

Cheap Postage in Canada.

The Postmaster-General of Canada has made his report for the year ending the 5th of April, 1852. It shows the favorable working of the system under the reduced rates of postage.

On 6th April, 1851, the management of the Canada Post Office was given up by the Imperial authorities to the Provincial. Under the Queen's officers, the gross revenue at the high tariff of rates was £93,802 currency, including the British packet postage—about £10,000.

By a Provincial act, the postage was reduced from nine-pence the half-ounce to three-pence—a reduction of two-thirds. The postage on box or drop letters was also reduced one-half. Furthermore, the charge was taken off the newspaper circulation, so that papers to and from the other British Provinces, papers sent to the United States, and exchange editors' papers have passed free of any postage charge. The rates on printed papers, circulars, pamphlets, books, &c., have been modified and reduced.

With all these reductions, it has been found that £15,000 appropriated last session of the Legislature to meet the apprehended deficiency in the revenue, has more than covered it. The first quarter of the present fiscal year, since April 5, exhibits still more favorable results of the cheap system; and it is estimated that, at the end of the year, £4,000 only will be required to balance the books of the Post Office. The increase of business is very marked. During a week in 1851 there passed through the post-offices of the Province 41,000 letters and 90,000 newspapers. During a corresponding week of April, in this year, the number of letters was 86,051, and of newspapers, 101,000. During the past fiscal year 243 new post-offices have been established. Post communication between Canada and the Provinces of New-Brunswick and Nova Scotia, by land route, *via* Quebec and Temiscuator, has, with the co-operation of the latter provinces, been increased from twice to three times a week.

Since April 1851 an agreement has been in operation with the U. S. Postmaster General, by which letters pass between any place in Canada and any place in the States at the rate of 6d. currency per half oz., except to and from California and Oregon,—the rate in the latter case being 9d. Each country retains the postage it collects, and dead letters are mutually returned to the Post-Office Department of the country whence they came. Last year there were \$43,031 77 for collection in Canada, and \$42,605 20 for collection in the United States, on letters. Several new points of inter-communication have been established on the frontier, for exchange of mails.

Mails from and to the west of Kingston, are forwarded by direct routes through the States, to the steamer at Boston and New-York. The mails are made up weekly at Kingston and Toronto for England; and in England for these places.

The Postmaster-General gives it as his opinion that packet postage ought to be reduced; the present high rates pressing severely upon poor emigrants and others, at a time like this, when thousands of families are, as it were, divided between the two continents. He says that as regards Canada, the present packet collection might be maintained at a much lower rate of postage charge. He mentions that the people do not take to the purchase of stamps for prepayment. This is curious and significant—proving the general reluctance to *pay postage*, and tacitly indicating the tendency to look for its reduction as much as possible.

A report of the cases of abstraction or loss of money letters shows that such violations of trust on the part of the Post-Office *employés*, is very rare. The number of letters with inclosures is very great—37,000 such having been registered at Montreal alone during the past year. There is a regular system of money letter registration in operation, which greatly helps the commercial intercourse of society. No money is charged for registering letters with inclosures; for it is found that sooner than pay anything for security, the majority of people would *trust to chance*; (there is, after all, a great leaning to the lottery business in human nature;) and in this way a great amount of temptation would be put in the way of the Post-Office clerks. It is to prevent any such demoralization that the Post-Office very wisely, and considerably guarantees the money letters *gratis*.

The number of dead letters in the Post-Office for the last year, was 66,862; of which 12,299 came from these States, and have now been sent to Washington.

In conclusion, the Postmaster-General recommends a further reduction of postage, and expresses his opinion that the financial condition and prospects of the Department, at the close of another year, will be such as to warrant the Governor-General in recommending a penny rate. A moderate aid from the general revenue, he says, will bridge over the deficiencies of the first and second year of the experiment, after which the results would resemble those of the postal changes in England.