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FOURTH REPORT

OF

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL,

ON

THE POST OFFICE.

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



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

1858.

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FOURTH REPORT.

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

MY LORDS,

I HAVE the honour to present to your Lordships the Fourth Annual Report on the Post Office ; being that for the year 1857.

Extension of Inland Service.

Last year the number of Post Offices in the United Kingdom was increased by 235, making the whole present number 11,101. Of these 810 are Head Post Offices, and 10,291 Sub-Post Offices.

Number of
Post Offices.

A new Post Office has been erected at Belfast, and one is in course of erection at Swansea. It has also been decided to build new offices at Manchester, Dover, and one or two other places in England, as well as at Edinburgh and Dundee. Increased accommodation has been provided in the Post Offices at Bristol, Exeter, Gloucester, Plymouth, Sunderland, Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton, and elsewhere, and is about to be afforded at Cork, Southampton, Brighton, Derby, and other towns.

New Post
Offices.

During the last few years important improvements have been in progress in the Chief Office in London, and, although not yet complete, they have, at a moderate expense, already added largely to the amount of accommodation, and have had a beneficial effect on the health of the officers.

Chief Office in
London.

Like too many other public buildings, the Chief Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand seems to have been erected with much more regard to external appearance than to careful adaptation for its purpose ; and the consequence has been a great waste of space, a bad arrangement of rooms, and half darkness where there is most need of light.

So long as the number of letters was comparatively small, these defects were probably little felt ; but the vast increase in the work of the office during the last twenty years caused such a pressure for room and such obstacles to the rapid

discharge of the duties, that, as your Lordships are aware, it was at one time in contemplation to build an entirely new office in another situation ; a measure which would necessarily have entailed a very great expense. By a careful examination, however, of the present building, it has been found practicable so materially to improve it and to devise arrangements for further improvements when these shall become necessary, that I have now no fear of the building proving insufficient for its requirements ; especially considering the relief which will be afforded by the district offices.

Road Letter
Boxes.

295 road letter boxes (some in towns and some in rural districts) were put up last year, making the whole number 703.

Rural Posts.

Further progress has been made in the revision of the rural posts ; and I trust that during the present year the general revision will be brought to an end ; though it will of course be necessary, from time to time, again to examine the posts in particular districts.

Deliveries.

At 1,041 places free deliveries were established for the first time last year ; and at 297 other places, including Dublin, Bristol, Bath, Exeter, Oldham, the thickly inhabited district round Manchester, Perth, and the neighbourhood of Belfast, the free delivery was extended or otherwise improved.

Posting Letters
during the
night.

As a general rule, the business of provincial Post Offices closes at 10 P.M. ; but in order to afford the public an opportunity of posting important letters up to the latest possible time, it has been arranged that at all offices in England and Wales where there is night duty, letters intended for night despatches shall be received, without fee, till within a short time of the making up of the bag.

If this measure should be found to work satisfactorily it will probably be extended to Scotland and Ireland.

Delivery in
London.

The first morning delivery in London, a striking improvement in which was notified in my last Report, has been further accelerated ; as will be seen by referring to the Appendix, page 37.

So far as this delivery is concerned, the object of dividing London into postal districts, and of making a preliminary sorting of the letters, either in the country offices or on the railways, has to a great extent been attained ; since, except on Monday, the delivery is almost always nearly completed before nine o'clock.

I should observe, however, that this result is not wholly

attributable to the foregoing measures, but is in part owing to the better state of preparation for delivery in which the Colonial and Foreign Mails now arrive (as will be explained hereafter), and to increased diligence and efficiency on the part of the letter carriers.

Arrangements have also been made for expediting the delivery of a large portion of the letters arriving by the Day Mails (those, namely, which are brought by the North-western Railway), provided they bear the initials of their respective postal districts; and when, from any cause, a part, though not the whole, of the contents of any other of the numerous mails arriving in the afternoon can be sent out by the next delivery, a selection for that delivery is made of such letters as bear the initials; this priority not being the result of arbitrary preference, but a natural advantage arising from the facility in sorting afforded by the senders of the letters.

The delivery of General Post letters has also been expedited in many of the suburban towns and villages; and in several, not only have earlier deliveries of these and other letters been effected, but it has been found possible to allow the posting of letters up to a later time, and to increase the number of despatches; while in some cases an additional and later delivery has been made in the evening, and a collection in the morning sufficiently early for many of the Day Mails.

Delivery in
Suburban
District.

Measures are in progress, though they must necessarily proceed gradually, for still further improving the postal service in the suburban district; and when completed they will, I trust, place the whole of this service on a very satisfactory footing. These measures include an acceleration (where this has not already been accomplished) of the General Post letters arriving in London by the Night Mails; the extension to all places within six or seven miles of London (isolated houses and scattered neighbourhoods excepted) of a late evening delivery, so that letters leaving the London Office about 7.30 P.M. may reach the hands of the public the same night, instead of remaining undelivered till the next morning; a greater approach to equality in the periods between the despatches from London; and, where requisite, more numerous despatches and collections, longer periods for posting, and an earlier morning collection.

General Postal
Improvement
in Suburban
District.

So far as its object was to expedite the interchange of correspondence between district and district, the system of postal divisions in London is still, owing to the want

Postal Dis-
tricts.

of offices, only in very partial operation. In some districts no suitable building, or even site, has yet been found; and in others unforeseen obstacles have arisen to retard the completion of the arrangements, even when considerable progress had been made.

Nevertheless offices have been opened in the Western, Western Central, North-Western, and South-Eastern districts; and not only is there already some interchange of bags between these districts, but in all of them that part of the plan which provides for the speedy delivery of letters posted in the same district in which they are to be delivered has been brought into full operation.

It may be well to point out that as the opening of a District Office is likely to cause a change in the starting point for the letter carriers, the effect on the deliveries, though beneficial on the whole, may not be so in special cases; I hope, however, that even such exceptional instances will be but temporary.

Street nomenclature and numbering of houses.

Since my last Report some little has been done towards improving the nomenclature of the streets in London, and the numbering of the houses; and, so far, the delivery of letters has been facilitated; but the work proceeds very slowly, and much remains to be accomplished.

A good street nomenclature and a proper numbering of the houses not only tend to increased rapidity in the delivery, but are a considerable security against errors.

In many towns it has long been the practice, in numbering houses, to put the odd numbers on one side of the street and the even numbers on the other; which is much better than a consecutive numbering, since it enables a person at once to know on which side of a street any particular house must be. I am sorry, however, to observe that even in some recent instances this obvious advantage has been overlooked, and the old practice of consecutive numbering persisted in.

A case has recently occurred illustrating in a striking manner the expediency of avoiding all duplications within the same street in the numbers of houses. It appears that in a street in Bristol there are two houses, which not only bear the same number, but till lately, were occupied by persons of the same name. To one of these a letter was addressed containing Money Orders for upwards of 6*l.*; but there being nothing to distinguish one occupant or one house from the other, the letter reached the wrong person, who forged the signature of his namesake, and

obtained payment of the Money Orders; an offence for which he has since been tried and punished.

During the last year 59 additional towns were provided with Day Mails to or from the metropolis of one or other of the three parts of the United Kingdom, and some of them with Mails in both directions. Supplementary Mails, moreover, being the third despatched from or to London in a single day, were established with Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Cambridge, Southampton, Sheffield, and other towns.

More frequent communications.

More frequent postal communication was also provided between many provincial towns, and between the mainland and some of the islands round the coast.

An earlier arrival of their North Mail by about four hours and a half has been afforded to towns in South Wales west of Carmarthen; the postal arrangements of the south-western part of Ireland, of the district between Edinburgh and Glasgow, and also of that between Glasgow and Greenock, have been materially improved; a later despatch of its Night Mail to the north by about two hours has been given to Liverpool; an earlier arrival of the Day Mail from London, to Norwich, Ipswich, and Yarmouth; and to Norwich and Yarmouth a later despatch of the Day Mail to London; and earlier arrivals and later despatches have been afforded to many other towns.

Earlier arrivals and later despatches.

A contract has been entered into for improving the postal communication between London and Dublin; but the time needed for building the powerful steamboats required will probably prevent the contract from coming into operation for at least eighteen months.

Mails between London and Dublin.

The Parcel Post Service, that is, an arrangement for forwarding Mails by certain trains at the ordinary parcel rate, when the number of letters is not sufficient to warrant the expense of a guard to take charge of them, has been considerably extended on the North-Eastern, South-Eastern, and Great Northern railways.

Parcel Posts.

Where a general contract exists, and applies to the whole line, no such measure as the foregoing is necessary; but in other cases the arrangement is very serviceable; the benefit extending, in my opinion, not only to the public at large but to the railway companies; though this is a point on which the directors of some of the companies take a different view.

I think I am safe in stating, as a general fact, that those boards of directors of railway companies which have

Railway interest promoted

by postal communication.

evinced the greatest readiness to meet the wishes of the Post Office, and to convey mail bags by frequent trains and at moderate rates, are at the same time those boards which have been most successful in promoting the interests of their companies, as shown by the market value of the shares. Nor is this surprising, when it is considered how much facilities in postal intercourse must tend to increase travelling, and to promote the habit of living in the country at a distance from the place of business.

General contracts with Railway Companies.

During the last year general contracts, giving the Department power to use all the trains, were entered into with four additional railway companies, making the whole number of such contracts twelve, and comprising the following railways:—

Caledonian.
East Lancashire.
Edinburgh and Glasgow.
Lancashire and Yorkshire.
London and North-Western.
Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire.
Midland.
Newcastle and Carlisle.
North British.
Preston and Wyre.
Stockton and Darlington.
Taff Vale.

All the advantages of such a contract are, moreover, enjoyed with respect to the main part of the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway; the directors having, many years since, offered to convey Mails by all their ordinary trains without extra charge.

Lest it should be supposed, however, that where, without additional payment to the company, a mail bag can be sent by any particular train, there is no difficulty in arranging for a more frequent interchange of letters, it may be well again to remind the public that little is gained by forwarding a mail bag, unless provision be made, on its arrival, for the delivery of the letters; and that such delivery would, in many cases, entail an expense altogether disproportionate to the amount of correspondence.

The defective state of the law regulating the relations between the Post Office and the railway companies has been viewed as a serious obstacle to postal improvement by my predecessors for many years past. In this view I entirely concur; indeed, my experience has satisfied me

State of the law between the Post Office and Railway Companies.

that as the law now stands it is impossible either to secure regularity in the conveyance of the Mails, or to have that full use of the railways for postal purposes which the public demands, which the Department is anxious to afford, and which would be beneficial even to the companies themselves.

Acting under this conviction, I caused a Bill to be prepared, which, with your Lordships' concurrence, was introduced into Parliament in the course of last session. In this Bill every provision, however important, which appeared open to reasonable opposition, was carefully avoided. Some of its clauses would have removed objections to the present law which have been repeatedly urged by the railway companies; and, taken as a whole, the Bill certainly cannot fairly be represented as a measure opposed to railway interests.

Nevertheless, owing apparently to misapprehension on the part of the railway companies, statements were put forth on their behalf which were almost wholly erroneous,—the Bill was strongly opposed by the railway interest generally, and, the close of the session approaching, it was withdrawn.

In the Appendix, page 46, the Bill is printed *in extenso*, with explanatory remarks opposite each clause. To these I would earnestly recommend the attention of the public and of the railway companies, in the hope that ultimately some such measure may obtain general concurrence, and that thus the most serious obstacles to postal improvement may be removed.

Application
from Northern
Towns respect-
ing Mails to
the Continent.

In the Appendix, page 63, is the copy of a reply made to an application from some of the northern towns in England for an available Day Mail to arrive in London in time for the despatch of letters by the Evening Mails to the Continent.

I could not, for the reasons assigned, accede to the application in the way proposed; but in order, if possible, still to meet the wishes of the memorialists, and to obtain other advantages, I entered into communication with the Post Offices of France and Belgium, with a view to the despatch of the Mails in question at a somewhat later hour than at present. I find that this change cannot as yet be made; nevertheless I hope, by other means, to attain in part the object desired.

Part of the reply referred to is applicable to many other cases in which demands are made for postal accommodation, the cost of which would far exceed the produce. As stated in the reply, if all such demands were admitted the whole

revenue of the Post Office would be absorbed, and, indeed, after a time even that would not suffice, and a heavy burden would be cast on the general revenue of the State.

Travelling
Post Offices.

The use of sorting carriages on railways, by which the delivery of the letters on their arrival at their destination is expedited, and by which also the business of the smaller Post Offices is simplified, was last year still further extended; as was also the use of the apparatus for exchanging mail bags on railways without stopping the train.

In some cases, the use of a travelling carriage, and of the apparatus just referred to, by avoiding the necessity for stoppages, cause an important acceleration of the Mail. It is in this way that a much improved postal service has been given to a large portion of the rural districts round Shrewsbury, and to Ludlow and Hereford, with their surrounding districts.

Postal accommodation at Manchester early in last century.

In the Appendix, page 67, will be found an extract from a report by Mr. Gay, one of the surveyors, containing a copy of a public notice issued in Manchester about 130 years ago, relative to the arrival and despatch of the Mails at that time, and affording a striking contrast to the present amount of postal communication.

Precautions against injury to officers of the department when travelling on railways.

Much consideration has been given to the question of altering the construction and arrangements of the interior fittings of the Railway Post Office carriages, so as to diminish the risk of injury to the clerks and mail guards in the event of collision or other accident; and, after some correspondence and negotiation with the various railway companies, many alterations have been made with this view, which, with others that are in progress, will, it is hoped, afford much protection to the Officers of the Department.

Distance that mails are now carried; with cost of conveyance.

It will be seen by the subjoined table that the distance over which Mails are now conveyed within the United Kingdom by railways, mail coaches, &c., steam packets, boats, and foot messengers, is nearly 130,000 miles per day.

	Mails conveyed by Railways.				Mails conveyed by Coaches, Omnibuses, Mail Carts, &c.			
	Number of Miles per Week Day.	Average Charge per Mile.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Number of Miles per Week Day.	Average Charge per Mile.	Maximum.	Minimum.
ENGLAND - -	23,620	s. d. 0 8½*	s. d. 3 9*	d. 8	19,097	d. 2½	s. d. 0 10½	{ Exemption from Tolls. d. ½ ½
IRELAND - -	2,850	1 4	4 6	½	8,603	2	0 8	
SCOTLAND - -	3,702	0 10½	3 2	½	5,297	2½	0 6½	½
UNITED KINGDOM	30,172	0 9½	4 6	8	32,997	2½	0 10½	{ Exemption from Tolls.

(continued)

	Mails conveyed on Foot.				Mails conveyed by Packets and Boats between different Places in the United Kingdom.		
	Number of Miles per Week Day.	Average Charge per Mile.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Number of Miles per Week Day.	Maximum.	Minimum.
ENGLAND - -	46,643	d. 1½	d. 4½	d. 2½	1431	s. d. 5 6½	d. ½
IRELAND - -	6,721	1	2½	½	52	0 5½	½
SCOTLAND - -	10,068	1½	3	½	1376	1 1½	½
UNITED KINGDOM	63,432	1½	4½	½	2879	5 6½	8

It appears by the last Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States, that the average cost per mile there paid for the postal use of railways is only 5¼d., being little more than half the payment in this country; and that the average payment per mile for the use of mail coaches, mail carts, &c. is 3¼d., being about 40 per cent. more than our payment.

The privileges of the Inland Book Post have been extended so as, in all cases, to include writing when not of Book Post.

* In calculating these amounts, the payment to the Chester and Holyhead Railway Company, hitherto included, has been omitted, as only part of that payment is for postal service, the remainder being of the nature of a Government grant to increase the general facilities for communication with Ireland.

the nature of a letter; and the penalty for neglect of some of the regulations has been considerably reduced.

Number of Letters, Newspapers, and Books.

The following Table shows the number of letters delivered in the United Kingdom during the last year, with the rate of increase, and the proportion of letters to population * :—

				Number of Letters in 1857.	Increase per Cent. on Number in 1856.	Proportion of Letters to Population.
ENGLAND	-	-	-	410 millions	About 5½	21 to each person.†
IRELAND	-	-	-	43 "	" 2¼	7 "
SCOTLAND	-	-	-	51 "	" 7	16 "
UNITED KINGDOM	-	-	-	504 "	" 5½	17 "

As compared with 1856, this number shows an increase of 26 millions; and as compared with the year previous to the introduction of Penny Postage (1839), an increase (omitting franks) of 428 millions; making the present number of letters more than sixfold what it was in 1839.

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

1853	-	-	-	-	-	8¼ per Cent.
1854	-	-	-	-	-	8 "
1855	-	-	-	-	-	23½ "
1856	-	-	-	-	-	43½ "
1857	-	-	-	-	-	5½ "
Average, nearly						<u>6</u> "

* This Table is to some extent an estimate, being the result of a calculation founded on a record of the actual number of letters delivered in one week of each month in the year. At page 38 in the Appendix will be found a statement of the number of letters thus estimated in each year since 1838.

† At Leeds the proportion is as high as 24 letters to each person, at Glasgow and Birmingham 27, at Liverpool 29, in Dublin and Manchester 30, in Edinburgh 36, and in London 43.

Of the whole number of letters last year nearly a quarter were delivered in London and the suburban district; and counting those also which were despatched, nearly one half passed through the London Office.

Letters in
London.

The numbers of letters given in the foregoing statements include colonial and foreign letters delivered in the United Kingdom as well as inland letters. The great bulk, however, are inland; the colonial and foreign letters forming less than one fiftieth of the whole number delivered.

Colonial and
Foreign letters.

According to an official return in a recent number of the "Journal de Saint Petersburg," giving various Russian postal statistics for the year 1855, the whole number of letters posted in Russia was about 16,400,000, or almost exactly the same as the number posted in the single city of Manchester and its suburbs.

Russia and
Manchester.

The number of registered letters last year was rather more than a million and a quarter; or about one registered letter to four hundred ordinary letters.

Registered
letters.

The number of newspapers delivered in the United Kingdom last year, as in the previous year, was about 71,000,000; nearly three quarters of which bore the impressed or newspaper stamp, the others having been paid by postage stamps.

Newspapers.

The proportion of Colonial and Foreign newspapers and books sent through the post is much greater than that of letters; for while of letters the portion, as already stated, is less than one fiftieth of the whole, of newspapers and books it is about one fifth.

This difference is probably owing, in part, to the means by which large numbers of inland newspapers and books are distributed otherwise than through the post, not being available for newspapers and books sent here from abroad, and to the rates of postage on colonial and foreign letters being much higher, compared with newspapers, than is the case with inland letters.

This great disparity in the rates of postage gives rise to much petty fraud in using foreign and colonial newspapers for letter writing.

The number of letters returned to the writers last year,

Returned
letters.

B

owing to failure in the attempts to deliver them, was about 1,700,000.*

Returned newspapers.

Owing to the same cause about 580,000 newspapers also were undelivered; being about 1 in 122 of the whole number.

Books.

There were about 6,000,000 of book packets last year.

The average weight of a book packet is about five ounces and a half, and the average postage about $2\frac{1}{4}d$.

Average weight of a letter.

Excluding official packets, the average weight of an inland letter is rather more than a quarter of an ounce; that of a colonial letter rather more than a third of an ounce; and that of a foreign letter rather more than a quarter of an ounce.

Average postage of a letter.

The average postage of an ordinary inland letter is about $1\frac{1}{8}d$.

Average weight of a newspaper

The average weight of a newspaper passing through the Post Office is rather more than two ounces and a half.

Money Orders.

Money Order Offices.

During the last year 138 new Money Order offices were opened, viz., 95 in England and Wales, 9 in Ireland, and 34 in Scotland; making the whole number 2,233.

Number of Money Orders, &c.

The following Tables show the number of Money Orders issued during the year, with other particulars:—†

—	Number of Money Orders issued.	Amount.	Increase per Cent.	Commission.	Profit after deducting Expenses.	Proportion of Money Orders issued to Population.
		£		£	£	
ENGLAND and WALES	5,417,203	10,410,863	3	90,112	23,613 1	to every 4 persons
IRELAND - -	459,625	818,537	$1\frac{1}{2}$	8,198	Loss 618 1	" 14 "
SCOTLAND - -	512,874	950,872	$5\frac{1}{2}$	8,542	1,180 1	" 6 "
UNITED KINGDOM -	6,389,702	12,180,272	$3\frac{1}{2}$	106,852	24,175 1	" 5 "

* The corresponding number in the previous year was erroneously given as 2,400,000 instead of 1,581,000. The former number included not only the letters which were returned to the writers, but those that were re-issued to corrected addresses, those that were returned unopened to places abroad, and those which, after every effort to discover the writers had failed, were destroyed.

† At pages 41 and 42 in the Appendix is a statement of the Money Orders issued and paid in each year since 1839.

ANNUAL INCREASE in the Total Amount for which Money Orders were issued in the last five years, as compared in each case with the Amount in the year preceding.

Year.	ENGLAND and WALES.	IRELAND.	SCOTLAND.	UNITED KINGDOM.
1853	About 5½	About 1	About 4½	About 5½
1854	" 5½	" 4½	" 8½	" 5½
1855	" 5	" 9	" 4½	" 5½
1856	" 7½	" 7	" 5½	" 7½
1857	" 3	" 1½	" 5½	" 3½
Average increase	5½	4½	5½	5½

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

Profit or loss.

	Profit.	Loss.
	£	£
1848	-	5,745
1849	322	
1850	3,236	
1851	7,437	
1852	10,689	
1853	14,149	
1854	16,167	
1855	20,252	
1856	22,674	
1857	24,175	

Notwithstanding the depression of trade during a large part of last year, it will be observed that there was no falling off in the number of Money Orders, but, on the contrary, a considerable increase, though not so great as in many previous years. This increase extends even over the last quarter, when the depression was greatest; a fact indicative of great vigour in the system and of a strong tendency to expansion, though, no doubt, attributable in part to the increased facilities caused by the opening of more offices, and by further relaxations in the regulations for the issue and payment of Money Orders; relaxations which, like those that preceded them, have not, I am glad to state, led to any fraud or abuse.

Increase in Money Order business.

There has again been a decrease in the amount of Money Orders paid in Ireland, but more than an equivalent increase in the amount issued; showing, as in previous years, a diminished habit of seeking for labour in England and Scotland (and, consequently, of sending money by Irishmen in

Ireland.

Great Britain to their families in Ireland), and an increased command of money at home.

Scotland.

In Scotland the increase in Money Order business, which in the two previous years had been less than either in England or Ireland, was last year proportionately greater.

Number of Money Orders at principal towns.

At page 43 in the Appendix is given the amount of Money Orders issued and paid last year at some of the principal towns.

It will be remarked that in many places more Money Orders were paid than issued, the difference in London being nearly two to one. This no doubt arises from the practice of persons in the country sending Money Orders to towns in payment for goods.

Greatest number of Orders in any one day.

The greatest number of Orders ever paid in England and Wales in one day was on the 24th December last, when it was upwards of 38,000. It need scarcely be suggested that the large number on that particular day must be attributable to the common practice of making presents at Christmas, and to the Money Order Offices being closed on the 25th.

In Ireland also the greatest number of Money Orders is paid on the 24th December; but in Scotland the greatest number is on new year's day.

Colonial Posts.

Reduced Postage.

The sixpenny rate of postage has been extended to letters between this country and Gambia, Natal, the Falkland Islands, Vancouver's Island, and Labuan; and, these being the only colonies to which this reduced rate had not previously been applied, letters may now be sent to every British colony for a postage of 6*d.* the half ounce.

Book Post.

The Colonial Book Post was also last year extended to those colonies which had not previously enjoyed its benefit.

The privileges of the Colonial Book Post have also been enlarged, and assimilated to those of the Inland Book Post, by permitting printed letters to be forwarded, as also manuscript (when not of the nature of a letter), and by reducing the charge for small packets.

The Inter-colonial Book Post, established for the first time in 1856, has been extended to Australia, India, Ceylon, Mauritius, Hong Kong, Malta, and Gibraltar.

Indian Mails.

According to the original terms of the contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company for the conveyance of the Indian Mails, the company was bound to provide two packets, to sail, one between Southampton and

Malta, and another between Marseilles and Malta; then to have a single packet between Malta and Alexandria; then a single packet between Suez and Aden; and then two packets, one between Aden and Bombay and the other between Aden and Calcutta. But owing to an increase in the number of passengers and the quantity of goods passing by these routes to and from India, the company, of their own accord, had gradually substituted two vessels for the single one between Malta and Alexandria, and two for the single one between Suez and Aden; so that during the greater part of the route the service became double. Matters standing thus, and the mutiny in India rendering it very desirable to have more frequent communication with that country, arrangements, at a moderate expense, were made with the Peninsular and Oriental Company to put on an additional packet between Marseilles and Malta (thus making the quickest and most important mail route to India double throughout), and so to alter the days of sailing as to cause the two lines of packets to proceed at intervals of about a week, instead, as previously, (where the service was double,) of sailing together.

The packet from Aden to Bombay affords, it is believed, a means of forwarding a Mail to Calcutta equally rapid with that given by a packet going direct from Aden to Calcutta; the time required in sailing from Aden to Bombay, and then proceeding overland to Calcutta, not being greater than that required for the whole voyage by sea from Aden to Calcutta.

Thus to Calcutta and Madras, to places near those cities, and to many other parts of India, we have now four Mails each month; although from its geographical position it has not hitherto been practicable to have the same frequency of communication with Bombay.

Since this measure was adopted, the Peninsular and Oriental Company have announced their intention of having additional packets also between Southampton and Alexandria; and I hope, therefore, that ere long there will be four Mails to India by the slow as well as by the quick route.

During the critical period of the Indian mutiny, when the receipt of intelligence, much fuller than could be given by the telegraph, was anxiously awaited here, I thought it right, especially while there were only two Mails in the month, to incur considerable expense in expediting the Mails to the greatest possible extent in their transit through France, across the Channel, and from Dover to London,

the distance from Paris to London having thus been frequently traversed in less than nine hours.

In accomplishing this object I received the cordial assistance of the French Post Office, for which I desire to express my obligation.

I have also to acknowledge, with thanks, the zealous co-operation of the Directors of the English, French, and Belgian Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, and of the South-Eastern Railway Company.

Measures are being taken for effecting a more speedy transit of the Indian and Australian Mails through Egypt; and to assist in this object, as also to revise the English Post Offices at Alexandria and Suez, I have despatched Mr. Trollope, one of the surveyors of the Department.

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company having established an additional communication between Point de Galle and China, Mails for Singapore, Hong Kong, and China are now forwarded twice each month, instead of only once.

Additional Mails also are sent to Canada, Malta, the Ionian Islands, and Ceylon.

The late contract for the conveyance of Mails to the Cape of Good Hope, which was very ill performed, having been brought to a close, the service was advertised afresh; and although not yet formally concluded, the chief provisions for a new contract have been settled with the Union Steam Shipping Company, who have already conveyed several Mails in both directions with much greater speed and regularity than the former contractor.

The regulation under which letters between the United Kingdom and the Australian colonies are required to be prepaid on either side having been found to work very satisfactorily, and to save much time both in the despatch and in the delivery of the letters, the system of compulsory prepayment has, since the beginning of the present year, been extended to the British West Indies, Malta, Gibraltar, and Hong Kong; and a proposal has been made to the governments of the other British colonies and possessions for the adoption of the same system.

Before any change, such as the foregoing, takes place, timely notice is always given by exhibiting placards respecting it at every Post Office in the country (which notices are always inserted also in the leading newspapers), and, when practicable, by announcing the alteration in the previous number of the Postal Guide. Notice also, gene-

Mails for Singapore, Hong Kong, and China.

Canada, Malta, &c.

Cape of Good Hope.

Prepayment of Postage.

rally several times repeated, is given in the Daily Packet List. Thus it is in every person's power, by the exercise of a little care, to obtain information of a postal change early enough to prevent his falling into an error.

These precautions were all taken in respect to the alteration requiring prepayment of letters for the West Indies. Nevertheless, on the despatch of the first Mail after the change, it was found that a large number of letters (although forming but about one-fiftieth part of the whole Mail) had been posted unpaid, and that so closely before the time of despatch as not to admit of their being returned to the writers in time to be re-posted.

A plan had long been in contemplation for sorting letters on board ship, but difficulties existed, as mentioned in the First Annual Report, which till lately prevented its being carried into operation. These difficulties having, however, been surmounted, the plan has been tried in the packets conveying the Australian Mails between Alexandria and Southampton, and has been found to work very satisfactorily.

Sorting letters
on board ship.

Hitherto the arrangement has been confined to the Homeward Mails, but I have proposed to the several Australian Post Offices to extend it to the Outward Mails.

Measures are being taken for extending the plan to other lines of packets.

Arrangements have been made with many of the colonies for providing for the registration of letters passing between them and the mother country, or through the mother country to other colonies or foreign states; so as to afford the same security, in the whole passage of the letter from the time of its posting to its delivery, as has long existed with regard to inland letters; and I hope that these arrangements will soon be extended to all the other colonies.

Registration.

Newspapers between this country and India, which were formerly subject to a charge, not only at the time of posting but on delivery also, are now liable to the first charge only.

Newspapers
for India.

In accordance with suggestions made by Mr. Creswell, the zealous and efficient Deputy Postmaster General of Gibraltar, the postal arrangements at that settlement have been greatly improved. The land post with Spain has been placed under the control of the Postmaster General; letters brought to or despatched from Gibraltar by private ship have been put under better regulation; the ship letter rate has been reduced; and an official delivery established of ship letters by letter carriers.

Gibraltar.

It is satisfactory to find that whilst the public convenience has been greatly promoted by these arrangements, the revenue has also benefited.

The Governor of Gibraltar has undertaken to build a new Post Office in a central and convenient position (for which the department will pay a rent), and the works have already made great progress.

The recommendation of my predecessor that such of the West Indian Posts as are still under the direction of the British Office should be placed under that of the local governments has not yet been adopted, the Houses of Assembly of Jamaica and of some of the smaller colonies having adopted resolutions adverse to this measure.

Colonial Posts
under British
direction.

Foreign Posts.

The new Postal Conventions with Belgium and Sardinia, referred to in the last Report, have been completed and brought into operation, though that with Sardinia did not take effect till after the beginning of the present year.

By means of these conventions, the rates of postage have been reduced, book posts have been established, and lower transit rates have been fixed, so as to facilitate the reduction of postage to other countries.

Liberia.

I have had peculiar pleasure in concluding a postal treaty with the small republic of Liberia.

By this convention, which will come into operation on the 1st April, and which I sincerely hope will tend to promote friendly intercourse between that interesting State and this country, letters will be exchanged at the same low rate of postage as between the United Kingdom and its colonies; and there will be the same facilities for forwarding books and newspapers.

German Postal
Union.
United States,
Portugal, and
Spain.

Some progress has been made in the convention with the German Postal Union, but none, I am sorry to say, in that with the United States, Portugal, or Spain.

The great intercourse, both commercial and social, between this country and the United States, renders the present high rate of postage, and the want of a comprehensive and liberal arrangement for the transmission of books and other printed matter, highly objectionable. It is now considerably more than a year since I made proposals to the United States Post Office, with a view to a great amendment in these matters; but hitherto I have not succeeded in obtaining either assent to what I have myself offered or counter proposals.

One result of the delay in the Portuguese Convention is the continuance of the excessively high rate of postage to Madeira, an evil which must be much felt by the many English invalids who frequent that island, and by their relatives at home. As stated in a former Report, I proposed a mutual reduction of postage in this case, without waiting for a more general agreement, but hitherto I have failed even in this.

Negotiations are in progress for new postal conventions with the Netherlands and New Granada.

Netherlands
and New
Granada.

The rate of postage on letters conveyed by private ship between this country and all parts of the world has been reduced, where it before exceeded that sum, to a uniform charge of 6*d.* the half ounce.

Reduction in
postage of
letters sent by
private ships.

I have availed myself, as respects several lines of vessels, of the power which your Lordships have given me to forward letters by foreign private ships, when the owners are willing to carry them, provided I be satisfied that they will be safely conveyed and delivered.

Conveyance of
Mails by fo-
reign ships.

This arrangement has enabled me considerably to increase the postal communication with Brazil.

Brazil.

The Brazilian and Argentine service will also soon be greatly improved by an acceleration in the speed of the packets belonging to the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company.

A British Post Office has been opened at Constantinople, and I have authorized the use of British postage stamps there as well as in Malta and Gibraltar.

British Post
Office at Con-
stantinople.

Revenue and Expenditure.

GROSS REVENUE.

Gross Revenue.

The Gross Revenue of the Post Office in each of the years 1856 and 1857 was as follows *:—

Postage :

	1856. £	1857. £	Increase. £
England -	2,295,685	2,437,053	141,368
Ireland -	214,488	219,899	5,411
Scotland -	254,433	271,906	17,473
	—————2,764,606†	—————2,928,858†	—————164,252

Commission on Money Orders :

England -	87,772	90,806	3,034
Ireland -	7,579	7,586	7
Scotland -	7,997	8,463	466
	—————103,348†	—————106,855†	—————3,507
	£ 2,867,954	£ 3,035,713	£ 167,759

The rate of increase in the Gross Revenue in the two years was as follows:—

1856. England nearly 6 per cent.
 Ireland „ 5 „
 Scotland „ 7 „
 United Kingdom rather more than $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.
1857. England rather more than 6 per cent.
 Ireland about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.
 Scotland „ $6\frac{3}{4}$ „
 United Kingdom nearly 6 per cent.

The increase in the Gross Revenue last year is attributable, for the most part, to a general increase of business, to the resumption of the full service of British packets between this country and the United States and Canada, which was diminished during the time of the war with Russia (owing to

* At page 44 in the Appendix a statement is given of the Revenue and Expenditure in each year since 1837; also (at page 45) a statement, for the last two years, of the amount of postage collected at many large towns.

† Exclusive of “returns” for refused letters, &c.

‡ These are the sums actually brought to account of revenue, and consequently somewhat different from those stated at page 18, which show the amount of commission on the orders issued during the year.

the demand for steam ships to serve as transports), and to the adoption of measures for securing greater vigilance than heretofore in charging letters with additional postage when the stamps affixed to them are insufficient.

The chief merit of ascertaining the extent of neglect in making the surcharges above referred to, and of devising measures for preventing such neglect in future, is due to one of the clerks in the Secretary's Office, who has received a special reward.

EXPENDITURE.

The following Table gives both the actual expenditure of the Post Office during the years 1856 and 1857 and the expenditure properly appertaining to those years :—

Actual Expenditure.		Heads of Service.	Expenditure properly appertaining to the year (partly estimated).	
1856.	1857.		1856.	1857.
£	£		£	£
909,094	948,573	Salaries, Pensions, &c. - -	909,094	948,573
29,310	1,573	Hereditary Pensions - - -	—	—
33,330	29,367	Buildings - - -	33,330	29,367
		CONVEYANCE OF MAILS.		
376,363	422,943	By Railways - - - -	419,000	420,000
162,837	167,823	„ Coaches, Carts, &c., and Wages of Mail Guards - - -	162,837	165,000
14,309	12,298	„ Mail Packets (when paid for by the Post Office) and Private Ships - - - -	14,309	12,298
26,164	28,566	Manufacture of Postage Stamps, &c.	26,164	28,566
108,822	109,672	Miscellaneous, including the conveyance of Mails in Colonies, under the postal direction of the Postmaster-General; the conveyance of the Mails through Egypt; Clothing for Letter Carriers and Guards; Rents, Taxes, Law Expenses, &c. -	108,822	109,672
£1,660,229	£1,720,815	Totals - -	£1,673,556	£1,713,476

The increase of expenditure properly appertaining to the year in 1857 was at the rate of nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., as compared with $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in 1856.

The addition of 39,000*l.* under the head of Salaries and Pensions may be divided thus:—

	£
1. For salaries and allowances to all officers of the grade of clerks and upwards in the United Kingdom - - -	6,000
2. For salaries, wages, and allowances to letter carriers, sorters, messengers, stampers, and porters in the United Kingdom -	22,500
3. For salaries and allowances to postmasters in the United Kingdom - . -	6,500
4. Pensions - - - -	4,000
Total - -	<u><u>£39,000</u></u>

The increase in the first three items is partly for an increased force of 420 officers, partly for higher scales of salary, partly for a greater amount of payment for poundage on stamps and commission on Money Orders, partly for the cost of substitutes during the absence of officers on their annual holiday or on account of ill health, and partly for the annual increments of salary now regularly accruing to a large number of officers.

The increase under the head of Pensions is in part owing to additional pensions which have been granted, and partly to the cessation of the superannuation abatements, which were brought to account in reduction of the charge for pensions, and which operated in this way during the whole of the year 1856, but during half only of 1857.

As regards the large decrease of actual expenditure under the head of Hereditary Pensions, it should be remarked that on the 31st March 1857 these pensions ceased to be payable by the Post Office, and since that date have fallen on the Consolidated Fund.

At the end of the year arbitrations were still pending with seven railway companies (two in England and Wales, and five in Ireland), respecting the rate of payment for the conveyance of Mails; but a charge has been made in the foregoing account according to the expected result of such arbitrations.

Railway arbitrations.

Packet service.

The packet service is for the most part under the superintendence of the Admiralty, and is borne on the expenditure of that Department; many of the contracts for this

service having been entered into with other objects besides those of postal communication. Indeed as postal enterprises few of them could be maintained; the expense, in the large majority of cases, far exceeding the income.

The omission in the expenditure of the Post Office of such portion of the cost of these packets as may be fairly chargeable to this Department, is in part counterbalanced by the omission (under the head of revenue) of the charge for transmission (inland) of stamped newspapers; amounting last year to nearly 160,000*l*.

NET REVENUE.

The Net Revenue, taken as the difference between the Gross Revenue and the Expenditure properly appertaining to the year, is as follows :—

1856.	1857.	Increase.
£	£	£
1,194,398	1,322,237	127,849

This increase is at the rate of rather more than 10 per cent., as compared with 7 per cent. in 1856.

Staff of Officers.

At the end of the year the Staff of Officers was as follows:—

On 31st Dec. 1856.			On 31st Dec. 1857.	
		1. Officers in British Isles:—		
	1	Postmaster-General - -	1	
	5	{ Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, and Secretaries for Ireland and Scot- land - - - }	5	
	15	Surveyors - -	15	
	19	{ Other Superior Officers; viz., Heads of Departments, Chief Clerks in the Metropolitan Offices, &c. - }	19	
	10,866	Postmasters - - - -	11,101	
	1,593	Clerks, &c. - - - -	1,610*	
	204	Guards - - - -	205	
	10,427	Letter Carriers, Messengers, &c. -	10,582	
	8	Marine Mail Officers - -	7	
23,138				23,545
	118	{ 2. Postmasters, Clerks, Letter Carriers, &c. in the Colonies, the Posts of which are under the direction of the Postmaster- General - - - }	125	
118				125
	55	{ 3. Agents in Foreign Countries for collection of Postage, &c. - }	61	
55				61
23,311				23,731

Of the above staff nearly 2,000 belong to the Chief Office in London; and (including this number) about 3,200 to the London District.

The force and scale of salaries at the Offices of Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Clonmel, and Bradford have been revised and improved; and the general revision, both in metropolitan and provincial Offices, is now completed.

Your Lordships will perceive by the able and interesting Report† of Dr. Lewis, the Medical Officer attached to the Chief Office, that the general health last year of the large number of officers under his charge was good; although it would probably have been far better had effectual means been sooner taken for preventing the appointment, especially to the office of letter carrier, of persons not possessing a

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

† Appendix page 68.

strong and healthy frame. It appears that the service has been less and less recruited from the class of persons who are accustomed to healthy out-of-door employments, and more from classes whose education may be higher, but whose physical condition is inferior. As there was reason to believe that many men who had the requisite physical qualifications for a letter carrier, and who were in other respects sufficiently qualified, had been rejected owing to the adoption of too high an educational standard, I have requested the Civil Service Commissioners to adopt a standard of examination somewhat lower; while at the same time, in addition to the other points of a careful medical examination, Dr. Lewis is making arrangements for subjecting all candidates for the office of letter carrier to stricter tests as regards bodily strength. By the joint operation of these measures, I hope that the falling off mentioned by Dr. Lewis in the physical condition of this class of candidates, will be stopped, and that men really better qualified for the duties will be obtained.

Qualifications
of Letter
Carriers.

True kindness even to the candidates themselves requires the adoption of effectual measures for keeping persons of feeble constitution out of the service; since the duties of a letter carrier, though by no means excessive or likely to inflict injury on a strong man, are beyond the power of the weak, and expose them to considerable risk, as will be seen by Dr. Lewis's Report.

The following extract bearing on the subject of health is taken from the Report of Mr. Bokenham, Controller of the Circulation Department:—

Decreased
illness among
clerks in Cir-
culation De-
partment.

“The attendance of the clerks during the year has been good, and an improvement has shown itself in their general health. This is highly satisfactory, and the decreased amount of absence from illness may, I think, greatly be traced to the good effects which the annual holiday has produced upon them in the temporary relaxation which it gives from their labours. The Saturday half-holiday, too, has not been without its influence. The duty certainly has not suffered by the establishment of that measure, both for the ordinary business of the week, and for any extra work that has required to be done (and in the District Branch the pressure has been very great) the officers have cheerfully attended beyond the regular official hours in order that no arrears might accrue. The privileges are felt to be most valuable, and every effort will be made by the officers to retain them.”

Dwellings of
Letter Carriers.

Besides his ordinary Report, Dr. Lewis has this year made a Report (Appendix, page 77,) on the sanitary condition of the dwellings of the letter carriers, sorters, and messengers attached to the Chief Office.

It is painful to reflect how much sickness must be caused by the small, close, and ill-ventilated houses or rooms in which many of these officers reside; an amount of sickness much beyond anything that can depend on the regulations of the Department itself.

The want of better houses for letter carriers has been spoken of in previous Reports; and I was in hope that by this time some company would, as a commercial undertaking, have provided suitable abodes for them, there being reason to believe that under good arrangements the rents now paid for bad accommodation would be sufficient to attain this object, especially as the Department has expressed its readiness to give a guarantee against loss from arrears of rent. Hitherto, however, nothing practical has been done; though, now that the monetary crisis is over, I trust the prospect is better.

Life Insurance.

That the officers of the Department still show an increasing desire to avail themselves of the provision for assisting them to insure their lives may be gathered from the following Table:—

TABLE showing the AMOUNT and NATURE of the Aid in Payment of Premiums on Life Assurances afforded to Officers of the Post Office of the United Kingdom in the year 1857.

	Policies not exceeding £50.	£50 and not exceeding £100.	£100 and not exceeding 150.	£150 and not exceeding £200.	£200 and not exceeding £250.	Policies exceeding £250.	Total Number insured.	Per-centage of the Insured to the Employed.	Total Number insured in 1856.	Per-centage of Insured to the Employed in 1856.	Amount paid in aid of Premiums in 1857.	Amount paid in aid of Premiums in 1856.
England -	34	559	19	198	20	418	1,248	7	1,124	6	£ s. d. 1,685 10 9	£ s. d. 1,483 19 3
Ireland -	—	17	4	20	—	69	110	4	84	3½	203 0 9	143 2 6
Scotland -	5	83	8	41	3	72	212	7	198	6½	260 12 8	239 16 5
In 1857 -	39	659	31	259	23	559	1,570	—	—	—	£ 2,129 4 2	—
In 1856 -	37	598	22	219	16	514	—	—	1,406	—	—	1,866 18 2
Increase in 1857 - }	2	61	9	40	7	45	—	—	164	—	—	262 6 0

The precise amount for which the officers who received aid in 1857 had insured their lives cannot be given; but the Receiver and Accountant-General states with confidence that it is not less than 280,000*l*.

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

Ages.	England and Wales.	Ireland.	Scotland.	United Kingdom in 1857.	United Kingdom in 1856.
Under 20 years - -	11	1	2	14	16
20 years and under 25 -	125	4	8	137	455
25 " " 30 -	245	10	28	283	
30 " " 35 -	235	19	56	310	530
35 " " 40 -	216	21	44	281	
40 " " 45 -	160	16	28	204	269
45 " " 50 -	117	20	21	158	
50 " " 55 -	67	6	11	84	114
55 " " 60 -	43	9	8	60	
60 years and upwards -	29	4	6	39	22
Totals - -	1,248	110	212	1,570	1,406

The foregoing Tables show an increase of 164 in the number of insurers and an increase of 262*l*. in the amount of aid granted.

Of the officers in each part of the kingdom who may claim this aid (a privilege extending to all who can properly be regarded as officers), about 7 per cent. now insure under this arrangement in England and Wales, 4 per cent. in Ireland, and 7 per cent. in Scotland.

In his Report on this subject, Mr. Scudamore, Receiver and Accountant-General, proceeds as follows:—

“ From the foregoing Tables, and from others which have been compiled with much labour by Mr. A. C. Thomson of this Department, I gather—

“ First, that out of 237 clerks in the London, Dublin, and Edinburgh Offices, who during the year 1857 received aid in the payment of their insurance premiums, 100 had insured their lives subsequently to the establishment of the fund for affording them assistance.

“ I have no present means of ascertaining whether the assistance held out has been as powerful with other officers of the establishment as with the clerks of the

“ Metropolitan Offices, but I should think it probable that at least one fourth of the whole number of officers receiving aid have been induced to insure their lives by the prospect of obtaining assistance.

“ From the information furnished by Mr. Thomson, I gather next, that of the officers of the grade of clerks and upwards in the United Kingdom 20 per cent. are claimants for assistance in the payment of their premiums; that of the Postmasters and Receivers throughout the United Kingdom 7 per cent. are claimants for assistance, and that of the letter carriers, messengers, sorters, &c. throughout the United Kingdom, 4 per cent. are claimants for assistance.

“ As it is probable that all or nearly all those whose lives are insured claim the assistance held out to them, the foregoing statement may be applied to the number insured on the several classes as well as to the number receiving aid.”

Large, abstractedly, as is the number of officers who now insure their lives, it will be observed that, in proportion to the whole body, the number is small; and that, notwithstanding the proffered aid, it is still the case that a large majority, especially in the class of letter carriers, sorters, and messengers, do not effect such an insurance.

It should, however, be remarked that the proportion of insurers among married officers, who alone, as a general rule, can be expected to incur such an expense, is much greater than the foregoing, though still far from what might be desired.

Arrangements are in contemplation for enabling such officers as may wish it to pay their premiums by small regular deductions from their salaries or wages; and I think it probable that this alteration will materially increase the number of insurers.

Conduct of
Officers.

I am again enabled to speak very favourably of the general conduct of the officers.

Promotion by
merit.

The system of promotion according to merit necessarily entails much trouble and many difficult comparisons; but for these there is an ample reward in the increased energy of the whole body, and in the greater industry, skill, and success of those who are raised to important posts.

Indeed, even as a matter of trouble, the plan of promotion by merit has really the advantage, since the effort required for making a good and just selection is small compared with the annoyance and vexation caused by the daily acts of persons appointed to important situations for which they are not qualified.

Miscellaneous.

A general improvement has taken place in the clearness of the stamp, showing the place where letters are posted and the date ; and various experiments are being made with a view to a still further improvement. Stamping.

The measures mentioned in a former Report as in progress under the direction of the Astronomer Royal for regulating the clocks at the Chief Office at St. Martin's-le-Grand, and at the Branch Office in Lombard Street, by means of telegraphic communication with the observatory at Greenwich, have been completed, and work very satisfactorily, securing, as they do, perfect accuracy in time through the whole of these offices. Regulation of clocks.

My thanks are due to Professor Airy for the trouble he has kindly taken in this matter.

Complaint is sometimes made of delay in obtaining a copy of the British Postal Guide ; but any person by giving in his name to a Postmaster as a regular purchaser, and paying the small annual cost in advance, may avoid such delay. Postal Guide.

An advertisement occasionally appears requesting that defaced postage stamps may be sent to the advertiser, on the pretence that a certain number will enable him to procure admission for a child into some specified charitable institution. Thinking it possible that there was a fraudulent purpose in view, I have several times directed inquiry to be made ; but have always found there was no truth whatever in the alleged object ; and generally, that the whole proceeding was the work of an unknown person, actuated apparently by a silly desire to give useless trouble. Applications for defaced Postage Stamps.

In the Appendix, page 83, is a narrative of some cases which gave rise to complaints against the Department, that Groundless complaints.

on investigation were found to be groundless. The chief object in inserting them is to suggest to any persons who may think that their letters have either been stolen or tampered with while in the Post Office, other explanations; with a view to due inquiry at home before applying to the Post Office.

I have the honour to be, my Lords,
Your Lordships' obedient servant,

ARGYLL.

General Post Office,
25th February 1858.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX (A).

TABLE showing to the nearest unit what PER-CENTAGE of the LETTER CARRIERS in LONDON, employed in the first Morning Delivery of each Day during the first Six Weeks of 1856, 1857, and 1858 respectively, completed their DELIVERIES at the time stated below.

Times at which the Deliveries were completed.	First Six Weeks of 1856.	First Six Weeks of 1857.	First Six Weeks of 1858.
	Average time at which the deliveries commenced $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{A.M.} \\ 7.55 \end{array} \right\}$	Average time at which the deliveries commenced $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{A.M.} \\ 7.22 \end{array} \right\}$	Average time at which the deliveries commenced $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{A.M.} \\ 7.4 \end{array} \right\}$
At or before 9 A.M.	5 per cent.	65 per cent.	93 per cent.
Between			
9. 0 and 9.15 A.M.	14 "	18 "	6 "
9.15 " 9.30 "	25 "	10 "	1 "
9.30 " 9.45 "	23 "	5 "	
9.45 " 10. 0 "	16 "	2 "	
10. 0 " 10.15 "	8 "		
10.15 " 10.30 "	5 "		
10.30 " 10.45 "	3 "		
10.45 " 11. 0 "	1 "		
	100°	100°	100°

Note.—The per-centage of *letter carriers* who have completed their deliveries by nine o'clock is obviously less than the per-centage of *letters* delivered by that hour; as a great portion of the correspondence sent out by those men whose deliveries were not completed till later must have been in the hands of the public before nine.

APPENDIX (B.)

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CHARGEABLE LETTERS delivered in the UNITED KINGDOM in the Year immediately preceding the first general Reduction of Postage on the 5th Day of December 1839, and in each complete Year subsequent thereto; also (in the first Year) the Number of Franks.

Year ending 31st December.	Delivered in England and Wales.						Increase per cent. on the previous year.	Total in Ireland.	Increase or decrease per cent. on the previous year.	Total in Scotland.	Increase per cent. on the previous year.	Total in United Kingdom.	Increase per cent. on the previous year.
	By Country Offices.	In London District, exclusive of Local Letters.	Increase or decrease per cent. on the previous year.	Local Letters in London District.	Increase or decrease per cent. on the previous year.	Total in England and Wales.							
Estimated No. of letters, 1839	—	—	—	—	—	59,883,000	—	8,302,000	—	7,653,000	—	75,908,000	—
Estimated No. of Franks, 1839	83,071,000	23,560,000	—	20,372,000	—	5,172,000	—	1,053,000	—	338,000	—	6,583,000	—
Estimated No. of letters, 1840	103,896,000	27,967,000	13½	23,390,000	13½	132,003,000	120	18,211,000	119½	18,554,000	143½	168,708,000	122½
" " " 1841	111,116,000	29,385,000	5	23,390,000	11	154,471,000	17	20,794,000	14½	21,235,000	14½	196,500,000	16½
" " " 1842	117,705,000	30,909,000	5½	24,831,000	6½	173,405,000	5½	22,323,000	7½	22,215,000	4½	208,434,000	6
" " " 1843	126,096,000	35,576,000	8½	26,981,000	8½	180,653,000	9½	23,937,000	5½	23,473,000	5½	220,450,000	5½
" " " 1844	147,227,000	38,098,000	7½	30,823,000	14½	214,154,000	13	28,588,000	10½	26,502,000	13	242,092,000	9½
" " " 1845	162,524,000	39,994,000	10½	33,351,000	8	235,879,000	10½	32,573,000	14	28,669,000	8½	271,411,000	12
" " " 1846	175,052,000	43,785,000	9½	34,631,000	2½ Dec.	253,412,000	7½	33,473,000	9	33,361,000	6½	299,387,000	10½
" " " 1847	190,716,000	45,991,000	5	33,673,000	2½ Dec.	260,380,000	2½	34,387,000	1½ Dec.	33,563,000	1	323,146,000	7½
" " " 1848	187,382,000	46,846,000	½ Dec.	33,960,000	½	297,188,000	2½	35,393,000	1½ Dec.	34,747,000	3½	338,586,000	2
" " " 1849	192,609,000	41,856,000	2½	33,988,000	14½	276,223,000	3½	33,389,000	1½	35,427,000	3½	337,399,000	2½
" " " 1850	199,746,000	47,810,000	6½	40,586,000	4½	288,152,000	4½	35,983,000	1½	36,512,000	3	347,069,000	2½
" " " 1851	212,654,000	51,171,000	7	40,463,000	½ Dec.	304,298,000	4½	37,450,000	1½	37,843,000	3½	360,647,000	4
" " " 1852	223,504,000	54,402,000	6½	42,916,000	6	329,752,000	5½	40,420,000	8	40,675,000	7½	379,501,000	5½
" " " 1853	234,923,000	57,138,000	5	46,192,000	8	338,301,000	8½	41,234,000	2	44,114,000	6½	410,817,000	8½
" " " 1854	263,036,000	59,647,000	4½	46,845,000	½ Dec.	368,650,000	2½	41,833,000	1½	46,853,000	4	446,649,000	8
" " " 1855	275,454,000	64,961,000	9	47,992,000	4½	388,310,000	5½	41,851,000	Nil.	46,253,000	5	468,616,000	2½
" " " 1856	291,634,000	66,533,000	2	52,134,000	8½	410,003,000	5½	42,806,000	2½	51,612,000	7	478,394,000	4½
" " " 1857	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	504,421,000	5½

APPENDIX (C.)

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF BOOK PACKETS and CHARGEABLE NEWSPAPERS* delivered in the UNITED KINGDOM in the Years 1856 and 1857.

Year ending 31st December.	Delivered in England and Wales.						Increase per cent. on the previous Year.	Total in Ireland.	Increase per cent. on the previous Year.	Total in Scotland.	Increase per cent. on the previous Year.	Total in United Kingdom.	Increase per cent. on the previous Year.
	By Country Offices.	Increase per cent. on the previous Year.	In London District, exclusive of Book Packets and Chargeable Newspapers.	Increase per cent. on the previous Year.	Local Book Packets and Chargeable Newspapers in London District.	Increase per cent. on the previous Year.							
Estimated No. of Book Packets and Chargeable Newspapers - 1856	12,356,000	—	1,197,000	—	1,904,000	—	15,487,000	1,766,000	—	2,966,000	—	20,249,000	—
" " 1857	15,356,000	24½	1,405,000	17½	2,405,000	31	19,284,000	2,584,000	24½	3,623,000	21	25,103,000	24½

* By "Chargeable Newspapers" are meant Newspapers not bearing the impressed newspaper stamp, and the postage of which is consequently paid in postage stamps or money.

APPENDIX (D.)

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF FREE NEWSPAPERS* delivered in the UNITED KINGDOM in the Years 1856 and 1857.

Year ending 31st December.	Delivered in England and Wales.						Total in England and Wales.	Decrease per cent. on the previous Year.	Total in Ireland.	Decrease per cent. on the previous Year.	Total in Scotland.	Decrease per cent. on the previous Year.	Total in United Kingdom.	Decrease per cent. on the previous Year.
	By Country Offices.	Decrease per cent. on the previous Year.	In London District, exclusive of Local Free Newspapers.	Decrease per cent. on the previous Year.	Local Free Newspapers in London District.	Increase per cent. on the previous Year.								
Estimated Number of Free Newspapers . 1856	31,423,000	—	3,995,000	—	423,000	—	35,846,000	—	10,098,000	—	7,876,000	—	53,790,000	—
" " 1857	30,647,000	2½	3,577,000	10½	879,000	104½	35,003,000	2½	9,368,000	7	7,245,000	8	51,616,000	4

* By "Free Newspapers" are meant all British Newspapers and Publications bearing the impressed newspaper stamp, and all newspapers from abroad upon which no charge has to be made in this Country.

APPENDIX (E.)

NUMBER and AMOUNT of MONEY ORDERS ISSUED and PAID in the UNITED KINGDOM, during the last Nineteen Years.
MONEY ORDERS ISSUED.

Year ending	ENGLAND AND WALES.		IRELAND.		SCOTLAND.		TOTAL, UNITED KINGDOM.	
	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.
5 January 1840	142,723	£ 240,063	30,015	£ 47,295	16,183	£ 25,765	188,921	£ 313,124
" 1841	482,764	802,827	53,507	77,167	51,526	80,380	587,797	960,975
" 1842	1,290,115	2,657,969	125,170	215,392	137,560	254,155	1,552,845	3,197,507
" 1843	1,767,626	3,709,778	169,910	293,878	174,444	331,520	2,111,980	4,387,177
" 1844	2,086,009	4,369,344	208,179	358,884	207,335	384,612	2,501,523	5,112,840
" 1845	2,333,693	4,858,885	232,525	391,692	240,585	444,817	2,806,803	5,695,395
" 1846	2,627,443	5,463,453	258,144	435,330	290,539	514,576	3,176,126	6,418,361
" 1847	2,881,699	5,926,473	299,521	519,877	333,859	624,706	3,515,079	7,071,056
" 1848	3,286,375	6,600,658	343,156	585,454	401,654	717,064	4,031,185	7,903,177
" 1849	3,468,823	6,861,803	359,043	604,192	375,785	685,298	4,203,651	8,131,294
From 6 January to 31 December 1849	3,515,839	6,880,865	358,578	592,504	374,474	679,373	4,248,891	8,152,643
" 1 January to 31 December 1850	3,677,112	7,173,622	377,436	628,732	385,165	697,143	4,439,713	8,494,498
" 1851	3,878,497	7,518,060	392,848	653,359	389,680	709,000	4,661,025	8,880,420
" 1852	4,158,753	8,061,061	393,379	656,110	395,193	721,106	4,947,825	9,436,277
" 1853	4,405,365	8,501,517	396,966	662,547	412,959	752,130	5,215,290	9,916,195
" 1854	4,621,296	8,937,135	409,625	690,809	435,323	814,466	5,466,244	10,462,411
" 1855	4,901,316	9,403,104	444,720	753,560	461,376	852,615	5,807,413	11,009,279
" 1856	5,231,736	10,099,366	461,723	806,942	485,523	899,253	6,178,982	12,805,562
" 1857	5,417,203	10,410,863	459,625	818,537	512,875	950,873	6,389,703	12,180,273

In 1840 the commission on Money Orders was reduced as follows:—
For any sum not exceeding 2*l.*, from 6*d.* to 3*d.*
For any sum above 2*l.*, and not exceeding 5*l.*, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 6*d.*

APPENDIX (E).—*continued.*

MONEY ORDERS PAID.

Year ending	ENGLAND AND WALES.		IRELAND.		SCOTLAND.		TOTAL, UNITED KINGDOM.	
	Number.	Amount. £	Number.	Amount. £	Number.	Amount. £	Number.	Amount. £
5 January 1840	124,004	208,586	47,022	71,426	17,609	31,715	188,615	311,727
" 1841	429,600	739,963	89,388	120,950	50,900	83,372	569,888	944,287
" 1842	1,268,660	2,638,060	158,651	245,887	132,899	256,147	1,560,210	3,140,096
" 1843	1,734,423	3,687,458	191,172	297,156	179,301	348,993	2,104,896	4,333,608
" 1844	2,047,605	4,323,820	232,026	355,973	216,100	411,664	2,495,731	5,091,458
" 1845	2,271,979	4,822,208	263,070	398,061	247,070	469,821	2,782,119	5,690,090
" 1846	2,540,456	5,348,411	316,814	483,339	281,757	539,977	3,139,027	6,371,728
" 1847	2,798,662	5,816,084	395,014	611,320	316,107	616,692	3,509,803	7,044,097
" 1848	3,138,010	6,425,250	545,709	806,770	345,811	666,873	4,029,530	7,898,894
" 1849	3,384,088	6,816,573	470,842	665,523	348,508	670,389	4,203,438	8,152,486
From 6 January to 31 December 1849	3,419,861	6,844,633	476,259	644,430	349,232	669,292	4,245,352	8,158,356
" 1 January to 31 December 1850	3,559,900	7,093,429	503,980	681,943	367,355	702,682	4,431,235	8,483,055
" 1851	3,743,803	7,432,163	531,514	721,713	382,126	722,366	4,657,443	8,876,243
" 1852	4,016,026	7,931,510	526,233	730,490	400,600	761,718	4,942,859	9,423,719
" 1853	4,240,704	8,339,938	551,555	778,196	420,806	802,161	5,213,065	9,920,296
" 1854	4,489,328	8,807,904	531,962	789,021	438,192	855,754	5,459,482	10,452,680
" 1855	4,789,289	9,255,642	547,917	841,270	464,083	905,464	5,801,289	11,002,377
" 1856	5,112,917	9,913,187	562,949	909,361	496,276	971,108	6,172,142	11,793,656
" 1857	5,333,979	10,281,663	537,881	893,789	515,563	1,002,857	6,387,423	12,178,309

In 1840 the commission on Money Orders was reduced as follows :—
 For any sum not exceeding 2*l.*, from 6*d.* to 3*d.*
 For any sum above 2*l.*, and not exceeding 5*l.*, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 6*d.*

APPENDIX (F.)

AMOUNT of MONEY ORDERS ISSUED and PAID at the undermentioned Towns during the Years 1856 and 1857.*

OFFICES.	1856.		1857.	
	Issues.	Payments	Issues.	Payments.
	£	£	£	£
ENGLAND.				
Bath	60,094	61,458	63,284	63,458
Birmingham	176,999	295,917	182,744	305,661
Bradford, Yorkshire	44,721	41,151	45,874	43,599
Bristol	121,438	201,089	124,666	204,022
Cheltenham	50,509	39,013	52,499	41,562
Coventry	33,486	24,207	35,140	24,084
Derby	43,975	39,032	45,327	40,228
Exeter	41,993	57,318	44,030	57,992
Hull	82,553	108,757	82,467	109,671
Leeds	93,674	129,376	98,969	135,199
Leicester	46,507	45,205	46,916	48,101
Liverpool	355,291	358,930	364,472	367,068
London	1,625,639	2,923,197	1,684,524	3,016,547
Macclesfield	16,157	10,798	16,840	11,948
Manchester	265,311	360,067	278,506	380,550
Newcastle-on-Tyne	96,430	83,195	100,018	84,879
Norwich	42,796	55,329	44,906	57,865
Nottingham	73,509	62,673	76,995	69,503
Plymouth	60,845	65,284	62,395	64,936
Portsmouth	89,562	69,623	74,466	62,541
Newcastle, Staffordshire	14,792	8,123	15,795	8,752
Preston	39,978	34,184	40,412	36,237
Sheffield	82,251	92,616	86,778	93,959
Southampton	68,438	65,010	70,974	66,394
Wolverhampton	48,116	32,208	50,355	33,919
York	53,032	53,756	54,446	56,279
IRELAND.				
Belfast	41,506	44,375	40,946	45,693
Cork	30,062	37,877	31,213	34,633
Drogheda	5,473	8,017	5,338	7,878
Dublin	266,043	210,558	274,905	217,846
Limerick	16,179	20,918	15,721	19,251
Londonderry	9,401	11,928	9,480	12,584
Waterford	12,476	11,448	13,135	11,154
SCOTLAND.				
Aberdeen	32,509	42,426	33,451	42,720
Dundee	33,274	29,608	33,660	29,659
Edinburgh	128,271	205,383	132,635	210,329
Glasgow	153,810	192,199	164,920	200,024
Perth	17,996	17,638	18,209	18,037
Stirling	11,721	13,899	11,751	14,395

* In former Tables the Money Orders issued and paid at places subordinate to those named in the Table, were included; but this is no longer the case.

APPENDIX (G.)

GROSS REVENUE, COST OF MANAGEMENT, and NET REVENUE of the POST OFFICE of the UNITED KINGDOM, for the last 21 Years.

Year ending	Gross Revenue. ^(a)	Cost of Management. ^(b)	Net Revenue.	Postage charged on Government Departments.
	£	£	£	£
5th January 1838 ^(c)	2,339,737	687,313	1,652,424	38,523
" 1839 ^(d)	2,346,278	686,768	1,659,509	45,156
" 1840 ^(e)	2,390,763	756,999	1,633,764	44,277
" 1841	1,359,466	858,677	500,789	90,761
" 1842	1,409,418	938,168	561,249	113,255
" 1843	1,573,145	977,504	600,641	123,161
" 1844	1,620,987	980,650	640,217	116,503
" 1845	1,705,067	985,110	719,957	109,232
" 1846	1,887,576	1,125,594	761,982	101,190
" 1847	1,963,857	1,138,745	825,112	100,354
" 1848	2,181,016	1,196,520	984,496	121,290
" 1849	2,143,679	1,403,250 ^(f)	740,429	115,902
" 1850	2,165,349	1,324,562	840,787	106,923
" 1851	2,264,634	1,460,785 ^(g)	803,898	109,523
" 1852	2,422,168	1,304,163	1,118,004	167,129 ^(h)
" 1853 ⁽ⁱ⁾	2,434,326	1,343,907	1,090,419	124,977
" 1854	2,574,407	1,400,679	1,173,727	134,112
31st Dec. 1854	2,701,862	1,506,556 ^(j)	1,195,306	185,256
" 1855	2,716,420	1,651,364	1,065,056	173,580
" 1856	2,867,954	1,660,229	1,207,725	154,229
" 1857	3,035,713	1,720,815	1,314,898	135,517

^(a) Namely, the Gross Receipts after deducting the Returns for "Refused Letters." &c.

^(b) Including all payments out of the Revenue in its progress to the Exchequer, except advances to the Money Order Office. Of the sums under the head "Cost of Management," 10,307*l.* per annum is, up to 1855 inclusive, for pensions which have no relation to the service of the Post Office; and last year the sum was not less than 29,310*l.*; but of this amount 19,003*l.* was expended in the purchase of part of the pension settled on the Duke of Schomberg and his heirs.

^(c) 1838 was the last complete year before the general reduction of postage.

^(d) On 5th December 1839, the maximum Inland Postage for a single letter was reduced to 4*d.*

^(e) On 10th January 1840 the postage on all inland letters weighing not more than $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. was reduced to a uniform charge of one penny.

^(f) This includes a payment of 198,066*l.* for the conveyance of Mails by Railway in previous years.

^(g) This includes a payment of 192,975*l.* for the conveyance of Mails by Railway in previous years.

^(h) This includes the sum of 31,899*l.* chargeable against the Census Office in the year.

⁽ⁱ⁾ The revenue and expenditure of the North American provinces, amounting for the last complete year to 96,164*l.* and 71,171*l.* respectively, no longer appear in the Accounts of this Department, except that the accounts for 1853 include one quarter's revenue and expenditure for Canada.

^(j) This includes a payment of 128,000*l.* for the conveyance of Mails by Railway in previous years.

^(k) This includes the official postage charged on the General Post Office and on the East India Company which was excluded from the Return in former years.

APPENDIX (H.)

AMOUNT of Postage collected at the undermentioned Towns of the United Kingdom (including Postage Stamps sold by the Post Office and by the Office of Inland Revenue) during the Years 1856 and 1857.

	1856.	1857.
ENGLAND.		
Bath	14,384	15,215
Birmingham	38,849	42,107
Bradford, Yorkshire	13,136	13,250
Bristol	29,967	31,264
Cheltenham	9,760	10,503
Coventry	4,620	4,911
Derby	8,659	9,053
Exeter	11,915	12,630
Hull	16,960	18,803
Leeds	21,433	23,844
Leicester	7,853	8,123
Liverpool	100,379	104,865
London	834,927*	833,952†
Macclesfield	2,231	2,295
Manchester	85,301	89,765
Newcastle-on-Tyne	19,647	21,909
Norwich	11,870	12,161
Nottingham	11,366	12,572
Plymouth	10,221	10,569
Portsmouth	10,894	9,394
Newcastle, Staffordshire, and Potteries	6,032	6,256
Preston	7,381	8,042
Sheffield	14,782	16,565
Southampton	11,585	12,219
Wolverhampton	8,780	9,498
York	10,096	11,132
IRELAND.		
Belfast	15,031‡	15,547
Cork	10,868	11,915
Drogheda	2,215	2,442
Dublin	55,103	60,391
Limerick	6,986	7,115
Londonderry	4,365	4,720
Waterford	3,195	3,594
SCOTLAND.		
Aberdeen	11,130	12,274
Dundee	8,883	9,365
Edinburgh	56,270	59,177
Glasgow	63,441	68,877
Perth	4,007	4,238
Stirling	3,830	4,284

* Including 142,261*l.* for postage charged to Government Departments.

† Including 135,517*l.* for postage charged to Government Departments.

In the last Report the amount for 1856 was stated erroneously.

APPENDIX (I.)

A BILL to make FURTHER PROVISION for the CONVEYANCE of
MAILS by RAILWAYS.

Preamble.

Whereas it is expedient to make further provision for the conveyance of mails by railways: Be it enacted by the Queen's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Postmaster-General may require the mails to be conveyed under 1 & 2 Vict. c. 98. at any rate of speed not exceeding the maximum rate prescribed by the directors for the conveyance of passengers as shown by the time tables, provided as high a rate of speed shall have been run for six weeks previously, and the Board of Trade shall not declare such speed to be unsafe.

I. It shall be lawful for the Postmaster-General, by notice in the manner prescribed by an Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, for providing for the conveyance of the mails by railways, to require that mails and post letter bags, mail guards and other officers of the Post Office shall be conveyed and forwarded by any railway company on their railway, pursuant to such last-mentioned Act, at any rate of speed which shall not exceed the maximum rate of speed prescribed by the directors of such railway company for the conveyance of passengers or goods by any of their trains, as shown by the time tables of any such railway company in force at the time when any such requisition shall be made; and such railway company shall convey and forward such mails and post letter bags, mail guards and other officers of the Post Office, accordingly, provided as high a rate of speed as that required shall have been run by any of their trains as shown by the time tables of any such railway company for the space of six weeks immediately previous to any such requisition being made, and provided the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Plantations for the time being, or any person appointed by them for that purpose, shall not by notice in writing under their or his hands or hand, delivered to the Postmaster-General, declare the rate of speed so required to be unsafe.

In estimating the rate of speed allowance to be made for stoppages, &c.

II. In estimating the rate of speed required of any mail trains, allowance shall be made for any difference in the stoppages required of such trains and the stoppages of the other trains run by such railway company, in respect both of the time during which such trains shall actually stop or remain at any station, and of the time consumed in slackening and regaining speed on approaching and leaving a station; and in case of any difference between the Postmaster-General and any railway company with regard to the rate of speed which may be required under this and the first section of this Act, or either of them, the same shall be referred to the decision of the Lords of the Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council for Trade and Plantations, or of any person to be from time to time appointed by them for that purpose.

EXPLANATORY REMARKS.

I. The effect of this clause would not, as alleged by the railway companies, be to enable the Postmaster-General to demand a higher rate of speed, since he already possesses the same powers in this respect as those conferred by the clause. The effect would be, first, to protect the railway companies by restricting the right of the Post Office to require equality of speed only in respect of such fast train as shall have been run voluntarily by the company for at least six weeks ; and, secondly, to remove doubts which have arisen under the existing law as to the consequences of any alteration which the company may make in the speed of its fastest train after notice shall have been served. The clause is also in accordance with the recommendation of the Select Committee of 1854, on conveyance of mails by railway, as shown in the following extract of their Report :—“ That the Postmaster-General should be authorized “ to require for mail trains such a rate of speed as he may deem “ desirable, subject, however, to its being certified by the railway “ department of the Board of Trade in such cases to be consistent “ with safety.”

II. This clause is intended to avoid the difficulties which arise when the Postmaster-General requires a number of stops different from that of the company's fastest train.

Postmaster-General may require a train or trains for the exclusive conveyance of the mails.

III. It shall be lawful for the Postmaster-General, by notice in the manner prescribed by the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, to require any railway company to provide and run on their railway a train or trains consisting of such carriage or carriages as the Postmaster-General shall direct, to be used and appropriated solely and exclusively to and for the conveyance of mails and post letter bags, mail guards and other officers of the Post Office; and such railway company shall provide and run such train or trains, and convey any such mails and post letter bags, mail guards and other officers of the Post Office, accordingly; and such railway company shall not carry or convey any passengers or goods by any such train or trains, or use the same for any other purposes of the said railway company; and all and every such train or trains, together with the hours or times for the dispatch of such train or trains, the places, times, and duration of stoppages, and times of arrival, and other matters and things relating thereto, shall be regulated or directed by the Postmaster-General in like manner as other mail trains; nevertheless the rate of speed of any such train or trains shall not exceed the maximum rate of speed in the first section of this Act mentioned.

Remuneration for the trains devoted exclusively to the conveyance of the mails.

IV. The amount of remuneration to be paid by the Postmaster-General to any railway company for every train used and appropriated solely and exclusively to and for the conveyance of mails and post letter bags, mail guards and other officers of the Post Office, provided by such railway company, under the third section of this Act, shall be fixed and agreed upon between the Postmaster-General and such railway company, or in case of difference between them shall be determined by arbitration, in like manner as is provided by the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, for the determination of the remuneration for services to be performed under that Act.

As to mail trains arriving late at railway stations.

V. It shall be lawful for the Postmaster-General, if he shall think fit, in any notice which he shall give, under the provisions of the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, an Act of the seventh and eighth Victoria, chapter eighty-five, and of an Act of the tenth and eleventh Victoria, chapter eighty-five, and of the first and third sections of this Act, to any railway company, requiring them to forward and convey on their line of railway any mails or post letter bags, guards or officers of the Post Office, which or any of which shall be to be brought to such railway by any train along another line of railway, inasmuch as the train wherein such mails or post letter bags shall be brought along such other line of railway may be delayed in its arrival by various causes, and may arrive late at the railway station or place from which such mails and post letter bags are appointed in such notice to be dispatched, so that they cannot be conveyed and forwarded at the hour specified in the notice, to require that in every such case all the services which shall be required by such notice to be performed at the hours and times specified in such notice respectively shall, in lieu of being

III. The object is to prevent the more important mail trains from being overloaded, and thus to secure regularity. The company might still, by agreement with the Postmaster-General, use a limited number of carriages. By employing an exclusive night mail between London and Bristol, irregularity has been reduced in the proportion of five to one.

IV. This clause extends, to exclusive trains, the existing mode of arbitration.

V. This clause is intended to meet the difficulty which actually occurred on the Aberdeen Railway, when the mail from the south having arrived late at Forfar, the company carried on the passengers, and left the mails behind. The general practice of railway companies is in accordance with this provision, and nothing more is intended than to enable the Postmaster-General to prevent the serious evils of occasional departure from the practice.

performed at those hours and times respectively, be performed at hours and times respectively later than those hours and times respectively by as many minutes as the train wherein the mails or post letter bags, guards or officers, appointed to be brought along such other line of railway, shall have arrived late as aforesaid, and that in every such case the whole time taken or occupied in the conveyance of the mails or post letter bags, guards or officers, shall not exceed the whole time allowed for that purpose in the time bills contained in or annexed to the notice.

Postmaster General may use ordinary trains for the conveyance of the mails, under certain regulations.

VI. It shall be lawful for the Postmaster-General, if he shall think fit, by giving fourteen days' previous notice in writing to any railway company of his intention so to do, to use any of the ordinary trains which may be running at the time of the delivery of such notice on their railway, for the purpose of sending thereby any mails and post letter bags, either with or without any guard or other officer of the Post Office in charge thereof, and to require in such notice that the railway company shall not, either before or after the expiration of such notice, alter the hour or time of departure or arrival of any such train, or alter the times or places at which any such train shall stop, or withdraw or discontinue running the same until seven days shall have elapsed after the company shall have delivered to the Postmaster-General notice in writing of such intended alteration, withdrawal, or discontinuance, in which notice shall be specified full particulars of any such intended alteration; or in case the train shall be to be withdrawn or discontinued, then there shall be specified in such notice, or shall be annexed thereto, full time bills of the passenger trains which such company shall intend to run from and after the date of such intended withdrawal or discontinuance next before and also next after the hours of the train so to be withdrawn or discontinued between the terminal stations or points between which the mails and post letter bags shall have been required by the Postmaster-General to be forwarded and conveyed; and in every such case the railway company shall not make any such alteration, discontinuance, or withdrawal, except as aforesaid provided; and when the Postmaster-General shall have received any such notice in writing from any railway company, it shall be lawful for him, after having given three days' notice in writing to such railway company to that effect, to send the mails and post letter bags as aforesaid by any of the passenger trains which such railway company shall in or with such notice have stated their intention to run from and after the date named in the notice so given by the company as aforesaid; and in every such case it shall not be lawful for such railway company to alter the times of departure or arrival of any such last-named trains, or alter the times at which the same shall stop or withdraw or discontinue running or forbear from beginning to run the same, until seven days shall have elapsed after they shall have given a like notice to the Postmaster-General as is herein-before mentioned; and in case of any such alteration, withdrawal, or discontinuance of any of such last-named trains, it shall be lawful for the Postmaster-General, after having given three days' notice as aforesaid, to send

VI. The effect of this clause would be not to increase the restrictions on railway companies (as has been alleged), but greatly to decrease them. The law now gives the Postmaster-General the right to send a mail by any ordinary train in the charge of the company's guard; but in exercising this power the Postmaster-General is obliged, whether the exigencies of the postal service require it or not, absolutely to fix the hours of the train so employed, and thus to deprive the company of the power of discontinuing it or even of altering the hours of running.

So great an interference on the part of the Post Office is rarely necessary for the postal service, and it is obviously to the interest of the companies as well as the department that the law in this respect should be amended.

The proposed clause leaves the control of the train with the company, who may alter its hours, or discontinue it altogether, if they think proper, provided only that they give the Post Office seven days' notice, and afford such necessary information as to other trains as will enable the department to adjust its arrangements to the altered circumstances of the case. These conditions really interpose little or no obstacle to the free action of the company, as all alterations in the working of trains must be decided upon many days in advance, in order that they may be duly notified to the public.

the mails and post letter bags as aforesaid by any of such passenger trains which the railway company in or with the time bills in such last-named notice from them as aforesaid shall have stated their intention to run from and after such last-named alteration, discontinuance, or withdrawal, under the same conditions and obligations as aforesaid, and so on toties quoties: Provided always, that after the receipt by the Postmaster-General of any such notice from any railway company as aforesaid, it shall be lawful for him, either before or after the expiration thereof, to give three days' notice in writing to the railway company that such services shall cease and determine, and thereupon, at the expiration of such three days' notice, the said services, and the remuneration for the same, shall cease and determine.

Remuneration for the service mentioned in the last section.

VII. The remuneration to be paid to any railway company for forwarding any mails and post letter bags, as in the last section mentioned, shall be determined in the same manner as is provided by the Act of first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, for the determination of the remuneration for the services which the Postmaster-General is authorized by that Act to require to be performed: Provided always, that upon the making of any alteration in the times or stoppages of any train by which any services as in the last section mentioned may be performed, or the withdrawal or discontinuance of it, as aforesaid, if one year or upwards shall have elapsed since the date of any commencement of the services, or alterations, discontinuance, or withdrawal of a train, in respect of which an agreement or reference to arbitration shall have been made, a fresh agreement for the remuneration to be paid for such services shall be entered into, or, if the parties cannot agree, the same shall be referred to arbitration, as provided in the seventh section of the said Act.

Postmaster-General may send the mails by ordinary trains in charge of the railway guards at three farthings per mile for every 112 lbs. average aggregate weight.

VIII. It shall be lawful for the Postmaster-General, if he shall think fit, at any time after giving three days' notice in writing to any railway company to send any mails and post letter bags by any ordinary trains on any railway of such railway company, in charge of the guards of such railway company, at a charge for the performance of any such service by any such railway company of three farthings per mile for any weight not exceeding one hundred and twelve pounds average aggregate weight of such mails and post letter bags, and the like sum of three farthings per mile for every one hundred and twelve pounds average aggregate weight over and above one hundred and twelve pounds average aggregate weight, any fraction of such weight over and above every one hundred and twelve pounds average aggregate weight to be considered as one hundred and twelve pounds average aggregate weight, which mileage shall be paid for the entire distance any such mails and post letter bags shall be conveyed by any one such railway company on any one such service, whether such mails and post letter bags shall be conveyed by any one or more such train or trains, and whether the same shall travel over their own line of railway or over the line or lines of any other railway company, or over any

VII. This clause leaves the mode of determining the remuneration for the use of an ordinary train, when converted into a mail train, unaltered, except that the latter part obviates the necessity for a fresh arbitration on every slight alteration in the working of the train, and thus tends, like the last clause, to leave the company unfettered.

With the consent of the companies, mileage rates, varying according to the space required by the Post Office, the weight of bags, &c., might be inserted in this clause, and thus the trouble and delay of arbitration wholly avoided.

VIII. Extract from the report of the Select Committee of 1854 on Conveyance of Mails by Railway.

“There is no difficulty in fixing the price to be paid by the Post Office for any amount of service when the mails are carried by one of the ordinary passenger trains.”

Extract from a report by the Board of Trade as to the rate of payment for this kind of service:—

“My Lords have carefully considered the remarks made by Mr. Gregory upon this subject, and they have caused several of the statements published by the metropolitan railway companies of the charges for conveyance of parcels and newspapers to be collated into a table, a copy of which is enclosed. These charges include an amount for collection and delivery, i.e., terminal expenses, from which the service for the conveyance of letter bags is free. The letter bags are brought to and fetched away from the stations by Post Office servants, and the only duty which the railway company’s servants are required to perform in respect of them is to lay them on the platform at the proper station.

“Under these circumstances, it appears to my Lords that $\frac{1}{2}d.$ or $\frac{3}{4}d.$ per cwt. per mile would be ample remuneration for this service.”

one or more line or lines of railway, and shall be reckoned and computed to commence at the first terminal or other station from which any such mails and post letter bags shall be dispatched or sent and conveyed by any such railway company by any such train or trains, and to terminate and end at the last terminal or other last station to or at which any such mails and post letter bags shall be sent or left and conveyed by the same railway company on any one such service; and the mails and post letter bags taken up or received or delivered or left at any place on the line of any railway by any such railway company between the said first terminal or other first station and the said last terminal or other last station shall be included in the mileage to be paid for such average aggregate weight.

Mode of ascertaining the average aggregate weight of such mails.

IX. The average aggregate weight of any mails and post letter bags to be sent by any ordinary trains under the provision for that purpose contained in the eighth section of this Act shall be ascertained and calculated in manner and the mileage thereupon payable shall be paid in such proportions as shall, either prior to or after the commencement of any such service, be fixed and agreed upon between the Postmaster-General and any such railway company, or in case of difference of opinion between them as shall be regulated or determined by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Plantations for the time being, or by any person to be from time to time appointed by the said Lords of the Committee for that purpose by writing under their or his hands or hand, which regulation or determination the said Lords of the said Committee are hereby authorized from time to time to revoke or alter as they shall think fit, and to make any other regulation or determination in lieu thereof, but so that any service which may be required by the Paymaster-General to be performed by any such railway company be not suspended, postponed, or deferred by reason of any delay which may arise in determining the amount payable under this Act for any such service.

Any railway company may alter the times of dispatch or arrival of any trains by which mails shall be forwarded, under the 8th section.

X. Any railway company may make any alteration as to the times of dispatch or arrival of any trains by which mails and post letter bags shall be sent, under the provision in the eighth section of this Act contained; provided that in the event of any such trains being rendered no longer serviceable for the conveyance of mails and post letter bags, by reason of such alteration, the Postmaster-General may thereupon or at any time thereafter discontinue the use thereof without notice, and the payment for such service shall thereupon cease; provided also, that the Postmaster-General shall under any circumstances be empowered to discontinue the use of any train by which mails and post letter bags shall be sent, under the provisions in the sixth and eighth sections of this Act respectively contained, upon giving seven days' previous notice to the railway company of his intention to discontinue any such service, and upon the discontinuance of any such service payment for the same shall cease.

These charges are based upon the principle that the Post Office is to have no pecuniary advantage over the general public; that it is to pay at rates calculated upon the actual charges for the traffic of the public, with no other deduction than that which is due for regularity and continuity of service.

The Post Office would exercise no control whatever over trains employed under this clause, and would require no notice of alterations.

A comparison of these rates with the return ticket charges for second class passengers and their luggage will show that for equal weights they are at least as high.

Several mails have recently been established at parcel rates, the cost of which, reduced to a mileage, varies from $\frac{1}{4}d.$ to $\frac{1}{2}d.$ per mile.

IX. This clause is merely to provide for the settlement of disputes as to what is "average aggregate weight."

X. This clause is intended to make it quite clear that railway companies may alter as they please trains employed at $\frac{3}{4}d.$ per mile, without any notice whatever to the Post Office.

For the protection of the companies the Postmaster-General is required to give seven days' notice before services by ordinary trains shall be withdrawn, unless the companies make such a change as renders the train useless.

Every railway company required to convey any mails are to carry and convey the same accordingly.

XI. Every railway company shall carry and convey any mails and post letter bags, and any mail guards and other officers of the Post Office, authorized to be sent or conveyed upon their railway, under the provisions of this Act, whenever thereunto required, and shall observe and perform all and every the directions and requirements contained in any notice to be given by the Postmaster-General to any such railway company, requiring the mails or post letter bags to be conveyed and forwarded, under the provisions of the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, or of the Act of the seventh and eighth Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or of the Act of the tenth and eleventh Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or of this Act, or of all or any of them; and every such respective railway company shall take up, receive, deliver, and leave all such mails and post letter bags, and every such mail guard or other officer of the Post Office, as in this Act mentioned, according to the destinations of such mails and post letter bags and mail guard or other officer of the Post Office respectively; and every officer, servant, and agent of such railway company shall permit any officer of the Post Office to enter upon any terminal or other station, and pass to the platform or other place where the train shall stop on the line of their railway, for the purpose of delivering or leaving or receiving or taking away any mails or post letter bags sent or to be sent under the provisions of this Act.

Penalty clause.

XII. If any railway company, or any officer, servant, or agent of any railway company, shall refuse or neglect to provide or run on their railway any such train or trains as in the third section of this Act mentioned, or shall refuse or neglect to carry or convey, or to take up or receive, or deliver or leave, any mails or post letter bags, or mail guards or other officers of the Post Office, sent or to be sent under the provisions of this Act, or shall refuse or neglect to observe and perform all and every the directions and requirements contained in any notice to be given by the Postmaster-General to any such railway company, requiring the mails or post letter bags to be conveyed and forwarded, under the provisions of the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, or of the Act of the seventh and eighth Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or of the Act of the tenth and eleventh Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or of this Act, or of all or any or them, or shall refuse or neglect to permit any officer of the Post Office to enter upon any terminal or other station of any such railway company, and to pass to the platform or other place where any train shall stop, for the purpose of delivering, leaving, receiving, or taking away any mails or post letter bags sent or to be sent as aforesaid, then and in every such case the railway company who, or whose officer, servant, or agent, shall so offend, shall for every such offence forfeit and pay a sum not exceeding twenty pounds, to be recoverable in like manner as pecuniary penalties not exceeding twenty pounds are by the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, authorized to be recovered.

XI. A formal clause upon which the succeeding penalty clause is based.

XII. The ordinary penalty clause. The amount of the penalty is the same as at present.

A mileage rate payable by the Post Office for each train to be stated in the award.

XIII. Every award or umpirage to be made under the provisions of the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, or under the provisions of the Act of the seventh and eighth Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or under the provisions of the Act of the tenth and eleventh Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or under the provisions of this Act, shall state and set forth in the form of a mileage rate the amount to be payable by the Post Office for each and every train to which the award or umpirage shall extend.

Appointment of an umpire.

XIV. In any reference to be made between the Postmaster General and any railway company, under the provisions of the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, or of the Act of the seventh and eighth Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or of the Act of the tenth and eleventh Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or of this Act, if no umpire shall have been appointed by the arbitrators, pursuant to the sixteenth section of the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, the appointment of an umpire shall devolve upon and be made by the Speaker of the House of Commons, which umpire shall proceed in such reference and shall make his award within twenty-eight days after the Matter shall have been referred to him by reason of the arbitrators not having made their award within the time by the said last-mentioned Act limited for that purpose, and in default thereof another umpire shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Commons, who shall in like manner proceed and make his award within twenty-eight days, or in default thereof be superseded, and so toties quoties.

Service of notices.

XV. Every notice by or from the Postmaster-General to any railway company, given under the provisions of the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, or under the provisions of the Act of the seventh and eighth Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or under the provisions of the Act of the tenth and eleventh Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or under the provisions of this Act, relating to mail trains, may be signed either by the Postmaster-General or by any or either of his secretaries or assistant secretaries on his behalf; and every such notice shall be considered as duly served on any such railway company if the same be delivered to any one or more of the directors of such railway company, or to any secretary or clerk of such railway company, or be left at any station of or belonging to such railway company; and every notice by or from the Postmaster-General to any railway company given in respect of or relating to ordinary trains shall be signed by the Postmaster-General or by the Inspector-General of Mails, or by One of the district surveyors for the time being of the General Post Office; and every such last-mentioned notice shall be considered as duly served on any such railway company if the same be delivered to any one or more of the directors of such railway company, or to any secretary or clerk of such railway company, or be left at any station of or belonging to such railway company, or if the same be sent by the post addressed to the chairman or any

XIII. The object of this clause is to render awards more explicit, and thus to enable the Post Office to know what each separate service actually costs, and to facilitate arrangements between the department and the railway companies in the event of the discontinuance of part of the service.

XIV. This clause is in accordance with the report of the Select Committee of 1854 on Conveyance of Mails by Railways, as shown by the following extract:—

“ Instances were adduced to your committee of awards not being
“ completed within several years of the time at which the arbit-
“ rators were appointed, owing to the non-agreement of the
“ arbitrators in the choice of an umpire.

“ Great inconvenience appears to have arisen in some instances
“ from the difficulty and the delay which has occurred in the choice
“ of an umpire ; and after mature consideration of this embar-
“ rassing question, your committee are disposed to agree with the
“ opinion of Major Williams, as given in his evidence, namely, that
“ if after a certain number of days the arbitrators are unable to
“ agree in the choice of the umpire, the nominations should then
“ be left to one of the judges.”

Of these delays the railway companies frequently complain, and it is for their advantage, rather than that of the Post Office, that the clause has been inserted.

XV. The object of this clause is merely to put an end to the inconvenience which occasionally arises from the necessity of having all notices signed by the Postmaster-General.

secretary or clerk of such railway company at any station of or belonging to such railway company.

Byelaws contrary to this act to be void.

XVI. Every byelaw, order, rule, or regulation made or to be made by any railway company contrary or repugnant to any of the enactments herein contained shall be null and void.

Nothing herein to affect the powers, &c. given to the Postmaster General by Act 1 & 2 Vict. c. 98., 7 & 8 Vict. c. 85., or the 10 & 11 Vict. c. 85.

XVII. Nothing herein contained shall in any manner prejudice or affect any of the powers or privileges given to the Postmaster-General by the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, or the Act of the seventh and eighth Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or the Act of the tenth and eleventh Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or any or either of them, otherwise than and except as is herein-before expressly provided, which said respective Acts shall (except as last aforesaid) remain in full force and operation as if this Act had not been passed; and the Postmaster-General shall have full power and authority at any time or times to apply and use all or any of the powers and privileges given to him by such respective Acts or any or either of them, either solely or in conjunction with the powers and privileges given to him by this Act, or otherwise, at his discretion.

No railway company to be liable to penalties for conveying any mails

XVIII. No railway company shall be liable to any of the penalties prescribed by an Act of the first Victoria, chapter thirty-six, for conveying any mails or post letter bags, under the provisions of the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, or of the Act of the seventh and eighth Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or of the Act of the tenth and eleventh Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or of this Act, nor for conveying any letters or packets of letters for or on behalf of the Postmaster-General or any Officer of the Post Office.

Postmaster General to be a body corporate as to contracts.

XIX. All contracts heretofore made or entered into or hereafter to be made or entered into with any railway company or other company, body politic or corporate, person or persons whatsoever, by or in the name of any Postmaster-General, for or on account of the public service, shall be vested in the Postmaster-General for the time being and his successors, who shall be and is and are hereby made a body corporate for such purpose by the name of "Her Majesty's Postmaster-General," and shall have a seal, and shall and may by that name sue and be sued, implead and be impleaded, in all courts and places of judicature whatsoever.

Definition of terms.

XX. The term "railway," wherever used in this Act, shall include every railway already constructed or hereafter to be constructed under the powers of any Act of Parliament; and the term "railway company," wherever used in this Act, shall be construed to include the proprietors for the time being of any such railway, and any lessees or tenants or other persons in actual possession thereof, and any company of proprietors or persons who shall run passenger trains over or work any railway belonging to any other company or persons; and the term "mail train," wherever used in this Act, shall mean any train conveying the mails under the pro-

XVI., &c. This and the remaining clauses are merely formal.

visions of the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight, or of the Act of the seventh and eighth Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or of the Act of the tenth and eleventh Victoria, chapter eighty-five, or of this Act, pursuant to notice in the manner prescribed by the Act of the first and second Victoria, chapter ninety-eight; and the term "ordinary trains," wherever used in this Act, shall mean every passenger or goods train, not being a mail train.

This to be
deemed a Post
Office Act.

XXI. This Act shall be deemed and considered a Post Office Act, within the true intent and meaning of the Act of the first Victoria, chapter thirty-six, and the several provisions herein contained shall be construed according to the interpretations used and contained in the said last-mentioned Act.

APPENDIX (J).

REPLY to MEMORIAL from LIVERPOOL, MANCHESTER, HUDDERSFIELD, LEEDS, BRADFORD, HULL, and SHEFFIELD, as regards a later arrival in London of their day mails.

General Post Office,

SIR,

11th November 1857.

THE Postmaster-General has had under consideration the memorial to which your signature is attached, and which was presented to him by a large and influential deputation on the 10th August last.

As a preliminary measure, his Grace directed immediate application to the several railway companies, for the purpose of ascertaining the terms on which the required service could be performed; and the last answer to such application has just been received.

In replying to your memorial, I am directed first to place before you the real facts of the case, which appear to be but imperfectly known to the memorialists.

By the existing arrangements there are three modes of conveyance for correspondence referred to in the memorial:—

1st. The one described in the memorial itself, viz., to London by the mails arriving at the office at 5 A.M. from the memorializing towns, and on from London, *viâ* Dover and Ostend, by the mails leaving at 8 P.M.

2nd. That by which letters reaching the London Office, whether by the mail arriving at 5 A.M. or that arriving at 11.30 A.M., are, if marked "*viâ* France," forwarded from that office at 1 P.M.; a dispatch which, though it would not expedite all the correspondence referred to, would yet serve that purpose for certain portions of it.

3rd. That by which letters reaching the London Office about 4.30 P.M. are forwarded thence, *viâ* Dover and Ostend, at 8 P.M. This last opportunity indeed is not open to all the towns joining in the memorial, (Huddersfield, Leeds, Bradford, and Hull having no available day mail to London,) but is useful, more or less, to the others; the trains leaving the stations and the boxes consequently closing, respectively, as follows:—

		Train starts.		Box closes.
Liverpool	-	9.10 A.M.	-	8.35 A.M.
Manchester	-	9.30 A.M.	-	9.0 A.M.
Sheffield	-	11.13 A.M.	-	10.55 A.M.

The memorialists, therefore, will perceive that, as respects the latter-named towns, letters can be forwarded by a morning mail, although that mail does not start so late as the memorialists desire.

The substance, therefore, of the application is reduced to the two following demands, viz.:—First, that the despatch of the

available day mail may be delayed from the hours stated above to the latest hour which will admit of the forwarding of the correspondence by the night mails from London, the memorialists expressing an opinion that this dispatch may be as late as "about noon;" and, second, that similar mails to be despatched at the same time may be supplied to such of the memorializing towns as at present have none.

Passing for the moment over the question of expense, I am directed to set before the memorialists the utmost extent to which their wishes could be carried into effect, even if expense were altogether disregarded.

It is essential to the purpose in view that the correspondence should, with undeviating punctuality, reach the London Office by 6 P.M., the hour at which the boxes are closed to the London public, though, indeed, for registered letters (and such doubtless there must be in the correspondence in question) they close thirty minutes earlier. To attain this the mail train must, with equal certainty, reach the London terminus by 5.30 P.M.; and, to make the needful allowance for irregularity, on which, unfortunately, the law gives the Post Office no efficient check, the time appointed for arrival cannot safely be later than 5 P.M.

The necessity for so large a margin arises from the fact that, under the proposed arrangement, any delay in the train by which the margin should be overstept would render not only the letters in question, but the whole correspondence brought by that mail, too late for the outward mail of that night; a delay which might be of serious consequence to letters for monthly or bi-monthly mails.

Now, supposing the highest speed to be obtained which the Post Office can demand (namely, that of the quickest train running), and the most favourable routes to be adopted, the hours of departure of the trains, and those, consequently, of closing the boxes, would be as follows:—

		Train would start.		Box would close.
Liverpool	-	11.30 A.M.	-	10.55 A.M.
Manchester	-	11.45 A.M.	-	11.15 A.M.
Huddersfield	-	11.33 A.M.	-	11.5 A.M.
Leeds	-	11.22 A.M.	-	10.50 A.M.
Bradford	-	10.35 A.M.	-	10.5 A.M.
Hull	-	10.44 A.M.	-	10.24 A.M.
Sheffield	-	12.30 P.M.	-	12.12 P.M.

Thus the utmost time which could be gained, as regards those towns having already available day mails, would be as follows, viz.:—Liverpool, 2h. 20m.; Manchester, 2h. 15m.; and Sheffield, 1h. 17m.; and though, as regards the other towns, the gain, as compared with the existing state of things, would be greater, yet in no instance would the hour of dispatch allow much time for morning letter writing, while this limited advantage could be obtained only at the enormous cost always attendant on the employment of quick special trains.

This cost, therefore, has now to be considered as well as the

amount of the correspondence for which the expenditure would be incurred.

As regards the cost of conveyance, the companies, with one exception, have declined to name any specific sum, leaving the amount to be settled by arbitration; and the Postmaster General is consequently obliged to adopt the best estimate which can be derived from past experience. According to this, the total cost may be stated at about 19,500*l.* per annum.

As regards the amount of correspondence in question, the places particularized in the memorial are Berlin and Hamburg, to which Leipsic was added by the deputation; and it is on the correspondence with these three cities that the main stress was properly laid.

It appears by a record specially kept at the London Office that the total number of letters sent to these cities from the towns joining in the memorial was, for the week ending 17th August last, only 1,740, of which about 1,400 only were subjected to the maximum delay of 15 hours.

Now assuming, contrary to all probability, that all the 1,740 letters would be reserved for dispatch by the proposed morning mail, the inland rate chargeable thereon (the remaining portion of the whole postage being for the most part paid over to other Governments, and the small remnant being required to meet the expense of marine transit,) cannot be estimated at more than 9*l.*—say 468*l.* per annum—while the charge of conveyance, as shewn above, would be about 19,500*l.* per annum.

It is true that part of the other "forward" correspondence, whether foreign or inland, of the memorializing towns, would be benefited by the proposed mails, and that these mails would be useful to certain towns which have not joined in the memorial. Something also must be allowed for increase of correspondence through increased facilities. On the other hand it must be borne in mind that a large portion, probably a majority, of the 1,740 weekly letters referred to above would still be posted in the evening, and consequently would not participate in the proposed acceleration.

Viewing the question, however, even in the most favourable light, it must be obvious that the revenue derived from all the letters benefited could not possibly warrant the enormous outlay indicated above.

With regard to the peculiar importance of the correspondence in question, on which great stress was laid by the deputation, I am instructed to say, the Postmaster-General finds it impossible to be guided by this consideration, which is frequently urged in relation to other portions of the public correspondence, both foreign and inland, which are of comparatively small amount. If this were admitted as a ground of disproportionate expenditure, the same could be alleged in numberless instances with equal truth; and the issue must sooner or later be, not only to absorb the whole revenue of the Post Office, but even to render the Department a serious charge on the revenue of the State.

In connexion with this point, the Postmaster-General would refer, for a moment, to the fact that means of communication are now available in cases of importance which secure, in a far higher degree than any possible acceleration of the mail, the advantage which it is sought to obtain. He understands that it is a practice in towns distant from the metropolis to send up telegraphic messages, which are forwarded, as letters, by the telegraphic companies through the foreign mails of the same evening; and that thus, at a comparatively small expense, communication is kept open almost to the hour when those mails are dispatched.

Upon a full consideration of all that is stated above, the Postmaster-General is sure you will perceive that he would not be warranted in making arrangements so costly as those which have been referred to.

There are, however, some improvements which may probably be effected at a moderate expense.

Since the establishment of the present available day mails from Liverpool and Manchester, the railway company has started other trains from those towns, which, if continued, may enable the Post Office to delay the dispatch of such mails by about one hour and fifteen minutes. Hitherto the Department has been deterred from the employment of these trains by the information that their establishment was a temporary measure; but as they have continued running for a considerable time, their permanency appears probable.

From the memorializing towns which have no available day mails, there now are likewise trains which may be employed for such purpose.

Assuming, therefore, that all these trains continue running (in which case their use can be had on reasonable terms), the memorializing towns would all have effective day mails, according to the following table:—

		Train starts.		Box would close.
Liverpool	-	10.30 A.M.	-	9.55 A.M.
Manchester	-	10.45 A.M.	-	10.15 A.M.
Huddersfield	-	9.20 A.M.	-	8.52 A.M.
Leeds	-	10.10 A.M.	-	9.38 A.M.
Bradford	-	9.30 A.M.	-	9.0 A.M.
Hull	-	9.15 A.M.	-	8.55 A.M.
Sheffield (as at present)	-	11.13 A.M.	-	10.55 A.M.

If the improvement indicated above be regarded as an advantage by the memorialists, his Grace will have much pleasure in using his best endeavours to give it effect.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ROWLAND HILL,
Secretary.

APPENDIX (K.)

EXTRACT from a REPORT by Mr. GAY.

As a contrast to the Manchester of the present time, with its *three* London mails every day, its almost hourly communication with Liverpool, and its two or more posts with all the surrounding towns, I beg to append this copy of a Manchester postal bill dated 1721, for which I am indebted to Mr. Eldershaw of the Manchester Post Office.

Postal accommodation at Manchester early in last century.

“ At Manchester
“ According to the last regulation, 1721.

The Post goes out

“ To London, &c. or to any } Monday
of the towns in or near } Wednesday } Morning 9 o'clock.
the road to London - } Saturday }

“ To Warrington }
Chester }
Worcester } Mondays }
Bristol } Thursdays } Morning 7 o'clock.
Ireland } Saturdays }
Liverpool }
Preston }
Lancaster }
Kendal }
Carlisle }
Dumfries, &c. }
Note. It will be best to bring the letters the night before the going out of the post, because the *accounts and bags* are usually made up over night.

“ To Roachdale } Sundays }
Yorkshire } Tuesdays } Morning 6 or 7 o'clock.
Edinbro', &c. } Fridays }

The post comes in.

“ From London, &c. - { Mondays }
{ Thursdays } Night 9, 10, 11, 12, or, &c
{ Saturdays }

“ From Warrington { Tuesdays }
{ Fridays } Morning 6 or 7.
{ Sundays }

“ From Roachdale, &c. { Mondays }
{ Wednesdays } Morning 8.”
{ Saturdays }

It is amusing to observe that the post is said to come in from London three days per week at night 9, 10, 11, 12, or, &c. The

beautiful uncertainty as to the hour leads one to surmise that an Inspector-General of Mails did not exist in those days.

Then, again, the simplicity with which some clerk, having an eye to his own comfort, entreats the public to bring their letters the night before, because "the *accounts* and *bags* are usually made up over night," is at sad variance with the existing regulations of the Department through which letters can be posted up to within *five* minutes of the dispatch of a mail, and which provide for the receipt of letters for America up to within *ten minutes of the sailing of the packet*.

Whether the manufacturers of Manchester would listen to such a gentle entreaty in the present day, even if it were more correctly written, is extremely doubtful.

APPENDIX (L.)

MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT for the Year 1857.

Medical Department,
General Post Office, 23d February, 1858.

SIR, THE present is my Third Annual Report on the health of the officers of this Department.

NUMBER OF OFFICERS UNDER MEDICAL CHARGE.

As there have been no epidemics among the officers during the past year, the heads of departments and clerks with salaries exceeding 150*l.* per annum, comprised in class A., have not come under my care. Their number was 256.

In class B., comprising clerks and inspectors, with salaries not exceeding 150*l.* per annum, there were 293.

In class C., which includes all the other officers in the minor establishment attached to the chief and money order offices, there were 1,375; making in the aggregate 1,668 officers under my medical charge.

But so many changes take place in the course of the year, more particularly among the officers of the minor establishment, that as many as 1,763 persons have had the privilege of applying for assistance to the medical officer during the year. As a considerable proportion of the officers constituting the difference between the permanent staff of 1,668 and the total number of officers who have been temporarily attached always help to increase the number of cases of illness, the number may be fairly averaged as 1,700 for the entire year.

CANDIDATES EXAMINED.

A.—*Clerks.* During the year 43 candidates for clerkships presented themselves for medical examination, and of these 3 were rejected as unfit.

B.—*Minor Officials.* The number of candidates for the office of letter carrier during the year was 319. They were thus disposed of:—

Appointed	-	-	-	-	168
Found disqualified on examination by Civil	}	-	-	-	89
Service Commissioners					
Ditto, by medical officer	-	-	-	-	36
Ditto, by being above age	-	-	-	-	10
Ditto, by being under age	-	-	-	-	5
Declined the appointment	-	-	-	-	7
Characters unsatisfactory	-	-	-	-	2
Nominations cancelled	-	-	-	-	2
					<hr/>
					319
					<hr/>

This shows, that while 11 per cent. of the candidates were rejected on grounds of physical incapacity, 89 of the 257 who presented themselves before the Civil Service Commissioners, or 34 per cent., were disqualified for want of the requisite amount of education.

PREVIOUS OCCUPATIONS OF CANDIDATES FOR LETTER CARRIERSHIPS.

Observing that a considerable number of the candidates who present themselves for medical examination are small, slightly made, and sickly looking, I have obtained information of the previous employments of the last 329 candidates. They were as follows:—

Domestic and other servants	-	-	-	-	60
Porters and messengers	-	-	-	-	38
Clerks in counting houses, &c.	-	-	-	-	20
Schoolmasters	-	-	-	-	2
Farmers and labourers	-	-	-	-	10
Soldiers and sailors	-	-	-	-	14
Workers in metals	-	-	-	-	11
Grocers	-	-	-	-	13
Tailors	-	-	-	-	14
Drapers and shopmen	-	-	-	-	13
Painters and plasterers	-	-	-	-	9
Shoemakers	-	-	-	-	7
Butchers	-	-	-	-	9
Bakers	-	-	-	-	7
Gardeners	-	-	-	-	9
Policemen	-	-	-	-	5
Booksellers, printers, &c.	-	-	-	-	6
Weavers	-	-	-	-	3
Carpenters and packers, &c.	-	-	-	-	6
Druggists	-	-	-	-	3
Tobacconists	-	-	-	-	2

Fishmonger	-	-	-	-	-	1
Publican	-	-	-	-	-	1
Coiner at the Mint	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dollmaker	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pipemaker	-	-	-	-	-	1
Milkman	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sand dealer	-	-	-	-	-	1
Moulders, furriers, and leather cutters	-	-	-	-	-	7
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	54

329

It will be seen from this list how small a proportion of the letter-carriers, sorters, and stampers employed in the department is derived from agricultural labourers, or from persons who have been accustomed to healthy out-of-door employment. The large proportion of domestic servants, clerks in counting houses, tailors, drapers, grocers' assistants, and other shopmen, accounts for the generally debilitated and under-sized condition of the present class of candidates. I am informed by officers who have known the department for many years, that formerly a very different class of persons presented themselves for employment as postmen. Agricultural labourers, and others of strong muscular development, constituted the general run of applicants; whereas for some few years past these are the rare exceptions.

The consequence of this state of things is that there is more illness among the officers than the nature of their work might be expected to give rise to.

That the occupation of the men employed in the minor establishment is by no means necessarily injurious to health, I have shown in my Report on the domiciliary conditions of the men; which will be found in Appendix (M). Instances are there given of officers who have been actively employed in the service for periods varying from 35 to 46 years.

During the last 10 years 7 men have left the service, all of whom had been employed as letter carriers for more than half a century; and in the course of the last 5 years 19 men have left who had served between 40 and 50 years.

But though the work is not detrimental to men of average constitutional strength, of fair muscular development, and with sound organs of breathing and circulation, it is quite the contrary with persons of impaired health, or who are undersized in stature, or weakly framed.

I have therefore, proposed that his Grace the Postmaster-General should sanction the medical officer rejecting as unfit for the work, not only such candidates as are labouring under disease, but also such as are not found, by certain specified tests, equal to a stated amount of corporeal exertion.

The injury done to candidates themselves by admitting such as have delicate lungs, is shown by the subjoined tables of mortality.

It will be seen that out of 20 deaths in the Department, including clerks, 10, or exactly half, have been victims of consumption.

That this is a very large proportion of deaths from this disease is proved by the fact, that while the total number of deaths in the city of London during the year 1857 was 2,942, but 356 of that number, or less than one eighth part, were caused by phthisis. Very nearly the same proportion obtains for the whole metropolis; where, on an average of 17 years, the deaths from decline were 13·173 to every 100 deaths. Of the deaths from all causes of persons aged 20 years (which is about the average age at which persons enter as officers of this department) and upwards in London, the proportion of those dying from phthisis is 18·1 per cent. on an average of three years, 1853–55.

In all of the 10 fatal cases whose history during life I was enabled to investigate, the disease proved to be hereditary; showing that if proper care had been taken on the application of those officers for admittance while candidates, the greater number, if not all of them, would have been rejected. All of these officers had been in the department for some years previously to the appointment of an examining medical officer.

I am sorry to state that there are still on my list numerous patients, of whom a very large proportion are Irish, suffering from this fearful scourge, and who will for some time to come help to swell inordinately the annual list of deaths.

In my opinion the utmost strictness should be used in excluding, not only such candidates as are actually at the time of presenting themselves suffering from this complaint, but also such as show a strongly marked hereditary tendency thereto; especially when this is combined with a weak frame of body.

GENERAL HEALTH.

The diminution in the number of cases of illness, and in their duration, proves that the general health of the whole establishment has been good. Compared with the year 1856, the past year exhibits a most favourable contrast, although the general mortality has increased. In the year 1856, among 1,500 officers, there had occurred 1,771 cases of illness, or 118 per cent.: while, during the past year, among 1,700 officers, being an increase of 200, there have been but 1,403 cases, or 82 per cent. This shows a diminution of 36 per cent. of sickness in 1857 compared with 1856.

The following Table shows the number of clerks and other officers who presented themselves for official medical assistance during the year 1857, specifying some of the more common complaints.

SICKNESS during the Year 1857.

		Clerks.	Others.	Total.	Diarrhoea.	Rheumatism.	Boils.	Sore Throat.
January	- -	10	110	120	3	10	3	5
February	- -	15	118	133	6	7	5	1
March	- -	6	96	102	4	9	4	7
April	- -	4	84	88	3	5	2	5
May	- -	13	87	100	6	8	3	9
June	- -	15	107	122	20	5	5	3
July	- -	21	133	154	63	7	5	7
August	- -	17	144	161	66	9	5	2
September	- -	16	106	122	21	9	—	5
October	- -	8	106	114	13	11	3	1
November	- -	19	85	104	6	3	2	5
December	- -	7	76	83	4	9	1	5
		151	1,252	1,403	215	92	38	55

524 visits were paid to officers at their own houses when too ill to attend at the office. I also visited officers at York, Derby, Rugby, and Newcastle, who had met with injuries in the execution of their duties.

EPIDEMICS.

There have been no special epidemics during the year. 62 district and branch offices have been supplied with medicine for the immediate and efficient treatment of the usual summer and autumnal diarrhoea so frequent among the letter carriers. By means of careful directions to the charge-takers and inspectors of the various offices, great numbers of the men have been relieved at once; and in most instances they have been enabled to continue their duties uninterruptedly. Upwards of 250 gallons of the medicine have been thus dispensed.

AVERAGE DURATION OF ILLNESS.

Clerks.

151 clerks presented themselves at the office for treatment during the year. This number includes a few in Class A. who were labouring under diarrhoea. The total number of heads of departments, clerks, inspectors, &c. comprehended under Classes A. and B., who have been off duty from illness, is 465, and the total amount of such absences is 4,919 days, making an average of $10\frac{1}{2}$ days each.

If 19 of these cases, however, (some of which were absences not really caused by illness, 7 ending in retirement from the department, and the rest being followed by dismissal,) which have exceeded three months in duration, and have engrossed between them

2,328 of the whole number of days, be deducted from the gross amount, the mean average duration of each case of sickness among those clerks who were absent will be about $5\frac{1}{2}$ days.

Minor Establishment.

The total amount of absence from duty, in days, on account of illness, in Class C., was 12,888 days. This will give a mean average duration of nearly 10 days for each officer who absented himself. But this amount of absence is unduly swollen by the prolonged absence of 21 officers who have been away 2,875 days. As none of these will return to the department, and their places have been filled up by fresh appointments, their absence should be deducted from the gross amount. The average duration of each case will thus be reduced to about 8 days.

But a large proportion even of this reduced amount of absence is caused by few cases. 15 officers have been absent many months consecutively; one for upwards of 11 months.

General Body of Officers.

Of the 2,019 officers who have been attached to the chief and money order offices during some portion of the year, 892 have been at some time absent from duty on account of illness. The average, number of days that an officer was off duty from this cause including in the calculation the whole body of officers, was about 10 days; but if correction be made for the 40 exceptional cases above alluded to, the average total absence will be $6\frac{1}{2}$ days; in other words every officer in the Department has on the average been absent from duty nearly a week on account of ill health.

DEATHS IN CLASSES A. and B.

(*Clerks, Inspectors, &c.*)

Disease.	Age at death.			
	Between 30 and 40.	Between 40 and 50.	Between 50 and 60.	Total.
Consumption - -	3	—	—	3
Inflammation of bladder - - - }	—	—	1	1
Typhus - - -	1	—	—	1
Total - - -	4	—	1	5

As these five deaths took place among a body numbering 549, it follows that the mortality among the heads of departments, clerks, inspectors, &c., was at the rate of 9 per 1,000.

DEATHS IN CLASS C.

Disease.	Age at death.					Total.
	Between 20 and 30.	Between 30 and 40.	Between 40 and 50.	Between 50 and 60.	Between 60 and 70.	
Consumption -	1	1	5	—	—	7
Inflammation of brain - }	1	—	—	—	—	1
Acute rheumatism -	1	—	—	—	—	1
Bronchitis and emphysema - }	1	—	—	—	—	1
Abscess of liver -	—	—	1	—	—	1
Disease of heart -	—	—	1	1	—	2
Mortification of leg -	—	—	—	—	1	1
Cancer of jaw -	—	1	—	—	—	1
Total -	4	1	7	1	1	15

The number of officers among whom these 15 deaths occurred being 1,375, it follows that the mortality during the year was rather under 11 per 1,000. The average annual mortality for the two years, 1856 and 1857, taken together, amounted to 9 per 1,000. I have compared this rate with the mortality in the same class (C.) in each of the three years 1851, 1852, and 1853, omitting the year 1854 as it was a year during which epidemic cholera existed in London. From the statistics furnished to me it appears that those three years show the following mortality per 1,000 :

in 1851	-	-	-	14.5
1852	-	-	-	18
1853	-	-	-	12.3

How far the very considerable diminution in the number of deaths in the two years just elapsed may be due to keeping a stricter surveillance over the admission of candidates than was practised before an official medical authority formed part of the staff of the department, and how far that improvement is due to other sanitary causes, it is impossible to state with any approach to accuracy.

OFFICERS RETIRED FROM THE SERVICE, AND PENSIONED.

During the year 46 officers have been superannuated, and 32 have been dismissed for bad conduct.

On the 31st December 1857 there were 225 officers receiving pensions for former services in this Department, exclusive of retired country postmasters and officers who had been attached to the packet service. There had been 14 deaths among the superannuated officers—a mortality of 6 per cent. or 60 per thousand.

The rate of deaths among the officers on active service being just 10 per 1,000, it follows that the mortality was six times as great among the non-efficient as among the men doing active duty.

If a calculation of the total mortality both among the efficient and the non-efficient branches of the Department for the year be now made, the numbers will stand thus :

Clerks in Class A.	-	-	-	256
" " B.	-	-	-	293
Officers " C.	-	-	-	1,700
Total retired officers	-	-	-	239
				<hr/>
				2,488
				<hr/>

Among whom 34 deaths took place ; an average mortality of rather less than 14 per 1,000.

These figures contrast favourably with the returns which the Registrar-General has transmitted to me for the three years 1853-5. From these it appears that the annual average mortality in London of males aged 20 and upwards is 24·2 per 1,000.

AGE OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS ON RETIREMENT.

The officer on the present list of pensioners who retired earliest in life was but 28 years of age when he left the service, and the oldest did not leave till he had passed his 77th year. The average age of the officers at the time of their retirement was 55.

LENGTH OF SERVICE

One clerk (the officer above alluded to as being but 28 years of age on retirement) was allowed to leave on account of incurable disease, after only 9 years' service ; while several served 50 and one more than 51 years, before applying for superannuation. The average length of service before retiring was nearly 30 years.

PRESENT AGE OF ANNUITANTS.

The ages of retired officers on the 31st December last varied from 28 to 84. Their average age was 59½ years.

FORMER STATUS OF RETIRED OFFICERS.

Of the 225 superannuated officers surviving on the 31st of December 1857, 53 had been heads of departments, clerks, inspectors, and other superior officers, while the remaining 172 were letter carriers, messengers, sorters, and mail guards.

CAUSES OF RETIREMENT.

The causes of retirement may be thus arranged :—

Age, general debility, and broken down constitution	93
Impaired vision - - - - -	24
Diseases of brain and nervous system - - - - -	18
Chronic rheumatism - - - - -	14
Disease of the lungs - - - - -	13
" " heart - - - - -	13
Rupture, &c. - - - - -	10
Injuries received in the service - - - - -	5
Ague - - - - -	1
Diseases of the liver or kidneys, deafness, lameness, or other infirmity - - - - -	25
Abolition of their office - - - - -	6
At officers' own request, having completed 50 years' service - - - - -	3
	<hr/>
	225

REMOVABLE CAUSES OF DISEASE.

In my last annual Report, I stated that the passages and hall on the southern side were extremely cold and draughty during the winter season, and I recommended that a fireplace or stove for warming the ascending air should be erected at the bottom of the grand staircase. This has been done, and I have reason to believe that it has had all the good effect anticipated from it. Complaints of colds and attacks of rheumatism from the officers on that side have been much less frequent this year than formerly.

With the exception of the draughts of cold air, which in the winter very much incommode officers doing sorting duties in some parts of the inland and newspaper offices, and which from the construction of the building itself are very difficult, if not impossible wholly to get rid of, without interfering with the dispatch of public business, most of the removable causes of disease to which the men are exposed are to be found in the insalubrity, the ill-ventilated, undrained, over-crowded, or confined condition of their private dwellings; with which, of course, the medical officer has no power to interfere, except by way of advice.

One among many examples may be mentioned of a letter carrier whom I attended for disease of the lungs. I found him with his wife and child sleeping in a close room, or rather box, measuring 6 feet in length, 5 in width by 8 in height. This gives an amount of only 240 cubic feet of air among the three, including the space occupied by the furniture; whereas there should be at least 2,000 cubic feet. There was no window or fire-place to the apartment, if such it may be termed. The only mode by which it was supplied with fresh air was a broken window adjacent to the door; and to which I attribute his very dangerous illness.

It should be borne in mind, when estimating the injurious effects of living in overcrowded or in close unventilated rooms, that the mischief is by no means entirely owing to the absence of oxygen, and its replacement by carbonic acid gas. Animals kept in a limited space, where the normal chemical constitution of the atmosphere is preserved by the absorption of the carbonic acid gas as soon as formed, and the substitution of oxygen, nevertheless die quickly from the effects of the gaseous and other effete matters thrown off by the lungs and skins of their own bodies.

VENTILATION OF THE BUILDINGS.

I have approved of a plan for ventilating the chief office, suggested by Mr. Cowper, C.E., which we hope will supply all the offices with a sufficient amount of fresh air without causing draughts. If this very difficult object can be attained, I have little doubt that the health of the officers in general will be greatly promoted thereby. As the plan has received the sanction of the Lords of the Treasury, and the necessary instructions have been given to the clerk of the works, I have but little doubt it will be in full operation by the ensuing summer.

PROVINCIAL AND COUNTRY OFFICES.

In addition to suggestions for the improvements of different rooms and offices connected with the Chief Money Order and Branch Offices in London, all of which have been attended to, and the recommendations carried out, during the course of the year, I visited the following offices, some of them by special request of his Grace the Postmaster-General, and made reports as to their sanitary condition; Edinburgh, which is about to be abandoned as soon as a new office can be erected; Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Cardiff, and Bristol.

I have, &c.

(Signed)
Rowland Hill, Esq.
&c. &c. &c.

WALLER LEWIS, M.B., Cantab.,
F.G.S., F.S.A., &c.
Medical Officer.

APPENDIX (M.)

REPORT on the SANITARY CONDITION of the DWELLINGS of the LETTER CARRIERS.

SIR,
His Grace the Postmaster-General having signified his wish that I should make him acquainted with the domestic circumstances of the officers in the minor establishment, in as far as relates to their dwelling houses, I have the honour of submitting the following statements:

Medical Department,
General Post Office, June 1857.

During the month of May I drew up a form, containing fourteen queries. This was circulated among the letter-carriers, sorters, sub-sorters, stampers, messengers, porters, and labourers attached to the Chief, the Money Order, and the nine Branch Offices in London.

Of the 1,648 men to whom these were addressed, 1,530 have returned them properly answered. The statistics that I now submit are drawn from the replies so given.

Of the 1,648 officers 1,155 are attached to the Chief and Money Order Offices; 493 to the Branches.

Nearly three fourths of the men return themselves as married or widowers with families.

AGE.

The letter-carriers are, as a body, the youngest of the officers. The youngest letter-carrier is 18 years old, while the eldest is 62. Their average age is 33.

There are very few very young men among the sorters or messengers; their average age is 36, 3 years more than that of the letter carriers.

The average age of the whole body of officers is 34.

NUMBER IN FAMILY.

This of course varies very much, viz., from 2 to 11. The average appears to be about 4, including the parents themselves.

SIZE OF THEIR HOUSES.

Some few of the officers who have families inhabit houses which they have purchased through being members of a building society. Three such societies in connection with the Post Office are in existence.

One of these admits as members only such persons as are attached to this Department, while the two others admit other persons as well. A very few of the men hire small houses of six rooms each for their own occupation alone, whilst others do so for the purpose of letting off the part they do not require for themselves, calculating that the profit derived from this sub-letting will relieve them from a portion of their rent-charge.

Several of the letter-carriers contrive to live occasionally rent-free, taking charge of empty houses.

The houses inhabited by the letter-carriers consist more frequently 8 rooms than of any other number.

NUMBER OF ROOMS OCCUPIED.

The greater number of unmarried men occupy single rooms, while some reside with their parents in a portion or the whole of a house.

About one fourth of the single men occupy 2 rooms. On the average, each married man's lodging consists of 3 rooms, although many occupy 4, 5, or 6 rooms.

A considerable amount of over-crowding exists among the officers who are married and have children. Thus, among those whose lodging consists of a *single room* only--

there are 17 who have 4 in family,

8	"	5	"
4	"	6	"

while among those whose lodging consist of *only two rooms*,—

there are 30 with 5 in family,

18	"	6	"
8	"	7	"
5	"	8	"
3	"	9	"
1	"	10	"
1	"	11	"

while many instances of five, six, seven, and eight in family are found inhabiting three small rooms.

If returns had been made by all the officers, these numbers would probably have received some addition.

AMOUNT OF RENT.

The rent paid by the various classes of officers varies slightly. Thus the average weekly rent paid by—

			s.	d.
The married letter carriers is	-	-	5	2
The single ditto	-	-	3	7
The married messengers is	-	-	6	0
The single ditto	-	-	4	0
The married sorters is	-	-	6	6
The single ditto	-	-	4	6

From this table it appears that the single men pay about 33 per cent. less for their lodgings than the married; that the letter carriers pay the smallest amount of rent; and the messengers about 15 per cent. more, and the sorters about 10 per cent. more than the messengers.

The unmarried men occupying single rooms pay rents varying from 2s. to 5s. 6d.; averaging 3s. 4d. per week. Those occupying two rooms pay from 2s. 6d. to 6s.; in one instance 8s. per week. The average is 4s.

Many messengers and sorters with families pay 10s. and some even 12s. 6d. per week for 3 or 4 rooms. One messenger with his wife (no children) and one servant pays 17s. weekly for his own occupation. A few, having the entire house or the greater part of it, the lower portion of which is used as a stationer's or grocer's shop, or for carrying on some trade or business therein, pay 20s. or 21s. a week. One messenger lately kept a coffee-house in the neighbourhood of the Chief Office, the rent of which was about 200l. a year.

DISTANCE OF RESIDENCE FROM WORK.

It will be seen that a large proportion of the men reside at a considerable distance from the office to which they are attached, or from their walk. Their object in doing so appears to be to enable them to have more healthy or cheaper dwellings than they

would find it possible to procure in the immediate neighbourhood of their work.

It will readily be seen how much additional exertion is undergone by those who have to walk some miles to their office before the commencement of their morning deliveries, and the same distance home again after the duties of the day are finished.

From the 1,530 returns which have been sent in (120 short of the entire number) it appears that 513 men live from one mile to two miles from their office or walk, 358 from 2 to 3 miles, 104 from 3 to 4 miles, and 47 live upwards of 4 miles; a few of them residing even 6 miles off.

LENGTH OF TIME IN THE SERVICE.

On account of recent changes in the Treasury arrangements respecting superannuation, a considerable number of men who have long been more or less inefficient are now quitting the service; and on this account, as well as from the increase of business demanding a corresponding increase of the force, and the annual official leave of absence necessitating extra men to supply the place of the absentees, a considerable addition to the number of men who have been a short time only in the service has been made during the last two years.

The number of men who have been a very long time in the service has correspondingly decreased.

Among the twelve officers who have been the longest in the service, and whose period varies from 35 years to 46, eleven belong to the London District Branch, and only one to the General Post. Eleven out of the twelve are letter carriers, the twelfth being a sorter.

The four who have been the longest in the service are attached respectively to and reside in the districts of Peckham, Stratford, Blackheath, and Hackney. These, it will be observed, are outskirts of the metropolis, affording the men employed there comparatively pure air.

The Peckham District letter carrier, who has been the longest in the service (46 years,) informs me, that, with the exception of a few slight colds from getting wet in the discharge of his duties, he has never had a day's illness, nor been absent from duty from sickness, nor has he ever had occasion to take medicine of any kind. He informs me that he lives in a good healthy cottage well drained into the common sewer.

These facts point clearly to the necessity of assimilating the condition of the dwellings of the officers of the Department in the interior of the metropolis, as far as pure air is concerned, to that of those who inhabit the outskirts.

They also show that there is not necessarily anything in the employment of a letter carrier detrimental to health.

RATIO THE RENT BEARS TO THE AMOUNT OF SALARY.

The average amount of salary earned by the letter carriers and sorters is 27*s.* 6*d.* per week, while that of the messengers is 29*s.* 4*d.*

It follows, therefore, that

the married letter carriers pay	20	per cent.
single	12	"
the married messengers	- 24	"
single	- 14	"
the married sorters	- 25	"
single	- 16	"

of their salaries for their dwellings alone. In these calculations I have not taken into account the Christmas boxes received by the letter carriers, which may average about 8*l.* each annually. This would diminish slightly the per-centage of their wages paid for lodging.

It appears to me that this is a very large proportion of their salaries to be paid for rent alone; and that if good accommodation could be found for them at a lower rate their condition would be much improved thereby.

CONDITION OF THE DWELLINGS.

The last question addressed to the men was as to the condition of their lodgings.

The greater number made no observation on the subject. Some 50 or 60 of the officers, the majority of whom live in the suburbs, as Islington, Kingsland, Peckham, Brixton, Pentonville, &c., say that their lodgings are "healthy;" "first rate;" "neighbourhood healthy, and sanitary condition satisfactory;" "very healthy;" "quite comfortable," &c.

These descriptions must be taken with a certain allowance, as in some cases they are made by the owners or the occupiers of the entire house, who let off apartments to other lodgers.

In some cases the men, from what I believe to be ignorance of what constitutes a healthy habitation, state their lodgings to be in a satisfactory condition as to sanitary requirements under circumstances that make it difficult to agree with that opinion. Thus one man living in a small narrow street in Lambeth in the neighbourhood of many notorious nuisances, as gas-works, potteries, bone boiling, &c., calls the situation "open and healthy."

A second, living in Millbank, calls it "very good"; while a third, who lodges in Bunhill-row, in the vicinity of a badly-contrived, over-crowded graveyard, says that the condition of his lodgings "far exceeds all expectations."

Others are not so satisfied. Thus they remark, "close quarters, the top room;" "the house itself is healthy, but the neighbourhood quite the contrary;" "not so comfortable as I should wish, but equal to the rent I pay."

This shows the expense and discomfort of those officers who for convenience sake live in the neighbourhood of their work.

The latter officer is a single man ; his lodging is in Jewin-street in the city, and he pays 4s. a week for *half a room* ! Other replies are as follows : " Bad smell from drains occasionally ; " " I would have " a better lodging if my wages would afford it ; " " The situation is " healthy, and yet, notwithstanding, I suffer very much from " chronic affection of the head, which I attribute either to the gas " or to draughts entering the doors or windows while employed " sorting."

I am sorry to say that the lodgings of the Irishmen in the force are, generally speaking, in a most unsatisfactory condition. They are much more over-crowded, close, and dirty than are those of the English. I have constantly to make the same remark relative to their personal condition.

I have thus drawn out in as brief a manner as was compatible with generalizing so large a mass of information the principal points to which it was necessary to draw the attention of the Postmaster-General in regard to the domiciliary condition of the officers of the minor establishment of this Department.

While leaving to his Grace and to yourself the practical points to be deduced from them, I cannot but remark that in my opinion, as conservator of the health of the employés, the facts disclose a very considerable amount of mischief to be present in the homes and dwellings of the men. The two evils that are the most prominent are, the large amount of over-crowding, and the great extra amount of exertion necessitated by so many of the letter carriers having to walk a considerable distance to the seat of their work, and to return again.

It is agreed by all philanthropists and sanitary inquirers who have the most deeply and minutely examined these subjects, that the greatest of all sanitary evils, the greatest spreader of contagion, and the greatest favourer of epidemic and endemic disease, is over-crowding. The effect of this evil is seen, not so much in the mortality of the adults as in that of the children, whose lungs act as a most delicate test of an impure atmosphere. It causes the adult working population to be more frequently disabled from sickness, and to be more easily fatigued with a moderate amount of labour than is normal.

In conclusion, I would say that I see no natural relief from this state of things, which, from the great annual increment of the population of this metropolis, and the improvements in and about to be brought into operation (improvements which mainly consist in destroying the habitations of the lower orders), has a tendency to augment in intensity,—I see no relief but causing the erection of special dwellings for the officers of this Department.

I have strong reason to believe that, under good management, healthy homes, within moderate distances of the various offices, can be provided at a cost not exceeding the average of what is now paid for very inferior dwellings.

Rowland Hill, Esq.
&c. &c.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALLER LEWIS.

APPENDIX (N).

UNFOUNDED COMPLAINTS against the POST OFFICE respecting the
LOSS of LETTERS.

A lady residing in Jersey applied to the Department respecting a letter she had sent to a clergyman at Oxford. No trace of the letter could be discovered in the different offices through which it would pass, but the addressee subsequently informed the secretary of the Post Office that he had found the letter between the cushions of his own arm-chair.

Inquiry having been made respecting a letter sent to a person residing at Kirkcudbright in Scotland, it appeared that it had been duly delivered, but that the addressee having left the letter on a table during the night it had been devoured by rats.

Complaint was made that two letters which had been posted had not been received; but it was found on inquiry that the servant intrusted to post these letters had dropped them into a letter box belonging to a private person.

In May last it was stated that a letter addressed to a bank in Glasgow had been delivered without its contents (halves of bank notes for 75*l.*); and on a strict investigation it appeared that the letter had been intrusted to a boy to post, who confessed that being aware the letter contained money, and finding that the wafer with which it was fastened was wet, he had been tempted to steal the contents, which at the time he believed to be whole notes; but who added that when, on afterwards examining them, he found them to be halves only, he enclosed them in an unfastened sheet of paper, which he directed according, as he believed, to the address of the letter from which he had taken them. The halves of the notes and sheet of paper were subsequently discovered in the Glasgow post office; the address on the paper being, however, very different from that of the letter in which the notes had been enclosed.

A gentleman wrote to the Department stating that a letter sent by him to a correspondent at Hungerford had not reached its destination. The usual inquiries were made without success, but the letter was at length discovered under one of the cushions of the gentleman's carriage.

Several complaints were made in the beginning of the summer of the non-delivery of letters addressed to the editor of a newspaper; but this gentleman afterwards informed the department that he had discovered that the delinquent was his own errand boy, who confessed to having pilfered his letter box.

A similar case occurred at Romsey, where, on an investigation by the surveyor, it was discovered that the applicant's errand boy had abstracted the letters from his private bag, which it was found could be done even when the bag was locked.

Application was made respecting a letter containing a cheque for 79*l.* 12*s.* 11*d.*, which had been presented and cashed. The letter had not been registered, and no trace of it could be discovered. The

applicants, however, ultimately withdrew their complaint against the Post Office, stating their belief that the missing letter had not been posted, but had been stolen by one of their clerks who had absconded.

A letter supposed to contain a 10*l.* note was registered at Moffat, and in due course delivered to the addressee, who however declined to sign a receipt for it as the 10*l.* note was missing. The sender was written to, but he asserted that the note had been enclosed. The Postmaster chiefly concerned (who had been more than 50 years in the service) was greatly distressed at the doubt thus cast on his honesty; but on further inquiry the sender admitted "that he had obtained a trace of the 10*l.* note," and stated that "the fault had not been with the Post Office." On being pressed for fuller explanation, he stated that when writing his letter he had placed the 10*l.* note in an envelope, and affixed a postage stamp thereon, when a lady came hurriedly into his shop also to write a letter; that he had assisted her by getting an envelope, and placing a postage stamp on it; that he had placed this envelope beside that which contained the bank note; and that when the lady had finished her letter he gave her by mistake the envelope with the 10*l.* note in it, and put his own letter into the empty envelope. He had carried the two letters to the Post Office, and his own, which he supposed contained the 10*l.*, he had registered. Both letters were safely delivered, and the 10*l.* having been returned as evidently sent in error, the lady who had forwarded it brought it to the complainant, and thus the mystery was cleared up.

A letter from a bank agent enclosing property amounting to nearly 4,000*l.* was posted without an address, but was delivered through the Dead Letter Office.

A letter said to have been posted by a person at Fochabers, enclosing a letter of credit for 50*l.*, was supposed to have been appropriated by an officer of the Post Office; but on inquiry it was ascertained that, instead of posting the letter himself, as he asserted, the writer had intrusted it to a servant, who had destroyed the letter, and had attempted to negotiate the Order.

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