on his back and a cloth round his chin,
And, tucked in his waistcloth, the Post Office bill:—
“Despatched on this date, as received by the rail,
Per runner two bags of the Overland Mail.”

Is the torrent in spate? He must ford it or swim.
Has the rain wrecked the road? He must climb by the cliff.
Does the tempest cry “halt”? What are the tempests to him?
The Service admits not a “but” or an “if.”
While the breath’s in his mouth he must bear without fail,
In the name of the Empress, the Overland Mail.

From aloe to rose-oak, from rose-oak to fir,
From level to upland, from upland to crest,
From rice field to rock ridge, from rock ridge to spur,
Fly the soft-sandalled feet, strains the brawny brown chest.
From rail to ravine—to the hill from the vale,
Up, up through the night goes the Overland Mail.

There’s a speck on the hillside, a dot on the road—
A jingle of bells on the footpath below—
There’s a scuffle above in the monkeys’ abode—
The world is awake and the clouds are aglow;
For the great Sun himself must attend to the hail:—
“In the name of the Empress, the Overland Mail!”

RUDYARD KIPLING.



HERE are but few known instances of ancient postal services in India, and no systematic attempt has been made to collate from ancient records for the purpose of forming a postal history. Shere Shah and Akbar, two Emperors of Delhi, are mentioned as effecting much improvement in the then existing postal system, which was of a very rudimentary

character. As in all countries, the earlier postal organisations were purely government institutions maintained for purposes of administration. It is probable that the runners were willing for a consideration to deliver private letters, and that in these illicit dealings we must see the origin of the public post. Shere Shah, during his short reign of five years (1541-45), is said to have effected many improvements, chiefly in the direction of expedition, by employing horsemen. In the time of Akbar, private letters were allowed to be sent by the Government mails, and altogether 4,000 runners are said to have been employed. They were placed at stages at a distance of ten miles from each other, and the mails were conveyed 100 miles in the twenty-four hours, or about four miles an hour. Letters are supposed to have taken five days in transit between Agra and Ahmedabad in Guzerat. One very urgent despatch is said to have been sent 1,400 miles in ten days, or at the rate of six miles an hour.

The *anche* post of the Mysore Native State is claimed to have been organised over two centuries ago by Deva Raja Urs. In Bombay wealthy opium merchants used to establish posts during a part of the year, chiefly to obtain early information for their business, and these posts are reputed to have been carried out with great celerity, as often a gain of ten minutes in information made a great difference in the market speculations.

Another known regular service is the one that was maintained by H.H. Nawab Nazim between Murshedabad and Calcutta, and called the Nizammat Dak. This was not made available to the public, and was restricted for the use of his Highness and the members of his family. It was abolished by the English in 1838. The Nawab Vizier of Oudh maintained a state post between Lucknow and the principal towns of the province, but this institution also was not made available for the public convenience.

With the advent of the British regular postal lines had to be maintained for purposes of administration, and private letters were allowed to be sent as a concession, but no figures earlier than those of 1853-54 have survived the periodical destruction of records, and only glimpses of the institution can be obtained from contemporary literature. One writer drew the following picture from the result of his researches :

“ About 1790 the mail bags were conveyed by *harkaras*, or runners, who were changed at intervals of eight miles. Each was attended by a drummer, who beat a loud tattoo while passing through jungly tracts known or suspected to harbour tigers. After nightfall two torch-bearers formed part of the escort, and where the road was

specially dangerous a brace of archers was supplied. The little band was thus, under ordinary circumstances, secure from the attacks of their feline foes. Sometimes, however, a hungry man-eater would defy the united forces of the Department, scatter drummers, link men and archers by a sudden onset, and disappear with a victim before his scared comrades had regained their presence of mind. The district of Chota Nagpore, then known as Ramghur, had an evil reputation in this respect. On more than one occasion the company's mails were stopped nearly every night for a fortnight consecutively while traversing one of the four passes near Hazaribagh. From one danger which still awaits his descendant in office, the runner of 1790 was free. Like Horace's traveller, who rejoiced in his empty pockets, he feared no assault by highwaymen. Registration, insurance, and value payable parcels were all in the womb of futurity, and the mail bags seldom contained anything of intrinsic worth."

It was not till the year 1837 that a public post was established by Act XVII. of 1837, which created a monopoly vested in Government. A department was then organized, but was very primitive in character, and the arrangements were more local than general. There was no central authority, and the arrangements in each district were in charge of the revenue collector of that district. The roads were bad, as internal communications had not been properly developed. The writer previously quoted gives the following description :

"In point of fact the East India Company had never shown itself alive to a position which has now become a truism too stale to insist on, that the prosperity of a country, and therefore of its Government, depends largely on the degree to which its internal communications are developed. The charges on the best conducted route—that between Calcutta and Bombay—averaged a lakh of rupees annually. This sum allowed for the maintenance of three runners on every stage, each of whom carried eighteen pounds; the weight of Calcutta letters reaching Bombay by mail steamer being six hundred pounds on the average. Eight days were required to pass the whole batch to its destination. The period of transit was ten days; hence, in 1840, letters were often longer *en route* across the peninsula than they are now in accomplishing the entire distance between Calcutta and London. So deplorable was the state of the roads, even on this trunk line, that home letters often missed the mail steamer. In September, 1841, seventeen hundred were thus left behind at Bombay to wait an entire month! On another occasion, all the mail letters posted in Calcutta were brought back to the capital. It turned out that the runners had met their *confrères* from Bombay near the "half-way house," and exchanged bags with them unwittingly after indulging in a friendly smoke together! The organization was bad to an incredible degree. Purposeless detentions

of four days at Bombay were not unusual. Letters for stations intermediate between the larger towns were systematically over-carried to the terminus of the postal lines and then returned to their destination. The newspapers of the period teem with complaints of loss and inconvenience arising from mismanagement. All things considered, it is doubtful whether any substantial advance took place between 1790 and 1840."

It was not till the year 1854 that the Post Office was organized on its present footing. A Director-General was appointed, and the mail lines throughout India were placed under his control. This practically brings us down to the present times.

Runners are chiefly from the agricultural classes; in the Punjab there are many Sikh Jats, and in the Bombay Presidency Mahratta peasants. The overseer is told, in the selection of men, to give preference to those who belong to villages in the vicinity of the stage hut where they are to be employed. The overseer has also to satisfy himself by personal enquiries from the head-man of the candidate's village, and, if necessary, from the police, that the man bears a good character. After appointment the runner is given an appointment certificate, which is prepared by the overseer and counter-signed by the inspector.

His pay is generally Rs. 5 a month. Some years ago when I was in the North Western Provinces, and also in Behar, there were a few men drawing only Rs. 4 a month. However, the cost of food and labour in different parts of India varies, and in Sind runners receive Rs. 7 a month. There is only one runner in the whole of Baluchistan, and he is employed by the Political Department on a salary of Rs. 12 a month. The Baluchis resemble the English in their love for horses and everything connected with them. Like the Dean's sister in *Dandy Dick*, a man who cannot afford a whole mare, will own as many legs as he can manage, keeping her for a quarter of a year for each leg of which he is owner. I remember, when trying to get runners for a mail line through the Mushkaf Valley, going out to interview several head-men of villages. They all said they could not help me in getting runners, as every Baluch considered it *infra dig.* to be a runner, or as they termed it a beast of burden, but they were quite willing to get me as many sowars (horsemen) as I required. It was mentioned that the general pay of runners is Rs. 5 a month, which at the present rate of exchange is five shillings and sixpence. Fancy being contented and happy, and often bringing up a family on this sum! In answer to the question, Who is the richest of men, Socrates replied, "He who is content with the least, for

contentment is nature's riches," and according to this maxim the harkara is one of the richest of men. Probably because of his contentment, he is easy to manage. He leads a very frugal and cheerful life, and has no idea of luxuries. His chief dissipation is, perhaps, taking part in a religious festival. He has a mud stage hut provided for him by the Department, and generally gets the local zemindar (landlord) to give him a small piece of land near his hut, and spends his leisure time in cultivating this plot, thereby augmenting his salary by growing sufficient to be a substantial addition for the household.

His dress is a short white cotton coat, and a dhotie tied tightly round his loins and coming down nearly to the knee, so as not to impede the free action of the limbs. He generally wears a red pugree for a head dress. As equipment, the department supplies him with a leather belt, and a brass badge which forms the buckle, and also a spear with bells. The spear is for self-protection, and the bamboo shaft is carried across the shoulder, the mail bags being tied to the shaft and slung over the shoulder. The bells are a concession to an old superstition, and they are supposed to frighten away evil spirits and wild animals.

The stages on the letter mail lines are at a distance of five or six miles apart, and a speed of five miles an hour is prescribed. A runner is required to carry mails in both directions, so that at the end of the day's work he finishes at his own stage hut. The stages on parcel lines are ten to twelve miles apart, and a speed of only three miles an hour is required. The weight carried by a letter runner is fifteen seers, or thirty pounds, and that by a parcel runner thirty seers, or sixty pounds, so that the work cannot be called heavy according to the European standard. One of those economic bores would probably calculate out in figures the actual amount of the task. He would say that an ordinary day's work for a man is equal to 300 foot tons of energy, and that a very hard day's work is equal to 400 tons. Carrying sixty pounds one mile is equivalent to twenty-five tons of energy, so that the actual work of a parcel runner is from 250 to 300 foot tons.

The lowly mail runner, jingling through the jungle with his staff and bells, and defending, sometimes at the cost of his life, the letter bags entrusted to his care, is not perhaps idyllic, but he is a pioneer of civilisation in his degree. He is very proud of his duties. It is often amusing to watch the air of self-importance he assumes when carrying Her Majesty's mail. It is quite beneath his dignity

to give way on the road to any ordinary pedestrian, and his voice may frequently be heard ordering heavily laden carts in advance to make way for his important charge.

A superintendent is the administrative head of a division, which comprises several districts, and he has to spend the whole of the cold weather on tour, visiting most of the post offices in the district, and encamping along the various mail lines. His day's march is generally from fourteen to twenty miles. After dinner in the evening his larger tent is struck, and is sent on during the night to the next encamping place, while he sleeps in a shouldari (small tent). Early the next morning, before Phœbus appears above the horizon, he mounts his horse and commences his journey, to find on arrival at the next halting place his larger tent pitched and his breakfast ready. As he comes to a runner's stage during the march, he dismounts to see if the stage is suitably situated on the side of the road, that it is in good repair, and that the full complement of runners are entertained and live in the hut. The men are next paraded, their certificates of appointment examined, and it is seen whether they are provided with belts, badges, and spears. They are next asked whether they receive their pay regularly and in full, and whether they have any complaints. The order is then given for them to run, and the superintendent trots in the rear for about a mile, before the halt is cried. He then dismounts and examines each runner separately. The small cotton coat is unbuttoned over the man's chest, and the superintendent places his hand over the heart to observe whether it is beating too vigorously, and sees if the men are perspiring too profusely. It is only by such testing that the condition of the runners can be gauged, and shirkers are at once spotted by their heavy breathing and profuse perspiration. Most of the superintendents are Europeans, and are fond of riding. During a service of eighteen years I have only come across one native superintendent who rode when on tour; and a Eurasian officer of twenty-nine years' experience in the department, who had been through every grade from Disbursing Postmaster to officiating Postmaster General, told the Civil Service Commissioners in 1887 that he had never known a native superintendent to go round his division on horseback.

To the harkara, the European superintendent is not only his departmental chief, for he has but vague notions of the august dignity of a Postmaster General, but he is the fountain head where he can obtain redress from any grievance. In the eyes of the harkara he is looked

up to as the embodiment of the Sarkar (Government), and possesses its attributes of paternal omnipotence ; he is the dispenser of justice, and can protect him from the exactions of the overseer or the orders of the native inspector. The runner is always a favourite with a sporting superintendent, for should he be encamped near a stage hut in the jungle between two towns, the runner, from his local knowledge, can always show the most likely places where shikar (sport) is to be had. In the afternoon he will accompany the superintendent with his gun, and return later on towards sundown with perhaps a bag of ducks, or snipe, or partridge, or hares, or even a black buck. Both are equally satisfied—the officer with his sport, and the runner with a *douceur*. It is on these occasions, when the two are alone in the jungles, that much can be learnt of local men and arrangements. With a little judicious pumping the runner will become communicative regarding the doings of local postmasters, the overseer, or the inspector. A sporting superintendent who takes an interest in his harkaras may perhaps organize a race once a year. The overseers will select from the different mail lines half a dozen of the swiftest men. They will be granted a few days' casual leave to come into the head station, their comrades sharing the duties of the absent men. There is a certain amount of excitement on these occasions, the various overseers giving their protégés a few hints as to training, &c., for the superintendent's prizes of ten rupees and five rupees are worth having. Such contests have a good effect on the working of the lines, and tend to promote an *esprit de corps* among the men.

The harkara is one of the most useful of postal servants, and is quite an indispensable as far as the cheap working of the Department is concerned. The following figures, quoted from the report of 1893-4, show to what an extent his services are utilised :—

POSTAL LINES.					
Nature of Line.					Total Mileage.
Railway	...	...	...	...	18,107
Mail Cart	...	...	...	...	6,091
Runners and Boat	...	...	...	...	78,221
Steamers	...	...	...	...	14,188
Total					116,607

Thus nearly 70 per cent. of the postal communications in India are maintained by runners, and if railways and steamers are excluded,

it may be said that runners are employed for the whole internal net-work of postal lines, mail carts being used only in a very few places where the weight of the mails are heavy. Of course, the railways form the chief channels of communication, and convey most of the heavy mails, but railways are not so plentiful in India as in England, and at present they are chiefly trunk lines, and connect the most important centres, but the construction of feeder lines is now attracting the attention of capitalists. Let me wind up with two extracts. It is well known that all natives are imbued with superstition, and the following is the story of a trial by ordeal. I will give it in the writer's (a Bombay Superintendent's) own words:—

“Some years ago I held charge of a postal division on the Western Coast. My district consisted of about 300 miles of low country lying between the ghauts and the sea, and, strange as it may seem, there were wild tracts in these parts which had seldom, if ever, been visited by a European officer. The people were for the most part simply country folk, very superstitious, and many of their villages and hamlets are picturesquely situated in thickly-wooded glens. One morning, at head-quarters, I was aroused in the small hours by the receipt of a telegram, informing me that a considerable sum of money, forming part of the contents of the mail from a head to a sub-office, had been stolen on the road. As the case was serious and demanded immediate personal investigation, I made arrangements to leave for the supposed scene of the theft, and after a long march through difficult country reached a small post office, remote from the larger centres of traffic, and began my inquiry. The mail wallet had often changed hands on the road as it passed from runner to runner at the different stages. No time had apparently been lost *en route*; the seals of the wallet, which had been preserved, were in perfect condition. There was no doubt the money had been enclosed by the Despatching Office, and no doubt that it had not reached its destination. The whole affair was wrapped in mystery. The only clue the police had been able to obtain was that one runner, whom we shall call Rama, had since the theft paid off certain debts in the village which had long pressed upon him; but there were no other suspicious circumstances, and the man had ten years good service. As a last resource it was determined to resort to trial by ordeal, and for this purpose an aged Brahmin, who was supposed to possess occult powers and to be in daily communion with the gods, was consulted and readily undertook to discover the thief. All the runners, a good array of sturdy Mahratta peasants, were summoned to the office, and under the guidance of a *chala*, or disciple of the old Brahmin, we all proceeded to a small deserted temple of Mahadeo, situated at some distance from the village. It was a desolate spot, and bore an evil reputation. The temple, owing to some act of desecration in the past, had been abandoned, and was almost buried among weeds and tangled brushwood. The hour

selected was about 6 p.m., and the long twilight shadows gave the place a weird, uncanny look. The old Brahmin was awaiting us, and, as we approached, appeared to be busy muttering incantations. The runners all seemed to be more or less under the spell of the hour, but the look of real fright on Rama's face was quite distinct. The Brahmin, having finished his incantations, rose, and addressing the men said, 'You are about to face the gods. To the innocent the trial will be nothing, but to the guilty, much. In the temple a magic wand has been placed on the altar. Each of you must go in by turns, take up the wand and turn round three times, repeating the name of Mahadeo; the wand will stick to the hand of the guilty one.' By this time it was nearly dark. I glanced in through the door of the temple. A solitary oil *buttee* threw a fitful light on to the altar, on which an ordinary bamboo stick about two feet long reposed, among grains of uncooked rice and cut limes, the whole sprinkled with red powder. A curtain was drawn across the door, and the men entered one at a time. As each one re-appeared the Brahmin seized his hands and raised them to his forehead, and then allowed him to pass on and join his fellows. Coming to Rama he went through the same pantomime, but instead of allowing him to pass on, bade him stand aside. When the last man had gone through the ordeal, the Brahmin turned to Rama and said quietly, 'Tell the Sahib how you stole the money.' To my utter amazement Rama fell on his knees, confessed that he was the thief, and offered to show where he had hidden the balance of the money. He had succeeded in opening the mail bag without seriously disturbing the seal. The Postmaster had not really examined them, and so their having been manipulated had escaped notice. Needless to say, the Brahmin was rewarded, and poor Rama was sent to repent at leisure in the District Jail. Now the natural question is, 'How was it done?' Very simply. The temple, the lonely glen, the uncanny hour, the incantations, all were merely accessories to appeal to the superstitions of the ignorant peasants. The 'magic wand' was thickly smeared with strongly scented sandal wood oil. Rama's guilty conscience had prevented him from touching it, as he firmly believed the wand would stick to his hands, and his, of course, was the only hand that did not smell of oil."

My last quotation is the graphic description of the death of a celebrated man-eater by that intrepid sportsman, "The Old Shekarry." The animal became a scourge, and was supposed to have carried off more than a hundred persons. He grew so cunning as to wait for the jingling of the runners at a certain spot in the jungle; and so many harkaras (sixteen) were carried off that the mail was eventually stopped, as nobody could be induced to go with the bags past that particular spot until the terrible man-eater was slain.

"At length Kistimah said that he had been thinking of a plan which, though dangerous in the execution, might be attended with success.

It was for me to go, with a man dressed as a runner, down the main road at sunset, being the time the tiger generally carried off his victims, and to run the chance of getting a shot. . . . Kistimah offered to accompany me as a post-runner. This, however, I objected to, for I thought that I should have a better chance of meeting the tiger if I went alone than in company: besides, I preferred having only myself to look after. The plan of action once settled, I returned to the village and obtained from the patel the bamboo on which the tappal-runners sling the mail-bags over their shoulders. To the end of this is an iron ring with a number of small pieces of metal attached, making a jingling noise as the man runs, which gives warning of the coming of the post to any crowd that might be obstructing the path, allowing them time to get out of his way. Having broken off the ring I fastened it to my belt so as to allow it to jingle as I walked, and arming myself with a short double rifle, by Westley Richards, a brace of pistols, and a huge shikar knife, I made Kistimah lead the way down the road towards the place where the man-eater was said to lurk. . . . Kistimah pointed me out a clump of rather thick jungle on the right of the road, where, he said, the tiger often lurked whilst on the look-out for his prey; and here we saw two or three old trails. He also showed me a rock from behind which the brute had sprung upon a post-runner some weeks before; but we saw no signs of his having been there lately. . . .

"I carefully examined my arms, and having ascertained that nothing had been seen by any of my gang, some of whom had kept a look out, I told my people to listen for the sound of my gun, which, if they heard, they might come up, otherwise they were to remain quiet where they were until my return. . . .

"The sun had almost set as I proceeded slowly down the road, and, although I was perfectly cool and as steady as possible, I felt cold drops of perspiration start from my forehead as I approached the spot where so many victims had been sacrificed. I passed the rock, keeping well on the look out, listening carefully for the slightest sound; and I remember feeling considerably annoyed by the chirping made by a couple of little bul-buls (Indian nightingales) that were fighting in a bush close to the roadside. Partridges were calling loudly all around, and as I passed the watercourse I saw a jackal skulking along its bed. I stopped, shook my jingling affair, and listened several times as I went along, but to no purpose.

"Whilst ascending the opposite side of the ravine I heard a slight noise like the crackling of a dry leaf. I paused, and, turning to the left, fronted the spot from whence I thought the noise proceeded. I distinctly saw a movement or waving in the high grass, as if something was making its way towards me; then I heard a loud purring sound, and saw something twitching backwards and forwards behind a clump of low bush and long grass, about eight or ten paces from me and a little in the rear. It was a ticklish moment, but I felt prepared. I stepped back a couple of paces in order to get a better

view, which action probably saved my life, for immediately the brute sprang into the middle of the road, alighting about six feet from the place where I was standing. I fired a hurried shot ere he could gather himself up for another spring, and when the smoke cleared away I saw him rolling over and over in the dusty road, writhing in his death agony, for my shot had entered the neck and gone downwards into the chest. I stepped on one side and gave him my second barrel behind the ear, when dark blood rushed from his nostrils, a slight tremor passed over all his limbs, and all was still. The man-eater was dead, and his victims avenged. . . .

“I have killed many tigers, both before and since, but I never met with such a determined enemy to mankind, for he was supposed to have carried off more than a hundred individuals.”

QUETTA.

ANGAREION.



“Short Circuited.”



“Offering great Resistance.”



“Below Standard.”

SOME ILLUSTRATIONS OF TECHNICAL TERMS.



POST OFFICE, MAFEKING.

Bechuanaland Telegraphs.

AT the present time, when South African affairs are occupying so large a share of public attention, I may not be wrong in thinking that a short account of telegraphic work and progress in Bechuanaland will prove of interest to the readers of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*.

Bechuanaland, that large tract of country lying to the west of the Transvaal, is bounded on the north by the Bechuanaland Protectorate, on the south by the Cape Colony, and on the west by Great Namaqua Land. The natives are chiefly known as Batlapins and Barolongs, and are collectively termed Bechuanas. The history of these people is lost in antiquity; and there are few or no dates to guide the enquirer. They are supposed to have migrated from Central and even Northern Africa; and, after many tribal wars, to have located themselves to the best advantage. They cannot be considered a warlike race, and will only fight on extreme provocation; although, when acting on the defensive, they have on many occasions shown great bravery and good tactics. It is, however, next to impossible for the Bechuanas to govern themselves. They have always been hopelessly disunited; and the numerous claims to chieftainship, due largely to their polygamous customs, have led to many jealousies and feuds.

Native politics came to a crisis in 1884, when the relations between two Barolong chiefs, Montsioa, of Mafeking, and Moshette, of Kunana, became strained. They each obtained the assistance of white men; Moshette's volunteers were principally Transvaal Boers; whereas Montsioa relied more on his own subjects, acting under the advice and guidance of traders and hunters who happened to be in his territory at the time. Mankoroane, the Batlapin Chief at Taungs, was continually harassed by these freebooters; and he also employed white volunteers to rid his country of the marauders. There is no doubt, however, that these whites were not over-loyal to the various chiefs they professed to serve; and, as time went on, things passed from bad to worse. The natives found that they were unable to cultivate their lands; and—most distressing of all things to the native mind—that their cattle were fast diminishing in number. Petitions were therefore sent by the Chiefs Montsioa and Mankoroane asking for the intervention of the English Government. England was not slow to realize the gravity of the situation and the importance of action; for the Bechuana territory was the key to the northern trade route, "the great highway to the interior." An expedition was accordingly sent out in January, 1885, under the command of Sir Charles Warren; and, after order had been restored, Bechuanaland was formally proclaimed to be under British authority. The southern part was made a Crown Colony, whilst the northern became a Protectorate.

Amongst the various equipments for Sir Charles Warren's force, the Field Telegraph, of which I was enrolled a member, was one of the most useful. It brought the several camps and the outside world into comparatively close touch, and as an agent in field operations, proved invaluable. The Cape Colonial telegraph system at this time terminated at West Barkly, whence a light line was rapidly extended through Taungs and Vryburg to Mafeking, and finally carried on by way of Kanye and Molepolole to Shoshong. The line was constructed by Lieutenants Anstruther and Heath, under the direction of Major Jelf, R.E. Many difficulties had, of course, to be contended with, the chief of which were clearing the bush for the track, and effectually guarding the working parties. Notwithstanding the almost tropical climate, an average of eight miles of line was completed each day—a very fair record. The work was done very systematically. First of all the route was surveyed, pegged off, and cleared of bush. Then followed a mule waggon, running out wire and distributing poles. These were dealt with by a

party of about twenty men, well trained in pole planting, straining, binding, staying, &c.

The operators, as well as the construction party, were chiefly composed of men from the Telegraph Battalion, R.E. ; but owing to the large number of stations taken in circuit, and the number of men required for the work, it was also found necessary to engage telegraphists and linemen from the irregular corps (the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Mounted Infantry, and 4th Pioneer Regiment). These were attached to the R.E. *pro tem.*, and proved a very serviceable addition. The linemen found the South African "trek ox" to be a great destroyer of man's handiwork. This animal seemed to possess a wonderful love at first sight for the bamboo and light pine poles. After long journeys with heavily-laden transport waggons, the wily ox, when released from the yoke, would invariably strike out a bee line for the nearest pole, and, rubbing his face and neck most affectionately against it, bring it down. In order to discourage these little attentions, huge thorn brushes were bound to the poles. Then came the white ant, and considerably demolished the underground portion of the somewhat frail wooden supports. Added to this, terrific thunderstorms were of frequent occurrence, and the lightning, besides melting the brass tops off the vulcanite insulators, would fuse the wire and render as much as a fifty-yard span completely useless.

The operators' work was, of course, very interesting ; all military orders and despatches, some of them very lengthy, were transmitted over the wire, besides a fair amount of commercial and press work. The instruments used were the ordinary single current sounder sets (*i.e.*, key, galvanometer, relay and sounder), the current being produced by hermetically sealed Leclanché cells, which were well adapted for transport. Duplex working was seldom resorted to, owing to the large number of stations kept in circuit. Several of the smaller intermediate offices were, however, fitted with what is commonly known as "the buzzer," the transmitter of which is a vibrator, and the receiver a telephone of the Ader pattern. By using ten Leclanché cells, "the buzzer" could, in most cases, be worked without interference with other stations that were using sounders. At the same time, the stations using sounders were provided with "buzzer" sets, and could at will switch over, and either clear small stations of their work or request them to leave a clear line.

Thunderstorms were of as much annoyance to the operator as to the lineman, and earth currents were very prevalent. Both interfered

with the working very considerably; the former often conveyed severe shocks to the operator, and to overcome the latter the telegraphist had to exercise his ingenuity and insulate the floor as best he could, often by means of insulator cups on the chair legs. It was also a common practice to put a capsule of Chatterton's compound or sealing wax over the thumbscrew of the relay, and to wind a silk handkerchief round the telephone receivers.

I should state that the European freebooters, who had enlisted under the native chiefs already referred to, had received large grants of land within the Bechuana district as the reward of their services. These lands became known as the Republics of Stellaland and Goshen; and it was one of the objects of the Warren expedition to bring about the dissolution of states so turbulent and dangerous. To many of us it was a trifle disappointing that the result was accomplished without any actual fighting; but the complete success of the mission in restoring and permanently securing law and order, and in placing the entire Bechuana territory under British control, compensated for the loss, and caused us to look with some degree of manly pride upon the medal that was issued, albeit it was of tin only, with merely a regimental number impressed upon it.

The Telegraph Battalion lost a good man and faithful comrade in sapper Charles Kingsland, who succumbed to the trying influences of the climate. His grave, and those of about half a dozen others belonging to different corps, are at Mafeking and are kept very neat in the small military cemetery there, which is well laid out with gravel paths, shrubs, and plants. Great credit is due to Mr. Edgar Rowland (one of the early settlers) for the care and attention bestowed on the last resting places of his fellow countrymen.

On September 1st, 1885, the military forces were withdrawn from Bechuanaland, and the country was handed over to the Civil Administration, under Sir Sidney Shippard, K.C.M.G. A body of about 500 armed and mounted police, under Sir F. Carrington, K.C.M.G., was enrolled to maintain law and order, and these were known as the Bechuanaland Border Police, or B.B.P. The telegraph system was also handed over to the Civil Administration, but the line beyond Mafeking was dismantled when military occupation ceased. Townships were surveyed at Mafeking and Vryburg; and as the principal sites were very soon occupied, a brisk commercial business was carried on over the wires. The telegraph offices were located in the various police camps, in the same manner as during the Warren Expedition; but, as one by one the military camps were

removed, so were the number of offices reduced. Those kept open were Greefdale, Mafeking, Setlagoli, Taungs, Vryburg,



NOTE.—Telegraph lines also run alongside all the railway routes shown.

A Sketch Map of
AFRICA SOUTH OF THE ZAMBESI,
Showing the principal railway and telegraph lines.

Scale—1 : 12,000,000.

Drawn by Sherwin Engall.

and Wittefontein, the distances between each averaging forty miles.

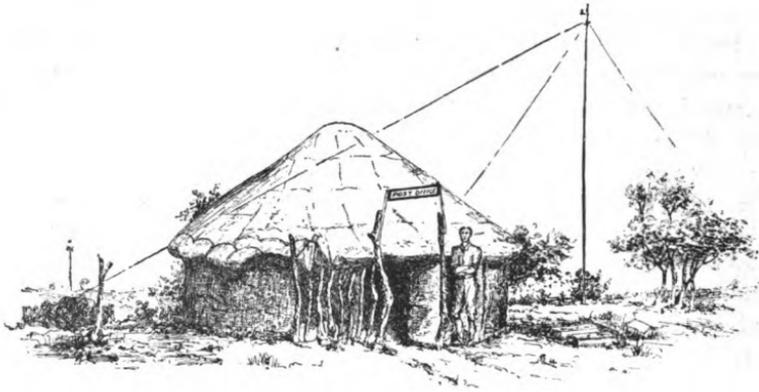
Maintenance then became a difficult matter; for as it was never intended that the field line should be worked as a permanency, the wooden poles soon showed signs of decay, and the wire (a thin 3-strand) contained many dry joints. "Buzzer" working was often resorted to in order to get signals through. After much gentle persuasion, the Government had the fifteen feet wooden poles replaced by twenty feet iron ones; but the same old wires were still used, the dry joints being cut out and new ones soldered in. This did not answer very well—it was like putting a new patch on an old garment. The old poles were sold to surveyors, who found them quite a boon for flagstuffs.

We soon found ourselves blocked with work in connection with gold prospecting and mining booms; several syndicates were formed in Bechuanaland, and there was quite a rush to Barberton, Witwatersrand, and Malmani. The Transvaal lines were unable to cope with the amount of work, and unfortunately the Bechuanaland and Transvaal authorities could not come to terms for the construction of a line between Mafeking and Malmani (a distance of but nineteen miles), which would have relieved the pressure. So an enterprising syndicate started a service of express riders between these two places and did a roaring business.

In May 1890, the British South Africa Company started an extension from Mafeking, through the Bechuanaland Protectorate, to Fort Salisbury in Mashonaland, their newly-acquired territory. The new construction was well carried out. No. 8 line wire was used throughout; iron poles were carried as far as Nuanetsi (a point between Tuli and Victoria), and substantial wooden poles were used beyond. The telegraph troop of the B.B.P. was disbanded in September 1886, and a civil staff formed, the Commissioner and Magistrate of Mafeking, Mr. R. Tillard, acting as Superintendent of Telegraphs. The troopers retained their appointments as telegraphists. The postal work was placed under the charge of the Commissioner and Magistrate of Vryburg, Mr. P. J. Truter, and the magistrates' clerks acted as postmasters. At this time there was but one mail a week each way, and the public would form an excited crowd round the offices and receive their correspondence and parcels from an open window. This was usually the event of the week.

In February 1890, the postal and telegraphic systems were amalgamated, and Mr J. E. Middleton (formerly a District Engineer of the Cape Colonial Service) was appointed Postmaster General and Superintendent of Telegraphs. Those of us who were in

charge of telegraph offices were made postmasters; our office accommodation was enlarged, and, what joy! our salaries also. It was finally decided to hand over the control of the Bechuanaland offices to the Postmaster General of the Cape, Mr. S. R. French, and this was done during April 1894. The result has been a marked success. By October 1894, the railway system had been extended from Kimberley to Mafeking. The telegraph line was at some points as much as fourteen miles away from the route selected for the railway, but was very speedily and successfully shifted by Inspector J. Gilbert, of Kimberley.



A PRIMITIVE POST OFFICE IN MATABELELAND.

(From a photograph.)

When the British South Africa Company had extended its territory from Mashonaland to Matabeleland, a branch telegraph line was constructed running through Tati to Bulawayo; and it is over this line that all the news from Bulawayo in connection with the recent Matabele revolt has been transmitted.

On the 16th of November last, Bechuanaland ceased to be a separate Crown Colony, and was annexed to the Cape Colony. There is every reason to believe that it will prosper exceedingly under the Cape administration; and it is certain that the Postal and Telegraph Staff will have a wider scope for their abilities. I cannot do better than quote the following sentences from the last report of the Cape Post Office:—

“In connection with the annexation of Bechuanaland to the Cape Colony on the 16th of November last, the post and telegraph services of that territory, which had already for some years been administered

by this department, were formally taken over. It is estimated that the above-mentioned services which, when the administration was first assumed by this department in 1893, showed a deficiency of over £7,000 per annum, will, during the current financial year, show a cash surplus of revenue over expenditure."

A few words descriptive of some personal experiences, directly resulting from Dr. Jameson's raid, may fittingly conclude this short sketch. The old proverb, "It is an ill wind that blows nobody good," kept ringing in my ears as I sat poring over my official correspondence one very hot afternoon during this last January. Could it be real, or was it my vivid imagination that heard the sounder click off in the plainest language a summons for me to proceed to Capetown for embarkation to England as a Crown witness in the trial *Reg. v. Jameson* and others? Yes, there was no imagination this time about my oft-sighed-for trip to England. I had only two days in which to balance accounts, hand over the office, pack up, and be off. What joy, after fourteen years' absence from the mother country, to be given such a favourable opportunity of once more seeing relatives and old acquaintances, roaming over the beloved haunts of rural England, and watching again the sights of London! The reason for my journey was in this wise.

It was reported on the morning of December 30th that the two telegraph wires running south of Mafeking were cut, and the poles broken, at a point about three miles along the railway line. On testing, not only was this found to be the case, but the line running north was found to have been cut at Pitsani Pitlogo. Mafeking was thus entirely cut off from telegraphic communication with the outside world. Immediate action had, of course, to be taken; so I at once arranged with the railway authorities for the services of a ganger with half a dozen natives to run me along on a trolley, carrying the necessary apparatus for repairs. The wires had to be pulled up and jointed, insulators and brackets fixed, and poles replanted. This was not easily accomplished under the broiling summer sun; but communication was restored about noon, and tracks were then made for home. The outward express came thundering along as we were nearing the Molopo river, and the trolley had to be quickly got off the line. This was accomplished none too soon, for, just as the trolley was thrown down the embankment by the excited natives, ably assisted by the ganger, the snorting engine, with its train of carriages, rushed past. The trolley with its load was replaced on the metals, and Mafeking reached in safety,

where I found that lengthy despatches were already being transmitted over the wires by the busy operators.

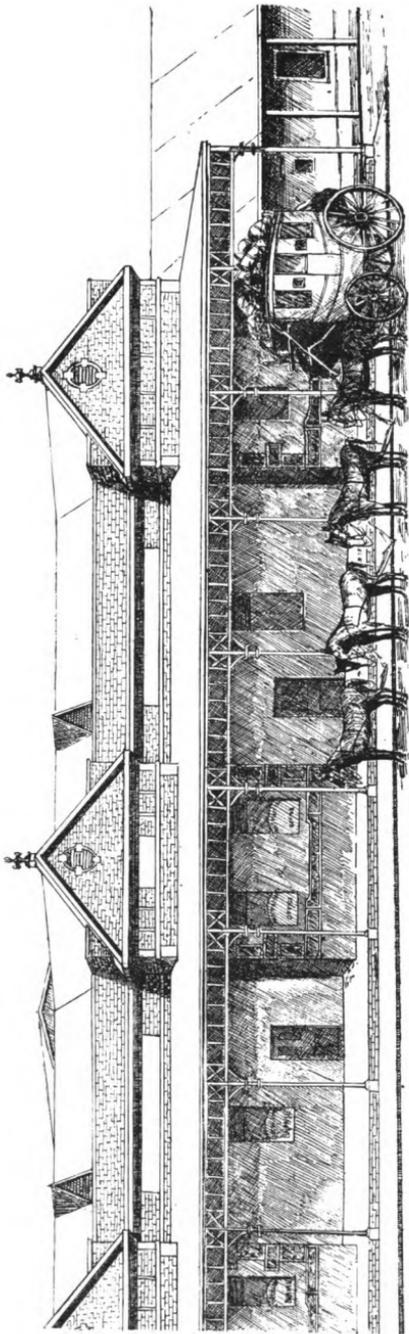
The northern line being still down, a horse vehicle was obtained and a start made at four o'clock the following morning. The fault, which was similar to the one already described, was got at, after a journey over very uneven roads and rough veldt, and was duly repaired. After a rest at Pitsani, the horses' heads were turned homewards, and Mafeking was reached at eleven o'clock the same evening. The weary Postmaster was hospitably entertained by the members of the Caledonian Society, who were having a convivial evening, seeing the Old Year out and the New Year in; and it was not until 3 a.m. that I was enabled to snatch a few hours of much-needed sleep.

H. HAMILTON FLOWERS.

Postmaster of Mafeking, Bechuanaland.



THE MARKET SQUARE, MAFEKING.



THE POST OFFICE AT BULAWAYO.

At the Sign of the "Red Ass."

"Alles rollt vorbei,
Das Geld und die Welt und die Zeiten
Und Glauben und Lieb' und Treu.'"

Heine.

FROM outside it was an ordinary looking wine-shop. The windows, covered with coloured designs, concealed the interior and prevented too much light reaching the exterior. There were many more brilliant cafés close at hand, and even in the rather dull Avenue there were brighter spots. But push open the door and enter, and all semblance of dulness at least is dissipated. A nebulous haze of smoke, the clatter of drinking-vessels, the hubbub of voices, leave no suspicion of dulness. All is indistinct at first; but gradually objects begin to take a precise shape. A long narrow room, a pulpit-like *caisse*, in which a plump, jovial-looking *patronne* is seated, a piano, a violinist, and tables crowded with a motley company of drinkers. This is all we can distinguish at present.

Ah, the proprietor has noticed our entry. Will messieurs follow him? He will find a place for them. V'la, just the thing! M'sieu et M'a'm'selle are leaving. Two more chairs, a little squeeze, and messieurs will be well placed. V'la!

Now we can look round. What a curious place it is! On the walls are frescoes, medallions, sketches. What pictures, what colour, what art! But the subjects—all that has ever been deemed most pure, chaste, inspiring, is mocked at, jeered at, made the target of sinister jests, of blasphemous gibes. "Ici, il faut rire," says an inscription. On the one side is a comic Calvary, on another a lascivious Venus, beyond is a more than blasphemous Faust—all executed in a manner that gives a priceless value to the walls of this ordinary looking drinking-house. Framed originals by Steinlen, Balluriau, and other well-known artists, fill up the bare spots; and

between the frames or round the doorposts peer grinning red asses' heads, little red devils, or ghastly little skeletons. Truly a bizarre sight.

At the tables are a few sober-looking lovers of music; but for the most part the company consists of blasé artists, Paris-bred bacchantes, and all classes of inhabitants of lower, middle, and upper Bohemia, who drink, talk, laugh, even weep together as the concert goes on and the music shifts from major to minor keys.

Hark!—a violin solo. All is hushed; and the violinist, a player of extraordinary skill, seizes the quickly responsive audience and lifts them unresistingly with him to the yearning heights of unachieved desire; or, with a long low wail, casts them down to the uttermost depths of despair. Art—wild, untrammelled, uncontrollable—is here, with its pale votaries. How the faces around seem to respond to the touch of the musician! The topmost summits, the deepest abysses of emotion, have been trodden by the feet of these pilgrims of sense, who now bear with them their insufferable burden of the knowledge of good and evil.

The violin dies out in an almost inaudible *pianissimo*; and, amid the cries of "bis," the clatter of glasses recommences. The *patron* has pressed a dowdy-looking girl to sing a song, and the demure little creature sings, or shall we say recites, Yvette Guilbert's latest success. The broad joke, the subtle allusion, the *double entendre*, are rendered to perfection with all the unconscious nonchalance of the great *diseuse*. A noisy applause gains another turn: an end-of-the-century chansonette. "*C'qu'y'a de plus parisien*," remarked one of our friends. A delicate tenor of no great range follows with a mock-sentimental serenade:

"Viens, ô viens, ma belle,
Je te mang'rai les prunelles."

The company, in a very easy mood, become uproariously enthusiastic, and are shouting their approbation, when the door is suddenly pushed open, and two poke-bonnetted girls appear. The *patron* rushes hurriedly forward and begins to protest, when the company, seeing here the chance of a new diversion, turn their energy in the direction of a noisy demand that admission be conceded. The new arrivals are two young girls in the well-known uniform of the *Armée du Salut* engaged in selling *l'En Avant*.

An arrangement is at length arrived at. They may come in and sell their papers on the condition that they afterwards sing. So, amid the jokes and jeers of the drinkers, these two young girls,

strong in their devotion, dispose of their journals. Then the time arrives for the singing. The title "Il frappe!" brings a round of ironical applause. The pianist improvises a short prelude, and the two untrained voices commence their *cantique*.

" Dans la maison il faisait sombre
—C'était l'heure ———"

One voice breaks down. The pianist has pitched it too high. A peal of laughter greets the failure. Undaunted, however, the girls make a fresh start. This time there is no failure; and the weak, nervous voices reach the end of the verse safely. The refrain is familiar to the company; and, with individual alterations and interruptions, it is laughingly, mockingly taken up by the now wild assembly:

" Je me tiens à la porte
Et je frappe ô pecheur,
Ouvre-moi, je t'apporte
Le secret du bonheur! . . .
A ma voix, ouvre vite
N'offre pas un refus. . .
Hélas! si je te quitte
Je ne reviendrai plus."

Was ever such a song sung by such a company? The young had touched the old. Youth and decadence were in apposition, but with what a gulf between! Poor girls, one could but admire their courage in coming thus to this bohemian haunt, outside the pale of all freshness, among this company who, like the demons in Verlaine's *Crimen Amoris*, "font litière aux sept péchés de leur cinq sens." How hopeless was their quest! It were far easier for them to join the ranks of these "sinners" than for the over-lived lives to turn back again towards their source and find afresh the simple faith of youth.

We left shortly after, amid the strains of *Sur le Boul' Mich'*, with much trite philosophy in our minds, and Heine's melancholy lines thrusting themselves involuntarily into our reflections.

C. T. O.

CHARLES H. GARLAND.

The Post Office Savings Bank.

[Under the title of "The dead set at the Savings Bank—the case on the other side," the *Daily News* recently published the following very powerful article, which we reproduce here for the benefit of those of our subscribers who do not read that journal.]

HERE seems to be a dead set in high financial circles just now at the Post Office Savings Bank. Only a year ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day expressed his satisfaction at the increase in the Savings Bank deposits, as showing "the power and the will of the humbler classes to save money." Now, his successor suggests that the thrift of the working classes has little to do with the matter, and intimates that it will be his duty to check the use of the banks by making the conditions of deposit less favourable. The fact that 140 millions have been confided to the safe keeping of the State, in small sums, and hence, necessarily, by vast numbers of persons, calls forth scarcely a word of praise from the Finance Minister of the day, or from the numerous members of the House who are supposed especially to watch over the interests of the rank and file of the population. Not a single working-man member rises in defence of an institution which has done more than any other to promote and popularise thrift. Attention is concentrated on the possibility that a few persons who do not earn weekly wages have been wicked enough to make use of the Savings Banks, and the disinterested private banker is listened to with bated breath as he holds up his hands in horror at the improvident principles upon which the State does business.

It will, of course, be said that no one has attacked the Savings Banks, but only their misuse. As at present conducted, it is alleged, the Savings Banks—and particularly the Post Office Savings Bank, for that is the institution which, being most successful, is the most conspicuous object of attack—carry on the business of banking for well-to-do people at a loss to the State. If this statement were true, it would, indeed, justify a serious complaint. But it happens to be untrue in every respect. The Post Office Savings Bank has never been, and is not now, carried on at a loss. And it does not, to any

appreciable extent act, as banker for the well-to-do. In 1894, after meeting all expenses and paying the stipulated interest of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to depositors, the Post Office Bank paid into the Exchequer £3,836, and it has been stated that the profit for 1895 will be considerably larger. Indeed, until within the last year or two the balance paid to the State has been substantial. Since 1876 no less a sum than £1,581,784 has been paid to the Treasury by the Post Office Savings Bank, in relief of the taxation of the country; and the profit made by the State is also represented by a valuable asset in the shape of the Bank Buildings, which extend from Queen Victoria Street to within a stone's throw of St. Paul's. Savings Banks were not instituted to make a profit, and when the taxpayer has, during a long series of years, had so substantial a benefit from the banking operations of the Post Office it does not strike one as very handsome to complain loudly, not over an actual loss, but over the mere prospect of the possibility of a loss.

But the gravamen of the charge against the Post Office is, that it has become the bank of the well-to-do; and this terrible result is attributed to the raising by Sir William Harcourt, in 1893, of the annual limits of deposit from £30 to £50. It seems a slight change to have produced a revolution. But listen to the figures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer! In 1893, 35,000 persons deposited the maximum sum of £50 in one sum; in 1894, 48,500. Thus £1,793,000 were added to the deposits in the first year, and £2,425,000 in the second. These depositors, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach thinks, cannot belong to the wage-earning class, and the Bank, in taking such deposits, is not fulfilling its proper function. We are not told how many persons in 1892 and previous years deposited £30, the then maximum, in one sum, or why £30 is a sum which a person in receipt of weekly wages may be expected to have at command, and £50 not. But let that pass. Suppose, for the moment, that 50,000 depositors not in the receipt of weekly wages put in £50 last year. They are but a handful in the crowd, and their deposits but a drop in the ocean. At the end of 1894, one in every six of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom was, as we have said, a depositor in the Post Office—a total of 6,108,763 depositors. Of these six millions, more than five millions and a half had accounts not exceeding £50; and of the remaining half million, 323,610, as Mr. Hanbury lately stated in the House, had accounts varying from £50 to £100. The depositors who had accounts exceeding £100 scarcely, therefore, exceeded 200,000. In other words, only one in

every thirty depositors, or but little more than 3 per cent., had an account exceeding £100; while those who had saved more than £50, represented only $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The use of the bank may be tested in another way. What is the average amount deposited and withdrawn in one sum? And what is the average amount standing to the credit of the six million depositors at the end of the year? Sir Michael Hicks-Beach is terrified by the number of deposits of £50 in one sum. But, in 1894, when there were 35,000 such deposits, the average sum deposited at one time was no higher than £2 15s. 6d. Moreover, this sum has not greatly increased during the last ten years. In 1885 it was £2 6s. 5d., in 1888 it had reached £2 10s. 6d. The average sum withdrawn has always been larger. In 1885 it was £5 15s. 10d., and in 1894 it was £6 3s. 1d. What an infinitude of small deposits and withdrawals, what a liliputian account-keeping do these figures represent! And so with the amounts held by the Bank. In 1885 each depositor on the average possessed £13 9s. 10d.; in 1890 it rose to £14 os. 3d.; it then fell slightly for a couple of years, and at the end of 1894 it had risen to £14 12s. 3d. With these figures before us, it is impossible not to conclude that the Post Office Savings Bank is pre-eminently the bank of the people, and that if it be used at all by what one may call, in a very general way, the middle class, such use is merely incidental to its main function.

In the Trustee Savings Banks the average amount of the depositors' accounts is, no doubt, higher, standing throughout the country, it appears from the last report of the Inspection Committee, at about £30. Nevertheless, here too the great bulk of the depositors deal in very small sums. At the Glasgow Trustee Bank, one of the largest, and a model of good management, out of 30,790 new accounts opened in 1895, more than 20,000 were commenced with deposits not exceeding £5; while at Aberdeen 30 per cent. of the deposits made during 1894 were under £1, and 50 per cent. under £5. At the Aberdeen bank a careful classification according to occupation of the persons who opened new accounts during the last two Savings Bank years has been made. The result is to show that beyond question the Bank serves the working and lower middle classes; there is no indication of its systematic use by moneyed people. Every class of labour is represented. Domestic servants, especially women servants, appear in considerable numbers; carters, porters, cabmen, railway servants, clerks, cashiers, artisans of various trades, and shop-keepers all contribute their quota.

But we must return for a moment to the depositors who have alarmed the Chancellor of the Exchequer—to the 48,000 persons who deposited £50 in one sum. It must not be assumed that these persons belong to the class which has banking accounts and invests in stocks and shares. It is not so very uncommon for an old domestic servant or other valued retainer to have a windfall—perhaps by way of legacy or gift from an employer. Even the persistent saving of small sums will effect wonders. It is said that when the Cardiff Savings Bank was wound up an agricultural labourer with a large family, but also with an exceptionally clever wife, was found to have accumulated no less than £600. A stock which rises and falls in value is a thing which a little capitalist of this sort cannot understand, and which he views with suspicion. There is a remarkable proof of this in the slight extent to which depositors in the Savings Banks have availed themselves of the facilities given them by Mr. Gladstone for the purchase of stock. The Banks have done all they could to recommend such investments, and, until quite recently, they commanded a higher rate of interest than cash deposits. But while the cash deposits of the Post Office are now over a hundred millions, the stock stands only at seven. The Trustee Banks have been still less fortunate in coaxing their customers into the Funds, their stock standing at a million and a quarter against forty-five millions cash. Persons with £50 to put by do not, as a rule, understand the fluctuations of the market; they wish to draw out the same sum that they put in, with reasonable interest. In Scotland small savings are readily taken by the ordinary banks, and consequently the Post Office has never numbered so large a proportion of depositors in Scotland as in England—only one in seventeen, as compared with one in five. South of the Tweed private banks do not look after small nest-eggs, and there is really, therefore, nothing for the happy possessor to do with his money but to put it in a Savings Bank. The Post Office is always at hand in every village. The depositor knows that his money will be safe there, that it will gradually roll up, and that he can withdraw it when he likes, and wherever he may be, by merely applying to the nearest postmaster. The windfall is given to the Post Office, and is saved; whereas if the Post Office refused to take it, it would probably be spent. That the former annual limit of £30 interfered with savings of this kind is proved by the occasional existence of two accounts in the name of the same person—sometimes opened at two different post-offices, sometimes in the Post Office and in a Trustee Bank.

Such accounts are, of course, illegal, and are subject to penalties. Where they are not made through pure ignorance, they have generally been created to evade, not the total limit of deposit, but the annual limit of £30. Everyone who has had anything to do with a savings bank will remember many cases in which the humble disciple of thrift has been hampered in his use of the bank by the low annual limit. By raising the limit to £50 Sir William Harcourt undoubtedly did much to encourage savings amongst the class which has practically no means of putting by except through the Savings Banks; and any lowering of this limit would be a severe blow to thrift.

There is another consideration which should not be forgotten. As a matter of management, dealing with very small amounts is a costly matter. The average cost of each transaction in the Post Office Savings Bank is about $6\frac{1}{2}$ d. It would be impossible to incur such a cost and to pay a reasonable rate of interest if all transactions were small in amount. It is the addition of a few substantial deposits—of a few accounts which run over £50—which enables a Savings Bank to give good terms to the very small depositor. This is not the experience of the Post Office alone; the actuary of the Glasgow Bank frankly stated to a Committee of the House of Commons that the large accounts in his bank paid for the management of the smaller ones. Any serious check, therefore, to the larger amounts would not only in itself discourage thrift in the higher ranks of the working class, but would by obliging the Savings Bank to give worse terms to small depositors, strike at the very beginnings of saving.

“We think that every effort should be made to simplify and make known the opportunities for saving, as well as annuities, which are offered by the Post Office, and we have noted with pleasure the special attention which is being given to the whole subject by the Department.” These are the words of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor—a body of representative men appointed especially to inquire into the conditions of the life of the people, and the best means of securing the industrious poor from want and indignity in old age. We commend the opinion of this body to the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the House of Commons when next they are urged to view the growth of the Savings Banks as a ground for alarm rather than for congratulation.

After Office Hours.

Up the River.

A GOOD address doubtless means a great deal to a man who aspires to be somebody. And this statement applies quite as much to his address postal as to his address personal. My postal address happens to be "Battersea, S.W.," and the result is that many of my friends regard me as an outcast, and shudder visibly when I hand them my visiting card. One and all remark, with more or less superiority in their tone of voice, that it is quite an unknown district to them. "Isn't the Dogs' Home somewhere in that part?" is the usual question. Most of these friends live themselves in places *they* describe as West Kensington, South Belgravia, South Hampstead, Hyde Park, or Bayswater, although in order to find their respective houses it is desirable to ask for the respective places under their better-known titles, Fulham, Pimlico, Camden Town, Edgware Road, or Latimer Road. Some of these friends would even, I believe, be able to live in Battersea itself but for one fatal objection. By no stretch of the imagination can you submit the place to the refining process which consists in generously allowing some more aristocratic neighbour to throw his already sufficiently stretched wing over you, and to be called by his name. For Battersea is hemmed in on all sides with places possessing worse names than its own. To call it North Clapham, East Wandsworth, or West Nine Elms does not help us at all, while the dividing line of the river prevents us taking a doubtful refuge in South Chelsea. And, though technically true, I have found the general statement that I am living "up the river" does not deceive people. No, if you come to Battersea you must put on a bold face and make the best of your position. The old name, Bathers-sea, calls up visions of the silvery Thames, with fashion and beauty disporting themselves in the water as they were wont to do here before the river was polluted with the refuse of a city of five million inhabitants. And the old name was pleasant to the ear, which the modern corruption is certainly not. A recent writer describes the place accurately in a few words—"Battersea is the most straggling oddity in the neighbourhood of London—a grave, slow, otiose place, lulled with the lapping of waves, soothed with the murmur of trees in unsuspected gardens, troubled but little with the clamour of passing trains, and dreaming, perhaps, of eighteenth century days, when there were mansions in the land and my lord Bolingbroke had his family seat near the church. The river here makes a somewhat abrupt curve, and gives a dubious outline to the whole locality. Small inlets run up between old walls, dark with the sludge of many years; and the streets and buildings have had to accommodate themselves to the caprices of the stream. Hence it is that in walking about Battersea you speedily lose your bearings, and after following a devious lane, which you suppose to be

parallel with the river, suddenly find yourself on a bit of shingly strand with a barge on the limits of the tide and a general appearance as if the end of all things had been reached." This is Battersea: and, indeed, the opposite shore of the river is known as "The World's End." Nor has the elevation of Mr. Cyril Flower to the peerage, with the title "Lord Battersea," rendered the place aristocratic. There is an incongruity about the title which almost goes to show that though Mr. Cyril Flower may have been an excellent Liberal Whip, he yet lacks the saving grace of a little humour in his composition. As it is, we think a great deal more of John Burns, and with good reason. He has done much to render life in this locality more tolerable to every resident. Battersea is pre-eminently "the home of the artisan," and I confess the artisan compares favourably as a neighbour with that type of humanity which struggles to be what it is not, and is to be found in all our suburbs. Somebody said that the chief reason for the success of the Primrose League lies in the fact that it was founded on a well-understood law prevailing through society, viz., "the desire of the middle class (upper and lower) to be on speaking terms with the aristocracy." And, though I have heard of towns where certain members of the League who belonged to the upper middle class have refused to attend League dances for fear they might be called upon to dance with members who belonged to the lower middle class, the aristocracy on the other hand, as a general rule, are quite ready to sacrifice themselves in this way for the benefit of their country and for the personal satisfaction of both branches of the middle class. The fact is that vulgarity of this kind, and of all kinds, is to be found oftenest in that middle region which separates the working man from the man of culture and refinement. And the two extremes have often more in common with each other than each has with the middle region. There is no pretence, no assertion of refinement about the real gentleman; there is certainly neither the one nor the other about the Battersea artisan. The misfortune is that since the cycling boom people of the middle region have discovered Battersea, and in a few years we may become as commonplace as Clapham, Islington, Hackney, or Stoke Newington. The middle region is being catered for by the enterprising builder, and it is possible that, like the Boer in South Africa, the artisan may eventually have to retire upon Nine Elms before the advances of the aggressive outlander. Even the aristocrats are to be seen on bicycles in our park. But threatened men live long, and I live in the conviction that before Battersea can be fashionable many more changes will have to be made than are represented by the creation of mansions and flats "suitable for large or small families."

In the first place, there is the artisan in his work-a-day clothes always in evidence, and there is the evidence of the character of the locality which is to be found almost nightly in the columns of the evening papers. Perhaps I notice this sort of thing in the same way that a lame man notices all other lame people, and so comes

to the conclusion that most people are lame. It certainly seems to me that scarcely a week passes without a Battersea scene, romance, tragedy, or scandal appearing in large print on the contents bills of the halfpenny papers. I do not think that the inhabitants of our neighbourhood are in reality more criminal than those of other suburbs, but they would appear to be less fortunate in escaping detection. "Battered at Battersea" was the agreeable way in which a morning paper announced one of our tragedies. The *Star*, in the evening expanded this in a characteristic fashion to "Battered to a Pulp at Battersea," and I sighed when I realised the opportunities afforded to the alliterative journalist by the name of my unfortunate locality. Another paper struck a blow at the domestic life of the whole district with the simple headline, "Married Life at Battersea: its results." This kind of thing, thrust before your eyes in the public streets, enables the enemy to blaspheme and to make jokes at your expense, especially if you yourself have only recently entered the marriage state. It is the more galling because the particular frailty represented in the tragedy is by no means peculiar to our neighbourhood, and if it had taken place at West Kensington the papers would have located it in Fulham, and even the next-door neighbour of the murdered one might have washed his hands of the affair before his friends. We, on the contrary, have to bear our own burdens. Here is another instance of the way the press treats us. A young lady in our neighbourhood, on deciding to take up her residence with the man of her choice, objected to bind herself down for life by a ceremony in a church, chapel, or registry office. She was prepared to make herself partly responsible for the rent of unfurnished rooms *sine die*, but that was the extremest limit to which she would go in the way of a contract. Her relatives, who lived in some suburb of the middle region, where the new ideas of our advanced reformers have not yet penetrated, promptly placed her in a lunatic asylum. This was a mistake, because Battersea's standard of what constitutes sanity frequently differs from the standard of Kensington or Belgravia. In this particular case Battersea's view was supported by the weight of medical authority, and the young woman was released. But it was a nine days' wonder, and the new men and the new women sympathised with the young woman, while the old men and the old women applauded the parents. The daily papers, which are read by the latter class, called the case "The Battersea Scandal," while the halfpenny papers, which are more often in sympathy with advanced thought and not seldom in advance of actual facts, spoke of it characteristically as "The Battersea Romance." So much depends upon the point of view. One really needs compensations for all these disadvantages if one is to be happy in Battersea. I am inclined to think they are not difficult to find, especially if you happen to be living, as I am, in a dwelling immediately facing the Park. I have a view from my balcony of its whole extent, and on its northern boundary I can trace the line of the river for a couple of miles or more.

Battersea Park is well known for the singing capacities of its birds, and at certain times of the day the only sounds one hears are the singing of the birds and the sighing of the wind among the trees. With each tide it is my fancy to think that we receive a supply of fresh sea air. When I mentioned this to a friend he said at once, "Ah yes! I know. When the wind is in the east you get the Gas Works, and when it is in the west you get Price's Candle Factory; if it blows from the north you get the river smells—everybody knows *them*, and if from the south you have the full benefit of the fried-fish shops in the Falcon Road." And this man lives himself in front of a mews off the Edgware Road, and writes to me from "Hyde Park." He has to walk half a mile or more to get a view of his postal address, whereas I can see mine, as well as his, from my window. On fine clear mornings I have also seen from my window the Hampstead heights and Highgate Church, and it is only the trees in the way that prevent me seeing Westminster. Moreover, I am still within sound of Big Ben, and there have been days when the sound of the bell was borne so clearly on the breeze that, for the moment, I have half forgotten the altered circumstances of my life, and I have dreamed I was still a sojourner in Bohemia. But the dream was accompanied with a shudder. And it was not a whiff from the candle factory which produced the shudder, but the thought of how immeasurably the life I had abandoned fell below that which I had adopted, even with an inferior postal address thrown in as a makeweight on the other side.

People talk to me of the charms of the Upper River, of its lazy, indolent life, of its exquisite landscapes, and of the way in which its influence penetrates and grows upon you, so that you are compelled to haunt its reaches summer after summer. I can well believe this, and in my own way I have felt not a little of the charm. But there is a glory of the Lower River, too, and it is a glory which has more in common with our "all the year round" life than the dainty and sleepy beauty of the Upper Thames. Perhaps the most beautiful spot on the whole of the Lower River at sunset or at night is at Battersea Bridge, on the Middlesex side. To that corner we owe some of the most marvellous productions of nineteenth century art—the Sunsets of Turner. Here, at this corner where the river broadens out, and where, towards the south-west, there is a suggestion of fairyland, as the water takes its colour from the setting sun, Turner, escaping from his house in Queen Anne Square, took a humble lodging in order to be near the loveliness which was a part of his life. The very balcony he constructed remains as a witness of his affection for this corner. And after sunset, more especially at moonlight, the loveliness of the Lower River at this point is as seductive and as insinuating as are the narrower reaches when bathed in the same light. The low lying banks looking south and south-west become lost to sight, and there is on your mind the impression of a vast sheet of water on which the moonlight dances and sparkles, and the lamps from the shore and the boats throw an uneasy and fitful flame. And

this, again, is poor slandered, democratic Battersea, the Home of the Lost Dog and of the London artisan, as well as of the City clerk who receives an artisan's wage but alas! cannot wear the artisan's clothes. But such is the foolishness of man that in the choice between fashion and beauty, beauty goes to the wall; and there is no price the foolish man is not prepared to pay to keep off "the Surrey side," to have a good address and to be on speaking terms with the class above him. It is, however, the foolishness of man which keeps my rent down, and it is not for me to complain.

Our Surplus Energies.

THE present Postmaster-General seems, since his accession to office, to have been particularly struck by the fact that notwithstanding the hard-worked condition of the department, the energy of the officials over whom he rules is so persistent that it overflows into any number of extra-official channels. Even benevolence at the cost of 4s. 4d. per head annually strikes him as a form of energy, and he marvels. He himself, it would appear from his words, could understand better the state of mind of a certain high official who stated at a meeting of the Post Office Library that after a hard day's work at the Office he was good for nothing "except to lie on the sofa and kick." In reality we know from his own career that the Postmaster-General is not in a position to be surprised at all, as his own energy appears to be inexhaustible. It is only his pleasant way of telling us we are all very fine fellows, and as this is, perhaps, the most workable creed a Postmaster-General can possess, we are the last persons in the world to resent his gentle flattery. Still for all that a Post Office man is no better or worse than his unofficial brethren in the matter of energy. If anything, he is perhaps slightly worse. What, too, is so often taken for energy, is simply our true life finding an outlet in some extra-official action. Our official life provides, perhaps, no outlet for what is nearest to our heart or character, and consequently after office hours there is a vast reserve of force which has to be worked off somehow. Edison has lately been reducing his working hours, but formerly he worked 130 hours a week, leaving himself only 38 hours a week for sleep. "Are five hours sleep a day sufficient?" an interviewer recently asked him. "Plenty," the great inventor replied, "if a man is well and is interested in his work. He cannot work so much if his work bores him. Thousands of men play every day as long as I work. It is easy to work if your work is play." To many of us in the Post Office these words especially apply because the public, and even our own chiefs, have thrown it in our teeth that at any rate we do not work so hard or so long as men in other occupations and professions. Much of our work is not play, and does not interest us in the sense that Edison's work interested him. We are, therefore, more quickly exhausted, and if we are not physically exhausted we are consumed with a desire to do something in our leisure hours which shall interest us and absorb

our attention. That is the explanation of much of the overflow energy at which the Postmaster-General marvels. It takes many different forms. Volunteering is too often regarded by cynics in the department much as marrying into a Bishop's family is regarded in the Established Church as an easy way to obtain preferment, but I have known volunteers who possessed the genuine fighting instinct, and who were unaffected by these considerations. The management of Stores and of building societies provides outlets for the true life of others, and I have known a man who was an awful duffer at official work to be a genuine success as an assistant to a barber in the evening. On the other hand, I have come across men who were geniuses at their official work, but were unable to employ their leisure hours in any more profitable occupations than in the old-fashioned pursuits of eating and drinking and sleeping. There used to be an official genius in the Savings Bank Department, who spent his leisure hours managing a Penny Bank in his particular suburb, but this is the only sad case of the kind I have known. Most of us require change of occupation and recreation, even if it is only an occasional turn in the back garden. Perhaps it would be better for us to find that recreation in a library, but though the spirit may be willing, the flesh is often weak. And the men who read much are often poor advertisements of this form of energy, being mere dictionaries of quotations, and strangers to the higher culture which only comes with knowledge of men. Besides, you can get the latter at a smoking concert, and we have the highest authority for calling an entertainment of this kind a commendable form of energy.

The College of Arms.

I HAVE received the following reply to the article which appeared in our last number, entitled "Some Compensations of my Official Life":—

"SIR,—I have read your article in the *St. Martin's-le-Grand* concerning the College of Arms, which is untrue. The College of Arms is a freehold, and what is done is no business of anyone. I think you had better take the mote out of your own eye before you see the beam in others, for it seems to me all you have to do is to look out of window, use a towel, or admire yourself in a looking-glass: it is a great pity you have not got something better to do. I did not know Government paid servants to look out of window. There ought to be some one to see you did your work or stop your money.

"FROM A LOOKER-ON."

The writer, it will be seen, raises an interesting question as to the exemption of freeholds from criticism; but he has evidently failed to identify the author of the article. I plead guilty to the towel but not to the looking-glass. Let me at once make what amends I can to my unknown correspondent who champions the cause of the College with so much *esprit de corps*. For some time past the gate has been opened by the unaided efforts of one man, and my account

of the vagaries of the porter of the College refers not to the present holder of that post but to his predecessor. I am very sorry, however, to have to place as a set-off on the other side the fact that the flag was not hoisted on the Queen's Birthday. Perhaps, like the Post Office, the College of Arms was deprived this year of its Queen's Birthday, and this was their way of showing their disgust. Our loyalty on the other hand was strained without any opportunity of this kind being given us to relieve our outraged feelings.

Sir Arthur Blackwood's Life.*

THE difficulty in dealing with the bulky volume which contains the records of Sir Arthur Blackwood's life is increased rather than diminished by the introduction written by the editor. For it is there stated that "the volume does not aspire to be a biography," and among the reasons given for this statement are the following: "The records are imperfect," "letters of which many must exist have not, except in a few instances, been attainable," and consequently much has "of necessity been left untold." Yet in spite of these drawbacks enough has been collected together to fill up 595 pages, and we tremble to think what would have been the result if materials for a full biography had been forthcoming. The editor herself would, I doubt not, acknowledge at once that good and able a man as was Sir Arthur, the size of this volume is in no sense an indication of the space he occupied in the public mind, or of his own official merits. Indeed; the nature and the quality of a very large portion of the "records" appeal only to the followers of the special form of Christianity in which Sir Arthur found so much consolation, and I take it that the book has been compiled mainly for their edification and to keep them in remembrance of a man who had at different times helped them in matters of faith. Nobody can quarrel with the compilers if this is their object; our protest would be only relevant if we thought that in their minds he deserved a biography of the size before us on account of the position he held in English life. It is pre-eminently a volume which appeals especially to his own circle of admirers, and remembering this fact I am disposed to deal very leniently with it, and to refrain from criticising, as I might have done, the loose way in which the journals and letters have been pieced together, and the total absence of anything like a picture in words of the man himself as we all knew him. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the book, from a literary point of view, is saved by the reproduction from our own columns of an article by Mr. Buxton Forman, the perusal of which will give the reader a truer idea of Sir Arthur as a man than all the other 575 pages. Quite four-fifths of the book deals with his early and his religious life, while the remaining one-fifth is devoted to his official career. And though his enemies might say that this proportion fairly represents

* *Some Records of the Life of Stevenson Arthur Blackwood, K.C.B.*, compiled by a Friend and edited by his Widow. Price 12/-. Hodder and Stoughton, London.

the position official matters occupied in his mind, those who, like Mr. Forman, have worked with him, emphatically deny this statement, and our disappointment is therefore great that more justice is not done in these records to this side of his life

Sir Arthur was appointed to a clerkship in the Treasury in 1852. His official responsibilities do not at first seem to have weighed heavily upon him. "Nor was the labour which the State then exacted of us of a too exhausting character. It consisted in copying letters into a big book, and then at the close of the day folding the said letters, enclosing them in large envelopes, addressing them, and sealing them, regardless of cost, with an enormous weight of red sealing-wax. This tremendous work, which began at half-past ten, concluded at four. It was relieved by an excellent luncheon, and the afternoon was often enlivened by Herbert Murray, now Chairman of the Customs; Wynne, an Eton friend, who afterwards left for the Coldstream Guards, and myself, in games of stump and ball." In the same journal he relates how they resorted to an expedient for hoisting up a cask of beer to be consumed among themselves, and how he was caught red-handed by Sir Charles Trevelyan, and how he, Sir Arthur, cheeked his chief. Indeed, there are many indications in the earlier portion of these records that Sir Arthur when a young man was a very lively individual indeed; he says himself that he never read at Cambridge, and was addicted to gambling, flirting, and dancing. Very little is told us of his Post Office life. When appointed to the new post of Financial Secretary, he states he was well received by the staff, with one notable exception. "A nice room, and everybody friendly except S——, who, though he likes me *personally*, was very stiff, and compared my coming to a dose of rhubarb, &c." Perhaps S—— would have been more than human if he had been effusive in his welcome. There are pleasant extracts from Mr. Baines' books and letters relating to Sir Arthur, but little else remains to interest the Post Office reader who may chance to be out of sympathy with the religious views of his late chief. It is quite tragic how inconsistent we all are, and how our fine theories and principles are abandoned when matters nearest our hearts are involved. I myself remember Sir Arthur telling a body of men, of which I was a member, that so long as we were attached to a Department we must conform to the rules of that Department, and though we might protest against what we thought was injustice, obedience must precede such protest. And yet after the Lincoln Judgment Sir Arthur, who was still a member of the Church of England, did not hesitate, in the interests of his own section of Christianity, to recommend boycotting. "In cases where there is nothing but a Ritualistic service within reach, it is, in my opinion, absolutely incumbent upon evangelical laymen to abstain from all attendance upon, and consequent participation in, idolatrous worship." Clearly, so long as he was a member of the Church of England, it was his duty to abide by the Lincoln Judgment; but it is evident that he thought otherwise. In the light of his official utterances on

the duty of obedience, his attitude is distinctly amusing. The fact is, his point of view on religious questions was of the narrowest description, and those who sympathised with his opinions made the most of him because of the rarity of any man with any pretensions to culture, learning, or position, being found in their ranks. It is obvious from these pages that Sir Arthur was not a widely-read man at all: those wasted years of his youth were never made up, and in after life he scorned much of what we call culture as the work of the devil, and partly as a result of this he was unable to make his religious experiences interesting to us in the way that Newman and Amiel have done.

I have only one more fault to find with the compiler of this book. There is a little too much extravagance of statement with regard to Sir Arthur's virtues, an extravagance which in some instances borders on the grotesque. For instance, "To many who never saw his face in the flesh, Sir Arthur Blackwood is well-known by his published works—books which have been touched with the imprimatur of God Himself, by being made the means of salvation and spiritual advancement of hundreds." I am not aware that the most orthodox person makes any greater claim for the Bible, and even "the bias of the personal estimate" will not excuse such a remark. Here is a specimen of the "inspired" utterances. "It strikes me that God has three great schoolmasters—the Weather for mankind, the Law for sinners, and Sickness for His children. You will be able to expand this, and if I live I may try and expound it some day. It is a very suggestive thought." Surely so trivial and fleeting an opinion was scarcely worthy to be recorded. But I have done with complaining. In every page of the book is the most abundant evidence that Sir Arthur was a good, sincere and honourable man, a man who in spite of inclinations dragging him the other way and of temptations peculiar to his position, deliberately turned his back on the world, and carried out to the best of his ability in his peculiar circumstances the unpopular tenets of his narrow creed. The note of sincerity is everywhere, in notes, in journals, in the record of his daily life. And he evidently was an influence for good among his fellow men. Personal magnetism is a bewildering force, it is beyond explanation; but if you look at the three excellent portraits which are bound up with this volume, you will, I think, be a little nearer to guessing the secret of Blackwood's influence. A man with such a presence will make himself felt in council, in the office, in the pulpit, or at a philanthropic meeting. And when we add to this a voice which was pleasant and melodious to the ear, and a manner which was the despair of his colleagues, we understand a little more the power this man possessed. Biography has been called "the art of transmitting personality," and in so far as the Editor of this volume has been faithful to her art, we thank her for her efforts; and profoundly as I, for one, disagree with her religious views, I think the book is none the worse reading because it takes the form rather of a eulogy than of a life. E. B.

St. Martin's Letter-Bag.

The Muniment Room.

IN a previous number of this Magazine H. S. C. published some verses, entitled "The Exodus," in commemoration of the opening of the G.P.O. North. After hailing the entrance into the new building of "the Gods and heroes," he has a word of welcome for "the relics."

Then the relics that we cherish, saved from half-forgotten time,
Mocked to-day, adored to-morrow, now absurd, and now sublime.

Relics of the courtlier graces, humour's quaint and kindly gleam,
Threatened by the demon Bustle, always whirring "all by steam."

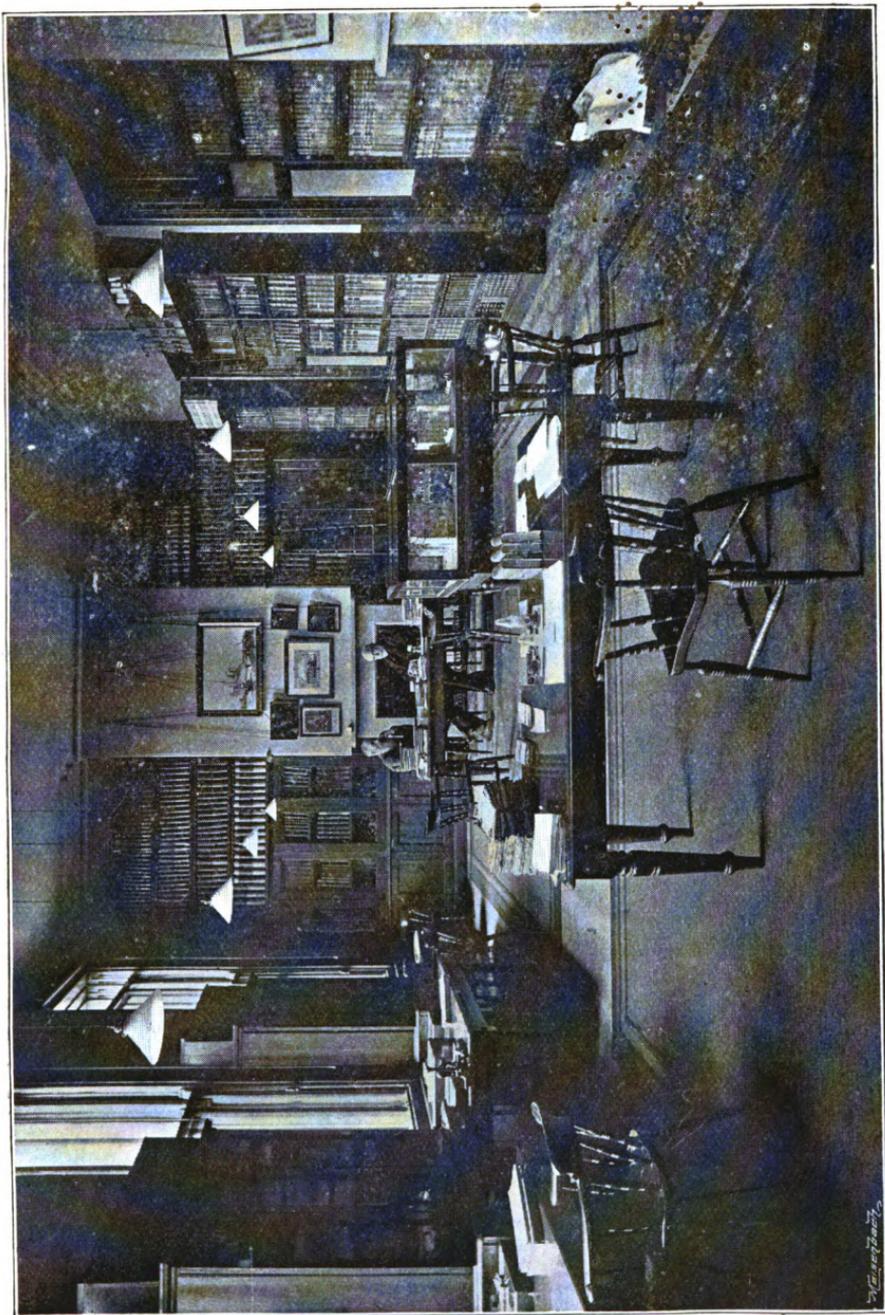
Relics of the pride of service, pride that neither bounced nor sobbed,
Sold not votes, nor howled on platforms, jobbing boldly when it
jobbed.

Relics of the old-world order of a slow and careful pen,
When th' official tape-bound bundle matched the use-bound minds
of men.

Pass along ye relic bearers, set them on their destined shelves;
Clear the way, for we are coming—place unto our noble selves.

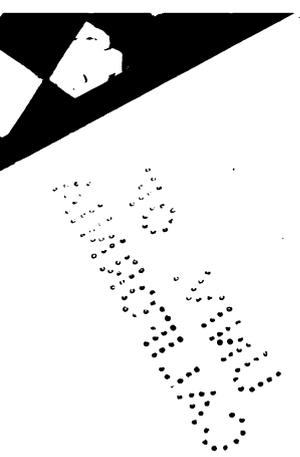
We have only to say here that the relics have arrived, and that in the new building, G.P.O. North, they have a large room all to themselves. Neglected as they have been for years, stowed away in vaults, defying even the energies of Dryasdust to penetrate their secrets, they have now been carefully collected and arranged under the experienced direction of Mr. Joyce, and the result is, if not a very valuable museum, at least the nucleus of a collection of which in time the General Post Office may be proud. The printed books consist mainly of Hansard, Parliamentary Papers, Revenue Inquiry Reports by or relating to the Post Office, and Notices which, until about sixty years ago, the Post Office, for expedition's sake, undertook to distribute. These altogether consist of about 3,008 volumes. The manuscripts, contained in about 1,200 volumes (most of them thick folios), are so various as to defy classification here; but among the more interesting of them may be mentioned the following:—

- a. Correspondence with the Treasury, dating from 1691.
- b. Correspondence relating to the Packets and giving particulars of their engagements with the enemy. This dates from 1700.



THE MUNIMENT ROOM.

The figures at the Table are Mr. Joyce, C.B., and Mr. Buxton Forman.



- c. Ralph Allen's correspondence from 1730 to 1740—a period during which, so far as the provinces were concerned, he was practically Postmaster General.
- d. Correspondence relating to the American Post Offices before the War of Independence.
- e. Correspondence connected with the Mail Coach era, 1784-1836.
- f. Minutes and reports to the Postmaster-General, by Sir Francis Freeling.
- g. Minutes of Sir Rowland Hill.
- h. What are called "The President's Order Books." These, dating from 1794, and consisting of about 150 volumes, have been recently unearthed from the vaults of the Circulation Department, and so far as we can judge from a cursory examination, they contain a great deal of matter that is not only interesting in itself but invaluable as illustrating the doings of the Post Office in times past.

In addition to these records there are in the Muniment Room a number of coins, models, and other curiosities relating to Post Office history, and it now rests with the officers of the department to make the collection even more interesting than it is. There must be many documents and curios in the possession of officers in the provinces which deserve a place in the room, and which the officers themselves would be proud to place in the hands of the Muniment Committee. Until the present year there has been no recognized place for any such records, and the provincial "relics" have been quite as much neglected as those of the capital and the head office. Mr. Joyce, the Chairman of the Muniment Committee, will be pleased to hear from any gentleman or lady who possesses anything which he or she may think deserves a place in the collection; and the Editor of *St. Martin's-le-Grand* will also, if desired, be pleased to advise any of his readers upon the matter if their modesty prevents them from approaching directly any member of the committee. It is our duty, as Post Office men who are proud of the history of our department, to make this collection worthy—we will boldly say—of ourselves.

German Post Office Statistics for 1894.

THE German Post Office is in many respects a model institution, and in few things does it excel more than in the completeness and clearness of its annual statistics. When one sets beside these sixty pages of orderly tables, giving in regular sequence the figures for all the different branches of postal and telegraphic work during the year, the somewhat scrappy and haphazard statistics embodied in the Postmaster General's report, it is clear that this sort of thing, at any rate, they do better in Germany. One's natural belief that the British Postal Service is the greatest and best in the world will hardly survive a casual study of these figures. We deal with more letters than the German Post Office, but in the

development of almost every other branch of the service we are a long way behind, while we have nothing at all to correspond with some of the largest and most successful branches of the German Service, such as the collection of bills and of trade charges on postal packets.

It may be interesting to compare as far as is possible the principal items of the work of the German Post Office during 1894 and of the British Post Office during 1894-5.

	In Germany.	In the United Kingdom.
Post offices	27,361	20,270
Letter boxes	83,355	26,819
Persons employed	148,035	138,738
Letters	1,200,976,640	1,770,900,000
Postcards	421,338,990	312,800,000
Printed matter, commercial papers and samples ...	507,787,560	614,600,000
Newspapers	924,343,142	151,800,000
Parcels	127,279,993	57,136,000
Registered and insured packets (parcels excluded)	12,202,694	11,958,264
Registered and insured parcels	2,774,665	649,381
Money Orders—		
Inland	80,023,498	9,190,304
Foreign and Colonial :		
Inwards	5,669,656	1,048,794
Outwards	5,079,997	446,108
Total	90,773,151	10,685,206
Total amount transmitted ...	£233,082,960	£24,953,532
Telegraph Money Orders—		
Number	260,127	132,457
Amount	£2,032,247	£456,731
Government Money Orders ...	1,632,479	1,662,166
Total receipts, postal and telegraph	£13,489,000	£13,347,000
Total expenditure	£12,038,000	£10,653,000
Surplus	£1,451,000	£2,694,000

In 1894 the German Post Office collected £29,080,500 in payment of 6,534,708 bills, and £7,768,600 as trade-charges on 14,978,236 parcels; it carried nearly 2,000,000 passengers, and, among services for other departments, it sold upwards of 389,000,000 stamps in payment of the premiums under the State system of insurance against sickness and old age. None of these services does our Post Office undertake. On the other hand there is no Postal Order system in Germany, whereas nearly 500,000,000 British Postal Orders were issued in the year to the value of about £200,000,000.

Subterranean Telegraph Lines.

THE *Globe*, of Tuesday, March 24th, publishes an article inspired by Mr. G. von Chauvin, of the Western Union Company, on the subject of "Our Telegraphic System: A Plea for Subterranean Cables," and in the same paper appears a short leader summarising Mr. von Chauvin's suggestions. Both article and leader are written in a satisfactory style, and the leader, for a wonder, does not contain any of the absurd deductions so characteristic of newspapers when discoursing on subjects of which they know only the elements. Mr. von Chauvin's suggestions contain, doubtless, a great amount of truth in them, but they do not contain the whole truth, and we think that they are calculated, to some extent, to mislead. The breakdowns, and consequent disorganization to business which take place after heavy gales and snowstorms are far more numerous than is advisable, and, says Mr. von Chauvin, "sooner or later some trunk system of underground lines will have to be taken in hand by the Government if we are to maintain our commercial telegraphic supremacy." It is not at all clear whether Mr. von Chauvin asks for an exclusive trunk underground system, or for a mixed overhead and underground one; the general public will doubtless be clamorous for, and assume, that an exclusive underground system is meant, quite oblivious of the fact that such a system would render fast-speed working and telephonic communication an impossibility. Fast-speed Wheatstone working is a characteristic of our English system, and it can only be carried out effectually with overhead wires on account, of course, of their low electrostatic capacity. For the same reason, long telephonic working can only be carried out with aerial wires. It was estimated some years ago that to construct a complete main trunk line underground system would cost six millions sterling; it is probable at the present day, with our experience of paper cables, that a similar system on the scale estimated for would cost considerably less than this, but in view of the expansion of the whole telegraphic arrangements of the country, the amount named might now be necessary for a complete system. Mr. von Chauvin's idea of having underground wires from London to serve the cables, might with advantage be adopted as a commencement, and could be carried out without difficulty, provided the financial question was settled; for the whole question is nothing more than one of finance; it would, however, necessitate more wires being employed than at present, as the traffic on those circuits now worked by the Wheatstone apparatus would be considerably reduced in volume, as a consequence of the reduction in speed at which the apparatus could work through the underground wires. If Parliament authorises the necessary expenditure, the thing can be done. It must not, however, be believed that the aerial system would be doomed; it would be so, doubtless, if electrostatic retardation were an innocuous element, but unfortunately it is not so; at the best an underground system would be only a supplementary one, though of its value there can be little doubt. We do not require to be reminded that Germany

has a very complete system of main underground lines; fast speed working is practically unknown in that country, and the conditions are therefore different, but still, the fact that such an underground system has been established and has proved successful from a maintenance point of view is a great argument in its favour, and will weigh with the public. The article states that when "telegraphic intercourse with the Continent is suddenly suspended, this is invariably owing to a breakdown in the lines leading to the English coast." As a matter of fact we have reason for saying that this is untrue; the vast majority of interruptions are not due to faults on this side of the channel at all.—*Electrical Review*, March 24th, 1896.

The Post Office Monopoly: A Little Bit of History.

THE following is an abstract of a paper which was read recently before the Cambridge University Philatelic Society by Mr. H. D. Catling, B.A., of St. John's College, on the subject of the obsolete Cambridge College Messenger Stamps.

It would appear, that the system of College Messenger service originated in 1871, when the Dean of Jesus College received permission from the Postmaster-General to make use of a form of local letter transmission which was not contrary to the law. In 1879 the Bursar of Clare College was allowed to make use of a more extended service, and the system was afterwards adopted by the remaining Colleges of the University. It was not until the end of the year 1882 that a Messenger stamp made its appearance. The first College to introduce this form of prepayment for the transmission of letters was Selwyn, which started the issue of stamps upon the opening of the College on the 10th October, 1882. Two other Colleges followed its example, viz., Queens', on the 26th November, 1883, and St. John's about the middle of January, 1884. It was during the May Term of 1885 that the Post Office authorities sent down a representative to enquire into the working of the system. It was said, and the statement has been confirmed in the University, that the Post Office officials were informed of it by Mr. Cecil Raikes, then M.P. for the University, during the Postmaster-Generalship of Lord John Manners. The Postmaster-General decided that the system had grown to such an extent as to have become a systematic private post, which entrenched upon his privileges, and the College authorities were called upon to suppress it. A controversy, which lasted until the Lent Term of 1886, ensued, though stamps were not used after the end of the year 1885. In January, 1886, his Lordship wrote that he had been most anxious to consult the convenience of the Colleges, and that with this view he had acquiesced in the continuance of the system until the end of the previous term. But it was his duty to prevent any systematic collection or delivery of letters otherwise than in connection with Her Majesty's Post Office. The College authorities contended that they were a private household, and that they had a perfect right to

send out letters just as any member of a household who sent out a messenger. The Postmaster-General replied that the only form of delivery exempted from his privileges were letters sent by a messenger 'on purpose.' The College authorities maintained that their messenger was sent out 'on purpose,' but the Post Office authorities argued that he was not the messenger of the writer of the letter, but of the College. The University said: If you stop our Messenger system, which ensures the rapid and certain delivery of letters at our particular rooms, and decide that the College is not a household but an institution consisting of a number of separate residences, you surely will agree that the Post Office authorities at Cambridge should deliver letters at the separate rooms of our members. The Postmaster-General thought that was nothing whatever to do with the case in point; the system of delivering letters to the porter of the College had always been considered perfectly satisfactory, but if a special arrangement were desired in a particular case he should be very glad to hear any arguments that the College authorities had to advance in support of their request. Delivery at separate rooms did not at once follow on the suppression of the Messenger system, but has since become the rule. The Postmaster-General called attention to the fact that King's Clare, Trinity Hall, and Caius jointly employed a single messenger, as did also Sydney, Christ's, and Emmanuel Colleges, and pointed out to the University that even if the arguments advanced as to a College being in the same position as a private household were correct, such coalitions were obviously illegal. In the result the University agreed to suppress the system, which, counsel advised, was undoubtedly contrary to the law.

The Proposed Pacific Cable.

THE inaugural meeting of the Pacific Cable Conference in London, which was held during the first week of June, may be said to have opened a fresh chapter in the subject of the development of intra-Imperial communications. The question to be discussed by the delegates was not so much whether the cable was to be laid as under what conditions it could be most advantageously laid. Ten years ago the project of a cable to be laid across the Pacific, connecting the Australian and Canadian groups of colonies, was regarded in many quarters as a wholly visionary scheme. So rapid, however, has been the progress of the idea, that in 1894 the Ottawa Conference, which arose out of Sir Mackenzie Bowell's mission to Australia of 1893, placed on record the urgent desire of the colonies for the construction of an all-British cable.*

At the annual meeting of Australasian Postmasters-General, which took place this year in Sydney, a definite plan of action was decided upon. Year by year the subject had been brought up and debated, but no common basis of agreement had been reached. The action

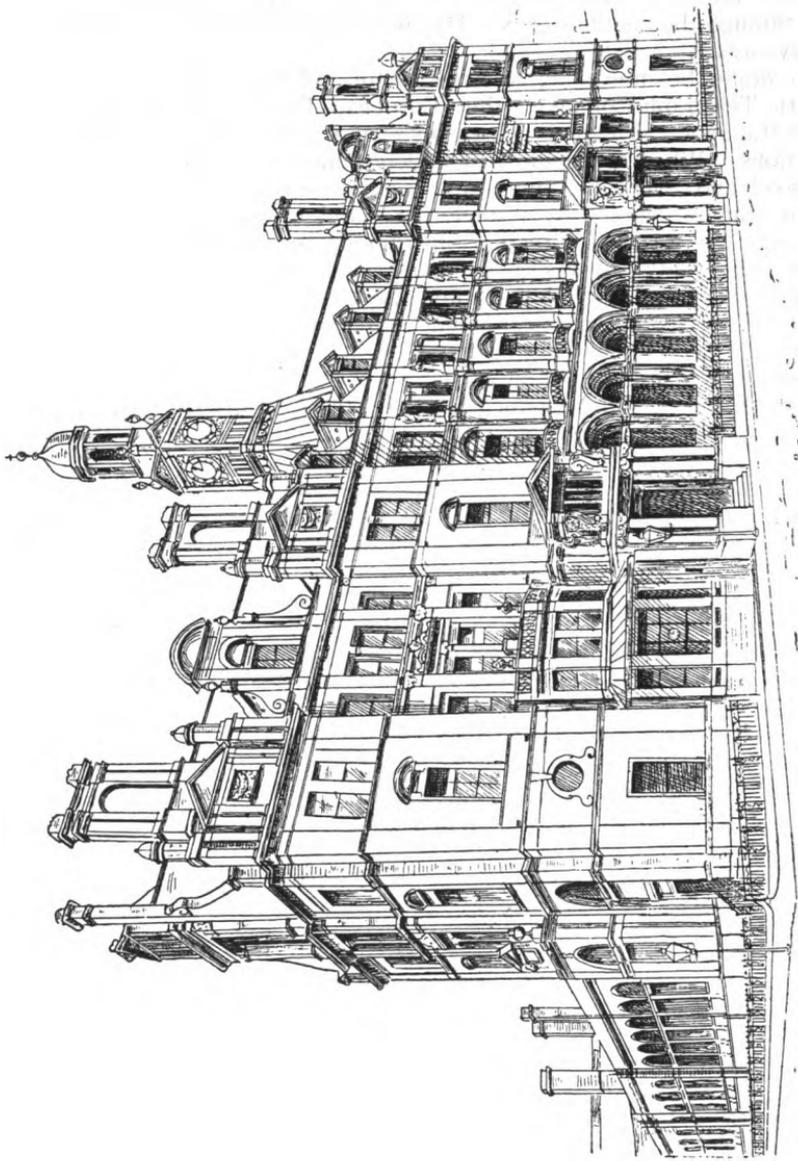
* See *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, Vol. IV., p. 433.

of Mr. Chamberlain in calling together the Agents-General and talking the matter over with them in a business-like manner had, no doubt, an important effect, and when the Colonial Postmasters were face to face with the problem of appointing representatives to the Conference in London they seemed to have admitted by common consent that the time for local jealousies had gone by, and that if they were not to stultify themselves before the world they must act. So far Australasia has been divided, and divided against itself. The question of a terminus on the other side was a very difficult point to get over, while the basis of contribution bristled with so many difficulties that the Colonies apparently acquiesced in an indefinite postponement of any pecuniary arrangement. Even now New Zealand and South Australia refuse their consent to any plan of equality. Their representatives at Sydney were of opinion that the payments must be reckoned by population, but it may be assumed that even if this opinion receive the support of their respective Governments at first, in the long run it is fairly certain that both the Colonies in question will be found subscribing to the resolution passed at Sydney "that the Colonies in question joining should contribute equally to the undertaking."

At the last Conference of Postmasters the route seemed to perplex them. That question was settled at Sydney. The cable is to run from Fiji to Norfolk Island, and thence to divide in two directions, one going to Moreton Bay, on the borders of Queensland and New South Wales, and the other to some convenient place in the North Island of New Zealand. This arrangement is highly satisfactory, and should suit all parties. Another resolution decided, so far as a resolution can decide, that the cable should be a Government affair, and that the landing places should only be upon territory belonging to or under the control of the British Empire. This disposes altogether of any station at Hawaii, except by a branch line, an undertaking, however, scarcely necessary, if the American Company complete their contract to join Honolulu with San Francisco by electricity. That the Australasian Colonies are represented here by Sir Saul Samuel and Mr. Duncan Gilles is most satisfactory, and if New Zealand and South Australia are ready to comply with what is agreed to on their behalf, the matter of contribution will be much simplified. In any case a signal advance has been made in the direction of Australasian Federation, and a decided step has also been taken towards Imperial Federation.

Early Telegraph History: An Appeal.

"**E**BOR" writes as follows: "Some of the earliest operators of the old Telegraph Companies have recently retired from active service, and others will soon do so. They, and they only, have knowledge of the early stages by which practical telegraphy was developed, and I suggest that they be asked, for the benefit of posterity, to record the circumstances under which early improvements in telegraphy took place. You may be able to ascertain



THE NEW POST OFFICE AT LEEDS.

where these early operators are to be found ; if not, they may be known to one or other of your readers, who will perhaps ask them to give, through the columns of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, the information they possess.

"It would be interesting to know where and when the 'British Electric Telegraph Company,' the 'European Telegraph Company,' the 'Magnetic Telegraph Company,' and others, began their operations. Where were the first underground wires laid, and the first road and overhouse lines built? What was the form of the first instrument worked by a single wire, and where was it used? What was the first sound-reading instrument like, and where was it tried? On what wire was a repeating instrument first placed in circuit? When were condensers first used, and for what purpose? When did the practice of telegraphing addresses and speeches (other than the 'Queen's Speech') verbatim begin? These are some of the questions that spring to my mind ; and no doubt many incidents worthy of record will be remembered by those who took part in developments which have had such a wonderful effect upon the progress of the world. I frequently see questions asked about matters of early railway history which cannot now be answered. Please endeavour to rescue the important incidents of early telegraph history from sinking into similar oblivion."

The New Post Office at Leeds.

WE congratulate Mr. Vinall and his staff that the removal from the old to the new Post Office is now an accomplished fact. Our illustration shows a handsome building, and we gather from the accounts in the local press that the internal fittings and accommodation are excellent. The instrument-room, on the top floor, extends from end to end of the building, and is a magnificent apartment, well ventilated and well lighted. It is indeed asserted that Leeds can now boast the best instrument-room in the country.

The Leeds Post Office has been selected as the Central Exchange for the Trunk Telephone wires, and it has therefore been necessary to make special provision for this department in the new building. The telephone-room is situated away from the sound of street traffic, and is well adapted to its purpose. There are at present twenty trunk lines connected with the office, and it is expected that within a short time the number will be very considerably increased. Some ingenious contrivances have been brought into use. One of these facilitates the connecting of one wire with another, and each switch operation is automatically signalled to the operators concerned. Electricity plays an important part in the building. As a matter of fact, the only part of the premises to which there is a supply of gas is the kitchen, where it is used for cooking purposes. The pumps needed for working the pneumatic tubes are operated by electric motors. In the telegraph-room the old primary batteries hitherto

employed have been entirely discarded, and the circuits are in future to be worked by secondary cells, the energy for which is supplied from the dynamo. The advantage of the new system may be understood when it is stated that whereas 6,000 primary batteries were required in the old Post Office, the work is now being performed by 244 secondary cells. Even in the heating of the wax used in sealing the mail-bags electricity is brought into use. The wax is placed in several small copper pans, which rest on electrical hot plates.

The German "Feld-Post."

IN the interesting account of Dr. von Stephan, which appeared in your October number (writes E. M.), no mention is made of the German Postmaster-General's achievements, upon the outbreak of the Franco-German war, in connection with the establishment of an efficient "Field-Post Service." Hostilities commenced within a few weeks of Dr. von Stephan's appointment as General Post Director, but thanks to the extraordinary efforts of this remarkable man the German army speedily possessed the best organised Field-Post which the world has ever seen. The following extract from Archibald Forbes' recently published and fascinating work, "Memories and Studies of War and Peace," has a direct bearing on the subject, and will perhaps prove of more general interest than any purely technical description derived from official sources:—

"That had been a strange scene on the evening before, when, under cover of the dusk—no vehicle dared move hereabouts in broad daylight—one of the battalion carts had brought out to us from the Field Post Office in Le Vert Galant the Christmas 'love-gifts' (*Liebesgaben*), packed by loving hands, that came to those fore-post regions of blood and death from the quiet homes in distant Saxon-land. It was a curious medley of souvenirs that streamed out as the tail-board of the cart was let down in front of the quarter-guard behind the house occupied by the major.

"The German Feld-Post was a more elastic institution than had ever been a King's messenger's service-bag in the good old unreformed days. I do believe that if his friends at home had chosen to send to a soldier in the field a beehive or a rabbit-hutch, there would have been no objection on the score of bulk. Out rolled cigar-boxes, stitched up in canvas wrappers, long cocoon-like shapes every outline of which spelt 'wurst,' flabby packages which evidently consisted of underclothing, and little boxes that rattled as they dropped, and, for certain, contained thalers. A pile of gifts was stacked against the wall, and a space in front was cleared, in which stood, wooden and stiff even when off duty, Under-officer Schulz, calling out the name as each packet was handed up to him by a corporal. It was rather a dreary, even indeed a solemn roll-

call, deeply eloquent of the casualties which war had wrought in the ranks of the battalion.

“ ‘Schumann?’ called out Under-officer Schulz.

“ ‘Shot dead in battle,’ was the curt response.

“ ‘Caspar?’

“ ‘Wounded.’

“ ‘Stolberg?’

“ ‘Dead.’

“ ‘Bergmann?’

“ ‘In hospital.’

“ ‘Schräder?’

“ ‘Weg.’

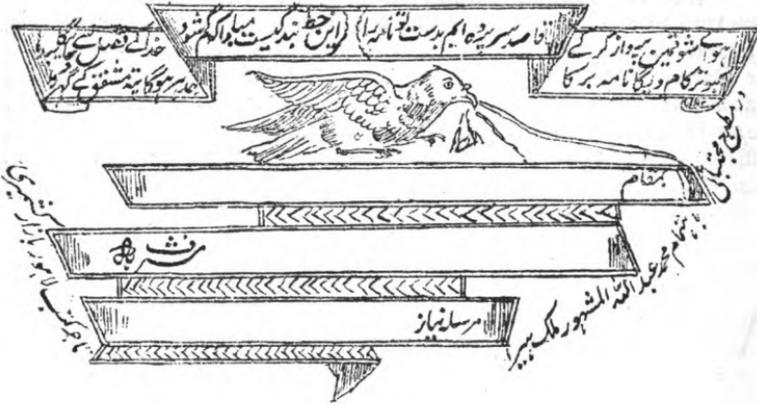
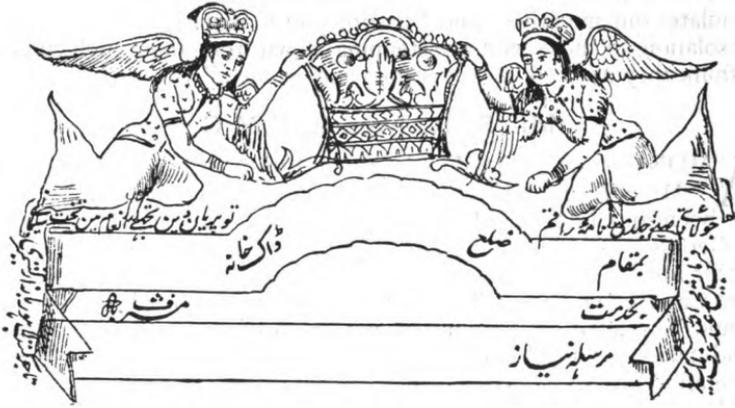
“ Now the dictionary definition of the word ‘weg’ is ‘away,’ ‘gone’; but on campaign it had a wide and rather vague significance. ‘Weg,’ then, might mean indeed almost anything: prisoner, missing, unburied, deserted—only that one never heard of a German soldier deserting. The sum and substance of the word was, ‘Not here, and Lord knows where he is!’

“ When Schulz had done, there was still quite a heap of packets which the men to whom they were addressed would never claim. I had seen Spreckels tear open the box of cigars addressed to him before I left the place of distribution. Now he was lying dead on the slab there, with a bullet-hole through his head; and from between the buttons of his tunic stuck out some half-dozen of the cigars that had come to him overnight from his mother in Kamenz.”

The Complete Lamp-Post.

A LIGHT to lighten the path of the wayfarer, the lamp-post is sometimes also a support. The Post Office is proposing to give it a new career of usefulness as a pillar-box. This is a system already in existence in the cities of the United States—where the postal service, by the way, is nothing like so good as our own—and is one of the things to which the American citizen points with the affectionate pride with which usually he regards American institutions. Our Post Office is beginning tentatively at Tottenham, though it is not quite easy to see how the experience gained in that respectable suburb can be useful in affording any clue to the advantages of the system if applied to the whole of the metropolis. The Beckenham District Council, which already uses its lamp-posts to ventilate the sewers, is permitting an experiment of a similar kind; and these circumstances suggest the irresistible reflection that we have not nearly gauged the possibilities of the lamp-post of the future. Why should it not also support an automatic machine for stamps and post-cards? Why, indeed, should it not carry a cab-call and a fire alarm? And if it only added to these attributes a telephone and a tape machine, then we might feel that there was something in civilisation after all.—*Daily Graphic*.

The Polite Letter Writer.



ANGAREION writes:—"The above are specimens of envelopes used by the natives of India for polite correspondence. The letters sent in these envelopes are generally scented with otto-of-roses or sandalwood."

Wise Words from Lord Dufferin.

IN *The Civilian* of the 6th of June, attention was called to some remarks made by Lord Dufferin on his retirement from the Diplomatic Service, and our contemporary went on to say that what he had said applied to the rest of the Civil Service. "The one thing," he declared, "that cast a shadow over the prospects of those who follow this profession is the slowness, the uncertainty, and sometimes the stagnation of promotion. In this last event the younger members are suffocated by the solid crusts of the ranks above them."

Now change and advancement are the very life of every career. It is the oxygen which revivifies our blood, brightens our intelligence, stimulates our initiative; and I assure you it is the greatest possible consolation to those who are stepping down from their high station to think they are making room for younger men."

Mr. S. R. French, C.M.G.

AMONG those included in the recent list of Birthday Honours was Mr. S. R. French, the Postmaster-General of Cape Colony, who has been appointed a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George. The distinction appears to have given keen satisfaction in official circles throughout the Colony. Mr. Harry, writing to us from Cape Town, says, "The staff is exceedingly proud that the chief should be singled out for such an honour, and the chief on the other hand takes the distinction as being conferred on the Department generally."

Mr. French's first appointment dates back to August, 1866, when he entered the London Money Order Office. In January, 1870, he was transferred to the Secretary's Office, and in July, 1880, was selected to proceed to Cyprus with the expeditionary force under Sir Garnet Wolseley, to organise a postal and telegraph service in that island. After his return to the United Kingdom, he was (says the *Cape Times*) appointed secretary and accountant to the General Post Office, Cape Colony, on the 1st August, 1880; and Controller of the Post Office Savings Bank, on the 1st January, 1884. He was made Postmaster-General and General Manager of the Telegraphs of Cape Colony and Basutoland on the 27th January, 1892, and also of British Bechuanaland on the 1st April, 1893.

St. Martin's-le-Grand has always found in Mr. French a very staunch friend. He has endeavoured to make the Magazine known throughout the entire Cape Postal Service, and has given help in every possible way. It only remains for us to offer him our hearty congratulations.

Mr. J. Mitford.

THE recent retirement of Mr. John Mitford, Cashier in the Receiver and Accountant General's Office, leaves behind, in more ways than one, an "aching void." He held a good position in the Post Office, he was Lieutenant-Colonel in the Civil Service Rifle Volunteer Corps, a keen sportsman, and what is generally termed "good company." Mr. Mitford entered the Service in August, 1852, and rose by various promotions and appointments to the position of Cashier, which he attained in October, 1884. He watched the Revenue passing through his hands, and was never weary of calling attention to the enormous annual growth of what he was pleased to call his "turnover."

As regards the rifle corps, the records show that he joined as a private in August, 1867, that he attained his majority in August, 1894, and was at the same time gazetted lieutenant-colonel. His

shooting was always of a very high order. In 1874, and again in 1884, he was within that magic circle known to riflemen as "The Queen's Sixty" at the Wimbledon competitions for the Queen's Prize. For several years he was captain of the regimental shooting team. As an athlete Mr. Mitford's performances date back to the early days when with Messrs. Lambert and Guinness he instituted those Post Office games which, it is said, originated the present very popular Civil Service Athletic Sports, at which he has, on more than



MR. J. MITFORD.

one occasion, carried off the first prize in the Veteran's Race. As to ordinary field sports, it would take long to chronicle Mr. Mitford's successes, both with rod and gun; but one incident may be mentioned by way of illustration. When deer-stalking in Scotland some years ago three deer fell to two shots from his double-barrelled gun.

After his long service in the Post Office, Mr. Mitford has, it is understood, taken up the life of a country gentleman, and we wish him many years of enjoyment of those pursuits which are so much to his taste.

The Late Mr. Vose.

IT is with much regret that we announce the death, on April 28th last, in his forty-sixth year, of Mr. H. J. Vose, of Cardiff, Superintending Engineer of the Post Office Telegraphs for the South Wales District.

Mr. Vose passed practically the whole of his official career in the engineering department of the Telegraphs. He joined the staff of the late Mr. Edward Graves in 1871, soon after the transfer. Mr. Graves was then Divisional Engineer for the old North-Western District, with headquarters at Birmingham. On Mr. Graves's promotion to be Engineer-in-Chief in 1878, Mr. Vose accompanied him to London, and with the exception of a short period of a few months in 1885, acted as his confidential assistant from then until his death

in 1892. Mr. Vose was then promoted to the Superintending Engineership at Cardiff in succession to Mr. J. Gavey, who removed to London on promotion as principal technical officer on the Head Office staff.

Mr. Vose possessed excellent business qualities and much tact, He was moreover a most charming and entertaining companion, and one of the kindest-hearted fellows that ever lived. He was



MR. H. J. VOSE.

a member of the Institution of Electrical Engineers, of several scientific and other societies in South Wales, and an enthusiastic Freemason. He had been in failing health for a considerable time prior to his death, and for at least twelve months his condition had given great anxiety to his relatives and friends. It was hoped, however, that his comparative youth and good spirits would pull him through. His long illness was borne without a murmur, and his loss is mourned by numberless friends, both in the service and outside. He leaves a widow and three children.

Mr. J. W. S. Lusty.

MR. LUSTY, who has been recently appointed Superintendent of Telegraphs at Exeter, has (writes "X.") reason to be proud of a service which already extends over thirty-eight years. His appointment as junior clerk in the service of the Electric Company at Exeter, when the only telegraph office in that place was at the old St. David's railway station, dates back to the 11th March, 1858. At that time it may be said that nearly all the commercial telegraphic business between the north and west of England was carried on over a double needle circuit of the old church-porch type, on which Bristol, Weston-super-Mare, Yatton, Bridgwater, Taunton, Exeter, and Plymouth were in circuit. As far as Exeter was concerned, the work was transacted in one room of very limited dimensions, abutting on the down platform. It was not an uncommon experience for the signals from the sending battery to suddenly and entirely fail without

warning. In such cases the battery had to be coaxed into renewed activity, frequently only for a brief period, by a copious drenching of diluted sulphuric acid, kept handy in a gutta-perch watering-pot.

In the autumn of 1858, at the time of the first attempt at cable communication with the Channel Islands, Mr. Lusty was transferred from the Electric Company's Western District to the South-Western District at Southampton, the genial and greatly esteemed superintendent of which was Mr. W. H. Preece. A further transfer to Winchester followed in 1859. In July, 1860, upon the opening of the London and South-Western Railway from Yeovil to Exeter, Mr. Lusty was "lent" to the railway company, and was appointed to the Exeter Queen Street station in charge of the railway telegraphic communication at that office. The post carried with it a supervision over other offices in connection with the signalling of telegrams. About two years later Mr. Lusty was transferred to Poole, and subsequently



MR. J. W. S. LUSTY.

to a newly opened branch office of the Electric Company at High Street, Portsmouth. It was at this time (during the reign of Napoleon III.) that the French Fleet visited Spithead, and that event gave rise to a very considerable amount of telegraphic business at the newly opened office, which happened to be in close proximity to the temporary buildings erected for the reception of the French naval officers. The manner in which the work was carried out elicited gratifying encomiums, amongst others from the French Consul. About a year later a reappointment at Exeter, arising out of a special qualification for dealing with certain important details of railway business, led to Mr. Lusty being reinstated at the Queen Street Railway Office.

On the transfer of the Telegraphs to the Post Office in February, 1870, Mr. Lusty was appointed Assistant Telegraph Superintendent at the Exeter Office, and now takes the position of Superintendent, which was vacated by Mr. Denmead upon the appointment of the latter as Postmaster of Watford, Herts.

The Queen's Telegraphist.

MR. GEORGE WARREN, who died at East Cowes last April, was not the least important member of Her Majesty's Household. Although most of his work was done behind the scenes, so to speak, he was the means of keeping Her Majesty in touch with the outer world, whether she was in residence at Windsor, Buckingham Palace, Osborne, or Balmoral. Mr. Warren was born at Wareham, Dorsetshire, in June, 1838, and entered the service of the late Electric and International Telegraph Company in May, 1855, or more than forty years ago. His first connection with the Court was in 1861, and he was appointed "Court Telegraphist" on July 30th, 1862. That he was highly respected not only by Her Majesty, but by the members of the Royal Household, was evident from the sympathy shown to his family during his long and painful illness, and by the imposing array of mourners at his funeral. The



MR. G. WARREN.

Queen not only made inquiries as to his condition from time to time, but sent him a sympathetic letter as well as flowers from Nice; and Her Majesty was represented at the funeral, which took place at Whippingham, by Colonel the Hon. H. W. J. Byng. Other mourners were: Mr. A. Blake, Her Majesty's land steward at Osborne; Staff-Captain Goldsmith, R.N., Royal Yacht "Alberta"; Dr. W. Hoffmeister, surgeon to the Household at Osborne; A. F. W. Lloyd, clerk-comptroller, Her Majesty's Household; and G. Woodford, of the Lord Chamberlain's Department. The Post Office was represented by Mr. H. Mitt, Postmaster of Cowes, and Mr. A. V. Tubb, the veteran Superintendent of Telegraphs at Southampton, who was accompanied by Mr. J. T. Edney, assistant Superintendent. The funeral service was conducted by the Queen's Chaplain, and the wreaths were very numerous, including one from Her Majesty, composed of bay and white immortelles, and labelled "A token of regard from R.I." There were others from the Princess Louise's Household,

Dr. and Mrs. Hoffmeister, the Telegraph Staff at Southampton, the Postmaster and Staff at Cowes, and "Friends at the Central Telegraph Office, London." Mr. Warren is survived by an only daughter, who has been doubly bereaved within a few months, her mother having pre-deceased her father by only a very short time. The Royal sympathy, we may be sure, will not be wanting to her, any more than it was to her respected father, who spent the long period of thirty-five years in Her Majesty's service. I have an imperfect recollection of seeing Mr. Warren at Balmoral, some twenty-five years ago, when on an official visit to Sir Henry Ponsonby; but I can hardly say that I enjoyed the privilege of his acquaintance. He is succeeded by Mr. John Malcolm Haley, of the Windsor Postal Telegraph Staff, who, I fancy, has assisted Mr. Warren at different times.

R. W. J.

A Post Office Family.

THE resignation of Miss E. Thomson as Postmistress of Forfar severs a family connection in the service of the public which is of its kind unique. For nearly a century the charge of the Forfar Post Office has been vested in the Thomson family, the post descending from grandfather to father, and from father to daughter, thus forming a complete link in the past, and keeping alive many interesting reminiscences of postal life in the olden days. The date of the appointment of Mr. John Thomson, senior, as Postmaster is not definitely known, but it must have occurred towards the end of last century. At that time the Forfar Post Office was situated at No. 66, East High Street, and here Mr. Thomson carried on the combined business of grocer and postmaster. Letters were few and far between in those days, and in the present era of the ubiquitous newspaper it seems impossible to realise that for a time in the beginning of the century only one newspaper, and that a weekly or bi-weekly, came to Forfar, four gentlemen—the late Provost Webster, Mr. Hunter (Town Clerk), Mr. Butchart, and the postmaster himself—having joined in subscribing for it. On the days when the newspaper was received the Post Office was for the time converted into a reading-room.

The late Mr. John Thomson succeeded his father in the Post-mastership in 1832, his duties being wholly confined to the work of the Post Office. He lived to the great age of eighty-seven, and saw many changes in the service, which, in his opinion, amounted to revolutions. The introduction of the telegraph was a sore point with him, as with many old-fashioned postmasters. His heart was in the mail bags, and he would not infrequently call his assistants to leave "thae instruments," and come and assist with the letters. During his long service of forty-five years he was only twice absent, notwithstanding that he often worked as many as seventeen hours a day, and on occasions had been on duty during a whole round of the clock. Mr. Thomson used to speak of a great snowstorm, when the railway was blocked between Laurencekirk and Stonehaven.

Train after train was sent north, and one after the other stuck fast. Mr. Thomson made his usual despatches in the trains, and the time speedily came when he was run out of mail bags owing to the number stuck between Forfar and Aberdeen. No deliveries were being made, and, as a consequence, a number of impromptu bags had to be provided. Nineteen years ago Mr. Thomson resigned, and was succeeded by his daughter, Miss E. Thomson, who for a long time had acted as assistant to her father. Mr. Thomson, however, was so thoroughly bound up with the work of the Post Office that he continued to daily visit the office, and anyone not in the secret would have imagined that he was still in charge.

Post Office Lecturers.

MR. T. E. PENGELEY'S illustrated lecture, "The Post Office, its History and Humour," has been more than once referred to in these columns. We are glad to see from reports in the local press that Mr. Pengeley is as active as ever in his efforts to popularize Post Office history. His last two lectures, given at Tiverton and Bampton during March and April, were in all respects successful. He believes, and rightly believes, that a good magic lantern is the most powerful auxiliary a lecturer can have. The list, now lying before us, of Mr. Pengeley's 130 slides, proves very conclusively that if his survey of the postal world does not extend exactly from China to Peru, it at all events reaches from Japan to the Argentine. Here are a few of the titles taken at random:—"A Persian Postal Carriage," "A Japanese Postman," "The Camel Post (Egypt)," "The La Plata Post Office," "A Zulu Postman," "A Prairie Coach." A few months ago we had the pleasure of reading the lecture and found it full of good things. We take it that Mr. Pengeley is wise in his generation. The deafest man in his audience is interested by the pictures, the blindest by the spoken words, the normal man by both.

* * *

ON the 31st March last, Mr. Campbell, the Postmaster of Haddington, gave a lecture at the St. John's Guild, Haddington, on "The Post Office." The Rev. Mr. Dempster presided, and we understand the lecture was much appreciated by the audience, Mr. Campbell enlivening the proceedings considerably with a choice selection of official anecdotes.

Our Danish and Dutch Colleagues.*

PERHAPS because the summer season of cruising in Northern Seas is upon us, do we remember at least one thing which we have left undone, and that is to acknowledge the courtesy with which Mr. S. Thomsen of Odense has again sent us the current number of the Danish Post Office Year Book. We are equally indebted to his

* *Aarboeg for det Danske Postvæsen.* S. Thomsen, Odense, 1896.

Jaarboekje der Posterijen en Telegraphie. W. Huismann, Jr., Almeloo, 1896.

Dutch Colleague, Mr. W. Huisman, for the sister volume—the Dutch Post and Telegraph Year Book for 1896.

These books are unlike anything we have in this country, and the reason of it may be that to group together so many accurate and personal details of the staff employed in these islands would, it almost seems, fill a book varying something in size between Green's larger History and Kelly's Post Office Directory. For the minuteness of the details of age, service, etc., in both volumes is something marvellous, and to the drier facts are added copious draughts of literature not all drawn from official springs. Nor is the wine of poetry missing from these waters of literature, for we have a poem set to music by Henri J. Messink in Mr. Huisman's admirable book. Poems have appeared, as all know, in these pages before now, but we are not aware of any music having seen the light in *St. Martin's-le-Grand*. Perhaps the "New Postman," who, like the New Woman and the New Journalism, must be, as Captain Jinks was in the old story, "Somewhere about behind the scenes," will appear among us shortly—musical, artistic, scientific, poetic, historical, and yet official. And while we wait his coming we may be content to point to the two volumes before us and, laying our hands on our hearts, say without the slightest admixture of envy in our tones, "They do these things much better in the land of the Dutch and the Dane."

"The Story of a Piece of Coal." *

THE enterprising firm of publishers, *George Newnes, Limited*, are publishing a series entitled "The Library of Useful Stories," and their object is to give the latest results of scientific research in such a way as to attract the general reader. The little manuals are concise, handy in size, readable, and cheap, and some of the best known men of science of the day have been employed to write them. For instance, Mr. Grant Allen tells *The Story of the Plants*; Mr. Edward Clodd tells *The Story of Primitive Man*; Mr. George F. Chambers tells *The Story of the Stars*, and *The Story of the Solar System*; and in the little book before us, Mr. Edward A. Martin, F.G.S., who is an officer of the Post Office and an old contributor to *Blackfriars*, as well as the author of books entitled *Glimpses into Nature's Secrets* and *Amidst Nature's Realms*, has told *The Story of a Piece of Coal*. Not the least attractive feature of the work are the illustrations, while "the story" itself is not overburdened with technical terms which so often render manuals of this kind distasteful to the general reader. There is a most interesting chapter on "The Coal Supplies of the World," and it is comforting to know "that in North America, in Prussia, in China and elsewhere, there are tremendous supplies of coal as yet untouched." Nobody who is fond of his fireside should be without the book.

* *The Story of a Piece of Coal: what it is, whence it comes, and whither it goes*, by Edward A. Martin, F.G.S., author of *Amidst Nature's Realms*, &c. Price 1s. London: George Newnes, Limited.

Mr. Cobb's Working Parties.

THE Editor has received a letter from Mr. Cobb, in which he says, "It was certain that as the summer drew nearer our working parties at the British Institute must grow smaller. The last gathering took place early in May, the lady who acted as Superintendent being unable to give her services any longer. I am sorry she will not allow me to give her name and publicly thank her for her great help. She tells me that nearly 500 garments were made and were sent into Asia Minor, and there is good reason to believe that they reached their destination. Those thoughtful readers of *St. Martin's* who sent me money through you, amounting to £4 5s., have my sincere thanks, and I wish there were more of them, for we spent every penny of the money." Mr. Cobb goes on to say that "the falling off in the subscriptions to the Relief Fund is sorely perplexing the Committee here. The cry of the children for bread comes from hundreds of ruined villages and towns, and soon there will be no answer to give, although fivepence would keep a family alive for a week."

The subscriptions received and forwarded to Mr. Cobb were from Miss Stewart, Miss Bedford, Mrs. Bedford, Mr. J. C. Palmer, Mr. Sydney Beckley, Mr. A. Blackmore, Mr. Rumsey, Mr. F. J. Frost, Mrs. F. J. Frost, Mr. F. G. Johns, Mrs. F. G. Johns, Mr. E. H. J. Frost, Mrs. E. H. J. Frost, Mrs. Hawkins, Mr. J. Pelham.

Answers to Correspondents.

CAPE COLONY. E.E.H.—Many thanks for your letter, from which we venture to clip the following:—"Mr. Duff, our Secretary, has just resumed duty after several months absence owing to a painful eye complaint. He has now almost recovered his sight, and is being congratulated on all hands. He is the popular commanding officer of the Cape Town Highlanders, and it did the eyes of the local Scotties good to see him once more in regimentals, leading his gallant kilted ones in the march past at the Queen's Birthday review."

* * *

CAPE COLONY. A. W. Paradise.—Your letter has been mislaid. We read it with great interest and shall be glad to hear from you again. As regards the team of zebras, which were shown in our October number at p. 481, we have excellent authority for saying that such a team *was* actually tried for a short time between Pretoria and Tuli. The experiment was not a success. Why not write down some of your postal experiences in Mashonaland and send them to the Magazine?

* * *

B. K. AND OTHERS.—We shall continue to insert portraits of officials from time to time; but pressure of other matter has prevented us publishing some of those at present in our hands.

AN INDIGNANT IRISHMAN writes:—"At page 170 of your April issue, in an article upon Epitaphs, you have put into the mouth of Dr. Lucas words uttered by the great Robert Emmet in a speech before his execution in 1803. Turn to page 455 of Madden's *The United Irishmen, their lives and times*, and you will read there Emmet's noble words:—"Let no man write my epitaph.....When my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, then, and not till then, let my epitaph be written."

Gently, gently, good friend; we fancy you must be wrong. Have not great minds been known to think alike before now? Then why not Dr. Lucas and Robert Emmet? Anyhow, we echo the sentiments of our Irish friend that "truth will out," and perhaps some other Irishman can say where the truth happens to be in this particular instance.

Odds and Ends.

THERE are sometimes bits of unconscious humour to be found in the Post Office Circular. Here is an instance. "On and after the 1st April, Sark, Guernsey, will become a Railway Sub-office, and be known as Sark, R.S.O. (Channel Islands)."

* * *

HE Stoops to Conquer.—The following letter received in the Department tells its own tale:—"In reply, I beg to state that the reason why the name of Noah is omitted in the marriage certificate is that my husband so disliked the name, and thinking that, perhaps, I might object to it, he only signed the register as John Smith, and did not tell me of the other name until some time after we were married. No doubt you will think this a simple reason, but it is the true one.

"I am, yours respectfully,

"MARY SMITH."

* * *

PERHAPS the person with whom "flats" are the least popular is the postman. Why should we not do what the people of Florence do? The following is an extract from a private letter, dated 9th April, 1896:—"In these high houses the people let baskets down from their windows for the letters, as the postman does not go up to each floor. He rings the door bell, which for each story is at the entrance."

* * *

IS it possible for a postmaster to be a matrimonial agent?" was the question asked by Lord Tweedmouth of Mr. Joyce at one of the meetings of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Post Office establishments. "Yes," replied Mr. Joyce; "it is not only possible,

but it is so. We interfere with the liberty of postmasters as little as possible, but we have certain prohibited positions—those which we hold to be thoroughly objectionable, and a matrimonial agent is not one of them. One of the postmen in the North, a most interesting gentleman, has acted as matrimonial agent to a large extent. He produced a book a short time ago showing 200 marriages which he had taken part in celebrating.”

* * *

“THE issue of an Imperial edict establishing a National Postal Service for China under Sir Robert Hart, announced this morning,” says the *Westminster Gazette* of the 28th March, “is a most important step for that laggard among the nations. Hitherto there has been no Post Office Department in China. The Government sent its despatches by means of couriers, and commercial enterprise had to be content with a system of local posts entirely independent of the State.* Certain shops and agencies received letters, and, according to one authority, it largely depended on the sum paid and the distance to be covered whether the missives ever reached their destination. The new state of things will change all that. It will, of course, be cordially welcomed by the mercantile community, and cannot fail to have a most beneficial effect on outside relations with China generally. The fact that Sir Robert Hart has the matter in hand is a sufficient guarantee that it will be established on a sound basis. China owes more to Sir Robert than to any man. Will he have the good fortune, we wonder, to crown his life's service by a network of railways across the vast plains of the many-millioned Empire?”

* * *

WE take the following from the *Blackpool Times*:—“A Post Office story has appeared in *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, recording how a clerk at Lytham did his duty. The Postmaster of Lytham was on holiday, and a north countryman took up temporary work at the Ribble resort. One day a lady and gentleman entered the office, and the lady handed in a telegram. The clerk handed over the stamp to be affixed. The lady inquired why it was she was required to affix the stamp, and the clerk, with the courage of a Washington, replied: ‘It is the command of the Postmaster-General.’ ‘There is the Postmaster-General,’ replied the lady, looking at the gentleman who accompanied her. The postal journal explains how pleased the clerk was that he had done his duty so nobly. The personage was the Duke of Norfolk, who is a pretty frequent visitor to Warton Hall, the residence of Mr. A. Wykeham Clifton. But an amusing part of the incident has not yet been told. The Duke took the telegram and stamp and asked for the pad which the regulations require shall always be on the counter. The pad had somehow found its way under the counter, and was as dry as

* See *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, Vol. IV., p. 328.

tinder! His Grace declared that the pad should always be on the counter. Enter the post-office at any time now, and you find an extra-sized damper always at hand."

* * *

MR. J. C. LAMB, C.B., C.M.G., Mr. H. C. Fischer, C.M.G., and Mr. P. Benton represented the Government of this country at the International Telegraph Conference which met at Budapest on the 16th of June. These delegates also represented the Cape Colony and Natal. Mr. R. J. Mackay, of the Secretary's Office, acted as secretary to the delegation.

* * *

SCHMETTERLINGSPUPPEN. — The following lines were found with the official papers about an enquiry whether the chrysalides of butterflies could be sent by post to this country:—

“And many an antenatal tomb,
Where butterflies dream of the life to come,
Was sent in a box from coast to coast
Across the sea by the Parcel Post.”

We understand that the highest living authority attributes them to Shelley.

* * *

GERMANY.—It is announced in the *Reichsanzeiger*, of the 18th of May, that in the supplementary Budget, approved by the Bundesrath for submission to the Reichstag, provision is made for a grant for the Post Office, amounting to 1,288,000 marks (£64,000), for the establishment of a new (fourth) cable between England and Germany.

Promotions.

LONDON.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Secretary's O.	Lamb, J. C., C.B., C.M.G.	Third Secretary ...	S.O., '64; R.A.G.O., '64; S.O., '70; Asst. Sec., '89
" "	Yeld, E. ...	Asst. " ...	Sur. Sta. Clk., '59; M.O.O., '63; S.O., '64; Prin. Clk., '86
" "	Bundy, C. H. ...	Prin. Clk. ...	S.B., '64; C.D., '65; S.O., '70; Prin. Clk., Lr. Sec., '92
" "	Chambers, J. ...	1st Cl. Clk. ...	1879; 2nd Cl., '83
(Intel. Bch.)	Chisham, F. T.W.	News Distributor ...	Cn. & Tel., N., '89
" "	Grafton, F. ...	" " "	2nd Cl. Tel., Edin., '92
Surveyor's O.	Green, J. ...	Head Sta. Clk. ...	Tel., Northampton, '80; S.C., Wolverhampton, '88; 1st Cl., '91; Asst. Head Sta. Clk., '93
" "	Hayes, T. ...	Asst. Head Sta. Clk.	S.C. & T., Bedford, '85; 2nd Cl. S.C., Notting- ham, '91; Sta. Clk., '93
" "	Calvert, A. G. ...	" "	S.C., N'castle-on-Tyne, '82; 1st Cl., '90; Sta. Clk., '93
" "	Brown, W. H. ...	Stationary Clk. ...	Tredegar, '84; S.C. & T., St. Ives, '87; Lowes- toft, '92
" "	Cabeldu, W. J. ...	" "	S.C. & T., Jersey, '91
" "	Noble, R. H. ...	" "	S.C., Ipswich, '89; S.C. & T., Loughboro', '92; S.C., Leicester, '92
R. & A.G.O. ...	Potter, C. W. ...	Cashier ...	A.G.O., '54; Prin. Clk., '85; Acct., '92
" ...	Miller, W. H. ...	Accountant ...	M.O.O., '67; R.A.G.O., '72; 1st Cl. Clk., '85; Asst. Acct., '92
" ...	Home, F. W. ...	" ...	1870; 2nd Cl. Clk., '85; Asst. Acct., '92
" ...	Hughes, R. B. ...	Asst. Accountant ...	S.B., '68; R.A.G.O., '72; 1st Cl. Clk., '92; Examr., '92
" ...	Maclean, L. W. B.	" "	S.B., '70; R.A.G.O., '72; 1st Cl. Clk., '92; Examr., '92
" ...	Farmer, A. ...	Examr. ...	1870; Hr. Grade, 2nd Div., '90
" ...	Wilson, J. C. ...	" ...	1871; Hr. Grade, 2nd Div., '90
" ...	Martin, C. T. M.	" ...	1872; Hr. Grade, 2nd Div., '91
" ...	King, L. G. ...	" ...	1870; Hr. Grade, 2nd Div., '90

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
R. & A.G.O. ...	Lee, G. F....	Examr.	S.B., '75; R.A.G.O., '76; 3rd Cl. Clk., '78; Hr. Grade, 2nd Div., '93
" ...	Yates, C. E. ...	"	1870; 3rd Cl. Clk., '75; Hr. Grade, 2nd Div., '91
" ...	Hill, R.	Hr. Grade, 2nd Div.	1882
" ...	Westell, A. E. ...	" "	Boy Clk., S.B., '80; Clk., Lr. Div., R.A.G.O., '82
" ...	Harrington, E. J.	" "	1882
" ...	Cook, F. C. ...	" "	Boy Clk., S.B., '83; Clk., Lr. Div., R.A.G.O., '85
C.T.O.	Gane, J. V. ...	Asst. Super.	1870; 2nd Cl. Asst. Super., '90
"	Cook, A.	"	1870; 2nd Cl. Asst. Super., '90
"	Covington, C. S..	" 2nd Cl.	E.T.Co., '70; Senr. Tel., '86
"	Sowman, T. W.	" "	1874; Senr. Tel., '86
"	Lamb, W. A. ...	Sen. Tel.	1875; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Kemp, R. E. ...	"	1875; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
"	Whittingham, J..	1st Cl. Tel.	1883
"	Brown, T. W. ...	"	1883
"	Miss K. E. Dolby	Asst. Super.	1870; 1st Cl. Tel., '81
"	" M. A. Bot- cherby	"	1871; 1st Cl. Tel., '81
"	Miss C. A. Red- man	1st Cl. Tel.	1884
"	Miss J.E.Cameron	"	1884
"	" E. M. House	"	1884
"	" E.R.Donally	"	1884
E. in C.O. ...	Botham, A. ...	2nd Cl. Engr. ...	Ex. Royal Engr.; Jnr. Clk., E. in C.O., '89
" ...	Stevenson, J.T.B.	Draughtsman and Shorthand Writer	Boy Copyist, '81; Copy- ist, E. in C.O., '88; Asst. Clk., '93
" ...	Fisher, H....	Draughtsman and Shorthand Writer	E. in C.O., '91; Tel., C.T.O., '93
L.P.S.D. (Contr's. Off.)	Carew, J. E. T. O'M.	Ch. Super.	1866; Contr.'s Off., '80; Asst. Super., '92
" "	Jones, F. J. ...	Asst. Super.	1868; 1st Cl. Clk., Cir. Off., '84
" "	Bolton, E. F. ...	2nd Cl. Clk.	Tel., 1871; Clk., C.O., L.P.S.D., '91
L.P.S.D. (Circn. Off.)	Walker, J. A. ...	1st Cl. Clk.	1875; R.A.G.O., '76; C.E.B., '85; C.O., L.P.S.D., '87
" "	Popkin, A. W. ...	1st Cl. Over....	1875; 1st Cl. Sr., '82
" "	Luxford, C. ...	"	1877; 1st Cl. Sr., '87
" "	Tong, W. S. ...	"	1861
" "	Forargue, J. T....	"	1872; 1st Cl. Sr., '79
E.C.D.O. ...	Gandon, H. ...	1st Cl. Cn. & Tel....	1886
" ...	Beddow, J. E. ...	"	1887
" ...	Williams, T. ...	"	Oxford, '73; Leeds, '82; 2nd Cl. Cn. & Tel., Lon., '87

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
E. D. O.	Blaver, H. S. ...	1st Cl. Over.	1871; 2nd Cl. Over., '88
"	Gilbreath, W. W.	2nd Cl. Over.	1877; 1st Cl. Sr., '90
Norwood... ..	Dann, W.	1st Cl. Over.	1873; 2nd Cl. Over., '88
"	Bedwell, T. C. ...	2nd Cl. Over.	1868; Head Postman, '92
"	Ball, W. J.	"	1876; Head Postman, '93
"	Horton, E.	"	1877; Head Postman, '94
S. W. D. O.	Miss A. L. Keene	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1886
"	" A. Kenshole	"	1886
Wandsworth	Dodson, T. W. G.	1st Cl. Over.	1870; Head Postman, '81; 2nd Cl. Over., '87
"	Jeffery, J.	2nd Cl. Over.	1882; 2nd Cl. Sr., '85; 1st Cl., '93.
N. W. D. O.	Hensen, G. W. ...	"	1881; 2nd Cl. Sr., '86; 1st Cl., '92

PROVINCES—ENGLAND and WALES.

Birmingham	Bowler, G.	1st Cl. S. C.	1883
"	Miss C. K. Sayer	Super. (T.)	S. C. & T., Wednesbury, '84; Tel., B'ham, '91; 1st Cl., '91
Bristol	Cooper, W. C. ...	1st Cl. S. C.	1885
Cardiff	Donne, E. L.	"	1887
Derby	Brown, A. E.	"	1882
Farnham	Trotman, A. J. ...	Clk.	S. C. & T., Winchester, '89; Farnham, '95
Liverpool	Clayton, A.	1st Cl. S. C.	M'chester., '81; L'pool., '86
"	Pritchard, F. T. .	1st Cl. Tel.	1884
"	Miss M. A. Connor	"	1884
"	" E. J. Owens	"	1887
Manchester	Woolley, W.	2nd Cl. Asst. Super. (T.)	U. K. T. Co., '64; Clk., '90
"	Wovenden, W. M.	Clk. (T.)	1871
"	Spooner, J.	1st Cl. Tel.	1882
"	Miss A. B. Cred- land	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	1876; 1st Cl. Tel., '83
"	Miss E. Cowell ...	1st Cl. Tel.	1885
Peterborough	Cornwell, J. W. .	1st Cl. S. C.	1882
"	Boyce, A.	"	1879; S. C., '82
"	Day, E. C.	1st Cl. Tel.	1871
"	Sillis, J.	"	1871
Stoke-on-Trent .	Churton, J.	"	1882
York	Smith, W.	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	E. T. Co., '63; Clk. (T.), '91
"	Waite, G. W.	Clk. (T.)	1876; 1st Cl. Tel., '95
"	Berry, W. H.	1st Cl. Tel.	Tel., Halifax, '77; Man- chester, '80; York, '83

SCOTLAND.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Aberdeen ...	Brown, W. ...	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	1874; Clk. (T.), '94
„ ...	Leiper, A. D. ...	Clk. (T.) ...	1875; 1st Cl., '83
„ ...	Smith, A. ...	1st Cl. Tel. ...	Tel., Glasgow, '82; Aberdeen, '84
Edinburgh ...	Campbell, H. N. M.	„ ...	1878; 2nd Cl. Tel., '83
Glasgow ...	McCredie, D. ...	„ ...	1884
„ ...	Miss G. L. Grant	„ ...	1885
„ ...	Miss M. J. McKenzie	„ ...	1886
Perth ...	MacIntosh, T. ...	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	E. T. Co., '67; Clk., '88
„ ...	Allan, D. ...	Clk. (T.) ...	1875

IRELAND.

Belfast ...	Orr, A. ...	Asst. Super. (P.) ...	1877; 1st Cl. S.C., '83; Clk., '91
„ ...	Arthur, E. D. ...	Clk. (P.) ...	1881; 1st Cl. S.C., '89
„ ...	Miss J. Long ...	1st Cl. Tel. ...	Chester, '82; Belfast, '83
„ ...	„ E. M. Christian	„ ...	1884
„ ...	„ M. Bingham	„ ...	1885
„ ...	„ M. McCullagh	„ ...	1887
„ ...	„ J. Kernahan	„ ...	1887
„ ...	„ R. Long ...	„ ...	1887
„ ...	„ E. A. M. Stratton	„ ...	1888
Cork ...	Dodds, G. ...	Clk. (T.) ...	1870
„ ...	Keogh, R. W. ...	„ ...	1870; 1st Cl. T., '85
Dublin (Sec.'s Off.) ...	Hancock, W. H.	Temp. Staff Asst.	Boy Clk., M.O.O., Lon., '85; Clk., Lr. Div., S.O., Dub., '87
„ (Acct.'s Off.)	Keawell, P. J. ...	Hr. Grade, 2nd Div.	S.B., '82; S.O., Dub., '86; Temp. Staff Asst., '95
„ (Sort. Off.)	Sanderson, C. C.	Super. (acting as Ch. Clk.)	S. C. & T., Sunderland, '81; Clk. Sortg. Off., Dub., '84; Asst. Super., '91; 1st Cl., '92
„ „	Forrest, F. J. ...	Asst. Super., 1st Cl.	1872; Over., '89; Asst. Super., '91
„ „	Wagner, W. H.	„ „	E. T. Co., '69; Clk., Londonderry, '83; Pmr., Killarney, '89
„ „	Dagge, J. ...	„ 2nd Cl.	1873; 1st Cl. Sr., '87; Over., '90; Clk., '91
„ „	Gilligan, W. ...	„ „	1881; 1st Cl. S. C., '89; Clk., '91
„ „	Cavendish, R. J.	Clk. ...	1859
„ „	Mansfield, J. ...	„ ...	1879; 1st Cl. S.C., '92
„ „	Thornton, M. J.	1st Cl. S.C. ...	1882
„ „	O'Gorman, P. ...	„ ...	1883

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Dublin (Sort. Off.)	Coyne, J. V. ...	Ist Cl. S.C. ...	1883
" "	Whelan, T. ...	" ...	1885
" "	Hadden, S. ...	" ...	1885
" "	Tierney, J. F. ...	" ...	1888
" "	Murphy, P. J. ...	" ...	1889
" "	Miss J. Phelan ...	Asst. Super. ...	1870
" "	" A. Phelan ...	" ...	1870
" "	" J. G. Graves ...	" ...	1870
" "	" M. M. Mac-Namara	Ist Cl. Tel. ...	Cork, '81 ; Dub., '85
" "	" I. C. Ronaldson	" ...	1887
" "	" K. M. Norris	" ...	1887
" "	" M. A. Brown	" ...	1888
" "	" M. E. Bran-nigan	" ...	1888
" "	" C. M. Brennan	" ...	1888
Killarney	Treacy, J. B. ...	Clk. ...	S.C. & T., '90
Waterford	Miss A. Farrell...	Ist Cl. Tel. ...	1885

Retirements.

LONDON.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
R. & A.G.O.	Mitford, J. ..	Cashier	R. A. G. O., '52; 2nd Cl. Clk., '54; 1st Cl., '65; Prin. Clk., '72; Cashier, '84
"	Wilson, J....	Accountant	R. A. G. O., '58; 1st Cl. Clk., '82; Prin. Clk., '92; Accountant, '92
"	Hooper, A. ...	2nd Cl. Clk.	M. O. O., '55; R. A. G. O., '60; S. B., '61; R. A. G. O., '72; 2nd Cl., '79
"	Berridge, C. ...	2nd Div. Clk.	1870; 3rd Cl., '75; 2nd Div. Clk., '90
"	Hawkins, C. S...	"	1870; 2nd Div., '90
"	Ibbett, W. J. ...	"	1875; 3rd Cl., '77; 2nd Div. Clk., '90
"	*Thomas, J. B. ...	Clk.	Late Sub. T. Co.; G. P. O., '89
"	Carpenter, C. G.	Jnr. Clk.	Elec. T. Co., '67
" (C.H.B.)	Miss F. de Renzi	Prin. Clk.	S. B., '75; R. A. G. O., '81; 1st Cl. '82; Prin. Clk., '86
" (P.O.B.)	Miss E. G. Nichols	1st Cl. Clk.	2nd Cl., '82; 1st Cl., '94
S.B....	Trenery, J. W...	"	1863; 2nd Cl., '73; 1st Cl., '83
"	*Miss R. S. G. Arundel	Clk.	1891
"	*Miss K. E. Faithfull	"	1894
R.L.O. ...	Miss C. K. Straker	Retr.	Cwn. & Tel., '84; Retr., '91
C.T.O. ...	Nye, W.	Asst. Super.	Mag. Tel. Co., '64; 1st Cl. Tel., '71; Senr. Tel., '74; Asst. Super., '80
"	Lemon, C.	"	E. & I. T. Co., '57; 1st Cl. Tel., '71; Senr. Tel., '77; Asst. Super., '89
"	*Edwards, T. ...	2nd Cl. Tel.	1893
"	*Wheaton, A. E...	"	1890
"	Miss M. A. Sanders	Super.	E. T. Co., '60; Asst. Super., '74; Super., '90
"	Miss H. Bloomfield	1st Cl. Tel.	1870; 1st Cl., '81
"	Miss J. Bond ...	"	1884; 1st Cl. '95
"	*" J. Watson...	2nd Cl. Tel.	1893
L.P.S.D. (Circn. Off.)	Charlton, S. ...	Over.	1855; Sr., '56; Over., '82
"	Pilgrim, W. ...	1st Cl. Sr.	1863; Sr., '67

* Awarded a Gratuity.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
L.P.S.D. (Circn. (Off.))	Macarthy, F. ...	1st Cl. Sr.	1872; Sr., '80
"	Pinfold, E. ...	"	1863; Sr., '67
"	Short, L. ...	2nd Cl. Sr.	1886
"	Hodder, E. A. ...	"	1866; Sr., '72
"	Lee, S. ...	"	1874; Sr., '89
"	*Raynsham, T. ...	"	1887
E.C.D.O.	Godfrey, F. ...	1st Cl. Cn. & Tel...	1873; 1st Cl. Cn. & Tel., '89
E.D.O. ...	Riches, I. C. ...	"	1876; 1st. Cl., '89
"	*Schutz, J. E. ...	2nd Cl. Cn. & Tel..	1890
W.C.D.O.	Glasscock, J. M..	1st Cl. Over....	1854; Sr., '73; 2nd Cl. O., '77; 1st Cl., '90
"	Plant, T. B. ...	2nd Cl. Over. ...	1882; 1st Cl. Sr., '92
"	Johnston, W. ...	"	1861; Sr., '67; Over., '74
Paddington	Miss E. Loch ...	2nd Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1871; 2nd Cl. Cwn. & Tel., '81
W.D.O. ...	Miss A. B. Pearce	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1883; 1st Cl., '92
N.W.D.O. ...	Hoddy, C. ...	1st Cl. Over....	1860; Over., '74
"	Miss T. Witchell.	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1874; 1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel., '88
"	James, W. J. ...	1st Cl. Sr.	1877; Sr., '82
S.E.D.O.	Mackenzie, F. ...	Insp.	1855; Over., '65; Insp., '76
"	Brattle, N. ...	1st Cl. Sr.	1858; Sr., '61
"	Miss E. Candy...	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	L. P. T. Co., '62; 1st Cl., 81
S.W.D.O. ...	Trickey, J. ...	1st Cl.	1861; Over., '74
Wandsworth	Royal, W. ...	1st Cl. Over.	1865; Over., '77
ENGLAND and WALES,			
Bradford (Yks.)	Hughes, A. ...	1st Cl. Tel.	1871; 1st. Cl. Tel., '86
"	Murphy, P. ...	2nd Cl. Tel.	1885
"	Tynan, J.	"	1886
Bristol ...	Morgan, A. E.	1st Cl. S.C.	1881
Cardiff ...	*Primmer, J. H. ...	2nd Cl. Tel.	1892
"	J. S.	"	"
"	*Thomas, D. ...	"	1887
Chatham ...	Broad, J. J. ...	S.C. & T.	Mag. Tel. Co., '53
Douglas, I. of M	*Bridson, T. H.	"	1887
Exeter ...	*Halse, E. J. ...	2nd Cl. S.C.	1887
Jersey ...	Gray, J. ...	Insp. of Postmen ...	1850; Insp. of Postmen, '92
Manchester ...	Abbot, T. D. ...	Asst. Super., 2nd Cl. (P.)	1859; Clk., '67; Asst. Super., '94
"	Smith, J. W. ...	1st Cl. Tel.	1873; 1st Cl. Tel., '90
"	Hough, T. M. ...	2nd Cl. Tel.	1885
"	*Miss M. A. A. Buckley	"	1891
N'castle-on-T.	Carr, J. W. ...	1st Cl. Tel.	E. T. Co., '68; 1st Cl. Tel., '81
Normanton ...	Clarke, W. ...	Pmr.	Clk., Farnboro', '58; Newbury, '72; K.-on-Thames, '77; Pmr., Bletchley Station, '82; Normanton, '92

* Awarded a Gratuity.

RETIREMENTS.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Portarl ngton ...	Murdoch, J. ...	S.C. & T.	Mag. Tel. Co., '67 ; G.P.O., '70
Plymouth ...	Foot, J. H. ...	1st Class Tel. ...	1871 ; 1st Cl. Tel., '86
Shrewsbury ...	Lockley, G. ...	Ch. Clk....	S.C., '68 ; Asst. Super., '91 ; Ch. Clk., '94
Stafford	Palmer, C. E. ...	Pmr.	1855 ; S.O., '77 ; Pmr., Gravesend, '85 ; Staf- ford, '91
Stoke-on-Trent.	Bowman, W. B.	2nd Cl. S.C.	1862 ; S.C., '81
Thirsk	*Jaques, C. E. ...	S.C. & T.	1891
Walsall	Jones, E.	Ch. Clk....	1856 ; Ch. Clk., '86
Windermere ...	Garnett, J.	Pmr.	1849

SCOTLAND.

Aberdeen ...	Morrison, J. ...	Asst. Super. (P.) ...	1874 ; Clk., '91 ; Asst. Super., '93
Dundee	Miller, R. R. ...	2nd Cl. Tel.	1883
Dunfermline ...	Burt, A.	Pmr.	S.C., Stirling, '72 ; Clk., '75 ; Pmr., Dunferm- line, '91
Edinburgh ... (Acct.'s Off.)	*Ross, A. J. ...	Tracer, 2nd Cl. ...	1890
Glasgow	*Sinclair, N.D. ...	2nd Cl. S.C.... ...	1893
„	Laing, J.	1st Cl. Tel.	1871 ; 1st Cl. Tel., '82

IRELAND.

Dublin (Sec.'s Off.)	*Palmer, J. W. ...	2nd Cl. Paper Keeper	1881 ; Paper Keeper, '94
„ (Tel. Off.)	Hayes, T. ...	Asst. Super., 2nd Cl. (T.)	M. T. Co., '59 ; 1st Cl. Tel., '77 ; Clk., 84 ; Asst. Super. 2nd Cl., '91
„ (Sortg. Off.)	Farmer, P. ...	1st Cl. S.C.	1860 ; Sr., '73 ; 1st Cl. S.C., '90
„	Eastwood, W. ...	„	1857 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '81
„	Harris, W. ...	„	1863 ; 1st Cl. Sr., '74
Cork	Thompson, P. ...	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	M. T. Co., '60 ; Cork, '72 ; Clk., '85 ; Asst. Super., '91

* Awarded a Gratuity.

Deaths.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
E. in C.O. ...	Adamson, E. W.	Relay Clk. (Lr. Sec.)	Late Submarine Tel. Co., G.P.O., '89
C.T.O.	Newing, A. F. J.	Senior Tel.	Late Submarine Tel. Co., G.P.O., '89; 1st Cl. Tel., '90
L.P.S.D. (Contr.'s Off.)	McDonnell, F....	Ch. Super.	1868; M.L.B., '73; Asst. Super., C.O., '89; Ch. Super., '92
Birmingham ...	Bennett, J. A. ...	1st Cl. Tel.	E. T. Co., 62; 1st Cl. Tel., '84
Cardiff	Jones, W.	1st Cl. S.C.	1885; 1st Cl. '92
Croydon	Wakerell, A. ...	S.C. & T.	1893
Dawlish	Jaquet, C.	Pmr.	Copyist, '77; Asst. Clk., S.O., '93; Pmr., Bran- don, '94; Dawlish, '95
Derby	Perkins, E.	1st Cl. S.C.	1877; 1st Cl. '93
Liverpool	Davies, R.	1st Cl. Tel.	Mag. Tel. Co., '63
„	Ball, C. H.	1st Cl. S.C.	1881; 1st Cl., '87
„	Hordern, J. B....	2nd Cl. Tel.	1885
„	Canty, P. H.	„	Ex Royal Engr.; Liver- pool, '95
Manchester ...	Flinn, T.	1st Cl. Tel.	Mag. Tel. Co., '62
N'castle-on-T. .	Robson, S.	2nd Cl. Tel.	1889
Slough	Leaver, A. E. E..	S.C. & T.	1886
Winslow	Winford, C.	Pmr.	1877
Edinburgh ...	Forbes, W.	2nd Cl. S.C.	1882; S.C., '88
Oban	Miss I. M. Rowan	S.C. & T.	1892
Sligo	Phillips, M. W. .	Pmr.	1869

Postmasters Appointed.

OFFICE.	NAME.	PREVIOUS APPOINTMENT.
Brierley Hill	Stevens, T.	Asst. Super. (P.), Stafford
Congleton	Hooper, T. E.	S.C. & T., Taunton
Dawlish	Reed, W. H.	Pmr., Ottery St. Mary
Hayward's Heath	Warriner, F. M.	1st Cl. S.C., Manchester
Holbeach	Mrs. R. K. Jaquet.	
Lostwithiel	Miss H. Williams...	Sub-Pmr., Stoke St. Gregory, Taunton
Morpeth	Johnston, J.	Pmr., Newton Stewart
Nantwich	Mynett, G. C.	Pmr., Shaftesbury
Ottery St. Mary... ..	Mrs. E. Hart	
Royston	Carter, J. W.	Clk., Coventry
St. Austell, Fowey, S.O.	Miss G. M. Gould.	
Settle	Hook, J. L.	S.C. & T., Settle
Shaftesbury	Haddy, C.	Pmr., Lostwithiel
Huntly	Jamieson, L.	Pmr., Inch
Newton Stewart	Hunter, J.	Pmr., Bathgate
Sligo	Keefe, T.	1st Cl. Tel., Limerick

ABBREVIATIONS.

Asst., Assistant; Ch., Chief; Clk., Clerk; Cn., Counterman; Cwn., Counterwoman; Engr., Engineer; Examr., Examiner; Insp., Inspector; Jnr., Junior; Over., Overseer; P., Postal; Prin., Principal; Pmr., Postmaster; Retr., Returner; Sr., Sorter; S.C., Sorting Clerk; S.C. & T., Sorting-Clk. and Telegraphist; Super., Superintendent or Supervisor; Sur., Surveyor; T., Telegraphist; Tel., Telegraphist.

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M. DE SZALAY

*(Director-President of Posts, Telegraphs, and Telephones of Hungary),
President of the Telegraph Conference.*

ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND.

OCTOBER, 1896.

*International Telegraph Conference at Budapest.**



FEW weeks ago, during the sitting of the Trades' Union Congress, the evening journals, being for the moment short of Presidential Messages or Jameson Raids, sought to create a mild thrill by the announcement, in letters a foot long, of DELEGATES ENJOYING THEMSELVES; and there are Philistines who aver that Telegraph Conferences are little more than an excuse for a pleasant holiday. The element of enjoyment indeed was by no means lacking at Budapest, but the intervals of leisure were bought with long spells of arduous work. That the work of the delegates can never be a holiday task, is obvious enough when it is considered that they are called upon at each Conference to regulate the international telegraphs of the world for the succeeding five years.

The International Telegraphic Union now includes almost all the large, and the majority of the smaller, countries of the world. The Union was founded in 1865. The United Kingdom gave its adhesion on the acquisition of the Telegraphs by the State in 1870. By that time the Union comprised practically the whole of Europe; and, of extra-European countries, British India had already joined. Cape Colony, Natal, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and New Zealand subsequently became members, and Queensland and Ceylon have joined in the present year. Canada, however, still holds aloof. The absence of the United States, so prominent a member of the Postal Union, is due to the fact that in that country the Telegraphs are not in the hands of the

* The illustrations are from photographs taken by Mr. Luke, Delegate of British India, and Mr. Mackay, Secretary of the British Delegation.

Government. The only other important country which is still outside the Union is China. Japan has been a member for several years. Persistent efforts have been made by Great Britain and other powers to induce China to join, but, after ten years, the only result has been the translation of the Convention into Chinese by order of the Tsung-Li-Yamen. It is understood, however, from a hint given by a member of the staff of Li Hung Chang, during his recent visit to England, that China, which already possesses a system of international Telegraphs, will now take her place among the other nations as a member of the Telegraph Union.

The position of Great Britain in the Union is one of special responsibility. Not only are the people of this country largely interested in foreign, and especially extra-European, telegraphy, but the cable companies of the world are mostly British. Of the twenty-six companies represented at the Conference, twenty-one (including the Eastern, the Eastern Extension, the Indo-European, the Anglo-American, the Direct United States, the Brazilian Submarine, the Western and Brazilian, and the West India and Panama) were British, three were American, one Danish, and one French. The Union is one of States, so that the cable companies, important as is their part in international telegraphy, cannot be members. They attend the Conference and join in the discussions, but they do not enjoy the right of voting. The settlement of all questions, whether of regulations or of tariffs, so far as the latter are dealt with by the Conference, rests with the Government delegates; and the Companies may find their interests seriously affected by decisions in which they have no part. The Conference, as a whole, is usually very considerate to the Companies, but if their legitimate interests are attacked, the duty of defending them devolves very largely on the representatives of the State to which they belong.

The Conference of Budapest would in the ordinary course have taken place in 1895, but it was postponed in order to coincide with the Millenary celebration. It was the eighth in succession, the previous Conferences having been held in Paris in 1865, Vienna in 1868, Rome in 1871, St. Petersburg in 1875, London in 1879, Berlin in 1885, and again in Paris in 1890. The next Conference will take place in 1901, and London has, for the second time, been selected as the place of meeting.

The representatives of the United Kingdom were Mr. J. C. Lamb, C.B., C.M.G., Third Secretary of the Post Office, Mr. H. C. Fischer, C.M.G., Controller of the Central Telegraph Office, and

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P. BENTON.

THE BRITISH DELEGATES

Mr. P. Benton, Assistant Receiver and Accountant-General, with Mr. Mackay, of the Secretary's Office, as Secretary. The delegates of British India were Mr. Luke, Deputy Director-General of Indian Telegraphs, and Mr. Finch, Director-in-Chief of the Indo-European (Persian Gulf) Telegraph Department of the Indian Government. The Australian Colonies, with the exception of New Zealand, were represented by their Agents-General. New Zealand, Cape Colony, and Natal were represented by the British Delegation.

Mr. Lamb was appointed President of the Commission des Tarifs, the Commission du Règlement being presided over by Herr Fritsch, the senior delegate of Germany, and the Commission de Rédaction by M. Raymond, the senior delegate of France, while the president of the whole Conference was M. de Szalay, the head of the Hungarian Administration. Mr. Fischer and Mr. Benton had also, in addition to their ordinary work as delegates, various special duties to perform, the former in his capacity as Doyen of the Conference, the latter as member of a Sous-Commission appointed to deal with the question of the equivalent of the franc in local currency. Mr. Fischer's position as Doyen was the result of experience extending so far back as the Conference of St. Petersburg in 1875, the recent Conference being the fifth which he has attended.

It would be travelling outside the scope of this article to describe the work of the Conference in detail. Numerous minor alterations have been made in the interests at once of the service and of the public; but the space at my disposal will only admit of a reference to some of the more important questions. These were: The Official Vocabulary for Code Telegrams, the Equivalent of the Franc in Local Currency, the German Project of a "Uniform Tariff" in Europe, and the Concessions made by the Cable Companies in favour of the Public.

So far as the public were concerned, the interest centred in the question of the Official Vocabulary. That unlucky compilation was certainly not so black as it was painted. Its object, at all events, was beyond reproach. That the existing freedom of choice lends itself to abuse, is obvious when we consider the number of languages from which words entitled to pass as "code" may be taken. In this imperfect world, counter clerks who possess an intimate knowledge of English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and Latin, are not numerous; and Mezzofanti himself might have shrunk from the task of checking many of the words which the ingenuity of the codemaker has brought to light. The codemaker's knowledge of

recondite Mediæval Latin would do credit to Ducange himself, and there is a temptation to go a step further and actually manufacture words in a systematic manner. For example, codes have frequently been compiled by taking a number of Latin roots, and adding, with sublime disregard of Dr. Smith, the terminations of all the declensions and all the conjugations. In presence of such difficulties it is not surprising that the Paris Conference sought to cut the Gordian knot by deciding in favour of the compilation of an official list from which there could be no appeal.

But the Vocabulary did not even get credit for good intentions. Chambers of Commerce united with codemakers in condemning it root and branch. A stream of memorials poured into St. Martin's-le-Grand from all parts of the United Kingdom and of the British Empire, to protest against its use being made compulsory. The reasons were various, and sometimes contradictory, but all agreed that the Vocabulary reflected little credit on the International Bureau. It was both incorrect and insufficient. "Why," exclaimed one firm indignantly, "it only contains 260,000 words!"

The complaints were often exaggerated and sometimes groundless. The Vocabulary was described as "a work of apprentices," as "a worthless foreign compilation," and as a publication "which the Swiss Office were endeavouring to foist on Great Britain." The objectors challenged, as fictitious, words taken from the recognised dictionaries, a list of which was furnished in the preface to the Vocabulary. English critics demanded the suppression of legitimate Dutch or German words on no other ground than that they appeared to persons unacquainted with those languages barbarous in spelling or pronunciation, words in the Romance languages being similarly attacked by Germans or Dutchmen. In certain cases complaint was made of undue similarity, where, in point of fact, there was a difference of no less than four letters and five elementary Morse signs, or of three letters and seven signs; and exception was taken to words in every way suitable, merely on the ground that, if read in their natural sense instead of in the sense agreed upon in the Code, they might give rise to confusion. For example, "marvel" was objected to as a personal name, and "afternoon" as a commercial term. Some critics went so far as to challenge words like "piassava," on the ground that they represented articles of commerce, an objection which, at one sweep, would exclude the name of every article capable of being bought and sold. But amidst all this, one thing was clear: the Vocabulary only accomplished its object of preventing

abuse at the cost of injury to legitimate commercial interests. It seriously curtailed the number of words which the merchant had to choose from, without giving him any security that the words in the collection had a sufficient telegraphic and typographic dissimilarity. Many of the words were, in point of fact, dangerously alike; but the unsuccessful attempt to secure dissimilarity had led to the exclusion of many words, suitable in themselves, on account of their resemblance to words in other languages; English words, for example, being set aside in favour of similar words in French, or German, or Dutch. Not only would the exclusion of English words be prejudicial to the interests of British and Colonial merchants, but it would, at the same time, be detrimental to the service of the Cable Companies, whose staff, composed as it is chiefly of English-speaking telegraphists, naturally find English words the easiest to transmit.

It was evident that if the British Delegation came home without obtaining a satisfactory settlement of this question, St. Martin's-le-Grand would be carried by assault. But when we arrived at Budapest, the prospect was anything but encouraging. We knew that in her attitude of opposition to the Vocabulary Great Britain would be supported by British India and the Australian colonies; but it was impossible to reckon on the support of any other Administrations. While Great Britain proposed to rescind the resolution of the Paris Conference, under which the use of the Vocabulary would have become compulsory for European telegrams from the 1st January, 1898, France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Japan were in favour of extending it to extra-European telegrams. The errors and exaggerations of the critics of the Vocabulary had created a general impression that the whole movement of opposition was a factitious agitation promoted by the codemakers; and there was a strong feeling that, whatever might be the defects of the existing publication, the restriction of code to an authorised list of words was a valuable principle which should not be lightly surrendered. Ultimately, the conflicting views were reconciled in a resolution which, while nominally recognising the principle of an official Vocabulary applicable to both the extra-European and the European *régime*, practically shelved the whole question for an indefinite period. The use of the Vocabulary was only to become compulsory from a date to be fixed by some future Conference (not necessarily the next), and, in the meantime, it was to be "duly augmented." This practically means that the new Vocabulary is to be a sort of polyglot dictionary, containing all the legitimate words in existing codes, and it is

possible that, with a Vocabulary so transformed, the curses of the Chambers of Commerce may be turned into blessings.

The decision of the Conference on the currency question might afford a theme for a Sound Money Democrat. In countries where the Cable Companies have had a free hand, and also in British India, the equivalent of the charges as fixed in francs has from time to time been raised in proportion to each fall in the currency. But in certain other countries the depreciated currency has been taken as the standard both for the collection of the charges and for the settlement of the accounts. This presses heavily on the companies whose cables afford communication with the countries in question. In the international accounts the charges are credited forward from Administration to Administration, each Administration retaining its own share of the total and paying over the balance to the next Administration, which in its turn pays the remainder to the third Administration, and so on. Thus the Companies in question have in certain cases had to pay out on a gold basis large sums for which they only received credit in depreciated silver, and in this way they have incurred a loss which practically deprives them of remuneration for some of their work, or even, in the case of high-priced traffic, say from Japan to South America, involves them in an actual pecuniary outlay on every telegram which they transmit. The recognition of the depreciated currency also involves the collection in many cases of a lower charge in one direction than in the other, thus throwing on one of the two terminal countries a larger share of the expense of maintaining the communication. There was a general feeling that this anomaly should be removed; and, after an animated and intricate discussion, it was resolved to adopt new regulations imposing on every State an obligation to fix in its currency an equivalent approaching, as nearly as possible, the actual value of the franc in gold; to declare this equivalent at the present time; and, in the event of any important fluctuation, to declare from time to time a new equivalent based on the mean course of exchange during the preceding three months. In pursuance of this resolution, several States (including Brazil, British India, Cochin China, Japan, Persia, Spain and Turkey) at once made declarations raising the equivalent of the franc in their currency. In the case of Brazil, which raised the equivalent from 400 to 900 reis, the increase is more than 100 per cent. On the other hand, the equivalent in British currency, which is at present fixed at rod., will under the new regulations be 9'6d.

The German scheme for a so-called "Uniform Tariff" in Europe (which has in one form or other been before every Conference since that of London in 1879) was one to which Great Britain found herself bound to offer opposition.

The scheme is avowedly based on the analogy of the Postal Union. The circumstances, however, are not really analogous. For various reasons (among which may be mentioned the facilities for dealing with letters in bulk, and the fact that railway and steamboat services can generally be utilized for the mails on payment of a small portion of the cost) distance is a comparatively unimportant factor in postal work. The difference between the highest and the lowest cost is so small that it becomes possible, by striking an average, to fix a uniform charge for the whole world. But in telegraphy increased distance entails a substantial addition to the cost; and the boldest telegraph reformer would shrink from an attempt to equalise the rate of about $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a word between Germany and Austria-Hungary with one of more than 12s. between Germany and British Guiana. Even in Europe it would be necessary to bring to one level charges which now range from about $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to about 7d. The Germans recognize the impossibility of such a measure, and, in point of fact, they propose four maximum rates, ranging from 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 30 centimes, while leaving untouched such rates as are already lower; and they confine their proposal to Europe.

The absence of real uniformity is, however, a weak point in the scheme rather than a ground for opposition. The objection entertained by Great Britain is that the scheme reduces the charges to such an extent as in many cases to entail a loss of revenue which would be prejudicial to the general efficiency of the service, and particularly so as regards the Cable Companies whose lines afford a valuable means of communication from this country to Spain, Portugal, and the Mediterranean on the one hand, and to Scandinavia and Russia on the other.

In her attitude of opposition, Great Britain had the support of Spain, Portugal, and Sweden (which are also, owing to their geographical position, specially interested in the maintenance of cable communication), and, among other States, of Austria, Russia, and Italy. In view of this opposition it was obvious that the scheme could not possibly pass, although it was warmly supported by Norway and a number of the smaller States, including the Netherlands and Belgium; and when this became clear, the Germans

acquiesced in a resolution, proposed by the delegate for the Netherlands, in favour of postponing the question until the next Conference, which, on being put to the vote, was adopted unanimously.

One of the concessions made by the Cable Companies was the assimilation of the extra-European to the European *régime* as regards the counting of words. At present, while the maximum of ten letters per word for code telegrams applies to both *régimes*, a maximum of fifteen letters per word is allowed for telegrams in plain language in the European *régime* as compared with only ten in the extra-European; and in cypher five figures or letters (the latter only permissible in Government telegrams) are passed as a word in the European *régime* as compared with only three in the extra-European. In future the two *régimes* will be assimilated, the maximum in the extra-European system being raised from ten to fifteen letters in plain language, and from three to five figures or letters. In extra-European telegraphy the commercial portion of the business is almost entirely carried on in code; but to private persons who telegraph in plain language, the increase to fifteen letters will prove an appreciable boon, and the increased number of figures or letters passed as a word will largely reduce the cost of such Government telegrams as are expressed in cypher.

The Companies have also been induced, in many cases, to agree to substantial reductions of tariff. The rate from the United Kingdom to Spain will be reduced from 4d. to 3½d. per word, and to Portugal and Gibraltar, from 4½d. to 3½d.; the rate to China will be 5s. 6d. instead of 7s., and to Japan (viâ Vladivostock) 6s. 2d. instead of 8s. In the case of Singapore there will be a reduction from 5s. 9d. to 5s. 1d., and corresponding reductions will be made in the rates to Malacca, Labuan, Macao, Java, Sumatra, and Celebes, Cochin China, Annam, Tonkin, and probably the Philippine Islands. A reduced rate of 5s. per word will be brought into operation between Europe and Mauritius.

Throughout the Conference there was a marked spirit of conciliation, many of the most important decisions being adopted unanimously. From first to last Latins, Teutons, Slavs, Scandinavians, Turks, Greeks, Japanese, and Anglo-Saxons mingled on the most friendly terms. The spirit of *camaraderie* reigned throughout, and many a thorny question, which would have absorbed volumes of correspondence, was settled in conversation at some informal friendly gathering. As for the Hungarians, they simply won all hearts. Nothing could have exceeded the cordiality of their

welcome ; and their hospitality knew no bounds. The Hungarian National Academy of Arts and Sciences (a splendid institution, founded by the illustrious patriot, Count Széchenyi, which is regarded by all Hungarians as the centre of the intellectual life of the nation) was placed at the disposal of the Conference for its meetings.

The delegates received invitations to a banquet given in their honour at the Palace by His Majesty the Emperor-King, and to a series of receptions and dinners offered by the Prime Minister, the Minister of Commerce, the Secretary of State for the Department of Commerce, the President of the Conference, and the Municipality



ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, WHERE THE MEETINGS
OF THE CONFERENCE WERE HELD.

of Budapest. The members of the Hungarian Administration, with the Director-President (whose portrait in gala dress adorns the frontispiece) at their head, vied with one another in devotion to their guests.

There was almost an *embarras de richesses* in the way of entertainment. The delegates were conducted over the Exhibition, meeting the King during their visit to the Pavilion of Posts and Telegraphs ; they were present at a Fête of the Postal and Telegraph employés of Budapest on the beautiful Margaret Island ; they visited the magnificent new Houses of Parliament. Gala performances were organized in their honour at the Royal Opera and the National Theatre, and there were a number of excursions to places of interest in the Provinces, including the town of Kecskemét in the Alföld or

Great Plain of Hungary, the Iron Gates, and the Cathedral City of Esztergom where they were the guests of the Primate of Hungary.

The members of the Conference bring home with them vivid recollections of Hungary and its beautiful capital. It is easy to raise a mental picture of the mighty river with its rushing current ; of the rock of Buda crowned with its picturesque citadel ; of the brilliant sunshine and the shady walks by the Danube under the beautiful acacias ; of the striking Oriental types of features and dress ; of the soldiers marching to the inspiring strains of the " Rákóczy March " ;



ESPLANADE ON THE DANUBE, BUDAPEST.

of the splendid Boulevards and Squares of Pesth ; of the Great Plain and its picturesque homesteads, its fields of golden corn, its herds of cream-white oxen with enormous horns, and its Oriental shadoofs outlined against the horizon.

Amidst all this wealth of recollection, there are two impressions which stand out in my own mind—the music, and the character of the nation.

To a musician, Hungary is Paradise itself. There are many countries with a fine National music, but in no country does music bulk so largely in the life of the nation as in Hungary. Music permeates the whole country. The smallest provincial town, nay, the smallest

village, possesses its gipsy band. The bands are to be reckoned by the thousand, and in Budapest alone there are some hundreds.

In Budapest music follows you at every step, and the men with no music in their souls who sought to avoid it, had to resort largely to those stratagems for which Shakespeare declares them to be fitted. And such bands! We know something of Hungarian bands, "Blue" and otherwise, in this country, but Hungarian music is an exotic which does not bear transplanting. To appreciate the dreamy pathos of a Hungarian song, or the wild rollicking gaiety of a



GIPSY BAND.

Csárdás, you must hear them as they are rendered at Budapest. For precision, for vigour, for *entrain*, a gipsy band is unsurpassed. Not a single member of any band, except the conductor, knows a note of music; but what is far more, every man possesses a musical soul. The conductor plays over a tune and the whole band follows as one man, each filling in his part as if by intuition. Let me give one illustration of their powers. They were unfortunately under the impression that it was a delicate compliment to Great Britain to play "Linger Longer, Loo" and "Daisy Bell"; and they played those well-worn themes so charmingly as to compel a rapt attention.

The cordiality of the Hungarian Administration was typical of the warm-hearted Hungarian nation. Wherever we went, we were treated as friends. We always felt that we were heartily welcome, and that the exercise of hospitality was not a mere act of conventional politeness, but was in itself a keen source of pleasure to our hosts. There is a genuine ring about the following address in seven languages (Latin, Greek, French, Italian, English, German, and Hungarian) which was placed in our hands on our arrival in Kecskemét—



CITIZENS OF KECSKEMÉT.

“GREETING WORDS

to the members of international Post- and Telegraph-congress when they are visiting Kecskemét.

“The liberty-loving citizens of town Kecskemét joyfully are greeting their dear guests, who are destined to distribute the spiritual treasure and material welfare of the newest time with the whole mankind by different method of sending news.

“We ask you to bring away the news in every part of the world, that the wellminded and animated citizens of our little town—feeling and highly esteeming your grand and useful aim and task—proudly and with the utmost joy have closed you in their arms.

“We beg you to feel and find yourself at home between ourselves. Wellcome, wellcome!” . . .

One feels that the honest burghers of Kecskemét mean all they say. We were not exactly closed in their arms, but their honest hand-grip is something to remember. Sturdy, manly fellows they are, as the foregoing portrait of some of the "well-minded and animated citizens" will show.

As a race, the Magyars are not tall, but they are powerful, well-knit, and erect. Above all, they have a manly, independent bearing, which is as noticeable in the peasant as in the nobleman. I do not



PEASANTS FROM KECSKEMÉT.

know whether a Hungarian Burns has ever sung that "a man's a man for a' that," but for such a song the Hungarian peasant affords splendid material. The groups of stalwart peasants from all parts of the Provinces were certainly the most interesting sight at the Exhibition. Attired in the picturesque national garb, they marched about the grounds with dignity. We heard that this independent bearing was strikingly exemplified on the opening day of the Exhibition. An old peasant was deputed to give an address of welcome to the King in the name of the peasantry of Hungary. He had never been in Budapest or in any large town in his life, yet

he betrayed no sign of curiosity or excitement. He sat erect on his horse, a model of dignity, and delivered his speech with marked self-possession.

From magnate to peasant, the Magyars are proud that Hungary is a land of freedom. The nation has a charter of liberty in the Golden Bull, wrested, like our own Magna Charta, from a tyrannical king; and under the Constitution it is the king who swears fealty to the people, not the people to the king. Their romantic and stirring history gives them the consciousness of a heroic past. None but a powerful race could have held its own for a thousand years in Hungary's position. Hungary is the meeting-ground of east and west. Exposed to attack on every side, the Magyars have only maintained their ground by dint of hard fighting. They, more than any other race, have had to bear the brunt of the Turkish invasion, and it was chiefly due to their courage and endurance that the tide was at last stemmed. In the struggle their blood was freely shed, and for over a hundred years they endured the horrors of Turkish domination. All Europe owes them a deep debt of gratitude for what they did and what they suffered.

It was with such thoughts in their minds that the members of the Conference said good-bye to their Hungarian hosts, and with genuine enthusiasm they cried the parting salute of

“Eljen Magyarország!”

“Vive la Hongrie!”

R. J. M.



R. J. MACKAY.
(Secretary of the Delegation.)

“Postes et Télégraphes.”

A CAUSERIE.

IN a recent number of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* there appeared an article by M. H. Blerzy, on *L'Administration des Postes et des Télégraphes : ses attributions nouvelles*, which was in fact more a retrospect of what the French Post Office had done during the last twenty years than a record, as might have been supposed, of changes that had taken place during the last few weeks or months. But whether these developments were recent or not in the modern quick sense of the word it is certain that M. Blerzy's article aroused a great deal of attention in France, possibly in a measure in consequence of the high standing of the great old *Revue* itself, and also in a high degree because the subject is one in which every Frenchman feels a very direct personal interest. Jokes have not such long and lingering lives in the French as in the English Press, and the chestnut wit and stereotyped humour with which certain sub-sections of the English Press—heedless of fact and innocent of fun—attack the most hard-working Department of the State would not be considered worthy of the minimum payment of a sou a line by any wide-awake French Editor.

This by the way. When I had read M. Blerzy's retrospect, I had it in mind to offer the Editor of this magazine a full translation of the article itself, believing that it could not fail to interest a modest percentage of the 3,500 readers of the *St. Martin's*. But on re-reading the thirty closely-printed pages as they stand in the French original I have been driven to the conclusion that this is too much to ask of the courtesy of the Editor or of the patience of the Three Thousand Five Hundred. I have, therefore, limited myself to extracting a few plums or crumbs from the dish, with the hope that those whose appetite requires a fuller meal may go to the *Revue* itself. Nothing more is claimed for this little article than that it contains a few scraps of information from the writings of an eminent Frenchman on a subject of deep interest to all workers in the English Post Office—the methods and ways of working of their French colleagues.

One of the *attributions nouvelles* is classed under the heading of “*Recouvrements*.” A very few words will explain this. When one trader sells to another trader a piece of silk or a load of pig-iron, or anything from a three-act play to a ream of blank paper, he

may (if he be lucky) get paid down on the nail. Or he may get (say) a bill at three months. Now it is found that modern commerce for various economic reasons dislikes paying cash, and much prefers the bill at three months. This being so, the bill when it becomes due has to be presented and, if not met, to be protested in due form. This is easy enough in large towns where there are bankers and bankers' clerks galore, but in villages and in the case of isolated houses and hamlets the "recovering" of the amount due on a bill is not such an easy matter. In old days in France the bankers made use of the country postmen for this purpose, as these functionaries appear to have been allowed, if it pleased them, to act as agents for the bankers in the matter of presenting bills and collecting money due on them.

M. Cochery, who found that Germany, Switzerland, and Belgium were already doing this bill-presenting business through the post, was enabled by the law of the 5th April, 1879, to establish it as a branch of Post Office work in France. At first, it is true, the top limit of a bill which the Post Office was allowed to handle was 500 francs, and this kind of service was not undertaken for large towns. But the maximum was subsequently raised to 2000 francs, and the local restrictions were gradually removed. Bill collecting by the Post Office for amounts not exceeding (say) £80 due on any one bill became general all over France.

The working-out of this measure is simple enough. The creditor sends in a registered letter to the Postmaster of the place where his debtors live the bills he wishes presented, and the postmaster distributes them to the delivering postmen. The same evening, or at latest on the next day, he returns to the sender in the form of a Money Order the amounts collected and (if there be any) the unpaid bills. Both Postmaster and delivering postman get a very modest percentage on the amount so collected.

So far things worked well. It is an easy job to present a bill, but it is not always so easy to meet it. The question arose whether the department should undertake the further duty of protesting a bill, if necessary, and so set going the machinery necessary to make the unwilling debtor pay up. The time-limit of a protest, which in France must be lodged within twenty-four hours of a bill becoming due, was one difficulty. Then many of the Postmasters were Postmistresses (*ut Hibernice loquar*), and the letter carriers might be under the legal age of twenty-one; neither ladies nor lads under age being, it would appear, duly qualified in law to protest a bill. These

difficulties were, however, grappled with and almost entirely overcome, with the result that since the 1st July, 1881 the French Post Office has undertaken the job of protesting bills and, as far as I can gather, collecting the money on bills so protested. What the whole business means and how much use is made of this service may be seen by the statement, that in 1890 some eleven million bills representing 285 million francs (or roughly about $10\frac{1}{2}$ millions sterling), were entrusted to the Post Office for collection.

Another development of the Post Office is also due to the organizing genius of M. Cochery, and may be touched upon in the fewest words. If you want your *Figaro* or your *Petit Journal* or the more solid *Débats* and *Revue des Deux Mondes* sent to you regularly, all you have to do is to open a subscription at the nearest Post Office. You pay your money and they do the rest. The French Post Office has in fact become a gigantic *bureau d'abonnement* for almost every published sheet; and the daily papers together with the weekly, monthly, and quarterly periodicals have almost without exception agreed to pay the very small sum the Post Office asks for this service. All those who have lived in France know what an enormous use is made of this convenience.

Not content with being bill collectors and news providers for the million, the *Administration des Postes* acts as guardian of the people's savings. But the English Post Office Saving's Bank had nearly come of age when, in 1881, the clear-sighted M. Cochery did another great service to his country by getting a law passed founding a National Savings Bank, and entrusting the working of it to the Post Office. The enterprise has been a signal success. After the first year it showed a balance in its favour, and has never cost the tax payer one centime. In less than fifteen years it has succeeded in gathering together a body of depositors numbering two millions and a half, whose united savings amount to 800 million francs or, say, thirty-two millions sterling. The total amount which anyone may deposit is lower than with us; this top limit was at first 2,000 francs (say £80), but has now been lowered to 1,500 francs (say £60). Fears were expressed at first that the old savings banks, or *caisses d'épargne*, would have suffered from such a powerful and ubiquitous competitor; as a matter of fact the Post Office seems to have spread the thrift fever so successfully that the old institutions in France have done better business since the birth of their official rival. Other fears were also felt lest some political or monetary crisis should cause a run on the Savings Bank. What real foundation there is for

these fears, and what would happen if a panic takes place I have at present no material at hand for estimating, but a restrictive law of a kind has been voted which is of too recent a date for its working and consequences to be fairly estimated. M. Blerzy himself shelves the subject, which he says would require a chapter all to itself.

Then we come to the Parcel traffic. Of all the new activities of the Post Office this is perhaps the one which most puzzles the intelligent outsider who, if really intelligent, is content never to prophesy unless he knows. This traffic branches out in so many ways, and develops so suddenly in previously unused channels, that a man writing in April may be hopelessly behind the time when his copy is read in the autumn light of September. Putting aside, then, whatever developments may have taken place since the spring the following lines sum up the situation in France as it was when M. Blerzy wrote: "Fifteen years have passed," he says, "and postal parcels (*colis postaux*) are still received and distributed only at the railway stations and by the carriers in connection with the trains." The letter carriers do not, or did not, handle them.

Some interesting details are given of the old *Messagerie* business which did most of the parcel carrying work, and had its chief office in the Rue Notre Dame des Victoires at Paris. A *diligence* left Paris on each of the odd days of the month for Lille and was three days and a half doing the journey. But one started for Bordeaux and Lyons every day, though the time they took is not stated. In 1856, the Post Office, which for more than half a century had carried no parcels, began by undertaking the carriage of samples. Then in 1873 registration, hitherto applied only to letters, was extended to packets of printed matter and to samples; the same law which brought this innovation into force also authorised the carriage of boxes containing articles of declared value up to a limit of 10,000 francs (say £400). The law of the 3rd March, 1881 may be said to have created the modern "*colis postaux*" which practically were postal only in name, for the Post Office did not handle them, and there were villages in France to which the service did not extend. The great railway companies undertook the service for the State, so far as their rails reached and their carriers carried. The present arrangement can by no means be looked upon as final, and M. Cochery, in notifying his subordinates of the establishment of *colis postaux* warned them that they might have to do the work themselves some day. As it is, the uniform charges and state-supervised services have been enormously popular.

All this, and much more than this, may be studied with profit in M. Blerzy's pages and in the many published documents which tell of the growth of that great kindred organization across the Channel. The work done—so far as figures tell their story to plain men—is astounding. Figures are, I know, to many foolishness. Yet as at a *table d'hôte* there is one guest at least with teeth and courage strong enough to tackle that dusty plate of dry nuts which does duty in the dull season for dessert, so I hold it possible that there may be one reader of the *St. Martin's-le-Grand* whose palate is tickled by statistics. Let us put our few figures in an ascending scale, and so finish with a bouquet. At the time this article was written the French Post Office dealt yearly with four million Savings Bank transactions, undertook the collection of twelve million bills, and handled twenty million Registered letters or packets. The year's Money Orders amounted to thirty millions and the Telegrams to forty. Finally the letters and packets reached a total of two thousand millions; about one-third of this number being ordinary letters. The net profit on the whole working amounted to fifty-two million francs, or (roughly) £2,080,000 a year. Of course, these numbers are by no means stationary; they are found, so French experts say, to increase by about half as much again every ten years.

To do this and all the other work of the French Post Office, quite an army is required. There are 37,000 *sous-agens*, mostly of the postman class, and 21,000 *agens*, whose duties are of the clerical and supervising order. This latter class numbers thousands of educated women, and our author speaks with enthusiasm of the good work done by the Post Office in enrolling every year hundreds of worthy women in its ranks. Many a widowed woman and orphaned girl owes it to the Post Office that the little mouths at home are not unfed, and this is not one of the least of the many ways in which the French Post Office has deserved well of the French nation. The pay, for men as for women, is modest indeed; and those (if such there be among us) whose talk is of insufficient pay and prospects here at home, might profitably spend a tonic half hour in studying the number of francs their French brethren get for similar work. I have myself taken that tonic, and learned something from the awe with which a Frenchman or a German or Italian listens to the Aladdin-like stories of our scales of pay and the princely nature of British per diems. But here I am on dangerous ground, and it is wise to leave these quicksands.

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My time is up. The Editor's bell warns me, as New Women and old men speakers are warned by the inexorable ten-minute bell in the debates at the Pioneer Club, that the measure of the seven pages so hospitably loaned to me is filled, and that I must go. Yet on this, my first and last appearance in these kindly pages,* I will crave the indulgence of just one last word. So far as a poor Englishman can, I know my France and love it. And all those that really see for themselves the France that lives and works, that suffers and so soon is strong to work again, are won to it without losing anything of their English heart or backbone. I have crossed it from north to south, and east to west—on foot, or on such wheels as I could afford—often with very slender means in my pocket, but always meeting with the kindest courtesy and a generous interpretation of my British shortcomings. For few men on their travels can “shortcome” like a tired and hungry Briton. I have been the guest of kindly *curés* in the land of grapes and the Golden Hills who were passing rich on some twenty pounds a year, and I have shared the *pot au feu* of many a French peasant. For if, as my old master has it—that great old man with the beautiful voice whom men revered in his last years as Cardinal Newman, but whom we boys only knew as “The Father”—if it be the true definition of a gentleman that he never inflicts pain, then the French peasant is, indeed, a gentleman. You do not know your France till you have learned even in some slight degree to know and respect the peasant class, the hope and the courage and the salvation of France.

* * * * *

That bell tinkles again, and yet, like the man in “*Il faut qu'une porte soit ouverte ou fermée,*” I loiter one moment more before I go. A sign of coming age, maybe, that one must chatter. And age brings pension with it, if it so please the Higher Powers. I dream (and which of us does not?) of a day when I shall put my Post Office Guide and my Post Office Handbook on the shelf, and take them down again no more; of a day when there will be no more drafting or cutting up of drafts, and when the only accounts I keep will be of my pension *in francs*. For I find it a heartening process to reckon up my pension in francs. Think of it, Two Thousand Five Hundred a year, five times the pay of my dear old Curé friend! Then little blue-eyed toddling Dorothy and I and Another will settle down on

* We can assure our readers, whose disappointment will be great at Mr. Stokes' intimation, that we have too much confidence in the effect of our own blandishments to regard this as his last appearance in our columns.—EDITOR.

the shores of that quiet bay we know of near old Antibes, with those Esterel mountains in the near distance that Another loves so well.

* * * * *

Again, and for the last time, the bell. Whoever has known the fascination of that last talk on the stairs on his way to the hall-door will not have the heart to condemn me. Two memories press upon me. In far-off days, when I was a boy at Edgbaston (penniless enough, and with no people to go to) "The Father" sent me to Etretat with a young Frenchman who wanted coaching in the "Long," and wrote worse Latin verse than I did myself. In those days Etretat was the summer home of *Tout-Paris* in journalism and literature, and we boys fell among pleasant folk. But the most glorious day was when M. John Lemoinne, of the *Débats*, and M. Prevost Paradol took us to a corner of the Casino Restaurant and told us we might look for a minute at an old magician. There sat, among others, a great, heavy, dark, thick-lipped, gobbling man pouring in soup and pouring out excited talk at startling speed. This was, to our minds, the greatest man that ever lived: no less a person than the hero who created Athos, Porthos, and D'Artagnan, and wrote the *Vicomte de Bragelonne*. It was Alexandre Dumas *père*, and I have never forgotten him.

We are very near the door now. I will end this string of ill-fitting scraps—as, indeed, I often end my scrappy day—with a line or two from old Montaigne. He leaves a fine flavour in the mouth. His three-century-old wisdom is still the most perfect antidote to the worry and fret and fuss of these our days. I read him first in the big Oratory Library, when (I almost fear) I ought to have been drudging hard at that MS. catalogue of the literature of Tract XC. I did my catalogue, and it still lives; but who could stick to Tract XC. bibliography when Montaigne was hard by? He dwelt in philosophic seclusion just behind that mighty row of the Bollandists, and not far from a huge Benedictine Edition of the Fathers. And when, nowadays, I read distorted popular verdicts on the working of our own Post Office, or on the work of any men or body of men whom I know to be leading laborious days, I find it hard not to call to mind the quaint old words of one of the wisest sons of France:

"De fonder la recompense des actions sur l'approbation d'autrui, c'est prendre un trop incertain et trouble fondement, signamment en un siècle corrompu et ignorant, comme cettuy ci. La bonne estime du peuple est injurieuse."

J. SCOTT STOKES.

Amalgamation.

Now A was a clerk, and B was a clerk, but not on the selfsame list ;
For A was strictly a sorting-clerk, and B a telegraphist.

One day in a spirit of rivalry, when the traffic was light, these two
Vaunted the relative arduousness of the work they had to do.

Said A, " I live in a world of trains, that scream by lea and linn,
And spread their netted wings, and scoop the wet portmanteaus in :
I dwell where the date-stamp thunders ! Aye, and the necks of the
bloated sacks

Are sealed with a seal, and there rises ever the savour of molten wax :
And I deal all day in my faithful way with letters containing gold,
Yea, registered correspondence—whose value cannot be told—
Jewels and notes amounting in worth to the unknown quantity, x ,
To say nothing whatever of dividend warrants, and postal orders and
cheques,

And the joys and the sorrows, the hopes, the fears, and, I may
safely say,

The orders and bills of *thousands*, pass through my hands each day ! "

" Dear A," said B, " it seems to me that the work of which you brag
Is taking a letter, and reading the name, and sorting it into a bag."

" That all ? " cried A, " but never mind ; the time has arrived for *you*
To enlarge on the arduous nature of the work *you* have to do."

" I deal," said B, " with a form of force that is wrapped in mysterie,
A thing that nobody ever saw and nobody ever will see.

It is the very lightning ! Aye, and I make its flashes fly,
On the service of Man, to Peru or Japan in half the blink of an eye.
Of a legion of bottled thunderstorms I hold in my hand the key,
And the last results of science are the tools that are used by me.
And oft I see before me, in the midst of the ceaseless rush,

Some *confidential secret* that raises my hair like a brush ;
And the joys and the sorrows, the hopes, the fears, and, I may
safely say,

The bets and the tips of *thousands* pass under my eyes each day ! "

Said A, " Dear B, you jeered at me, but is your case much better ?
You merely learn your A B C, and spell words letter by letter."

Now B was short in his temper, and smote A hard on the nose,
 And A smote B on the jaw, did he, with right and left-hand blows ;
 They only fought for a little while, a " momentaneous blink,"
 But in that time they smashed the clock, upset the office ink,
 Caved in two bandbox parcels, and imperilled several more,
 And simultaneously sat down upon the office floor.

Said A to B, " It seems to me that we were both unwise
 To carry on the way we did, and I apologize ;
 Instead of fighting, tooth and nail, like two Kilkenny cats,
 And smashing bandbox parcels which contain, no doubt, top hats,
 Our proper course, I think, is to amalgamate the staff ;
 Of the expression $A + B$ let each of us be half ;
 Instead of A denoting me, and B denoting you,
 Let each of us from this time forth be $A + B$ by 2."

B tumbled to it instantly ; on B there was no sand,
 And straightway up they rose and shook each other by the hand ;
 And now in blissful unison they sing continually
 The glorious, arduous nature of the work of $A + B$.

LEO WOLFE.



General view of the Quadruplex, showing the attraction of
 opposite polls.

SOME ILLUSTRATIONS OF TECHNICAL TERMS.

Ralph Allen's Bye-Posts.

PART II.

TO proceed; during the first contract, Mr. Walpole died, and was succeeded by Mr., commonly call'd, Governor Harrison, who, together with Mr. Carteret, was appointed His Majesty's Postmaster General. These Gentlemen declared themselves (as indeed as their predecessors had done) to be very sensible of Mr. Allen's care and ability in improving both Branches of the Revenue, and of his particular attention to render the Merchantile Correspondence more safe and expeditious; so that though they could not venture to redress him in the two instances just above mentioned, yet, to shew their sense of his Public Services, they, with the greatest readiness, recommended the renewal of his Contract to the Lords of the Treasury, for another term of seven years, upon the same conditions with the first, but still, no agreement was entered into relative to the produce of the Country Letters.

Before the end of the second contract, Mr. Harrison died, and was succeeded in his Employment by Lord Lovell, afterwards Earl of Leicester: Upon the conclusion of this second Contract it appeared that the *Country Letters* were then increased to the sum of £17,464 4s. 11d. per annum.

And here let it be observed, that, till this time, it had been still suggested to the Postmasters General, even from the commencement of Mr. Allen's concerns with the Government, that the support of his undertaking must greatly injure, if not by degrees, totally destroy the Revenue of the Country Letters: so that it was a very great, as well as agreeable surprise to them to find by this account, that this Branch of the Revenue of the *Country Letters*, instead of being impair'd, was, at the end of fourteen years, found to be considerably augmented. However Mr. Allen's management in thus supporting and augmenting both these Branches was, from the commencement of his Contract to the erection of the every day Post, so little comprehended, that it will be no unnecessary digression here, to give a clear and succinct explanation of it.

In order to this, let it be observed, that one of Mr. Allen's expedients, proposed to Lord Cornwallis and Mr. Craggs, for ascertaining what Lett^s ought, of right, to be sent upon either of

these *interfering Branches*, was this, That whatever Letters had been sent as *Country Letters* for the space of four years prior to his first Contract, should be always conveyed by the Post, during his Contract, thro' London as *Country Letters* still, and that whatever Letters had been sent in the Bye Bag, for that space should still be conveyed as *Bye Letters* during the said Contract.

This expedient tho' admitted by the Postmasters General to be very rational in itself, and of great use in practice, to adjust the proper conveyance of Letters in each of these interfering Branches, Yet were they not clear, that it would perfectly obviate all the difficulties occurring, and to occur, in the management of this very intricate affair.

Mr. Allen therefore, to remove every obstacle that might arise, or might appear to arise, proposed afterwards the Explanatory Contract above recited, which was readily agreed to.

While this matter was in agitation, and Mr. Allen thus employed in contriving new Methods to secure and improve the Revenue; He found the Country Deputy Postmasters, (the chief embezellers of the *Bye and Way Lett^{rs}*) had been as busy, in opening new clandestine Channels for the conveyance of all such *Country Letters* likewise, as they did not chuse to account for. For, in fact, he found that, during those four years preceding his Contracts (the years which had been proposed as the standard for adjusting the distinct conveyances of the two *interfering Branches*) great numbers of the *Country Lett^{rs}* were, unknown to the Postmasters General, conveyed on the Bye Bags, as bye or way Letters.

The extent of these Frauds was not then certainly known: But when Mr. Allen went himself thro' out the Kingdom, to make an actual survey, he traced them fully and minutely, thro' all their windings, and then suppressed them all at once, by fixing Barriers in those various parts where communications were open from one Road, or from one Branch of a Road to another. The use of these was to prevent the undue extension of any of the several conveyances.

But as these boundaries must frequently vary in different parts of the same road, Mr. Allen for the better supporting and rendering more effectual these very necessary Checks, (necessary for the right management of his concerns, and to preserve distinct, and keep separate the two Branches) found it as necessary to appoint *Surveyors* whose office it is, with proper instructions suited to each various occurrence, to repair to, and, for a considerable time together, to reside at, those places, which one may fitly call the *Key Posts*; and

there make inspection, from day to day, into the due operation of the established cheques. In this service the Surveyors are directed to keep exact Journals of everything that passes, and to transmit to Mr. Allen copies of the most material parts of them ; so that on the first appearance of any oblique motion to injure either the one or the other of the two Branches, Mr. Allen (who by the aid of his general plans, in which the parts are so tied, and connected to one another, and by long experience in conducting it, is enabled to detect the earliest tendencies towards a fraudulent or mistaken attempts of deviating from the established conveyance) Mr. Allen, I say, may be always able to suppress these irregularities, 'ere they have time materially to injure the Revenue. This was the first means of enabling Mr. Allen to execute what was esteemed so much a paradox, the improving the Revenue of the *Country Letters*, at the same time that he recovered for the public the *Bye and Cross Road Letters*.

Another means for obtaining this end, viz., the gradual increase of the *Country Letters* during the period mentioned above was this,— In the Act of the ninth of Queen Anne, the Country Deputy Postmasters are not the only offenders complained of, as embezzeling the Revenue of Letters Carriers, Stage Coachmen, and others of the like occupations thro'out the Kingdom, are accused of the same transgression, of clandestinely receiving and conveying Letters from one town to another ; and are made subject to the penalties inflicted on corrupt Deputy Pmrs.

Now whilst the *Bye and Way Lett^{rs}* continued to be conveyed in so precarious and unsafe a way, as is shewn above, it was thought hard to punish such as undertook to convey them in a speedier and safer manner. But from a time that this Branch of the Revenue was put under a just regulation, in consequence of the contract with Mr. Allen, and all such Persons who were any way concerned in this illegal collection and conveyance of Letters, were by proper Officers employed by him, strictly enquired after, and when detected, the most notorious of them punished as a terror to the rest. This as we may easily conceive greatly restrains this enormity, and consequently occasions a very considerable increase as well of the *Country Letters* as of those of the *Bye and Cross Roads*.

And now, it having been found that this material point as well as every part of Mr. Allen's engagement had been performed with equal honesty to serve the Public, Lord Lovell and Mr. Carteret, after a strict examination into all his transactions with the Government, from the commencement of his first Contract, to that time,

expressed their entire satisfaction with every part of it, and openly declared that he had not only saved the produce of the *Country Letters* as well as those of the *Bye Way and Cross Road*, from being on the matter, entirely lost, but had likewise considerably improved both those Branches, which amongst the other more obvious benefits, had been of signal service to the trade and commerce of the Kingdom, and therefore declared, that it was but justice to him, that he should have their best support and encouragement for the management of this Branch for the remainder of his Life; in order, that a plan so well formed and so honestly executed, might receive all such further extension and improvement as he only appeared capable of giving it.

But since it appeared to them, on the above inspection and examination, that great difficulties attended a right knowledge of the just Boundaries of the two interfering Branches of the Revenue, in the distant parts of the Kingdom, and that under this inconvenience, they had frequent applications made to their Board by Persons of great distinction and interest for erecting new Branches for the benefit of commerce in the manufacturing parts of the Kingdom, they were justly apprehensive that, tho' the *Country Letters* had to that time kept improving, yet, under these circumstances of intricacy in the boundaries, and the reasonableness and necessity of complying with many of those applications, they themselves might, before they were aware, occasion the sinking of the Revenue of the *Country Letters* beyond their power afterwards to restore it.*

On these considerations they thought proper to propose a new Covenant to Mr. Allen, whereby he should, from that time, oblige himself not only to *preserve*, but to improve the produce of the *Country Letters* during the new grant he was then contracting for; And so, during all future grants for his management of the *Bye Way and Cross Road Letters*. But as this was a matter of great importance the Postmaster General offered to give Mr. Allen all reasonable time to weigh, examine and to deliver in his answer to the following question. Whether he thought, he could safely engage

* To understand the nature and just apprehension entertained of this danger, it may not be improper to give one instance (amongst many which might be produced) of a late application made to the Postmaster General by the inhabitants of Warwick, to erect a new *Cross Road* Branch from Stratford on Avon to Nottingham, thro' Warwick, Coventry, Nuneaton, Kirkby, Leicester, and Loughboro', which if granted as desired, must unavoidably have been attended with a lessening of the Revenue of the *Country Letters* to the amount of upwards of £5000 a year over and above all advantages that could have been obtained in the increase of the *Bye* and *Cross Road Letters*.

for the future, not only to support the *Country Letters* at the sum they were then found to produce at the commencement of his first Contract, but at the sum they now produced; and whether he would agree that all exceedings, if such there should be, in time to come, should be declared to belong to, and be for the use of His Majesty? In consideration of which engagement and agreement, and likewise of another article, they had then to propose, Mr. Allen should be at full liberty, in the management of his own concerns of the *Bye Way and Cross Road Letters*, to make all kind of improvements that he should judge to be most conducive to the extension of commerce in the first place; to the improvement of His Majesty's Revenue in the next; and to his own private advantage in the last, without any restraint or impediment from the authority of the Board.

After duly considering this proposal, and weighing all the favourable and unfavourable consequences of it both to the public and to himself (for if ever he lost sight of the public benefit in any of his transactions, he should now be ashamed to make his appeal to their justice) Mr. Allen agreed to it; and entered into every engagement for the honest performance of it. And here, he says, he should be ungratefull to the memory of those two worthy Persons then in Office, did he not still retain a warm sense of their frank acknowledgments unto him "that he had a full claim to" "make the utmost improvement for his own benefit, during life, of" "that branch under his own farm and management, since this" "improvement was inseparable from the improvement of the" "King's Revenue and the enlargement of the national Commerce." And he should be equally unjust to his own conscious integrity in the discharge of his Duty thro' out the whole time of his management, did he not, on this occasion, take all the advantage, which so well weighed a declaration of these Postmasters General fairly gives him.

The other regulation they had to propose was this, that tho' his Contract was so unexceptional, his Plan was so advantageous, that he had the highest pretention to every reasonable support and encouragement. Yet as this was a matter merely personal, and capable of being executed by him alone, They proposed that, that part of the Contract, which made the Farm absolute for seven years (unless the King should happen to die within that space) by which on Mr. Allen's death it might devolve on his Executors, persons unknown, incapable, certainly without the pretentions of regard and favour due to him personally, they proposed, I say, that this part of

the Contract should receive a new form, and that all the future Leases should from henceforth, be made to determine on the death of the King, or of Mr. Allen, if either should happen within the seven years; And further, that on Mr. Allen's death, the Government should be entitled to all Books, Accounts, Papers, etc., any way relating to the management of the Farm of the *Bye Way and Cross Road Letters*; all which should be delivered up on demand by Mr. Allen's Executors to the Post^{ms}. General, to enable them to conduct this affair for his Majesty's Service when it should return back again under their management, and that lastly Mr. Allen should leave directions to the Clerks and Assistants, employed by him in the management of this concern, to be always ready to render the best services to the Postmasters General concerning the premises.

To all this Mr. Allen readily agreed. In conformity to which the new Contract was drawn up and directly executed. And from that time to the present the reason ceasing, no account of the annual profits accruing to Mr. Allen (which he covenanted should be delivered on demand) has been called for; tho' an account was annually called for, and given in before the *Country Letters* were thus secured, and improved to the benefit of the Government. But more of this matter hereafter.

Upon the next renewal of his Contract which was in the Year 1741, the Postmasters General, after largely expressing, as usual, their sense of the integrity of his conduct, and the services he had done to the Public, told him they judged it but reasonable to expect some addition to his rent of £6,000 a Year for the *Bye Way and Cross Road Letters*, altho' he should still continue to support and increase the produce of the *Country Letters* for the Benefit of the King. To which, Mr. Allen answered, that their expectations of additional rent appeared very reasonable to him, and which he should have made in his own way (a way he was going to open to them) had they not themselves proposed it. That there were two ways of giving this additional Rent; the one was by paying a further sum of money yearly, such as he could afford for his Majesty's use without any advantage to public commerce, the other was by paying His Majesty, and immediately too, a much larger sum than he could in the first way pretend to advance, in causing a considerable increase of the produce of the *London and Country Letters* by means of extending and quickening the correspondence of London and several of the most considerable Trading Towns and Cities thro' out the Kingdom; a project that would be of infinite advantage to

commerce. Which of these two ways the Postmasters General would think fit to prefer, he left to themselves to consider; who on duly weighing all circumstances, did not in the least hesitate to prefer the latter method.

Upon which Mr. Allen agreed to erect, at his own Expence, one every day post from London to Bath, Bristol and Gloucester towards the *West*; and from London to Cambridge, Lynn, Norwich and Yarmouth towards the *East*; and to all the intermediate places in both quarters: and that all the increase of the postage of Letters thus conveyed between London and the several places, East and West of it above mentioned, should, without any charge or deduction, be paid in directly for His Majesty's use, as well as all the increase of the *Country Letters* within that District, that is, such Letters as pass between one Country Town and another thro' London.

All this was accordingly done and executed conformable to the terms of the Contract.

And now, this unexpected quickening of Correspondence having been found, on tryal, fully to answer all the good purposes, Mr. Allen had made the Postmaster General to expect, they readily agreed (upon the renewal of his Contract in the Years 1748 and 1755) that the further increased annual rent should be given in the same manner by new extensions of the *every day post* at Mr. Allen's expence and for the benefit of His Majesty as aforementioned.

Accordingly the every day post was then extended from London, thro' Bristol to Wells, Bridgwater, Taunton, Wellington & Tiverton to Exeter, *South West*; and also from London to Derby and Nottingham, and from London, thro' Oxford to Worcester, B'ham and Wolverhampton, from thence to Shrewsbury, and by other Branches, to Chester, L'pool & M'chr, *North West* and thro' all the intermediate Towns.

These attempts to enlarge still further both the *Commerce* and the *Revenue*, having likewise fully answer'd all that was proposed for it, In this Year 1760 upon the renewal of Mr. Allen's present Contract, on the death of his late Majesty (of which more hereafter) it was proposed and agreed to, that the further advanced rent should be made to the Government, in the same manner as in the three preceding Contracts, by a more enlarged extension of the *every day post*; and on the same terms of advantage to the Government. The first from London to the following places, viz. thro' Derby to Chesterfield, and from Nottingham thro' Mansfield, to meet the Derby post at Chesterfield, from thence to proceed jointly to

Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster and Howden to Hull, together with another new Branch from Doncaster thro' Ferrybridge to Wakefield and Leeds, and so to York.

The *second every day Post*, to be erected by this Contract, is from London, thro' Caxton, Huntingdon, Stilton, Stamford, Grantham, and other Post Towns on that Road, to meet the Leeds *every day post* at York, and from thence to be extended on that post Road to Durham and Newcastle.

A *third every day Post* is likewise to be erected and extended from Wakefield to Leeds, thro' Bradford, Halifax, and Rochdale to meet the every day Post from London to Manchester & Liverpool, and likewise from those places thro' Wiggan, Preston, Lancaster, Kendal, Appleby & Penryth to Carlisle & Whitehaven.

These extensive and quick conveyances of Letters by an *every day Post* undertaken by Mr. Allen, in his last Contract, together with the erection of all the following communications by the new *Cross Roads*, is the completion of an enlarged Plan, very early formed, long meditated upon, and by degrees, from time to time, carried into execution by him; not only with the consent, but with the highest approbation and applause of the several Postmasters General, in whose times the various parts of it were executed; as visibly carrying along with it all its advantages to public commerce and the King's Revenue.

The *first new erected Communication* of those by the Cross Road, which remains to be spoken to, is to be from Wakef^d and Leeds to Manchester, thro' Bradford, Halifax & Rochdale, for quickening the Correspondence between all the trading parts of Yorkshire, to those of Staffordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire, N. Wales, Lancaster, Westmorland & Cumberland.

The *second communication* is to be from Whitehaven & Carlisle on the *Western Coast*, to Durham & Newcastle on the *Eastern*; which will not only open a new communication of Correspondence between those places of Commerce, but likewise will be extremely beneficial to the Merchants of Sunderland, Stockton, and other trading Parts in that Country.

The *Third Communication* is to be between Portsmouth & Salisbury, thro' Winchester, which will not only quicken the Correspondence between those places, but the benefit it will extend likewise to S'hampton & the I. of W., & thro' Salisbury to Bath, Bristol, and all the trading parts thro' out the *Western Road*.

The *fourth Communication* is to be, between Nottingham &

Newark, carried on six days of the week, for the further quickening of the Correspondence between Leicester, Derby, Nottingham, and other parts of those Counties upon the *Chester Road* to the places of commerce on the great *Northern Road*.

The *fifth communication* is to be between Caxton & Cambridge six days in a Week (instead of three as in the former appointment) for the speedier conveyance of Letters between all the places on the Northern Road to the Eastern, as Cambridge, Bury, Thetford, Lynn, Norwich, & Yarmouth.

But now, having brought the Narrative to this period, it will be necessary to give a succinct account of what passed between Lord Bessborough and Mr. Hampden, the present Postmasters General and Mr. Allen, in the course of the renewal of the present contract.

When Mr. Allen had petitioned the Treasury as was usual, for this renewal, enforced by his proposal of the advanced Rent to the Public, above explained, to which was subjoined an abstract of the improvement that had accrued to the Revenue, which at the same time, evinced the great advantages that had arisen to the national Commerce from this enlarged and yet enlarging Correspondence, the Treasury as usual referred him to the Postmasters General; who after having weighed and examined his proposal gave ample Testimony to the utility of it; but finding in all the preceeding contracts a *Clause* which obliged Mr. Allen to give an annual account of his own clear profits arising from the execution of his Engagements, they thought proper to call for the produce of the last Year. Mr. Allen's answer to demand was to the following purpose, that he was then absolutely unprepared to give them this satisfaction, having been obliged to come directly to London on the sudden and unexpected death of His late Majesty, by which event his Contract expired and became void.

But now, as it may be asked, how a man so exact, and who had discharged his forty years engagements to the Government with so distinguished Integrity and Fidelity, should have an account of this nature so unready as not to be produced on demand, it will be proper to relate the true cause of inserting this *Clause* in his Contracts. It may be remembered in the course of this Narrative, that for many years together the *Revenue* of that Branch, which comprised the Country Letters, lay, as it were, at Mr. Allen's mercy, to sink or raise as he saw fit; and that no proper expedient could for some time, be found to remedy this inconvenience. The integrity which the Postmasters General had experienced in Mr.

Allen's whole conduct induced them however, to go on contracting with him, notwithstanding this precarious condition of things; but to make the best provision they could against the inconvenience of it, they inserted a Clause in their Contract, which obliged Mr. Allen to give an annual account of his own clear profits; by which it would be seen whether he used any undue methods to lessen the Revenue of the *Country Letters*, if it should be found to lessen. And in compliance to this clause, Mr. Allen gave annually to the Postmasters General a faithful account of such clear profits. But from the year 1733 (the Post Office being then under the direction of Lord Leicester and Mr. Carteret) when the Revenue of the Country Letters was secured, by Mr. Allen's engaging himself not only to *preserve* but also to *improve* the produce of them, this Clause, inserted only to secure that Revenue while in a precarious condition, was understood by both parties to be suspended, when a remedy was provided against that danger; as appears from the same accounts never having been asked for or given in, from that time to this; and yet till that time it was annually asked for and given. Still, indeed, this clause, as well as other unperformed clauses, continued to stand in all the subsequent contracts; but it was by that sort of inattention which is so common in formalities of this nature.

This is a plain and true History of that *Clause*, of which the Postmasters General not being apprized, they thought themselves intitled to expect a compliance to it; and Mr. Allen never having anything to hide or disguise, instead of insisting on that satisfactory answer, which arises from the History of it, chose rather to give them the satisfaction they expected, in their own way, as soon as such an account (which being composed of a vast variety of Articles, would unavoidably take up several months to digest) could be exactly drawn out. But his very ill state of health disabling him from any considerable stay in Town, and the nature of his affairs with the Government requiring (for the interests of both parties) a speedy adjustment, he thought on an expedient which (if this was the only remora to the usual report, which the Postmasters General had now for forty years together made to the Treasury, on the returns for this occasion) would certainly remove it. In order to know this, he presumed to ask the Postmasters General, whether they were fully convinced of the Emoluments that had arisen both to the *Revenue* and to the General *Commerce* from the faithful discharge of his past services, and of the promising advantages of those which

were to come, as explained in the representation then laid before them. To which, they were pleased to say, they were fully convinced of both. He then took the further liberty to ask, whether they apprehended, that his present profits for *the Service of preventing two Branches of the Revenue from being destroyed, And of extending and accelerating commercial correspondence, to a degree unknown to all other Countries*, together with his other faithful services of this kind, for more than Forty Years, were too exorbitant to be continued to him, during the small remainder of a Life, become so precarious by his Age and Infirmities. To this, likewise their answer was, "That they were very sensible of his distinguished services and upright conduct thro' out the whole course of his attention to these concerns; nor did they suppose that the profits resulting from them, were too great: but that they being accountable for their conduct to another Board, while the revenue made part of the King's Civil List, and now perhaps to a more general inspection, since this Revenue, by a late Act of Parliament, is become part of that for the Public; in this situation they apprehended they could not properly digest a full report to the Lords of the Treasury, without receiving further satisfaction concerning the *Clause* in question."

Mr. Allen then saw, that having now the pleasure to understand, that this was the only difficulty; he had thought upon an expedient which, he presumed, would effectually remove it; and enable both parties to finish this transaction on a very unexceptional footing, for he had not the most distant wish, that any one step should be taken by them, out of favour or indulgence to him, which, upon the strictest scrutiny, should not turn out to their honor as well as to his own.

The expedient was this, that as the former Contract, had his late Majesty lived, would not have expired till Midsummer 1762, when all the great improvements (which Mr. Allen had in view for the completion of his whole design, gradually advancing thro' out the course of so many years, for the increase of commerce and the Revenue) were intended to be entered upon, he, Mr. Allen, was ready to agree to a new Contract, to commence from the death of the late King, for seven years as usual, if his present Majesty (whom God preserve) and Mr. Allen should so long live, with an express *clause* that the Treasury for the time being should, if they saw just cause, have it in their power to determine the Contract at Midsummer 1762, or at any other succeeding Midsum' during the said

Term; and that he, Mr. Allen, would within a year from the date of the Contract, transmit to the Postmasters General, to be by them laid before the Lords of the Treasury, a full state of the gross produce of the *Bye and Cross Road Letters* together with all the expenses attending the management of those concerns, for the year ending at Midsummer next, 1761, He, Mr. Allen, being at present fully employed in preparing for and at Midsummer next (instead of Midsummer 1762 as was first intended) entering upon the completion of the great scheme explained above, which by his particular instructions for this purpose, he is in hopes may be put under a stable permanent management within, or in a little more than a year from its establishment.

This expedient the Postmasters General very readily approved; and thereon made their report to the Treasury, in terms of much advantage to the conduct and character of Mr. Allen that he had as much reason to be satisfied with their report as they appeared to be with the fairness and openness of his offer; which he was the more easily induced to make, partly from his intire confidence in the justice and reconisance of the public, whose voice in these matters he considered the Treasury to be; and partly from a shew of reason in the Proviso itself; since, in all his Contracts, there had been a similar proviso in his own favour, whereby he was at liberty to make his contracts void, on reasonable notice to the Treasury: so that these rights now appear to be equal and reciprocal: And as he was not likely to claim the benefit of his proviso, while he could serve the Public without ruin to himself; so, he thought it as unlikely that the Public, that is, the Treasury, should take the advantage of their's, while he continued to discharge, with the strictest diligence and integrity, what he had obliged himself to perform.

To this plain narrative of Mr. Allen's transactions with the Government, it is judged necessary, upon the occasion, for the better information of the Lords of the Treasury, to subjoin a calculation of the improvements to the Revenue by means of his several Contracts, and a succinct Account of the great advantages to the national Commerce, in consequence of what he has done for the safe and speedy Conveyance of intelligence, which may be deemed the Life of Trade.

In respect to the *Revenue* it will be found, upon a moderate computation, that it has and will be augmented to a sum upwards of one Million and half Sterling.

But this augmentation of the *Revenue* considerable as it is in

itself, Mr. Allen reckons to be by far the least part of the services that he has been enabled to render his Country.

Those which he hath done to it, by aiding and befriending *Commerce and Social intercourse*, in quickening and accelerating correspondence between distant Parts of the Kingdom (which the Post office was erected to procure) He shall always esteem to be much more important than any improvement of the Revenue alone.

These advantages will in a great measure appear by the following list of the several new Post Roads, Branches, and communications from one road to another, erected at his expense from the commencement of his concerns in 1720 to the completion of his enlarged plan in the year 1762.

This representation, thus explained, with a clear state of Mr. Allen's own profits for the year ending with last Midsummer (which is more beneficial to him than any of the preceeding, and much more than can be expected in any of the succeeding years, during the remainder of his contract, for the particular reasons inserted in the said state) is now offered to the Lords of the Treasury, for their Lord^{ps} consideration, upon whose equity and justice he safely depends.

However, if in anything material, the Treasury and Mr. Allen shall happen to think differently, He shall still continue to enjoy that self content and pleasure to the end of his Life, which has been his viaticum thro' out the progress of it, while contemplating the goodness of providence, he first reflects on that rare felicity bestowed upon him, of providing for himself and family, not only without the least wrong and damage to any one Man of the community, but by procuring the commodity and advantage of every individual in it. And secondly and principally, for enabling him, in his own private station, unaided by anything, but by his integrity, and his very intimate knowledge of what he undertook, to render these important and lasting services to the Public.

(Signed)

RALPH ALLEN.

Prior Park,

December 2, 1761.

Digitized by Google



L. JONES.
(Cardiff.)



T. E. PENGELLEY.
(Tiverton.)



R. REID.
(Inverness.)



J. APPLEBY.
(Nottingham.)



G. LOCKLEY.
(Shrewsbury.)



A. WOODLEY.
(Bolton.)

A Thousand Miles in the "F.F.V."

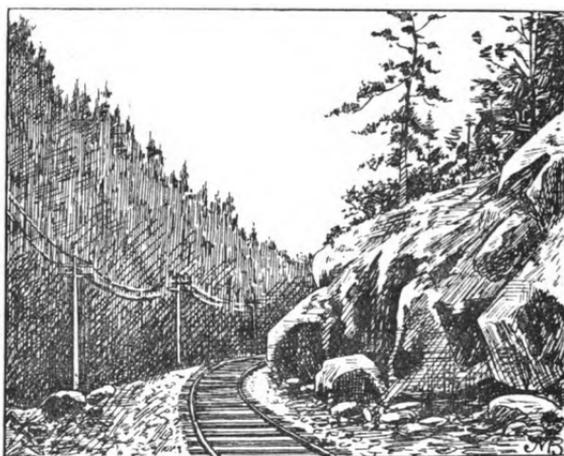
PROMPTLY at 2 p.m. the "F.F.V.," or (to give it its full title) "The Fast Flying Virginian," steamed out of the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad depôt at Washington on its Westward-bound journey of upwards of a thousand miles. Crossing the Potomac river, the train soon left the "Garden City" behind, and making its way through the fair fields of Virginia, entered upon its climb through the famous Allegheny Mountains.

The train was drawn by two powerful engines, and consisted of three Pullman cars, a drawing-room car, a sleeping car, and a dining car, and was what the Americans term a "solid vestibuled" train. The strong springs on the bogey frames and in the vestibules gave the train an even motion, and as it was heated by steam throughout its entire length and lit by the electric light, travelling proved to be a luxury.

During the morning my three friends and I had clubbed together and bought from the Washington market a stock of fruit for the journey. We obtained some fifty bananas, a few pine-apples, three dozen oranges, half a dozen pounds of strawberries, and several bottles of syrups. A spoonful of the latter mixed with iced water made a delicious drink. After an hour's ride we were fairly in amongst the beautiful Alleghenies, occasionally coming to a small settlement where the inhabitants, chiefly negroes, trooped out to see the train pass. On and on the heavy train rolled, seeming at times to cling to the sides of the mountains, anon dashing over a long, quivering tressle bridge, or rounding a curve so sharp that, sitting in the middle of the train, one could see the two ponderous engines labouring in front, and, with a turn of the head, could catch a glimpse of the rear car just balancing on the rails as it swung round the curve. Presently we plunged through dark ravines and long tunnels (on approaching which the electric light was turned on); and then, after flying down a steep incline, the pneumatic brakes brought the train to a sharp standstill at Charlottesville, time 5.30 p.m. Here, a motley group of negro women crowded around the train, bearing

trays, on which were placed boiled eggs and ham and chicken sandwiches, which did not appear very inviting. Some, more enterprising than others, offered cups of tea or coffee with small custards at the price of ten cents. Business was not very brisk, however, as the dining car claimed the majority of the passengers, many of whom also had supplies of their own. Our own stock of fruit perceptibly diminished as the day wore on, and we were obliged to change our vegetarian diet for a more substantial repast in the dining car.

After a few minutes' stay at Charlottesville, during which we had a glimpse of the University of Virginia, the train steamed off through



BUFFALO GAP.

the delightful Valley of Piedmont—which has been likened to the Valley of the Euphrates on account of its exquisite beauty—thence through a long tunnel under the Blue Ridge Mountains; on again through the Valley of Virginia, skirting the mountains and plunging through dark pine forests, where fifty years ago lonely trappers and backwoodsmen led solitary lives in the almost impenetrable fastnesses. Then ascending a steep grade, the train passed through Buffalo Gap, a natural opening in the North Mountains, where the railroad track has an elevation of 4,500 feet, and magnificent vistas burst into view at every curve and point on the road.

The sun was just setting, sending forth long beams of mellow light, as we rounded a curve into the James River Valley at a point where the James and the Jackson rivers meet and form a huge water

gap at Clifton Forge. There was a lively scene at Clifton Forge Station. Engineers, officials, porters, and workmen were hurrying to and fro. Evidently something was amiss. A negro porter came into our car and shouted, "You can't go any further to-night, gen'lmen; there is a wash-out on the line eighty miles a-head." There were cries of "Throw him out!" but he grinned and saved the trouble by rushing out and repeating his story in the next car. The passengers were beginning to show signs of uneasiness until they were re-assured by a conductor, who came into our car a few minutes later, and said we should go on again in half an hour, as it was only a "dodge" of the hotel people to get custom. This cheered us somewhat; but an American, who, no doubt, had had similar experiences before, said it would be the longest half hour we should ever see.

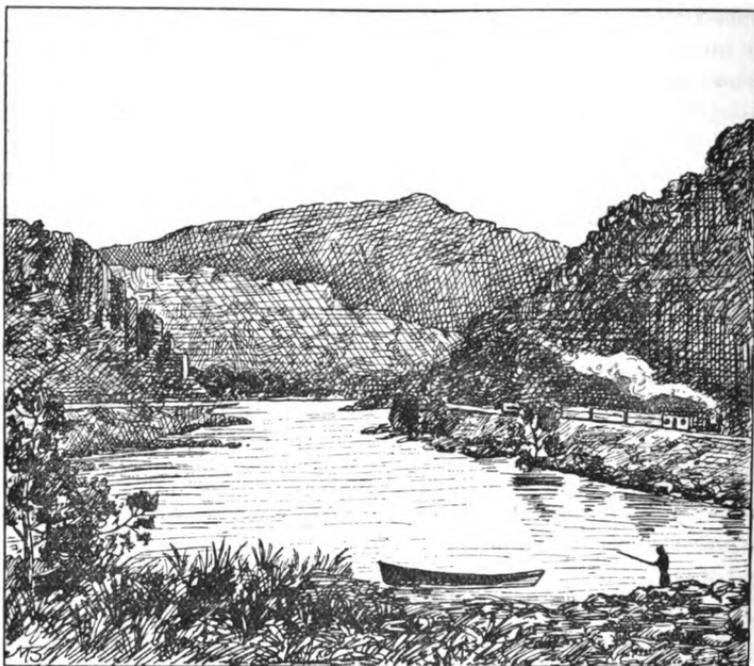
That was at nine o'clock. At eleven, the "half hour" showed no signs of coming to an end. Meanwhile, our party got into conversation with some American commercial travellers, and had a lively argument on the subject of the American *versus* the English constitution and government. There were some smart repartees, which kept the passengers roaring with laughter. At 11.30 p.m. things began to look unpleasant again. After being shunted into a siding for an hour and having several false starts, we heard that we were to retrace our line for a hundred miles, and then proceed by another company's route. Had it been daylight, I think there would have been very little objection raised at the idea of repeating the magnificent ride of the evening; but the sun had already set, and the night was dark.

Towards midnight the passengers began to get sleepy, and those who had secured sleeping berths retired, whilst the remainder settled down as comfortably as circumstances would permit in the ordinary Pullman coaches. The train had commenced to retrace the route traversed during the evening, and proceeded at a steady rate. The slight rolling motion, peculiar to American trains, soon produced a drowsy sensation upon the majority of the passengers, who were reclining in various positions, more or less elegant.

About five o'clock the following morning I was awakened by the train coming to a sudden stop owing to an overheated axle-box. We had already had several delays from the same cause; and on one occasion the train was delayed for more than half an hour, whilst the engineer poured water over the heated wheels.

At six o'clock the conductor announced breakfast, and the *menu*

provided was so varied and excellent that it satisfied the most fastidious appetite. During breakfast-time the train was at a standstill on the side of a mountain, and in the valley below a tributary of the Ohio river foamed and leapt in a turbulent manner over a fall of considerable height. On enquiry, I found that our train had been transferred to the Norfolk and Western Railway, which starts from Norfolk, on the Atlantic coast, and runs in a south-westerly direction through the states of Virginia, Kentucky,



ALONG THE JAMES RIVER VALLEY, NEAR CLIFTON FORGE.

and Tennessee. This line had only been built two years, and the rails were very indifferently laid. In some places I noticed gaps of two or three inches between the joints of the rails. This, of course, would not allow of any speed being attained, and I think that the average rate at which our train travelled did not exceed eighteen miles an hour.

After breakfast we resumed our seats in the Pullman car, and watched the magnificent hill and forest panorama as it presented itself to our gaze in unending variety. We followed the course of

a river for over a hundred miles, crossing and re-crossing it frequently, often by means of tressle bridges, the frailty of which would cause an involuntary shudder amongst the more nervous passengers.

As the day wore on we had many stoppages; for sometimes the engine failed, and sometimes we had to wait for other trains to pass, as there was only a single line for hundreds of miles, except at the small stations and passing places. During some of these delays the passengers took the opportunity of stretching their legs a little, and dashed off into the fields and woods to pick flowers. Directly they got any distance from the train the order "all aboard" would be given, and a general rush would ensue. Some of the passengers narrowly escaped being left behind altogether. At 10 a.m. the train drew up at a small town called Bluefield, where several passengers endeavoured to get a drink, but soon returned in disgust, having discovered that "total prohibition" was in force, and that no alcoholic liquor could be obtained. At this station, as in most others, I noticed a small board with the number of miles between stations given; it read "355 miles to Cincinnati." This was somewhat encouraging, as until then we could get no information as to our whereabouts. The conductor had been asked several times, "Where are we?" and always replied, "Don't know any more than you." "When shall we reach Cincinnati?" "Can't say, might be a week"; which under the circumstances seemed very probable.

Soon after starting from Bluefield we came to a number of coal mines, and passed some small settlements where the inhabitants appeared to be only half civilized. Leaving the mining district behind, the train entered a very wild region, where the scenery was some of the most varied, weird, and lovely which I had ever seen.

At one of the stations a telegram had been thrown into the train, instructing the official in charge to serve the passengers with one free meal. This was a stroke of good fortune to some of the poorer travellers, many of whom had been overcarried and, their money having run short, had had no means of procuring food. A young negress who had lost her money would have fared badly but for the English tourists who got up a subscription for her. It is an undeniable fact that Englishmen travelling in the States are much more friendly towards the coloured people than the Americans are. Perhaps this is because they do not come into contact with them so often, and have not to face the difficult problems which the negro question presents.

There were some natives of Cornwall travelling with us who had been settlers in an outlying district. They seemed to have had a hard time of it on their small plot of ground in the mountains, and were seeking a more civilized region where they would not be so isolated. We passed many small holdings during the day, and it was interesting to look at the little huts, the doorways of which were invariably filled with barefooted children gazing at the train as it crawled past. I say *crawled*, because it did not do much else all day long, save when it stopped altogether. Perhaps it was as well for us that this was the case, for in the afternoon we caught up another train and discovered that there had been a landslip, upon which a breakdown gang was at work clearing the line. We learned that the train in front had been waiting six hours, but fortunately the line was nearly clear when we arrived. A large number of passengers got off to watch the process of clearing the way, and jumped on the train again when it had passed safely over the newly laid track.

At tea time the provisions had become rather limited, only tea, coffee, and buttered rolls being obtainable. However, as we paid nothing for this plain fare we could not grumble. During the night steady progress was made through the States of Tennessee and Kentucky, and Cincinnati was reached about four a.m., eighteen hours behind time. We stopped at Indianapolis shortly after seven o'clock, where the station buffet was besieged by the hungry passengers.

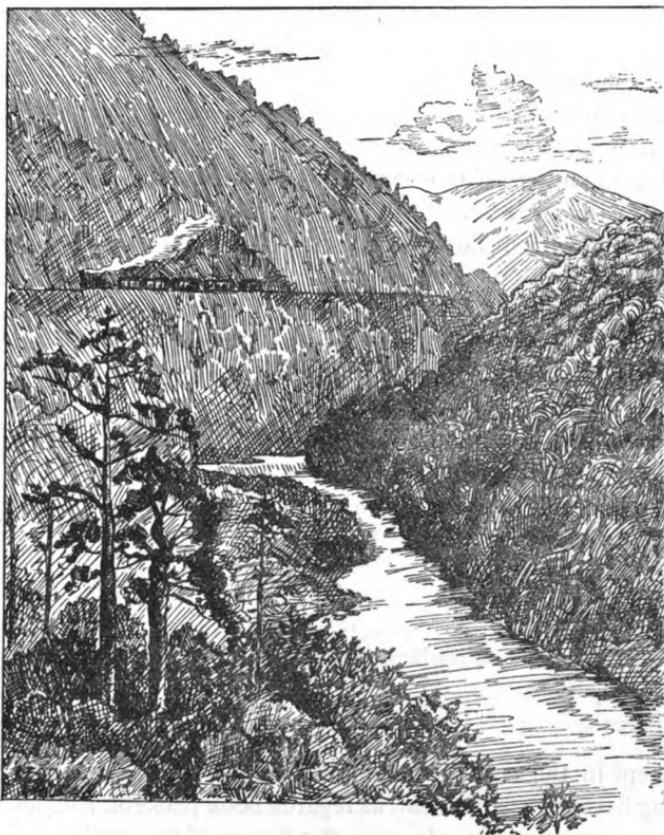
The State of Indiana is rather flat, with a large area of pasture land and trim farms and homesteads, forming a great contrast to the rugged mountainous districts through which we had passed the previous day. At Kankakee, a station on the border line of the States of Indiana and Illinois, I noticed a blackboard with the train times chalked on it. 'Train No. 2 was three hours late; another local train was "on time"; No. 3 (ours) was marked "Lost." We were then about a hundred miles from Chicago, and thought we should make the run in a couple of hours. We might have known better after our previous experiences on the journey. Our mishaps were not over, for after going another fifty miles the engine broke down and positively refused to go a foot further. The passengers by this time were getting impatient and began to hurl epithets at the driver; someone remarked that an attempt was being made to "tie the engine together with string."

Fortunately, a telegraph office was near, and another engine was sent to our relief in half an hour. We were the last of three trains

and stopped about every five minutes, taking six hours to cover the last eighty miles. When within twenty miles of the great city, its "bigness" already began to make itself felt, for we were then passing through its suburbs. The train made its way by the shore of that great inland sea, Lake Michigan, and drew up in the depôt at Chicago exactly twenty-one hours behind time. Thus the "Fast Flying Virginian" had been turned, for once in its existence, into a genuine Virginian Creeper.

GEORGE H. WELLS.

Wolverhampton.



CROSSING THE ALLEGHENIES.

The Forty-second Report of the Postmaster-General.

THE Postmaster-General's Report for the year ended the 31st March, 1896, which made its appearance during the last week of August, has not been so fully noticed by the daily and weekly newspapers as some of its predecessors. Whether this omission is due to the pressure of more sensational matters, such as the amenities of sea bathing, the wisdom or folly of matrimonial engagements, the movements of the Czar, or the state of the weather, with which able editors fill the columns of their journals in late summer and early autumn; or whether the total absence of strange stories and amusing anecdotes from the present report has brought about a conspiracy of silence we must not stop to enquire. It is certain, however, that persons who desire to inform themselves as to the progress of the Post Office will not get much help from the newspapers. The present report is certainly full of interest to the readers of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, and as the authorities, doubtless with the fear of the Treasury before their eyes, are not over liberal in distributing copies among the officers of the Post Office, who, on their part, perhaps, do not choose to spend fivepence halfpenny for a booklet they think should be given them, we propose to occupy a page or two of our present issue with a brief statement of the progress of the Department in the past year.

It is estimated that during that year the following postal packets were delivered in the United Kingdom :

Letters	...	...	...	...	...	1,834,200,000
Post Cards	...	...	...	...	...	314,500,000
Book Packets, Circulars, and Samples	...	...	...	...	...	672,300,000
Newspapers	...	...	...	...	...	149,000,000
Parcels	...	...	...	...	...	60,527,000

Except in the case of newspapers these figures show an increase varying between 9·4 per cent. as regards book packets, &c., and 0·6 per cent. as regards post cards, over the figures of the previous year, and looking back over a long period of years, the growth of the business of the Department seems to have been continuous. The total revenue

was £14,639,739, the total expenditure £11,007,617; the nett postal revenue was £3,666,909, but as there was a deficit of £34,787 on the telegraphs, the actual nett revenue was £3,632,122, the largest annual tribute ever paid by the Post Office into the Exchequer, though this handsome surplus was nearly approached in 1890, when the nett profit was £3,531,356. In 1839, the last complete year of dear postage, the nett revenue was £1,678,041.

The business of the Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post increased 13 per cent.; the increase in the parcels despatched was 7 per cent. and in the parcels received 23 per cent. The figures relating to Germany will perhaps alarm those timid souls who believe that our trade is being destroyed by the enterprising Teuton. We sent to that country 208,484 parcels, or 14,271 more than last year, and we received 464,004 parcels, or 98,220 more than last year. France sent us 340,273 parcels, while we sent her 185,056. No other Foreign country and no British colony approaches these figures.

The Inland Money Order business continues to show a slight increase, 9,334,296 Inland orders having been issued for £25,582,236, being 1·5 per cent. in number and 2·5 per cent. in amount over the figures for the previous year. The Colonial orders are 4 per cent. in number and 3·9 per cent. in amount, and the Foreign orders 5·1 per cent. in number and 4·7 per cent. in amount over the figures for the previous year. £798,582 were remitted to Foreign countries by means of money orders, and £1,567,420 were received from foreign countries in the same manner; of the latter amount no less than £1,015,187 came from the United States.

There was a much larger increase in the number of Postal Orders, 64,076,377 having been issued for £23,896,594, as compared with 60,681,078 for £22,759,282 in the previous year.

The business of the Post Office Savings Bank still grows by leaps and bounds. There were 11,384,977 deposits, amounting to £32,078,660, and 4,102,059 withdrawals, amounting to £25,698,296. The interest credited to depositors was £2,222,545, and at the end of the year £97,868,975 remained to the credit of 6,453,597 accounts, so that the average amount standing to the credit of each open account was £15 3s. 4d. The average cost of each transaction was 6·4d.* and the rate per cent. of the expenses of management was only 8s. 5½d. In 1886 it was 11s. 5d., and, with the exception of 1888, it has been falling ever since.

* This item appears in the appendix to the Report as a vulgar fraction, though decimals are employed in all other places.

The Stock investments were 18,090 in number and £1,185,720 in amount; the sales, 19,608 in number, and the amount realized was £1,238,491. As might have been anticipated, owing to the appreciation of Consols, the investments were fewer and the sales more in number than in the previous year. Nevertheless at the end of the year 68,949 Stock accounts remained open, representing £6,949,948 Stock, or an average of £100 16s. od. for each account.

During the year, 1,898 Immediate Annuity, 169 Deferred Annuity, and 720 Insurance Contracts were issued, and 10,024 Insurance Contracts and 16,435 Annuity Contracts were in force on December 31st.

During the twelve months under review 78,839,610 telegrams were forwarded, an increase of 10·12 per cent. over the previous year. Of these, 5,915,646 were press telegrams; 6,701,838, foreign telegrams; and 1,338,818, free railway telegrams. The arrangements for restricting the last-mentioned class have been so far extended that there are now only four Companies with whom agreements have not been concluded.

The report contains a reference to the recently established Muniment Room in the General Post Office North, of which we gave an illustration in our last number, and, as it would seem that the early history of the letter post is now receiving official attention, we may, perhaps, anticipate the publication in a future report of the results of some of the discoveries which are, no doubt, being made among the documents and books handed down, if not precisely from pre-historic days, at least from the now remote period when the Postmaster General was not called upon to furnish an annual report to Parliament. Something has been done in the present report to explain the development of the Post Office since 1840, and several pages are occupied with an interesting historical outline of the transmission of money by postal and telegraphic orders. The Money Order System is rather more than a century old, and is therefore, entitled, according to a well-known Horatian canon, to be regarded with special honour. It was originally suggested in 1791 by an accountant of Crutched Friars, and the Postmasters General and their staff were in favour of its adoption, but the legal adviser of the Department doubted whether the Postmasters General had power to adopt it, and the scheme was not taken up officially for 47 years. But in the meantime six clerks of the roads came forward with a "Money Letter" plan of their own, and the Postmasters General not only sanctioned and encouraged the venture, but bore the cost of

advertising it, and after some hesitation, of which we are not surprised to hear (for when was anything done in a Public Department without hesitation?) allowed the advices of the Money Orders to go post free.

The scheme of the six clerks came into operation on October 1st, 1792, but six years later they gave it up as it had involved them in a loss of £298, besides interest. The business then passed into the hands of other officers of the Department, and when, in 1838, the Government determined to undertake the Money Order business, the surviving proprietor obtained more than £400 a year by way of compensation, and a larger sum was paid to a fortunate officer who was in possession of the Money Order business in Ireland.

Although Sir Rowland Hill suggested an arrangement for Colonial Money Orders as long ago as 1843, nothing was done until 1849, and even then the difficulties proved insurmountable. During the Crimean War, however, the Army Post Office issued Money Orders, and the system was extended in April, 1856, to Malta and Gibraltar. In 1859, an arrangement was made with Canada, and in 1868 the first Money Order Convention was concluded with a foreign power—Switzerland. As our readers are aware, Money Orders are now exchanged with nearly all foreign countries which make any claim to civilisation.

We began this brief *résumé* of some of the more important features of the report with a reference to the conspiracy of silence with which it seems to have been received by the editors of our newspapers. But if these gentlemen have not given their readers the same amount of information about the Post Office as in former years, they have opened their columns to a considerable number of complaints and suggestions which the publication of this report has evoked. It does not fall within the province of this magazine to defend or to criticise the policy of the Department, but as regards suggestions for improving the service of the Post Office it ought never to be forgotten that many most important improvements have been suggested by "outsiders." The Penny Post, the Money Order system, and the Post Office Savings Bank were all proposed by persons who had no official experience, though it may fairly be doubted whether any of these schemes, with possibly the exception of the Penny Post, could have been successfully developed by the original proposers without assistance from officers within the Department. And we do not suppose that with all its claims to the support and confidence of the public, the Post Office might not be made

even more useful than at present by the adoption of further suggestions from "outsiders." Many of the plans recently set out by correspondents of the newspapers are, however, too crude to be useful, and the majority of the complaints which have been published to the world are either absurd or evidently capable of easy explanation. At one time the Postmaster-General's report included refutations of some of the more unfounded complaints which reached the Department, and, if we may hazard a suggestion of our own, there would be no harm in an occasional return to the former practice in this respect.



SCENE—ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND.

YOUNG CURATE (on his first visit to London): Constable, can you tell me where I can get a stamp?

CONSTABLE (with sarcasm): They *might* be able to oblige you across the road, sir.

[From *Morning Leader*, 3rd May, 1896.]

Early Post Office Days.

IV.—MEN OF NOTE, AND OTHERS.

NEXT to Rowland Hill, Frank Ives Scudamore and Anthony Trollope, I suppose Edmund Yates must be considered as one of the best known men connected with the Post Office during the past half century, or so. I remember being introduced to him by Scudamore, whom he always called "Frank," but I never knew him intimately, although there is a circumstance which led me to take more than a mere passing interest in his career. I succeeded to one of his London correspondentships something like thirty years ago, and I highly valued the connection, not simply because Yates had preceded me in it, but because he, in turn, had been preceded by none other than Shirley Brooks, and my gifted and brilliant countryman, Angus Reach. I never could rise to an adequate appreciation of Yates's novels, and it seems to me that what may be called his "Official" Novel, *Wrecked in Port*, which was inscribed to Frank Ives Scudamore, is crowded with useless characters simply in order to enable the writer to drag in the names of official persons in some ludicrous sense or other. Thus, we have "Old Ashurst, Head Master of the Helmingham Grammar School," "Godby of St. Vitus's Hospital," "Squire Peacock," "Mr. Chambré, an earnest Clergyman," "Mr. Trollope, a mild, gentlemanly, retiring young man, with a bashful manner and a weak voice;" "Mrs. Caddy, the housekeeper at Woolgreave's;" "Bidwell, of Brocksopp, the Liberal agent;" "Mr. Lawrence, the miller and churchwarden;" "Mr. Cunynghame, who represented his own firm in Scotch goods—a very pushing young gentleman, and a wonderful fellow to get on;" "Farmer Jeffery;" "Old Tom Bokenham, of Blott's Mills;" "Miss Parkhurst;" "Tom Boucher, the draper;" and a host of others. The story always struck me as being very poor stuff, and, indeed, I should be inclined to say the same of most of the series to which it belonged. But if Yates's novels fall below expectation, the same cannot with justice be said of his *Recollections and Experiences*, which are amongst the very best of their kind which have ever been published. There is a chapter entitled, "Early Days in the Post Office," which contains some interesting bits for present day official men.

It is as nearly as possible fifty years since Yates entered the Post

Office, he being then barely sixteen years of age. The chief clerk of that day was an elderly gentleman, "who had the reputation of being a little thick and cloudy after luncheon." His room communicated with that in which Yates, and a number of other juniors were employed, and, entering the latter one day, "flushed with lunch and rage," he caught Yates in what he supposed was the act of creating the "row," which had disturbed his mid-day meal. "What the devil's this row?" he exclaimed, and turning to Yates, he continued: "Oh, it's you, is it, sir? Please to recollect you're not now on the boards of the Adelphi!"

Colonel Maberly was Secretary of the Post Office when Yates entered the service, and we have the following characteristic portrait of the gallant Irishman:—

"He used to arrive about eleven o'clock, and announce his arrival by tearing at the bell for his breakfast. This bell brought the head messenger, whose services he arrogated to himself, and who, being a venerable-looking and eminently respectable personage, probably well-to-do in the world, was disgusted at having to kneel at the Colonel's feet, and receive the Colonel's dirty boots into his arms with the short adjuration, 'Now, Francis, my straps.' He wrote a most extraordinary, illegible hand, and perhaps for that reason scarcely any holograph beyond his signature is to be found in the official records. The custom was for certain clerks of recognized status, who had a distinct portion of the official work in their charge, to submit the reports which had been received from the Postmasters or District Surveyors, on complaints or suggestions of the public, to the Secretary, and receive his instructions as to the course to be pursued, or the style of reply to be sent. This performance we used to call 'taking in papers to the Colonel,' and a very curious performance it was. The Colonel, a big, heavily-built, elderly man, would sit in a big chair, with his handkerchief over his knees, and two or three private letters before him. Into a closely neighbouring seat the clerk would drop, placing his array of official documents on the table. Greetings exchanged, the Colonel reading his private letters, would dig his elbow into the clerk's ribs, saying, 'Well, my good fellow, what have you got there—very important papers, eh?' 'I don't know, sir; some of them are, perhaps.' 'Yes, yes, my good fellow; no doubt *you* think they're very important: *I* call them damned twopenny-ha'penny! Now, read, my good fellow, read!' Thus adjured, the clerk would commence reading aloud one of his documents. The Colonel, still half engaged with his private correspondence,

would hear enough to make him keep up a running commentary of disparaging grunts, 'Pooh! Stuff! Upon my soul,' &c. Then the clerk, having come to the end of the manuscript would stop, waiting for orders; and there would ensue a dead silence, broken by the Colonel, who, having finished his private letters, would look up and say, 'Well, my good fellow, well?' 'That's all, sir.' 'And quite enough, too. Go on to the next.' 'But what shall I say to this applicant, sir?' 'Say to him? Tell him to go and be damned, my good fellow!' And on our own reading of these instructions we had very frequently to act."

Such were the amenities of official life in the Maberly days, but a very different state of things set in when Rowland Hill became Secretary. Yates came early into contact with the Great Reformer who advised him, as a means of bringing his animal spirits to a proper level, to *walk* down to the office daily, instead of riding on the St. John's Wood omnibus. I'm afraid he did not take this advice, although he formed, in later years, a very high opinion of his chief, whose uniform kindness towards him he is not slow to acknowledge. Nor is he slow to emphasize the cordial hatred which existed between Sir Rowland and Anthony Trollope, although the former was "far too cautious and reserved ever to put his likes or dislikes into print." Not so the latter, who, in his *Autobiography*, confesses that he was "always an anti-Hillite, acknowledging, indeed, the great thing which Sir Rowland Hill had done for the country, but believing him to be entirely unfit to manage men or to arrange labour." That Trollope had the courage of his opinions, no one will deny; but he had also a belief in them which almost exceeded his courage. "It was a pleasure to me," he continues, "to differ from him on all occasions; and, looking back now, *I think that, in all such differences, I was right.*" There are very few of us, I imagine, who can say this, and very few of us, I hope, who would say it if we could. Speaking of the feuds—the "delicious feuds," which existed between the two men, Yates says: "Trollope would bluster, and rave, and roar, blowing and spluttering like a grampus; while the pale old gentleman opposite him, sitting back in his arm-chair and regarding his antagonist furtively under his spectacles, would remain perfectly quiet until he saw his chance, and then deliver himself of the most unpleasant speech he could frame in the hardest possible tone." Trollope's failure to obtain the Assistant Secretaryship, for which he had applied, helped to hasten his retirement at the comparatively early age of fifty-two. He retired in a pet, in fact, although,

as it turned out, it was the best thing he could have done for his literary reputation, which was greatly enhanced by the greater freedom he enjoyed during the fifteen years he survived his retirement. Yates took a very low view of Trollope as a possible Assistant Secretary. "Such an appointment would have been worse than fatal. The proverbial bull in the china-shop would have been a tame and harmless animal compared to Trollope in the Assistant Secretary's chair." Still, he had a high opinion of Trollope both as a man and a novelist, and is at pains to recount many little acts which redound to his credit as a kindly friend and a generous foe. But it is of Frank Ives Scudamore that he writes with affection as well as gratitude :

"F. I. Scudamore, afterwards so well-known for his management of the Government Telegraphs, for which he obtained a C.B.-ship, was at that time a fellow-clerk of mine in the General Post Office. Some years my senior, he had already attracted my admiration by my knowledge of the fact that he was already an accepted contributor to *Punch*, many most admirable sets of verses from his pen having appeared therein. I shall have other opportunities of mentioning Mr. Scudamore, but I may here place on record my opinion that, of all the men I have known in my long experience, there was scarcely one to beat him. His powers of organization at the height of his career were confessedly wonderful; he was a sound classical scholar; wrote by far the best 'light' verse of any man living; was a most effective speaker; and had the keenest sense of humour. His versatility was marvellous; he could persuade a Chancellor of the Exchequer into disbursing millions, and turn out a political parody with a lilting *refrain* which would be quoted throughout the provincial press."

And this is what he wrote in the *World* on the announcement of poor Scudamore's death :

"Frank Ives Scudamore, C.B., the news of whose lamented death comes to us from Constantinople, was one of my earliest, best, and dearest friends. Some years my senior, he took interest in me from a very early period of my career, and had opportunities, which he never neglected, of doing me substantial service. I well remember how, with my literary ambitions, my admiration was evoked when I learned that Scudamore was a contributor to *Punch*, in which he published many excellent sets of verses. . . . He made his mistakes and had his failures, as who has not? But they shall find no record here. These words are dedicated, in all affectionate

regret, to the memory of one of the cheeriest, merriest, clearest-brained, largest hearted sprites that ever drew the breath of life."

Another man who fired Yates's enthusiasm and drew forth his gratitude was the late John Strange Baker, for many years head of the Buildings Branch of the Secretary's Office. To Baker he admits that he owed his business training, his love for English literature, and many of the happiest hours of his life. "It was," he says, "a critical period with me just then; for though, during my school days, I had imbibed a taste for reading in a small way, the fact of becoming my own master, and the introduction to the grosser pleasures of London life, had almost extinguished it, and I was degenerating into rather a rowdy *farceur*, a senseless, sensuous, funny-story-telling, practical-joke-playing kind of cub, when I was rescued by my official apprenticeship to John Baker. . . . My friend was an admirable master of official style, and had the power of marshalling his facts and expressing himself in concise sentences, which must have been specially grateful to our Chief, Colonel Maberly, who abhorred what he called 'slip-slop.' Gifted with a large stock of patience and toleration, gentle, kindly, full of fun himself, and with a keen appreciation of humour; an excellent official guide, and a charming private friend, he was essentially a man to obtain influence over a youth of my earnest, eager temperament, an influence which was always wholesomely and beneficially exercised." Those who, like myself, remember John Baker, will find in this description a most faithful picture of the man and the official. I fancy he did not long survive his retirement, and when he died there were a good many men, both within the Post Office and without, the poorer by one staunch friend, whom to know was to love.

That Yates should have divided his friendship, at this time, between John Baker and James Kenney, showed a certain catholicity of taste, to say the least, and a disbelief in the copybook sentiment that "evil communications corrupt good manners." For Kenney was, according to Yates's own admission, of very different calibre, both in mind, body, and brain, from Baker, and of very different habits too, I should imagine. He was the eldest son of Kenney the dramatist, "a strange, weird, little man, with bright eyes and shaven cheeks and stubbly black hair, looking something between an actor and an abbé, although there was considerably more of the actor than the abbé about him." He was a brother of Charles Lamb Kenney, who achieved considerable distinction with his pen, and from whom he "cribbed" most of the stories with which he was wont to amuse

the men of the Secretary's Office of that time. He was thought to have a very pretty wit, until it was discovered that he was simply a funnel through which his brother's genius came pouring whenever the tap was turned on. I remember Kenney very well—"Jim," as he was usually called. He was employed in what was then called the "G. C. B.," and he would constantly come round to the Circulation Office to have what he considered a "knotty point" cleared up in some case or other. He was, like the Chief Clerk of Yates's early days, "a little thick and cloudy" at times, and his heavy, well-waxed moustache, trained out to a single hair, used to impress me as a beardless youth very considerably. Yates speaks of him as always carrying a black bag about with him, in which were contained portions of a brass machine on which he exercised his mechanical ingenuity during official hours, scraping and filing it until he set the teeth of all the men in the branch on edge. I remember a story about that bag which Yates does not give. It was said to have been brought to the Office, one morning by a stranger, crammed with official papers, and when Kenney was sent for by the Chief Clerk, and an explanation demanded, he gasped out, "Heavens! Where's the ducks?"

Another chum of Yates's in those days was a man whom he calls "Pitt," whom I think I shall not be far wrong in assuming to be Pitt-Bontein, late Postmaster of Gloucester. Yates describes him as the most audacious practical-joker he ever met, a man of the most charming manners, and the most perfect *sang froid*. Nothing ever upset his balance, and he could perpetrate the most daring hoax without altering a muscle of his face. This is illustrated by the well-known story of "Pitt" going into Holloway's pill shop, near Temple Bar, on one occasion, and tearing up and down between the counters like a lunatic, in order to demonstrate the value of the pills and ointment in the cure of "bad legs of forty years' standing." There was the story, too, of the "very last bananas of the season," when "Pitt" went into a shop in the Strand, and dragged the proprietor from his tea right out to the street in order to question him whether there was no probability of his receiving "another batch" of the luscious fruit! I spent an evening or two with Bontein at Gloucester some five and twenty years ago. He was living then next door to a soda-water manufactory, and I remember how he plied me with that invigorating beverage! I think it was there I heard the story of some Post Office imp having poured the contents of a bottle of blacking over some member of the public passing

below, who complained to Bontein of the outrage. The latter took a sheet of foolscap and a pen, in order to take down the particulars of the occurrence, and when the "complainant" declared himself unable to say whose blacking it was—whether Day & Martin's, or Warren's, or Carr's—he (Bontein) lectured him most severely on daring to make so serious a charge on such imperfect information!

Yates did some very useful work in connection with the Telegraph Transfer, which he very happily describes as follows:

"My duties were pleasant, and thoroughly congenial. The engineer, in proposing a certain extension of telegraphic accommodation, would report that difficulty might possibly be experienced in 'getting consent,' as we used technically to call it, for the erection of poles or carrying the wires over certain property. This might mean on public roads, or private lands, across gardens, through streets, or over chimneys. I was then despatched to see how the difficulties could be smoothed. I took up my quarters in the place, harangued mayors and corporations in council assembled; presented myself before local magnates in their libraries, on their lawns, even in the midst of their shooting parties when time pressed; sat with old ladies, and dissipated their fears of the wires proving lightning conductors, and importing the 'electric fluid' into their bedrooms; persuaded invalids that the sighing of the wind through the wires, instead of being an annoyance, had an æolian harp-like quality of soothing; laughed, chaffed, persuaded, cajoled, threatened—when necessary; but generally got my way."

I think it was Yates who told the story of the old lady who entreated that the wires might be removed from her chimney, as she could no longer stand the dreadful language passing over them, *especially at night time*. No doubt this referred to an "Irish night" in the House of Commons, although Yates did not suggest such a possibility! In the pursuance of these duties he (Yates) remarks that he had the best of friends in his chief, Scudamore, and the kindest of allies in the engineer of the South Western District of England, Mr. W. H. Preece, and in Mr. T. H. Sanger, head of the Telegraph Office in Ireland, "one of the most genial, generous creatures that ever drew breath." With the completion of this work Yates retired from the Post Office service, and soon after he started *The World*, which was the making of him. I remember the prospectus being issued, and looking upon it as a joke worthy of Pitt-Bontein. Yates himself admits that it was generally voted "very clever and extremely impudent." But the thing soon caught

on, and there it is to this day—a property worth some thousands a year to its fortunate inheritors. If there *must* be “Society” papers, *The World* will probably always be an easy first amongst them.

Most people nowadays think of Scudamore as connected with the Secretariat only; but I remember the time when he was Receiver and Accountant-General. One of my first acts on entering the Service was to insure my life, and I remember the notice sent to me on the subject was signed by him, which leads me to remark that he was chiefly instrumental in obtaining the concession in the matter of premiums and deductions from salary, which has made insurance so much easier than it would otherwise have been to many men. This concession, which was threatened with extinction by—I think—Robert Lowe, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, has been extended to all members of the Civil Service Insurance Society, and has thus become a blessing to the whole Civil Service. At one time, when there was comparatively little either to receive or to account for in the Post Office, there was both a Receiver-General and an Accountant-General; and, if I remember rightly, the former office was held by one Hyde. I forget whether Scudamore was the first official in whom the two offices were united, but I believe he was instrumental in introducing many changes into the accounts, and in getting up the history of the account-keeping of the early days. He was a man who could extract poetry even out of figures, and make the driest subject interesting by the touch of his genius. To him succeeded George Chetwynd, who was the first Controller of the Post Office Savings Bank. Scudamore was generally credited with the introduction of these Banks, but he was always careful to point out that his colleague and successor had a large share in the matter. I suppose it was here, as in most cases of the kind, the system was the outcome of the united wisdom of many minds, including that of the late Sir Charles Sikes, of Huddersfield, who took a life-long interest in the subject of Savings Banks.

The Savings Bank was established in 1861, and I think I can just remember that it was first carried on in a long room of the old building, looking down upon the central hall, the same in which, some years afterwards, an exhibition of telegraphic apparatus was held, under the superintendence of that funny little Irish genius, W. A. Lyttle. The Bank soon overflowed the narrow limits of its early home, and migrated to St. Paul's Churchyard, where it was “warehoused” for several years, and whence it gradually extended into Queen Victoria Street. Where it will be fifty years hence it

would be rash to predict, unless the inevitable decentralisation shall have set in before that time. I had some experience of Savings Bank work in the very early days, being one of a corps of extra-duty men from other departments, which included J. J. Cardin, J. C. Badcock, T. C. Bokenham, and some others, whom I cannot now recall. The work consisted in computing interest and balancing summaries, and was paid for by the piece. The "averages" in those days were adjusted to the lowest capacity, so that a moderately smart man could make a very good thing of it. Indeed, it was only the other day that Tom Bokenham was reminding me that the only complaint ever made against us was that we did too much work, or, rather, earned too much money! But I disliked the work all the same, and I have often thought, since, that if I had a mortal enemy on whom I wished to be revenged (which Heaven forbid!), I should put him to computing interest in the Savings Bank. But those were the days when the *Res angusta domi* had to be considered, and one had to pocket a good deal besides the "tenpences" earned at extra duty. The amenities of the situation were not overwhelmingly agreeable, either in respect of persons or surroundings, and I remember one of the chiefs calling me a "drivelling idiot" when I was trying to impress him with the fact that there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in *his* philosophy. That gentleman is in retirement now, and I hope he has reflected on the unkindness of that remark. But, whether or no, I have long since forgiven him. One of the sprightliest fellows in the Bank at that time was Arthur Vinall, now Postmaster of Leeds. Alas! he has grown aldermanic now, and must, like some of us, be looking forward to the approach of the *grand climacteric*. The Bank has been very greedy of Controllers, having had no fewer than six during the thirty-five years since its establishment. It was when George Chetwynd was Controller that my clever countryman, Andrew Halliday, made play on his name in an article entitled, "My Account with her Majesty," which appeared in *All the Year Round*, and was reproduced in various forms to the extent of half a million copies or more. Halliday's description of the receipt of the acknowledgment of his first deposit by a five-shilling depositor is worth reproducing, even after an interval of five and thirty years:

"Lor', George," she says, "it's a letter, 'On Her Majesty's Service'; whatever can it be about? I shouldn't wonder if it was the water rates, for you know the man has called three times, and"—

"There, let's open it," I says; "that's the best way to find out

what it's about. It's all right, Susan," I says, "it's a letter from the Postmaster-General."

"And whatever does *he* want?" Susan says.

"Oh, nothing," I says; "he only writes to say that five shillings have been placed to my credit in the books of his department."

"Well, it's very condescending of him," Susan says, "for so little."

"Well," I says, "it's a guarantee that it's all right, and there's his signature, 'Geo. Chetwynd.'"

"Cheat-wind!" Susan says; "are you sure it's all safe, George?"

"Safe as the bank," I says, "and safer; for the Queen, the two Houses of Parliament, and all the taxes are security."

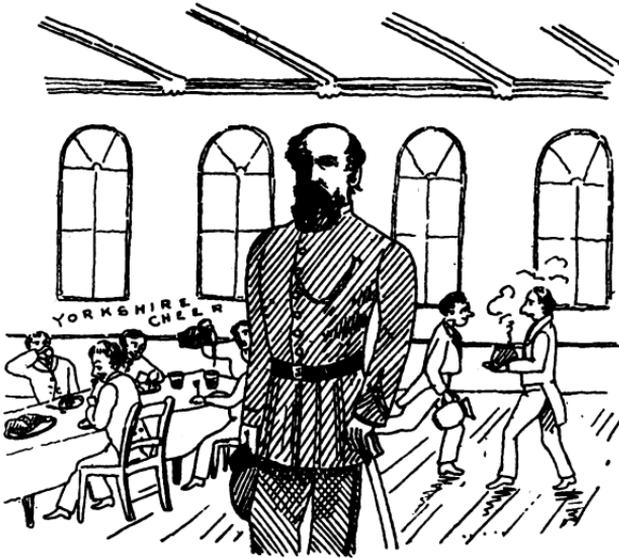
I believe the paper was officially circulated throughout the country, and there can be no doubt that it led to a large accession of Savings Bank business. Poor Halliday! he died too early for his many friends, and for the many social reforms he advocated by his gifted pen. The last I saw of him was in the chair at a house dinner of the Savage Club, when I was the guest of my old friend, George Henty. Chetwynd was succeeded at the Bank by Alfred Milliken, whose name was subjected to numerous variations on the part of illiterate depositors, "Milkman" being, I fancy, the most frequent. Christie Thomson, who succeeded Milliken, had also to put up with the occasional indignity of being called "Kirsty," but that must have been at the hands of his compatriots amongst the depositors.

Chetwynd was Receiver and Accountant-General during the troublous times of the telegraph transfer, and had to share with Scudamore the odium of those inevitable "irregularities," which probably hastened the end of both. He had plenty of courage, and was a fighting man in the best sense of the term. I remember looking in upon him one evening (as was my custom), to find him engaged in a "delicious feud" with my predecessor at Manchester, and I shall never forget the glee with which he read out a portion of his report in which he referred to the Postmaster of that great city as a "Sub-Accountant." I have often thought since that I would have given anything to hear the remarks of John St. Lawrence Beaufort when he read that report. I fancy they would have been "strong," to say the least. But Chetwynd was a kindly fellow in the main, chivalrous to a fault, and there are not a few in the service to-day who ought to think of him with something more than gratitude. That he was able goes without saying; and that his ability was given ungrudgingly to our great service is equally certain. He was

succeeded by George Richardson, who earned his spurs in the Savings Bank in the early days. The Receiver and Accountant-General's office has produced many able men since Scudamore's day, but none better worth knowing than the three men who have held the Cashiership during my time—Charles Burgess Fyfe, Harry Brown Wilkinson, and John Mitford. Fyfe was a countryman of mine, and one of the most genial fellows that ever lived. He was a keen sportsman, and owed his sad end to a too enthusiastic devotion to the "gentle art," which he practised on his native Speyside during most of his holidays. Wilkinson, familiarly called "Billy Wilks" in the early days, was the best of all good fellows, and wrote a "fist" which must have been the envy of all who had the privilege of receiving his cheques. I had a letter from him, from Brighton, not long before his death, which was a wonderful production for a man considerably over seventy. John Mitford has been so recently the subject of eulogy in the magazine, that I need not say more than join in the best wishes of his friends for a long and happy retirement in his native "North Countree." But, thinking of these three men, has often set me wondering whether there is anything in the handling of money which goes to the making of a "right good fellow"!

Of Money Order men I have had but a small acquaintance; but I can remember that Frederick Rowland Jackson was Controller when I entered the service, and I believe he is on the pension list to this day. He must be almost a nonagenarian, I should imagine. The Money Order Office may be said to have "taken it out of" the pension list, for I believe there were until quite recently no fewer than three Controllers on it, viz., Messrs. Jackson, Prall, and Hawkes. The latter, I remember in the Savings Bank in the early sixties, where also his successor, T. J. Hanley, the present Controller, as well as the Assistant Controller, John Manson, may be said to have graduated. It is just twenty years since Hawkes was appointed Controller of the Money Order Office, and about six years since he retired. Amongst the men of the early days was one Palmer, one Farmer, and the great Croke, whom everybody knew, and from whom Yates derived the character of "Muster Croke" in his *Wrecked in Port*. When the old Money Order Building in Aldersgate Street was rased in order to make way for the G.P.O. North, the deportation of the staff to classic Clerkenwell, of which so much has been heard, took place. Thus a link with the past has been severed, and the place which knew the Money Order Office in the early days knows it no longer.

Speaking of the Money Order Office reminds me that Sam Walliker, late Postmaster of Birmingham, was connected with that branch of the Service. It is just fifty-five years since he first entered, and I think his service must have extended to, if it did not exceed, half a century, when he retired. Walliker worked very hard during the early years of his service, being at it both early and late inside the Office as well as outside, and I believe it was of him that the story was told that his children asked their mother one day who the strange gentleman was who came to dinner on Sundays! He did a good deal to re-arrange and simplify the Money Order System in the



early days, and for this he was rewarded with the Postmastership of Hull, which he took up in the beginning of 1864. He was a strange combination of postmaster and philanthropist, and I remember visiting him on one occasion at Hull, when I found his room at the Office filled with fish and flowers, ready to be distributed to sundry poor people in the town. He used to take these poor people for trips in the country, supplying them—even the old women—with pipes to smoke, and other luxuries to which they were more or less unaccustomed. During his stay at Hull he established a Post Office at the Docks, and asked his friend, Sam Court, then Postmaster of Derby, to compose a song to be sung by a full chorus of fishermen and mariners on the occasion. This effusion, each stanza of which

described a distinct branch of Post Office work, was cleverly illustrated by Augustus Forrest, then Surveyor's Clerk of the North Midland District, and afterwards Surveyor of the Eastern District. Here is the opening stanza :—

“Ye jolly tars of valour full,
 Who hail from Kingston-on-the-Hull,
 I'll sing you a song of a rare John Bull,
 So Hurrah for the Hull Postmaster !
 He is as brave a volunteer
 As ever gave vent to a Yorkshire cheer.
 Every one of his staff
 Can work and laugh,
 For well they know 'tis no vain boast,
 That never will *Sam* desert his *Post*,
 So Hurrah for the Hull Postmaster !”

And here is the penultimate stanza, illustrating the Telegraph Branch of Official work :—

“An absent messmate would you hail,
 When you've no time to write 'per mail,'
 A message swifter than the gale
 You may send by the Hull Postmaster.
 With a needle and a bit of wire
 He can draw from the clouds the lightning's fire :
 Nay, 'tis no chaff,
 For the *Telegraph*
 Is the modern mail coach for you and me,
 Its driver is Electricity,
 And its guard is the Hull Postmaster.”



We can imagine how this performance was given in true Wallikerian style, and I should say that it was perfectly unique as an accompaniment to such a prosaic operation as the opening of a Post Office.

During his stay at Hull, or rather during his Postmastership of that town, Walliker was a good deal employed in connection with the transfer of the telegraphs, and especially in connection with the valuation of the telegraphic rights of the railway companies. He was all over the kingdom in a single week in connection with this work, which seemed exactly to suit his mercurial temperament, and he only descended upon London at intervals, and in the most meteoric fashion. His energy was resistless, not to say consuming, and that he ever lived to tell the tale of his triumphs is to me inexplicable. After he had settled down once more in Hull, he was, in 1881, appointed to the Postmastership of Birmingham, from which he retired about ten years later. He was under a surveyor at first, and I remember how he complained to me on one occasion, with no little warmth, of his practice of "skinning" him. I was incredulous, until it was explained to me that this referred to the practice of enclosing official papers in wrappers, which are sometimes called "skins." On another occasion he was virtuously indignant when another surveyor spoke of him as "One of *my* Postmasters." He was very proud of the number of "variants" upon his name used by the public, and had the envelopes addressed to him framed and glazed, and hung up in his room. Here are one or two of the funniest specimens out of a collection of a hundred or more: "Walleark," "Wallaky," "Walliquer," "Wollica," "Vallicker," and "Sir Wallicker, Esq." Busy man as he was, he was always full of other people's business, and I remember when the "Practical Officers" were in session at Bushey, he was called away to attend to some matter affecting "Pat" Harrington, at one time of the Secretary's Office, and latterly Postmaster of York, to whom he acted as a sort of guardian. On his retirement he went to India for the winter, hoping to breathe more freely in that climate, and to get rid of his terrible cough, in which I could fully sympathise with him. I heard of him away up in the hills, attending balls and other entertainments of a festive character, from which it was evident that he had succeeded in mastering his complaint for the moment at least. But, by the irony of fate, he was carried off by quite another trouble, having died of fever at Darjeeling on May 2nd, 1892, at the age of seventy. Poor Walliker! He was a good

soul and a true, if a trifle fond of being in evidence on all occasions.

I have spoken a good deal about Postmasters in these notes ; let me say a single word about Postmen before I close. On one occasion a City man, arrayed in white gaiters, came to me to complain that some postmen in Gresham Street had laughed at him in passing, and made an objectionable remark, current at the time, "He's got 'em on." I sent for the men on the spot, when they stoutly denied that the remark had any reference to the complainant, but was pointed at a monkey who was performing some antics in the street. I have always had the gravest doubts about that explanation, but the complainant accepted it graciously, not to say gratefully, and went his way ! Apropos of Christmas boxes, which are to the front just now, I once said to a worthy old Letter Carrier, on one of the best city walks, "Of course you never ask for a Christmas box, R—— ?" "Oh ! no, Sir ; I just take off my hat and say, 'I wish you a merry Christmas, gentlemen all.'" He was a worthy old soul that postman, and could never get off his mind that I had once helped him to place one of his sons out in the world. He went a good way round to pay me a visit at Manchester on one occasion, a delicate little attention which I valued very highly.

My story is now ended. I have been greatly encouraged in the telling of it by the letters I have received from numerous kind friends in all parts of the service ; and if I have succeeded in amusing some, without offending any, I am abundantly rewarded for what, after all, has been a labour of love.

R. W. J.

Note.—I have pleasure, as evidencing the wide-spread interest created by our magazine, in acknowledging the receipt of a letter from Mr. W. Aspinall, Postmaster of Houw Hoek, Cape Colony, expressing the pleasure with which he read the sketch of "Tom" Angell in last quarter's issue. Mr. Aspinall was in the Crimea with Angell and Henry Mellersh, under whom he was in charge of the transport for the conveyance of the mails to and from Kamiesch (the French Port) and to the different divisional camps when the mail steamers arrived from England. He had not seen Angell since 1859, when he visited him at his apartments in Piccadilly, he being then a bachelor.

R. W. J.



COLONEL DU PLAT TAYLOR, C.B.

A Veteran Volunteer.

THE *Gazette* of September 1st contained the announcement that Colonel Du Plat Taylor, C.B., had retired from the command of the 24th Middlesex (Post Office) Rifle Volunteer Regiment, and thus severed the link which, after his retirement from the service of the Department twenty-six years ago, had kept him in touch with his old comrades, and with many others whose acquaintance he had made as Colonel of the Post Office Volunteer Regiment. To the old friends, as well as to those of more recent date, this step has been the source of much regret, for Colonel Taylor had won the esteem and admiration of all ranks.

His career has been an eventful one. Having passed through Sandhurst with the intention of entering the Army, he served in various capacities in Ceylon and the Mauritius. Subsequently entering the Post Office, in 1853, he served as Private Secretary to

Lord Stanley of Alderley and the Duke of Montrose, and afterwards took an active share in the arduous work connected with the acquisition of the Telegraphs by the State. In 1870 he quitted the Civil Service to become secretary of the East and West India Dock Company.

It will be chiefly, however, as a most active and energetic volunteer that Colonel Taylor will be remembered by those who served with him both while he was an officer of the Civil Service Rifle Volunteers and afterwards while occupying the position in the 24th M.R.V., which he has just relinquished.

When the present volunteer organization first came into force, Colonel Taylor took an active part in raising Post Office companies of the Civil Service Regiment. In January, 1860, he was appointed a Captain, and in June, 1865, a Major of that regiment; but when in 1867 he had raised a new regiment, composed exclusively of Post Office employés, he left his old corps and was gazetted Lieutenant-Colonel of the new 49th Middlesex Post Office Rifle Volunteer Regiment on March 2nd, 1868. The number was more recently changed to 24th, and Colonel Taylor attained the honorary rank of Colonel in 1885, and was made a member of the Order of the Bath.

The excellent state of discipline and efficiency to which he brought this regiment, which includes in its total of 1,216 the two Army Reserve Companies organized by Colonel Taylor for postal and telegraph work with the Army, both of which have seen active service in Egypt and the Soudan, is well known throughout the Department, and has been testified to frequently by successive Postmasters-General and Secretaries; but none of these testimonies has been couched in more complimentary and touching terms than the reply from Mr. Spencer Walpole to Colonel Taylor's farewell letter to him. We feel sure that both these letters, which we are permitted to reproduce here, will be read with interest by many of our subscribers.

2nd September, 1896.

DEAR WALPOLE,—

In giving up the command of the Post Office Volunteers, I wish to thank you for the support which you have invariably given me, and which I am sure you will extend to my successor—my friend Thompson.

I cannot tell you how deeply I feel my severance from all the good fellows in the Regiment, and I can honestly say that the 8th August, when I said "Good-bye" to them on parade, was the saddest day of my life. There is not a better corps of Officers in Her Majesty's Service, and I cannot speak too highly of the conduct of the Rank and File. No other Regiment of Volunteers could take close upon 1,000 men into camp—as I have done for several years—without one single case of irregularity being brought under notice, and you should be proud to be the permanent Chief of men of this stamp. I am satisfied that the formation of this Regiment has, in many ways, been of much benefit to its members.

I am very sorry that my connection with your great Department, which I joined as an extra clerk in July, 1853, has now come to an end, but I hope I may have left many friends who will not forget me in my old age.

I enclose a copy of my "Farewell" to the Regiment.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) J. L. DU PLAT TAYLOR.

4th September, 1896.

MY DEAR DU PLAT TAYLOR,—

I have received, with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret, your kind letter of the 2nd inst., on the occasion of your retirement from the command of the Post Office Volunteers.

You are good enough to thank me for the support which you say that I have invariably given you. But I am afraid that you overrate what I have done, for long before I reached the Post Office, the 24th—under your command—had attained a state of efficiency and prosperity, which rendered it independent of any support which any outsider could give it.

But, if you have overrated the support which I have given you, you can hardly exaggerate the deep interest which I have taken in the regiment. I agree with you in thinking that its existence confers the greatest benefit on the Service. It is the means of drawing men together who would otherwise have no common ground on which to meet. It increases, in doing so, the sympathy and good fellowship which it is so desirable to promote between the different ranks of our great Service. It supplies our younger members with a training

which must improve their health and their physique. But, above all, the high tone which has pervaded its ranks under your command must have tended and must tend to raise the tone of the whole Service. I deeply feel with you that I ought to be proud—as I trust that I am proud—of being the permanent chief of a Department which can produce such men.

I readily understand the keen regret which you so evidently feel at laying down the command of a Regiment which is second to none in the whole Volunteer Service, and I hope that, in your retirement, you may have, at any rate, the satisfaction of seeing that your old Regiment maintains under your successor—Colonel Raffles Thompson—the same high qualities which it has continuously displayed under your command.

Pray rest assured that, while the members of the Regiment will always be ready to hear good tidings of their old Commanding Officer, other members of the Service will have an equally warm welcome for their old colleague; and, though I cannot claim the privilege of having been your colleague, none of them will hear with greater pleasure of your health and happiness than

My dear Du Plat Taylor,

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) S. WALPOLE.

Two Snow-Storms in the South of Scotland.

1895.—GALLOWAY.

“*Twixt Wigtoone and the Toun of Aire,
And laigh down by the Cruives of Cree,
You shall not get a lodging there,
Except ye court a Kennedy.*”



POST OFFICE men having been allowed in a previous issue of this Magazine to fight their battles with the snow over again, it may not be unacceptable to readers if a brief description of the effects of the storm on the railway service in Galloway be now presented. The doings of the railway companies have an interest for the majority of people in all ranks of life, and officials who have to do with mails have a special interest in the railway system of the country. This article deals with the comparatively short, though important, line, between Stranraer and Dumfries, as it was at Creetown and Kirkcowan that the snow accumulated to such an extent as to block the line from the 6th to the 11th of February last year.

It may not be generally known that when a block of the kind in question occurs on a railway, the resources of the Company for dealing with such a state of affairs are directed by the heads of the two branches known as the Locomotive Department, and the Permanent-Way Department. The latter is bound to clear the way, and the former to co-operate towards that end, and to restore the circulation of the system. The moment appearances indicate a coming snow-storm of unusual magnitude, the officials of the Locomotive Department attach a snow-plough to one or more engines, and run up and down the line to prevent the forming of drifts. The permanent way men are kept ready to be conveyed to any part of the line, as a “breakdown gang,” where the formation of a drift which the plough cannot disperse is feared. The one department uses the plough, the other the shovel. This was what the officials did on the 6th. First of all a snow-plough was sent over the line from Stranraer to Castle Douglas, and instructions were given that, after turning the locomotive for the homeward journey, the plough should be run back to Stranraer. Castle Douglas was reached

all right, but there the first of a series of difficulties was encountered, when the turning-table was approached. The heavy fall of snow had blocked the points, and covered the table; and it required the services of all the men who could be obtained, to perform in upwards of an hour an operation which ordinarily occupies five minutes. Once round, the locomotive steamed off for Stranraer, with the plough in front.

The storm was then at its height, and soon the men on the footplate were as white as millers. All went well until, on nearing Creetown, the men were astounded to find that their further progress was rendered impossible by a huge drift, in which the mail train from Stranraer to Dumfries was embedded. This mail train runs in connection with the up Limited Mail to London, and, for the convenience of the wide district it passes through, a post office sorting carriage, known as the Galloway Sorting Tender, is attached to it. The obstruction was more than the officials had bargained for; and the fact that so much snow had accumulated at the spot in the space of a few hours proved that the storm was one of the most violent character.

The railway-men did not, however, give way to despair. Procuring another locomotive, the two were coupled together, and the drift was charged full tilt. Four times the attack was repeated, but the men might as well have tried to bore through Ben Nevis. Retiring from the contest, the officials did everything in their power for the comfort of the unfortunate passengers in the embedded train, whom they reached after strenuous exertions. The station being upwards of a mile from the nearest village, refreshments could only be supplied on a limited scale; but at three o'clock in the morning some hot coffee and bread were conveyed to the train and handed round. The officials in charge of the locomotives had to exercise the greatest economy in the consumption of fuel and water, as, hemmed in as they soon were, the food and drink of their fiery steeds could not be renewed in anything like adequate quantities. At one watering one of these locomotives could drink about three tons of water. Precaution had to be taken to save every gallon that was not required for actual work, and so carefully was this attended to that the fires were damped whenever a locomotive was taken out of action for a few hours' rest. The fires were even drawn and allowed to burn out on the footplate. Every device known to the engineers was adopted to prevent the waste of what was so essential to the locomotive. If the water in the boiler had been allowed to fall below a certain point the fires of the engines, considering the state of the weather,

could not have been relighted with safety. To rekindle the fires in such circumstances was no easy matter, as, the frost being intense, it was necessary in the first place to melt the ice in the boiler, and this was done by building fires of old wood under, and round, the locomotive.

The object of this precautionary measure having been accomplished, old sleepers, and everything that would burn, were thrust into the fireplace, to boil the water and get up steam. It was also necessary, when subsequently attacking the drift after the permanent-way men had made some holes in it, to avoid damaging the plough, or throwing the whole concern off the metals. It would have been equally unfortunate if the plough had rushed at the drift with too great force, as it is not an uncommon experience for the "biter" to be "bit," by itself becoming embedded in the snow when attacking in such a fashion. On the 8th, three powerful locomotives with a snow-plough attached, arrived on the scene from the locomotive headquarters of the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company, and in the course of the same evening the mail train was dragged out of the wreath and taken to Castle Douglas. The section between Newton Stewart and Glenluce was still, however, blocked, and a goods train was known to be embedded in a drift somewhere in the vicinity of Kirkcowan. The clearing of this section proved a very trying job, and it was not until the 11th that the main line was cleared from Stranraer through to Dumfries.

The public, not being there to see, know very little of the exhausting nature of the work which falls upon railwaymen when a serious interruption of traffic of the kind in question takes place. The work is of such a character that the men engaged upon it must be content with little or no rest, and be prepared to endure great hardships.

The writer is aware of a case in connection with this storm in which an energetic servant of the company, who was in charge of the locomotives on the spot, performed eighty-seven hours' duty without sleep, during the period of the block. This is equivalent to eleven days' work of the average Post Office man. It is questionable whether, notwithstanding the high sense of duty which is known to prevail in all ranks of the Post Office service, a similar case in any crisis in the history of the Department could be quoted. It should not be overlooked that during the whole time stated this devoted railway servant was exposed to a storm of almost unparalleled severity.

Turning to the concluding narratives of the local officers of the

Department, the first that claims attention is one written by Mr. Robert McBryde, the mail officer in charge of the Galloway Sorting Tender attached to the train which was snowed up at Creetown. From their carriage the officers on duty appear to have closely observed everything that occurred, and Mr. McBryde says, "Some of the incidents were alarming, and not without danger, but as they ended, almost without exception, without any serious injury to the victims, they can now be viewed from a humorous standpoint.

"When the train came to a standstill, an elderly lady, thinking that the train had stopped at the platform, opened the carriage door and jumped out, only to find herself in a wreath of snow, which covered her; and to make matters worse, one of her feet became entangled in the wires connecting the distant-signal. A commercial gentleman at once jumped into the snow to effect her rescue, and it was with a deal of exertion that he succeeded in extricating her foot. After regaining the compartment, the lady was loud in her praises of the gentleman's prompt attention, and he, no doubt feeling elated in presence of his fellow travellers, kindly handed the lady a small flask of whisky, inviting her to take a little, as it might revive her. To his bewilderment, and the amusement of the other passengers, she emptied the flask without a cough. Attention was then directed to the gentleman's face, which had assumed a look of injured innocence. He was probably recalling to mind the old song, 'The charming young widow I met in the train.'

"Shortly afterwards, an old man in funereal garb thought he could make his way through the fields to the village, but almost immediately found himself deep in snow, his black silk hat only being visible. He was rescued, but stimulants could not be extended to him, as the contents of the only flask in the train perished in the preceding case.

"A lady who was being assisted through the snow from the train to the station, fainted on the way, and, on recovering consciousness, expressed a wish to be allowed to lie down in the snow and die. She was advised to postpone this intention, as the nature of her surroundings were not conducive to her doing so with any degree of comfort. She was assisted on to the engine, beside the fire, where she remained till daylight, when she was taken to the station. It is to be hoped she is now in a happier frame of mind, and not yet quite tired of the world.

"We, ourselves, had a rough experience on our way to Creetown village. Being unaware of the low-lying ground, hollows, and frozen ditches, we were more than once in difficult straits, and some of our

number were at times lost to view. We, however, stuck to each other as a party, and had no serious mishap."

The above extracts are given with pleasure, and if any English colleague fail to appreciate the "pawkiness" of the style, perhaps the departmental medical officer for the district will do for him what was once recommended for Scotchmen to enable them to assimilate the ponderous English joke, before age had dulled their faculties.

Mr. Johnston, now Postmaster of Morpeth, transmitted very



QUEEN STREET, NEWTON STEWART.

interesting accounts of the condition of affairs at Newton Stewart, of which he was then Postmaster. Having heard that the mail train was embedded at Creetown, he determined to make an attempt to reach it by road, to see whether anything could be done to get some mails past the obstruction, and on to Castle Douglas. He started with a couple of horses, two men, and two of his postmen, to drive the seven miles. In several places he found the snow on the road five feet in depth. After a long struggle he reached the sorting carriage, but failed in his purpose through obstacles which could not be overcome.

Mr. Gibson, the Sub-Postmaster of Gatehouse, says that the frost was so intense, that when the Mail Contractor reached Gatehouse, with the mails from the Castle Douglas line, the bags were frozen so hard that they "stood straight up on their ends like boards." He bears testimony to the excellent service rendered by the Contractor under extremely trying conditions. The mail-gig had to be dispensed with, and Mr. Gibson tied the mail bag in the middle, as well as at the end, in order that the contractor might secure it to the horse which he rode.

Several other reports might be referred to, but as it is not possible to do justice to all in the limited space of a magazine article, the writers will have to take the will for the deed, assured that their contributions are highly appreciated.

J. B. HEGARTY.

Surveying Branch, Scotland.



A PUBLIC ROAD IN TONGUELAND, KIRKCUDBRIGHT.

(From a photograph.)

Oddities of the Post Office.



UNDER the above heading the *Daily Chronicle* of the 1st September publishes an interview with a Post Office man on the subject of the Postmaster-General's Report and its omissions. The disappointment in press circles at the absence of the usual "copy" in the shape of curious incidents moved the editor of the *Daily Chronicle* to make special enquiries as to the cause of this departure from old established custom, and to obtain for the edification of his readers that portion of the Report which we will call "the might have been." But he unfortunately sent his representative to the wrong quarter, for almost all the stories and incidents he was enabled in this way to publish in his paper were chestnuts which had already done duty in previous reports. If the representative of the *Chronicle* had consulted a few back numbers of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, or better still if he had interviewed the Editor, his column would have been more up to date, and possibly his oddities a little odder than they were. We might have shown him for instance the following letter which was addressed to the postmaster of Portsmouth from a person in Canada. The letter in itself is amusing, but in the circumstances we are not surprised to learn that there was actually no delay in delivering it. For even in a military town such as Portsmouth, tailors with two cork legs each cannot be in every street.

"M——

" Man. Canada

" 11 May 1896.

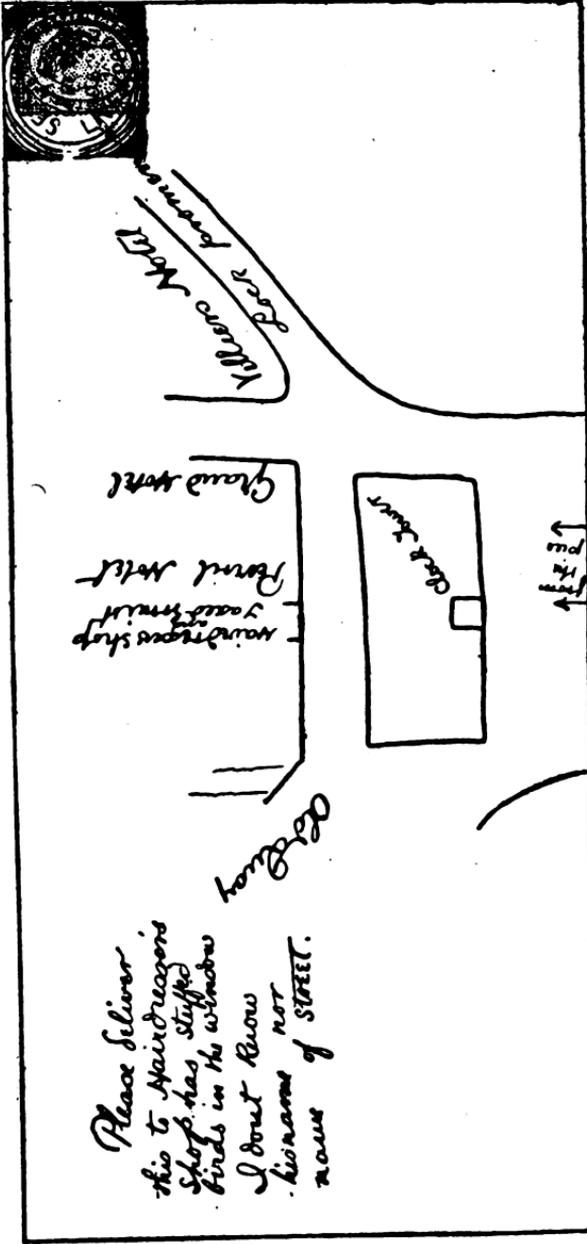
" To the Postmaster of Portsmouth.

" Dear Sir

" I am troubling you by asking you a favour I have a uncle name William Goddard a tailor he has cork legs I do not know his address will you please forward the enclosed letter to him he lived in 1893 in the Mile End somewhere aside of a chapel oposite a Hotel and Butcher shop at the top of the street at the bottom is narrow near the tramway and a tobacconist at the corner hoping you will do this favor for me I remain yours truly S—— P——

" Please put a little mucilage on the stamp "

And perhaps it did not require a Sherlock Holmes to unravel this problem. A letter posted at Seacombe, Liverpool, bearing neither



"A PRIZE PUZZLE."

the name of the addressee, the name of the street, nor the town of destination, was delivered without delay to the rightful owner. It was intended for Douglas, Isle of Man, as was clear to officers knowing Douglas, but the sender omitted to insert the town.

A short time ago there was a correspondence in the *Times* under the heading "Post Office Smartness," and in a letter from Mrs. Berkeley Hill, of Mount Pleasant, Harrow-on-the-Hill, it was stated that her daughter received a letter from a friend in London with no other address than the following:—

" To Rita, whose surname and house
All signify some rising ground,
And Pleasant is the Mount she calls her home,
And near a famous boys' school to be found."

Mrs. Hill adds that her daughter is the grand niece of Sir Rowland Hill. "He would have greatly appreciated the perfection to which the Post Office has attained." We are not sure whether Mrs. Hill intends to be sarcastic, and we rather agree with the *Westminster Gazette* that "no harm would have been done if no account of what happened had been published. But, as it is, probably the Duke of Norfolk will have to set up a special Enigma-Solving Department at St. Martin's-le-Grand. The whole thing will become an amusing game, at which we can all play at the cost of a penny postage stamp."

More amusing than these address puzzles are the contents of some communications sent direct to the Department by the public. A man claimed two pounds compensation because a letter, containing no value, from the woman he was engaged to marry, had failed to find him. In his own words, "That letter I would not have missed for anything—through that I lost a wife. After returning from a nine months' voyage my intended wife was not to be found and I do not consider £2 full compensation."

Another applicant propounds the following puzzle:—"Does a person lay himself open to any penalty if he habitually, intentionally and deliberately places a postage stamp on a letter or other missive with the Queen's head upside down?" Whilst yet another, leaving the Queen's head alone, plays ducks and drakes with the Queen's English, as follows:—"I earnestly solicit your Lordship's most ingenuous and momentous attention concerning the culpable negligence and gross inadvertence of the Post Office people at—— in the elimination of their duties; and I trust that your Lordship will

incontinently take such procedure as will lead to a lesson never-to-be forgotten in these parts."

Here are some oddities in Savings Bank correspondence, consisting of extracts from applications made respecting the following regulation: "A Depositor in the Post Office Savings Bank of the age of 16 or upwards, may nominate any person to receive any sum (not exceeding £100) due to such depositor at his death."

(a) "Having been asked by a lady to become nominee for her male servant in respect to his Savings Bank account, I have consented to do so subject to your reply: *i.e.*, am I qualified—*an officer of the Post Office living at home with my parents?* John Jones."

(b) "so that I can nominate a person in fear of death."

(c) "to receive any sum that may be due to me from the Department in the event of me dying according to rule thirteen and oblige."

(d) "Please send me an ominous form."—*i.e.*, *nomination form.*

One of the best Savings Bank stories, which, though an old one to many members of the Department, may be new to readers of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, is the following. An application was received from three trustees of a friendly society addressed to the then Postmaster-General, Lord Wolverton. From the alteration in the letter it was apparent that much discussion had arisen as to the proper manner in which a letter to His Lordship signed by three persons should be commenced. "My Lord" was evidently considered ungrammatical, and the epistle was eventually commenced "Our Lord."

After Office Hours.

A Surrey Alp.

PROFESSOR TYNDALL, though he aspired to both titles, was more respected as a scientific man than as a politician. In both capacities, however, he is remembered chiefly, by the average man for his ability to arouse passion and irritation whenever and wherever he ventured upon a platform or into print. And the particular controversies in which he engaged, and to which he added a bitterness all his own, are still dividing us the one from the other. But, like the hardest-hearted among us, Tyndall had his soft side, and in his love for hills and mountains he became as a little child, and won the sympathy of his strongest opponents. Even Mr. Gladstone, in the most trying hour of the Home Rule controversy, playfully recalled to his bitter antagonist's mind the memorable occasion when the Professor offered to be his guide in an ascent of the Matterhorn. And now that Tyndall is dead, this passion for the hills is the common ground on which we can all unite to do him honour. The one book, out of many which he wrote, that our children will most certainly read, is *Hours of Exercise in the Alps*. He was the conqueror of many virgin peaks: he was the first to set foot on the summit of the beautiful Weisshorn, and he was only just beaten on the Matterhorn by Mr. Whymper. He also discovered Hindhead, the Surrey Alp, and it is quite possible that a generation hence, when big hotels and casinos and steepgrade railways cover this delightful spot, that the share he took, against his will or intention, in popularising Hindhead will count more to his credit in the eyes of Londoners than all his brilliant achievements in the popularisation of science. The fight he had with his neighbours over the erection of a stable, and the screen which he erected to hide these same neighbours from his sight, are even now remembered more vividly in these parts than his quarrels with the Bishops on the origin of matter, or the coarse abuse that he levelled at Mr. Gladstone. Ask a Hindhead native, as I have done, what the Professor was celebrated for, and his answer will probably bear out what I have said. Country folk who are engaged in the more important work of agriculture don't think much of literary persons. Sir Wemyss Reid, in the September number of the *Nineteenth Century*, tells a charming story of how he was warned against a literary career by an old friend of the family. The friend told him that writing to the papers would do him no good, adding:—"I mind there was a very decent friend of mine, auld Mr. Forster, the butcher in the Side. He had a laddie just like you, and nothing

would serve him but he must go away to London to get eddicated, as he called it; and when he had got eddicated he wouldn't come back to his father's shop, though it was a first-class business. He would do nothing but write and write and write, and at last he went back again to London, and left his poor old father alone, and *a've never heard tell of that laddie since!*" The "laddie" was no less a person than John Forster, the author of the *Life of Goldsmith* and the *Life of Charles Dickens*. And Matthew Arnold has told us of a pilgrim to the Lake District, who, by the way, was a clergyman, who once asked the poet Wordsworth whether he had written anything besides the *Guide to the Lakes!*

I have said that Tyndall discovered Hindhead; but this statement

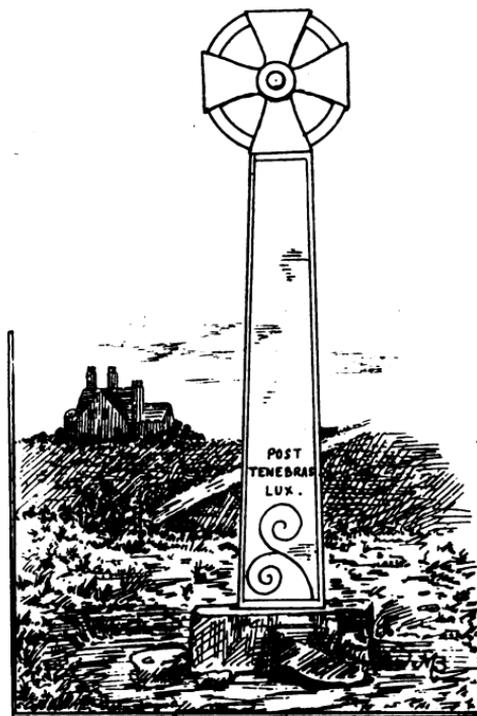


“THE ROYAL HUTS” HOTEL, HINDHEAD.

merely means that he built himself a house there, and then proceeded to write the place up in the newspapers and magazines until the modern builder found it worth his while to cater for the people who were attracted by Tyndall's advertisement. For a century, of course, the place had been known well enough, situated as it is on the main Portsmouth road, but it was regarded rather as a spot which it was desirable to rush past and hastily forget, than as a health resort possessing any life-giving qualities. In fact, at this time of day you are never allowed to forget the life that was taken away here on September 24th, 1786. On that date an unknown sailor returning from Portsmouth was set upon by three men, who robbed him of the money in his possession, murdered him, and threw his body over into the dark valley called “The Devil's Punch Bowl.” The murderers were arrested the same day at an inn where they were selling their victim's clothes; they were hung in chains at

Hindhead, on a spot which is called to this day "The Gibbet," and the scaffold remained for a long while with the three skeletons hanging therefrom to strike terror into the hearts of the inhabitants of the district, and more especially of the travellers on the London and Portsmouth road. At "The Royal Huts" Inn, which is close to the scene of the tragedy, there hang some painfully realistic and shockingly executed pictures of the various scenes in the crime. But, bad artist as the painter undoubtedly was, he possessed imagination. For the best and last of the series is a picture which shows the London coach at night passing the scaffold, and the scared and frightened appearance of the horses, and above all, the averted eye of the driver, give to the work almost a touch of genius. There is no doubt that the unknown sailor, by his death, conferred a boon on Hindhead, which the place has not been slow to benefit by. Two memorial stones have been erected near the scene of the tragedy itself, while in the neighbouring churchyard of Thursley, yet another stone bear witness to the villainy of Messrs. Edward Lonagan, Michael Casey and James Marshall. The story heightens the effect of the scenery on one's mind: one finds oneself again and again sinning against all the laws of historical perspective, and giving an exaggerated importance to this very sordid crime. If you can for a moment forget the murder, and possess yourself of an "averted eye,"—and it is difficult to do so with these memorial stones always staring you in the face,—the view from "The Gibbet" is sufficiently inspiring. You are 903 feet high. All around you and beneath you are vast rolling downs—"great immutable waves, repeating to the eye the movements of the ocean,"—heather-laden plains, and in the far distance, the hazy outlines of—shall I call them so?—"peaks," which are well-known to every Surrey climber. Here you see Leith Hill, St. George's Hill, the Hog's Back, the Devil's Jumps, Hambleton Hills, and the Hampshire Downs; indeed, wherever the eye wanders on a bright and sparkling June morning, "the mountains skip like rams and the little hills like young sheep." You talk of the view from the Rigi, and all the time you have never seen what is close to your own door—a mountain,—not fifty miles from Hyde Park Corner! And the air which blows upon you is the air of the Alps, flavoured by pinewoods and scented with heather. No wonder that Tyndall said that there was nothing to compare with it except the air of the Bel Alp. If you are a visitor to Hindhead, you find yourself always gravitating towards "The Gibbet." Just as at the seaside, one can never get away from the shore; so at Hindhead, one is always seeking the highest ground, the spot where the full effect of air and scene are most apparent. For a day or two, if you have come straight from the heart of London, the silence of the place has upon you the effect of a blow on the head. The silence stuns you, and it is only little by little that you adapt yourself to your new environment. The proximity of the Portsmouth road helps you in this process. I am by no means a lover of lonely places, where one can forget man and all his works. Such places.

oppress me, fill me with an unrest, a longing for something in direct sympathy with me ; and a bit of picturesque high road in a world of beauty, always acts as a safety-valve to my nature. An old highway, moreover, has a history. It ministers to the imagination ; and when you have, as is the case with the road which skirts "The Gibbet," the most picturesque of old inns in the near neighbourhood, it is no difficult task to call up in your mind some scenes of Old England. It is a road "with a past ;" and as you look along the thin white



"THE GIBBET," HINDHEAD.

(Professor Tyndall's House in the Distance.)

line which stretches,—and, in the sunshine, sometimes dances,—from "The Royal Huts" to "The Seven Thorns" at the end of the common, the only fit accompaniment to the scene would appear to be a coach and four, and footpads and highwaymen.

When in company with Angelina, I stayed at a boarding-house in the neighbourhood for a few days, in the early summer—it was difficult to keep me off this Portsmouth road. Angelina stigmatised my tastes as barbarian and cockney ; but she, too, in time, yielded to the fascination this road exercises. "The view from it," Angelina

said, "is equal to anything in Pairthshire." Angelina herself comes from the Highlands, and her previous acquaintance with mere English mountain scenery had been restricted to the view from Notting Hill, and the new experience impressed her much. Moreover the association of heather and mountains had the effect of loosening her tongue considerably and of intensifying a Highland accent, which is sufficiently difficult for me at all times and on the level; but which becomes utterly unintelligible when she is possessed with a great thought, or is 900 feet above the sea level. We were sitting, one morning, on the highest of "The Devil Jumps," and I ventured to remark to her that there was no doubt as to her own origin, and her answer reminded me of the story of the Scotchman, who was gazing at Niagara, when he heard close to him some accents which he had been familiar with from childhood. "Ye come from Tweedside!" said he, smiling in a friendly way to the stranger. "And what am I the waur o' that!" was the unfriendly but characteristic reply.

Angelina had a sneaking fondness for the bar of "The Seven Thorns." This is a less aristocratic inn than "The Royal Huts," and, moreover, only the *bonâ fide* traveller or working man refreshes himself there, as we had reason to know. We arrived at our boarding-house in time for dinner on Saturday night, but forgetting the disabilities under which these establishments suffer, we had omitted to bring with us the beverage of our choice. We wandered outdoors after dinner, discussing the terrible situation, when in the distance, against the bluest of blue landscapes and half surrounded by trees, we caught sight of this picturesque inn, and we were at once possessed with an idea—we would fetch our own liquor. In answer to our enquiry at the bar the man said, "Yes, he kept wine—it was port—and it was eighteen pence the bottle." "But your best," I interposed, "what is that?" He replied, eyeing us both all over, and not quite making up his mind whether we were tramps, harvesters, or hoppers. "Yes," he said, "he had another kind, but *that* would be two shillings the bottle;" and all the time he went on packing up the eighteen-penny quality. I said sharply, "Then let us have the better sort." "But it is *two* shillings the bottle," argued the man, pitilessly, not insolently or rudely, but in a puzzled manner, clearly out of pity for us in naming a price so obviously beyond our means or station. We often visited him afterwards, and we found that a chat with this sluggish-minded Hampshire native was the best corrective we had ever come across to Highland pride and Civil Service arrogance.

Perhaps we were drawn to the society at "The Seven Thorns" or "The Royal Huts" more as a relief to the social atmosphere which prevailed at our own establishment; for here were a collection of the usual curiosities one meets at boarding-houses. Unmarried ladies of uncertain age, a clergyman, an inspector of schools, and a few nondescript others formed the party, and "in a loomp" they were, like Tennyson's poor, "bad." Not that the conversation at meals ever flagged, even when the clergyman and the inspector

of schools were absent. Angelina and I were mistaken for a honeymoon, so we were thoughtfully placed at a table by ourselves, but after our first dinner we became quite reconciled to our isolation. We also extracted a good deal of amusement for ourselves by doing our best during the remainder of our stay to keep up the honeymoon legend. At our small table we were only able to catch snatches of the conversation which went on at the big one. The following is not an unfair specimen of the things we were privileged to hear:

First lady, with thin, whimpering voice.—"I don't know how it is, but I always sneeze in the sun."

Second lady, with shrill ditto, intensely interested.—"Do you, really? And is it not awful when you want to sneeze and can't?"

Third lady, with enthusiasm.—"Sometimes I sneeze and sneeze, and can't stop."

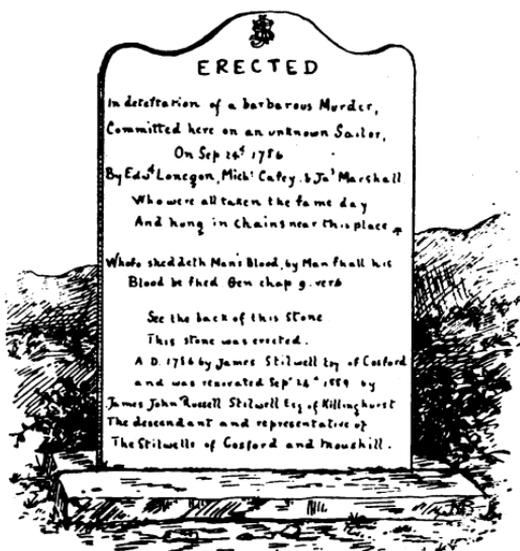
First lady, scarcely heeding the experience of her sisters, and intent still on the mystery of her own creation.—"And the funny thing with me is that when I have a cold I rarely sneeze at all."

Of course everybody was interested in the demeanour of the clergyman, though he was about as tame a specimen of the article as you could meet on a boarding-house tour. A very wise lady said to me in reference to this particular clergyman, "The clergy form a sex by themselves; they act neither like men nor women." He was asked one evening in the drawing room to read something, and he thereupon selected "a little piece," as he called it. It was Wordsworth's "We are seven," read solemnly as if it must be a revelation to us. No wonder Angelina found it livelier at "The Seven Thorns." He rode a bantam bicycle because it was safer than the ordinary pattern; but as he could ride neither up hill nor down, he found the Portsmouth road trying. And he made complaints aloud at table of the very excellent dishes which were placed before him, and, with the usual indulgence permitted to the clergy, his complaints were seriously regarded by the proprietress, who always looked very unhappy at what in other people she would have put down to their bad breeding. He had not even the excuse we make for Archbishop Trench, whose absent-mindedness was so incurable that one day, when dining with the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, at Dublin Castle, he turned to his wife, at the close of the first course, and said, audibly and sternly, "The soup is again a failure, my dear."

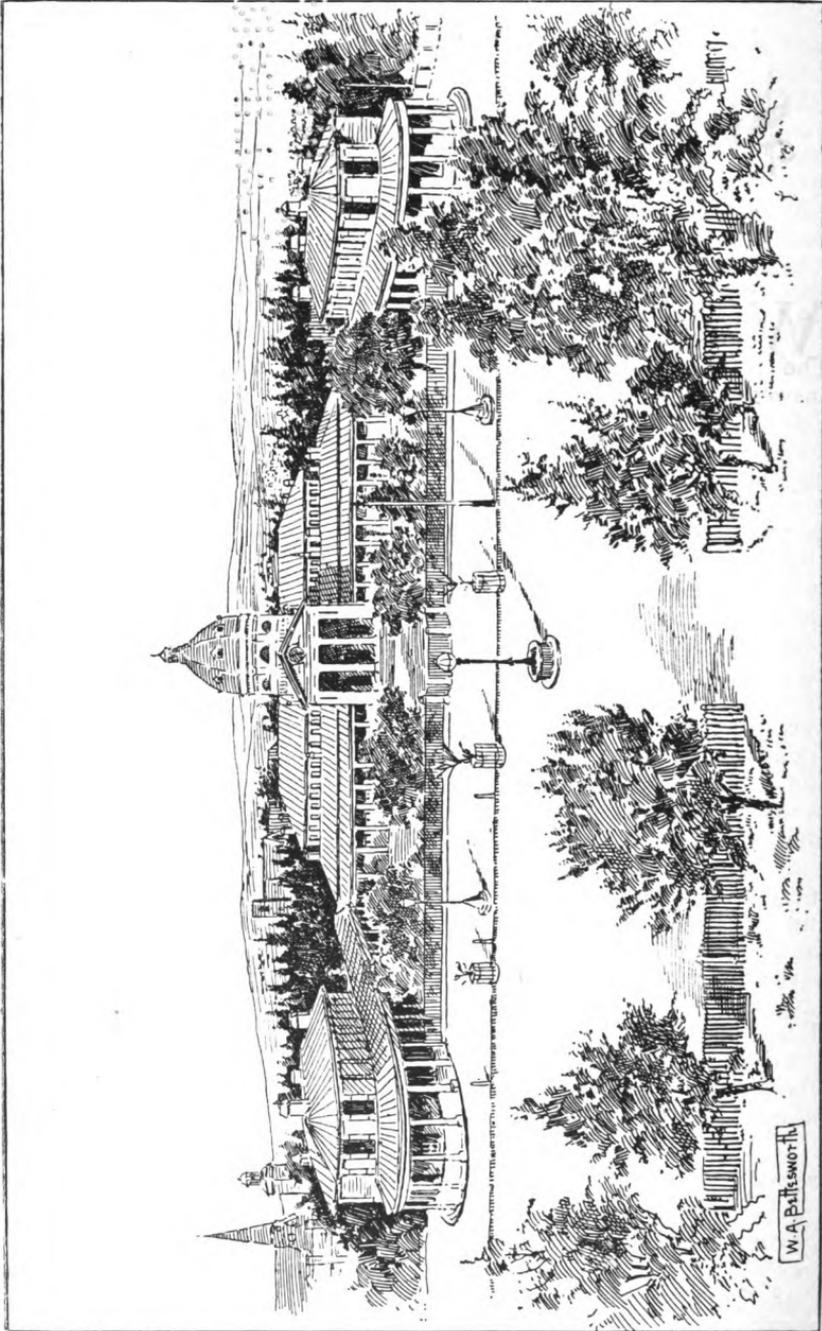
But the glories of Hindhead and of "The Gibbet" made us think lightly of the inanities of our boarding-house. At a time when all London was suffering from heat and drought we were enjoying the soft balmy air of our mountain-top, and were always deliciously cool. It was an easy walk to Liphook, one of the prettiest of Hampshire villages, and to Haslemere, of Surrey towns the most quaint and picturesque. In the space of a few days a mere introduction to the locality is all that is possible. During the short time we were at Hindhead, however, we abstained from one act—shall I call it

vandalism or the spirit of covetousness?—of which other people, who have been charmed as we were, have been guilty. We never once looked at this glorious expanse of country, as Professor Tyndall, Mrs. Humphry Ward, Frederic Harrison, Conan Doyle, and our own Sir Robert Hunter may have done, with the words on their lips, "This is none other than the gate of heaven; let us build here a tabernacle for ourselves." For reasons partly pecuniary we made no such declaration, and the best we can wish for Hindhead is that future visitors may emulate our wise reticence. I rather fancy, indeed, that could I live there all the year round, rent free, I should still be unsatisfied, for Angelina reminds me that there was one wet evening, when we both sat on the doorstep and said to each other that we would give all we possessed at that moment to be within a penny 'bus ride to Charing Cross.

E. B.



SAILOR'S MEMORIAL, HINDHEAD.



Telegraph Office.

Court House.

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, BATHURST, N.S.W.

Post Office.

[To face page 463.]

St. Martin's Letter-Bag.

Ourselves.

WITH this number we complete the volume for the current year, and we are already making arrangements for 1897. The extent of those arrangements depends, however, upon the answer given to our appeal on page 504. The support given to the Editor as the result of the appeal he made in November last has far exceeded his expectations, and has proved beyond doubt that the magazine had gained, under Mr. Beckley's management, too strong a hold upon the affections of Post Office men to permit of a change in the directorship or in the editorship affecting its continued prosperity. We have maintained with little difficulty our position; in many ways and directions we have advanced rather than retreated, and we are now in a position to ask all our readers to make a great effort to raise our circulation by several hundreds. It is a very hackneyed form of appeal, and it includes a statement which is mathematically obvious, to say that if every one of our supporters were to make it his business to obtain one additional subscriber our circulation would at once be doubled, but in the case of a big Department like the Post Office the request is not so impracticable as such requests often are. The present Editor's heart jumps within him when he thinks of what could be done in still further increasing and improving our pages as a result of any large addition to our subscribers. He leaves the matter in the hands of his supporters, and in thanking them for the assistance they have rendered him in the past, he is especially grateful to those of their number whose advice and aid, at all times freely given, have made his position as easy as it is interesting. He has only to add that although *St. Martin's-le-Grand* is essentially the Post Office magazine, the sale is no longer restricted to officers of the Post Office, and all persons who are interested in the Department and its work are invited to become subscribers.

The Mail Services.

THE 7th of July was a notable day in the Packet Branch at Head Quarters, for it was the latest day for receiving tenders for the Mail Services to and from India, China and Australia, the present contracts for which terminate simultaneously in January, 1898. As the subsidies now paid for these services amount to upwards of £445,000 a year, it will be seen that the interests at stake are considerable. For days the office was haunted by unhappy-looking tenderers vainly endeavouring to pick up some hint of what

was going on, and departing with an air of ever-deepening dejection. The *Times* announces that the tenders are under consideration by the Government, and that the Governments of India and the Colonies interested are being consulted; but no particulars have transpired.

Meanwhile several matters connected with the services have been discussed in the newspapers. Sir John Leng suggested that the Indian Mails ought to be carried as fast as the American Mails, to which Mr. Hanbury, on behalf of the Treasury, replied that, even if so fast a service were practicable, the cost would be very heavy; and he pointed out that the estimated loss on the Eastern Mail Services is already £164,500 a year. A promise was however given that the Government would try to secure the highest speed consistent with due economy.

Another suggestion has been made which, if carried out, would certainly revolutionize the service. It is that a railway should be built across the Arabian Desert from Port Said to the head of the Persian Gulf and ultimately to Karachi in India, thus bringing India within ten or twelve days of England. This scheme is perhaps hardly likely to be realized, at any rate within the term of the next mail contracts; but it seems probable that considerable changes in mail communication with the Far East will be effected by the great railway which the Russian Government is building across Siberia. There is already talk of a service from Ostend to Vladivostock on the Pacific Coast in eighteen days. But a port that is frozen up in winter is not likely to be the permanent terminus of the railway; and it is believed that a branch line to Pekin is in contemplation, bringing that city, when all the connections are completed, within about ten days journey of London, whereas now it can scarcely be reached under six weeks.

Not much progress appears to be made with the scheme of a Fast Mail Service between England and Canada. It is stated that two tenders for the service were sent in to the Canadian Government and that Sir C. Tupper's ministry, before going out of office, accepted the one made by Messrs. Allan, the contractors for the existing slow service. The present ministry at Ottawa, however, is looking into the question afresh, and its decision has not been announced. Doubts are, it is said, felt whether the proposed service would be worth to the Dominion the promised contribution of £150,000 a year.

Parcels for Japan.

SOME months ago, a good deal of cheap sarcasm was expended on the Post Office for sending parcels to Japan via Germany. Are there not, it was said, plenty of British steamers going direct to Japan? The critics apparently thought the Post Office had only to pack their parcels in a box and dump it down on the quay at Yokohama. But the Department considered it necessary to arrange with the Japanese Post Office for the delivery of the parcels at the other end. The Japanese were slow in coming to an agreement

with us, although they had consented to exchange parcel mails with the Germans, who, on the other hand, were quite ready to send to Japan, with their own parcels, any parcels received from Great Britain. A roundabout service seemed better than no service at all; so, pending more direct communication, the British Post Office forwarded its parcels for Japan, first *viâ* Germany, and more recently, under special arrangement, by the German Mail Steamers from Southampton. In future, however, all obstacles having been removed, the parcels will travel to Japan by the most direct route, namely, across Canada by the Canadian Pacific Service and across the Pacific by the magnificent steamers of the "Empress Line." The time of transit will thus be reduced by about a fortnight, and at the same time the postage will be considerably lowered.

The Tobacconists' Grievance.

ONE of the latest accusations against the Post Office is that it is ruining the tobacco trade. A memorial has been presented to the Treasury, setting forth the civic virtues of those employed in the trade, and how much they contribute to the state in license-fees, rates and taxes. And yet, owing to the facilities afforded by the Post Office and other carrying companies, purchasers are actually enabled to get their cigars and cigarettes direct from Egypt, or Malta, or Guernsey, without the intervention of a tobacconist. "Their Lordships" are prayed to put an end to such an abuse of the Post.

But, as the *Manchester Guardian* well says:—

"It is difficult to see how the tobacco trade can be given the measure of protection they seek without other trades demanding to be similarly protected. There seems no more reason why the Post Office should be forbidden to carry cigars from the Continent than that they should be precluded from carrying any other small portable commodity. The purchaser has to pay the tobacco duty just the same as if he bought the cigars from an English dealer. The extraordinary thing is that it should be possible for the consumer to pay the postage from the Continent, in addition to the duty and the price of the cigars, and still get his cigars cheaper from abroad than he can at home."

The Savings Bank Scores One.

"AT the counter of the Bolton Post Office a few days ago," writes a correspondent, "a young lady was noticed by one of the counter clerks to be in a state of perplexity as to the filling up of a Postal Order which she had just purchased. Catching a glance of the clerk's sympathetic eye, the lady ventured to enquire how she should make a Postal Order for five shillings 'payable to the Controller,' and on being asked 'What Controller?' replied 'the Controller of the Savings Bank.' The needed information was given, and in answer to a courteous interrogation, the outcome perhaps of an undercurrent of curiosity in the clerk's mind, she volunteered the statement that she had just closed her Savings Bank account, that the Controller must have 'been put to a deal of

trouble,' and that he 'had acted so promptly' that she felt she must make some practical acknowledgment of his kindness. She was informed that although the Controller would appreciate her good intentions, he would certainly return the Order. She then suggested that perhaps he might be good enough to hand it to the clerk who had taken the trouble to look into her case. The counter-clerk assured her that the Controller would be inflexible in declining to accede to her request. Reluctantly the young lady abandoned her benevolent design. Generous soul! Such gratitude, so practically expressed, is rarely shown by those for whom the Post Office willingly takes 'a deal of trouble,' and the Savings Bank Department will no doubt appreciate the kind intention, although it fails to receive the five shilling Order."

A Public-Spirited Frenchman.

A PROVINCIAL Postmaster lately received the following letter. We should perhaps explain that in France the parcel post is managed by the railway companies on behalf of the State.

77, Avenue de —, Paris.

Sir,—I take the liberty, for the sake of your countrymen, to place under your eyes the very astonishing upset in the doings of our northern railway.

Till now, I have seen, being an old man, very curious events; but I never could suppose that the correspondence trusted to the honourable English and French Post Offices could be at the discretion of a petty clerk of a railway in France.

My correspondent, Mr. F—, L— Street, of your city, forgot on the enclosed label to put the number "77" (Avenue de —). Since the railway, stopping a letter or bundle, has carriers, this carrier must look in the directory, where, being an engineer, I am noted since 52 years as J— J— B—.

Three days after the arrival of the Parcel Post, I have received yesterday morning a letter from this clerk. I went and said "But why did you not look in the directory of Paris?" "Bosh!" replied he, "that is not our business. There was no number 77 of the Avenue, the Post Carrier found you!" I took my bundle, which could have remained a long time there if I had not, for my sake, the good will of my Post Carrier. I paid 0·75 centimes for Custom House duties; I own I do not know why. Enclosed the bill. Moral—1s. 9d. paid by Mr. F—, 7½d. by me, and 3 hours lost for a bundle of English circulars. Oh, Custom House!

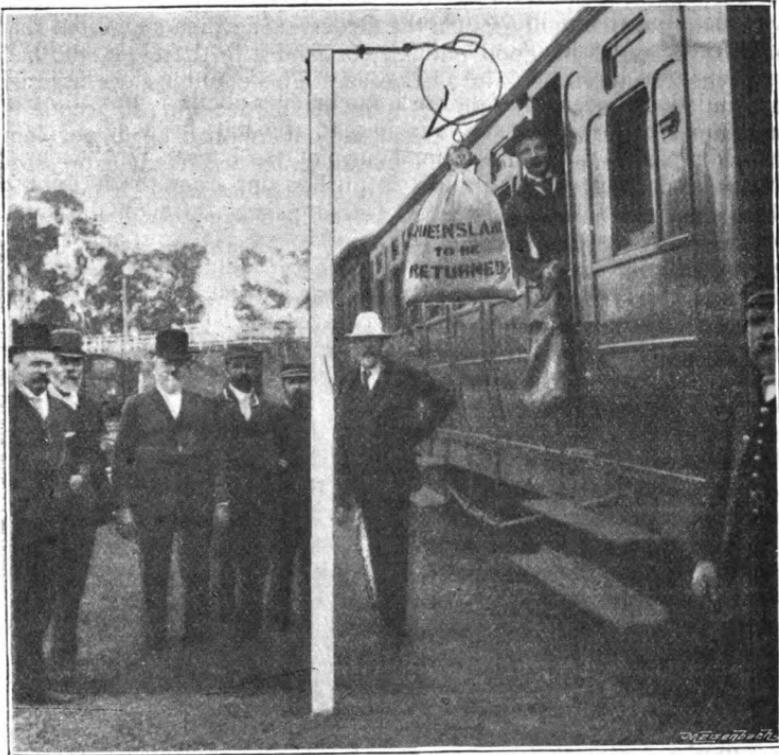
I authorise you to make of these details the use you think proper; but do, Sir, give a warning to your countrymen, not to forget to put the number of the street on parcel post, passing *unhappily* through the hands of a petty railway clerk!

I fight always against abuses. Many say, I do not care. I am amongst those who have a different heart. A man who lives for himself is a brute.

Yours respectfully,

J— J— B—.

The Queensland T.P.O.



THE travelling post office has been in existence on the southern and western railways of Queensland for many years, and is now one of the established postal institutions of the colony. As a collecting and distributing medium for the populous districts between Brisbane and the southern border of the colony it has justified its existence. The southern colonies have, of course, their travelling offices. How could a modern postal system exist without them? In some respects, however, the Queensland T.P.O. is unique in the Southern Hemisphere. In the other colonies the mail train stop at all stations, and the exchange of mail is easily managed; but in Queensland the mail trains to and from the south run express, and stop only at a few of the most important towns. Hence some method of picking up mails at places where trains do not stop is imperative, and as the mails from such places are, with a few exceptions very light, and the narrow-gauge of the railway does not lend itself to the British method of nets, etc., it became necessary to devise some simple and inexpensive method adapted to the

circumstances. After some consideration the Superintendent of Mails and the Engineer of the Railways—which, by the way, are the property of the state—devised the system which has, with some unimportant modifications, been in vogue ever since. It may be described in a few words. At each station there are posts fixed beside both the up and down lines, carrying moveable arms, on which the mails are suspended by means of an iron hoop or ring about fourteen inches in diameter, the ring being attached to the bag by a spring hook which is passed through the small rings of the bags. When nearing the posts carrying mails, an arm is pushed out from the interior of the carriage, just under the roof: this passes through the hoop, which is secured by a spring in the elbow of the arm, and is held until taken by the officer in charge or his assistant. The mails to be delivered are thrown out on any clear portion of the platform of the station as the train passes. As one distinguishing feature of this T.P.O., it should be mentioned that owing to the kindness of the London Office, which makes up separate mails for it, the English and other correspondence received at the border is at once distributed, so that places furthest from the capital have the earliest delivery, and have also later opportunities of posting.

A special trip recently made on a portion of the line with a view to testing the appliances, afforded Mr. Arthur W. Pigott, the chief draughtsman of the Locomotive Engineer's branch, who is a clever amateur photographer, an opportunity to take the picture now reproduced, which gives a better idea of the system than is possible in a short description. Whatever may be thought of the Queensland T.P.O. by our readers, most of whom are acquainted with the more elaborate English and European methods, it will have for them at least the charm of novelty.

It may also interest them to learn that the officers in charge of the T.P.O., who discharge all the duties of itinerant postmasters, receive salaries of £170, with an annual allowance of £50 to cover all travelling expenses.

Submarine Cables in War Time.

IN one of first messages which passed through the first Atlantic cable, and which was sent by Mr. Buchanan, President of the United States of America, to Her Majesty the Queen (says the *Electrical Review* of July 3rd), the following hope is expressed, "Will not all nations of Christendom spontaneously unite in the declaration that it shall for ever be neutral, and that its communications shall be held sacred in passing to their places of destination, even in the midst of hostilities."

Nearly forty years have elapsed since this message was sent. During this time cable after cable has been laid, but in spite of several International attempts to assure the neutrality of submarine cables in war time, no agreement has yet been concluded. On consideration, it is apparent that any such agreement is not at all likely to meet with general acceptance among the nations. Great

Britain stands alone in this question. To no other nation can the need of neutralising the lines of communication appeal with such force, and for none has it the same interest. With colonies and troops in every quarter of the globe; war ships and coaling stations in every ocean, and depending for her very food supply on other lands, it is useless to expect that, even nominally, the potential adversaries of England (and they are many) would agree to place themselves at a disadvantage, such as would result from guaranteeing continuity to the very means which might prove to them a source of defeat and disaster.

To those who have studied the cable routes which connect England with her possessions and with other countries, and which unite English Colonies with each other, it is not difficult to appreciate the ease with which, in the event of a war with any first-class power, the whole network of cables would be destroyed. To some of our readers we may seem alarmist in our views, but it should be borne in mind that the great network of submarine cables, through which we are daily supplied with news from all parts of the world, has been constructed since the last serious war in which this country has been engaged, and that for this reason the attention of the public has not been called by experience to the great value of our cable system during the time of stress, or to the great loss which its damage would entail. It is true that this has been indicated to us in a small degree recently. We refer to the interruptions to the cables to South Africa during the troubles in the Transvaal; although working unsatisfactorily at this critical period, the cables managed to serve their purpose to the extent of carrying the messages from Mr. Chamberlain, which saved the situation, and which undoubtedly prevented another Boer war, and possibly even much more serious consequences in Europe. The delay of telegrams and consequent anxiety also had the effect of showing the great value of reliable cable routes.

We may here refer to some occasions less generally known, from which the vital importance of submarine cables in war time can be estimated. During the Franco-German war, when the landline system in France changed hands to a great extent, a cable was laid along the French coast from Dunkirk to Bordeaux, landing at various points. Although the ship which laid this cable was accompanied by two large French war vessels, the cable was no sooner laid than it was picked up and cut by a small German gunboat. On the West Coast of South America, during the war between Peru and Chili, the Chilians cut the cables which formed the only source of communication between the various coast provinces of Peru, and later, during the insurrection against President Balmaceda's Government in Chili itself, the submarine cables were cut, thus destroying the hope of any organised action between the Government troops in the northern and southern provinces. It may not be generally known that when the first shot was fired in the bombardment of Alexandria the lines were immediately cut by the

Egyptians; and thus, for her communication with India, Australasia, China, and the East generally, England had to rely either on the overland wires, which, crossing various European countries, run through Turkey and Persia to India and the East, or, as an alternative, on the other landline, which, running through Russia and Siberia to the Russian stronghold of Vladivostock, on the Pacific coast, forms a roundabout means of communication, *via* China, with the Straits settlements; there meeting lines to Australia and India. Again, some few years ago, when great political tension existed with Russia, the cables which united Australasia with the rest of the world were interrupted simultaneously, this sudden cessation of news caused much uneasiness in Australia, and led to the immediate mobilising of the Colonial troops, the manning of batteries, and to the putting in active commission of the Australian defence ships.

There are other instances, on which we will not now enlarge; but it may be right to recall to the attention of our readers a statement made to the House of Lords by the Earl of Carnarvon, who pointed out to the House that in 1878, when there were great alarms as to a Russian war, the Russian Government had taken measures to equip ships for cutting out submarine cables. That this would have been an easy matter is obvious, when we remember, as has been already pointed out in this Journal, that in the Java seas, and the south-west part of the China Sea, there are some 3,500 miles of telegraph cable which lie in less than 50 fathoms of water, and which could be broken by any vessel carrying only the ordinary supply of chain and anchors. Now the above, as far as ocean telegraphy goes, may be looked on as ancient history; but as history is said to repeat itself, it would be unwise of us to close our eyes to such warnings. To poets and orators, a state of "splendid isolation" might form an inspiring theme; but to more practical minds, such a state of affairs could only be looked on with serious misgivings.

The New Chinese Postal Service.

THE native Chinese newspapers have recently given *in extenso* the memorials and decrees connected with the new scheme. It appears that the Board of Revenue formally brought the matter before the Emperor on March 20th. This action of theirs was in consequence of an instruction received from His Majesty, calling upon them for a report upon the project recommended two or three months previously by Chang Chih-tung, then Viceroy at Nanking, now at Hankow. The Viceroy had explained to the Emperor what immense revenues were derived from the postal administration by the Governments of Great Britain and other countries, and had also set forth the enormous advantages accruing to the general public from regular and organized postal arrangements. The so-called Imperial Maritime Customs Posts established by Sir Robert Hart, and at present in vogue between Peking and the various treaty ports, are, it is acknowledged, excellent in their way; but, not

possessing full Government sanction, were incapable of that extension which would be inseparable from entry into the International Postal Union.

After a sketch of European postal history, beginning with the year 1760, the Board submitted Sir Robert Hart's proposed rules in full. These are of considerable length, and cover very wide ground, dealing with the minutæ of postal business as well as with the more important matters of administration. To the recommendations of Sir Robert Hart the Emperor replies by the single word "Seen," and this fact alone is sufficient evidence that the Civil Service of China is assimilating the methods of Western civilization.

The Chungking Post Office.

WE have received a broad-sheet containing the tariff and regulations of the Local Post Office at Chungking, China. This private Post Office was established in 1893, and undertakes the transmission of letters, newspapers, parcels, &c., by special overland couriers, between Ichang and Chungking, two 'ports' situated in the very heart of China on the mighty Yang-tse-kiang. The modest broad-sheet in question (it consists of two pages only) is evidently the Chungking equivalent of our *Post Office Guide*. Upon opening the September number of the *Philatelic Journal of Great Britain*, we find it serving as a peg for the following piquant remarks:—

"Since our good friend, Li Hung Chang, with the treble barrelled name, left these shores, with the fizz of Crystal Palace fireworks and the cheers of an Empire echoing in his Celestial ears, we have all of us felt it necessary to get up something of the Immemorial East. A fresh lesson has come to us from far-off Chungking, whose Postmaster, the much to be venerated Lu Sui Tung, has sent us a copy of the Postal Regulations which govern the Letter and Parcel Traffic of that far-off land. Lu Sui Tung is more merciful than the home Postmaster General, for we are only required to get up a fair-sized sheet of clearly-written postal injunctions and commands, instead of the 490 closely-printed and perhaps somewhat puzzling pages of that most useful but severe volume, the *Post Office Guide*.

"Now, whether the *Post Office Guide*, like Martin Tupper and the learned Jew, Josephus, may be said to be too little read in these days, is perhaps a matter beyond the province of the pure philatelist. Extracts and quotations from it are liberally imparted to us, it is true, in gentle lectures from St. Martin's-le-Grand; but they come so much like undertaker's circulars, when we have lost a dear and valued letter or parcel, or are mourning for the bruised works of a watch that can speak to us no more, that somehow or other the temper of the public is hardly properly attuned to receive the kindly postal wisdom concealed in the bulky, and occasionally humorous pages of the *Post Office Guide*.

"*Nul est censé,*' says the law of France, '*ignorer la loi;*' and we must all, willy-nilly, get up our *P.O.G.* That being so, will the governing Powers of the Post Office (in high, good humour, doubtless, with

their three and a half millions of pure postal profit) make things easier for their devoted slaves, the British Public, by taking a tip from Lu Sui Tung, Postmaster of Chungking.

"No, we do not ask them to boil down their Guide to two pages ! All we ask is that they should imitate Lu by dropping into poetry at intervals. It is not so hard as the Permanent Officials may be inclined to think, and there must be some academic young gentlemen in the Post Office capable of a stimulating exercise in verse. With some diffidence we will give an instance. We all know, or ought to know, that unless one marks one's valuable watch or ancestral teapot '*Fragile, with Care,*' there is no compensation for us—no, not one cent, for is it not so written in the fateful pages of the *P.O.G.* ? Surely a little couplet or quatrain might be introduced into the solemn pages something after this most clumsy model :—

" ' If ever you register things that are rare,
Be sure that you stick on 'em "*Fragile with Care,*"
For if you omit this, with confidence rash,
And the railway-nets' jerks your frail property bash,
The P.M.G. 'll weep ; but *he'll give you no cash.*' "

Some Experiences of a Savings Bank Instructor.

AT the time of the introduction of Post Office Savings Banks, Mr. T. G. Ramsay, who afterwards rose to be Controller of the Department, was sent on a mission of enquiry and of instruction to the Receiving Offices in the London District, and the results of his experiences and observations were duly recorded in a memorandum book which has lately been put into our hands. Mr. Ramsay was one of those comparatively rare officials who could write English other than what H. S. C. calls "*officialese,*" and, moreover, he was not without humour or culture. It is thirty-five years ago since these observations were made, but for obvious reasons in publishing a selection from his reports, we omit the names of the offices referred to.

The following is a specimen of Mr. Ramsay's unfavourable reports : " L——. So far this is the only thoroughly disagreeable case in my varied rounds of visits. The Receiver, from my first entrance, was scarcely civil, and instead of being glad to gain information, as nearly all the others had been, he sneered contemptuously at all I said. When I remarked that he had better put the large copy of the Regulations in the window, he replied with an impudent leer, " Oh, yes ! we might certainly—that is if we chose ; but then we get so precious little, you see, for anything we do for you." As I proceeded with my explanation of the Savings Bank system, he was cross-grained, captious, and fault-finding. He alluded in an offensive manner to the extravagance of enclosing the acknowledgments to Depositors in envelopes ; he said that sending up the Certificates of Transfer as Remittances was a round-about way, giving a great deal

of trouble, and so on, throughout, he kept up a running fire of impertinence, winding up with a regular harangue about the wrongs of Receivers generally, and himself in particular. "Ah," said he, "Mr. Smith catches it nicely whenever he comes, I can tell you." It was in vain I reminded him that I was not Mr. Smith. Presently his wife appeared—a regular virago! She would have nothing to do with it—not she, indeed! No, the more they worked, the less pay they got—that they did! And, as I was trying to explain that this was not exactly in accordance with the fact of the separate allowances for Savings Bank and Money Order duty, she flounced out of the shop. I could only take leave of the Receiver after assuring him that the report of my visit could not possibly be favourable to him in any respect. I had contrived to edge in a word about the Tract and the large copy of the Regulations, and, perhaps, four copies of the latter may as well be sent. I cannot but think it most undesirable both for the public and the Service, that the various branches of Post Office duty should be in the hands of such an agent. I consider, indeed, that a sacrifice should be made in order to get rid of him. Strange to say, however, he had taken an early opportunity of opening Saving Bank accounts for his children at a neighbouring Post Office. His window was plentifully garnished with handbills about sermons by Chadband & Co., and I suspect he is either a stump-orator or a tub-preacher himself."

Very different to the foregoing is the report of his visit to another office: "A——. A complete contrast to M—— which was a common little shop in a dirty street called —— Grove, being a striking instance of *lucus a non lucendo*. The Receiver himself a character to match the place. But at A—— there were signs of comfort and opulence in the customers. Neat and buxom maidservants—sure indications of home comforts—tripping about gaily. The Receiver, though interrupted much by people on Post Office and other business, attended cheerfully to my explanations, and I appreciated his goodwill the more on finding that he actually believed that the Savings Bank duty was to be done for nothing—"philanthropically" as he termed it. He was, of course, agreeably surprised to learn that there would be a separate allowance. Four large copies of the Regulations to be sent."

Mr. Ramsay appears on several occasions to have had great success in his instructions to the fair sex. Here is one instance: "F——. The Receiver's wife heard my instructions attentively, while the man himself sat sulkily in a corner of the room. When I was about concluding he burst out with a vehement demand as to when his pay for Post Office duty was to be increased. It appeared that he had been doing all he could to dissuade his wife from attempting the Savings Bank business, and it was evident that he had sat by expecting to see her puzzled by my 'instructions.' So when he found that I made all clear and plain, his temper was too much for him, and after I told him that I had nothing to say to him, except on Savings Bank business, for which there was a separate

allowance, he left the room, calling his wife a foolish woman, and declaring his determination to resign his appointment forthwith." But Mr. Ramsay's triumph comes in here. "His wife agreed to get three copies of the Regulations posted."

"Epitaphs and Epitaphs."

"M. E. C." writes:—In your July number you ask "some other Irishman" to have his say on the question between the "indignant" one and your contributor "K. T. L." as to whether Dr. Lucas or Robert Emmet uttered certain words. Do not, however, set me down as another indignant Irishman if I point out how "K. T. L." has slipped in history, and mixed matters somewhat, when stating that Dr. Lucas, before his execution, used the words, "Let no man write my epitaph until my country takes her place among the nations of the world," and that "to this day his tomb in St. Michan's churchyard, Dublin, is a plain slab of stone."

The fact is that Lucas died a natural death, when fifty-eight, in the year 1771, being at the time M.P. for Dublin City, and his remains were honoured with a public funeral. His fellow citizens then subscribed, and

"They made a marble image,
And set it up on high;
And there it stands unto this day,
To witness if I lie."

That is, it stands in the Dublin City Hall, and rarely is its equal to be met with as a striking and dignified effort of the sculptor's art.

Dr. Lucas was a fearless politician, and got into trouble with the Irish Government; but so far from being executed, he was never even put on his trial, though his arrest and prosecution were ordered. He avoided all this in a way that seems strange to us at this day—by crossing over the sea to England, where he advanced in reputation as a physician, and earned the esteem and high eulogy of Dr. Johnson. It is true he was buried in St. Michan's churchyard, but his tomb is the reverse of "a plain slab of stone," for it bears a somewhat lavish inscription of sixteen lines! There is no record that he used the words in question, or anything like them. That they proceeded from Robert Emmet, in his famous speech from the dock, is as well established as the authorship of any other remarkable utterance, for instance that of the Lord Chancellor of England, in after years, who characterized the trial by jury, and conviction of Daniel O'Connell for sedition, in 1844, as "a mockery, a delusion, and a snare."

Very different from the public funeral, the carved tombstone, and the marble statue, were the posthumous honours of Robert Emmet. His remains were put into a shell and conveyed from the place of execution to the jail. Orders had been given that they should be kept there some hours for his friends to claim for decent burial. No application was made all the evening, and, when night fell, the prison officials carried them to a near burial ground appropriated

chiefly to the interment of criminals. In the dead of the night men came and lifted the coffin from the newly-made grave, and bore it to some more hallowed ground. The place chosen is uncertain; but that same night the incumbent of Glasnevin, a suburban village, was called from his bed to perform a burial service, at which were present two men and two women, and he has stated his belief that the coffin contained the body of Emmet. Certain it is that an uninscribed tomb was set up to mark the grave shortly after, and there it is to be seen to this day, "a plain slab of stone."

"The Travelling Post Office."

THE roving breezes come and go, the reed beds sweep and sway,
The sleepy river murmurs low, and loiters on its way,
It is the land of lots o' time along the Castlereagh.

* * * * *

The old man's son had left the farm, he found it dull and slow;
He drifted to the great North-west, where all the rovers go.
"He's gone so long," the old man said, "he's dropped right out of
mind,

But if you'd write a line to him I'd take it very kind;
He's shearing here and fencing there—a kind of waif and stray—
He's droving now with Conroy's sheep along the Castlereagh.

The sheep are travelling for the grass, and travelling very slow;
They may be at Munderoran now, or past the Overflow,
Or tramping down the black soil flats across by Waddiwong;
But all those little country towns would send the letter wrong.
The mailman, if he's extra tired, would pass them in his sleep,
It's safest to address the note to 'Care of Conroy's sheep.'
For five and twenty thousand head can scarcely go astray;
You write to 'Care of Conroy's sheep along the Castlereagh.'"

* * * * *

By rock and ridge and riverside the western mail has gone,
Across the great Blue Mountain Range to take that letter on.
A moment on the topmost grade while open fire doors glare,
She pauses like a living thing to breathe the mountain air,
Then launches down the other side across the plains away
To bear that note to "Conroy's sheep along the Castlereagh."

And now by coach and mailman's bag it goes from town to town,
And Conroy's Gap and Conroy's Creek have marked it "further down."
Beneath a sky of deepest blue where never cloud abides,
A speck upon the waste of plain the lonely mailman rides.
Where fierce hot winds have set the pine and myall boughs asweep
He hails the shearers passing by for news of Conroy's sheep.
By big lagoons where wildfowl play and crested pigeons flock,
By camp fires where the drovers ride around their restless stock,
And past the teamster toiling down to fetch the wool away
My letter chases Conroy's sheep along the Castlereagh.

(From A. B. PATERSON'S *The Man from Snowy River, and Other Verses.*)

A Dog Story.

THE most intelligent dog I know "resides" at Haxey, in the Isle of Axholme, and is named Staffa. Some years since, when his owner was appointed sub-postmaster of the village, Staffa learnt the telegraph signal of the office in less than three weeks. I was present in the office one day, and was asking the telegraph clerk how she got on with her work, when the needle began to sound. Almost immediately Staffa came trotting in with the messenger's hat in her mouth. "Why," said the girl, "that must be our call;" and so it was. The dog had known it before the clerk. To appreciate this fact it should be known that the call-signals of two or three of the offices on the circuit are so much alike in sound, that even a practised ear may be in doubt as to which is which. Staffa, however, I was assured, never made a mistake. At the time I speak of the office had been open about three weeks.

(From *Notes and Queries*.)

"On Her Majesty's Service."

A FEW months ago, the writer had occasion to pass a night at the little East Yorkshire village of Middleton-on-the-Wolds. He had with him a strong envelope of the cartridge-paper persuasion, bearing the legend "On Her Majesty's Service," and containing various circulars dealing with the "Telephone Trunk Line" work. At Driffield a change of trains was necessary, and on going to the van of the main line train, it transpired that an item of telegraphic equipment which ought to have been there was missing. Fortunately the local postman was on the platform and kindly undertook to "hand in" an "S. G.)* The writer's personal luggage consisted of a handbag and of the aforesaid envelope. Whilst the "S. G." was being written, on the top of a parcel hamper, the handbag was put down on the platform, and the envelope (for greater security) was placed in the railway company's parcel cart. At the end of the half minute or so which was occupied in the writing of the telegram, the envelope had disappeared, and a frantic rush was made to the assistant station master, who happened to be near. He suggested a visit to the Parcel Office, but without result; to the Lost Luggage Office, ditto; to the van of the branch line train, ditto. Every person on the platform was appealed to in vain; and after having kept the train waiting for about three minutes, the writer had to depart, not however without having left a solemn injunction to the effect that if the envelope turned up it was to be sent on by the next train.

When the day's work was over, enquiry was made at the railway station at Middleton and telegrams were despatched, but without result; so the disconsolate victim returned to the little inn to bewail his misfortune and to drown his troubles in tea.

* For the sake of those of our readers who are not in the Post Office, it may be explained that an "S. G." is a service telegram.—ED.

At about 9 o'clock, in came a countryman enquiring for the "telegraph man," and with the missing packet under his arm. The following conversation ensued:

"Hallo! Where did you get that?"

"Who, ah fun i' my basket when ah geet 'ooam."

"Where do you live?"

"'Ere, i' Middleton. Moi woife says, w'ats ta getten theer Jack? Ah says, ah dun 'no'. Lets luak at it, says she . . . Whoi it says 'MAJESTY' on it! Tha greeat fual what's ta getten. Tha'll get us a' into trouble; away tha goos and tak it to 't pleeceman. Ah says, whoi mebbe its 'oor Ned sent us summat fra Merikey; let's luak what's in it. Nout o't sort, says she, tak it to't pleeceman. So ah set off wee't, and ca'd in to see a chap on't rooad, an' tell 't him about it. Whoi, he says, there's some chaps i' 'oor kitchen bi'n talkin' about this. So then we fun' out 'oos it wur, an' ah browt it straight 'ere."

Well, to make a long story short, the man's basket had been put into the parcel cart whilst he went to the refreshment room, and as it lay there, the "Majesty" packet must have dropped into it. The "chaps" in the kitchen were the Department's workmen, who—by a lucky accident—happened to be lodging in that particular house.

Glasgow.

THOS. HARRISON.

A Letter from Bulawayo.

THE following is a portion of a letter, from the son of Mr. F. R. Langton (of the Secretary's Office), which will be read with interest. The writer served $1\frac{1}{2}$ years in the Cape Mounted Rifles, and subsequently in the Bechuanaland Border Police, all through the first Matabele war; after which he left on the Force being disbanded in September last, and went up to see a piece of land which the British South Africa Company had granted him for his services in the war. He is 23 years of age.

"BULAWAYO, *June 28th*, 1896.

"DEAR FATHER,—I know it is an awfully long time since you last heard from me, but as it happens this time, it is not altogether my own fault. Since I left the Bechuanaland Border Police, I have been staying some 130 miles from Bulawayo, in a very slightly developed mining district, where communications from the nearest town were not so frequent as they might have been. You have doubtless heard and seen described, by this time, as much as I could tell you of the wicked doings of the Matabele; but perhaps I may be giving you news when I tell you that your dilatory correspondent of a son had, in company with six others, as narrow an escape from being murdered as he devoutly hopes he is ever likely to have, and, as it may interest you, let me tell you about it.

"In company with another, I had just started a store at the place mentioned above (by Lower Gwelo, about 80 miles from Gwelo township and 125 from Bulawayo), when one morning early, as we lay just awakened in the store (March 31st), a Kaffir rushed in, sans

blanket, sans shirt, sans everything, except a terrified stare, and informed us that a party of natives, &c., who had left us a couple of days before had all been murdered by a large party of Matabele that very morning. They numbered (the whites) as we knew, seven, with some six Cape boys and a few Kaffirs. According to his account, he was the only one that had escaped. A pleasant awakening was it not? We immediately collected all the whites about that part, numbering, including ourselves, seven, inspanned the cart with four oxen, put on what valuables and blankets, food, &c., that we could, and trekked for all we were worth for the nearest town—Gwelo, 80 miles away. We were, as far as we knew, flying from the Kaffirs; but as it turned out the whole country was up—but that we didn't know at the time.

“All went well until we reached Tughen, 25 miles from Gwelo, when we found that the store there had been deserted and, on further examination, the murdered bodies of two whites were discovered, evidently some days dead. The sight was awful. That decided us; we stopped there no longer than we could help, and then went as hard as we could for Gwelo again. So far, we had seen no Kaffirs, but the absence was ominous in the extreme. We had got within 15 miles of the township, it was just about 4 a.m., and the road lay between two mealie-fields, when all of a sudden “bang! bang!” the Matabele were on us; and then the fun started. We were all armed, and we returned the compliment as well as we could; but owing to the Kaffirs being so well hidden, together with the bad light, it was no easy matter to obtain a decent aim. We kept going with the cart the whole time, making a running fight of it. They evidently had information of our coming, and were waiting for us, as they lined each side of the road, and lay hidden in the grass and clumps of bush, popping up to blaze at us and then down again. They were shooting horribly wild, as, although some of the lead came pretty close, it was some ten minutes before they hit anything, and then they managed to find a white ox, but not hard enough to drop him; but shortly after the achter ox (hind ox) went down, and that of course stopped the cart at once. We then moved steadily off into the veldt and made for a large ant-heap, where we took what cover we could, meaning it for a last stand indeed, as the chances of escape seemed small enough. There were about a hundred Kaffirs I should say to our poor seven. The end of it seemed pretty obvious to us all then! The Kaffirs now ranged up pretty close, and as the light was better, we were firing with better effect. One of our party then spotted some of the black devils making a circular movement, as if to surround us, so we decided to move again and make for some kopjes towards Movene. After pouring a good warm shower into them we did so, and, *mirabile dictu*, beyond following us a few hundred yards and firing a few desultory shots, they made no attempt to follow us, and we made off into the veldt as hard as we could walk in the direction of the river (Gwelo River), expecting to come across some other body of niggers

at any moment. But why that lot did not follow us any further, considering that they held us entirely at their mercy, and, had they rushed us, could have finished us off at any moment, is a mystery that none of our party were able to solve. So far, so good; by an intervention of Providence—it was nothing more or less—we were out of one fix about as tight a place as a man ever need wish for! But, after reaching the river some five miles from the scene of our late encounter, we held a consultation; it seemed very much like “out of the frying pan into the fire.” There we were out on the veldt with the niggers all round us, who knew perfectly well that we were in the neighbourhood, between us and Gwelo township as they were. We had no blankets, no food, nothing at all, except our rifles and about fifteen rounds per man, and about 150 miles across country to Bulawayo! A nice situation truly! The whole native population was up on the war path. That we knew for certain at any rate. Beyond that we knew nothing. A council of war was held—it was decided unanimously that it was impossible after what had occurred to try and get into Gwelo. Therefore, although it seemed a hopeless task at the time, we made up our minds to try and get to Bulawayo! We started off at sundown on a tramp that none of us are ever likely to forget for the term of our natural lives. Seven days it took us, travelling only by night and hiding by day.

“I won't attempt to describe the horrors of that tramp, but you can imagine that it was no particular pleasure. To make matters worse, I got a dose of fever on the road, and my boots also gave out, and consequently I suffered torture and only just managed to get the distance. However I managed it; but they had to carry me to the hospital, where I got in, pretty nearly unconscious, and it was about a fortnight before I could use my feet. I had had the fever before the row started, out on the Gwelo, and it must have got pretty well into my system, for I only left the hospital on June 8th. We had only one feed the whole seven days, and that was of locusts. We were pretty well skin and bone when we got in. We got right through the niggers, who were all round Bulawayo at that time, during the night. Our escape was nothing short of miraculous! All our party were down for different periods after we came in, and one of them, as soon as he got convalescent, went straight home to Australia.

“Another sad event I must tell you of is that your kindly thought-of gift fell into the hands of the Matabele before I had even seen it, together with some letters, possibly one of yours. One of the men who lived down our way, and who subsequently formed one of our party, had gone into Bulawayo, and he promised to bring out anything there might be for me at the post-office, and was coming out with this parcel and letters for me, in company with two other fellows; but circumstances requiring him to hurry, he came on by himself, when he was about 20 miles from our camp, leaving the others to follow with the cart. But they had never turned up when we heard of these murders I told you of, and had to scoot. As they

have never been heard of since, there's not much doubt but that they too have been murdered, poor fellows! So I am afraid I shall never see either that parcel or those letters again. However, in common with many others I have lost all I possess, so I suppose that must go with the rest. I went out of the hospital, as I told you, on June 8th, joined Gifford's Horse, and was congratulating myself that I had shaken off the fever, but I was mistaken. I went down again with it; but it proved to be only a slight attack, and I am out again now, hoping devoutly that I have got rid of it, as I have had my share of it this season. Heaven alone knows how much longer this business is going to last, as Mashonaland has broken out now, and these Matabeles are a long way from conquered yet. They are building forts all over the place now; but of course there is no work going on outside yet, and not likely to be for some time to come. Nor is there likely to be anything to do inside, even after the niggers are got under, as the rinderpest has practically stopped all general transport, and everything is at starvation prices even now. There will be hard times in the town yet, I expect. Twenty-five of Gifford's Horse, in company with thirty-five others, left for Charter to-day (28th), to help relieve the poor fellows up there; as of course I am liable to go out for an indefinite period at any time, you must not worry if you don't hear from me. My address still remains the same: Bulawayo Poste Restante. . . .

"With best wishes all round to the family,

"I remain, your affectionate son,

"C. J. LANGTON."

Mr. W. Gill.

THE operation of the sixty-five years' rule has deprived the department of the services of a valued officer, Mr. William Gill, Postmaster of Newport, Mon., who has just retired after a service of 41 years. Mr. Gill entered the Manchester Post Office in 1855 as a clerk under Mr. Willcocks, whose salary and emoluments, as Postmaster, at that time closely approximated to the salary of the Secretary of the Post Office. Mr. Willcocks retired at a ripe old age, and was succeeded by Mr. Beaufort, who speedily discovered the ability of Mr. Gill, and placed in his hands many important matters; notably the arrangements in the Manchester district for the transfer of the Telegraphs to the State in 1870. Mr. Gill personally superintended these arrangements at the Sub-offices—many of which are now important Head-offices—and in recognition of his services at that time he was awarded a personal allowance of £50 per annum. In 1886, Mr. Gill was appointed Postmaster of Newport, Mon., and received from his colleagues, headed by Mr. Beaufort, a handsome "send off" in the shape of an address and a purse of sovereigns. The value of the improvements he effected in his new district is evidenced by the fact that the Corporation and other public bodies recently submitted a

memorial to the Postmaster-General requesting that Mr. Gill might be retained in his office for a further period. The rule could not be relaxed, but Mr. Gill has the gratifying assurance that his efforts during the last ten years have secured him the esteem of his fellow townsmen.



MR. W. GILL.

Mr. Gill has not confined his activity to official matters. He is an enthusiastic musician, and has gathered around him others likeminded with himself, who assemble weekly at his house and practise an extensive repertory of the works of the great masters; music of a class which is but seldom heard in provincial towns. That he may long be spared to continue these delightful practices will be the earnest wish of all who know him.

Mr. J. C. Chambers.

THE retirement of Mr. Chambers, the Superintending Engineer of the North-Eastern District, after a service of over forty-four years, releases from duty one of the few old telegraph officers that remain. He joined the British Electric Telegraph Company soon after its formation in 1852, and was, indeed, one of the first officers to be sent out on active duty under that company. The head-quarters of the engineering branch were at Stockton-on-Tees, and here, under the late Mr. E. Higleton, Mr. Chambers carried out the construction works then in progress on the Leeds Northern, Stockton and Darlington, and other railways. Among other works of this period was the erection of the first pole line built on a public highway, viz., that between Cold Rowley and Riding Mill (eleven miles), for the purpose of connecting the wires on the Stockton and Darlington and Newcastle and Carlisle Railways. This road line, although not actually built by Mr. Chambers, was handed over to him for completion.

After the amalgamation of the British Electric Telegraph Company with the Magnetic Company, when the united systems became known as the British and Irish Magnetic Telegraph Company, Mr. Chambers, in 1860, was appointed Superintendent of the Leeds and Newcastle District, with head-quarters still at Stockton-on-Tees. This position he held until the Telegraphs were taken over by the State in 1870, when he was made Superintendent of the North-Eastern section of the Northern division under the late Mr. J. Walsh, Divisional Engineer. On the re-organization of the engineering branch in 1878, he was appointed Superintending Engineer



MR. J. C. CHAMBERS.

at Leeds over a district comprising practically the whole of Yorkshire. This responsible post he held until his retirement under the operation of the sixty-five years' rule. The period expired in April last; but in view of the many important works just at that time in hand it was deemed advisable to retain Mr. Chambers's services for a further period of three months, and his final retirement only took place at the end of June.

It is somewhat curious that Mr. Chambers's first employment after leaving school was in connection with the old mail coaches then running to Hull and Louth, so that his career may be said to have begun and ended with Post Office work.

Mr. William Wood.

MR. WILLIAM WOOD, who for many years was one of the Superintendents in the Telegraph Department at the General Post Office in Edinburgh, retired on the 30th June last. Mr. Wood's connection with telegraphy commenced so long ago as the year 1850, when he entered the service of the Electric and International Telegraph Company, and his employment under that

Company remained unbroken until the transfer of the telegraphs to the Government in 1870. After three years service at York Mr. Wood was, in 1853, placed in charge of the Electric Company's Office at Scarborough, but in 1854 he was transferred to Edinburgh, where he remained for about five years, with the exception of an interval of a few months which he spent at Newcastle-on-Tyne. In 1859 he joined the staff of the Glasgow Office, removing thence to Leith, as Clerk in Charge, in 1865. Mr. Wood was still at Leith on the occasion of the "transfer," and was then appointed Superintendent. In 1872 he was transferred to the Chief Office at Edinburgh.



MR. W. WOOD.

Although Mr. Wood's official life extends over a period of more than forty-six years, he is considerably under the age at which retirement becomes compulsory; but he has elected to take advantage of the opportunity afforded him by the regulations for retiring on a pension. Mr. Wood possesses a kindly and genial disposition, and his relations with the staff have always been on a most amicable footing. He is much respected by its members, who, on the 22nd July last, in token of their appreciation, presented him with a handsome testimonial.

The late Mr. Messum.

WE regret to record the death of Mr. Josiah Young Messum, R.N., who for twenty-two years held the position of Controller of the Packet Service at the General Post Office. Mr. Messum entered the Naval Service in 1837 as an Assistant Clerk, became an Assistant Paymaster in 1846, and Paymaster in 1854. He retired in 1859, and was advanced to the rank of Fleet Paymaster on the Retired List in 1886. While on active service he was Clerk of the "Jupiter" at the blockade of Canton River, and

was present at the capture of Chusan, Chapoo, Woo-sung, and Chin-kiang-foo, and at the operations in the Yang-tse-kiang from 1840 to 1843. He was afterwards employed on surveying service on the Australian station, and during the war with Russia was Paymaster of the "Swallow" from September, 1854. Subsequently he acted for



MR. J. Y. MESSUM.

twelve years as Secretary to the Admiralty and Post Office Packet Department at Southampton; and in 1870 was appointed Controller of the Packet Service in London, from which he retired in 1892.

Mr. Cobb.

THE Editor has received the following communication from Mr. Cobb, which he publishes in its entirety. Any news we give concerning him will be stale news by the time this journal is in the hands of our readers, and we can only express our sympathy with him and our regret at the loss his own staff has sustained as a result of the recent massacres. The two friends alluded to are Mr. W. T. White, of the C. E. B., and Mr. Vian, an old member of the now defunct Civil Service Debating Society. "The article" is, of course, a suggested account of the British Postmaster's experience:

"BRITISH POST OFFICE, CONSTANTINOPLE,
" *September 18th, 1896.*

"The article is still in my head. I hope it will remain there in clear enough form to send you when I no longer need White's help

as penman. Things are quieter, but to us who know the usual life and bustle it is an almost deathly quiet. 'What is to come next?' is on everybody's lips, and visible on everybody's face. Vian is here, and the presence of these two friends from Europe is particularly cheering in present circumstances. Remember me to your wife and to all my old friends in S.B.D. I wonder if anyone would like to exchange!

Ever yours, F. S. C."

The late Mr. Mannings.

MR. R. S. MANNINGS, who died on August 4th, had occupied the position of Chief Clerk at the Exeter Post Office for more than twenty-three years. He first entered the Service in 1857, was promoted in October, 1862, and became Chief Clerk in 1873. He served under the following Postmasters and Acting-Postmasters of Exeter: Mr. Paul Measor, Mr. C. L. M.



MR. R. S. MANNINGS.

Teesdale, Mr. Carter (now of Southampton), Mr. C. Bennett, Mr. Leal (late of Leeds), Mr. Adams (Coventry), and Mr. J. Wilson (Derby). In the interim, between the retirement of Mr. Bennett and the appointment of Mr. Adams, Mr. Mannings acted as Postmaster.

"A more genial, kind-hearted man," writes a correspondent, "is seldom to be met with. He was much beloved."

Bravery.

MR. FRANCIS ROBERT BROWN, aged twenty-two years, a sorter at the South Western District Post Office, displayed bravery under somewhat exceptional circumstances on the 14th July last. Brown, who at the time was invalided at home, went to Putney Heath for the benefit of the fresh air, and sat on a seat watching the bathers in the Queensmere pond. Two lads, named Collier and Simmons, aged twelve and fifteen respectively,

got beyond their depth. Brown saw their danger, and, forgetful of his own illness, divested himself of his clothes, and dived into the water. He had to make three separate dives before he got both



MR. F. R. BROWN.

lads ashore, and it was then found that the elder lad was beyond human power to restore. The other lad was saved. Such bravery is deserving of public reward, and we are glad to hear that Mr. Brown has been awarded the Royal Humane Society's Certificate.

Two more Postmen Poets.

SOME few weeks ago a little book was placed in our hands entitled *Thoughts in Verse*, by two friends, and we were informed that one of the authors was a postman while the other had seen some service as an auxiliary letter-carrier. We opened the volume with some trepidation, fresh from Mr. Gladstone's attack on the minor Poet, but we are bound to say we were on the whole agreeably surprised. We do not go so far as to admit that the verses are high class poetry; in many instances they are as false in sentiment as they are faulty in rhyme, but one does not need to read much of the book before one is impressed with the fact that the writers possess poetic feeling, a love of nature, and a power of interpreting her moods and seasons which many men of higher education might envy. We asked the authors for a few particulars relating to themselves and we received the following very modest little note from one of them, Mr. Charles Donner:

"I was born at Alford on June 9th, 1858; but my earliest recollections are of green fields and all the delights of rural life. I lived with my parents in a Lincolnshire village until I was 19 years old, when we removed to Louth, where I have resided ever since. Of schooling I had very little, as it was my hard lot to have to work when I was ten years old in the brickyard of which my father was manager. The employment, which I did not leave until

I was 20 years old, was both dirty and arduous. Then I went to work on the Great Northern Railway, but did not get on the permanent staff. I was soon paid off, with many more, and did not get any regular work until I became Town Postman in 1880, which employment I like and still retain.

"I began to write verses when about 20 years old and still write occasional pieces; but feel conscious of a serious drawback in literary efforts, viz., a very limited education, not having got beyond the 3rd standard at school. Of course I am fond of reading and have read many of the works of the best authors of history, poetry, fiction, etc., my favourite author being Charles Dickens. Of the little work *Thoughts in Verse*, by "Two Friends," of which I am part author, I can only say that we never thought of it as circulating beyond our immediate circle of friends, at whose earnest solicitation it has been published.

"My friend James Hill is a Louth man; he has been employed for some little time as auxiliary postman, but is by trade a draper's assistant, which calling he now follows. Like myself, he is of poor parentage, and had to go to work early, so that his educational advantages have also been small. He is about ten years younger than I am, our friendship having commenced in the Sunday school where I was his teacher."

"The Postman-Poet of Bideford."

UNDER the above heading, an interesting account of Edward Capern, the best known of our postmen poets, appeared in the July number of *The Sunday Magazine*. We are told that Capern was born at Tiverton on January 21st, 1819. His parents were poor, and at the age of eight years he commenced to earn his livelihood as a worker in a lace factory. On the outbreak of the famine of 1847, he sought employment in Bideford, and, after a precarious interval, secured the post of rural letter-carrier over a rambling district of thirteen miles in extent. In this capacity he was remunerated at the rate of 10s. 6d. for a seven-days week.

The first volume of Capern's works appeared in 1856, and it is interesting to note among the subscribers the names of Alfred Tennyson, Walter Savage Landor, Charles Dickens, Charles Kingsley, and James Anthony Froude. Some of the notices of the volume were extremely favourable. Mr. Froude, in *Fraser's Magazine*, spoke of Capern as a "real poet, a man whose writings will be like a gleam of sunshine in every household which they enter;" and Landor wrote in still more enthusiastic terms. The first edition, consisting of 1000 copies, of this work, was exhausted in three months, leaving the poet a profit of £150, which was applied to the purchase of an annuity on the joint lives of himself and his wife. In addition to this, the Post Office authorities increased his salary to 13s. per week, and (what was even more appreciated) relieved him from Sunday duty.

We refer our readers to the pages of *The Sunday Magazine* for

further particulars of this sweet and simple-hearted poet of nature.* Capern died in June, 1894, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. He "expressed a wish that his old postman's bell—the one he had used so long as a rural letter-carrier between Bideford and Buckland Brewer—should be buried with him. Most unfortunately, on the



EDWARD CAPERN.

day of the funeral, this interesting relic of struggling days could not be found, and so the coffin-lid had to be placed over the wild-flower-bedded corpse without it."

The portraits of two of *our* poets, John Hyslop, of Kilmarnock, and J. D. Hosken, of Helston, have already appeared in this magazine. We have pleasure in adding that of Capern, from a photograph kindly placed at our disposal by Mr. Pengeley, of the Tiverton Post Office.

The Bournemouth Post Office.

THE new Post Office at Bournemouth was opened for public business on the 2nd of August last. On the following day, an inaugural dinner was given at the Grand Hotel by the Postmaster, Mr. William Dunn, who was supported by the Mayor, Alderman H. Newlyn, and other local gentlemen. The Chairman, in responding

* Our own pages contain a critical estimate of his poetry (see vol. iv., pp. 332-3).

to the toast of the evening, "The Health of the much respected Postmaster of Bournemouth," proposed by the Mayor, said he had been connected with the Bournemouth Post Office since 1873. As an instance of the abnormal growth of the town, he might say that for one week of April, 1858, there were 2,634 letters only which were delivered at a cost of 11 shillings, increased later on to 15 shillings a week, the work being performed by John Elgar and his wife; whereas the letters, &c., delivered in one week in March last numbered 192,699.



THE BOURNEMOUTH POST OFFICE.

Children's Country Holidays Fund.

THE following is a statement of the amounts subscribed by various departments of the Post Office for the above fund during the present year.

Last year, in submitting a similar statement, we notified that the

contributions then received had reached the very substantial total of £404 (it was subsequently raised to £408 7s.), and that this sum had enabled the society to provide more than 800 poor ailing London children with a fortnight's holiday in the country.

This year, as will be seen, as much as £415 has been subscribed, and we note the increase with great pleasure, as we are sure that the fund is an excellent one, and merits unstinted support. We venture to express a hope that the present total, large as it is, does not yet represent "high water mark."

Office.	Amount.	Office.	Amount.
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Secretary's and Solicitor's Office ...	14 6 0	Brought forward ...	340 5 6
Receiver and Accountant General's Office...	34 15 8	District Offices, London—	
Savings Bank, Men's Staff	16 13 11	continued:—	
Do. Women's Staff	19 10 6	Paddington ...	28 0 0
Returned Letter Office ...	2 8 3	Wandsworth (including Wimbledon £2 11s. 4d.)	25 16 1
London Postal Service, Controller's Office ...	12 11 7	Norwood ...	5 17 0
Inland, East Central and Branch Offices ...	47 9 2	Ealing ...	2 15 6
Money Order Office ...	4 0 0	Provincial Surveyor's Department:—	
Medical Department ...	0 19 6	North Eastern ...	0 15 0
Postal Stores ...	2 3 11	North Western ...	1 1 0
Telegraph Stores ...	2 9 6	North Wales ...	0 15 0
Do. Factory ...	1 12 6	South Wales ...	1 5 0
Central Telegraph Office...	32 13 6	North Midland ...	0 15 0
Engineer-in-Chief's Office	2 6 6	South Midland ...	0 15 0
District Offices, London:—		South Eastern ...	1 0 0
South Western ...	38 19 1	South Western ...	0 15 9
South Eastern ...	26 13 7	Western ...	1 10 0
Eastern ...	28 16 1	Eastern ...	1 0 0
Northern ...	15 12 7	Northern Scotland	0 14 6
Western ...	7 11 1	Southern do. ...	0 13 6
North Western ...	20 8 1	Northern Ireland	0 12 6
West Central ...	8 4 6	Southern do. ...	0 12 6
		Midland do. ...	0 17 6
Carried forward ...	<u>£340 5 6</u>	Total ...	<u>£415 16 4</u>

In accordance with the ordinary practice this list will be published by the society in their annual report, copies of which will in due course be furnished to the heads of the departments concerned.

Mr. C. H. Bundy, of the Secretary's Office, is the collector for the Fund in the Post Office, and will be happy to furnish any information regarding it which may be desired. The headquarters of the society are: 10, Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C. (Secretary, The Hon. Alfred Lyttelton.)

Manx Music.

WHEN that enthusiastic Manxman, Mr. W. H. Gill, of the Secretary's office, undertook to collect and preserve from threatened oblivion the national melodies of his native island, his project, as was but natural and proper, received a blessing in the

pages of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*.* The result of his labours is now lying before us.†

Mr. Gill has been extremely fortunate in his quest. He cherished the hope that, by a carefully arranged plan of campaign, he might discover "in out-of-the-way spots on the mountains, and among the solitary glens a remnant of the old folk, who might still have retained some of the earlier tunes hitherto unrecorded." The old folk were found—"quite a goodly number of old Manxmen of ages ranging from sixty-five to eighty-four"; and the old tunes, which the younger generations have discarded in favour of music-hall ditties, were for the first time written down in black and white. In a few years' time these melodies would doubtless have died out; and we are under a debt of gratitude to Mr. Gill for having rescued many of them from oblivion.

As regards the songs themselves, the critic must write with some restraint, for they are presented to us in an avowedly popular dress, and the compiler acknowledges that in "arranging" them full advantage has been taken of the latitude implied by the word. Now, Mr. Gill's "arrangements" (that is to say his harmonies, accompaniments, and symphonies) always reveal the hand of the cultured musician; they are often extremely effective and sometimes very beautiful. Let our readers sing No. 12 ("I saw Thee Weep"), or No. 26 ("Cradle Song"), or No. 46 ("The Deemster's Daughter"), both with and without the accompaniment, and they will recognize how much these songs depend for their charm upon the subtle harmonies woven around them. It is not denied that some of the melodies are very sweet in themselves; and others in the book are of a nature so bold and inspiring that they almost compel a corresponding dash and vigour in the accompaniments. Indeed, such songs as "Manxmen we'll remain," "Heroes all," and "The Maid of Port y Shee," possess in a marked degree elements which should ensure their popularity.

The vexed question of accompaniments assumes an acute form when another class of song is considered. Mr. Gill has lighted upon some genuine Old-World melodies, the notes of which form a scale identical with the scale in the ancient Dorian mode. This mode, in which so many of the old German chorales was written, has long ago been discarded in favour of our present major and minor modes. Mr. Gill was surprised and delighted to find his old Manxmen singing songs with minor thirds, major sixths, and variable leading notes; and, although the young lady who warbles drawing-room ballads may pronounce his choice collection of "Dorians" dull and even barbaric, the musician will share his delight and will find them the most valuable and interesting portion of the collection. Unfortunately, the compiler, desirous no doubt that these, the most distinctively national of Manx melodies, should obtain their due share of recognition and popularity, has "arranged" them in a manner

* Vol. V., p. 241.

† *Manx National Songs*, arranged by W. H. Gill. Boosey & Co., London, 1896.

essentially alien to their character. It is allowed that Mr. Gill might be justified of his treatment if the modern harmonies, progressions and modulations, which he so freely uses, could render these songs *popular*. But we are convinced that the attempt is a hopeless one. Popular they are not, and cannot be. Their tonality is strange to modern ears, and their present harmonic support only thinly disguises the strangeness. We ask Mr. Gill to reconsider the matter, and venture to suggest that in a future edition the "Dorians" should be grouped together, instead of being scattered as at present throughout the book, and that they should be harmonised with the austerity and restraint which their form demands. If there are any indications of harmony in the older Manx music, let those indications, however crude, be followed up; if not, let Palestrina, rather than Sullivan, be the guide. Thus dealt with, these plaintive, dreamy melodies will acquire a yet deeper significance and beauty.

Odds and Ends.

MR. ROBERT BRUCE, of the Secretary's Office, has been appointed Vice-Controller of the London Postal Service (Controller's Office), a position rendered vacant by the retirement of Mr. E. A. Sanderson.

* * *

ON the occasion of the late open-air concert of the "Gesangverein Liederkranz," says the *Breslauer Zeitung*, the committee naturally wished for fine weather. So the secretary addressed a postcard to "Jupiter Pluvius, Heaven," with a short petition to keep the night clear from rain. The postcard was duly posted, but a few days later it was returned to the secretary, with the following notice written across it: "Person and place inaccessible; none of the postmen who have gone to the address mentioned have ever returned to the post-office.—SIETEN, Postmaster."

* * *

A CORRESPONDENT in the *St. James's Gazette* of June 2nd writes: "I am told by Post Office officials that during the last twelve hours numbers of poor foreigners, especially in the East-end, who had sent money abroad in postal notes and orders, have made anxious enquiries, or applied for a return of their cash, in consequence of a not unnatural alarm created by the letter about the 'validity of Anglican orders' from a distinguished statesman and financier."

* * *

IT would not be a bad thing for the Postmaster-General's balance if Mohammedanism spread widely amongst persons connected with the Post Office Savings Bank. It is reported from Capetown that the Cape Treasurer-General has just got a windfall through the refusal of a number of Mohammedan depositors to receive the

interest accruing to their balances. They declared that they would only take back from the Bank what they had given to it.—*Daily News*.

* * *

THE MAIL SERVICE TO NEW YORK.—The New York correspondent of the *Times* takes the British Post Office officials to task for sending mails by slow boat "Britannic," when the "St. Paul" would have delivered them two days earlier." Evidently the "St. Paul" ought to be *the* boat for carrying "epistles."—*Punch*.

* * *

HERE is the way in which one of the electrical journals lashes a layman who has dabbled in that which he does not understand:—"Mr. — is at it again, mixing up ohms, volts, and ampères as if he were stirring sugar in his tea. He repeats one of his old blunders, though the error of his ways has been pointed out to him, and persists in saying that it requires a 'force' of 14 ohms to the mile to 'send a current' with a telegraph message. Why not go the whole animal at once in inaccuracy, and say that you hang your telegraph message written on white paper on the telegraph wire. You pick up 14 ohms out of the till, and hitch them on behind the message. The ohms prod it up, and the message is shoved along to its destination, while the ohms turn the white paper pink, and alter the character of the handwriting, and manufacture an orange-coloured envelope on the passage."

* * *

AT a certain Branch Office (writes C. W. B.) a gentleman called to make an enquiry. As is customary in such cases, he was referred to the enquiry window, and at the same time was asked to ring the bell, which is on the right-hand side of the window and immediately above the newspaper receptacle. After the lapse of a moment or two, the words, "Shall I speak," came from the direction of the enquiry window, and arrested attention. It was then noticed that the applicant, with his finger on the bell, was leaning over the newspaper receptacle and speaking through the aperture into the sack beneath. He was evidently under the impression that he was dealing with a telephone; and it is quite possible that to this day he is unaware of the mistake he made, for on being told by an amused but polite onlooker that he would receive his answer at the enquiry window, he showed not the slightest sign of having grasped the situation.

* * *

WE gather from the *Anuario Postal y Telegráfico*, a recently published work, written by two Spanish officials, Messrs. Dionisio Sánchez Moraleda and Francisco de Asis Gatiérrez, that some extraordinary anomalies exist in the Spanish Postal Service. Thus, the postage for an inland letter weighing 15 grammes ($\frac{1}{2}$ oz.) is 15 centimes; but a letter weighing 15 grammes can be sent to Portugal,

to the Azores, to Madeira, or to Gibraltar for 10 centimes only. The postage on letters for all countries of the Postal Union (with the exception of those mentioned above) is 25 centimes; but Spain does not allow her own colonies such a favoured rate. A letter cannot be sent to Cuba or Porto Rico for less than 30 centimes; and in the case of the Philippines and the Spanish islands in the Gulf of Guinea the postage is not less than 50 centimes.

* * *

DURING the last parliamentary session no fewer than 950,680 letters were received, and 410,500 letters posted at the post office of the House of Commons. The number of Telegrams, including messages for the Press, forwarded or received, amounted to 75,227. There was, besides, a considerable amount of money order and parcel business. Stamps were sold to the value of £2,991.

* * *

ACCORDING to the *Monte Video Times* of the 14th of July last, the Uruguay postal arrangements are not yet wholly perfect. A postcard must be quite a *rara avis* if the following statement can be credited:—"As we said recently, it is a monstrous thing that a note or acknowledgment of two or three lines cannot be sent abroad except in a letter costing 10 cents., instead of on a postcard of 2 or 3 cents. *It is now some two years that we have been without postcards.*"

* * *

DURING July the National Telephone Company issued *The Telephone Directory*, a substantial volume containing the names of their subscribers throughout the United Kingdom, with their telephone numbers. The lists are arranged under the names of the towns and cities. In the preface reference is made to the special facilities which are offered to subscribers, such as the transmission of telephone messages over the postal telegraph system and the delivery of same by express messengers. Attention is also called to the index of towns, the index of public call offices, and the fact that, for the purpose of expediting messages in London, the name of the exchange is given in addition to the subscriber's number.

* * *

A NOVEL game of cricket was lately played at Thornton Heath. One side was composed of Mr. W. Bacon, a local postman, and his ten sons, five of whom are in the service of the Post Office. Their ages ranged from ten to twenty-six, the father, who possesses the maximum number of good-conduct badges, being in his forty-eighth year. The members of this family, who are all well known to local cricketers, were opposed by an eleven of Thornton Heath postmen, whose total reached 42 for nine wickets. Amid frequent applause the Bacon family ran their score to 73 for eight wickets, when stumps were of necessity drawn owing to postal duties.

Promotions.

LONDON.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Secretary's O.	Brown, F. J. ...	Deputy Staff Officer, Supply. Est.	S.O., '86
" "	Duncan, J. ...	3rd. Cl. Clk., Sup- ply. Est.	2nd Div. Clk., Dub., '92; S.B., Lon., '93
" "	Simes, J. A. ...	" "	2nd Div. Clk., R.A.G.O., '93
" "	Westell, E. L. ...	" "	Boy Clk., Customs, '90; 2nd Div., R.A.G.O., '93
" "	Trayfoot, H. G. .	" "	2nd Div. Clk., S.B., '92
" "	King, F. N. ...	" "	Boy Clk., S.B., '91; 2nd Div. Clk., '92
" "	Codd, E. A. ...	" "	2nd Div. Clk., R.A.G.O., '93
" "	Gibbings, H. E...	" "	2nd Div. Clk., R.A.G.O., '93
" "	Hide, L.	" "	2nd Div. Clk., R.A.G.O., '94
" "	Ross, F.	" "	2nd Div. Clk., S.B., '93
" "	Braun, C. W. S.	" "	2nd Div. Clk., S.B., '93
" "	Dunlop, J. ...	" "	Tel., Edin., '91; Clk., 2nd Div., S.B., '94
" "	Higginbottom, H. E.	" "	S.C., Southport, '89; 2nd Div. Clk., S.B., '96; R.A.G.O., '96
" "	Harris, W. B. ...	" "	2nd Div. Clk., R.A.G.O., '92
" "	Baillie, C. H. C.	" "	2nd Div. Clk., S.B., '94
Surveyor's O.	Longland, R. M.	Surveyor's Clk. ...	Clk., Lr. Div., S.B., '81; C.E.B., '86
Postal Stores Dept.	Rowland, T. E...	Clerk	1880; Asst. Clk., S.O., '94; Jnr. Clk., P.S.D., '94
" "	Hewson, G. M....	Jnr. Clk.	2nd Cl. Cn. & Tel., S.W., '85
" "	Wevell, T. ...	"	Tel., T.S., '92; 2nd Div., R.A.G.O., '94
" "	Parsons, H. A....	"	2nd Cl. Sr., S.E., '94
" "	Adams, G. D. ...	"	2nd Div. Clk., S.B., '92
E. in C.O. ...	Partridge, G. N.	Suptg. Engr. ...	E.T. Co., '57; Asst. Suptg. Engr., '91
" ...	Carr, G. M. ...	"	E.T. Co., '57; U.K.T. Co., '63; Asst. Suptg. Engr., '92
" ...	Moir, A.	Asst. Suptg. Engr.	Tel., Aberdeen, '74; Insp., E. in C.O., '83; 1st Cl. Engr., '92
" ...	Sinnott, J. ...	2nd Cl. Engr. ...	Tel., Dublin, '84; Jnr. Clk., E. in C.O., '91; Relay Clk., '91

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
E. in C.O.	Booth, A. C.	Relay Clk., Lr. Sec.	Tel., T.S., '88; Jnr. Clk., '95
"	Newlands, T. H.	" "	Tel., Edin., '81; 1st Cl., '89
"	Hoult, W. E.	" E. Dean.	Sub. Tel. Co., G.P.O. (S.C.&T., Dover), '89
"	Casserley, E. W.	Jnr. Clk.	Tel., T.S., '94
C. of S.O.	Mann, H. A.	Jnr. Examr.	Tel., T.S., '91
"	Sawyer, W. C. J.	" "	Tel., T.S., '91
C.T.O.	Miss E. Gloyns	Supervisor	E.T.Co., '64; G.P.O., '70
"	M.A. Arundel	Asst. Supervisor (Hr. Scale)	U.K.T.Co., '65; Asst. Super. (Lr. Scale), '85
"	S. Robinson	Asst. Supervisor (Lr. Scale)	1870; 1st Cl. Tel., '83
"	E. F. Hart	1st. Cl. Tel.	1884
"	E.K.J.O. Bell	"	1884
"	B. A. Lewis	"	1884
R.A.G.O.	E. R. Boyd	1st Cl. Clk.	2nd Cl. Clk., '82
(C.H.B.)	" S. A. M. Hawkins	Prin. Clk.	1882; 1st Cl. Clk., '86
(P.O.B.)	" E. J. Temple	1st Cl. Clk.	2nd Cl. Clk., '82
"	" K. Smith	"	2nd Cl. Clk., '83
"	" E. Tydeman	"	2nd Cl. Clk., '83
"	" S. M. Mann	"	2nd Cl. Clk., '84
"	" E. F. Cox	"	2nd Cl. Clk., '86
S.B.	Lloyd, F.	1st Cl. Clk.	1868; Hr. Grade, 2nd Div., '90
"	Page, H. W.	"	1870; Hr. Grade, 2nd Div., '90
"	Gardiner, B. L.	Hr. Grade, 2nd Div.	1875
L.P.S.D.	Bruce, R.	Vice-Controller	S.O., '76; 1st Cl., '93
(Contr's. Off.)	" Hale, P.	2nd Cl. Clk.	Boy Clk., M.O.O., '82; Clk., Lr. Div., '82; Clk., C.O., L.P.S.D., '91
L.P.S.D. (Circn. Off.)	O'Leary, J. M.	1st Cl. Sr.	1877; 2nd Cl. Sr., '81
"	" Tew, F. J.	"	1880; 2nd Cl. Sr., '82
"	" Fulton, H. W.	"	1881; 2nd Cl. Sr., '83
"	" Bulmer, H. S.	"	1881; 2nd Cl. Sr., '84
"	" Bevis, A. A.	"	1881; 2nd Cl. Sr., '84
"	" Fletcher, W. H.	"	1882; 2nd Cl. Sr., '84
"	" Collett, H. W.	"	1881; 2nd Cl. Sr., '85
"	" Willis, W. R.	"	1880; 2nd Cl. Sr., '85
"	" Barham, T.	"	1870; 2nd Cl. Sr., '85
E.C.D.O.	Miss M. A. Rand	4th Cl. Super.	1873; 1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel., '81
"	" F. M. Brennan	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1886
W.C.D.O.	Nadand, L. J.	Insp. in Ch. (Lr. Sec.)	1870; Senr. Cn. & Tel., '90
"	" F. B. Haynes, G. H.	1st Cl. Sr.	1885
"	" Barker, J. E.	"	1887
"	" Brimley, J. T.	"	1884; Sr., '87

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
W.C.D.O.	Quinton, G. H.	1st Cl. Sr.	1884; Sr., '87
"	Lloyd, A. P.	"	1884; Sr., '87
W.D.O.	Reason, J. B. C.	1st Cl. Over.	1857; 2nd Cl. Over., '74
"	Reilly, W.	1st Cl. Sr.	1884; Sr., '87
"	Tansley, S. G.	"	1886
"	Bull, E.	"	1880; Sr., '90
"	Miss C.E. William- son	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1886
Paddn.	Belbin, H.	1st Cl. Sr.	1884; Sr., '87
S.W.D.O.	Whitburn, C.	1st Cl. Over.	1872; 2nd Cl. Over., '88
"	Parr, W.	2nd Cl.	1858; 2nd Cl. Over., '88
"	Groves, A. J.	2nd Cl. "	1878; 1st Cl. Sr., '90
"	Hinton, A. H.	"	1874; Head Postman, '92
"	Miss M. A. H. Wise	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1886
S.E.D.O.	Reilly, W.	Insp.	1867; 2nd Cl. Over., '82; 1st Cl., '85
"	Ead, J. T.	1st Cl. Over.	1873; 2nd Cl. Over., '87
"	Earle, J.	2nd Cl. "	1873; 1st Cl. Sr., '90
N.D.O.	Walton, W. J.	1st Cl. Sr.	1884; Sr., '87
E.D.O.	Thrower, H. S. T.	"	1884; Sr., '87
Norwood...	Butteris, S. G.	1st Cl. Cn. & Tel.	2nd Cl., '82
N.W.D.O.	Miss F. C. Lock.	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1885

PROVINCES—ENGLAND and WALES.

Bradford, Yks.	Robinson, J.	Clk. (P.)	1880; 1st Cl. S.C., '86
"	Dent, S.	1st Cl. S.C.	1887
"	Frank, T.	Clk. (T.)	1872
"	Sharper, J. W.	1st Cl. Tel.	1876
Bristol	Miss E.H. George	"	1886
Colchester	Aldis, R. W.	Ch. Clk.	E. T. Co., '62; Asst. Super., '91
"	Smith, S. A.	Asst. Super.	S.C. & T., H'tingdon, '82; Clk., Colchester, '91
"	Hubbard, F. W.	Clk.	S.C. & T., '80
Exeter	Butt, F. W.	1st Cl. S.C.	1884
"	Miss C. M. V. Mannings	1st Cl. Tel.	1888
Evesham...	Crisp, G. E.	Clk.	B'ham, '74; S.C. & T., Evesham, '83
Manchester	Sirett, C. J.	1st Cl. Tel.	1882
"	Ryman, C. J.	"	1882
N'castle-on-T.	Morton, J.	Super.	E. T. Co., '53; Asst. Super., '83; 1st Cl., '90
"	Platten, W. W.	1st Cl. Asst. Super.	S.C., '74; 2nd Cl. Asst. Super., '90
"	Friedrichs, W. J.	2nd Cl. Asst. Super.	S.C., '73; Clk., '90
"	Raven, J.	Clk. (P.)	S.C., '73; 1st Cl., '90
"	Urwin, T. J.	1st Cl. S.C.	S.C., '84
"	Kaye, F. W.	1st Cl. Tel.	1882
Plymouth	Edgcombe, E. A.	1st Cl. S.C.	1886
"	Rawling, W. R.	1st Cl. Tel.	1875; 2nd Cl. T., '80

PROMOTIONS.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Stafford	Jenkinson, J. C. .	Asst. Super. (P.) ...	1884 ; Clk., '93
Taunton	Passmore, H. ...	1st Cl. S.C. & T. ...	1881
Walsall	Sutton, G. H. ...	Ch. Clk.	1875 ; Clk., '90
„	Bird, G. S.	Clk.	1872 ; S.C. & T., '74

SCOTLAND.

Edinburgh ...	Jefferj, J.	Clk. (P.)	1873 ; 1st Cl. S.C., '87
„ ...	Boyd, J.	Clk. (T.)	1871 ; 1st Cl. Tel., '83
„ ...	Kay, R.	1st Cl. Tracer ...	1883 ; 2nd Cl. Tracer, '87
Glasgow	Miss E. B. Donald	1st Cl. Tel.	1886

IRELAND.

Belfast	Wilson, W. J. ...	1st Cl. S.C.	1887
„	J. McKeown ...	1st Cl. Tel.	1885

Retirements.

LONDON.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
S.B....	Pennington, B. ...	1st Cl. Clk. ...	C.D., '53; S.B., '61; 2nd Cl., '73; 1st Cl. '85
"	*Miss A. V. Greer	2nd Cl. Clk. ...	1891
"	*Miss E. M. Forrow	" " ...	1891
R.L.O. ...	Millard, H. ...	2nd Cl. Examr. ...	1858; Clk., 89; 2nd Cl. Examr., '92
C.T.O. ...	Thompson, J. ...	1st Cl. Tel. ...	1870
"	Miss J. Anderson	Asst. Super. ...	E. T. Co., '61; Clk., '71; Asst. Super., '77
C. of S.O. ...	Milton, R. E. ...	2nd Cl. Examr. ...	Ein. Co. '70; Sur. Clk., '85; Pmr., Stroud, '87; C. of S.O., '88
E. in C.O. ...	Chambers, J. C.	Suptg. Engr. ...	Mag. Tel. Co., '52; G. P.O., '70; Suptg. Engr. '78
"	Bird, J. E.	1st Cl. Engr....	E. T. Co., '47; Insp., '81; 1st Cl. Engr., '91
"	Pennymore, F....	2nd " ...	E. & I. T. Co., '68; Relay Clk., Lr. Sec., '84; 2nd Cl. Engr., '92
L.P.S.D. (Contr's. Off.)	Sanderson, E. A.	Vice-Controller ...	1866; Clk., F. B., '67; Asst. Super. I. B., '81; Contrs. Off., '86; Asst. Sub. Contr., '87; Vice-Contr., '94
L.P.S.D. (Circn. Off.)	†Heraud, C. W....	Super. ...	S.O., '47; I.O., '49; Asst. Super., '75; Super., '91
"	Mills, P. C. ...	Over. ...	1871; Sr., '81; Over., '92
"	Standen, E. ...	" " ...	1866; Sr., '71; Over., '81
"	Hambly, R. ...	1st Cl. Sr. ...	1855; Sr., '60
"	Dear, W. ...	1st " ...	1860; Sr., '61
"	Davis, A. W. ...	2nd " ...	1872; Sr., '85
"	*Platt, A. E. ...	2nd " ...	1892
E.C.D.O. ...	Tottman, L. C. .	1st Cl. Cn. & Tel. ..	1870; Cn., '80; 1st Cl., '90
"	Miss E. A. Hartley	" Cwn. " ..	1885; 1st Cl., '95
W.D.O. ...	Smaul, A. J. ...	1st Cl. Over....	1856; Sr., '59; 1st Cl. Over., '81
"	Bullard, J. ...	Senr. Cn. & Tel. ...	1856; Cn., '67; Senr. Cn. & Tel., '92.
Paddington	Drake, J. ...	1st Cl. Over....	1849; Asst. Over., '73; 1st Cl. Over., '91
S.E.D.O. ...	*Miss F. E. R. Pedler	2nd Cl. Cwn & Tel.	1892
S.W.D.O. ...	Wilson, F. S. ...	Insp. ...	1861; Over., '72; Insp., '78
"	May, W. A. ...	1st Cl. Over....	1863; Sr., '72; 1st Cl. Over., '89
"	*Jackson, W. R.C.	2nd Cl. Sr. ...	1890
"	Miss M. G. Boys	1st Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1881; 1st Cl., '93
E.D.O. ...	*Tredgay, F. ...	2nd Cl. Sr. ...	1893; Sr., '95

* Awarded a Gratuity.

† Retires under the provisions of the Order in Council of August 15th, 1890.

ENGLAND and WALES.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Birmingham ...	*Miss E. H. Baker	1st Cl. Cwn. & Retr.	1889; 1st Cl., '93...
" ...	*Miss A. E. Child	2nd Cl. Tel. ...	1893
Blackburn ...	Scott, G. ...	Pmr. ...	Clk., Birkenhead, '57; Ch. Clk., '69; Ch. Clk., Bradford (Yks.), '75; Pmr., Blackburn, '85
Bristol ...	Ann, W. ...	Clk. (P.) ...	1868; S.C., '72; Clk., '90
Derby ...	*McDonald, H....	2nd Cl. S.C. ...	1886
Devizes ...	Trolley, T. ...	Pmr. ...	1860; Office Keeper, S.B., '85; Pmr., Devizes, '92
Enfield ...	Mrs. M. Copeland	Postmistress ...	1875
Ipswich ...	Mapperley, S. ...	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	E. & I. T. Co., '67; Clk., '86; Asst. Super., '91
Leighton Buzzard	†Johnson, J. M. ...	Pmr. ...	Tel., Rugby, 1865; Clk., '70; Clk., Coventry, '80; Pmr., Leighton Buzzard, '89
Liverpool ...	Mawson, J. A....	1st Cl. Asst. Super. (P.)	1855; 2nd Cl. Asst. Super., '83; 1st Cl., '92
" ...	*Miss E. A. Minns	2nd Cl. Tel. ...	1893
Manchester ...	Barlow, W. ...	1st Cl. Asst. Super. (T.)	E. T. Co., '54; 2nd Cl. Asst. Super., '89; 1st Cl., '90
" ...	*Anderson, J. A. ...	2nd Cl. S.C. ...	1888
" ...	Fletcher, J. ...	1st Cl. Tel. ...	1870; 1st Cl., '83
" ...	Miss A. J. Bridge	Asst. Super. ...	1875; 1st. Cl. Tel., '81; Asst. Super., '87
Northampton ...	Whitney, T. ...	Asst. Super. (T.) ...	E. T. Co., '53; Asst. Super., '91
Plymouth ...	Crimp, W. H. H.	Clk. (P.) ...	S.C., '77; 1st Cl., '85; Clk., '91
Portsmouth ...	*Holman, W. ...	2nd Cl. S.C. ...	1887; S.C., '92
Redditch ...	*Laight, F....	S.C. & T. ...	1888
Sheffield ...	Gibbins, J. H. ...	Super. (T.) ...	E. & I. T. Co., '56; Asst. Super., '74; Super. (T.), Leicester, '83; Sheffield, '87
Southampton ...	Witt, J. T. ...	Super. (P.) ...	1861; Asst. Super. (P.), '91; Super., '93
" ...	Perry, A. ...	Asst. Super. (P.) ...	1853; 1st Cl. Sr., '59; Clk., '81; Asst. Super., '91
Whitby ...	Jefferson, F. ...	S.C. & T. ...	1880
Worthing ...	Etherton, G. R.	Pmr. ...	1858; Insp. H.M.B., S.O., '73; Pmr., Worth- ing, '92

* Awarded a Gratuity.

† We regret to state that Mr. Johnson died on the 11th of September, a fortnight after his pension was granted.

SCOTLAND.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
Edinburgh	Dickson, A.	2nd Div. Clk., A.O.	1865
"	Wood, W.	Super. (T.)	E. & I.T. Co., '51; Clk., '52; Super., '71
"	Fraser, A. M.	1st Cl. Tel.	S.C. & T., Stromness, '79; 2nd Cl. Tel., Edin., '81; 1st Cl., '87
Forfar	Miss E. L. Thomson	Postmistress	1877
"	*Miss I. K. Thomson	S.C. & T.	1887
Glasgow	Hall, T.	1st Cl. Tel.	1881, 1st Cl. Tel., '90
Hawick	Orr, J.	Postmaster	Tel. Troon, '61; Pmr. Troon, '74; Hawick, '79

IRELAND.

Cork	Murphy, J. J.	1st Cl. Tel.	Mag. Tel. Co., '69
Dublin	Gibbons, W.	1st Cl. S.C.	1862
"	Darbey, R. P.	"	1862; S.C., '70; 1st Cl., '80
"	Gilbraith, J. W.	"	1855; S.C., '71; 1st Cl., '81

* Awarded a Gratuity.

Deaths.

OFFICE.	NAME.	APPOINTMENT.	PREVIOUS SERVICE.
S.B.D.	Barratt, W. J. ...	2nd Div. Clk. ...	1891
"	Sharland, A. ...	"	1894
C.T.O.	Hind, B. J. ...	Senior Tel.	1871; Sen. Tel., '84
"	Havard, J. W. ...	"	1872; Sen. Tel., '94
"	Shave, F. W. E. ...	1st Cl. Tel.	1880; 1st Cl., '90
"	Pendergrass, C. J.	2nd Cl. Tel.	1889
"	Harris, S. H. O.	"	S.C. & T., Redruth, '84; T.S., '90
"	Herbert, R. W. ...	"	1895
Circn. Office ...	Denny, F. S. ...	1st Cl. Sorter ...	1875; 2nd Cl. Sr., '78; 1st Cl., '86
"	Alden, F.	2nd Cl. Sorter ...	1888; 2nd Cl. Sr., '90
S.W.D.O.	Meehan, J.	"	1894
"	Miss F. E. Lush ...	2nd Cl. Cwn. & Tel.	1895
Cardiff	Miss L. M. Swan ...	2nd Cl. Tel.	1890
Exeter	Barham, R. J. ...	1st Cl. S.C.	1881; 1st Cl., '94
Halifax	Normanton, J. H.	Super. (T.)	1872; Super., '91
Liverpool	Boraston, T. C. ...	1st Cl. Tel.	1856; 1st Cl. Tel., '88
Llanelly	Rees, A. D.	S.C. & T.	1891
Wantage... ..	Clegg, D. L.	"	1895
Edinburgh	Miss J. Coutts ...	2nd Cl. Tel.	Tel., Aberdeen, '88; Edin., '90
Glasgow	Danskin, J.	"	1889
Lerwick	Mail, S. W.	S.C. & T.	1884
Dublin A.O. ...	Mowatt, H. J. ...	2nd Div. Clk. ...	Clk., 2nd Div., M.O.O. Lon., '95; A.O. Dub., '96
Killarney	Royse, H. B.	Clerk	Tel., Limerick, '73; Clk., Killarney, '94

Postmasters Appointed.

OFFICE.	NAME.	PREVIOUS APPOINTMENT.
Aberystwyth	Williams, P.	Pmr., Machynlleth
Belper	Miss E. J. Kibble .	Postmistress, Market Harboro'
Bletchley Station ...	Lucas, J. W.	Ch. Clk., W. Hartlepool
Devizes	Rodwell, W.... ..	Pmr., Tring
Horncastle	Chandler, R.... ..	Pmr., Belper
Ilfracombe	Sims, H.	Pmr., Pontefract
Liskeard	Andrews, G. W. ...	Clk., Devonport
Lydney	Shaw, J.	1st Cl. Tracer, R. & A.G.O.
Market Harboro' ...	Smith, T. W.	Pmr., Horncastle
Newton Abbot	Ilsley, J. S.	Pmr., West Hartlepool
Normanton... ..	Righton, S.	Pmr., Penzance
Normanton, Mirfield, S.O.	Barnes, A. F.	2nd Cl. S.C., Grimsby
Penzance	Woolston, F.	Pmr., Bletchley Station
Pickering	Preston, H.	S.C. & T., Spalding
Pontefract	Chambers, W. H. A. B. McD.	Asst. Super. (P.), Chester
Spalding	Allen, J. W.	1st Cl. S.C. & T., Taunton
Stafford, Uttoxeter, S.O.	Miss H. Upton	S.C. & T., Uttoxeter, Stafford
West Hartlepool ...	Smith, Philip	Pmr., North Shields
Wigton	Schofield, C.... ..	Clk., Rochdale
Windermere	Stevenson, D.	Pmr., Spalding

ABBREVIATIONS.

Asst., Assistant; Ch., Chief; Clk., Clerk; Cn., Counterman; Cwn., Counterwoman; Engr., Engineer; Examr., Examiner; Insp., Inspector; Jr., Junior; Over., Overseer; P., Postal; Prin., Principal; Pmr., Postmaster; Retr., Returner; Sr., Sorter; S.C., Sorting Clerk; S.C. & T., Sorting Clk. and Telegraphist; Super., Superintendent or Supervisor; Sur., Surveyor; T., Telegraphs; Tel., Telegraphist.

TO OUR READERS.



Print below our summary of annual subscriptions for the present year. If compared with the summary for 1895, which appeared in our last volume, it will be seen that there has been a slight falling off in the number of subscribers. We do not regard this as in any way a discouraging sign, for it was not to be expected that the Magazine could wholly escape from the ill-effects of the crisis through which it passed at the close of last year. If the kind things which, of late, so many of our subscribers have said about the Magazine may be regarded as trustworthy indications, our circulation during the coming year should be a record one.

Our readers will please note that (1) The next number (No. 25) will appear on the 1st of January, 1897; (2) That all subscriptions should be sent in *not later than December 1st*; (3) That a subscription form is sent with each copy of the present issue; (4) That the audited accounts for 1896 will appear in the January number.

Attention is directed to the rules and suggestions printed on the back of the Order Forms.

Summary of Annual Subscriptions for 1896.

London	...	...	...	...	715	
England	...	...	...	...	1,560	
Scotland	...	...	...	...	289	
Ireland	...	...	...	...	56	
						2,620
Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Malta, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey...					28	
India, Singapore	...	...	...	...	7	
Egypt, The Cape, Natal, Sierra Leone	...	...	...	...	232	
Bermuda, Canada	...	...	...	...	17	
New South Wales, New Zealand, Queens- land, South Australia	...	...	...	...	166	
						450
						3,070

COVERS FOR BINDING VOL. VI.—Applications, together with a remittance of one shilling for each cover required, should be made to Mr. A. F. KING, *not later than December 1st*.

ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION, newspaper cuttings, drawings, photographs, notices of events, &c., should be sent either to the Hon. Editor, EDWARD BENNETT, or to SHERWIN ENGALL, c/o Messrs. Griffith & Sons, Ltd., Prujean Square, Old Bailey, E.C.

ALL REMITTANCES should be addressed to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. A. F. KING, c/o Messrs. Griffith & Sons, Ltd., Prujean Square, Old Bailey, E.C. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to him, and should be crossed "London and Midland Bank, Newgate Street, E.C."

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