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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK FOOT-PRINTS OF A LETTER CARRIER; OR, A HISTORY OF THE WORLD'S CORRESPONDECE ***

FOOT-PRINTS

OF A

LETTER-CARRIER;

OR

A History of the World's Correspondence:

CONTAINING

BIOGRAPHIES, TALES, SKETCHES,
INCIDENTS, AND STATISTICS CONNECTED WITH
POSTAL HISTORY.

BY

JAMES REES,
CLERK IN THE PHILADELPHIA POST-OFFICE.

"The Post-Office is properly a mercantile project. The government advances the expense of establishing the different offices, and of buying or hiring the necessary horses or carriages, and is repaid with a large profit by the duties upon what is carried."

SMITH, *Wealth of Nations*.

"A Messenger with Letters."—SPENSER.

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PREFACE.

There are few institutions in this or in any other country the history of which is so little known as is that of the post-office. The very name, in the opinion of the masses, is sufficient to enlighten them; and beyond this little or no interest is manifested. Yet the history, if fairly written, would surprise that very portion who consider the name alone an index to its unwritten pages.

Indeed, it seems strange that so important a branch of our government should have been so slighted by those who constituted themselves historic writers. Our school-books contain no allusion to it, nor are its officers mentioned with any marks of commendation in any of our national works. And yet there are names identified with this department, both as regards mind, intellect, and character, unequalled by those of any other in the country.

Perhaps it is looked upon as being merely an appliance to the wheels of government and not essential to its general movements. Is this so? is the department a mere workshop and its officers and employees simply workers?

We have endeavored in this work—perhaps feebly—to place the "post" before our readers as one of the most important branches of the General Government. We have thrown around its social and political history an interest by connecting with it incidents, facts, and local matter more immediately identified with events which have marked our country's history from its earliest period to that of the present.

Much has transpired during all these years to render such a work both instructive and interesting; and although we do not claim for ours any such pretension, yet we may safely term it *a pioneer in the cause of our postal history*. 6

We have also endeavored, without any aid from the postal department at Washington, to furnish a somewhat desultory history of the post in this country, while at the same time we have given some account of those of other nations. Ours is not a mere statistic history, but one that blends with it a certain amount of information upon every subject more or less connected with it. Aiming at no high literary attainments, or attempting to excel others in language, beauty of sentiment, or construction of sentences, he has written a work in his own style, and in a manner which he flatters himself will be received favorably by the masses. The American language given in its plainest style will be far more appreciated by them than if clothed in the classic garb scholastic and academical *tailoring* has thrown around it.

The primitive style in which our forefathers wrote has been materially changed by the introduction of foreign and learned words. This, it is true, as Blair says, "gives an appearance of elevation and dignity to style;" but often, also, they render it stiff and forced; and, in general, a plain native style, as it is more intelligible to all readers, so, by a proper management of words, "it may be made equally strong and expressive with this Latinized English." Barren languages may need such assistance, but ours is not one of these.

The author is also aware that in the general arrangement of his subject there may seem a want of connection; but, as the postal chain is linked to dates, he may be excused if other portions of the work fly off in tangents. This, however, is owing more to the variety of postal matter introduced than to any neglect on his part to bring them into harmonic action.

The post-office, dry and uninteresting as its name alone implies, possesses an interest few people are aware. It is not a mere commercial affair, but one that connects itself with the interest of every man, woman, and child in the country whose business and sympathies are alike linked to its operations. There is not a country or a spot of ground on the habitable globe where civilization, with its handmaid, intellect, treads, but is identified with this vast postal chain. Touch the wire at one end, and its vibration may tend to enlighten even the land of the heathen. The wire *has* been touched; for 7

"From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand,
Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand,
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,"

come messages from our missionaries, who are endeavoring to extend the cause of Christianity, and which postal facility, the enterprise of civilized nations, affords.

The author in a great measure had to rely upon his own resources for all the postal information incorporated in this work. The department at Washington and post-offices throughout the country seem to consider the records of the institution not of sufficient importance to be preserved in such a manner as to make a reference to them an easy matter.

To M. Hall Stanton, Esq., and Thomas H. Shoemaker, Esq., the author feels highly indebted, not only for the interest they have taken in the work, but for placing at his disposal their valuable libraries and the loan of old and rare works.

For the valuable statistical tables so carefully and so well arranged, giving at a glance the *Ledger* account of the financial postal department, the author is indebted to William V. McKean, Esq., the able and talented editor of "The National Almanac and Annual Record,"—a work, to use the language of a distinguished public character, "which is a little library in itself, and one which 8

answers nearly all questions on public affairs in a most satisfactory manner.”

To “the press” of our country, which has become its historian, is the author indebted for much valuable matter connected with the subject of the post. If from these sources he has compiled a work calculated to place the postal department in its proper light and render it in the least instructive or interesting, he will be fully repaid for the labor bestowed upon it.

DEDICATION.

The custom of dedicating works to individuals is of some antiquity, or, at least, as far as the antiquity of book-making extends. At one period it served the double purpose of creating a patron and enlarging the sale of the book. Again, dedications became popular when great men condescended to notice authors and placed their extensive libraries at their disposal. Books published in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries afford the curious reader rich specimens of this species of literary composition.

Others, again, dedicated their works to men whose opinions assimilated with their own. Thus, the philosopher dedicated his work to one who was considered versed in the mysteries of science; the poet dedicated his effusions to an admirer of rhyme; the dramatist, to a well-known patron of the stage and of the drama; the painter dedicated his work on art to a connoisseur,—one whose skill and judgment in the arts had secured him a “world-renowned reputation.”

In our day and country the sale of a book depends altogether upon its own merits and the *honest* criticism of the press. Dedications, therefore, are looked upon as one of those liberties an author can take with a friend, and thus bring his name before the public in connection with the work without being accused of selfish or interested motives.

Just such a liberty the author of this work takes with one whom he is proud to call friend,—one whose many amiable qualities endear him to all. It is, therefore, with much pleasure he dedicates this work to

M. HALL STANTON, Esq.
of Philadelphia,

as a memento of friendship and of the many happy hours that friendship has afforded.

THE AUTHOR.

PHILADELPHIA.

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FOOT-PRINTS

OF A

LETTER-CARRIER.

I.

Posts—Post-Offices, Ancient and Modern.

"The Post-office is properly a mercantile project. The Government advances the expenses of establishing the different offices, and of buying or hiring the necessary horses or carriages, and is repaid with a large profit by the duties upon what is carried."—Smith's Wealth of Nations.

In the earlier periods of society, communication between the parts of a country was a rare and difficult undertaking. Individuals at a distance, having little inclination and less opportunity for such intercourse, were naturally satisfied with their limited means of communicating one with another.

As civilization advanced and trade became a national feature, these communications became more important and, of course, more frequent. Our readers will observe, as we progress in this work, how it assumes at last one of the most important branches of a government. Indeed, this it was destined to become from the fact that it originated with the people, and their interest made it a part and portion of the great postal system.

Posts and post-offices, as understood in modern parlance, are identified with trade and commerce, and in their connection with *letters*. The word post, however, was used long before post-offices were established, implying a public establishment of letters, newspapers, &c. In the Roman Empire, couriers, on swift horses, passed from hand to hand the imperial edicts to every province. Private letters were sent to their destination by slaves, or intrusted to casual opportunities.

Although we are apt to stigmatize two of the greatest nations of the earth—the Greeks and Romans—as being uncivilized, and historically termed barbarians, yet were they highly educated in many of the branches of literature, art, and science. The posts were well known among the Romans; yet is it difficult to trace with certainty the period of their introduction. Some writers carry it back to the time of the Republic,—posts and post-offices, under the name of *statores* and *station*, having been then, it is said, established by the Senate. Whether this was the case or not, Suetonius assures us that Augustus substituted posts along the great roads of the Empire. At first, the despatches were conveyed from post to post by young men running on foot and delivering them to others at the next route. Post-horses are mentioned in the Theodosian Code, *decursu publico*; but these were only the public horses for the use of the government messengers, who, before this institution was established, seized everything that came in their way.

Horace speaks of the post as "means of conveying rapid intelligence." Flying posts in the days of Richard III. were used for military purposes, imparting news of war, victory, &c. "*Equi positi*"—post-horses—were common even before the idea of a general postage-system was conceived. "Post-haste" is a familiar phrase among the old poets. Drayton says,—

> "A herald posted away
> The King of England to the field to dare."
> The post of gods is come!"

Virgil, in one of his sublime epics, makes use of this expression:—

> "Now Jove himself hath sent his fearful mandate through the skies:
> The post of gods is come!"

After the introduction of letters and the conveyance of messages, written and printed, the word post was understood to mean "to ride or travel with post-horses;" "with speed or despatch of post-horses." What it means now in such connection can only be explained by calculating the speed of lightning.

The modern post and post-office form a part and portion of a government, and act in concert with other great agents of civilization in the formation of permanent institutions.

The post-office is one of those tests by which the progressive prosperity of a country may be ascertained. In this respect, perhaps no other nation in the world presents a more extended view of such progress, in connection with the postal system, than does that of the United States. In the short space of eighty years she has set an example, by the action and the enterprise of her people, to nations who boast of a political and national existence of centuries.

The literary treasures of England,—accumulating from Alfred, Bede, and Chaucer, through a succession of enlightened ages, swelling up in their onward progress the vast catalogue of science, connecting with their recorded mental wealth the names of men who consecrated with their genius the age in which they flourished,—did less for her commercial interest, throughout all those periods, than has the United States in less than fifty years. Enterprise came forth under the light of liberty, and extended its operations to every department of trade, commerce, art, and science. England became alive to the fact that a new people had created and given a living principle to the mechanical workings in the world of trade and commerce. Its operations gave vigor to action, and infused a spirit into merchants and traders which, heretofore, followed in the wake of *monarchial follies*,

> "As peddlers from town to town."

We purpose to speak now of the post being a branch of the government, and, in some respects, one of the most important.

The post-office department should be, but it is not, a social agent. The peculiar character of a republican government is such that the post becomes essentially a great political one. Its connection with an administration is one of the links connecting party with its political interests, and which becomes broken immediately on the success attending that of a rival. It is rotary in its motion; hence the various changes which necessarily occur at elections have a tendency to retard, rather than advance, the postal system on its road to perfection. Indeed, it is not assuming too much if we say that civil liberty, practically speaking, partly consists in these changes; for opposition is an essential and vital element of such liberty, and opposition, with these possible changes, would have little or no meaning. If, however, they were limited to the heads of the department, and not extending down to the humblest workers in the office, the evil effects ever attending on such changes would not so materially operate against its interests, and, of course, that of the community. A general sweep of the employees of any one State or government department makes the whole system a gigantic political, rather than what it should be, a social, institution.

In whatever light, however, we view the post-office, it presents to us a subject of the highest interest. Connect it with commerce, and it assumes the power of a “Merlin,” whose magic wand, raised in the ages of superstition, astonished the world! Connect it with the arts, and nations are brought together by the mere stroke of the pen! Associate it with science, religion,—in fact, with any of the prominent features which make up civilized life,—it becomes at once the great medium through which their mysteries and developments are made manifest to all.

Viewed historically, we trace the history of the post to Moses, and the peopled countries, even to the children of Canaan, in the swamps of Egypt. We link it with the hieroglyphic, or symbolical, characters of that age, long before Hermes substituted alphabetical signs. We follow it up, through sacred and profane history, to the exclusive royal messengers in Persia mentioned by Herodotus, and the grant of the postal establishment as an imperial fief, made by Charles V. to the princely family of Thurn and Taxis, and from that down to the establishing of that system which is now followed by all civilized nations.

The making a branch of a government an hereditary one, particularly that of the postal, could only have originated under the genial rule of Charles. The family of Thurn and Taxis held the post-office as a fief, given to them by the Emperor Charles V., and they continued to hold it long after the different German States had become independent. Of course, like all such fiefs, (even those of *Saxon* notoriety,) it became, in time—instead of what the true meaning implied, “fealty or fidelity,” to “keep and sustain any thing granted and held upon oath, &c.”—a most vile and corrupt institution.[1]

The first recorded riding-post was established in Persia, by Cyrus, 599 B.C. Cyrus was the son of Cambyses, King of Persia, and Mandane, daughter of Astyages, King of the Medes. The history of Cyrus is a lesson worthy to be read by all who can appreciate in one man all those elements which combine to make a great one. He was educated according to the Persian institutions, of which Xenophon gives such glowing accounts. Among the numerous inventions he made and carried into operation, that of the posts and couriers, to facilitate the transportation of letters, was probably the most important. He caused post-houses to be built and messengers to be appointed in every province. There were one hundred and twenty provinces. Having calculated how far a good horse with a brisk rider could go in a day, without being spoiled, he had stables built in proportion, at equal distances from each other, and had them furnished with horses and grooms to take care of them. He likewise appointed a "postmaster," to receive the packets from the couriers as they arrived, and give them to others, and to take the horses and furnish fresh ones. Thus, the post went continually, night and day, with extraordinary speed. Herodotus speaks of the same sort of couriers in the reign of Xerxes. He speaks of eleven *postal stages*, a day's journey distant from one another, between Susa and the Ægean Sea.[2]

These couriers were called in the Persian language by a name signifying, as near as we can comprehend it, "service by compulsion." The superintendency of the posts became a considerable employment. Darius, the last of the Persian kings, had it before he came to the crown. Xenophon notices the fact that this establishment subsisted still in his time, which perfectly agrees with what is related in the book of Esther concerning the edict published by Ahasuerus in favor of the Jews, which edict was carried through that vast empire with a rapidity that would have been impossible without these posts erected by Cyrus.[3]

Persia, in some respects, has not kept pace with the progress of other nations, or carried out those plans of government and schemes which Cyrus originated in his early reign. Traces of a race far more energetic than the present inhabitants of Persia are found in various parts of the kingdom. The ruins of many ancient cities scattered over the land are imposing and grand, especially those of Persepolis. Next to the pyramids of Egypt and the colossal ruins of Thebes, they have attracted the attention of travellers, and, like them, still remain an enigma,—their history, dates, and objects being involved in the gloom of antiquity. These evidences prove the existence of a state of refinement in art in the sixth century, scarcely equalled, certainly not excelled, since, and fully sustain the *data* given to that wonderful discovery,—the establishing the postal system and the first introduction of the "riding-post."[4]

In the highest eras of their civilization, neither the Greeks nor the Romans had a public letter-post; though the conveyance of letters is as much a matter of necessity and convenience as the conveyance of persons and merchandise.

There were *stationese* and mounted messengers, called *tabellarii*, who went in charge of the public despatches; but they were strictly forbidden to convey letters for private persons.

In the time of Augustus, post-houses were established throughout the kingdom, and post-horses stationed at equal distances to facilitate the transmission of letters, &c. Under his reign, literature flourished, many salutary laws were established, and he so embellished Rome that he was declared "to have found it brick and left it marble." He was born at Rome, B.C. 63, and died at Nola in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

We have alluded to the fact of nations, considerably advanced in civilization at the early period of the world's history, being without a public post for the conveyance of letters. Yet, when we take into consideration that trade and commerce were then in their infancy, simple messengers only were required. Indeed, letters at that period were only written when great occasions called them forth. What with us is now a pleasure, was with the ancients a task.

It was not until the year 807 that a postal service was established by the Emperor Charlemagne, —a service which did not survive him. This, however, differed very little from that which was framed by Cyrus.

The first actual letter-post system, connecting countries together by communications, furthering the cause of trade and commerce, and established to facilitate the conveyance of letters throughout the commercial world, originated in the manufacturing and business districts of the "Hanse Towns." The confederacy was established in 1169.

So early as the thirteenth century this federation of the republics required constant communication with each other; and it became almost a necessity of their existence that some letter-post system should be established.

The society termed the "Association of the Hanse-towns," is better known in history under the name of "The Hanseatic League." It consisted chiefly of merchants,—men who had brought commerce to all the perfection it was capable of acquiring at that period, which may justly be termed the dawn of our great commercial history. It was under this league the banking system, exchanges, and the principles of book-keeping, with double entries, and various other practices which facilitate and secure commercial intercourse, originated. We speak here of the banking system only. Banks existed long prior to this date, but in a very different form. Those of the ninth century were literally "benches," from the custom of the Italian merchants exposing money to lend on a "banco," or bench, or tables.

The towns of the “Hanseatic League” were originally a confederacy united in an alliance for the mutual support and encouragement of their commerce. Perhaps the world’s history does not present an example so fraught with interest to the commercial world than that which was here furnished. Industry, application, a union of interests, combined with a general knowledge of trade and commerce, the league soon became the wonder of surrounding nations, who not only imitated its example, but followed its precepts. It was under its dynasty the postal system was established and communications of post-routes opened with all the towns. In proportion as the reputation, opulence, and forces of the league subsequently changed to “The Hanseatic Confederacy” increased, there were few towns of note in Europe that were not associated with it. Thus, France furnished to the confederacy Rouen, St. Malo, Bordeaux, Bayonne, and Marseilles. Spain: Cadiz, Barcelona, and Seville. Portugal: Lisbon. Italy and Sicily: Messina, Leghorn, and Naples. Russia: Novogorod. Norway: Bergen, &c. Lastly, England furnished London to this celebrated association, whose warehouses and factories were the wonder and the admiration of the commercial world.[5] As we have said, it was under this league the first practical post system was established; and its legitimate object and purpose was only interfered with when it became subject to a higher power.

This great commercial league fully sustained the opinion—at least entertained at that period—that “Commerce alone is sufficient to insure greatness.” Subsequent events, arising out of the political elements of a country, afford convincing proofs that something more substantial than commerce is requisite to maintain the independence of any nation. This, however, is a question which involves that of the laws of nations and the ethics of political economy. Mr. Oddy ascribes the downfall of the Hanse Confederacy to their becoming warlike, and preferring political importance to wealth obtained by their original modes. It is, however, probable that no system of policy, either commercial or political, however wise or moderate, could have prevented the wars in which the Hanseatic League were involved. They stood on the defensive against their hostile neighbors, whose envy and jealousy were excited by the showy wealth of these cities. If commerce, therefore, brought on these wars, and defeated the great object of the league, it is evident that something more powerful than commercial sway was necessary to keep it in contact with the agricultural and political interests of the nation.[6]

The combination of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce is no doubt the true cause of greatness,—the opulence and power of those nations who study the interest of each alike. It ought therefore to be the policy of the rulers to guard the progress of these great branches with the same fostering care and protection,—to encourage one without depressing the other; and to watch their reciprocal bearings, connection, and affinity, that the general interest may be promoted and the resources consolidated into a mass of strength adequate or superior to the power of their enemies. The United States has not lost sight of this fact; and hence every department of its great interests is alike defended, protected, and encouraged. We may have wars; but they will never arise from our neglect of any one particular branch of the government, or of its source of revenue.

Perhaps no city in the world presented a greater display of wealth than did that of Bruges in the year 1301. She was one of the cities of the confederacy. It contained in that year sixty-eight companies of traders and artificers, while its citizens rivalled many of the European monarchs in their sumptuous mode of living. Some idea of their splendor may be formed from the following anecdote, recorded by Dr. Robinson in his “Historical Disquisitions,” who relates that, in the year 1301, Joanna of Navarre, the wife of Philip the Fair, of France, having been some days in Bruges, was so much struck with the splendor of the city and its grandeur, as well as the rich and costly dresses of the “citizen’s wives,” that she was moved by female envy to exclaim with indignation,—“I thought that I had been the only queen here; but I find that there are many hundreds more.”

The Hanse Towns had attained the summit of their power in 1428; but they began to decline the moment they became warlike,—thus neglecting their great commercial power, wealth, and influence. The rise of Holland accelerated their decline; and the general attention which other nations began to pay to manufactures and commerce, by distributing them more generally and equally amongst the people in different parts of Europe, destroyed that superiority which they had so long enjoyed.

The number and variety of the military undertakings in which the Hanse Towns embarked, contributed more powerfully, perhaps, than any of the causes above specified to accelerate their ruin. A general jealousy was raised; and the kings of France, Spain, and Denmark, and several States of Italy, forbid their towns to continue members of the confederacy. Upon this, the Teutonic Hanse Towns restricted the confederacy to Germany. About the middle of the seventeenth century the confederacy was almost wholly confined to the towns of Hamburg, Lubeck, and Bremen. They retained the appellation of the Hanseatic Towns, and claimed their former privileges, among which their postal system was included. Under the appellation of the Hanse Towns they were recognized at the peace of Utrecht, in 1715, and at the Definite Treaty of Indemnity, in 1805,—almost the last moment of their political existence.[7]

The first serious blow struck the postal system was that which it received from the Emperor Maximilian. He established a post between Austria and Normandy, and, as a sort of retaliatory measure, made it an espionage over his subjects through the medium of their correspondence, and also for the purpose of enriching himself by the profits of the enterprise. Fortunately, however, for the cause of justice and of letters, Maximilian died before he had inflicted this great wrong on the people to any extent. He died January 12, 1519.

Having brought the reader to this point of our postal history, it may not be out of place before we reach the fifteenth century—when it assumed a very different aspect—to give some account of the earlier history of art, pastoral life, language, writing materials, letters, &c., more or less connected with our subject.

II.

Nihil Sub Sole Novi.

“There is nothing new under the sun.” “There is no new thing,” says Solomon, “under the sun.”

We cannot speak of any thing, either of a useful or ornamental character, but we invariably cast our eyes over the ages of the world and trace up, or rather back, to its earliest period, their very origin. There is scarcely an art or a science of which we boast now but owes its existence to the past ages. We have the proofs on their paintings, their mechanics, their arts, and sciences: these are the evidences to prove how far they had advanced in knowledge before the world’s revolutions cast them back again to ignorance and gloom. With the downfall of cities—crumbling away under the fiat of the Almighty, or swallowed up by earthquakes—went the genius of ages; and from their ruins and the debris of classic temples came those traces of high art of which no other living evidences bore witness. The secret went down amid their tottering ruins, and left to after-ages the simple task of imitating their monumental sculptured beauties and fresco painting on the shattered walls of their ruined temples.

Well, then, may we exclaim with Solomon,

“There is no new thing under the sun.”

George R. Gliddon, in his great work of “Ancient Egypt,” speaking of the state of the arts in the earliest ages of Egyptian history, says:—

“Will not the historian deign to notice the prior origin of every art and science in Egypt a thousand years before the Pelasgians studded the isles and capes of the Archipelago with their forts and temples,—long before Etruscan civilization had smiled on Italian skies? And shall not the ethnographer, versed in Egyptian lore, proclaim the fact that the physiological, craniological, capillary, and cuticular distinctions of the human race existed on the distribution of mankind throughout the earth?

“Philologists, astronomers, chemists, painters, architects, physicians must return to Egypt to learn the origin of language and writing; of the calendar and solar motion; of the art of cutting granite with a *copper* chisel and giving elasticity to a *copper sword*; of making glass with the variegated hues of the rainbow; of moving single blocks of polished sienite 900 tons in weight for any distance by land and water; of building arches, round and pointed, with masonic precision unsurpassed at the present day, and antecedent, by 2000 years, to the “Cloaca Magna” of Rome; of sculpturing a Doric column 1000 years before the Dorians are known in history; of *fresco* painting in imperishable colors; and of practical knowledge in anatomy.

“Every craftsman can behold in Egyptian monuments the progress of his art 4000 years ago; and, whether it be a wheelwright building a chariot, a shoemaker drawing his twine, a leather-cutter using the selfsame form of a knife of old as is considered the best form now, a weaver throwing the same hand-shuttle, a whitesmith using that identical form of blowpipe but lately recognized to be the most efficient, the seal-engraver cutting in hieroglyphics such names as Shooph’s above 4300 years ago, or even the poulterer removing the *pip* from geese, all these and many more astounding evidences of Egyptian priority now require but a glance at the plates of Rosellini.”

Perhaps the post-office, being a more modern invention, the result of man’s progress, and its use essential to his present wants and governmental requirements, claims more originality than many of those inventions which a ruder state of society devised. And yet even here we actually owe to those ages much of the material which makes up our great postal superstructure. We learned from them how messengers, couriers, and the transmitting of letters formed an important part of their social system, and how it ultimately grew into a political one, under kings and emperors, through all subsequent ages.

"Nothing great, nothing useful, nothing high and ennobling, nothing worthy of man's nature, of his lofty origin and ultimate exalted destiny has ever been accomplished but by toil; by diligent and well-directed effort, by the busy hand guided in its effort by the wise, thoughtful, hard-working brain."—*Anon.*

When God said, "Let there be light: and there was light," it was not the mere flash of the brightness of heaven over the earth, but a light that was to be as lasting as creation itself.

Every thing that sprung up from the earth in its order and beauty received the spirit of a new life from this holy and divine light. And when man in the image of his Maker stood in the Garden of Eden, there shone around him another light,—an emanation from God himself. Mind—intellect—power!

Man was the pioneer of the science of government. Deity planned it, and, as the crowning work of his creation, said:—

"*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*"

As the earth became peopled the wants of man called forth all those energies requisite to sustain life by labor or otherwise; and these brought forth the mind's attributes combined, and the world became a mirror reflecting Him who created it.

Pastoral life, in the early ages of the world's history, afforded in itself the means of providing for the wants of man. This led to the cultivation of the soil and the raising of cattle.

Before the flood, Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Jabez was the father of such as dwell in tents and have cattle. Then came trades and professions. These led to art, art to science; and, as their numbers increased, they soon found that their sources from which they derived their subsistence—the spontaneous fruits of the earth and the flesh of wild animals killed in the chase—were insufficient to maintain them. Hence they were obliged to have recourse to other means. Property being established and ascertained, men began to exchange one rude commodity for another. While their wants and desires were confined within narrow bounds, they had no other idea of traffic but that of simple barter. The husbandman exchanged a part of his harvest for the cattle of the shepherd; the hunter gave the prey which he had caught at the chase for the honey and the fruits which his neighbor had gathered in the woods. Thus, commercial intercourse began and extended throughout the community. It reached still farther. It passed in its onward career from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, till at last it comprehended and united the remotest regions of the earth.

Then came trades and professions. These led to art, art to science, and science to the highest degree of knowledge the human mind is capable of attaining. Men became great: greatness led to power,—power to rule and govern. The combining of all these elementary steps led to the creation of kings, emperors, and lords. Then followed the division of classes. The phases of human intellect harmonized the whole system of rule, and men acknowledged in time the one great axiom, that "Knowledge is power."

As language, writing, and writing-materials are all, more or less, connected with any subject identified with the welfare, the interest, and honor of a nation, as well as of mankind, they will not be considered out of place if alluded to here in connection with the subject of this work. First:—

Blair, in his introduction to his Lectures on Rhetoric, speaking of language, says:—“One of the most distinguished privileges which Providence has conferred upon mankind is the power of communicating their thoughts to one another. Destitute of this power, reason would be a solitary and, in some measure, an unavoidable principle. Speech is the great instrument by which man becomes beneficial to man; and it is to the intercourse and transmission of thought, by means of speech, that we are chiefly indebted for the improvement of thought itself.”

Tooke, in one of his admirable golden sentences, says:—“The first aim of language was to communicate our thoughts; the second, to do it with dispatch.”

“And all the worlde was of one tongue and one language.”—*Bible*, 1551, *Gen.* xi.

Language came into the world along with all things that had life. It was the voice of nature speaking through things animate, giving form and harmony to objects animate as well as inanimate; and all of which, as soon as created, God pronounced good.

Flowers had their language, and there was music in the spheres. Trees murmured through their deep forest-home long before the woodman’s axe stripped them of their mode of expressing their wild æolian sounds to each other. And there was language in waterfalls, mountain cataracts, as well as music in the sound, though expressed in thundertones; and, as the spirit of Deity passed over the earth, all living things found tongue, thought, expression, and the human voice syllabled the words and commands of its Maker. Language, therefore, is a divine institution.

Horace, Pliny, Juvenal, and others, held the opinion that it was a divine institution, and only reached its present state after a long and gradual improvement of the human family.

Many of the ancient philosophers and poets believed that men were originally “a dumb, low herd.”

“Mutum et turpe pecus.”

Lord Monboddo—who, in his work on “the Origin of Language,” labors to prove that man is but a higher species of monkey—thinks that originally the human race had only a few monosyllables, such as, “Ha, he, hi, ho,” by which, like beasts, they expressed certain emotions. Others, again, assert that the early races were in all things rude and savage, totally ignorant of the arts, unable to communicate with each other, except in the imperfect manner of beasts, and sensible of nothing save hunger, pain, and similar emotions. Cicero, alluding to the human race in primeval ages, says:—

“There was a time when men wandered everywhere through life after the manner of beasts, and supported themselves by eating the food of beasts. Fields and mountains, hills and dales were alike their homes.”

Rousseau represents men as originally without language, as unsocial by nature, and totally ignorant of the ties of society. He does not, however, seek to explain how language arose, being disheartened at the outset by the difficulty of deciding whether language was more necessary for the institution of society, or society for the invention of language.

Language is beyond doubt a divine institution, invented by Deity, and by him made known to the human race. If language was devised by man, the invention would not have been at once matured, but must have been the result of the necessities and experience of successive generations. Adam and Eve, in the garden of Eden, spoke a language the purity of which continued until its final disruption at the building of the Tower of Babel.

What language is more beautiful and expressive than that of the Hebrew? It is the language of Deity, and it pleased our Lord Jesus to make use of it when he spake from heaven unto Paul.

There are said to be no less than 3425 known languages in use in the world, of which 937 are Asiatic, 588 European, 276 African, and 1624 American languages and dialects.

By calculation from the best dictionaries, for each of the following languages there are about 20,000 words in the Spanish, 22,000 in the English, 38,000 in the Latin, 30,000 in the French, 45,000 in the Italian, 50,000 in the Greek, and 80,000 in the German.

In the estimate of the number of words in the English language it includes, of course, not only the radical words, but also derivatives, except the preterites and participles of verbs; to which must be added some few terms which, though set down in the dictionaries, are either obsolete or have never ceased to be considered foreign. Of these about 23,000, or nearly five-eighths, are of Anglo-Saxon origin.

The alphabets of different nations contain the following number of letters:—English, 26; French, 23; Italian, 20; Spanish, 27; German, 26; Sclavonic, 27; Russian, 41; Latin, 22; Hebrew, 22; Greek, 24;[8] Arabic, 28; Persian, 32; Turkish, 33; Sanscrit, 50; Chinese, 214.

Anthony Brewer (1617) thus characterized those best known:—

“The ancient Hebrew, clad with mysteries;
The learned Greek, rich in fit epithets,
Blest in the lovely marriage of pure words;
The Chaldean wise; the Arabian physical;
The Roman eloquent; the Tuscan grave;
The braving Spanish, and the smooth-tong’d
French.”

The Hebrew language and letters are derived from the Phœnician, since Tyre, Sidon, &c. were distinguished cities in the age of Moses and Joshua. Even Abraham lived in their territory.

Sanscrit is the basis of Hindoo learning, and said to be the first character.

The most ancient Arabic, called Kufick, so named from Kufa, on the Euphrates, and is not now in use. The modern Arabic was invented by the Vizier Moluch, A.D. 933, in which he wrote the Koran.

Armenian is used in Armenia, Asia Minor, Syria, Tartary, &c. It approaches the Chaldean or Syriac, and the Greek.

Chaldean, Phœnician, or Syriac, ascribed to Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Moses, is the same as the Hebrew.

The Coptic is an alphabet so called from Coptos in Egypt,—a mixture of Greek and Egyptian.

Ethiopic, or Abyssinian, is derived from the Samaritan, or Phœnician.

The Etruscan was the first alphabet used in Italy, and so called from the Etrusci, the most ancient inhabitants.

Gothic: the most ancient characters under this name are attributed to Bishop Ulphilas.

Cadmus, the Phœnician, introduced the first Greek alphabet into Bœotia, where he settled in B.C. 1500; though Diodorus says the Pelasgian letters were prior to the Cadmean.

The Greeks called the Phœnicians *Pelasgü quasi Pelagi*, because they traversed the ocean and carried on commerce with other nations.

Scaliger supposes the Phœnician to have been the original Hebrew character, otherwise the Samaritan,—which is generally supposed to be that which was used by the Jews from the time of Moses to the Captivity.

The alphabet of the Sanscrit is called the devanagari.

The Oriental alphabets are the Hebrew, ancient and modern; Rabbinical; Samaritan, ancient and modern; Phœnician; Egyptian hieroglyphic; Chinese characters.

The Irish alphabet is the Phœnician.

III.

Origin of the Materials of Writing, Tablets, etc.

The art of writing is very ancient. Its origin is actually lost in the distance of time. From one point, however,—this side of the gulf of lost ages, in which high art perished, and with it the key to all its antediluvian greatness,—we date our history.

The Bible gives us the earliest notice on the subject that is anywhere to be found. The most ancient mode of writing was on *cinders*, on bricks, and on *tables of stone*; afterwards on *plates* of various materials, on *ivory* and similar articles. One of the earliest methods was to cut out the letters on a tablet of stone. Moses, we are told, received the two tables of the Covenant on Mount Sinai, written with the finger of God; and before that, Moses himself was not ignorant of the use of letters.[9] [Exodus xxiv. 4; xvii. 14.] A learned writer says:—"In Genesis v. 1, 'This is the book of the generations of Adam,' reference is made to the book of genealogy; whence it irresistibly follows that writing must have been in use among the antediluvian patriarchs; and, under the view that writing was a divine revelation, the same almighty power that, according to the preceding proposition, instructed Moses, could have equally vouchsafed a similar inspiration to any patriarch from Adam to Noah. Nor does it seem consistent with the merciful dispensation which preserved Noah's family through the grand cataclysm, and had condescended, according to the biblical record, to teach him those multitudinous arts indispensably necessary to the construction of a vessel destined to pass uninjured through the tempests of the Deluge, that the Almighty, by withholding the art of writing, should have left the account of antediluvian events to the vicissitudes of oral tradition, or denied to Noah's family the practice of this art, which, it is maintained, was conceded first to Moses."

It is said that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." The five books of Moses carry with them internal evidence, not of one sole, connected, and original composition, but of a *compilation* by an inspired writer from earlier annals. The genealogical tables and family records of various tribes that are found embodied in the Pentateuch, bear the appearance of documents copied from written archives. We have the authority of Genesis v. 1 for asserting the existence of a book of genealogies in the time of Noah; and a city mentioned by Joshua was named in Hebrew "Kirjath Sefer," "The City of Letters." It is impossible to prove that letters were unknown before Moses; and the Hebrews of his day appear to have had two distinct modes of writing the characters of which, in one case, were "*alphabetic*," and in the other "*symbolic*." The inscription on the ephod itself is said—Exodus xxviii. 36—to have been written in characters "like the engravings of a signet."

The materials and instruments with which writing was performed were, in comparison with our pen, ink, and paper, extremely rude and unwieldy. One of the earliest methods was to cut out the letters on a tablet of stone. Another was to trace them on unbaked tiles, or bricks, which were afterwards thoroughly baked or burned with fire. When the writing was wanted to be more durable, lead or brass was employed. In the book of Job, mention is made of writing on stone. It was on tablets of stone that Moses received the law written by the finger of God himself. Tablets of wood were frequently used as being more convenient. Such was the writing-table which Zacharias used. [Luke i. 63.] Cedar was preferred as being more incorruptible; from this custom arose the celebrated saying of the ancients, when they meant to give the highest eulogium of an excellent work, *et cedro digna locuti*,—that it was worthy to be written on cedar. These tablets were made of the trunks of trees. The same reason which led them to prefer the cedar to other trees, induced them to write on wax, which is incorruptible. Men used it to write their testaments, in order better to preserve them. Thus, Juvenal says, *cereus implere capaces*. The leaves and, at other times, the bark of different trees were early used for writing. From the thin films of bark peeled off from the Egyptian reed papyrus which grew along the Nile, a material was formed in latter times answering the purpose much better. It bore the name of the reed, papyrus, or, in our language, paper. Long afterwards its name passed to a different material, composed of linen or cotton, which has taken place of all others in the use of civilized countries, and is called to this day paper. Paper made of cotton was in use in 1001; that of linen rags in 1319.[10]

"*The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, ... shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.*"—Isaiah xix. 7.

Pliny, speaking of the papyrus, says:—

"Before we depart out of Egypt, we must not forget the plant *papyrus*, but describe the nature thereof, considering that all civilitie of life, the memoriall, and immortalitie also of men after death consisteth especially in *paper* which is made thereof. M. Varro writeth that the first invention of making paper was devised upon the conquest of Ægypt, achieved by Alexander the Great, at what time as he founded the city of Alexandria in Ægypt, where such paper was first made."—*Holland*, *Plinie*, b. xiii. c. 21.

We have alluded to the barks of trees being used. The thin peel which is found between the second skin of a tree was called *liber*,—from whence the Latin word, *liber*, a book; and we have derived the name of library and librarian in the European language, and in the French their *livre* for book.

The instruments employed by the ancients for making the letters on their tablets was a small, pointed piece of iron, or some other hard substance, called by the Romans a *style*: hence a man's manner of composition was figuratively called his *style* of writing. The use of the word still continues, though the instrument has long since passed away.

Style derives its name from *stylus*, Latin, as also from a Greek word, *columna*, an instrument with a point.

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Reeds formed into pens were used to trace the letters with ink of some sort after the fashion that is now common; or else they were painted with a small brush, as was probably the general custom at first. Pens made of quills were not in use until the fifth century. The oldest certain account of writing with quills is a passage of Isidore, who died in 636, and who, among the instruments of writing, mentions "reeds and feathers." In the same century a small poem was written on a pen, which is to be found in the works of Althelmus. He died in 709.

We annex the following as giving a poetical original of the pen:—

"Love begg'd and pray'd old Time to stay
While he and Psyche toyed together;
Love held his wings: Time tore away,
But in the scuffle dropp'd a feather.
Love seized the prize, and with his dart
Adroitly work'd to trim and shape it,
O Psyche, though 'tis pain to part,
This charm shall make us half escape it.
Time need not fear to fly too slow
When he this useful loss discovers,
A pen's the only plume I know
That wings her pace for absent lovers."

PENCILS.

The ancients drew their lines with leaden styles; afterwards a mixture of tin and lead fused together was used. The mineral known under the name of plumbago is supposed to have been first employed for the purpose of drawing in the fifteenth century. In 1565, an old author notes that people had pencils for writing which consisted of a wooden handle, in which was a piece of lead; and a drawing is given of the pencil as an object of curiosity. They continued to be uncommon for upwards of a century, when we hear them spoken of being enclosed in pine or cedar.

THE SCRIBE.

“Scribe was a name which, among the Jews, was applied to two sorts of officers. 1. To a civil: and so it signifies a notary, or, in a large sense, any one employed to draw up deeds and writings. 2. This name signifies a church officer, one skillful and conversant in the law to interpret and explain it.”—*South.* vol. iv. ser. 1.

The word *scribe* is derived from the Latin, *scribere*, which has the same meaning as “schrabben” (Dutch), to scrape or draw a style, or pen, over the surface of paper or parchment.

The name, however, was given to such as excelled in the use of the pen, and who were likewise distinguished in other branches of knowledge. It came in time to mean simply a learned man; and, as the chief part of learning among the Jews was concerned with the sacred books of Scripture, the word signified especially one “who was *skilled in the law of God*”—one whose business it was, not merely to provide correct copies of its volume, but also to explain its meaning. Thus, Ezra is called “a ready scribe of the law of Moses.”—Ezra vii. 6.

Before the introduction of types, books were written generally upon skins, linen, cotton-cloth, or papyrus: parchment in later times was most esteemed. The business of the scribes was to make duplicate copies of these books, which, when completed, the leaves were pinned together so as to make a single long sheet. This was then rolled round a stick: hence books of every description or size were called “rolls;” our word volume means just the same thing in its original signification.

“*Volumed in rolling masses.*”

In the time of our Saviour the scribes formed quite a considerable class in society. Many of them belonged to the sanhedrim, or chief council, and are therefore frequently mentioned in the New Testament with the elders and chief priests.—See Luke v. 17, x. 25; Matthew xxiii. 2; Matthew ii. 4, also xiii. 52; and Mark xii. 35.

The ink used by the ancients appears to have been what is termed in art a “body color,” or a more solid medium than is at present used, and similar to what is used by the modern Chinese.

Subsequently, lamp-black, or the black taken from burnt ivory, and soot from furnaces and baths, according to Pliny and others, formed the basis of the ink used by old writers.

It has also been conjectured that the black liquor of the scuttle-fish was frequently employed.[11] Of whatever ingredients it was made, it is certain, from chemical analysis, from the blackness and solidity in the most ancient manuscripts, and from inkstands found at Herculaneum, in which the ink appears like thick oil, that the ink then made was much more opaque, as well as encaustic, than what is used at present. Inks red, purple, and blue, and also gold and silver inks were much used; the red was made from vermilion, cinnabar, and carmine; the purple from the *murex*, one sort of which, named the purple encaustic, was set apart for the sole use of the emperors. Golden ink was used by the Greeks much more than by the Romans. The manufacture of both gold and silver ink was an extensive and lucrative business in the Middle Ages. Another distinct business was that of inscribing the titles, capitals, as well as emphatic words, in colored and gold and silver inks.

The ink-horns were sometimes made of lead, sometimes of silver, and were generally polygonal in their form.

The remote antiquity of hieroglyphical writing may be inferred from the fact that it must have existed before the use of the *solar* month in Egypt,—"which," says Gliddon, "astronomical observations on Egyptian records prove to have been in use at an epoch close up to the Septuagint era of the Flood." From Egyptian annals we may glean some faint confirmation of the view that they either possessed the *primeval* alphabet, or else they rediscovered its equivalent from the mystic functions and attributes of the "two Thoths,"—the first and second Hermes, both Egyptian mythological personages, deified as attributes of the Godhead.

To "Thoth," Mercury, or the first Hermes, the Egyptians ascribed the invention of *letters*.

The first attempts of "picture-writing" were to imitate certain images, each representing a word or letter. Drawing, therefore, was the most natural medium; and the study of representing things pictorially became popular and the only mode of communication.

The true origin of alphabetical writing has never been traced; but that of the Egyptians has been proved by the Comte de Caylus to be formed, as stated above, of hieroglyphical marks, adopted with no great variations. "We find," says Warburton, "no appearance of alphabetical writing or characters on their public monuments."

This, however true at the time he wrote, cannot now be asserted; since the celebrated Rosetta stone, in the British Museum, is engraved with three distinct sets of characters,—Greek, Egyptian, and a third resembling what are called hieroglyphics. The only doubt that can be entertained is, whether these are strictly hieroglyphics,—that is, representations of things,—or rather an alphabetical character peculiar to the priesthood, and called hierogrammatics. 1. The existence of this sacred alphabet is attested by Herodotus, Diodorus, and several other writers. 2. It went occasionally under the name of hieroglyphic, as appears not only by the passage quoted above from Manetho, if we do not alter the text, but from one in Porphyry, which may be found in Warburton. 3. It was, however, considered as perfectly distinct from the genuine hieroglyphic, which was always understood to denote things, either by mere picture-writing, or, more commonly, by very refined allegory. 4. Works of a popular and civil nature were written in this character, as we learn from Clement of Alexandria; whereas the genuine hieroglyphic was exceedingly secret and mysterious, and the knowledge of it confined to the priesthood. 5. The inscription upon the Rosetta stone is said, in the terms of the decree contained in it, to be written in the sacred, national, and Greek characters. 6. It could not be a mysterious character, such as the genuine hieroglyphic seems to have been, because it was exposed to public view with a double translation. 7. It occupies a considerable space upon the stone, although an indefinite part of it is broken off; although the real hieroglyphic, as is natural to emblematic writing, appears to have been exceedingly compendious. 8. The characters do not appear to be very numerous, as they recur in various combinations of three, four, or more, as might be expected from the letters of an alphabet. But this argument we do not strongly press, because our examination has not been very long. It appears to hold out a decisive test, and we offer it as such to the ingenuity of antiquaries.

Upon these grounds we think that the characters upon the Rosetta stone, which are commonly denominated hieroglyphics, are in fact the original alphabetic characters of the Egyptians, from which the others have probably been derived by a gradual corruption through haste in writing. They are, however, in one sense, hieroglyphics, being tolerably accurate delineations of men, animals, and instruments. If we are right in our conjectures, the value of the Rosetta stone is incomparably greater than has been imagined. We have no need of hieroglyphics: Roman and Egyptian monuments are full of them. But a primitive alphabet, probably the earliest ever formed in the world, and illustrating an important link in the history of writing,—the adaptation of signs to words,—is certainly a discovery very interesting to any philosophical mind. Through what steps the analysis of articulate sound into its constituent parts was completed—if we can say that it ever has been completed—so as to establish distinct marks for each of them, and whether these marks were taken at random, or from some supposed analogy between the simple sounds they were brought to represent and their primary hieroglyphical meaning, are questions which stand in need of solution.[12]

The Rosetta stone is the only one yet discovered, being no doubt the *pioneer* to many more that may yet be unearthed. The importance of this stone—its inscription indicating the probability of its supplying a key to the deciphering of the long-lost meanings of Egyptian hieroglyphics—"was immediately," says Gliddon, in his Lectures on Ancient Egypt, "perceived by the learned, who in vain endeavored to trace the analogy between symbolical and alphabetical writing. Its arrival in London excited the liveliest interest in all those who had devoted themselves to Egyptian archæology; and the attention of the greatest scholars of the age was directed to its critical investigation." (See Gliddon's work on Ancient Egypt.)

Any one who will examine the hieroglyphical alphabet closely will discover a most extraordinary coincidence in that of the symbolical writing of our North American Indians, specimens of which are in the museum at Washington City. A war despatch, giving an account of one of their expeditions, has the same emblematical figures as has that of the Egyptians as used 1550 B.C.

There are also among other tribes many remarkable similarities, and analogous with Egyptian symbolical writings, which strengthen the supposition that the Indians of North America are one of the lost tribes of Israel. Nor is it alone the mere words which these signs and figures convey, but certain traits of character in their habits and customs as compared with the ancients.—(See

Isaiah xi. 11-15.)

The Indians have a tradition among them to this effect: “*that nine parts of their nation out of ten passed over a great river*.” They also have traditions of the “Flood,” “a good book,” “Tower of Babel,” “dispersion of the Jews,” and the “confounding of language.” It is related by Father Charlevoix, the French historian, that the Hurons and Iroquois in their early day had a tradition among them that the first woman came from heaven and had twins, and that the elder killed the younger. In 1641 an old Indian woman stated that this tradition among her tribe was that the Great Spirit had killed his brother. This is evidently a confusion of the story of Cain and Abel. Still, the tradition is remarkable from the fact that this, as well as the others alluded to, existed long before the discovery of this continent.

The Ottawas say that there are two great beings who rule and govern the universe, and who are at war with each other. The one they call “*Mameto*,” the other “Matchemaneto.” There is a wonderful, or rather, we should say, a remarkable, resemblance between the language of the Creek Indians with that of the ancient Hebrew; for instance: “Y He Howa” means Jehovah; “Halleluwah,” hallelujah; “Abba,” in Creek, has the same meaning as “Abba” in Hebrew; “Kesh,” kesh; “Abe,” Abel; “Kenaaj,” Canaan; “Awah,” Eve, or Eweh; “Korah,” Cora; “Jennois,” Jannon, both literally meaning, “He shall be called a son.” There is more in these similarities than can be attributed to mere chance.

Any one at all familiar with hieroglyphical writing need only to examine the Indian characters upon buffalo and other skins received in trade from the Indians to trace, as it were, a distinct line from that most ancient school of designing figures to suit expression and language, down to these tribes, who may well be called the descendants of the “remnant of” God’s people, who were scattered over the lands of Egypt and the “islands of the sea,” in the time of Isaiah.

In the Ambrosian Library at Milan there are to be seen Mexican hieroglyphics, painted in Mexico upon buck-leather, and were presented to the Emperor Charles V. by Ferdinand Cortez. These hieroglyphics are now as little understood as are those of Egypt, although both are now gradually yielding to the mind’s influence in their development. Impressions of these were taken on copper from fac-similes in the possession of Humboldt.

Perhaps the first real step made into the hieroglyphical arcana may be dated from 1797, when the learned Dane, George Zoega, published at Rome his folio “De Origine et Usa Obeliscorum,” explanatory of the Egyptian Obelisks.—(*G. R. Gliddon.*)

One of the most remarkable passages in Holy Writ is that which speaks of the confounding of language. “And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language. Let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of the earth, and they left off to build the city.”

The name of it was called “Babel” (confusion), from the Hebrew. The consequence of this eternal fiat, which went forth like a flash of lightning, was, that the people became as strangers to each other, and spoke a language wild and chaotic. Gesticulation took the place of words; and hence their punishment for daring to contest power with their Creator.

The building of the Tower of Babel was an act of Nimrod’s, who “esteemed it a piece of cowardice to submit to God;” and he urged the people on to build this tower, saying, *He would be revenged on God* if he should ever have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build it so high the waters could not reach it. The place wherein they built the tower is now called Babylon. From this date may be ascribed the history of languages. It is supposed, however, that Noah and other pious persons, chiefly the descendants of Shem in the line of Eber, not being concerned in this project, retained the *original* language. Now, if this was, as it is highly probable, the Hebrew, we may conclude it was thus called from Eber, to whose descendants it was peculiar; and perhaps this is the most satisfactory reason that can be assigned why Abraham is called the Hebrew and his posterity Hebrews.

It was not, however, the mere confusion of tongues which rendered the people incapable of conversing one with another, but it was the extraordinary miracle connected with it of the *mind’s confusion*. Incapable, therefore, of bringing their original language back to its former use, they invented new languages, new phrases; and thus in time every great nation had its own language. The dividing of languages was therefore the dividing of nations. The precise number of original languages then heard for the first time cannot be determined. The Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Teutonic, Sclavonian, Tartarian, and Chinese languages are considered to be original: the rest are only dialects from them.

History is silent on the early data of the building of the Tower of Babel; nor is one of its builders’ names mentioned, except the somewhat obscure intimation respecting Nimrod.[13]

Babylon subsequently became the head-quarters of idolatry, and the type of the “mystical Babylon,” the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.

The glory of Babylon departed. Its walls of sixty miles in circumference, eighty-seven feet thick and three hundred and fifty feet high, built of brick and containing twenty-five gates of solid brass and two hundred and fifty towers, are now the wonder of men who gaze upon the *debris* of “splendor in ruins.”

The ruins of “Birs Nimrod,” on an elevated mount, are supposed to be the Tower of Babel of the sacred Scriptures, and the temple of Belus, so minutely described by Herodotus. The base of this tower measures two thousand and eighty-two feet in circumference. Babylon was in its glory in the time of Nebuchadnezzar. It was besieged and taken by Cyrus B.C. 538, and afterwards by Alexander the Great.

IV.

Messengers, Carriers, etc.

"The eye is a good messenger,
Which can to the heart in such manner
Tidings send as can ease it of its pain."
Chaucer.

There are so many beautiful passages both in sacred and profane history alluding to messengers, in connection with our subject, that there is no doubt but as civilization progressed the word and its meaning laid the foundation for the many improvements which are to be found in our present postal system,—a system which now connects all nations together by a *letter-line mode* of communication.

There is a beautiful passage in Holy Writ from which, figuratively, we date the origin of *first carrier or messenger*: it is that of the dove that went forth from the ark. "And the dove came in to him in the evening, and, lo, in her mouth *was* an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth."

THE RETURN OF THE DOVE.

"There was hope in the ark at the dawning of day,
When o'er the wide waters the dove flew away;
But when ere the night she came wearily back
With the leaf she had pluck'd on her desolate track,
The children of Noah knelt down and adored,
And utter'd in anthems their praise to the Lord.
Oh, bird of glad tidings! oh, joy in our pain!
Beautiful Dove, thou art welcome again."
Mackay.

The name of messenger is derived from the Latin word *missaticum*, and this from *missus*, one sent. The old French *mes* was applied both to the *message* and the *messager*.

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"*But eare* he thus had say'd,
With flying speede and seeming great pretence,
Came running in, much like a man dismay'd,
A *messenger* with letters, which his *message* say'd."
Spenser.

Gower, the poet of the fourteenth century, says:—

"*The raynbow is hir messagere.*"

Angels are called "winged messengers."

"The angels are still dispatched by God upon all his great *messages* to the world, and, therefore, their very name in Greek signifies a *messenger*."—*South*, vol. viii. ser. 3.

Milton also thus beautifully alludes to the angel messengers:—

"For will deign
To visit the dwellings of just men
Delighted, and with frequent intercourse
Thither will send her winged *messengers*
On errands of supernal grace."

Carriers, in connection with letters, are modern appendages to the post-office, and now form one of its most important branches. They are indeed welcome messengers.

"The very carrier that comes from him to her is a most welcome guest; and if he bring a letter she will read it twenty times over."—*Burton.*

The first mention we find made of the employment of pigeons as letter-carriers is by Ovid, in his "Metamorphoses," who tells us that Taurosthenes, by a pigeon stained with purple, gave notice of his having been victor at the Olympic Games on the very same day to his father at Ægina.

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Goldsmith, in his "Animated Nature," says:—"It is from their attachment to their native place, and particularly where they have brought up their young, that these birds (pigeons) are employed in several countries as the most expeditious carriers."

When the city of Ptolemais, in Syria, was invested by the French and Venetians, and it was ready to fall into their hands, they observed a pigeon flying over them, and immediately conjectured that it was charged with letters to the garrison. On this the whole army raising a loud shout, so confounded the poor aerial post that it fell to the ground; and, on being seized, a letter was found under its wings from its Sultan, in which he assured the garrison that "he would be with them in three days with an army sufficient to raise the siege." For this letter the besiegers substituted another to this purpose: "that the garrison must see to their own safety; for the Sultan had such other affairs pressing him it was impossible for him to come to their succor;" and with this false intelligence they let the pigeon flee on his course. The garrison, deprived by this decree of all hopes of relief, immediately surrendered. The Sultan appeared on the third day, as promised, with a powerful army, and was not a little mortified to find the city already in the hands of the Christians.

In the East the employment of pigeons in the conveyance of letters is still very common, particularly in Syria, Arabia, and Egypt. Every bashaw has generally a basketful of them sent him from the grand seraglio, where they are bred, and, in case of any insurrection or other emergency, he is enabled, by letting loose two or more of these extraordinary messengers, to convey intelligence to the government long before it could be possibly obtained by other means.

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The diligence and speed with which these feathered messengers wing their course is extraordinary. From the instant of their liberation their flight is directed through the clouds at an immense height to the place of their destination. They are believed to dart onward in a straight line, and never descend except when at a loss for breath; and then they are to be seen commonly at dawn of day lying on their backs on the ground, with their bills open, sucking with hasty avidity the dew of the morning. Of their speed the instances related are almost incredible.

The Consul of Alexandria daily sends despatches by these means to Aleppo in five hours, though couriers occupy the whole day, and proceed with the utmost expedition from one town to the other.

Some years ago a gentleman sent a carrier-pigeon from London, by the stage-coach, to his friend in St. Edmundsbury, together with a note desiring that the pigeon, two days after their arrival there, might be thrown up precisely when the town-clock struck nine in the morning. This was done accordingly, and the pigeon arrived in London and flew to the Bull Inn, Bishopsgate Street, into the loft, and was there shown at half an hour past eleven o'clock, having flown seventy-two miles in two hours and a half.

Carrier pigeons were again employed, but with better success, at the siege of Leyden, in 1675. The garrison were, by means of the information thus conveyed to them, induced to stand out till the enemy, despairing of reducing the place, withdrew. On the siege being raised, the Prince of Orange ordered that the pigeons which had rendered such essential service should be maintained at the public expense, and at their death they should be embalmed and preserved in the town-house as a perpetual token of gratitude.

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At Antwerp, in 1819, one of the thirty-two pigeons belonging to that city, which had been conveyed to London and there let loose, made the transit back—being a distance in a direct line of one hundred and eighty miles—in six hours.

It is through the attachment of the animals to the place of their birth, and particularly to the spot where they had brought up their young, that they are thus rendered useful to mankind.

When a young one flies very hard at home, and is come to its full strength, it is carried in a basket or otherwise about half a mile from home and there turned out; after this it is carried a mile, two, four, eight, ten, twenty, &c., till at length it will return from the furthermost parts of the country.

The word *letter* is derived from the Latin “*litera*,” of which Vossius has not decided its etymology,—perhaps, from *litum*, past participle of *linere*, to smear, as one of the oldest modes of writing was by graving the characters upon tablets smeared over or covered with wax. From this word comes that of *letters*; and, as they are more immediately connected with our subject, we incline to the opinion of Pliny that the word *linere*, to smear, is by far the most truthful definition. In this respect—that of “smearing”—it has lost nothing of its original character, if we were to judge from the appearance of many letters daily passing through the post-office.

“Smeared o’er with wax” would not cause any great surprise to a modern post-office clerk if a letter presented itself with this only on it; but when in addition he could scarcely read the name through the mists of blotted ink and bad spelling, we venture to say he would endorse Pliny’s opinion, above that of all others, without the least hesitation.

An Oriental scholar, speaking upon the subject of writing as connected with the ancients, makes use of this language:—“The origin of the art of writing loses itself among the nebulous periods of man’s primeval history. With the original ethnographic varieties of the human species, the primitive distribution of mankind, the patriarchal fountains of a once-pure religion, and the earliest sources of the diversity of language, must be associated the first developments of this art which, from the remotest periods, has enabled man to record his history, and to overcome space and time in the transmission of his thoughts.”

Symbolical or hieroglyphic writing is also very ancient. It was the ancient style of writing among the Egyptians. They were also termed “sacred sculptured characters,” which was the original or, rather, monumental method. The hieratic or sacerdotal was used by the scribes and priests in literary pursuits prior to 1500 B.C.

There is a beautiful conceit of Lord Bacon’s,—“*Literæ Vocales*” (vocal letters), the designation given by that philosopher to the popular lawyers of the House of Commons in the reign of James I., meaning those lawyers who were bold enough to speak their minds and to stand up for the rights of their constituents.

Words, however, will pass away and be forgotten; but that which is committed to writing will remain as evidence; for then you have them in “black and white.”

“Litera scripta manet.”

Jezebel, it seems, was the first—or, at least, we believe the first—that is mentioned in the Bible as a letter-writer: “So she wrote letters in Ahab’s name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth.”—1 Kings xxi. 8.

For fear a wrong construction should be put upon this act of Jezebel, and the cause of letters affected thereby, it may be well to state that she was allowed to do so by him, and that his name and seal were to be used as she pleased. She, however, used both for a bad purpose: hence the name of Jezebel is synonymous with deceit and treachery.

Letter-writing is also alluded to in Nehemiah ii. 7: “Moreover I said unto, the king, If it please the king, let *letters* be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah.” Also, in Esther i. 22: “For he sent letters into all the king’s provinces, into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, that every man should bear rule in his own house; and that it should be published according to the language of every people.”

Hiram, King of Tyre, when he heard that Solomon succeeded to his father’s kingdom, was very glad of it; for he was a friend of David’s . So he sent ambassadors to him, and saluted him, and congratulated him on the present happy state of his affairs. Upon which, Solomon sent an epistle, the contents of which here follow:—

“Know thou that my father would have built a temple to God, but was hindered by wars and continual expeditions; for he did not leave off to overthrow his enemies till he made them all subject to tribute. But I give thanks to God for the peace I at present enjoy, and on that account I am at leisure and design to build a house to God; for God foretold to my father that such a house should be built by me. Wherefore I desire thee to send some of thy subjects with mine to Mount Lebanon, to cut down timber; for the Sidonians are more skillful than our people in cutting of wood. As for wages to the hewers of wood, I will pay whatsoever thou shalt determine.”

When Hiram had read this epistle he was pleased with it, and wrote back this answer:—

"It is fit to bless God that he hath committed thy father's government to thee, who art a wise man and endowed with all virtues. As for myself, I rejoice at the condition thou art in, and will be subservient to thee in all that thou sendest to me about; for when by my subjects I have cut down many trees of cedar and cypress wood, I will send them to sea, and will order my subjects to make floats of them, and to sail to what place soever of thy country thou shalt desire, and leave them there; after which, thy subjects may carry them to Jerusalem. But do thou take care to procure us corn for this timber, which we stand in need of because we inhabit an island."[14]

Josephus says:—"The copies of these epistles remain at this day, and are preserved not only in our books, but among the Tyrians also." They were at that period among the records in the city of Tyre. Other epistles are also there recorded, among which were those written by Xerxes, King of the Persians, to Ezra; Artaxerxes to the Government of Judea; Antiochus the Great to Ptolemy Epiphanes; and of the Samaritans to Antiochus, Alexander Balas to Jonathan, Onias to Ptolemy and Cleopatra, and many others.[15]

V.

Post-Offices—England.

The history of the English post-office affords but little interest to the general reader beyond that which its statistics and geographical calculations afford. It is, however, a history that goes hand in hand with its trade and commerce; and whatever improvements have been made upon its past history are owing altogether to the enterprise of those who are identified with those branches of the world’s great business.

It is not the statesman or the politician who originates, but the mechanic, the farmer, and the merchant. The former are the aristocrats of society; the latter, the workers—the very bone and sinew of a government.

It is to the farmer, the artisan, and the merchant that art and science are indebted to their position among the most brilliant things of earth. It is to them that commerce owes wings to fly to the remotest parts of the civilized world, laden with the handiwork of art and the richness of a nation’s growth. Society becomes more dignified, man more ennobled. It is to this power that kings, emperors, and lords owe their positions; for one word from that class will bring the loftiest head to the block, if by word or action the attempt should be made to lessen or destroy that power which elevated him or them to eminence.

The commercial power of England is its rule, and to it that nation owes all its present greatness. The politics of England is its disgrace; its commerce, its honor. The king and Parliament are at the head of the one,—the hewers of wood and drawers of water at that of the other.

We have already alluded to the postal system organized by the Emperor Charlemagne in the year 807. Yet in China posts had existed from the earliest times. These were called *Jambs*, and were established at a distance from each other of twenty-five miles. This mode of conveying letters was by horses; and it is stated by Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller, that there were frequently as many as three or four hundred horses in waiting at one of these places. He also states that there were ten thousand stations of this kind in China, some of them affording sumptuous accommodation to travellers. Two hundred thousand horses are said to have been engaged in the service.

Louis XI. first established post-houses in France. Post-horses and stages were first introduced into England in 1483.

The mounted posts in France were stationed at distances of four miles apart, and were required to be ready day and night to carry government messages as rapidly as possible. Private correspondence, however, was carried on very differently. The students of a university in Paris established a postal institution in the eleventh century. A number of pedestrian messengers were employed, who bore letters from its thousands of students to the various countries of Europe from which they came, and brought to them the money they needed for the prosecution of their studies.

The great development of commerce following the Crusades, and the geographical discoveries of the Italians, Portuguese, and Spaniards, created a necessity for a more extended business-correspondence about the beginning of the sixteenth century.

In Peru, in 1527, the Spanish invaders found a regular system of posts in operation along the great highway from Quito to Cuzco, and messages as to the progress of the invasion, as well as on other subjects, were forwarded to the Inca by fleet-footed runners, who wound around their waists the *quipu*, a species of sign-writing, by means of knotted cord.

In Sierra Leone they have what is termed the “Kaffir letter-carrier,” who immediately on the arrival of a vessel takes charge of the letters; and, although it should be late at night, he starts on his mission into the settlement, and actually arouses the sleepers with his cry of, “Ah, massa, here de right book come at last!” The Kaffir carries his letters in a split stick, which he thrusts under your very nose as he approaches with his welcome document. He is one of those rare letter-carriers who never tires, nor complains of making too many trips a day.

The regular riding-post system owes its origin to Edward IV. This answered not only the demands of the government, but those of merchants, traders, and others. The former had, however, what were termed “government messengers,” whose business was more particularly to summon the barons, sheriffs, and other officers. Heralds are not to be confounded with these messengers, as they were more identified with the military than with the civil power.

In the reign of Henry I. messengers were first permanently employed by the king

> “Messengers he sent throughout England.”

In the reign of King John, messengers were called the “nuncii:” subsequently they became attached to the royal palace, and wore the king’s livery, as in the reign of Henry III. Several private letters are in existence, dating as far back as the reign of Edward II., which bear the appearance of having been carried by the nuncii of that period, with “Haste, poste, haste!” written on the back.

Little or no improvement was made in England in the postal system until about the end of Queen

Elizabeth's reign. Even then it simply corrected some of the abuses of the old system, by establishing what was called "Master of the Postes."

Some idea may be formed of the limited character of this department of her majesty's service, when we state that before her death the expenses of the post did not exceed £5000 per annum. Previous to this estimate, however, the expenses were considerably larger, owing to the careless manner, as well as the extravagance, of those having charge of it.

The reign of Elizabeth was more distinguished for its number of great men in the world of letters than for almost any other characteristic feature. The names of these have been handed down to us, identified with literature in all its various branches,—statesmen, warriors, divines, scholars, poets, and philosophers. Among them we find the names of Raleigh, Drake, Coke, Hooker, and others of higher sounding and more frequently quoted,—Shakspeare, Sidney, Bacon, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher,—men "whose fame has been eternized in her long and lasting scroll, and who by their words and acts were benefactors of their country and ornaments of human nature."

Although an age of letters, the commercial interest was not neglected. Still, that attention was not paid to the merchant's demands for new laws and regulations which the increasing business demanded: hence there arose a difficulty in the postal system, which was more immediately identified with their interests.

In the early part of the queen's reign, disputes were frequent with the foreign merchants resident in London, with regard to the foreign post, which up to this reign they had been allowed to manage among themselves. In 1558, the queen's council of state issued a proclamation "for the redress of disorders in postes which conveye and bring to and out of the parts beyond the seas, pacquets of letters."

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This system—a system which the very spirit of trade should rise up against—was done away with, and the sole authority was given to the "Master of the Postes," who, therefore, took charge of the foreign office. The title of his office was changed, in consequence, to that of "Chief Postmaster." Thomas Randolph was the first Chief Postmaster in England.

It must be borne in mind that during all these periods of English history the "common people" held little or no communication with each other: hence their correspondence was very limited. Few of them could read or write. Palmers, nay, even wandering gipsies, were not unfrequently the "common people's" post. The former, particularly, were trusted with letters and packets for the "gentry."

Under the Stuarts a regular system of post was established, the benefits of which were to be shared by all who could find the means. Even then England was behind the other European nations in establishing a public letter-post. Still, it was a vast improvement on those of the preceding reigns.[16]

In 1632, Charles I. approved of William Frizell and Thomas Witherings, to whom the office had been assigned by Lord Stanhope under James I.

These two gentlemen, as the head of the post-department, gave general satisfaction, and tended much to satisfy those who had just reason to complain of the system as heretofore conducted.

1635.—Till this time there had been no certain and constant intercourse between England and Scotland.

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Thomas Witherings, his majesty's Postmaster of England for foreign parts, was now commanded "to settle one or two posts, to run day and night between Edinburg and London; to go thither and come back again in six days; and to take with them all such letters as shall be directed to any post-town on the same road; and the posts to be placed in several places out of the road, to run and bring and carry out of the said roads the letters as there shall be occasion, and to pay twopence for every single letter under fourscore miles; and if one hundred and forty miles, fourpence; and if above, then sixpence. The like rule the king is pleased to order to be observed to Westchester, Holyhead, and from thence to Ireland; and also to observe the like rule from London to Plymouth, Exeter, and other places in that road; the like from Oxford, Bristol, Colchester, Norwich, and other places. And the king doth command that no other messenger, foot-posts, shall take up, carry, receive, or deliver any letter or letters whatsoever, other than the messengers appointed by the said Thomas Witherings, except common known carriers or particular messengers to be sent on purpose with a letter to a friend."—*Rushworth*, vol. ii., p. 104.

It will be observed, by those who are acquainted with the business of the postal department, that the above forms the groundwork of that gigantic institution which, linking itself with those of other nations, encircles the whole civilized world.

After undergoing many and various changes, it became, under the Protectorate, a sort of convenience for Cromwell and his council, who, taking advantage of its immense power, made it subservient to the interests of the commonwealth. One of the peculiar features which it assumed under Cromwell's rule was that "it might be made the agent in discovering and preventing many wicked designs which have been and are daily contrived against the peace and welfare of this commonwealth, the intelligence whereof cannot well be communicated except by letters of escript."

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A system of espionage was thus established which no one having the interest of the nation and

people at heart could consistently subscribe to. But Cromwell's rule was based on fanaticism: hence those leading principles, the result of a long and *religious* study, and which made up the business character of England before he gained the right to rule, were all swallowed up in the vortex of his own created revolutions.

At the Restoration the system became adapted to the more enlightened intellect of the people, and various changes took place, which gave universal satisfaction. These were made in the reign of Charles II.

Two years before the death of this monarch the first penny post in England was established (1683).

This establishment was originated by one Murray, an upholsterer, and it was afterwards assigned to Mr. William Docwray, whose name long subsequently figured in post-office annals. The penny post was found to be a decided success. No sooner was this fact made apparent, than the Duke of York, on whom and his heirs male in perpetuity the entire revenue of the post-office had been settled by stat. 15 Car. II. c. 14, complained that this post was an infraction of his monopoly.

In 1685, Charles II. died, and, the Duke of York succeeding his brother, the revenues of the post-office reverted to the crown. Throughout the reign of James II. the receipts of the post-office went on increasing, though no great improvements were made in the administration. It was this bigoted king who commenced the practice of granting pensions out of the post-office revenues. The year after he ascended the throne he granted £4700 a year to Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland, one of his brother's many mistresses, to be paid out of the post-office receipts. It is a curious and disgraceful fact that this pension is still paid to the Duke of Grafton as her living representative. The Earl of Rochester was allowed a pension of £4000 a year from the same source. These pensions were paid during the reign of William and Mary, and the following pensions were added:—

Duke of Leeds	£3500
Duke of Schomberg	4000
Lord Keeper	2000
William Docwray, 1698	500

Among the post-office pensions granted in subsequent reigns, Queen Anne gave one, in 1707, to the Duke of Marlborough and his heirs of £5000. The heirs of the Duke of Schomberg were paid by the post-office till 1856, when about £20,000 were advanced to redeem a fourth part of the pension, the burden of the remaining part being then transferred to the Consolidated Fund. There was, it must be admitted, some semblance of reason in giving Docwray a pension, for he had claims as founder of the district post or the penny post; but he only held his pension for four years, losing both his emoluments and his office in 1698, when charges of gross mismanagement were brought against him. Some of the charges alleged are curious. It was stated that he stopped "under spetious pretences most parcells that are taken in, which is a great damage to tradesmen, by loosing their customers or spoiling their goods, and many times hazard the life of the patient when physick is sent by a doctor or apothecary."

Ten years after the removal of Docwray from his office, another rival to the government department sprung up, in the shape of a half-penny post. The scheme, established by a Mr. Povey, never had a fair trial.

The first act for establishing a general post-office in *all* her majesty's dominions was the 9th Anne, c. 10. This act, which remained long in force, was the foundation of all subsequent legislation. By its provisions a general post and letter office was established in London for Great Britain, Ireland, North America, the West Indies, or any other of her majesty's dominions, or any country or kingdom beyond the seas. To this end chief offices were established in Edinburgh, at Dublin, at New York, and in other convenient places in her majesty's colonies of America and the islands of the West Indies. The whole of these chief offices were to be under the control of an officer to be appointed by the queen by letters patent under the great seal, by the name and style of Her Majesty's Postmaster-General. The improvements introduced by this act increased the importance of the post-office and added to the available revenue of the country. For ten years no further steps were taken to develop the service; but in 1720, Ralph Allen, immortalized by Pope, appeared on the scene, and he was destined to be one of the great improvers of the establishment. Mr. Allen, who at this time was postmaster of Bath, and who from his position was aware of the defects of the system, proposed to the government to establish cross-posts between Exeter and Chester, going by way of Bristol, Gloucester, and Worcester, thus connecting the west of England with the Lancashire district. The Bath postmaster proposed a complete reconstruction of the cross-post system, guaranteeing improvement to the revenue and increased accommodation to the public. The Lords of the Treasury granted him a lease of the cross-posts for life, his engagement being to bear all the costs of the new service and to pay a fixed rental of £6000 per year. The contract was several times renewed to Allen, the government on each occasion stipulating that the service should be extended. In this wise, in 1764, the period of Allen's death, it was found that the cross-posts had extended to all parts of the country. Notwithstanding the losses he suffered through the dishonesty of country postmasters, Allen estimated the net profits of his contract at the sum of £10,000 annually: so that at the end of his official life he had made nearly half a million sterling. He bestowed a considerable part of his income in supporting needy men of letters. He was the friend of Fielding, of Pope, and Warburton. Fielding has drawn his character in the person of Allworthy, and Pope has celebrated

his benevolence in the well-known lines,—

> "Let humble Allen, with an awkward shame,
> Do good by stealth and blush to find it fame."

On Allen's death the cross-posts were brought under the control of the postmaster-general, and the success of the amalgamation was so complete that at the end of the first year profits to the amount of £20,000 were handed over to the crown. In subsequent years the proceeds continued to increase still more rapidly, so that when the by-letter office was abolished in 1799 they had reached the sum of £200,000 per annum.

In the time of George I. the whole London post-office establishment, which at present numbers several thousand officers of different grades, was worked, without counting letter-carriers, by a staff of thirty-two persons only.

The treasury warrants—warrants directed to the masters of packet service, towards 1701—franked, as Mr. Lewins observes, the strangest commodities. Among others, fifteen couple of hounds going to the King of the Romans, two maid-servants going as laundresses to my lord ambassador Methuen, Doctor Chrichton, carrying with him a case and divers necessaries, two bales of stockings for the use of the ambassador to the court of Portugal, and four flitches of bacon for Mr. Pennington, of Rotterdam. Nor were these the only abuses. So little precaution was used in the reigns of George I. and George II. that thousands of letters passed through the post-office with the forged signatures of members. Even in the early part of the reign of George III. it was related, in the investigation of 1763, that one man had in the course of five months counterfeited one thousand two hundred dozens of franks of different members of Parliament. In the year 1763 the worth of franked correspondence passing through the post-office was estimated at £170,000. In 1764, when George III. had been four years on the throne, it was enacted that no letter should pass franked through the post-office unless the whole address was in the M. P.'s handwriting with his signature attached. In 1784, frauds still continuing, it was ordered that franks should be dated, the month should be given in full, such letters to be put into the post on the day they were dated. From 1784 to the date of the penny postage, no further regulations were made as to the franked correspondence, the estimated value of which during these years was £80,000 annually.

It was fifteen years after the death of the kindly and benevolent Allen, the postmaster of Bath, that John Palmer, also of Bath, and one of the greatest of post-office reformers, rose into notice. Originally a brewer, Mr. Palmer was in 1784 the manager of the Bath and Bristol theatres. Having frequently to correspond with and travel to London, Mr. Palmer found that letters which left Bath on the Monday night were not delivered in London until the Wednesday afternoon or night, but that the stage-coach which left through the day on Monday arrived in London on the following morning. He pointed out to the authorities that commercial men and tradesmen, for safety and speed, sent their correspondence as parcels, robberies from carelessness and incompetence of post-office servants being then frequent. Mr. Palmer was ready with remedies for these countless defects. In 1783 he submitted his scheme to Mr. Pitt, who lent a ready ear. The officials, however, were first to be consulted; and they, as is their wont, made many and sweeping objections to changes which they represented not only to be impracticable and impossible, but dangerous to commerce and the revenue. Mr. Pitt, however, as Mr. M. D. Hill says in an article on the post-office, inherited his great father's contempt for impossibilities. He saw that Mr. Palmer's scheme would be as profitable as it was practicable, and he resolved that it should be adopted.

Mr. Palmer was installed at the post-office on the day of the change, under the title of Controller-General. It was arranged that his salary should be £1500 a year, together with a commission of two and a half per cent. upon any excess of revenue over £240,000. The rates of postage were now slightly raised; but, notwithstanding, the number of letters began most perceptibly to increase. Several of the principal towns, and notably Liverpool and York, petitioned the treasury for the new mail-coaches. But, though manifest success attended the introduction of the Palmer scheme, yet the authorities were determinedly opposed to the reformer, and he had to contend with them single-handed. In 1792, when his plans had been about eight years in operation and were beginning to exhibit elements of success, it was deemed desirable that Palmer should surrender his appointment. In consideration, however, of his valuable services, a pension of £3000 per annum was granted to him; but this sum fell far short of the emoluments which had been promised to him, and he memorialized the government, but without success. He protested against this treatment, and his son, General Palmer, member for Bath, frequently urged his father's claims before Parliament; but it was not until 1813, after a struggle of twenty years, that the House of Commons voted him a grant of £50,000. This great benefactor of his country died in 1818. In the first year of the introduction of his plans, the net revenue of the post-office was about £250,000. Twenty years afterwards, the proceeds had increased sixfold, to no less a sum than a million and a half,—an increase doubtless partly attributable to the increase of population, but mainly to the punctuality and security of the new arrangements. Mails not only travelled quicker, but Mr. Palmer augmented their number between the largest towns: three hundred and eighty towns, which had in the olden time but three deliveries a week, had in 1797 a daily delivery. The Edinburgh coach required less time by sixty hours to travel from London; and there was a corresponding reduction between towns at shorter distances. For many years after their introduction, not a single attempt was made to rob Palmer's mail-coaches, which were efficiently guarded.

In 1836 there were fifty four-horse mails in England, whereas forty years before there was not a third of the number. We remember the annual procession of the mail-coaches on the king’s birthday,—a gay spectacle, which Mr. Lewins is not old enough to remember. Coachmen and guards on that occasion donned a new red livery, and all the coachmen and most of the guards wore bouquets in their button-holes. In the year 1814 the business of the post-office had increased so greatly that better accommodation was sought than was afforded by the office then in Lombard Street. The first general post-office, opened in Cloak Lane, was removed from thence to the Black Swan, in Bishopsgate Street. After the fire of 1666 a general post-office was opened in Covent Garden; but it was soon removed to Lombard Street. In 1825 the government acquiesced in the views of the great majority of London residents, and St. Martin’s-le-Grand was chosen for the site of a new building, to be erected from the designs of Sir R. Smirke. 70

It was opened for business in September, 1829. From the date of the opening, improvements ceased to be pertinaciously resisted. It was not, however, till the late Duke of Richmond became the postmaster-general, in the ministry of the late Earl Grey, in 1830, that improvements were earnestly forwarded by the head of the department. The duke, a highly public-spirited and patriotic man, was indefatigable in the service of the department over which he was placed from 1830 to 1834. At first his grace refused to accept any remuneration for his services; but at length, in compliance with the strong representations of the treasury lords as to the objectionable nature of gratuitous services, “which must involve in many cases the sacrifice of private fortune to official station,” he consented to draw his salary from the date of the treasury minute already referred to. In 1834, Lord Grey’s postmaster-general submitted a list of improvements to the treasury lords, in which at least thirty substantial measures of reform were proposed. It was under this functionary that amalgamation of the Irish and Scotch offices with the English took place.

The railway for the first few years of its existence exerted but little influence on post-office arrangements. On the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester line, however, in 1830, the mails of the district were consigned to the new company for transmission. After railways had been in existence seven or eight years, their influence became paramount, and in 1838 and 1839 acts were passed to provide for the conveyance of mails by them.

It was in 1836 that Sir Francis Freeling, who had been secretary to the post-office since 1797, a period of forty years, died. He was an industrious public servant of the old school, strictly performing his duty according to ancient precedent and routine. He was succeeded in his office 71 by Colonel Maberly, the son of a gentleman who, having amassed a considerable fortune by trade, entered Parliament, and ultimately succeeded Perry as the proprietor of the “Morning Chronicle.” Colonel Maberly had been himself in Parliament, and was generally considered a good man of business; but he was an entire stranger to the business of the post-office, and, according to his own evidence before the Select Committee on Postage, was introduced into the office by the treasury for the purpose of carrying into effect the reforms which a commission of inquiry had recommended.

On the fall of Sir R. Peel’s administration, in 1835, the Earl of Lichfield succeeded to the office of postmaster-general under Lord Melbourne. It must be admitted that the new postmaster and secretary introduced many important reforms. The money-order office was transferred from private hands to the general establishment. At this juncture also commenced the system of registering valuable letters, and, at the suggestion of Mr. Rowland Hill, a number of day mails were started for the provinces.

At the close of 1836 the stamp-duty on newspapers was reduced from 3-1/4*d.* to 1*d.*,—a reduction which led to an enormous increase in the newspapers passing through the post-office.

But, though these improvements were in themselves commendable, the authorities still tenaciously clung to the old rates of postage, and refused to listen to any plan for the reduction of postage-rates. Colonel Maberly, the secretary, had no sooner learned the business of his office than he made a proposition to the treasury that the letters should be charged in all cases according to the exact distance between the places where a letter was posted and delivered, and not according to the full distance. The lords of the treasury promptly refused, to use the language 72 of Mr. Lewins, “this concession.”

In 1837 the average general postage was estimated at 9-1/2*d.* per letter; exclusive of foreign letters, it was still as high as 8-3/4*d.* It is a curious but significant fact that in the reign of Queen Anne the postage of a letter between London and Edinburgh was less than half as much as the amount charged at the accession of Queen Victoria. The fact that the revenue derived from so well-protected a monopoly remained stationary for nearly twenty years may be fairly attributable to these high postage-rates.[17]

Mr. Lewins states that the revenue derived in 1815 from the post-office amounted to a million and a half; while twenty-one years afterwards,—in 1836,—notwithstanding the increase of trade and the diffusion of knowledge, the increase of this sum had only been between three and four thousand pounds. The evil of high rates led not merely to small returns, but to the evasion of postage by illicit means of conveyance, so that some carriers of letters were doing as large a business as the post-office itself.

This will appear evident from the statement that a post-office official seized a parcel containing eleven hundred letters in a single bag in the warehouse of a London carrier. The head of this firm proffered instant payment of £500 if the penalties were not sued for. The postmaster-general

accepted the offer, and the letters passed through the post-office on the same night.

So early as 1833, the late Mr. Wallace, M. P. for Greenock, drew the attention of the House of Commons to the numerous abuses in the post-office. There can be no question that his frequent motions and speeches directed public attention specifically to the subject and incalculably advanced the cause of reform. Mr. Wallace was not aided by the government or by the aristocracy or higher professional classes; but he derived much active support from the mercantile and manufacturing community, and from the shopkeepers in all the great towns of the empire. 73

It was the ventilation of the subject of the post-office by the member for Greenock that first drew the attention of Mr.—now Sir—Rowland Hill, to the subject. The son of a country schoolmaster, Mr. Hill had for a long time acted as usher at his father's establishment at Birmingham. Being of an active and energetic disposition, he left the paternal roof for the metropolis, and was in 1833, when he was about thirty-eight years of age, secretary to the commissioners for the colonization of South Australia. Here he exhibited powers of organization, and we have from his own pen a statement that he read very carefully all the reports on post-office subjects. He put himself into communication with Mr. Wallace, M. P., who afforded him much assistance. He also corresponded with Lord Lichfield, then postmaster-general, who imparted to him the official information he sought. In January, 1837, Mr. Hill published the results of his investigations and embodied his schemes in a pamphlet entitled "Post-Office Reform: its Importance and Practicability." The pamphlet created a sensation in the mercantile world. It was well noticed in the "Spectator" and "Morning Chronicle," to both of which journals Mr. Hill's elder brother Matthew, now a commissioner of bankruptcy at Bristol, contributed. Mr. Rowland Hill contended that the post-office was not making progress like other great national interests,—that its revenue had diminished instead of increased, though the population had augmented six millions and trade 74 and commerce had proportionally increased. From data in his possession Mr. Hill pretty accurately proved that the primary distribution, as he called the cost of receiving and delivering the letters, and also the cost of transit, took two-thirds of the total cost of the management of the post-office. Out of the total postal expenditure of £700,000, Mr. Hill calculated that the amount which had to do with the distance letters travelled amounted to £144,000. From calculations which he then made, he arrived at the conclusion that the average cost of conveying each letter was less than the one-tenth of a penny. By this process he deduced the conclusion that postage ought to be uniform. The propriety of a uniform rate was further demonstrated by the fact that under the old system the cost of transmission was not always dependent on distance. The case was made still plainer by these facts. An Edinburgh letter, costing the post-office an infinitesimal fraction of a farthing, was charged 1*s.* 1-1/2*d.*, while a letter for Louth, in Lincolnshire, costing the post-office fifty times as much, was charged 10*d.*

Mr. Hill's four proposals were:—1st, a large diminution in the rates of postage, even to 1*d.* in a half-ounce letter; 2d, increased speed in the delivery of letters; 3d, more frequent opportunity for the despatch of letters; 4th, simplification and economy in the management of the post-office, the rate of postage being uniform.

In February, 1838, Mr. Wallace moved for a select committee of the Commons to investigate Mr. Hill's proposals; but the government resisted the measure. Lord Lichfield, the postmaster-general, described it as a wild, visionary, and extravagant scheme. The public at large were greatly dissatisfied. Some of the most influential men in the city of London established a committee for the purpose of distributing information on the subject by means of pamphlets and 75 papers and for the general purposes of the agitation. A month or two after Mr. Wallace's motion, Mr. Baring, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, proposed a committee to inquire into the present rates of charging postage, with a view to such reduction as may be made without injury to the revenue, and for them to examine into the mode of collecting and charging postage recommended by Mr. Rowland Hill. The committee sat sixty-three days, concluding their deliberations in August, 1838. They examined the principal officers of the post-office, and eighty-three independent witnesses.

In opposition to the views of official men, Mr. Hill held that a fivefold increase in the number of letters would suffice to preserve the existing revenue, and he predicted that the increase would soon be reached. He showed that the stage-coaches then in existence could carry twenty-seven times the number of letters they had ever yet done. The post-office authorities traversed every statement of Mr. Hill and his supporters, and Colonel Maberly expressed an opinion that if the postage were reduced to one penny the revenue would not recover itself for forty or fifty years. But, notwithstanding the opposition of the post-office authorities, the committee reported for a reduction of the rates, for the more frequent despatch of letters, and for additional deliveries, adding that the extension of railways made these changes urgently necessary. They further urged that the principle of a low uniform rate was just, and that when combined with prepayment it would be convenient and satisfactory.

The commissioners, consisting of Lord Seymour, Lord Duncannon, and Mr. Labouchere, proposed that any letter not exceeding half an ounce should be conveyed free within the metropolis, and the district to which the town and country deliveries extend, if enclosed in an envelope bearing a 76 penny stamp.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had the plan of a uniform rate of postage embodied in a bill, which passed in the session of 1839. This act, approved by a majority of one hundred and two members, conferred temporarily the necessary power on the lords of the treasury. On the 12th of

November, 1839, their lordships issued a minute reducing the postage of all inland letters to the uniform rate of 4*d.* The country was greatly dissatisfied. It required Mr. Hill's plan; and the fourpenny rate was in no respect his. The treasury lords were at length convinced they had made a mistake, and on the 10th of January, 1840, another minute was issued, ordering the adoption of a uniform penny rate. On the 10th of August the treasury had its minute confirmed by the statute 3 & 4 Vict. c. 96. A treasury appointment was given to Mr. Hill, to enable him to assist in carrying out the penny postage. He only, however, held the appointment for about two years; for when the conservative party came into power the originator of the penny postage lost his situation. Mr. Hill entreated to be allowed to remain at any sacrifice to himself, but Sir R. Peel was obdurate.

Mr. Hill's popularity increased with his dismissal. A public subscription was opened for him throughout the country, as an expression of national gratitude, which amounted to over £13,000. On the restoration of the whigs to power, in 1846, he was placed in St. Martin's-le-Grand as secretary to the postmaster-general. In 1854, on Colonel Maberly's removal to the audit-office, he was named secretary to the post-office under the late Lord Canning,—the highest appointment in the department. In 1860 the secretary of the post-office was made a Knight Commander of the Bath. During the autumn of 1863 his health began to fail him, and in March of the present year (1865) he resigned his situation. The executive government showed a just and liberal sense of Sir Rowland Hill's merits. By a treasury minute of the 11th of March, 1864, advantage was taken by the government of the special clause in the Superannuation Act relating to extraordinary services, to grant him a pension of three times the usual retiring allowance. This was not merely a just but a generous act; and the language in which the resolution was couched was not official, nor solemnly and decorously dull, as is usual on such occasions, but encomiastic in the highest degree. Sir Rowland Hill was pronounced not merely a meritorious public servant, but a "benefactor of his race." We do not say this eulogistic epithet was not deserved, for we think it was well merited; but we may be permitted to remark that Sir Rowland Hill has lived in a felicitous time, thus promptly to find his merits officially recognized on retiring from his labors.

Harvey, Jenner, Palmer of Bath, of whom we have antecedently spoken, and scores of other discoverers and philanthropists, were less fortunate than the late post-office secretary. Sir Rowland Hill was not only allowed to retire on his full salary of £2000 per annum, but Lord Palmerston gave notice that the pension should be continued to Lady Hill in the event of her ladyship surviving her husband.[18] Since this notice was given by the premier, an influential deputation of the house waited on the first minister of the crown, strongly urging that, in place of the deferred pension to Lady Hill, a Parliamentary grant, sufficient, though reasonable, should be made at once to the late secretary.

We do not say that the social, moral, and commercial results of the famous penny postage have not been singularly wondrous and beneficial, and that Mr. Hill does not deserve all that has been done for him by ministers, by his private friends and admirers, by the commercial and manufacturing community, and by the public at large. We think the late post-office secretary fully deserves every farthing that has been paid or that may be hereafter paid to him, whether as an annuity or a gratuity; we think he deserves the order of K.C.B., which he obtained, and, further, that he deserves to have his merits and his name commemorated by a statue intended to be erected at Birmingham in his honor. But how few are there in this world of ours who obtain a tithe of their deserts! Neither Harvey, Jenner, Newton, nor Locke was properly rewarded by his country. Newton, indeed, passed many years of his life in straitened circumstances, and never had any employment which produced him more than from £1200 to £1500 per annum, while Locke's commissionership of appeals gave him only the miserable pittance of £200 a year. It is the good fortune of Sir Rowland Hill to have flourished in more liberal times, when merit is fittingly acknowledged and rewarded.

The discovery of Sir Rowland Hill was not a brilliant and wonderful so much as a useful discovery, and there can be no doubt that he worked out all the details with a patience, a perseverance, and a judgment sure and unerring. When the system of penny postage had been in operation two years, it was found that the success of the scheme had surpassed the most sanguine expectations. It almost entirely prevented breaches of the law and that illicit correspondence by which the revenue had long been defrauded. Commercial transactions as to very small amounts were chiefly managed through the post: small money-orders were constantly transmitted from town to town and from village to village, the business of the money-order office having increased twentyfold. No men are more indebted to the system of the penny post than literary men, publishers, and printers,—manuscripts and proof-sheets now passing to and fro from one end of the kingdom to the other with care, cheapness, and celerity. Common carriers, too, are greatly benefited by the penny postage. Pickford & Co. now despatch by post more than ten times the number of letters they despatched in 1839. Mr. Charles Knight, the London publisher, stated that the penny postage stimulated every branch of his trade, and brought the country booksellers into daily communication with the London houses. Mr. Bagster, the publisher of the Polyglot Bible in twenty-four languages, stated to Mr. Hill that the revision which he was just giving to his work would on the old system have cost him £1500 in postage alone, and that the Bible could not be printed but for the penny post. One of the principal advocates for the repeal of the Corn Laws stated that the objects of the league were achieved two years earlier than otherwise, owing to the introduction of cheap postage. Conductors of schools and educational establishments stated how people were learning everywhere to write for the first time, in order to enjoy the benefits of a free correspondence. In all the large towns, too, it was remarked that night-classes were springing up for teaching writing to adults. As the system made progress with the public, Mr. Hill's recommendations and improvements extended and expanded.

A cheap registration started into existence, simplification was introduced in the mode of sorting letters, slits were suggested in the doors of houses, restriction as to the weight of parcels was removed, and a book-rate was established. It was also suggested that railway stations should have post-offices connected with them, and that sorting should be done in the train and in the packets. The union of the two corps of general and district letter-carriers, the establishment of district offices, and an hourly delivery instead of every two hours, were also suggested by Mr. Hill, and, after being strenuously combated by the authorities, carried by the indefatigable secretary.

The amalgamation of the general post and what were called the London district carriers did not take place till 1855, when the Duke of Argyll was postmaster-general. For this amalgamation Mr. Hill had been striving from the commencement. It avoided the waste of time, trouble, and expense consequent on two bodies of men—the one being paid at a much higher rate of wages—going over the same ground.

A more important step than this was the division of London into ten districts. Under the new arrangement, instead of district letters being carried from the receiving houses to the chief office in St. Martin’s-le-Grand, to be there sorted and redistributed, they were sorted and distributed at the district office according to their address. An important part of the new scheme was that London should be considered in the principal post-offices as ten different towns, each with its own centre of operations, and that the letters should be assorted and despatched on this principle. A new and special service was brought into operation between England and Ireland on the 1st of October, 1860. Night and day mail-trains have from that date been run from Euston Square to Holyhead, and special steamers have been employed at an enormous expense to cross the channel. Letter-sorting is now carried on not only in the trains but on board the packets, nearly all the post-office work for immediate delivery being accomplished between London and Dublin and Dublin and London respectively.[19]

The first letter penny post was established in Edinburgh by one Peter Williamson, a native of Aberdeen. He kept a coffee-shop in the Parliament House, and as he was frequently employed, by gentlemen attending the courts, in sending letters to different parts of the city, and as he had doubtless heard something of the English penny post, he began a regular post with hourly deliveries, and established agents at different parts of the city to collect.

Posts for letters, mode of carrying, invented in Paris, 1470; post-horses by stages, 1483. Louis XI. first established them in France. In England, 1581; Germany, 1641; in the Turkish dominions, 1740. Offices erected, 1643, and in 1657; made general in England, 1656; in Scotland, 1695; as at present formed, 12 Charles II., December 27, 1660. Penny posts began in London, 1681; taken in hand by the government, 1711; the penny post made twopence, 1801. Mails first conveyed by coaches, August 2, 1784; the first mail by railway, November 11, 1830, between Manchester and Liverpool.

The mail first began to be conveyed by coaches, on Palmer's plan, August 2, 1785.

Posting and post-chaises invented in France.

Post-chaise tax imposed, 1779; altered, 1780.

The postal districts of London are so arranged as to render favorable not only the facilities for delivering letters, but equally so to the carriers. The employees of the London post-office are not overtasked, nor are the carriers compelled as it were to become "beasts of burden." A want of consideration on the part of officials here for those in their employ is a sad reflection on our republican institutions. Men who exercise a little brief authority imagine themselves for the time-being taskmasters, and those in their employ slaves. Nothing in the world tends more to change a man's politics than the abuses arising out of the system pursued by men in power towards those in their employ. Thus comparisons are drawn between the two parties, and the course of each is canvassed; and not unfrequently, we regret to say, the Democracy has the advantage. It has always been a principle of the Democratic party to take care of "their men." It is a fact that under Democratic administration the salaries of the employees in the post-office were thirty-three and one-third per cent more than they receive at present, and that, too, when gold was at par and the rate of living fifty per cent cheaper than it is now. The fact is, there are not ten men in the post-office department whose salaries are adequate to their wants; and to their just demand for an increase of salary they are coolly answered that "if they are not satisfied they can resign, as there are plenty outside willing to take their place." Is it to be expected that men so treated can consistently admire a system or maintain a principle that strikes at the root of their interest and patriotism? In another part of this work we have alluded to this subject, and referring to it here is simply to contrast a portion of our postal system with that of the English. Let it be distinctly understood that these remarks apply as much to the heads of the postal department at Washington as they do to their officials: the latter simply imitate the actions and carry out the plans of their superiors, and not unfrequently in a manner as insulting as their action and conduct are repulsive. Men in power should be gentlemen; and in selecting their assistants, this natural attribute of the man, refined by education, would exercise its influence in such a manner as to render such selection a very easy matter. But, unfortunately, in many instances such is not the case. The great error committed by the *fortunate candidates* for office is that of assuming consequence, or, to use a more familiar phrase, "putting on airs:" it is an error that in part arises out of our system of government, and is one that can only be corrected by placing gentlemen in high positions, instead of ignorant, brawling politicians. It is true, our government is not established upon a state religious basis; or, if it were so intended, that corner-stone has been misplaced. Our rulers are generally politicians. To obtain office, corruption not unfrequently takes precedence of religion: hence injustice, wrong, and oppression are the means used to insure success. Examples thus set in high places have been followed through all the departments; peculation in office, fraud in agents, government itself cheated, are all indications of corruption, and are the strongest evidences to be adduced for the increase of crime, the disregard of truth, and the absence of morality among us. Even our clergy display more of the

"animum pictura pascit inani"[20]

than they do of the principle conveyed in this line from Virgil,—

"Animus lucis contemtor."[21]

The English post-office, to a certain extent, is a political one; but there is one feature in it which differs materially from our own, and it is one that reflects the highest credit on the English government; and that is, a man is not discharged from office simply on political grounds, but is retained as long as he attends to his business and conducts himself properly. The reward of merit and long service is, when incapable of attending to his duties, a pension from his government. With these remarks, elicited by contrasting the two systems, we annex the following synopsis of the London postal arrangements:—

(From the London "Postal Guide" for 1864.)

The London district comprises all places within a circle of twelve miles from the general post-office, including Cheshunt, Hampton, Hampton Court, and Sunbury, and the post towns of Barnet, Waltham Cross, Romford, Bromley, Croydon, Kingston, and Hounslow. It is divided into ten postal districts, each of which is treated, in many respects, as a separate post town. The following are the names of the districts, with their abbreviations, viz.:—

Northern	N.	Southwestern	S.W.
Northeastern	N.E.	Eastern	E.
Northwestern	N.W.	Eastern Central	E.C.
Southern	S.	Western	W.
Southeastern	S.E.	Western Central	W.C.

By adding the initials of the postal districts to the addresses of letters for London and its neighborhood, the public will much facilitate the arrangements of the post-office.

The district initials for every important street or place are given in the street list.

The portion of each district within about three miles of the general post-office is designated the town delivery, and the remainder the suburban delivery.

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Within the town limits there are twelve deliveries of letters daily. The first, or general post delivery, including all inland, colonial, and foreign letters arriving in sufficient time, commences about 7.30 A.M., and is generally completed throughout London by nine o'clock, except on Mondays, or on other days when there are large arrivals of letters from abroad.

The second delivery, which commences about nine A.M., includes the correspondence received by the night mails from Ireland and France, and letters from the provinces and abroad which may arrive too late for the first delivery, as well as those posted in the nearer suburbs by 6.30 A.M., as specified in the tables for each district.

The next nine deliveries are made hourly, and include all letters reaching the general post-office or the district offices in time for each despatch.

The last delivery commences about 7.45 P.M.

Each delivery within the town limits occupies about an hour from the time of its commencement, which may be averaged at from forty-five minutes to an hour from the time of despatch from the general post-office, according to the distance from St. Martin's-le-Grand and the number of letters to be arranged by the letter-carriers for distribution.

The provincial day mails are due at various times, and the letters are included in the next delivery after their arrival in London. The day mails from Ireland, France, and the continent generally, and the letters received from Brighton and other towns which have a late afternoon communication with London, are delivered the same evening in London and the suburbs within the six-mile circle.

The suburban deliveries are regulated in a similar manner, with this difference, however, that in some of the less-thickly inhabited portions the deliveries are necessarily fewer.

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There is more attention paid in England to this letter or paper inscription than there is with us. The "Poste Restante" being intended solely for the accommodation of strangers and travellers who have no permanent abode in London, letters for residence in London *must not be addressed* "Post-Office till called for." Letters addressed to "initials" or "fictitious names" cannot be received at the "Poste Restante." If so addressed, they are returned to the writers.

With us, little or no attention is paid to this important postal matter: hence, a letter addressed simply to "John Smith, Philadelphia," without the word "Transient," "or Poste Restante," must necessarily take its winding way through all the phases of postal travel until it reaches the dead-letter office. We make another extract from the English "Postal Guide:"—

"Letters for strangers are delivered from the Poste Restante for a period of two months; after which period they must have them addressed to their place of residence, in order that they may be sent by the letter-carriers. Letters for known residents in London, addressed to the 'Poste Restante,' are retained for one week only.

"Letters addressed 'Post-Office, London,' or 'Poste Restante, London,' are delivered only at the Poste Restante office, on the south side of the hall of the general post-office, St. Martin's-le-Grand; and at this office also, and there only, are delivered letters addressed to the district or branch offices in London. The hours of delivery are between nine and five.

"All persons applying for letters at the Poste Restante must be prepared to give the necessary particulars to the clerk on duty, in order to prevent mistakes, and to insure the delivery of the letters to the persons to whom they properly belong."

The establishment of a "Poste Restante" on this principle would be an important feature in our post-office, and would save both trouble and expense.

VI.

The Kaffir Letter-Carrier—African Post.

The African post, as we term it, is of course simply connected with the European settlements. A system of carrying letters is established, and the principal messengers or carriers are the Kaffirs. In the several settlements, more particularly those of the British at Sierra Leone, Cape Coast Castle, and the Cape of Good Hope, and at several unimportant establishments on the Gold and Silver Coasts, these messengers of the African race were not only very useful in conveying letters, packages, &c., but honest, trustworthy, and remarkably swift of foot. In Sierra Leone more particularly they were considered very important personages. In 1845 there was a well-known character, called the "Kaffir letter-carrier." He was employed to convey letters to the South African settlement. He carried his document in a split at the end of a long stick. He took great interest in his employment; and if a vessel arrived at a late hour of the night, and the letter came into his possession before morning, he would start off with it: no matter how dark the night or how great the distance, away he would speed. When he reached the house of the person to whom the letter was directed,—one of his customers,—he would commence shouting and knocking; and as soon as the house was alarmed, he would exclaim, "Ah, massa, here de right book come at last!" This expression was caused by the anxiety manifested by the Europeans generally to receive letters and packages by every vessel. Another reason that might be assigned for the activity displayed by the Kaffir letter-carrier was the fact that he usually displayed some extra trinket immediately after the delivery of his letter or package. The free-delivery system had not been adopted in Africa at that period, nor do we believe it can boast of that liberal governmental privilege yet.

The name of Kaffir, or unbeliever, was originally given to the inhabitants of the southern coast of Africa by the Moors; and, being adopted by the Portuguese, it became the common appellation of all the tribes occupying the southeastern coast. The Kaffirs living beyond the Fish River, on the eastern boundary of the colony, are a bold, warlike, and independent people, and are supposed to be of Arabian origin.

VII.

Post-Offices—The Colonies.

“There were men with hoary hair
Amid that pilgrim band:
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood’s land?”
Hemans.

If fanaticism had not been mixed up with the materials embarked on the Mayflower, July 22, 1620, those scenes which disgraced humanity and civilization and enacted under the belief of witchcraft would never have occurred here; but, unfortunately, that evil came over with the “Pilgrim Fathers,” and its consequences gave a dark page to the history of the “Land of Promise.”

They were, it is true, the pioneers of liberty to a certain extent,—freedom to the body, but not to the mind.

The chains, riveted by the old Gothic laws at that period existing in England, and by which millions of human creatures were held in a state of mental and physical bondage, were left behind, it is true; but the link which bound them to superstition remained unbroken.

Apart from this, however, their landing on Plymouth Rock was the dawn of a new era, and it gave an additional spring to human enterprise, “opened new trains of thought, new paths of gain and of information.”

“What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine,
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
They sought a faith’s pure shrine!”

Passing over the dark days of witchcraft and the persecution of the Quakers, the colonial history brightens up under a more tolerant rule. That the belief in witchcraft was a delusion arising from ignorance, under the influence of which many persons became frantic, there can be no doubt. And yet there was a method in their madness so cunningly carried out that it deceived many far more enlightened. A writer speaking upon the subject says, “It is but justice to the inhabitants of New England to observe that, though the present age may censure the past for its superstition, neither England nor any other nation is entitled to cast the first stone at them. More persons were put to death in England in a single county, in a few months, than suffered in all the colonies during the whole period of their existence.”

The scenes that were enacted in New England during this epidemical reign of insanity gradually yielded to the influence of reason, which under proper religious discipline once more assumed its rule. One of the chief causes which tended to arouse the mind from its mental darkness was the fact of a dog being taken up on suspicion, and actually hanged, as an accomplice of his master, who was accused of witchcraft![22] This act capped the climax of folly. People began to wonder if such things could be; and they actually took the case of the dog into serious consideration, and then came to this very wise conclusion,—that he fell a martyr to the folly and ignorance of a few fanatics. They then began to ridicule those who assumed the power to terrify the people and who had exercised it to a bitter end over men and animals. This did more to bring men to their senses than all the preaching and reasoning of the elders previously.[23]

Naturally, while these idiotic scenes were enacting, the arts and sciences, commerce and manufactures, were materially neglected; but when the gloom which fanaticism had cast over this portion of the colonies had passed away, the dawn of *reason and civilization* awoke her benighted children to a new state of existence.

To trace up the postal history of the colonies to the glorious epoch of our independence would be to give a history of trade and commerce, science and art. To these do every thing useful and ornamental in the New World owe its existence. It is true the postal department was at the early age of colonial history but a minor consideration. The system was a limited one, and consisted in having post-roads and post-riders. Even here the latter were to be seen “like angels’ visits, few and far between.” We can draw one of these from a picture seen in our boyhood days. It was in the good old State of Pennsylvania, not many miles from the city of Philadelphia, and while trudging on our way to the village school, this living picture presented itself. A tall, gaunt man sat on a tall, gaunt horse; he came riding slowly up the road,—this was not, as now, a fast age: his hair was partly gray, and fell in tow-looking ringlets down and around his long, sinewy neck. Over the horse’s back was swung a large, well-filled pair of saddle-bags. He was the post-rider. He had started from the main post of the county, established in Norristown, to others in directions diverging from the main road. He stopped his horse, and, raising his tall form, resting his feet on a pair of old rusty stirrups, he shouted out, in a voice of mimic thunder, “Look here, Jim: take this letter to your mother, ’mediate; for that is written on the back; and as you pass Mrs. Stroud’s, hand her this newspaper. Do this, Jim, and I’ll give you sixpence next pay-day.” Such was the post.

Connected with this little incident there is a somewhat curious coincidence. Little did the writer think then, while acting as “an incipient post,” he should in after years find himself in a position in the Philadelphia post-office, acting first as a carrier, and then as clerk, and whose early vocations in life were in no manner identified with public men and public institutions. But what

will not revulsions in trade, politics, and governments effect! Equally strange, too, that forty years after the little incident of the “old post” he should meet in the same office the son of that same Mrs. Stroud mentioned above, acting in a similar capacity. Truly may it be said that “*coming events cast their shadows before* us on our boyhood’s wayward path.” But this is a digression.

Expresses and regular messengers were employed by the colonists, and horses were kept in constant readiness to start on a moment’s notice with letters or packets, for the government as well as individuals. There was no established postal system but that which the exigencies of the times created. The post-riders, or rather government messengers, ran frequent risks. Captain Hutchinson started July 4, 1665, sent by the Governor of Massachusetts with letters constituting him a commissioner to treat with the Narragansetts. The “letter system” failed to conciliate the tribe, as they had openly declared for Philip; and here we have another illustration of the fact that in cases of war and rebellion the “sword is mightier than the pen.” The colonial forces marched into their country and compelled them to sign a treaty, which, however, was only considered binding as long as the forces sent against them were present.

In 1676, however, the colonial court established a post-office in Boston, appointing John Heyward postmaster. Heyward followed the system as established in England, and placed posts and made routes to the extent of the commercial interest of the State. This gave general satisfaction to those who were interested in this mode of communicating with men connected with them in trade, as also to others who had friends and relations scattered throughout what was then a thinly-populated State.

In the year 1700, Col. J. Hamilton, of New Jersey, and son of Governor Andrew Hamilton, first devised the post-office scheme for British America, for which he obtained a patent and the profits accruing. Afterwards he sold it to the crown, and a member of Parliament was appointed for the whole, with a right to have his substitute reside in New York. The statute of Anne, in 1716, placed the postal department under the immediate control of the crown.

The first regular post-office established in the colonies by Parliament was in 1710. By its provisions a general post-office was established in North America and the West Indies, or any other of her majesty’s dominions, or in any country or kingdom beyond the seas, and “at which office all returns and answers may be likewise received. For the better managing, ordering, collecting, and improving the revenue, and also for the better computing and setting the rates of letters according to distance, a chief office is established in Edinburgh, one in Dublin, one at New York, and other chief offices in convenient places in her majesty’s colonies of America, and one in the islands of the West Indies, called the ‘Leeward Islands.’”

That our readers may form some idea of the limited use of a post-office at that period, it is only necessary to state the fact that in 1708 New York contained but one thousand houses, most of them substantially built. The great Trinity Church, so called then, was erected in 1695.[24] A library was established there in 1700, and the post-office, as stated above, in 1710. The post-horse system, such as was pursued in England, continued, nor was it until 1732 that the first stage-route to Philadelphia was established: stages also departed for Boston monthly, taking a fortnight on the route.

The following announcement is taken from the “Philadelphia Weekly Mercury,” dated November 30, 1752:—

“On Monday next the Northern post sets out from New York, in order to perform his stage but once a fortnight during the winter quarter; the Southern post changes also, which will cause this paper to come out on Tuesdays during that time. The colds which have infested the Northern colonies have been also troublesome here; few families have escaped the same; several have been carried off by the cold, among whom was David Brintnall, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. He was the first man that had a brick house in the city of Philadelphia, and was much esteemed for his just and upright dealing. There goes a report here that the Lord Baltimore and his lady are arrived in Maryland, but, the Southern post being not yet come in, the said report wants confirmation.”

The David Brintnall mentioned here built the first house made of brick in the city of Philadelphia: it was situated in Chestnut Street below Fourth, and stood back from the street-line, with a small garden in front. The first house erected in Philadelphia was a wooden one, on the east side of Front Street, a little north of the place now called “Little Dock Street,” and is said not to have been finished when William Penn first arrived. The owner, John Guest, kept a public house there for many years. His sign was a “Blue Anchor.” The town and boroughs of Philadelphia were located in 1682.

Letters between New York and Boston were, previous to the introduction of stages, conveyed on horseback. Madam Knight, in her journal, dated 1704, says that “she was two weeks in riding with the postman, as her guide, from Boston to New York. In most of the towns she saw Indians.” In 1702, Mrs. Shippen, soon after her marriage, came from Boston to Philadelphia on horseback, *bringing a baby on her lap*.

Even at a much later period the mode of travelling was still in a slow way, as may be seen by the following advertisement, which appeared in 1776:—

“This is to give notice to the Publick that the stage waggons kept by John Burrowhill, in Elm

Street, in Philadelphia, and John Mersereax, at the Blazing Star, near New York, intend to perform the journey from Philadelphia to New York in two days; also to continue seven months, viz.: from the 14th of April to the 14th of November, and the remaining five months of the year in three days. The waggons to be kept in good order, and good horses, with sober drivers. They purpose to set off from Philadelphia on Mondays and Thursdays punctually at sunrise, and to be in Prince-Town the same nights, and change passengers, and return to New York and Philadelphia the following days. The passengers are desired to cross Powlass Hook Ferry the evening before. The waggon is not to stay after sunrise. Price, each passenger, from Powlass Hook to Prince Town, ten shillings; from thence to Philadelphia, ten shillings also; Ferriage free. Threepence each mile any distance between. Any gentlemen or ladies that wants to go to Philadelphia, can go in the stage and be home in five days, and be two nights and one day in Philadelphia to do business or see the market-days. All gentlemen and ladies who are pleased to favour us with their custom may depend on due attendance and civil usage by those humble servants,

"John Mersereax,
"John Burrowhill.

"June, 1776."

Market-days in Philadelphia at that period, and long afterwards, were great attractions to the country-people, even apart from business. It was also customary to ring the bells of Christ Church on the evenings previous to "market-days" for the edification of the country-people, who had learned to look upon them—or at least to hear their sound—as more or less identified with our independence. There is a peculiar history attached to these bells. They were purchased in England at a cost of £900. There were eight of them, and their aggregate weight was eight thousand pounds, the tenor bell weighing eighteen hundred pounds. In 1777, fearful of their falling back again into English hands, they were taken down and conveyed to Allentown, Pennsylvania, for "*safe keeping*." After the evacuation of the city they were replaced, and have been ringing joyfully ever since. They pealed forth in gladsome sounds when the old State-House Bell sounded its note to liberty, and in harmony they proclaimed it to the world. But did the world respond? Did it shake off the bonds which bound man to man by an iron chain? Did it "proclaim" alike to the African that freedom was his birthright? Alas! no; for although the Declaration of our Independence pronounced "all men equal," yet a distinction was made in color, and, under that very document and the Constitution, slavery came in, to become in time, what it was in reality before, a curse.

Years passed on; trade and traffic in human flesh continued, until the Almighty, in his wondrous mystery, brought about their emancipation in a manner that levelled the institution of slavery to the ground forever. But, alas! have we not as a people and a nation been severely punished? Established on a basis of crime and carried out in a spirit of fiendish ferocity, they dared call it a "divine institution." For this fearful error on the part of those eminent men who framed that document, our country has suffered fearfully; but these bells and all other bells will peal once more under a new order of things, and truly as well as righteously "proclaim liberty throughout the land to all the people thereof." Then will our land

"be blest,
Its branchy glories spreading o'er the West;
No summer gourd, the wonder of a day,
Born but to bloom, and then to fade away,
A giant oak, it lifts its lofty form,
Greens in the sun, and strengthens in the storm.
Long in its shade shall children's children come,
And welcome earth's poor wanderers to a home,
Long shall it live, and every blast defy,
Till Time's last whirlwind sweep the vaulted sky."

New York, like Pennsylvania, has its primitive postal history. The first postmaster at Schenectady was Dr. Eleazer Mosely, who died in 1833, aged seventy-three years. He established a post by raising subscriptions from the inhabitants, which operated very favorably; and the result was the carrying the mail by contract.

At first the western mail was carried from Albany once a week, in a valise on the shoulder of a footman.

As late as the year 1810 there was only a weekly mail between Canandaigua and Genesee River, carried on horseback, and part of the time by a *woman*!

In 1730 notice was published to this effect:—"*Whosoever inclines to perform the foot-post to Albany this winter is to make application to Richard Nichols, the postmaster.*" Only think of this, ye modern letter-carriers!

The carrying of the mail between New York and Philadelphia previous to the Revolution was a very small matter: it was hardly an affair to be robbed. It was carried by a boy, who took the whole in saddle-bags, on horseback, three times a week. Next it was carried in a sulky;—next in coaches. What is it now?

In 1753 the post-office at the Bowling Green, Broadway, was, as announced, "opened everyday save Saturday afternoons, and Sundays from eight to twelve A.M. and from two to four P.M."

The original office was situated at the corner of William and Garden Streets, in which house resided the then Postmaster-General, Theodorus Bailey. It was also the residence of Sebastian Ballman, the first postmaster of the city subsequently to the Revolution, who was appointed to the office by General Washington. The room used as an office was twenty-five to thirty-five feet in length, and contained one hundred boxes. In 1827 it was in the basement of the “Merchants’ Exchange,” occupying two-thirds of that extensive space. The Merchants’ Exchange is situated on Wall Street. It is built of white marble. Its front on Wall Street is one hundred and fourteen feet, and its depth, extending to Garden Street, one hundred and fifty feet. The portico of the building, to which a flight of marble steps ascends, is ornamented with Ionic columns twenty-seven feet high.

In 1844 the post-office was removed to a new building,—the first, we believe, ever erected in that city expressly for postal purposes.[25] It is situated on Nassau Street, and reflects but little credit to the city either for its architectural or business-like appearance. There is many a lager-beer establishment can compete with almost any post-office in this country in point of those attractive qualities in architectural design in which they are so totally deficient. In this, however, we are not surprised; for the former has become an institution that may well claim precedence over almost any other in the country. Lager-beer saloons are institutions dedicated to death: hence their motto should be the Dutch word for *beer*,—BIER.

An independent post-office was established in New York in 1775. It was suggested by William Goddard, the publisher of the “Maryland Journal,” and John Holt, the printer, was appointed postmaster. It went into (partial) operation on the 11th of May. The office was kept at Holt’s printing-office.

There is no doubt that the “Sons of Liberty,” a popular association of Americans, were connected with this movement; for one of the first acts of its members was to send, through this office, threatening letters to the leading members of the tory party. This association took the lead in political matters, and exercised a powerful influence over the masses.

They also, in the dead hour of the night, went to Holt’s printing-office and printed inflammatory handbills themselves, and then circulated them throughout the city.

JOHN HOLT.

This gentleman was originally mayor of Williamsburg, Virginia. He also established a newspaper there, and rendered important service to the cause of the patriots. He came to New York, where ten years before he had published the “New York Gazette and Post-Boy” in company with James Parker. He started another paper shortly after his arrival in New York. When the British took possession of the city, he left it, and published his journal at Esopus and Poughkeepsie. While at the former place he published Burgoyne’s pompous proclamation, also the full account of the dreadful massacre in the Wyoming Valley. Holt died January 30, 1784, aged sixty-four years.

The tongue of slander found no poison in his life to bait shafts with; and justice, having awarded him all praise in life, left his memory and his acts to the historian.

VIII.

Pennsylvania—The Olden Time.

William Penn, the founder of the colony of Pennsylvania, was born in London in the year 1644. His father, Sir William Penn, was distinguished in the British navy as an able admiral, being commander of the fleet at the reduction of Jamaica in 1655, and contributing greatly to the defeat of the Dutch fleet in 1664. For his services he was knighted by Charles II.

William Penn was entered in 1660, as a gentleman commoner, at Christ's Church, Oxford; but, withdrawing from the national forms of worship, in connection with other students, who like himself had attended the preaching of Thomas Loe, an eminent member of the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, he was punished by fine for nonconformity, and in the succeeding year, for pertinacious adherence to his opinions, was expelled from the college. His father, considering that his singularly sober and serious manner of life tended to prevent his elevation to the honors of Charles's licentious court, was indignant at his disgrace, and therefore turned him out of doors in 1662, after, as he says, being whipped and beaten.

He was, however, sent by his father to France, and after his return was entered at Lincoln's Inn as a law-student. He renewed his acquaintance with Loe in Ireland, where he had been sent to manage an estate in 1666, and showed so much partiality to the persecuted sect of Quakers that he was arrested at a meeting in Cork and imprisoned by the authorities, who at last restored him to liberty at the intercession of some influential persons. He returned to England, when he had a violent altercation with his father, who was desirous that he should abandon habits so singular, so offensive to decorum, and so opposed to established forms; and, refusing to appear uncovered before the king and before his father, he was a second time dismissed in disgrace from protection and favor.

In consequence of a controversial dispute in 1668, when he first appeared as a preacher, he was sent to the Tower, where he remained a prisoner for seven months, and shortly after his release he was, on the passing of the Conventicle Act, again sent to prison in Newgate,—from which he was liberated by the interest of his father, who about this time became reconciled to him, and, dying some time after, left him an estate of £1500 per annum. Marrying in 1672, he fixed his residence in Hertfordshire, occupying himself zealously in promoting the cause of the Friends both by preaching and writing.

Soon after his return from Holland, whither he had gone in 1677 to assist at a general meeting of Friends, he petitioned his majesty Charles II. for a grant of land lying north of that already granted to Lord Baltimore, and west of the now Delaware. In consideration of his father's services, and of a debt of sixteen thousand pounds due the admiral at his decease, the grant was readily made, to which the Duke of York added by cession a neighboring portion of territory on the Delaware to the south of the king's grant. The patent bore date March 4, 1680-81; and in this instrument the king gave the name of Pennsylvania to the province, in honor of Admiral Sir William Penn.

The day after the charter was granted to Penn, he wrote a letter to Robert Turner, in which he gives the particulars of the naming of his province. The essential parts of this letter we quote:—

" ... Know that, after many waitings, watchings, solicitings, and disputes in council, this day my country was confirmed to me under the great seal of England, with large powers and privileges, by the name of Pennsylvania, a name the king would give it in honor of my father. I chose New Wales, being a pretty hilly country; but Penn being Welsh for *a head*, as Penmanmoire in Wales, and Penrith in Cumberland, and Penn in Buckinghamshire, the highest land in England, called this Pennsylvania, which is the *high* or *head woodlands*; for I proposed, when the secretary, a Welshman refused to have it called New Wales, *Sylvania*, and they added *Penn* to it, and though I much opposed it, and went to the king to have it struck out and altered, he said it was past, and would take it upon him; nor could twenty guineas move the under-secretaries to vary the name, for I feared lest it should be looked on as a vanity in me, and not as a respect in the king, as it truly was, to my father, whom he often mentions with praise."

The charter constituting William Penn and his heirs true and absolute proprietaries of Pennsylvania, saving to the crown their allegiance and the sovereignty, is preserved in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth at Harrisburg. Being thus constituted absolute proprietor and governor of Pennsylvania, Penn published "A Brief Account of the Province," proposing terms of settlement to such as might choose to remove thither; in which land was offered to purchasers at forty shillings per hundred acres, with a quit-rent of one shilling per annum. Many persons embraced his offer, and several companies of emigrants sailed to take possession of their new purchase, landing December, 1681, at Chester.

While the colony was thus commenced, Penn remained in England, occupied in forming a government for his people and providing means for its security.

Early in 1682 the proprietary published "The Frame of Government of the Province of Pennsylvania, together with Certain Laws, &c.," in the preface to which is found a sketch of his sentiments on the form and substance of civil government.

The governor, having completed all his preparations, sailed early in the fall of 1682, in company with about one hundred colonists, mostly Quakers from his own neighborhood, of which number, however, about thirty persons perished by small-pox, which broke out after their departure.

The first colonists sent out, being chiefly of the Society of Friends, with the predominating

characteristics of their people, temperance, industry, and economy, and conducting themselves in the difficulties and hardships of their new situation with much prudence and circumspection, avoided most of the dangers to which a new colony is usually subject, and received with demonstrations of satisfaction the new settlers who arrived at New Castle October 24, 1682. Immediately on his arrival, Penn proceeded to establish his government over the colony, and the first assembly was convened at Chester on December 4. This legislature, in a session of three days, passed laws annexing the lower counties ceded by the Duke of York to the province, confirming an act of settlement, and naturalizing resident foreigners, and also passed in form, after some revision, the laws which had been prepared in England.

After a visit to Lord Baltimore in his government of Maryland, Penn returned to *Coaquannock* (the site of Philadelphia), and, still conscientiously regarding the Indians as rightful possessors of the soil, he invited them to a conference at Shackamaxon (now Kensington), where they assembled in great numbers. A formal treaty of peace and amity was made: the Indians were paid for their lands, and departed for their homes full of love and admiration for the great and good *Onas*, as they called Penn. For seventy years this simple but sincere treaty remained inviolate: of it Voltaire says, “It was the only treaty between these people and the Christians that was not ratified by an oath, and which was never broken.” Certain it is that Penn’s strict observance of justice in paying for the soil, and the interest he manifested, during many successive treaties, in their real welfare, not only operated to secure the colony for many years from hostile attacks, but implanted in the generous though uncultivated mind of the Indian a regard for Penn and the Quakers which bids fair to be transmitted to the latest remains of the race.

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The capital of the province, Philadelphia, was next to be laid out, of which at the time of Penn’s arrival not a house was completed,—the colonists having in general no better lodgings than caves hollowed out of the high banks of the rivers. The very ground on which it was proposed to locate was in dispute, being claimed by some Swedes, who were induced to relinquish their claim for a larger portion of land elsewhere. The city was located between *Wicacoa*, now Southwark, and Shackamaxon,—two miles in length and one in breadth, with a navigable river at each end,—and was planned with admirable convenience and regularity under the inspection of the Surveyor-General of the province. During the first year there were erected about eighty houses; and the establishment of various mechanical arts, as well as a profitable trade, soon gave strength to the infant city.

Early in 1683 the first jury was impanelled for the trial of one Pickering, with others as accessories, who were convicted before the governor and council of counterfeiting the Spanish silver money current in the colony. The sentence discovers the same spirit of mildness and equity which at this day constitutes the praise and the efficacy of the criminal code of the State. He was to pay a fine of £40 towards the building of a court-house, standing committed until payment, find securities for his good behavior, and make restitution in good silver to the holders of his base coin, *which, being first melted down, was to be restored to him*.

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Penn’s interest at court had declined considerably, partly caused by *ambitious* enemies; but it was soon restored upon the death of Charles II. by the accession of his more immediate patron, James II., which occurred shortly after Penn’s arrival in England in 1684. The troubles in that country during the reign of James involved Penn and his colony in difficulty, and after the revolution of 1688, which placed William and Mary on the throne, Penn was several times imprisoned in consequence of his religion and his supposed adherence to the cause of the fallen monarch.

On the prevalence of his enemies at court, he had been deprived of his government of Pennsylvania, which was annexed in October, 1692, to that of New York under Colonel Fletcher.

The suspicions which had so long rendered the king unfriendly to Penn were at last removed. He was honorably acquitted of all charges, religious as well as political, which had been brought against him, and his rights were restored to him by an instrument of William and Mary, dated in August, 1694.

We have given this little sketch of the history of Pennsylvania simply as an episode. It is, however, connected with that portion of our subject which laid the foundation for a system of communication that has, ever since the introduction of trade and commerce, made up one of their chief facilities in business, and identified itself with the cabinet of Washington,—THE POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

In connection with William Penn our readers will no doubt be interested in the following letter, which is on file in the Land Department at the Capitol, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

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According to the “Harrisburg Telegraph,” it appears to be the credentials of a Society of Free-Traders, an organized body of merchants which once existed in London, whose objects were to trade with Canada, at that time a comparatively unknown country. The “Emperor of Canada” was supposed by the company to be a celebrated Indian chief. The letter is written on a piece of parchment about two and a half feet wide by three feet in length. The letters are about an inch in length, slightly inclined to the right, bold, and of a very symmetrical formation. The first letters of the first and second lines are large and highly ornamented,—a style which is yet kept by some of our first-class publishers, who introduce ornamental initial letters to chapters in their books. The signature of Penn is nearly an inch long, with the same inclination to the right, but the letters are not quite so bold and gracefully formed as those in the body of the document:—

"To the Emperor of Canada:—The Great God that made thee and me and all the world, Incline our hearts to love peace and Justice that we may live friendly together as becomes the workmanship of the Great God. The King of England, who is a Great Prince, hath for divers Reasons, granted me a large Country in America, which however I am willing to Injoy upon friendly terms with Thee. And this I will say that the people who come with me are a just, plain and honest people, that neither make war upon others nor fear war from others, because they are just. I have set up a Society of Traders in my Province to traffic with thee and thy people for your commodities, that you may be furnished with that which is good at reasonable rates. And the Society hath ordered their President to treat with thee about a future Trade, and have joined with me to send this messenger with certain presents from us to testify our willingness to have a fair Correspondence with thee. And what this Agent shall do in our names we will agree unto. I hope thou wilt Kindly Receive him, and comply with his desires on our behalf both with respect to Land and Trade. The Great God be with thee. Amen.

"WM. PENN,
"Philip Theodore Lehnman, *Sec.*

"London, the 21st of the fourth month, called June, 1682."

IX.

Philadelphia Post-Office—Posts, etc.

"Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, *Philadelphia is still erect, a column in a scene of ruins*, a pleasing example that the paths of honor and safety may sometimes be the same."—Gibbon.

We purposely passed over Pennsylvania in giving a statistical account of post-offices, as we intend to make the Philadelphia post-office the starting-point of a more general history, as far as the State is concerned, as also a more extended notice of the system of the general postal department. Again, there are more historical and remarkable events associated with Pennsylvania, in connection with the Revolution, than any other State in the Union.

The history of any one post-office after the Revolution would be a history of all; and, as the writer is more familiar with that of Philadelphia, he is enabled to gather more materials for the miscellaneous portion of his work than if he had selected any other.

The general business routine of one office differs very little from that of another: yet every office has its "unwritten history" and its own "romance and realities."

New York, with its vast commercial interests both at home and abroad, and justly termed the metropolis of America, could, from the archives of her post-office, give to the world incidents that perhaps would find no parallel in the annals of all the calendars that have registered events of a startling character since the creation of the world.

A post-office, with its millions of letters, is an epitomized world. The letters represent the human race, and contain the written records of their vices and virtues; or it may be compared to a huge volume, and the letters passing to and fro, the indexes to its contents.

Not that the secrets of a post-office become known to its officers by improper means, but by that process of secret modes of detection whose mysterious workings are unknown to those unconnected with the institution. Very little behind the great city we have named stands that of Philadelphia; and its post-office, like the tomb, has buried secrets which an "Old Mortality" alone has the power to bring forth. The task be ours to paint the mysteries of the postal tomb.

History and romance have, as it were, by mutual consent allied themselves together for the sole purpose of mystifying mankind. It is true the first cannot pervert a living fact, but it can materially affect the character of one long since passed away and mingled with the revolution of words, men, and nations. The latter is simply a colorist: the one maps, the other paints. And yet how often do we hear it said that truth is stranger than fiction! The romance of a post-office would be a far more truthful history of the human heart than any other work ever written upon the subject. The post-office is the pulsation of a nation, the beating of a million of hearts, and its records would be the world's volume. "A mail-bag," says a writer, "is an epitome of human life. All the elements which go to form the happiness or misery of individuals—the raw material, so to speak, of human hopes and fears—here exist in a chaotic state. These elements are imprisoned, like the winds in the fabled cave of Æolus, 'biding their time' to go forth and fulfil their office, whether it be to refresh and invigorate the drooping flower, or to bring destruction upon the proud and stately forest king."[26]

We have selected the Philadelphia post-office as the scene of our romantic portion of this work, because, as stated, it is familiar to us, and many of the incidents, anecdotes, &c. related came under our immediate notice. We mention this simply to do away with any impression that may arise that our purpose was to exalt one city over another and praise its institutions at the expense of those of other places. The author having received some little credit as a critic in another department of our literature for impartiality at least, it is hoped that he will not be accused of a departure from it in this instance.

The history of Philadelphia is fraught with much interest; it is identified with the name of one whose mild and conciliating views with regard to the Indians made his colonization one of holy peace, and gave to the name of Philadelphia by Christian practice what its Biblical meaning conveys,—"the City of Brotherly Love."

We annex an extract from a Latin poem, inscribed to James Logan, Esq., by Thomas Makin, dated 1728. It was found among James Logan's papers many years after his death. The poem seems to have been written for amusement in his old age:—

"First, Pennsylvania's memorable name
From Penn, the founder of the country, came;
Sprung from a worthy and illustrious race,
But more ennobled by his virtuous ways.
High in esteem among the great he stood;
His wisdom made him lovely, great, and good.
Tho' he be said to die, he will survive;
Thro' future time his memory shall live;
This wise proprietor, in love and praise,
Shall grow and flourish to the end of days.
With just propriety, to future fame
Fair Pennsylvania shall record his name.
This Charles the Second did at first command,
And for his father's merits gave the land;
But his high virtue did its value raise
To future glory and to lasting praise."[27]

The want of a regular postal system was not felt in the colonies until they had reached a certain point in trade, commerce, and population. The mode of conveying letters and packages, indeed, as well as merchandise of all kinds, was perfectly simple and of a decided primitive character.

Pack-horses were used for the purpose of conveying goods from Philadelphia to towns west. Pack-horses afforded almost the sole means of transportation until about 1788, when the roads were made accessible for wagons; and even then, when the first wagon made its appearance at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the "packers" became greatly excited, and looked upon it as an improvement likely to "ruin their trade."

The year 1683 was remarkable for the number of emigrants who arrived in the colony. It was in this year the first Assembly was held in Philadelphia, and laws enacted which had a wonderful bearing on the future prospects of the colony.

In July of this year William Penn issued an order for the establishing of a post-office, and granted to Henry Waldy, of Tekonay (now written Tacony), authority to hold one, and to supply passengers with horses from Philadelphia to New Castle, or to the Falls. The rates of postage were as follows: "Letters from the Falls, 3*d.*; to Chester, 5*d.*; to New Castle, 7*d.*; to Maryland, 9*d.*; and from Philadelphia to Chester, 2*d.*; to New Castle, 4*d.*; and to Maryland, 6*d.*" The post went once a week, and was to be carefully published "on the meeting-house door and other public places." 114

There being no other mode of conveyance except by horse,—wagons and stages not being then established,—the transporting of letters was, of course, made by "post-horses:" these were of the slow order and conducted on that principle. It was not until 1756 that the first line of stages was established. The chief office was in Strawberry Alley, at the sign of the "Death of the Fox."

The stage *viâ* Perth Amboy and Trenton made its trip to New York in three days. John Butler was the proprietor, he having been set up in the business by the "Old Hunting Club," to whom Butler had been huntsman and kennel-keeper. The same year "British packet-boats" were first announced between New York and Falmouth. In 1765 a second line of stages was set up for New York, to start twice a week, using three days in going through, at twopence a mile. It was a covered Jersey wagon, without springs, and had four owners or proprietors concerned in its management. The same year the first line of stages, vessels, and wagons is set up from Philadelphia to Baltimore *viâ* Christiana and Frenchtown on Elk River, to go once a week from Philadelphia. In 1766 a third line of new stages for New York, modestly called the "Flying Machine," and intended, of course, to beat the two former ones, was set up to go through in two days,—to start from Elm Street, near Vine Street, under the ownership of John Barnhill. They were to be "good stage wagons, and the seats set on springs." Fare, threepence per mile, or twenty shillings for the whole route. In the winter season, however, the "Flying Machine" was to cleave to the rough roads for three days, as in former times. 115

In the "Weekly Mercury" of March 8, 1759, we find the following quaint advertisement:—

"PHILADELPHIA STAGE WAGGON AND NEW YORK STAGE BOAT

"*performs their stages twice a week.*

"John Butler with his waggon, sets out on Mondays from his house at the sign of the Death of the Fox, in Strawberry Ally, and drives the same day to Trenton Ferry, when Francis Holman meets him, and proceeds on Tuesday to Brunswick, and the passengers and goods being shifted into the waggon of Isaac Fitzrandolph, he takes them to the New Blazing Star to Jacob Fitzrandolph's the same day, where Rubin Fitzrandolph, with a boat well suted, will receive them and take them to New York that night. John Butler returning to Philadelphia on Tuesday with the passengers and goods delivered to him by Francis Holman, will again set out for Trenton Ferry on Thursday and Francis Holman &c. will carry his passengers and goods, with the same expedition as above to New York.

"March 8, 1759."

"In 1773, as perfection advanced, Messrs. C. Bessonett & Co., of Bristol," start stage-coaches—being the first of that character—to run from Philadelphia to New York in two days, for the fare of $4. At the same time "outside passengers" were to pay 20 shillings each.[28]

In 1785 the legislature of New York passed an act of exclusive privilege for ten years to Isaac Vanwick and others to run a four-horse stage from New York to Albany at fourpence a mile. This to encourage the experiment. 116

It would be a curious history to follow up that of stage-coaches until the introduction of railroads and steamboats. It would be a history fraught not only with interest, but showing the enterprise of men under a new mode of government, and the developing of minds which under monarchical rule were chained as it were to ignorance and fanaticism. Liberty and that freedom a republican system gives both to mind and body create a desire

"To learn and know the truth of every thing
Which is co-natural and born with it,
And from the essence of the soul doth spring."

We have stated that Butler was the “kennel-keeper” to the Old Hunting Club. This club was composed of the “first men of the day.” The kennel for the hounds belonging to the company was situated on the brow of the hill north of Callowhill Street, descending to Pegg’s Run, near Second Street. Butler lived in a low brick house adjoining the northwest corner of Callowhill and Second Streets. Fox-hunting was a favorite amusement of the club. When the population of the city increased and game disappeared, the members removed their establishment over to Gloucester, so as to make their hunts in the Jersey pines.

The passion for hunting led to other amusements not quite so interesting or innocent, both as regarded their character and the influence they were calculated to have on society. These were horse-racing and bull-baiting. The latter were frequent, more particularly in the Northern Liberties, and were first supported chiefly by butchers, but gradually assumed a more aristocratical character, being encouraged by many members of the “Old Hunting Club.” John [117] Ord, an Englishman, kept bull-dogs for the purpose of the breed. His establishment was at the corner of Second and High Streets. The cruel amusement of bull-baiting—one which gave to Old Spain a character for cruelty only equalled by that of the Inquisition—continued until about 1798, when Robert Wharton, Esq., was elected mayor of the city. He attended one of these “bull-baits,” and actually, just as they were about to loose the dogs, jumped into the ring, and, calling aloud, said he would arrest the first man who should commence the cruel work. The effect was tremendous: men started back in affright; the very dogs cowed beneath the glance of his flashing eyes; and the bull gave a roar,—no doubt one of rejoicing for his escape. There were no more bull-baitings after that.

William Penn did not enter upon his mission in the colonies unprepared for all the difficulties he had to encounter, nor was he ignorant of the history of those nations and their great cities which ages ago gave them a classic habitation and a home.

Penn evidently had the celebrated city of Babylon in view as a model for Philadelphia; and, from a draft before us, the idea, as far as regularity and order were concerned, appears to have been well conceived, and, as proved, subsequently carried out.

The history of Philadelphia, as it was during its colonial, caterpillar state, and as it is now in dazzling, butterfly beauty under a far different system of government, is familiar to all: yet we shall have occasion, in connection with our subject, to allude to its former history as we proceed.

The post-office scheme of Colonel John Hamilton was well adapted to the wants of the colonists. In 1717 a settled post was established from Virginia to Maryland, which went through all the Northern colonies, bringing and forwarding letters from Boston to Williamsburg, in Virginia, in [118] four weeks.

In 1727 the mail to Annapolis was opened, to go once a fortnight in summer, and once a month in winter, *viâ* New Castle, &c., to the Western Shore, and back to the Eastern Shore, managed by William Bradford in Philadelphia, and by William Parks, of Annapolis.

William Bradford established a press in Philadelphia in 1687, the first-fruits of which was a sheet almanac. The title was, “An Almanac for the Year of the Christian Era 1687; particularly respecting the meridian and latitude of Burlington, but may indifferently suit all places adjacent. By William Leeds, Student in Agriculture. Printed and Sold by William Bradford, near Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania.”

A copy of this rare print is in the Philadelphia Library.

William Bradford was the then deputy postmaster, but, having proved negligent respecting his official accounts, was removed, and Benjamin Franklin was appointed in his stead. Colonel Spottswood was the postmaster-general, at whose instigation Bradford was removed.

Now commenced a new and important era in the postal department of our country, bearing date 1737. It was at that period, however, a very unimportant matter, but in time has become a gigantic institution. We look back to that period now with more interest, for two reasons: one is, to contrast it with the present, and the other, because the name of Benjamin Franklin is identified with the first great move in our postal history.

Franklin assumed the deputy-postmastership in 1737. The only pecuniary available result from it, however, was that it afforded him better facilities for procuring news for his paper, and for its distribution. This paper was originally entitled “The Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences, and Pennsylvania Gazette,” and had reached its thirty-ninth number when its proprietor sold out [119] to Franklin and Meredith. October 2, 1729, was the date of No. 40, edited by B. Franklin. It was reduced in name to “Pennsylvania Gazette.” The increase and emoluments of his paper were still further aided by the diminishing patronage received by his rival Bradford, the displaced postmaster, who had while in office forbidden his post-riders to distribute any papers but his own. Franklin, speaking of this ungenerous conduct on the part of Bradford, said, “I thought so meanly of the practice on his part, that when I afterwards came into the situation I took care never to imitate it.” He also says, in his Life, “Thus Bradford suffered greatly from his neglect in due accounting; and I mention this fact as a lesson to those young men who may be employed in managing affairs for others, that they should always render accounts and make remittances with great clearness and punctuality, &c.”

Perhaps there is no portion of our postal history more interesting than that which characterized its early dawn. It presents a sort of political and financial struggle between trade, commerce, and

a government. Franklin, however, settled the question by making it both a national and commercial feature. It is also interesting to note the difference between the movements of the public mail in those old colonial days, when its bags, at most but a few score pounds in weight, were almost universally carried on horseback, and in these times, when it is speeded in tons by steam!

Perhaps there was not another man in the colonies better adapted for the postmastership than Franklin. He had been, up to that period, an active business-man. He was a printer, editor, compositor, publisher, bookseller, and stationer,—in fact, a modern Faust in the first, and a Mathew Carey in the latter.

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The postal services of the colonies now began to assume a somewhat business form, and, although some of these services were not immediately connected with the department, they were nevertheless highly advantageous to the community: as, for instance, letters arriving from beyond sea were usually delivered on board the ship into the hands of the persons to whom they were addressed; families expecting letters would send a messenger on board for the purpose of receiving letters. Those that were not called for before the sailing of the vessel were taken to the “Coffee-House,” where everybody could make inquiry for them; thus showing that the post-office did not seem to claim a right to distribute them, as now. Persons coming from adjacent settlements called at the “Coffee-House,” and carried away not only their own letters, but all those belonging to their neighborhood. These were called “neighborly posts.”

As the trade of the colonies extended, the system of letter-delivery began to vary; and thus the “neighborly post” system resolved itself into that of the “post-rider.”

Perhaps Boston deserves the credit of the first formation of a foreign postal system; for in 1639 the General Court of Massachusetts issued the following decree:—

“It is ordered that notice be given that Richard Fairbanks his house in Boston is the place appointed for all letters which are brought from beyond the seas, or are to be sent thither to be left with him; and he is to take care that they are to be delivered or sent accordingly to the directions; and he is allowed for every letter a penny; and he must answer all miscarriages through his own neglect in this kind.”

In Philadelphia, the Old Coffee-House system prevailed for many years.

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In Virginia, the mail-bag was passed along from plantation to plantation, and each planter was required by law, passed in 1757, to send a messenger with it to his next neighbor, under a penalty of a hogshead of tobacco. Every man took out his own letters from the bag, and so on to the remainder.

In 1672 the government of New York established a monthly mail to Boston, advertising that those disposed to send letters should bring them to the secretary’s office, where, in a “locket-box,” they shall be preserved till the messenger calls for them; all persons paying the post before the “bagg be sealed up.”

In 1692 the office of postmaster-general for North America was created; but as late as 1704 no post-rider went farther east than Boston, or farther south than Baltimore. When Franklin was appointed postmaster-general, in 1753, the line of posts still began at Boston, and went no farther south than Charleston.

In 1738 Henry Pratt was made riding-postmaster for all the stages between Philadelphia and Newport, Virginia, “*to set out in the beginning of each month, and to return in twenty-four days. To him all merchants, &c. may confide their letters and other business, he having given security to the postmaster-general.*”

In 1744 it was announced in the Gazette that the “Northern post begins his fortnight stages on Tuesday next for the winter season.” In 1745 John Dalley, Surveyor of the State, says that he has just made survey of the road from Trenton to Amboy, and has set up marks at every two miles to guide the traveller!

An attempt was made in 1692 to establish post-routes throughout Virginia. A patent was laid before the Virginia Assembly for making a Mr. Neal postmaster-general of that and other parts of America; but though the Assembly passed an act in favor of this patent, it had no effect. The reason assigned was that it was impossible to carry it into execution, on account of the dispersed situations of the inhabitants. 122

The locality of the colonial post-offices is a matter of doubt; but, as nearly all the public departments were located in private houses, the presumption is that the post-office was, under Bradford, at his printing-office, and it is more than probable that Benjamin Franklin’s residence, corner of Second and Race, was, or at least a portion of it, used for postal purposes. The first located building used for the purpose was on the east side of Water Street, a few doors below High Street,—the same house which had before been the residence of the chief justice.

It is evident from the old records that all along Water Street and Front Street, extending to South, the chief business of the city was transacted. The earliest papers show by their advertisements that many of the goods for retail were sold on Water Street. Even Penn Street at that early period was of some note; and there are to this day many buildings in its immediate vicinity which bear date prior to 1750. As early as 1737 Mrs. Fishbourne kept a store in Water

Street below Walnut, expressly for "ladies' goods." In Water Street above Pine Street, in 1755, there was a fashionable furnishing-store for gentlemen's wearing apparel. The "Old London Coffee-House" stood at the corner of Front and Market Streets: it was the resort of merchants and the *élite* of the city.[29] All that portion of Front and Second Streets extending as far down as Almond was termed "Society Hill," and was the nucleus around and near which the tradesmen, the milliners, mantuamakers, and retail merchants gathered.

William Penn, Jr., had a small house at the corner of Second and South Streets. The scenery in the neighborhood of Second and Dock Streets is described by old historians as being very beautiful. Watson says, "Looking across the 'Dock Creek,' westward, we see all the margin of the creek adorned with every grace of shrubbery and foliage; and beyond it a gently sloping descent from the line of Second Street, whereon were hutted a few of the natives' wigwams, intermixed among the shadowy trees. A bower near there, and a line of deeper verdure on the ground, marked 'the Spring,' where the naiad weeps her emptying urn." 123

In the neighborhood of Union and Front Streets, "Alderman Plumstead" had a splendid garden on the "Sloping Hill:" it was the admiration of the town. In 1739 the Rev. George Whitefield preached to fifteen thousand people on "Society Hill," near to the flag-staff near Front and Pine. There was also a place of resort in this vicinity, called "Cherry Garden." "The Friends' Meeting-House" was also located here, and "George Wells's place" was much admired. The Loxley House, which stood back of 177 South Second Street (old number), below Little Dock, and only within a few years torn down, is well known for its historical reminiscences to our readers. Near to the Loxley House there was a peculiar spring of water, called "Bathsheba's Spring and Bower." The origin of the name is somewhat curious. "Bathsheba Bowers" was the name of a young lady. She erected a small house near to the best spring of water that was in our city. The house she furnished with books, a table, and a cup, in which she, or any that visited her, drank of the spring. Some people gave it the name of "Bathsheba's Bower," and the spring long afterwards bore the name of "Bathsheba's Spring."

It was in the immediate vicinity of this then beautiful portion of the city the first theatre was opened.

Perhaps there are many of our readers unacquainted with the early history of the stage and the drama in Philadelphia. True, much has been written upon the subject; but in almost every instance discrepancies both in dates and names have occurred. 124

In the year 1747, one hundred and nineteen years ago, a company of comedians were performing in this city. As this announcement will no doubt startle many, we must, as pioneers in the cause of truth and the drama, be chronological as well as logical in establishing the fact.

The state of society at the period alluded to above was different from what it is now. A feeble, sickly spirit of aristocracy, even at that early stage of our history, disgraced alike the moral and intellectual character of those who caught the infection; and hence a bitter feeling existed among the various classes making up the great body politic. This dangerous foe to all social and religious forms was brought over to the colonies by a few decayed branches of the nobility-trees of England, who had established a sort of "West End" fraternity along Front Street below Spruce (in the immediate vicinity of the Loxley House), and which was known for many years as Society Hill. Broad lines of distinction were drawn between the classes, and mechanics were looked upon as being so far beneath the consideration of these "Malaprops" of real life that servants had to negotiate all business transactions: *the quality had nothing to do with them*!

In the principal streets, such as Second, Front, Spruce, and even as far down as South Street, various artisans, shopkeepers, and others had established themselves in business; and it was here the first attempt was made to enact plays and lay the foundation of the drama's temple.

The Quakers, and the more sober portion of other denominations, left no means untried to break up what they termed "these Satan-like doings." It is true, these exhibitions were not publicly announced, and the citizens generally were not aware of their secret place of exhibiting "profane plays." Private as they were, however, sufficient publicity was given to them to create an alarm among a class of people possessing all the primitive qualities, as well as virtues, of their great founder. 125

The dawn of literature in this country (*that is, admitting it ever had a morning*) dates at a much later period than the year 1747. It is true many obstacles stood in the way of its advancement; apart from which, the colonists were not a reading community, and the press throughout the land might be likened unto "angels' visits, few and far between." It is true the colonists could boast of a few names, whose works bear date as far back as 1640. In 1639 manuscripts were used in courts. The laws by which the colonies were governed were not printed until 1641. The art of printing was introduced into North America in 1639. The first printing-press established in the States was put up at Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1639, by Stephen Day. In 1640 he published the Bay Psalm-Book. The year 1678 may be said to form an era in our literature; for at that time John Foster, Boston, published the works of Anne Bradstreet; in 1676, Peter Folger wrote and published his famous "Looking-Glass for the Times." Various poems, orations, sermons, &c. &c., were published; but it was not until 1720 the *first play was written on the American continent*; and we deem it of sufficient importance to engross it in our sketch of the American stage.

Benjamin Coleman, or, as some wrote it, Colman, was born in Boston, October 19, 1676. While at Harvard College, he wrote the tragedy of "Gustavus Vasa;" and this was the first play enacted by

[126] a company of amateurs in the colonies. The history of our literature is associated with that of the press: without the press it would have been as learning was when vellum and beech received the impression of certain figures called letters, and were sold at enormous prices, in proportion to the intellectual and physical labor bestowed upon their productions. The moment the press was put in operation in Connecticut, poetry, Pallas-like, sprang from its mystic womb, and, if unlike Pallas, completely armed, was at least so decently clad that criticism faltered at the threshold of censure. The next play written and the first published in the colonies was “The Prince of Parthia,” by Thomas Godfrey: it was printed in 1768. A copy of it is in the Philadelphia Library. This author was the son of Thomas Godfrey, a glazier, and inventor of the celebrated quadrant now in use. He was born in Philadelphia, in the year 1736. We never refer to these pioneers in the cause of our drama and literature without feeling a desire to moralize. Indeed, to look back over a series of years, and call up images to the mind which have long since passed away, strikes so forcibly the conviction of man’s identity with the infinite works of God, that he trembles, while he meditates, and feels his own insignificance while mourning o’er “visions fled.”

They are brought up to our view by the “Old Mortalities” of every generation; and the selfsame enthusiastic feeling which prompted them to remember coming ages urges us to fulfil our destiny in this. It would be curious to us in this generation, if it were possible, to raise up the curtain of the mouldering past and bring to view “the things that were,”—paint the lowly dwellings of our ancestors, the simplicity and primitive qualities of their minds, and the stern moral rectitude of their even lives. All this would contrast fearfully with what we are now, not only as regards our temporal but our spiritual state. [127] If we differ from our good old friends of the eighteenth century, it is on the subject of the drama and the strange notion they had of its immoral tendency; for we never could imagine that the choicest gems from the British poets—conveyed to us through the medium of the stage—could have any other effect than to exalt the mind, expand the intellect, and open to the view the rich and inexhaustible mental wealth of the mimic world. It would be curious, we say, if it were possible to describe that state of society which could exist without *music*, *poetry*, and *painting*,—a state of society no doubt perfectly moral, strictly pure, but rather stiffly starched with the old-fashioned notions of propriety and the right of enjoyment. At that period, dancing was prohibited, and a fencing-master from Paris almost hunted down for attempting to teach the art in this city. It is true, a few wax figures and Punch and Judy made their appearance on some holidays; but they soon *melted* away before the heat of puritanical sunshine.

We now come to the first attempt at theatrical representations. In the year 1747 a company was formed, composed chiefly of young men whose education and birth placed them in positions to advance the cause of science or art, as their tastes and inclinations might have led them to advocate. A family by the name of Courtland, an English family, had but recently arrived in this country, and, possessing many of the prevailing notions at that time popular in England, their astonishment at our total ignorance of the drama and its literature was fully shown by a display of their knowledge and a familiar acquaintance with the living dramatists of that period in England. It is not our purpose to connect the name of Courtland with the organization of this company: indeed, such a thing would be almost impossible, inasmuch as the association was as secret as were the names of its members. One thing, however, was evident: a taste for dramatic reading soon became prevalent, [128] and the plays of Shakspeare found favor even in the eyes of the godly. Young Courtland, the leader of “Society Hill” boys, soon inoculated his companions with many of their follies, and the playgrounds about the Loxley House resounded with their shouts. From this circle came forth the pioneers of our drama. A companion of Courtland’s, by the name of Aitken, was the first to propose a dramatic association. The name of Garrick and the uprising of the English drama in London had already enlisted many here in its favor.

The place of meeting for the early pioneership of the drama was held in a house on Second Street adjoining the then gardens of the Loxley House, and immediately connected with an old white building, recently altered into stores, and which was used in our Revolutionary War as a hospital. The front portion of this dramatic temple was used as a boot and shoe store; the rear was occupied by the proprietor’s family, and the range of rooms over the back building was the scene of the drama’s birth. It was here “Richard III.” was enacted, and it was here the few plays that had crossed the Atlantic found favor in the eyes of the aspirants for histrionic fame, and whose dramatic efforts kindled a flame in many a youthful breast, which has sent its light down through the mimic world to brighten it in all ages.

A great sensation was created by this theatrical outbreak, and on its reaching the ears of the Quakers, they, with others opposed to such “unlawful proceedings and profane exhibitions,” had the matter brought before the council, or, rather, the recorder, and we find upon his office-books, bearing date January 8, 1749, gravely written, “The recorder then acquainted the board that certain persons had taken upon them to act plays in this city, and, as he was informed, intended [129] to make a frequent practice thereof, which it was feared would be attended with mischievous effect, such as the encouraging of idleness, and drawing great sums of money from weak and inconsiderate people, who are apt to be fond of such kinds of entertainments, though the performance be ever so mean and contemptible. Whereupon the board unanimously requested the magistrates to take most effectual measures for suppressing this disorder, by sending for the actors and binding them to their good behavior, or by such other means as they should judge most proper.”

This proceeding, strange as it may seem, produced quite a contrary effect; for the company, which was now regularly organized, and was made subservient to the interests of all concerned,

actually stepped out from behind the law and boldly asked permission from the authorities to enact plays in some more public place other than the obscure spot they had selected. Backed by the aristocracy of "Society Hill," their application was granted.

What aided to strengthen this company and give it character was the fact of several members of a West India company arriving here, who immediately joined them; and thus Richard III., Hamlet, Beau Stratagem, &c., were played in a manner to please the "million."

The Philadelphia company left the Quaker City at the close of 1749, and opened a temporary theatre in a wooden building in Nassau Street, New York. A writer, alluding to this company and the early history of the drama, says, "The earliest theatrical performances, in the recollection of the oldest inhabitants, were in a store on Crugar's wharf, near Old Slip, by a company of Thespians, composed of 'choice spirits' of a certain order. They were roystering young men, full of tricks and mischief, who used to play cricket in the fields, and who spent their nights at the Boat-House, on Broad Street, near where the United States Public Stores now stand." Our readers will recognize in these young men the Thespian company from the Quaker City. After playing here with some success, the company left for Virginia.

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They then went to Williamsburg, Virginia, and, although William Dunlap denies the fact in his "History of the American Stage," yet it is true that under the presidency of Thomas Lee the Philadelphia company, strengthened by the addition made to it in New York, obtained permission to erect a theatre in Williamsburg, and in the year 1750 it was begun and finished. They played here in 1751.[30]

Hallam opened at this very theatre on the 5th of September, 1752, and on the evening of July 13, 1752, the Philadelphia and New York company opened their second new theatre in Annapolis, and performed "The Beau Stratagem" and the farce of "The Virgin Unmasked:" boxes, 10*s.*; pit, 7*s.* 6*d.* Richard III. was performed twice,—the character of Richard by Mr. Wynel, and that of Richmond by Mr. Herbert. Mr. Eyniason, Mr. Aitken, and Mr. Courtland are the only names handed down to us as belonging to the colonial company.

As Hallam's company arrived at Yorktown in June, 1752, and did not open until September at Williamsburg, there is no doubt that a portion of his company joined Eyniason at Annapolis and played until the opening at Williamsburg.

The first play, therefore, acted in this country by what may be termed a regular company (and this company was composed of the old actors, and two or three of Hallam's, viz.: Wynel and Herbert) was "The Beau Stratagem," and the farce of "The Virgin Unmasked." After the organization of Hallam's company the members of the old became incorporated with it. The Annapolis theatre, which in 1752 was called the New Theatre, was built of brick, and was calculated to hold over five hundred persons. Dunlap says *this was the first theatre erected in this country*, not being advised of the one erected in Williamsburg in 1750. In justice, however, to Dunlap, the author has a letter from the veteran of the drama within a short time before his death, wherein he acknowledges his error and does justice to Burke the historian, and admits the justice of our correction made in the year 1835.

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The following are the names of a portion of the company who played in the "The Beau Stratagem:"—Mr. Eyniason, Mr. Bell, Mr. Miller, Mr. Love, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Aitken, Mrs. Love, and Mrs. Becceley. These we have every reason to believe were of the old company.

COPY OF THE FIRST PLAY-BILL ISSUED BY THE ENGLISH COMPANY AT WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA, SEPTEMBER 5, 1752.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Bassanio	Mr. Rigby.
Antonio	Mr. Clarkson.
Gratiano	Mr. Singleton.
Salanio and the Duke	Mr. Herbert.
Salarino and Gobbo	Mr. Wynel.
Launcelot and Tubal	Mr. Hallam.
Shylock	Mr. Malone.
Servant to Portia	Master L. Hallam.
Portia	Mrs. Hallam.
Jessica (first appearance on the stage)	Miss Hallam.
Nerissa	Miss Palmer.

LETHE.

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Æsop	Mr. Clarkson.
Old Man	Mr. Malone.
Fine Gentleman	Mr. Singleton.
Frenchman	Mr. Rigby.
Charon	Mr. Herbert.
Mercury	Mr. Adcock.
Drunken Man and Tattoo	Mr. Hallam.

John	Mr. Wynel.
Mrs. Tattoo	Miss Palmer.
Fine Lady	Mrs. Hallam.

The above cast includes in the bill the names of all who composed the company, with the exception of Mrs. Clarkson, Mrs. Rigby, and Adam Hallam, a child.

After playing here for a while under circumstances by no means pleasing, the manager cast his eyes to the principal cities of the country, and selected New York as the first step towards the establishing of the drama among the *élite*. At that period the *first families* in Virginia had not assumed that prerogative. Hallam opened his first place of amusement in the city of New York on the 17th day of September, 1753, with “Conscious Lovers,” and “Damon and Phillida.” The site was originally occupied by the old Dutch Church on Nassau Street. As a matter of history, as well as of curiosity, we append the opening bill:—

BY HIS EXCELLENCY’S AUTHORITY.

By a company of comedians from London, at the New Theatre in Nassau Street, the present evening, being the 17th of September (1753), will be performed a comedy called

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS.

Young Bevel	Mr. Rigby.
Mr. Sealand	Mr. Malone.
Sir John Bevel	Mr. Bell.
Myrtle	Mr. Clarkson.
Cimberton	Mr. Miller.
Humphry	Mr. Adcock.
Daniel	Master L. Hallam.
Tom	Mr. Singleton.
Phillis	Mrs. Becceley.
Mrs. Sealand	Mrs. Clarkson.
Lucinda	Miss Hallam.
Isabella	Mrs. Rigby.
Indiana	Mrs. Hallam.

To which will be added the Ballet Farce of

DAMON AND PHILLIDA.

Arcas	Mr. Bell.
Ogon	Mr. Rigby.
Korydon	Mr. Clarkson.
Cymon	Mr. Miller.
Damon	Mr. Adcock.
Phillida	Mrs. Becceley.

A new occasional prologue to be spoken by Mr. Rigby.

An epilogue (addressed to the ladies) by Mrs. Hallam.

Prices.—Box, 8*s.*; Pit, 6*s.*; Gallery, 3*s.*

No person whatever to be admitted behind the scenes.

N. B.—Gentlemen and ladies that choose tickets may have them at the new printing-office in Beaver Street.

To begin at six o’clock.

The days of performance, were Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and continued so for half a century.

The city of Philadelphia was the next move by this company on the checker-board of the mimic world.

THE PHILADELPHIA STAGE.

The Nassau Street, New York, closed on the 18th of March, 1754, and Hallam accepted a pressing invitation from a number of gentlemen in Philadelphia, and opened on the 15th of April, 1754, in a sail-loft or warehouse belonging to William Plumstead, Esq.,[31] situated in Water Street, southeast corner of the first alley above Pine. This building extended to the wharf. This was certainly a most curious locality: yet at that period the neighborhood of its site was almost *aristocratical*, for “Society Hill,” extending all along Front Street to Almond, was the theatre of as much fashionable parade and display as Chestnut Street is now. There stood at that period several finely-built houses, and its proximity to the “Loxley House” and “White Hall” gave it a character it certainly could not claim at the present day: we mean, of course, for its locality as a theatre. There is also another, and perhaps a paramount one; and that is, it was the only place they could get. It was here, on this lone spot, the first regular company of comedians opened their Philadelphia campaign. The play was the “Fair Penitent,” and “Miss in her Teens.”

We present the cast of the tragedy:—

Sciotto	Mr. Malone.
Horatio	Mr. Rigby.
Lothario	Mr. Singleton.
Altamont	Mr. Clarkson.
Catista	Mrs. Hallam.
Lavinia	Mrs. Adcock.
Sucetta	Miss Hallam.

Prices of admission.—Box, 4*s.*; Gallery, 2*s.* 6*d.*

Having given an account of the first theatrical exhibition given in this city, and the site of the first theatre, we come now to the second, which may, in fact, be termed the first erected for legitimate purposes. The company continued to play at Plumstead's warehouse, gaining favor gradually with the public, until June, having remained open two months, and playing to crowded houses. On the 17th of June they played "The Careless Husband" by particular request, the proceeds of which were appropriated to the poor of the city. It is a curious fact in the history of the drama, and one which reflects but little credit upon its opponents, that in almost every case of opposition the belligerent parties were bought over by *money*, and even this came into their hands as *donations to the poor*; but whether the poor ever received a penny of it is a matter time 135 and eternity have already reconciled. Even at the present day there are classes of men whose opinion of actors and theatres would undergo a *material* change if a portion of the proceeds of the theatrical representations were poured into their laps, and used, as the phrase goes, *for the poor*.

In the year 1759 David Douglas opened the second theatre in Philadelphia. This building stood at the southwest corner of South and Vernon Streets. It was built entirely of wood, weather-boarded and painted a dark lead-color. It was a large building, and calculated to hold a thousand persons. Douglas had succeeded to the throne of the "mimic world" in consequence of the death of Mr. Hallam, whose widow he married. Douglas was a man of enterprise, and ambitious to establish the regular drama in the Western World. In the pursuit of this object he at once determined to erect temples to the histrionic muses which in after-years would lead to the establishing of others, whose classic beauty and architectural design might emulate the proudest edifices of the land and find their model in Roman superstructure. In doing this, he had to contend against the prejudices of the people, and select such plays as were calculated to disarm opposition and enlist the liberal in his favor. Thus, he opened the old South Street Theatre with the tragedy of "Douglass," written, as was stated in the bills, by Mr. Home, minister of the Kirk of Scotland. This was followed by "Hamlet," which play, it was said, furnished a moral lesson for youth and the regulation of their conduct through life. On the 27th of December a benefit was given towards raising a fund for "purchasing an organ to the college hall in this city, and instructing the charity children in psalmody."[32]

136 On the following evening "Hamlet" was played for the benefit of the Pennsylvania Hospital, and the theatre closed for the season. The members of the company—at least the chief portion—were Mr. and Mrs. Douglas, Miss Cheer, Mrs. Morris,[33] Mrs. Crane, Mrs. Allyn, and Miss Hallam. In addition to the company which we have already mentioned in another chapter, we find the names of Quelch, Tomlinson, Stuart, Tremaine, Reed, and Morris.

Francis Mentges, afterwards an officer in our service, was the dancing performer. While he danced he assumed the name of Francis. Miss Cheer was the *Lady Macbeth* of the day, and Morris, the husband of the lady whose unfortunate fate we have stated, was the low comedian: his name is to be found in various companies, enacting old men, up to as late a period as 1800. Dunlap says, "Those that can look back to 1788 will remember him as a little, shrivelled old man, with a voice palsied with age, having for his second wife a tall, elegant woman, the favorite comedy lady, and the admiration of the public."

The Presbyterian Synod, in July, 1759, formally addressed the governor and legislature to prevent the opening. The Friends made their application to Judge William Allen to suppress the representations. His reply was that "he had got more moral virtue from plays than he had from sermons." As a sequel, it was long remembered and spoken of, that the night the theatre opened, and on which he intended to visit, *he was called to mourn the death of his wife*! The motto over the stage was:—

Totus mundis agit histrionem.

There are many persons who confound this with the third theatre, erected by Douglas. That no further doubt may exist upon its site, three brick buildings are situated, as stated, at the 137 southwest corner of South and Vernon Streets.

Society Hill, which extended from Spruce Street (gradually rising, having its summit on Pine Street) to the Swedes' Church, was the fashionable portion of the city. At that period they had "Cherry Garden" on Society Hill; the "Friends' Meeting-House," the "theatre," "George Wells's place." They had also a flag-staff erected on Society Hill, under which Whitefield preached. This staff stood at the corner of Pine and Front Streets. Alderman Plumstead's garden was situated in Union Street, and it was the admiration of the town.

In the year 1724 a slack- and tight-rope exhibition was given by a company of men and women, at the corner of South and Front Streets. They continued their antics for twenty nights to gaping crowds. This was the first exhibition of the kind ever given in the city.

Douglas, finding the more respectable portion of the community disposed to encourage theatricals, selected a more eligible site for the building of another theatre, and for that purpose fixed on a vacant lot situated at the southwest corner of South and Apollo Streets, above Fourth: hence the error of many historians who confound this with the one at the corner of Vernon Street. This theatre was erected in 1760. Little attention was paid to design in the building. The view from the boxes was intercepted by large pillars supporting the upper tier and roof. It was lighted by plain oil lamps, without glasses, a row of which was placed in front of the stage. The scenery was dingy,—chamber-scenes taken from descriptions of old castles; and altogether the whole presented a dark and sombre appearance. The stage-box on the east side in after-years was fitted up for President Washington, whenever he honored the theatre with his presence, at which time "The Poor Soldier" was played by "desire." 138

Much was written and published at this time against the immoral tendency of the stage; and a cursory glance at the public papers would lead to a belief that the introduction of stage-plays was deprecated as being a greater evil than pestilence and famine. The fathers of the Church were quoted most appositely on the occasion, and the poor players were near being confounded with the weight of authority against them; for, unfortunately, they could not "quote Scripture for their purpose." Occasionally some one was bold enough to raise his voice in their defence, but it was heard as the small note of the oaten reed amidst the braying of the warlike trumpet. More, however, is effected by steady perseverance than by violent measures. The players pursued the "even tenor of their way," and as the mass of the people did not foresee the evil consequences which the more enlightened apprehended, they attracted full audiences, which kept up their spirits in spite of the papal bulls incessantly issued against them.

We have here to correct an error of Mr. J. F. Watson in his celebrated "Annals of Philadelphia." In doing so, the writer of this would merely remark that this error of Watson's evidently arises from his distaste to the subject of theatres; for had he exercised a twentieth part of his usual judgment in tracing past occurrences, incidents, &c., this would not have occurred. Page 471, first volume of Watson's Annals, we find this paragraph:—"In 1760 a large building, constructed of wood, situated in South Street above Fourth Street, was opened," &c. &c. "The managers were Hallam & Henry."

Mr. John Henry, the partner of Hallam in after-years, arrived in New York from England in 1767, and made his first appearance at the John Street Theatre, New York, December 7 of that year. 139 The company was still Douglas's .

Mr. Wemyss, in his Chronology of the American Stage, says that the John Street Theatre opened December 7, 1767, under the management of Hallam & Henry, and in the same book announces his first appearance in America, on that very evening, as *Aimwell* in The Beau Stratagem. Hallam & Henry did not form a partnership until the 21st of November, 1784. Douglas having gone to Jamaica, where he received a judgeship under the British crown, he relinquished the sceptre of the American company to Hallam, his step-son, who took for his partner John Henry. How our friend Wemyss could fall into so gross an error is entirely beyond our comprehension. The South Street Theatre opened under Hallam & Henry's management in 1786.

The members of the old South Street company, in 1761, consisted of Messrs. Douglas, Hallam, Allyn, Morris, Quelch, Tomlinson, Street, Reed, Tremaine, and Master A. Hallam, Mesdames Douglas, Morris, Crane, Allyn, and Miss Hallam.

To the antiquarian the subject of our drama and stage would afford a wide range for the display of his genius in that line, as they embrace the very "*Mémoires pour Servir*" for a volume.

"POST TENEBRAS LUX."

"After darkness comes light."

We have referred to these reminiscences of the olden time simply to contrast the past with the present; for in tracing up the progress of any one institution connected with the government, it necessarily follows that every thing else must have a corresponding progressive interest. Reminiscences, however, are but retrogressive shadows that come over us in their gloom, as they conjure up the spirits of those who have long since passed away from the earth, as have all those 140 scenes which the "Old Mortalities" of the present take delight in repainting. "Passing Away" is but the result of the onward march of Time:—

"Still he goes,
And goes, and goes, and doth not pass away;
He rises with the golden morning, calmly,
And with the moon at night. Methinks I see
Him stretching wide his mighty wings,
Floating forever o'er the crowds of men,
Like a huge vulture with its prey beneath."

In 1753, on the death of the postmaster-general for America, Benjamin Franklin and Colonel William Hunter, of Virginia, by a joint commission from the English postmaster-general, were appointed to succeed him. The two American deputies were to have £600 per annum between

them, provided they could raise the sum from the net proceeds of their office. The colonial post-office receipts had never been sufficient to pay a shilling of revenue into the English treasury; and to render them productive enough to yield the compensation mentioned, various reforms were necessary, and Franklin immediately set about introducing them. In the summer of 1753 he started out on a tour of inspection, and visited every post-office in the colony, except that of Charleston, infusing new vigor into the service, and putting the whole upon an improved footing.

After four years' almost unremitting attention to the postal service, the new system began to tell, and the results were that the receipts soon yielded the salary of the postmaster, and considerably increased the revenue of the government. As he himself stated, it "yielded three times as much clear profit to the crown as the post-office of Ireland did."

141

As the modern postal system was based in part upon that of Charles II.'s time, much of it remains to this day; but the vast improvements made give to the original plan what can be better expressed in the language of the Emperor Augustus: "I found Rome all brick, and left it all marble." Thus the postal department, then in a *debris* state of chaotic confusion, presents at the present time an institution wherein order and system reign supreme.

Franklin made every department pay. The carrying of newspapers was made a source of revenue: previous to his administration they had been carried free. He charged each subscriber who received a newspaper by mail nine pence a year for fifty miles, and eighteen pence a year for one hundred miles. Post-riders received orders to take all newspapers offered, instead of only those issued by a *postmaster*. Franklin himself being both postmaster and newspaper publisher, this action on his part was considered worthy the man and his position. The speed of the post-riders was accelerated by his energy, and their number increased to meet the public demand.

In 1753 the delivery of letters by the penny post was first begun, and at the same time letters were regularly advertised. Letters from all the neighboring counties were sent to Philadelphia, and lay there until called for.

Our readers can form some idea of the mode of travelling between cities, when we state that Franklin improved on the old system by starting a mail from Philadelphia, to run three times a week in summer, to New York and Boston, and once a week in winter. To get an answer from Boston a Philadelphian had been obliged to wait six weeks. Franklin reduced the time to three. The rates of postage were also materially reduced. The rate across the ocean was fixed at one shilling, and, strange as it may seem, it has not changed since, although one hundred years have elapsed.

142

Most of the post-roads then were mere bridle-paths through forests. "Even," says a writer, "between Amboy and Trenton, the very road along which Franklin the runaway apprentice had wearily trudged in the rain in 1723, had as late as 1775 a stake set up every two miles to keep the traveller from going astray."

In 1765 Mrs. Franklin, writing to her husband, then in England, says, "The Southern mail has not come in, nor has the Virginia mail, for more than two months." Little intercourse at that period. The name of Franklin in connection with science, and his being deputy postmaster-general, was not only a household word from Boston to Charleston, but was also extensively known in Europe. Only two American names were then familiar to the Old World,—Jonathan Edwards in the religious world, and Benjamin Franklin in the circle of science. Jonathan Edwards was born at Windsor, in the province of Connecticut, in 1703. He graduated at Yale College, and afterwards was a tutor in the establishment. He was ordained in the ministry in 1727. His chief works are a "Treatise on the Religious Affections," "An Enquiry into the Notion of Freedom of Will," "A Treatise on Original Sin," "Religious Narratives," &c.

In 1756 an attempt was made, instigated by some political enemies, to induce the postmaster-general to remove Franklin from office, as being a "factious and troublesome man." As the cause assigned was so trifling, the postmaster-general sent his "deputy" a letter of reprimand, or rather one of gentle reproof. So the matter ended.

A copy of the "Gazette" bearing date 1747 is in the possession of a gentleman of this city. Published by B. Franklin, Postmaster, and D. Hall. All post-office notices and letters remaining in the post-office were published in the "Gazette."

143

In 1774 Benjamin Franklin was very summarily dismissed from the office of postmaster. The letter from the postmaster-general stated simply "that the king had found it necessary to dismiss him from the office of deputy postmaster-general of America."

It is not necessary for us to give the readers the reasons for this act, as the history of Franklin in connection with the events preceding the Revolution will fully explain them. *The colonies were in a state of incipient revolution.*

The course pursued by the British Government was such that, under the excitement arising from its acts, the colonies declared themselves constitutionally exempt from all obedience to the measures of the British Parliament, and that the government of the provinces was in fact dissolved.

Thus, the Congress held in Philadelphia on the 5th of September, 1774, will ever be remembered and celebrated in the annals of history as the first page dedicated to liberty. It was a congress of men who met to decide the question whether one man had the power and the right to rule the

million, or the million the right to govern themselves. The success of our Revolution decided the question; and counter-rebellions and revolutions can never change that *base*, upon which is erected Liberty's throne.

Franklin arrived in Philadelphia, from England, on the evening of May 5, 1775, and the very next day the Assembly of Pennsylvania, then in session, appointed him a delegate to the Second Continental Congress, which was to convene in Philadelphia four days after. The people of America had everywhere become exasperated beyond all further forbearance. The blood of their countrymen had been wantonly shed by British troops, at Lexington and Concord, in April; and the call to arms was now ringing through the land.

The second Congress, held May 10, 1775, was remarkable for its action at a moment when liberty was as a "waif" in the political world, liable at every breeze to be lost in the vortex of its revolutions. It set the seal on British rule in the colonies forever! It was the first move morally and physically made against tyranny and usurpation, and was only surpassed by that which inaugurated the Fourth of July, 1776, as the birthday of freedom! 144

One of the acts of its members was to adopt the armies of New England, and elect General George Washington commander-in-chief, and also to adopt a platform which made colonial resistance, to use a modern term, "a military necessity."

Another of their measures was to correct the postal department, which during Franklin's absence had been somewhat neglected. A committee was appointed, of which Franklin was made chairman, to consider the best means of establishing posts for the conveyance of letters and intelligence throughout the country. Franklin was at home in this employment, having served a long apprenticeship and studied its workings both theoretically and practically. He drew up a plan for the purpose, and laid it before the committee, who approved of it at once; and it was eventually the same as that upon which the post-office of America is now conducted.

The committee recommended that a postmaster-general be appointed for the UNITED STATES, who should hold his office at Philadelphia, and be allowed a salary of one thousand dollars for himself, and three hundred and forty dollars per annum for a secretary and controller, "with power to appoint such and so many deputies as to him may seem proper and necessary;" that a line of posts should be appointed, under the direction of the postmaster-general, from Falmouth, in New England, to Savannah, in Georgia, "with as many cross-posts as he shall think fit; that the allowance of the deputies in lieu of salary and all contingent expenses shall be twenty per cent. on the sums they collect and pay into the general post-office, annually, when the whole is under, or not exceeding, one thousand dollars, and ten per cent. for all sums above that amount a year; that the several departments account quarterly with the general post-office, and the postmaster-general annually with the Continental treasurers, when he shall pay into the receipt of the said treasurers the profits of the post-office, and if the necessary expenses of this establishment should exceed the produce of it, the deficiency shall be made good by the United Colonies, and paid to the postmaster-general by the Continental treasurers." 145

This plan, and resolutions accompanying it, were submitted to Congress, who adopted it, and, taking into consideration the interest Franklin had always taken in the department, and also his summary dismissal under the "British dynasty," unanimously elected Benjamin Franklin, Esq., postmaster-general for one year, and until another Congress assembled. Eighteen months had passed since his dismissal, when he now found himself reinstated in office with higher rank and augmented authority. Nay, more: he was postmaster-general under a new ruling power,—a power that was uprising like the glorious sun from the mists and the gloom of a long, dreary night of wrong and oppression. It was now the dawn of a new era in the history of men and of nations. *It was the dawn of freedom!*

The people made a law; and as there cannot be rational freedom where there are arbitrary restraints, they adopted Cicero's maxim, and proclaimed liberty as the law of the land:—

"*Libertas est potestas faciendi id quod jure liceat.*"

One of the strongest tests by which the progressive prosperity of a country may be ascertained is that of its postal department. It forms a chain which links together all private and public interests; it links state to state, countries to countries, nations to nations. It is the alphabet of the world! 146

Benjamin Franklin appointed Richard Bache, his son-in-law, deputy postmaster. They established mail-riders to carry the mails, and stationed them at distances of twenty-five miles, to deliver from one to the other and return to their starting-places: they travelled night and day, and were men selected for their honesty and sobriety.

At the same time it was ordered that three advice-boats should be established, "one to ply between North Carolina and such ports as shall be most convenient to the place where Congress shall be sitting," one other between the State of Georgia and the same port. The boats to be armed, and to be freighted by individuals for the sake of diminishing the public expense.

The state of the country was such that it became necessary to enlist the services of the most prominent men in its cause, both at home and abroad; and who so popular then as Benjamin Franklin? A writer speaking of him and the period says, "With a fame unequalled in brilliancy by that of any other man of those times, not only as a philosopher and sage, but as a profound political thinker, and an undaunted asserter of the rights and liberties of his country, Franklin's

name was now familiarly known and revered throughout all Europe."

Is it to be wondered at, therefore, that he should have been appointed one of the commissioners to France? The commissioners first appointed for this purpose, on the 26th of September, 1776, were Franklin, Silas Dean, and Thomas Jefferson. The last, however, declined, and Arthur Lee, of Virginia, was put in his place. Mr. Lee and Mr. Dean were both in Europe, the former having been employed several years in England as a colonial agent, and the latter having been sent out in the preceding March by the committee of secret correspondence, with a view to diplomatic as well as commercial objects; and Franklin, after a boisterous voyage in the United States sloop-of-war *Reprisal*, Captain Wickes, and after escaping from the guns of several British cruisers, met them in Paris in the latter part of December, 1776. This portion of history is familiar to all. 147

In the absence of Franklin, Richard Bache attended to the post-office business, and in all respects carried out his father-in-law's plans.

In March, 1777, Franklin received from Congress a commission as minister to Spain.

After residing in Europe nearly nine years, acting in the capacities named, he returned to America, and arrived in Philadelphia on the 14th of September, 1785. His return was greeted with every mark of personal regard and public respect.

We will close this portion of our postal history, and Franklin's connection with it, by the following letter, which he wrote to Mr. Thomson shortly after his return home. It is to be regretted that it is a *finale* which reflects but little credit on our government at that time, and gives occasion for our opponents to repeat the old saying that "republics are ungrateful." Nor is Franklin's case an isolated one.

Franklin, speaking of unrequited services to his friend, says,—

"I see by the minutes," speaking of Congress, "that they have allowed Mr. Lee handsomely for his services in England before his appointment to France, in which services I and Mr. Bollan co-operated with him, and have had no such allowance, and since his return he has been very properly rewarded with a good place, as well as my friend Mr. Jay,—though these are trifling compensations in comparison with what was granted by the king to Mr. Gerard on his return to America. But how different is what happened to me! On my return from England, in 1775, the Congress bestowed on me the office of postmaster-general, for which I was very thankful. It was, indeed, an office I had some kind of right to, as having previously greatly enlarged the revenue of the post by the regulations I had contrived and established while I possessed it under the crown. When I was sent to France, I left it in the hands of my son-in-law, who was to act as my deputy. But soon after my departure it was taken from him and given to Mr. Hazzard. When the English ministry thought fit to deprive me of the office (that of postmaster), they left me, however, the privilege of receiving and sending my letters free of postage, which is the usage when a postmaster is not displaced for misconduct in the office; but in America I have ever since had the postage demanded of me, which since my return from France has amounted to about fifty pounds, much of it occasioned by my having acted as minister there." 148

There are so many incidents connected with Benjamin Franklin—incidents associated alike with our country's history, its literature, art, and science—that we are not at all surprised at the many editions and variety of style of works written expressly to connect his name with them. We annex a pleasing little sketch of some of the early scenes of his life, from notes furnished by Thomas J. Wharton, Esq., to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in 1830:—

"The year 1719 deserves particular remembrance in the annals of Pennsylvania, as that in which the first newspaper was printed in the State. These potent engines exercise so vast an influence for good or evil over men's minds and actions in the present age, that a particular history of their rise and progress would be no idle or unprofitable task, though out of place here. The first number of the 'American Weekly Mercury,' as it was called, appeared on the 22d of December, 1719, on a half-sheet of the quarto size, and purported to be printed 'by Andrew Bradford at *the* Second Street,' and to be sold by him and by John Copson in Market Street. The price was ten shillings per annum; and this was quite as much as it deserved. Extracts from foreign journals generally about six months old, and two or three badly-printed advertisements, formed the substance of the journal. The office of the editor was a sinecure,—at least his *pen* seems to have been seldom employed, and little information can be derived from the journal concerning the existing condition of Philadelphia. Occasionally a bill of mortality tells us that one adult and one child died during a certain week, and even that is beyond the usual number; for some weeks appear to have passed without a single death. From the following advertisement, which appears in No. 17, something of the customs and state of things at the period may be gathered:—'These are to give notice that Matthew Cowley, a skinner by trade, is removed from Chestnut Street to dwell in Walnut Street, *near the Bridge*, where all persons may have their buck and doeskins dressed, &c.' 'He also can furnish *you* with bindings, &c.' What new ideas of Walnut Street does not this hint about a *bridge* give us! and how plenty must deer have been in those times, when *all persons* are invited to have their skins dressed by Matthew Cowley! And then what a familiar and village-sort of acquaintance with everybody does not the transition at the end, from the third to the second person plural, imply! 'He also can furnish you with bindings, &c.' 149

"Nine years after the appearance of the American Mercury, the Philadelphia press was delivered of a second newspaper, to which the modest title was given of 'The Universal Instructor of all Arts and Sciences, and Pennsylvania Gazette.' In his inimitable autobiography Franklin has 150

immortalized Keimer, the eccentric publisher of this journal, whose vanity and selfishness, whose wild notions upon religion and morals, and whose turn for poetry and gluttony are so happily and graphically delineated. Franklin, from whom Keimer had stolen the idea of a second newspaper, attacked it in a series of papers published in Bradford's journal and called The Busy-Body.[34] The 'Universal Instructor' soon fell into decay, and then into Franklin's hands, by whom it was very skilfully managed, both for his own profit and for the interest and edification of the public. An editorial notice in one of Franklin's papers proves, in rather a ludicrous way, how badly Philadelphia was supplied at the time (1736) with printing-presses. What was called the *outer form* was printed reversely or upside down to the inner form, and the following apology is offered:—'The printer hopes the irregular publication of this paper will be excused a few times by his town readers, in consideration of his being at Burlington with the press, laboring for the public good to make money more plentiful.'

"It is not generally known that this venerable journal survived till within a year or two of the present time, under the name of 'The Pennsylvania Gazette.' The third newspaper published in Pennsylvania was 'The Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser,' the first number of which appeared on the 2d of December, 1742; and several other journals shortly afterwards arose, with various success. In 1760 five newspapers were published in the State, all weekly,—three of them printed in the city, one in Germantown, and one in Lancaster. In 1810 the number had increased to sixty-six, of which thirteen were published in Philadelphia; and in 1824 an official return to the postmaster-general stated the number at one hundred and ten, of which eighteen were published in Philadelphia, eleven of them daily: a prodigious increase, which argues that the appetite for this food has increased in full proportion with the population. It is perhaps worth adding that the first *daily* newspaper that appeared on the continent of America was published in Philadelphia.

"There are few persons on record to whose individual genius and exertions a community has owed so much as to Dr. Franklin. If William Penn was the political founder of the province, Franklin may perhaps be denominated the architect of its literature, the gifted author of many of its best institutions, and the father of some of the finest features of our character. It is seldom, however, that Providence has vouchsafed such a length of years to such an intellect, and still more seldom that such events occur as those which developed the powers and capacities of Franklin's mind. The name of this illustrious man is closely connected with the literary history of Pennsylvania; but his life and actions are too well known to require that any elaborate notice of them should be given here. Referring, therefore, to his own invaluable memoirs for the events of his personal and political history, I shall content myself with a short sketch of the principal features of his literary career. The year 1723 was that in which Franklin first set his foot in Philadelphia. As he landed on Market Street wharf, and walked up that street, an obscure and almost penniless boy, devouring a roll of bread, and ignorant where he could find a lodging for the night, little could he or any one who then saw him anticipate that later advent, when, sixty years afterwards, he landed upon the same wharf, amid the acclamations of thousands of spectators, on his return from an embassy in which he had dictated to his former king the terms of peace for the confederated republics, of one of which he was placed at the head, and not merely distinguished as a politician, but covered with literary honors and distinctions from every country in Christendom by which genius and public virtue were held in estimation. And yet the change was scarcely greater for Franklin than for Philadelphia. The petty provincial village, with its scattered houses dotted over the bank of the Delaware, had become a magnificent metropolis, distinguished for the wisdom and liberality of its institutions, and as the seat of a general and republican government, which at the former period could scarcely have entered into his dreams.

"At the time of Franklin's arrival in Philadelphia there were two printing-offices in operation. Keimer, the proprietor of one of them, had but one press and a few worn-out types, with which, when Franklin visited him, he was composing an elegy, literally of his own *composition*, for it had never gone through the usual process in this manufacture, of pen and ink, but flowed at once from his brain to the press. The subject of these typographical stanzas was *Aquila Rose*, an apprentice in the office, whose surname naturally suggested to the mind of Keimer some touching figures. If we may judge from some specimens of his poetry which Thomas has preserved in his History of Printing, the province lost little by Keimer's emigration to Bermuda, which took place shortly afterwards."

Perhaps, if we except his scientific and political labors,—labors which won him a name while living and honored when dead,—there was no other department wherein business and tact were so united to effect a great national reform as in that of the post-office.

And yet historians pass over that portion of his life with a mere dash of the pen, and seem to consider it a dry episode in his otherwise eventful career. Had they gone into the history of this connection, the business of the postal department would have loomed up before them a splendid subject to descant upon. It would have shown them how out of chaos came forth, under Franklin's control, a form perfect in shape and gigantic in its proportions. It would tower a giant above the many lesser subjects he wrote pages upon, and give to the world a leaf in our book on political economy which is now—at least as far as this department is concerned—a blank page.

Benjamin Franklin, at the head of the postal department under the colonial government, was the great pioneer in the cause of *letters*: he mapped the length and breadth of their extent; brought distant places together by the speed of horses, as he did in after-years by electric power the lightning from the surcharged clouds to our very feet.

And when at the head of the department, under the *States united* forming a Union that has made

us a nation among nations, to be honored, respected, and *feared*, he carried out his plans, based upon a principle that has governed the operations of the postal department to this day.

Franklin died April 17, 1790. In his will, dated July 17, 1788, he simply expressed his wish to have his body buried with as little expense or ceremony as might be. But in the codicil, dated June 23, 1789, but a few months before his death, we find this clause:—

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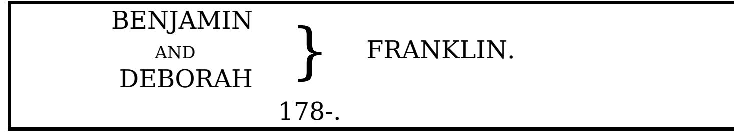
"I wish to be buried by the side of my wife, if it may be, and that a marble stone, to be made by Chambers, six feet long, four feet wide, plain, with only a small moulding round the upper ledge, and this inscription:—



to be placed over us both."

In the graveyard belonging to Christ Church in this city, situated at the southeast corner of Arch and Fifth Streets, this plain slab, with the above inscription, is still to be seen.

The man to whose memory it is dedicated, in immediate expectation of death (as is shown by the fact that the codicil was made in June, 1789, and the figures 178-are so arranged by him that unless he died in that very year they would be useless), had calmly and deliberately selected the spot where he wished his corpse to repose. There rest the remains of one whose name, though simply recorded on a piece of marble, lives in memory while reason holds its throne in the immortal mind.

There is in the simple gray stone which now covers the breasts of "Benjamin Franklin and Deborah his wife" more attraction and genuine respectability than could be found in the loftiest pillar ever reared to gratify mere ambition.

"Can storied urn or animated bust
   Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can honor's voice provoke the silent dust,
   Or flattery soothe the dull, cold ear of death?"

Richard Bache had acted as postmaster up to 1776, when he was succeeded by Ebenezer Hazard. Hazard's name is better known as an editor than as a postmaster, as he subsequently compiled the valuable historical collections bearing his name. He held the office of postmaster until the inauguration of President Washington's administration. The succession of postmaster-generals since the adoption of the Federal Constitution will be given in its proper place.

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X.

Reminiscences.

In the year 1776 authority was given to employ extra post-riders between the armies from the head-quarters to Philadelphia. These post-riders ran many risks, as refugees were not rare at that day: hence the danger was materially increased in consequence. The letters of General Wayne were interrupted, as were those of others, and the utmost caution was necessary for the purpose of securing a safe conveyance. Various plans were adopted, and the postmaster was active in establishing a postal communication with the armies. There was another mode, however, which was even more successful, but equally dangerous to the parties engaged: this was the spy system. Much valuable information was conveyed to the commanders of the armies by it, which could not have reached them through the regular post. In one of General Wayne's letters, addressed to his family in 1781, he makes allusion to one "Jemmy the Rover," whom he had employed as a spy. While our army was encamped at Valley Forge, Jemmy was repeatedly sent within the British lines, and always returned with correct and important information. With him originated the appellation of "Mad Anthony" as applied to the general. "Jemmy the Rover" was an Irishman by birth, and was a regularly-enlisted soldier in the Pennsylvania line. The real name of Jemmy is not known. He was subject to, or at least feigned, occasional fits of craziness, in which state he often proved very noisy and troublesome, and in one instance was ordered to the guard- house. Whilst the sergeant with a file of men was conducting him thither, Jemmy suddenly halted, and asked the sergeant by whose orders he was arrested. "By those of the general," was the reply. "Then forward!" said the Rover. In the course of a few hours he was released. In the act of taking his departure, he asked the sergeant whether Anthony (this being the only name he gave General Wayne) was mad or in fun when he placed him under arrest. The answer was, "The general has been much displeased with your disorderly conduct, and a repetition of it will be followed not only by confinement, but by *twenty-nine* well laid on." "Then," exclaimed Jemmy, "Anthony is mad: farewell to you; clear the coast for the commodore, Mad Anthony's friend!" He suddenly disappeared from the camp. In a postscript to a letter General Wayne wrote to his family, he says, "Jemmy the Rover, *alias* the commodore, has absented himself from this detachment of the army. Should he in his rambles pass your way, I hope that you will extend towards him every hospitality which may be most likely to minister to his comfort. I am convinced that, whether in his hours of sanity or insanity, he would cheerfully lay down his life for either me or any of my family."

It is said by some who knew Jemmy that he was a man of good education and extraordinary shrewdness: in fact, it was much doubted whether or not Jemmy feigned derangement.

As every thing having any connection with the events of 1776, which led to our independence, must be of interest, it may not be out of place here to introduce the following remarkable prophecy, made in the eighth century by Merlin, the celebrated Welsh astrologer. Its fulfilment in almost every particular renders it the more interesting, as evidenced in the American Revolution, to which reference seems to have been made. Had this prophecy been published subsequent to the Revolution, its authenticity might have been doubted, or at least questioned. But it is copied from Hawkins's work, published in the year 1530.

In connection with the prophecy, we also give the key, furnished by an old citizen of Philadelphia to the editors of the "Columbian Magazine," published in this city, in the March number, 1787:—

"*SIBYLLINE ORACLE.*

"Uttered by Merlin, some time during the eighth century, in Wales, of which he was a native.

I.
"When the savage is meek and mild,
The frantic mother shall stab her child.

II.
"When the Cock shall woo the Dove,
The mother the child shall cease to love.

III.
"When men, like moles, work under ground,
The *Lion* a *Virgin* true shall wound.

IV.
"When the *Dove* and *Cock* the *Lion* shall fight,
The *Lion* shall crouch beneath their might.

V.
"When the *Cock* shall guard the *Eagle's* nest,
The *Stars* shall rise *all in the west*.

VI.
"When *ships* above the clouds shall sail,
The *Lion's* strength shall surely fail.

VII.
"When *Neptune's* back with *stripes* is *red*,
The sickly *Lion* shall hide his head.

VIII.
"When *seven* and *six* shall make but *one*,
The *Lion's* might shall be undone."

Verse 1.—The settlement of America by a civilized nation is very clearly alluded to in the first

line. The frantic mother is Britain. America still feels the wounds she has received from her.

Verse 2.—The Cock is France, the Dove is America, Columbia; their union is the epocha when America shall cease to love Britain.

Verse 3.—In many parts of Europe there are subterranean works carried on by persons who never see the light of day. But perhaps the solution may more particularly be referred to the siege of York, in Virginia, where the approaches were carried on by working in the earth. In the second line there is another equivoque. We are told by Mr. Addison, in his "Spectator," that a lion will not hurt a true maid. This, at first view, seems to be contradicted by the prophecy; but, on examination, the epocha referred to, the virgin, Columbia (or, perhaps, *Virginia*, by which name all North America was called in the days of Queen Elizabeth), shall wound the *lion*,—that is, *Britain*,—which shows the precise time when the oracle should be accomplished.

Verse 4 clearly alludes to the successes of the united forces of America and France against those of Britain.

Verse 5.—For the solution of this oracle, as well as all the rest, we are indebted to the engraving of the *arms* of the *United States* in the "Columbian Magazine" for September, 1786. America is clearly designated by the eagle's nest, as it is the only part of the globe where the *bald eagle* (the arms of the United States) is to be found. Thus, this hitherto inexplicable prophecy may now be easily understood as meaning that when the *cock*—that is, France—shall protect America (as she did during the late war), the stars—that is, the standard of the American empire—shall rise in this western hemisphere.

Verse 6.—It is very remarkable that the first discovery of the amazing properties of inflammable air, by means of which men have been able to explore a region till then impervious to them, happened in the same year when *Britain's* strength was so reduced as to oblige her to acknowledge the independence of America. The *boats* in which the adventurous aeronauts traversed the upper regions are the *ships* here referred to. 160

Thus far the prophecy seems to have been already fully and literally accomplished: it is to be hoped that the accomplishment of those which remain is not far remote.

Verse 7 I understand to mean that when the *sea* (*Neptune's back*) is *red* with the *American stripes*, the naval power of Britain shall decline. A proper exertion in the art of ship-building would soon produce this effect; and whenever Congress is vested with the power of regulating the commerce of America, we may hope to see the full accomplishment of this prediction.

Verse 8.—This oracle clearly alludes to an epocha not far removed, as we may hope; for when the *thirteen* United States shall, under the auspices of the present *federal convention*, have strengthened and cemented their union by a proper revisal of the articles of confederation, so as to be really but ONE NATION, Britain will no longer be able to maintain that rank and consequence among the nations of the earth which she had hitherto done.

Since the publication of this explanation, the fulfilment of the two last has become a part and portion of our history. That Neptune's back is red with the stripes and, we may add, stars, every child knows; and the sickly lion already hides his head, not only beneath the folds of our flag, but plays second fiddle to the cock of France.

The eighth is fully accomplished, and '76, as well as seven and six, form a pleasing illustration of the prophecy, as they do one of the most interesting incidents in our history. The thirteen States (seven and six) have multiplied nearly thrice since the Declaration of Independence, and are now, 161 as then, but one, and that one a nation.

Walter Scott, speaking of Merlin, or the Savage, as he was called, says, "The particular spot in which he is buried is still shown, and appears, from the following quotation, taken from a description of Tweeddale, 1715,to have partaken of his prophetic qualities:—

'When Tweed and Pausayl meet
At Merlin's grave,
Scotland and England shall one
Monarch have.'

For the same day that our King James the Sixth was crowned king of England, the river Tweed, by an extraordinary flood, so far overflowed its banks that it met and joined with the Pausayl at the said grave, which was never before observed to fall out."

The precise spot pointed out to travellers is situated near Drumelzier, a village upon the Tweed.

“The first motion in Congress was to declare this country independent.”

The first assembling of the Revolutionary Congress took place in this city on the 5th of September, 1774. Subsequently the progress of the war continued to ripen the public mind and feelings for a total separation from Great Britain. It was not, however, until the 7th of June, 1776, that any special action was had for that purpose. On that day Richard Henry Lee, a delegate from Virginia, made the following motion, which was seconded by John Adams:—

“To declare these united colonies free and independent States; that they are dissolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved; that measures should be immediately taken for procuring assistance of foreign powers, and that a confederation be formed to bind the colonies more closely together.”

On the following day the subject was debated, and on the 1st of July a committee consisting of five delegates—Messrs. Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, R. Sherman, and R. R. Lawrence—was selected by ballot to draft a Declaration of Independence.

According to parliamentary usage, Mr. Lee would have been the chairman of this committee; but he was absent in Virginia on account of the illness of a member of his family. Mr. Jefferson, however, having the greatest number of votes, was selected by the other members of the committee to act as chairman, and the draft prepared by him was first read in committee. Some verbal alterations were made by Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams, and it was not thought necessary to read the drafts prepared by the others. It was stated at the time that the other members of the committee were so pleased with Mr. Jefferson’s draft that they would not submit theirs even for consideration. Perhaps no higher compliment was ever paid to the author of *our* Declaration of Independence than that which emanated from the gentlemen who composed this committee.

The Declaration, thus prepared and amended, was finally adopted in Congress on the 4th, and was read to a meeting of the citizens of Philadelphia, assembled at the State-House yard, from the steps of the building.

The house in which Mr. Jefferson wrote the Declaration is still standing, at the southwest corner of Seventh and Market Streets. Mr. Jefferson had rooms in it as a lodger when a member of the Congress of ’76. Two days before the adoption of the Declaration and its promulgation, Mr. Adams, in a letter addressed to his wife, makes use of the following language:—

“I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the grand anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp, shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of the continent to the other, from this time forward and forever.

“I am well aware of the toil, and blood, and treasure that it will cost us to maintain this declaration and to support and defend the States: yet through all the gloom I can see the rays of light and glory. I can see that the end is more than worth all the means, and that posterity will triumph, although you and I may rue it,—which I hope we shall not.”

When the bell sounded forth from the steeple of the old State-House, the first peal for liberty gave new life to the citizens: from lip to lip, from street to street, from city, town, and through the country, away, away, the words roll like the waves of the ocean, and reverberating like the roar of the wind as, undulating, it passed through all space. The city of Philadelphia on the afternoon of July 4, 1776, presented to view a city convulsed. Joy united with patriotism, and then the word “Freedom!” became the watchword.

When the news reached New York, the bells were set ringing, and the excited multitude, surging hither and thither, at length gathered around the Bowling Green, and, seizing the leaden equestrian statue of George III. which stood there, broke it into fragments: this was afterwards run into bullets and hurled against his majesty’s troops.[35] When the Declaration arrived in Boston, the people gathered around old Faneuil Hall to hear it read, and, as the last sentence fell from the lips of the reader, a loud shout went up, and soon from every fortified height and every battery the thunder of cannon re-echoed the cry.

During the Stamp Act excitement there arose a practice of signifying public sentiment in a very effectual way,—though without any responsible agent, unless the inanimate Liberty-Tree may be so considered. This tree was a majestic elm that stood in front of a house opposite the Boylston market, on the edge of the "High Street," in the town of Boston. On the 14th of August, 1765, an effigy representing Andrew Oliver, a gentleman appointed to distribute the stamps, was found hanging upon this tree, with a paper before it, on which was written, in large characters,—

"Fair Freedom's glorious cause I've meanly quitted,
For the sake of pelf;
But, ah, the devil has me outwitted,
And, instead of stamping others, I've hang'd myself.

"P.S.—Whoever takes this down is an enemy to his country." On the right arm was written "A. O.," and on the left, 165

"What greater pleasure can there be
Than to see a stamp man hanging on a tree?"

On another part of the tree a boot was suspended,—the emblem of the Earl of Bute, First Lord of the Treasury,—from which the devil, with the Stamp Act in his hand, was looking out. Chief Justice—afterwards Governor—Hutchinson, directed the sheriff to remove this exhibition; but his deputies, from a fear of the popular feeling, declined. In the evening the figures were taken down by the people and carried in procession through the streets. After demolishing the stamp-office, in State Street, they proceeded to Fort Hill, where a bonfire was made of the pageantry in sight of Mr. Oliver's house. It being intimated to Mr. Oliver that it would conduce to the quiet of the public if he would go to the tree and openly resign his commission, he appeared the next day, and declared, in the presence of a large concourse of people, that he would not continue in office. It was thenceforward called the Liberty-Tree, and the following inscription placed upon it:—"This tree was planted in the year 1614, and pruned by the order of the Sons of Liberty, February 14, 1766." On future occasions there was seldom any excitement on political subjects without some evidence of it appearing on this tree. Whenever obnoxious offices were to be resigned or agreements for patriotic purposes entered into, the parties were notified to appear at the tree, "where they always found pens and paper, and a numerous crowd of witnesses, though the genius of the tree was invisible. When the British army took possession of Boston, in 1774, Liberty-Tree fell a victim to their vengeance, or to that of the persons to whom its shade had been disagreeable." Liberty-trees were consecrated in Charlestown, Lexington, and Roxbury, Mass., 166 and also in Charleston, S.C., Newport and Providence, R.I.—*Tudor's Life of Otis*.

Liberty-Tree.
1765.

This beautiful ballad was written by Thomas Paine, the author of the "Age of Reason," and published in the Pennsylvania Magazine of July, 1775, while he was editor of that periodical. He composed and published many songs and elegies during his connection with the magazine. Among them, "The Death of Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham" is uncommonly pathetic and graceful.

LIBERTY-TREE.

In a chariot of light from the regions of day
The Goddess of Liberty came;
Ten thousand celestials directed the way,
And hither conducted the dame.
A fair budding branch from the gardens above,
Where millions with millions agree,
She brought in her hand as a pledge of her love,
And the plant she named Liberty-Tree.

The celestial exotic struck deep in the ground;
Like a native it flourished and bore;
The fame of its fruit drew the nations around,
To seek out this peaceable shore.
Unmindful of names or distinctions they came,
For freemen like brothers agree;
With one spirit endued, they one friendship pursued,
And their temple was Liberty-Tree.

Beneath this fair tree, like the patriarchs of old,
Their bread in contentment they ate,
Unvex’d with the troubles of silver and gold,
The cares of the grand and the great.
With timber and tar they Old England supplied,
And supported her power on the sea;
Her battles they fought, without getting a groat,
For the honor of Liberty-Tree.

But hear, O ye swains,—’tis a tale most profane,—
How all the tyrannical powers,
Kings, Commons, and Lords, are uniting amain
To cut down this guardian of ours;
From the east to the west blow the trumpet to arms,
Through the land let the sound of it flee,
Let the far and the near all unite with a cheer
In defence of our Liberty-Tree.

There are so many versions of the origin of this popular and now national air, as well as the words, that we offer the following to our readers without note or comment.

In Burgh's Anecdotes of Music, vol. iii. p. 405, after speaking of Dr. Arne and John Frederick Lampe, the author proceeds:—"Besides Lampe and Arne, there were at this time [1731] other candidates for musical fame of the same description. Among these were Mr. John Christian Smith, who set two English operas for Lincoln's Inn Fields,—Teraminta and Ulysses,—and Dr. Tresh, author of the oratorio of Judith."

About the year 1797, after having become a tolerable proficient on the German flute, I took it into my head to learn the bassoon, and for this purpose procured an instrument and book of instructions from the late Mr. Joseph Carr, who had then recently opened a music-store in Baltimore City, being the first regular establishment of the kind in this country. In this book there was an "Air from Ulysses," which was the identical air now called Yankee Doodle, with the exception of a few notes which time and fancy may have added.

Here is another version:—

In the simultaneous attacks that were made upon the French posts in America in 1755, that against Fort Du Quesne (the present site of Pittsburg) was conducted by General Braddock, and those against Niagara and Frontenac by Governor Shirley, of Massachusetts, and General Johnston, of New York. The following is an extract from Judge Martin's History of North Carolina, giving an account of those expeditions:—

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"The army of the latter (Shirley and Johnston), during the summer, lay on the eastern bank of the Hudson, a little south of the city of Albany. In the early part of June the troops of the Eastern provinces began to pour in, company after company; and such a motley assemblage of men never before thronged together on such an occasion, unless an example may be found in the ragged regiment of Sir John Falstaff. It would have relaxed the gravity of an anchorite to have seen the descendants of the Puritans, marching through the streets of that ancient city (Albany), take their situations on the left of the British army,—some with long coats, and others with no coats at all, with colors as various as the rainbow,—some with their hair cropped like the army of Cromwell, and others with wigs, the locks of which floated with grace around their shoulders. Their march, their accoutrements, and the whole arrangement of the troops, furnished matter of amusement to the rest of the British army. The music played the airs of two centuries ago; and the *tout ensemble*, upon the whole, exhibited a sight to the wondering strangers, to which they had been unaccustomed. Among the club of wits that belonged to the British army there was a Doctor Shackburg, attached to the staff, who combined with the science of surgeon the skill and talents of a musician. To please the new-comers, he composed a tune, and with much gravity recommended it to the officers as one of the most celebrated airs of martial music. The joke took, to the no small amusement of the British. Brother Jonathan exclaimed it was *nation fine*, and in a few days nothing was heard in the provincial camp but the air of Yankee Doodle. Little did the author in his composition then suppose that an air made for the purpose of levity and ridicule should ever be marked for such high destinies. In twenty years from that time the national march inspired the heroes of Bunker Hill, and in less than thirty years Lord Cornwallis and his army 169 marched into the American lines to the tune of Yankee Doodle."

"Watson, in his "Occurrences of the War of Independence," says,—

"This tune, so celebrated as a national air of the Revolution, has an origin almost unknown to the mass of the people of the present day. An aged and respectable lady, born in New England, told me she remembered it well, long before the Revolution, under another name. It was then universally called 'Lydia Fisher,' and was a favorite New England jig. It was then the practice with it, as with Yankee Doodle now, to sing it with various impromptu verses,—such as

'Lydia Locket lost her pocket,
  Lydia Fisher found it;
Not a bit of money in it,
  Only binding round it.'

"The British, preceding the war, when disposed to ridicule the simplicity of the Yankee manners and hilarity, were accustomed to sing airs or songs set to words invented for the passing occasion, having for their object to satirize and sneer at the New Englanders. This, as I believe, they called Yankee Doodle, by way of reproach, and as a slur upon their favorite 'Lydia Fisher.' It is remembered that the English officers then among us, acting under civil and military appointments, often felt lordly over us as colonists, and by countenancing such slurs they sometimes expressed their superciliousness. When the battles of Concord and Lexington began the war, the English, when advancing in triumph, played along the road, 'God save the King;' but when the Americans had made the retreat so disastrous to the invaders, these then struck up the scouted *Yankee Doodle*,—as if to say, 'See what we simple Jonathans can do!' From that time the 170 term of intended derision was assumed throughout all the American colonies, as the national air of the Sons of Liberty; even as the Methodists—once reproachfully so called—assumed it as their acceptable appellation. Even the name of 'Sons of Liberty,' which was so popular at the outset, was a name adopted from the appellation given us in Parliament by Colonel Barré in his speech! Judge Martin, in his History of North Carolina, has lately given another reason for the origin of 'Yankee Doodle,' saying it was first formed at Albany, in 1755, by a British officer, then there, indulging his pleasantry on the homely array of the motley Americans then assembling to join the

expedition of General Johnston and Governor Shirley. To ascertain the truth in the premises, both his and my accounts were published in the gazettes, to elicit, if possible, further information, and the additional facts ascertained seem to corroborate the foregoing idea. The tune and quaint words, says a writer in the 'Columbian Gazette,' at Washington, were known as early as the time of Cromwell, and were so applied to him then, in a song called 'Nankee Doodle,' as ascertained from the collection he had seen of a gentleman at Cheltenham, in England, called 'Musical Antiquities of England,' to wit:—

"'Nankee Doodle came to town
Upon a little pony,
With a feather in his hat,
Upon a macaroni,' &c.

"The term feather, &c. alluded to Cromwell's going into Oxford on a small horse, with his single plume fastened in a sort of knot called a 'macaroni.' The idea that such an early origin may have existed seems strengthened by the fact communicated by an aged gentleman of Massachusetts, who well remembered that, about the time the strife was engendering at Boston, they sometimes conveyed muskets to the country concealed in their loads of manure, &c. Then came abroad verses, as if set forth from their military masters, saying,—

"'Yankee Doodle came to town
For to buy a firelock:
We will tar and feather him,
And so we will John Hancock.'

"The similarity of the first lines of the above two examples, and the term 'feather' in the third line, seem to mark in the latter some knowledge of the former precedent. As, however, other writers have confirmed their early knowledge of 'Lydia Locket,' such as,

"'Lydy Locket lost her pocket
In a rainy shower,' &c.,

we seem led to the choice of reconciling them severally with each other. We conclude, therefore, that the Cavaliers, when they originally composed 'Nankee Doodle,' may have set it to the jig-tune of 'Lydia Fisher,' to make it the more offensive to the Puritans. In this view it was even possible for the British officer at Albany, in 1755, as a man skilled in music, to have before heard of the old 'Nankee Doodle,' and to have renewed it on that occasion. That the air was uniformly deemed a good retort on British royalists, we must be confirmed in from the fact that it was played by us at the battle of Lexington when repelling the foe, again at the surrender of Burgoyne, and finally at Yorktown surrender, when Lafayette, who ordered the tune, meant it as a retort on an intended affront."

The following is the first verse in the original *American* Yankee Doodle song:—

"Yankee Doodle, keep it up,
Do it neat and handy:
The boy to flog the British troops
Is Yankee Doodle Dandy."

The following is Judge Hopkinson's own account of the origin of "Hail Columbia:"—

"This song was written in the summer of 1798, when a war with France was thought to be inevitable, Congress being then in session in Philadelphia, deliberating upon that important subject, and acts of hostility having actually occurred. About that time a young man by the name of Fox, attached to the Chestnut Street Theatre, was getting up some attraction for his benefit. I had known him when at school. On this acquaintance he called on me on Saturday afternoon,—his benefit being announced for the following Monday. He said there were no boxes taken, and his prospect was that he should suffer a loss instead of receiving a benefit from his performance, but that if he could get a patriotic song adapted to the tune of the 'President's March' (then the popular air) he did not doubt of a full house; that the poets of the theatrical corps had been trying to accomplish it, but were satisfied that no words could be composed to suit the music of the march. I told him I would try for him. He came the next afternoon, and the song, such as it is, was ready for him. It was announced on Monday morning, and the theatre was crowded to excess, and so continued, night after night, for the rest of the season,—the song being encored and repeated many times each night, the audience joining in the chorus. It was also sung at night in the streets by large assemblies of citizens, including members of Congress. The enthusiasm was general, and the song was heard, I may say, in every part of the United States."

The President's March was composed by Professor Pfyle, and was played at Trenton Bridge when Washington passed over on his way to New York to his inauguration. An old writer, speaking upon this subject, says, "I have also reason to believe that the Washington's March generally known by that title—I mean the one in the key of G major—was composed by the Hon. Francis Hopkinson, Senior, having seen it in a manuscript book of his, in his own handwriting, among other of his known compositions."

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER.

Was written by Francis S. Key, while on board one of the vessels composing the British fleet. He was an agent for the exchange of prisoners, and witnessed in the distance the bombardment of Fort McHenry. The tune was originally set to the song “To Anacreon in Heaven,” by Dr. Arnold.

The first flag adopted by the colonial army before Boston was a red flag, with the mottoes, "An appeal to Heaven," and "Qui transtulit sustinet," which was construed by the colonists thus:—"God, who transplanted us hither, will sustain us." About this time also the floating batteries, which were the germ of the navy subsequently organized, bore a flag with the motto, "Appeal to Heaven." These flags were adopted before the union of the colonies was effected. After that union, and upon the organization of the army and fleet, these flags were supplanted by one calculated to show to the world the union of the North American colonies among themselves and as an integral part of the British empire, and as such demanding the rights and liberties of British subjects. And for this purpose a flag combining the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew united (the distinctive emblem of Great Britain), with a field composed of thirteen stripes alternate red and white, the combination of the flags previously used in the camps and on the cruises, and the floating batteries of the colonists, was adopted, and called the *Great Union flag*. The union implied both the union of the colonies represented in the striped field, which was dependent upon it, and the nationality of those colonies. The thirteen stripes alternate red and white, constituting the field of the flag, represented the body of that union, the numbers that composed it, as well as the union of the flags which had preceded this Great Union flag. The colors of these stripes, alternate red and white, indicated on the part of the colonies thus represented as united the defiance to oppression, symbolized by the red color of the flag of the army and the red field of the Continental cruisers, with the purity implied by the white flag of the floating batteries, of which the motto was, "Appeal to Heaven."[36] These flags of the colonies and this Great Union flag gave place in turn to the flag of the United States, which is thus described in the following resolution of Congress, passed June 14, 1777:—

"*Resolved*, That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

From the above it appears that the only alteration made from the Great Union flag was the substitution of a union of stars representing "a new constellation," in place of the old union of the British crosses; and the question is, what is the meaning of the "new constellation," and is there any constellation which represents union? The answer is, that the constellation Lyra is of this character; for, according to classical authority, the Lyra was the symbol of harmony and unity among men. The constellation Lyra is a time-honored emblem of union, and because it was so it gave to our forefathers the idea of the stars now on our flag, while the stripes have originated as we have mentioned. May the Stars and the Stripes ever "wave over the land of the free and the home of the brave," and may the United States ever be among the nations of the earth a constellation like Lyra, which is said to "whirl in harmony and unity along the immense orb of the revolving world, and to lead all the other stars."

Previous to the Revolution, and during the war, the seat of government, or points of meeting of Congress, were at such places as convenience suggested or the vicissitudes of war allowed. The first Congress under the present Constitution met in New York, on the 4th of March, 1789. George Washington was inaugurated President before this body, John Adams Vice-President. F.A. Muhlenberg, of Pennsylvania, was the Speaker of the House.

The following are the places at which the Continental Congress met from 1774 to the adoption of the Constitution, in 1789:—

At Philadelphia, 1774, September 5.
At Baltimore, 1776, December 20.
At Philadelphia, 1777, March 4.
At Lancaster, 1777, September 27.
At York, Pennsylvania, 1777, September 30.
At Philadelphia, 1778, July 2.
At Princeton, 1783, June 30.
At Annapolis, 1783, November 26.
At Trenton, 1784, November 1.
At New York, 1785, January 11.

From which time New York continued to be the place of meeting until the adoption of the Constitution. From 1781 to 1788, Congress met annually (on the first Monday in November), pursuant to the Articles of Confederation adopted June 9, 1778.

The first Congress under the Constitution met in New York on the 4th of March, 1789. The second session of the same Congress met at New York in January, 1790, at which session the *permanent* seat of government was fixed in the District of Columbia, and the *temporary* seat moved from New York to Philadelphia. The third session of the First Congress was held at Philadelphia, December, 1790, where it continued until December, 1800, when Congress met for the first time in Washington.

The following table, in connection with the names of the postmaster-generals, furnishes a complete panoramic view of the chief officers of the United States Government from 1774 to 1864.[37]

THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS BEFORE THE REVOLUTION.

First Congress, Sept. 5, 1774. Peyton Randolph, of Virginia, President. Born in Virginia, in 1726, died at Philadelphia, Oct. 22, 1785. Charles Thomson, of Pennsylvania, Secretary. Born in Ireland, in 1730, died in Pennsylvania, Aug. 16, 1824. This patriot was Secretary of all the Congresses in session during the Revolution, and until March 3, 1789.

Second Congress, May 10, 1775, Peyton Randolph, President. Resigned May 24, 1775.

John Hancock, of Massachusetts, elected his successor. He was born at Quincy, Mass., A.D. 1737, died Oct. 8, 1793. He was President of Congress until October, 1777.

Henry Laurens, of South Carolina, President from Nov. 1, 1777, to Dec. 1778. He was born at Charleston, S. C., A.D. 1724, died in South Carolina, Dec. 1792.

John Jay, of New York, President from Dec. 10, 1778, to Sept. 27, 1779. He was born in New York City, Dec. 12, 1745, died in New York, May 17, 1829.

Samuel Huntingdon, of Connecticut, President from Sept. 28, 1779, until July 10, 1781. He was born in Connecticut, in 1732, died 1796.

Thos. McKean, of Pa., President from July, 1781, until Nov. 5, 1781. He was born in Pennsylvania, March 19, 1734, died at Philadelphia, June 24, 1817.

John Hanson, of Md., President from Nov. 5, 1781, to Nov. 4, 1782. He was born ——, died 1783.

Elias Boudinot, of N. J., President from Nov. 4, 1782, until Feb. 4, 1783. He was born at Philadelphia, May 2, 1740, died 1824.

Thomas Mifflin, of Pennsylvania, President from February 4, 1783, to November 30, 1784. Born at Philadelphia, 1744, died in the same place, January 21, 1800.

Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, President from November 30, 1784, to November 23, 1785. He was born in Virginia, A.D. 1732, died 1794.

John Hancock, of Massachusetts, President from November 23, 1785, to June 6, 1786.

Nathaniel Gorham, of Massachusetts, President from June 6, 1786, to February 2, 1787. He was born at Charlestown, Massachusetts, A.D. 1738, died June 11, 1796.

Arthur St. Clair, of Pennsylvania, President from February 2, 1787, to January 28, 1788. He was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, ——, died in 1818.

Cyrus Griffin, of Virginia, President from January 28, 1788, to the end of the Congress under the Confederation, March 3, 1789. He was born in England, A.D. 1748, died in Virginia, A.D. 1810.

1789 to 1793.

George Washington, of Virginia, inaugurated as President of the United States, April 30, 1789. He was born upon Wakefield estate, Virginia, February 22 (11th, Old Style), 1732, died at Mount Vernon, December 14, 1799.

John Adams, of Massachusetts, Vice-President. Born at Braintree, Massachusetts, October 19, 1735, died July 4, 1826, near Quincy, Massachusetts.

Electoral Vote—George Washington, 69. John Adams, 34. John Jay, New York, 9. R.H. Harrison, Maryland, 6. John Rutledge,

South Carolina, 6. John Hancock, Massachusetts, 4. George Clinton, New York, 3. Samuel Huntingdon, Connecticut, 2. John Milton, Georgia, 2. James Armstrong, Georgia, 1. Edward Telfair, Georgia, 1. Benjamin Lincoln, Massachusetts, 1.—Total, 69. Ten States voted,—Rhode Island, New York, and North Carolina not voting, not having ratified the Constitution in time.

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1793 to 1797.

George Washington, President, inaugurated March 4, 1793.

John Adams, Vice-President.

Electoral Vote—George Washington, 132. John Adams, 77. George Clinton, 50. Thomas Jefferson, Virginia, 4. Aaron Burr, New York, 1.—Total, 132. Fifteen States voted.

1797 to 1801.

John Adams, President, inaugurated March 4, 1797.

Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia, Vice-President. Born at Shadwell, Virginia, April 13, 1743, died at Monticello, Virginia, July 4, 1826.

Electoral Vote—John Adams, 71. Thomas Jefferson, 68. Thomas Pinckney, South Carolina, 59. Aaron Burr, 30. Samuel Adams, Massachusetts, 15. Oliver Ellsworth, Connecticut, 11. George Clinton, 7. John Jay, 5. James Iredell, North Carolina, 3. George Washington, 2. John Henry, Maryland, 2. S. Johnson, North Carolina, 2. Charles C. Pinckney, South Carolina, 1.—Total, 138. Sixteen States voting.

1801 to 1805.

Thomas Jefferson, President, inaugurated March 4, 1801.

Aaron Burr, of New York, Vice-President. Born at Newark, N. J. February 6, 1756, died at Staten Island, New York, September 14, 1836.

Electoral Vote—Thomas Jefferson, 73. Aaron Burr, 73. John Adams, 65. Charles C. Pinckney, 64. John Jay, 1.—Total, 138. Sixteen States voting.

There was no election by the Electoral colleges, and the election was carried into the House of Representatives, when, upon the thirty-sixth ballot, it appeared that ten States voted for Jefferson, four States for Aaron Burr, and two States in blank. Whereupon Jefferson was declared elected President, and Burr Vice-President. After this the Constitution was amended, so that the Vice-President was voted for separately as a distinct office, instead of being the second on the vote for President.

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1805 to 1809.

Thomas Jefferson, President, inaugurated March 4, 1805.

George Clinton, of New York, Vice-President. He was born in Ulster county, New York, A.D. 1739, died in Washington, D. C., April 20, 1812.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, Thomas Jefferson, 162; Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, 14.—Total, 176. Seven States voting.

For Vice-President, George Clinton, 162; Rufus King, New York, 14.

1809 to 1813.

James Madison, of Virginia, President, inaugurated March 4, 1809. He was born March 16, 1751, in Prince George county, Virginia, and died at Montpelier, Virginia, June 28, 1836.

George Clinton, of New York, Vice-President, until his death, April 20, 1812.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, James Madison, 122; George Clinton, 6; C. C. Pinckney, 47.—Total, 175. Seventeen States voting.

For Vice-President, George Clinton, 113; James Madison, 3; James Monroe, Virginia, 3; John Langdon, New Hampshire, 9; Rufus King, New York, 47.

1813 to 1817.

James Madison, of Virginia, President. There is no record in the Journals of Congress of his having taken the oath of office.

Elbridge Gerry, of Massachusetts, Vice-President, until his death, November 23, 1814. He was born at Marblehead, Massachusetts, July 17, 1744, and died at Washington, D. C.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, James Madison, 128; De Witt Clinton, New York, 89.—Total, 217. Eighteen

States voting.

For Vice-President, Elbridge Gerry, 131; Jared Ingersoll, Pennsylvania, 86.

1817 to 1821.

James Monroe, of Virginia, President, inaugurated March 4, 1817. He was born in Westmoreland county, Virginia, A.D. 1759, died in New York, July 4, 1831.

Daniel D. Tompkins, of New York, Vice-President. Born June 21, 1774, at Fox Meadows, New York, died at Staten Island, June 11, 1825.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, James Monroe, 183; Rufus King, 34—Total, 221. Nineteen States voting.

For Vice-President, Daniel D. Tompkins, 183; John Eager Howard, Maryland, 22; James Ross, Pennsylvania, 5; John Marshall, Virginia, 4; Robert Goodloe Harper, Maryland, 3.

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1821 to 1825.

James Monroe, President. There is no record in the Journals of Congress of his having taken the oath of office.

Daniel D. Tompkins, Vice-President.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, James Monroe, 231; John Quincy Adams, Massachusetts, 1.—Total, 232. Twenty-four States voting.

For Vice-President, Daniel D. Tompkins, 218; Richard Stockton, New Jersey, 8; Robert G. Harper, 1; Richard Rush, Pennsylvania, 1; Daniel Rodney, Delaware, 1.

1825 to 1829.

John Quincy Adams, of Massachusetts, President, inaugurated March 4, 1825. He was born at Quincy, Massachusetts, July 11, 1767, died at Washington City, February 23, 1848.

John Caldwell Calhoun, of South Carolina, Vice-President. Born in Abbeville district, South Carolina, March 18, 1782, died March 31, 1850, in Washington City.

Popular Vote—*For President*, John Quincy Adams, 105,321; Andrew Jackson, Tennessee, 152,899; William H. Crawford, Georgia, 47,265; Henry Clay, Kentucky, 47,087.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, Andrew Jackson, 99; John Quincy Adams, 84; William H. Crawford, 41; Henry Clay, 37.—Total, 261. Twenty-four States voting.

There being no choice by the Electoral colleges, the vote was taken into the House of Representatives, when upon ballot it appeared that Adams had received the vote of thirteen States, Jackson seven, and Crawford four. John Quincy Adams was therefore declared elected President.

For Vice-President, the Electoral vote was John C. Calhoun, South Carolina, 182; Nathan Sanford, New York, 30; Nathaniel Macon, Georgia, 24; Andrew Jackson, Tennessee, 13; Martin Van Buren, New York, 9; Henry Clay, Kentucky, 2.

1829 to 1833.

Andrew Jackson, of Tennessee, President, inaugurated March 4, 1829. He was born in Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, near the Waxhaw Settlements, which are in South Carolina, March 15, 1767, died at the Hermitage, Tennessee, June 8, 1845.

John Caldwell Calhoun, Vice-President, until his resignation, December 28, 1832.

Popular Vote—*For President*, Andrew Jackson, 650,028; John Quincy Adams, 512,158.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, Andrew Jackson, 178; John Quincy Adams, 83.—Total, 261. Twenty-four States voting.

For Vice-President, John C. Calhoun, 171; Richard Rush, Pennsylvania, 83; William Smith, South Carolina, 7.

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1833 to 1837.

Andrew Jackson, President, inaugurated March 4, 1833.

Martin Van Buren, of New York, Vice-President. He was born at Kinderhook, New York, December 5, 1782. Died, July 24, 1864.

Popular Vote—*For President*, Andrew Jackson, 687,502; Henry Clay, 550,189; opposition (John Floyd, Virginia, and William Wirt, Maryland), 33,108.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, Andrew Jackson, 219; Henry Clay, 49; John Floyd, 11; William Wirt, 7,—Total, 288. Twenty-four States voting.

For Vice-President, Martin Van Buren, 189; John Sergeant, Pennsylvania, 49; William Wilkins, Pennsylvania, 30; Henry Lee, Massachusetts, 11; Amos Ellmaker, Pennsylvania, 7.

1837 to 1841.

Martin Van Buren, President, inaugurated March 4, 1837.

Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, Vice-President. He was born in 1780; died November 19, 1850.

Popular Vote—*For President*, Martin Van Buren, 762,149; opposition (William H. Harrison, Hugh L. White, Daniel Webster, W.P. Mangum), 736,736.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, Martin Van Buren, 170; William H. Harrison, Ohio, 73; Hugh L. White,

Tennessee, 26; Daniel Webster, Massachusetts, 14; W.P. Mangum, 11.—Total, 294. Twenty-six States voting.

For Vice-President, Richard M. Johnson, Kentucky, 147; Francis Granger, New York, 77; John Tyler, Virginia, 47; William Smith, Alabama, 23.

1841 to 1845.

William Henry Harrison, of Ohio, President until his death at Washington, April 4, 1841. He was inaugurated March 4, 1841. He was born in Berkeley county, Virginia, February 9, 1773.

John Tyler, of Virginia, Vice-President. He was born April, 1790, at Greenway, Charles City county, Virginia. Died, January 18, 1863.

John Tyler, of Virginia, became President by the death of William H. Harrison. He took the oath of office April 6, 1841.

Popular Vote (November, 1840)—*For President*, William Henry Harrison, 1,274,783; Martin Van Buren, 1,128,702; James G. Birney, New York (Abolition), 7609.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, William Henry Harrison, 234; Martin Van Buren, 60.—Total, 294. Twenty-six States voting.

For Vice-President, John Tyler, 234; Richard M. Johnson, 48; L.W. Tazewell, South Carolina, 11; James K. Polk, Tennessee, 1.

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1845 to 1849

James Knox Polk, of Tennessee, President, inaugurated March 4, 1845. He was born in Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, November 2, 1795; died at Nashville, Tennessee, June 15, 1849.

George Mifflin Dallas, of Pennsylvania, Vice-President. Born in Philadelphia, July 10, 1792.

Popular Vote—*For President*, James K. Polk, 1,335,834; Henry Clay, 1,297,033; James G. Birney, 62,270.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, James K. Polk, 170; Henry Clay, 105.—Total, 275. Twenty-six States voting.

For Vice-President, George M. Dallas, 170; Theodore Frelinghuysen, of New Jersey, 105.

1849 to 1853.

Zachary Taylor, of Louisiana, President, inaugurated March 4, 1849. Born in Virginia, A.D. 1784; died in Washington City, July 9, 1850.

Millard Fillmore, of New York, Vice-President. Born in Locke township, Cayuga county, New York, January 7, 1800.

Millard Fillmore, President after the death of Zachary Taylor, July 9, 1850. He took the oath of office July 10, 1850.

Popular Vote—*For President*, Zachary Taylor, 1,362,031; Lewis Cass, of Michigan, 1,222,455; Martin Van Buren (Free Soil), 291,455.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, Zachary Taylor, 163; Lewis Cass, 127.—Total, 290. Thirty States voting.

For Vice-President, Millard Fillmore, 163; William O. Butler, Kentucky, 127.

1853 to 1857.

Franklin Pierce, of New Hampshire, President, inaugurated March 5, 1853. He was born at Hillsborough, New Hampshire, November 23, 1804.

William R. King, of Alabama, Vice-President. He was born in North Carolina, April 7, 1786; died at Cahawba, Alabama, April 18, 1853.

Popular Vote—*For President*, Franklin Pierce, 1,590,490; Winfield Scott, 1,378,589; John C. Hale, New Hampshire (Abolition), 157,296.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, Franklin Pierce, 254; Winfield Scott, of New Jersey, 42.—Total, 296. Thirty-one States voting.

For Vice-President, William R. King, 254; William A. Graham, of North Carolina, 42.

1857 to 1861.

James Buchanan, of Pennsylvania, President. He was born at Stony Batter, Franklin county, Pennsylvania, April 22, 1791.

John C. Breckenridge, of Kentucky, Vice-President. Born near Lexington, Kentucky, January 21, 1821.

Popular Vote—*For President*, James Buchanan (Democratic), 1,832,232;

John C. Frémont, California (Republican), 1,341,514; Millard Fillmore, New York (American), 874,707.

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Electoral Vote—*For President*, James Buchanan, 174; John C. Frémont, 109; Millard Fillmore, 8.—Total, 291. Thirty-one States voting.

For Vice-President, John C. Breckenridge, 174; William L. Dayton, New Jersey, 109; A. J. Donelson, Tennessee, 8; total, 291.

1861 to 1865.

Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois, President, inaugurated March 4, 1861. He was born near Muldraugh's Hill, Hardin county, Kentucky, February, 1809.

Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, Vice-President. He was born at Paris, Oxford county, Maine, August 27, 1809.

Popular Vote—*For President*, Abraham Lincoln (Republican), 1,857,610; Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois (Democratic), 1,365,976; John C. Breckenridge, of Kentucky (Democratic), 847,953; John Bell, of Tennessee (Constitutional Union), 590,631.

Electoral Vote—*For President*, Abraham Lincoln, 180; John C. Breckenridge, 72; John Bell, 39; Stephen A. Douglas, 12.—Total, 291. Thirty-three States voting.

For Vice-President, Hannibal Hamlin, Maine, 180; Joseph Lane, Oregon, 72; Edward Everett, Massachusetts, 39; Herschel V. Johnson, Georgia, 12.

As our postal history, so far as the States are concerned, is limited to our own State, it may not be out of place here to introduce the following table containing the names of the

more, however, as being useful for future reference rather than to its connection with our subject:—

1682 to 1863.

1682, October. William Penn (Proprietary), acted as Governor until August, 1684.
Thomas Lloyd, President until December, 1688.
Captain John Blackwell, Deputy-Governor to 1690.
President and Council to April 26, 1693.
Benjamin Fletcher, Deputy-Governor to September, 1692. 184
William Markham, Deputy-Governor to December 3, 1696.
William Penn again acted as Governor to November 1, 1701.
Andrew Hamilton, Deputy-Governor to February, 1703.
Edward Shippen, President of Council to February, 1704.
John Evans, Deputy-Governor to February, 1709.
Charles Gookin, Deputy-Governor to March, 1717.
Sir William Keith, Bart., Deputy-Governor to June, 1727.
Patrick Gordon, Deputy-Governor to June, 1736.
James Logan, President of Council to June, 1738.
George Thomas, Deputy-Governor to June, 1748.
James Hamilton, Deputy-Governor to October, 1754.
Robert Hunter Morris, Deputy-Governor to August 19, 1756.
William Denny, Deputy-Governor to November, 1759
James Hamilton, Deputy-Governor to October, 1763
John Penn, son of Richard Penn, Deputy-Governor to May 6, 1771.
Richard Penn, Governor to August, 1771.
John Penn (second time), Governor to September, 1776.
Thomas Wharton, Jr., President of Executive Council to October, 1777.
Joseph Reed, President to November, 1781.
William Moore, President to November, 1782.
John Dickinson, President to October, 1785.
Benjamin Franklin, President to October, 1788.
Thomas Mifflin, President to the adoption of the new Constitution in 1790.

UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF 1790.

1790.	Thomas Mifflin	27,725	
	Arthur St. Clair	2,802	
	Whole number	———	30,527
1793.	Thomas Mifflin	19,590	
	F.A. Muhlenberg	10,700	
	Whole number	———	30,290
1796.	Thomas Mifflin	30,029	
	F.A. Muhlenberg	10,011	
	Whole number	———	40,040
1799.	Thomas McKean	37,244	
	James Ross	22,643	
	Whole number	———	59,887
1802.	Thomas McKean	47,879	
	James Ross	17,037	
	Whole number	———	64,916
1805.	Thomas McKean	48,483	
	Simon Snyder	43,644	
	Whole number	———	82,127
1808.	Simon Snyder	67,975	
	James Ross	37,575	
	John Spay	4,006	
	Whole number	———	109,556
1811.	Simon Snyder	52,319	
	No opposition.		
	Whole number	———	52,319
1814.	Simon Snyder	51,099	
	Isaac Wayne	29,566	
	Whole number	———	80,665
1817.	William Findlay	66,331	
	Joseph Heister	59,273	
	Whole number	———	125,604
1820.	Joseph Heister	67,905	
	William Findlay	66,300	
	Whole number	———	134,205
1823.	John A. Shultze	89,968	
	Andrew Gregg	64,221	
	Whole number	———	154,189

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1826.	John A. Shultze	72,710	
	John Sergeant	1,174	
	Whole number	———	73,884
1829.	George Wolf	78,219	
	Joseph Ritner	51,776	
	Whole number	———	129,995
1832.	George Wolf	91,235	
	Joseph Ritner	88,186	
	Whole number	———	179,421
1835.	Joseph Ritner	94,023	
	George Wolf	65,804	
	H. A. Muhlenberg	40,586	
	Whole number	———	200,413
1838.	David R. Porter	131,496	
	Joseph Ritner	121,389	
	Whole number	———	252,885
1841.	David R. Porter	136,335	
	John Banks	113,374	
	Whole number	———	249,709
1844.	Francis R. Shunk	160,403	
	Joseph Markle	156,114	
	Whole number	———	316,517
1847.	Francis R. Shunk	146,081	
	James Irvin	128,148	
	Emanuel C. Reigert	11,247	
	Whole number	———	285,476
1848.	W. F. Johnston	168,462	
	Morris Longstreth	168,192	
	Whole number	———	336,654
1851.	William Bigler	186,507	
	W. F. Johnston	178,070	
	Whole number	———	364,577
1854.	James Pollock	204,008	
	William Bigler	167,001	
	Whole number	———	371,009
1857.	William F. Packer	188,890	
	David Wilmot	146,147	
	Isaac Hazlehurst	28,100	
	Whole number	———	363,137
1860.	Andrew G. Curtin	262,403	
	Henry D. Foster	230,239	
	Whole number	———	492,642
1863.	Andrew G. Curtin	269,496	
	G. W. Woodward	254,171	
	Whole number	———	523,667

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XI.

Postmasters.

Having brought the postal history of the colonies up to the time Richard Bache succeeded Benjamin Franklin (November, 1776), and whose dismissal gave the latter some grounds of complaint, if not censure, against the appointment of Ebenezer Hazard, who had the office under President Washington, we will carry out the object of these tables, by continuing the list of postmaster-generals from that period.

Samuel Osgood.—This gentleman was born at Andover, Massachusetts, February 14, 1748; graduated at Harvard College in 1770; a member of the Massachusetts Legislature, and also of the board of war, and subsequently an aid to General Ward; in 1779, a member of the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention; in 1781, appointed a member of Congress; in 1785, first commissioner of the treasury; and September 26, 1789, postmaster-general. He was afterwards naval officer of the port of New York, and died in that city, August 12, 1813.

Early in the first session of the Second Congress two important subjects of a national character received the attention of the representatives of the people: one was establishing a national mint, and the other the organization of the postal system.

The establishing of a mint, however, was delayed, and no special action was taken in that direction until 1790, when Mr. Jefferson, then Secretary of State, urged the matter upon the attention of Congress. In 1792, April 2, laws were enacted for the establishment of a mint. It did not, however, go into full operation until 1795.

The first mint was located in Philadelphia, and remained the sole issuer of coin in the United States until 1835, when a branch was established in each of the States of Georgia, North Carolina, and Louisiana,—in Charlotte, Dahlonega, and New Orleans. These three branches went into operation in the years 1837-38.

A bill for the organization of a post-office system was passed in 1792, simultaneously with that for establishing the mint.

Very soon after the commencement of the first session of Congress a letter was received from Ebenezer Hazard (July 17, 1789), then postmaster-general under the old Confederation, suggesting the importance of some new regulations for that department. A bill for the temporary establishing of a post-office was passed soon afterwards. The subject was brought up from time to time, until the present system was organized in 1792. The postmaster-general was not made a Cabinet-officer until the first year (1829) of President Jackson’s administration.

Timothy Pickering.—Born at Salem, Massachusetts, July 17, 1746; graduated in 1763; was colonel of a regiment of militia at the age of nineteen, and marched for the seat of war at the first news of the battle of Lexington; in 1775, was appointed judge of two local courts; in the fall of 1776, marched to New Jersey with his regiment; in 1777, appointed adjutant-general, and subsequently a member of the board of war with Gates and Mifflin; in 1780 he succeeded Greene as quartermaster-general; in 1790 he was employed in negotiations with the Indians; August 12, 1791, he was appointed postmaster-general; in 1794, Secretary of War, and in 1795, Secretary of State; from 1803 to 1811 he was senator, and from 1814 to 1817 representative in Congress; died at Salem, June 29, 1829.

Joseph Habersham.—Born in 1750; a lieutenant-colonel during the Revolutionary War, and in 1785 a member of Congress; appointed postmaster-general, February 25, 1795; he was afterwards president of the United States Branch Bank in Savannah, Georgia; died at that place, November, 1815.

Gideon Granger.—Born at Suffield, Connecticut, July 19, 1767; graduated at Yale College in 1787, and the following year admitted to the bar; in 1793, elected to the Connecticut Legislature; November 28, 1801, appointed postmaster-general; retired in 1814, and removed to Canandaigua, New York; April, 1819, elected a member of the Senate of that State, but resigned in 1821 on account of ill health. During his service in that body he donated one thousand acres of land to aid the construction of the Erie Canal. Died at Canandaigua, December 31, 1822.

Return Jonathan Meigs.—Born at Middletown, Connecticut, in 1765; graduated at Yale College in 1785, and subsequently admitted to the bar; in 1788, emigrated to Marietta, Ohio, then the Northwestern Territory; in 1790, during the Indian wars, he was sent by Governor St. Clair on a perilous mission through the wilderness to the British commandant at Detroit; in the winter of 1802-03 he was elected by the legislature the first chief justice of the Supreme Court of the new State; in October, 1804, he was appointed colonel commanding the United States forces in the upper district of the Territory of Louisiana, and resigned his judgeship; in the following year he was appointed one of the United States judges for Louisiana; April 2, 1807, he was transferred to the Territory of Michigan; in October following he resigned his judgeship, and was elected Governor of the State of Ohio, but his election was successfully contested on the ground of non-residence. He was chosen at the same session as one of the judges of the Supreme Court of the State, and at the next session as United States Senator for a vacancy of one year, and also for a full term. In 1810 he was again elected Governor of Ohio, and on the 8th of December resigned his seat in the Senate; in 1812 he was re-elected Governor; on the 17th of March, 1814, he was appointed postmaster-general, which he resigned in June, 1823. Died at Marietta, March 29,

1825.

John McLean.—Born in Morris county, New Jersey, March 11, 1785. His father subsequently removed to Ohio, of which State the son continued a resident. He labored on the farm until sixteen years of age, when he applied himself to study, and two years afterwards removed to Cincinnati, and supported himself by copying in the county clerk's office while he studied law. In 1807 he was admitted to the bar; in 1812 he was elected to Congress, and re-elected in 1814; in 1816 he was unanimously elected by the legislature a judge of the Supreme Court of that State; in 1822 he was appointed by President Monroe commissioner of the General Land-Office, and on the 26th of June, 1823, postmaster-general; in 1829 he was appointed as one of the justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

William T. Barry.—Born in Fairfax county, Virginia, March 18, 1780; graduated at the College of William and Mary. He was admitted to the bar, and in early life emigrated to Kentucky. In 1828 he was a candidate for Governor of that State, and defeated by a small majority after one of the most memorable contests in its annals; appointed postmaster-general March 9, 1829; in 1835, appointed minister plenipotentiary to Spain, and died at Liverpool, England, on his way to Madrid.

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Mr. Barry was the first postmaster-general who had the honor of being one of the Cabinet. Whether such a movement has benefited the postal department or not can only be ascertained by a reference to its records. As these present more the appearance of political names, figures, changes, removals, and a confusion of all the elements which make up a party, it is doubtful if the public mind is prepared to view the postal department in any other light than that of one of the revolving political luminaries of the country. A reference, however, to some statistics furnished in this work, and an occasional reference to its not being a self-sustaining institution, may probably throw some light upon the subject.

We have avoided, through motives of nationality rather than of choice, any direct allusion to frauds in the postal department. "When Judge McLean left the department it was," said his friends, "in a thriving condition." Such was not the case. From "The Aurora," edited by the late William Duane, bearing date January 10, 1835, we take the following statement:—

"It would be a hopeless task to seek the *qualities*, *actions*, *evidence of fitness*, or *principles* of Mr. McLean. We know he was a member of Congress: can any one *discover* any thing which he did there? He was appointed postmaster-general to cover the *retreat* of R. J. Meigs, who should have been removed three years before.

"And what did he do in the general post-office? Why, the men who had practised the most enormous abuses, which had been proved by *blanching evidence* before Congress, he retained in the prosecution of their *former business*.

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"The reproach is no doubt to be shared with Congress, which, on the occasion of the investigation of the sale of post-office drafts, suffered the inquiry to be stifled after attempts had been made, without success, on some poor men to suppress the truth, and who were discharged for their fidelity, whilst others were retained whose memories, like the memorable Italian delator, was *non mi ricordo*!

"Mr. McLean entered the general post-office when it was whelmed in abuses and in debt. Accounts in that office had not been brought up, or cash accounts balanced, for several years; and, in fact, no true *account* of the affairs of the post-office department at that period had ever appeared.

"Mr. McLean was a mere walking-stick for the *directors* of his predecessor. He made some efforts to bring up the business, and some laws were passed to oblige accountability; but he left the general post-office as he found it, deep in debt,—saddling his successor with the burden, and leaving the system in such disorder as to render it necessary for Mr. Barry to organize the department wholly anew, were it only to extricate it from the hands of those men who had thrown it all into confusion."[38]

Mr. Barry, in his address to the people, speaking of the department as it came from the hands of Mr. McLean to him, says,—

"The late postmaster-general, in his report dated November 17, 1828, shows that, instead of saving $500,000, the expenses of his department from the 1st of July, 1827, to the 1st of July, 1828, were upwards of $25,000 more than all its revenues for the same period, and that he had entered into contracts to take effect from the 1st of January, 1829, which involved the department in an expense, for the period of only six months from the 1st of January to the 1st of July, 1829, of $40,778.55 more than all its revenue for the same time; and that the expenses of the department for the year commencing the 1st of July, 1828, were $74,714.15 more than its revenues, and that the excess of expenditure, together with the losses sustained, had diminished the finances of the department within one year to the amount of $101,266.03. In this state of things I had no agency. It was produced before I came into office."

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Amos Kendall.—Born at Dunstable, Massachusetts, August 16, 1789; graduated at Dartmouth College in 1811; about the year 1812, removed to Kentucky, and in 1815 was appointed postmaster at Georgetown in that State; in 1816 he assumed the editorial charge of the "Argus," published at Frankfort, in the same State, which he continued until 1829, being most of the time State printer; in 1829 he was appointed fourth auditor of the United States Treasury; and May 1,

1835, postmaster-general. He resigned the latter office in 1840, and has, since the introduction of the electric telegraph, been mainly employed in connection with enterprises for its operation. He is yet living.

A GLANCE OVER HIS POSTAL OPERATIONS.

The years 1834, '35, and '36 were remarkable for an almost epidemic species of madness on the subject of slavery, or, rather, upon the question of the immediate emancipation of the slaves throughout the South. That this was carried to extremes by both parties there can be no doubt, and that very extremity became the chief cause of the rebellion of the South. The question has been settled by the North that although the South had all she could claim consistently under an *uncertain clause* of the Constitution, she had no right to make slavery a fiendish monster, that was to ride iron-shod over all the Free States in the Union, and silence the voice of Christianity in its peaceful attempts to lessen its evils. As a relic of the long past, one of the dark pages from Saxon history, the institution of slavery, as sustained in the South, was a deep, damning, dark spot on a land that boasted of principles based on three cardinal precepts, "virtue, liberty, and independence,"—a misnomer in its Constitution and laws.

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While the fanatical portion of the Northern abolitionists were striving to impress upon the South the enormity of their crime in sustaining slavery, the South was equally virulent in its condemnation of their mode of doing so. Meetings were held all over the country, speeches made, and passion swayed the judgment to the total extinction of common sense. The South accused the North of encouraging amalgamation; the North indignantly denied it, and with much logic proved that it was a *Southern virtue altogether*.

This was the beginning of the rebellion: here were the seeds grown, watered, and nurtured by hatred, envy, and malice. The South had planted its poisonous root on a free soil, and it came in contact with its more wholesome brother: the one began to pale before the venom of the other, blasting it like "a mildew'd ear." It is not our purpose to give a history of these eventful years, nor the consequence attending the operations of the Northern opposition party to slavery against Southern arrogance and presumptuous domination. The question, however, had to be decided at one time or another; and in 1860 it was answered by the thunder sound of cannon and flashes from millions of rifles.

The South became very indignant against the post-office department, which it accused of an abuse of power, by *permitting* what they called "incendiary publications" to pass through the office to individuals in the South. The Federal Government was called upon to correct this "prostitution of its laws," which was calculated to affect its (the South's) peculiar "domestic institution," and if persisted in would be the CERTAIN DESTRUCTION OF THE UNION.

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In answer to repeated complaints made to Amos Kendall, Esq., the then postmaster-general, both from Southern men and Northern advocates of slavery, he stated distinctly that he had no legal authority to exclude newspapers from the mail, nor prohibit their carriage or delivery on account of their character and tendency, real or supposed. Indeed, this would be assuming a power over the liberty of the press which might be perverted and abused to an extent highly injurious to our republican system of government.

In 1835, Amos Kendall received a letter from the postmaster at Charleston, stating that he had detained in the office certain inflammatory newspapers, circulars, pamphlets, &c., the distribution of which he thought was calculated to do much harm in the State; in fact, a meeting was called in that city of its citizens upon the subject of these "incendiary documents," when it was publicly stated that "*arrangements had been made with the postmaster, by which no seditious pamphlets shall be issued or forwarded from the post-office in this city*"! The committee consisted of the following-named gentlemen, who had waited upon the postmaster, and hence his letter to the postmaster-general:—General Hayne, John Robinson, Charles Edmonston, H. A. Desaussure, James Robertson, James Lynah, Edward R. Laurens. The following is an extract from Mr. Kendall's letter to the postmaster at Charleston: similar replies to other postmasters from the Southern States were also forwarded, as it appeared to have been a preconcerted Southern action. Of this there can be no doubt; for the Charleston letter bore date July 29, 1835, the Richmond August 8, New Orleans July 15, and Georgia July 10. Mr. Kendall says,—

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"But I am not prepared to direct you to forward or deliver the papers of which you speak. The post-office department was created to serve the people of each and all of the *United States*, and not to be used as the instrument of their *destruction*. None of the papers detained have been forwarded to me, and I cannot judge for myself of their character and tendency; but you inform me that they are in character 'the most inflammable and incendiary, and insurrectionary in the highest degree.'

"By no act or direction of mine, official or private, could I be induced to aid knowingly in giving circulation to papers of this description, directly or indirectly. We owe an obligation to the laws, but a higher one to the communities in which we live; and if the *former* be perverted to destroy the *latter*, it is patriotism to disregard them. Entertaining these views, I cannot sanction, and will not condemn, the step you have taken. Your justification must be looked for in the character of the papers detained, and the circumstances by which you are surrounded."

"The surroundings" in and near all Southern post-offices are those which the institution of slavery inaugurates. Letters from certain Eastern States were subject to an espionage somewhat similar to that by which a detective policeman tracks an unsuspecting culprit from haunt to

haunt, acquiring a perfect knowledge of his habits and the character of his associates. Letters were opened by a sort of steaming process, read and their contents noted, carefully sealed again, and delivered to the person to whom they were directed. If the contents of the letter came under the denunciatory head, the individual to whom it was addressed received intimation from the Order of “The Regulators,” a society formed for the purpose of finding out abolitionists, to leave the city in twenty-four hours. 197

The writer of this resided in the city of New Orleans at that period, and he knew of the existence of one established as far back as 1829: it was called the “Regulators.” It was not only formidable in numbers, but equally so in a political point of view. This order has since been merged in that of the “Golden Circle.” One of the obligations of the “Regulators” was, and is in the new “junto,” to this effect:—

“I do promise that I will use my best exertions to find out any and every one who in any way favors abolitionism, and who attempts to instruct or enlighten a slave, either by teaching him his letters, or by giving him religious instruction,” &c.

Under this oath men were driven from the South, and in some instances *tarred and feathered*! In 1834 the writer knew an old gentleman from Boston, who, ignorant of the *exclusive* slave-laws of the State, was compelled to quit New Orleans for simply talking to an old black man about religion and teaching him his letters, so that he might read the word of God: this, too, in a Christian land,—a land of freedom![39]

It may be observed, however, in extenuation even for such seeming high-handed measures, that as slavery was an acknowledged institution rearing itself up on the Constitution, and that some 4,000,000 of human creatures were chained to it, it was absolutely necessary to keep them in ignorance of any sympathy existing for their degraded state either in the North or the South, lest such sympathy should excite them to resistance. Hence every thing that was calculated to throw light on their benighted pathway, and strengthen any lingering preconceived idea that they were men and not beasts of burden, was kept studiously away from them. As long as this country sanctioned the existence of slavery, just so long was she justified in protecting those States sustaining it from any outbreak on the part of its victims. It was an evil that came in under the Constitution, and it was an evil it was bound to sustain. The anti-slavery party North carried their views far beyond common sense and simple reason; and this led to Southern opposition. But the more enlightened people viewed both parties as acting wrong, and in opposing the first they as strongly repudiated the acts of the latter. And what has been the consequence? The South, alone in its crime, alone in its inhuman traffic, alone in its crushing power to make men beasts of burden,—even lower in the animal scale than the animal itself,—like Lucifer, rebelled against its country and its God. Thus, slaveholders became barbarians by the very act of attempting to rivet the chains of bondage on man and his country. That rebellion recreated in our midst a new order, or rather carried out the very spirit of the Declaration of Independence, declaring that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, “Free and Independent States.” There can be no such thing as freedom, if its meaning be linked to the chains of slavery. There is no true freedom for an American to boast of, if one portion of the land sustains slavery and laughs at the sound of the lash as it lacerates the back of a bondsman in the nineteenth century. Age of Christianity! age of refinement! age of letters! What a misnomer! 198

This feeling, which had a tendency to divide the South from the North, was gradually assuming a dangerous aspect. It was a feeling antagonistical to that which prevailed in the North. The one was allied to the age of barbarism, the other to the highest order of civilization. The worst passions of bad men were working the evil; they engendered hatred and malice; and the rising popularity of the North for its intelligence, its institutions, its educational system, its arts, its sciences, and, in fact, all that a high state of intellectual knowledge produces, added fuel to the hellish fire that was burning in the Southern breast. 199

They could boast of only one institution, and that was slavery. This institution sent forth

“the piercing cry
Which shook the waves and rent the sky:
E’en now, e’en now, on yonder western shores
Weeps pale Despair, and writhing Anguish roars;
E’en now on Afric’s groves, with hideous yell
Fierce Slavery stalks, and slips the dogs of hell;
From vale to vale the gathering cries rebound,
And sable nations tremble at the sound!”

The South actually could boast of but this one institution: for all others, either of commerce, agriculture, education, arts or sciences, they were indebted to the North. And yet they rebelled!

The moment men, as well as nations, feel their own insignificance and witness the rising greatness of others, that moment they begin to plot mischief. Treason is the offspring of disappointment and a desire for power. Defeated ambition not unfrequently steps in, and out of such elements rebellions are made. Lucifer, therefore, may be quoted as the personification of the treason of Jeff Davis.

The South also made the discovery that slave labor, devoted only to one object, was demoralizing the soil, as it had already demoralized society. Northern men and Northern manners did not suit their ideas of refinement, and thus the social relations became unpleasant. 200

Every foot of ground neglected or simply used for one especial purpose was gradually wearing out. The census of 1850 furnishes the following facts connected with the decadency of the Southern soil.

Three hundred and thirty-five thousand natives of Virginia emigrated from the State of Virginia and found homes elsewhere. South Carolina sent forth 163,000. North Carolina lost 261,575,—equal to thirty-one per cent. As regards Maryland, the extreme poverty of her soil can be directly traced to man’s neglect of what kind Nature sent him, that by the “sweat of his brow” he should cultivate and enjoy.

If we were to trace the cause of this, it would be found to have originated in the sterility of the soil, the absence of free labor and agricultural knowledge. Southern men are not favorably disposed towards Northern improvements in any department, no matter whether it be trade, commerce, or agriculture: hence they have no such farms South as they have North, even in portions of their country where the soil is equally susceptible of improvement.

The South stated distinctly, speaking through her secret councils, using their own language, “*that it could only hope for the real enjoyment of its rights in a* Southern Confederacy”!

Mr. Kendall’s letter to the postmaster was applauded by the Southern press, and most severely censured by that of the North. One editor said, “There was but one course for the postmaster-general to pursue in relation to the distribution of the documents at Charleston, and that is, to have directed his subordinate officer to follow the statutes as laid down, and leave the result to the law. Instead of this, he tells him that it is *patriotism sometimes to disregard the law*!” 201

It is said the law is defective: it may have been in 1835; but the South, by its own vile act, has made that law so clear that there is not the least doubt but every Southern postmaster hereafter, whatever his political opinions may be, will be fully able to understand it.

Perhaps no man exerted himself more to make the postal department honored and respected than did Amos Kendall. He was, consequently, making rules and regulations organizing the several departments, and watching each and every operation with a shrewd and business eye to its interest.

In 1835, under the heading of the “Organization of the Post-Office Department,” he published fifty-six rules and regulations, concluding with the following remarks, *apart from a political basis*:—

“The postmaster-general looks to all those under his direction and control for a cheerful and vigorous co-operation in the management of the business of the department, by which they will not only render an essential service to their country, but assuredly promote their own happiness and extend their individual reputation. It will give him pleasure, and it is his fixed purpose, to advance, as occasion may offer, all such as by their industry, fidelity, and correct deportment may give character to the department and enable him to discharge honorably the important duties with which he is intrusted.”

Mr. Kendall and, in fact, all postmaster-generals in their reports invariably speak of advancing the interest of honest and trustworthy employees; but we believe that unless this important and much-desired consideration is carried out by *political influence, anxious expectants will never enjoy the benefits arising from it*.

202 Postmaster-General Blair made similar promises, which, like those of others, were not fulfilled, and the writer of this, among others, was told that an addition to their salary would follow Postmaster-General Blair’s promises. The presumption, however, was that there was not a man in the whole postal department who came up to the postmaster-general’s idea of what constituted “honesty” in its connection with the department. This, however, we do know, that the noisy, ignorant politicians, those who exercised an influence over frequenters of rum-shops, were the men who received the most attention from these functionaries. Postmaster-General Blair, in his Annual Report of the Post-Office Department, 1862, winds up with these words:—

“It is my purpose to adhere firmly to my determination to displace incompetency and indifference wherever found in official position under my control, without any discrimination in favor of appointments which I may myself have made under misinformation of facts. The postal business must be conducted, if successful, upon the same principles which control the operations of the upright and sagacious man of business. The department should adhere to those officers who have administrative talents and are faithful to its interests, and should remove those who take no interest in the efficiency of its service.”

This is exactly the argument we have used in another portion of this work in favor of those who are faithful to the interest of the government and have acquired a thorough knowledge of their duties. We hope the suggestions of Mr. Blair will be *practically* carried out.

Mr. Kendall had to contend against a powerful political party which was brought to bear upon his time and patience. The latter was severely tried during the session of Congress, March, 1839. To all the attacks, however, which were made upon him, and the various attempts to accuse him of political partiality in his appointments, he answered with a clearness and boldness which fully 203 proved that the attempt to make political capital out of his supposed malfeasance in office was at best but a “weak invention of the enemy.”

It was stated that he retained in office a postmaster, “a wretch who was guilty of forgery and

counterfeiting, and who escaped the fangs of the law only by turning state's evidence," although he had been fully informed of the facts and knew the character of the man, and that his reason for retaining him (such a villain) in office was that he was an active and determined partisan. To this statement Mr. Kendall replied as follows:—

"These charges appear to have been made on the 28th of February last. Lucius D. Smith, postmaster at New Lebanon, Oneida county, New York, the individual referred to, was removed from office on the 21st of January last, and the appointment of his successor was officially announced in the 'Globe' on the 1st of February last. He had, therefore, been removed more than a month when these charges were uttered on the floor of the House."

In another portion of this work we have alluded to the fact of the postal department being made a political one. It is one of those institutions that is allied to the general interest of all parties; and for the maintenance of that interest its political influence should not extend throughout all its ramifications. It is true, the heads of the department in many instances, being mere ciphers, might be with propriety politically disposed of; but the workers in the office—the active business-men—should not step out from their duties to take part in the active workings of the party at the expense of the postal interest. And yet, under the present system, these men *must labor* in their "political vocation" or lose their position. Their presence at ward-meetings, their being elected delegates, their lost time at the polls, are all for their chances of retaining place for four years. 204 Then they pass away into other business, forgotten by those who used them as their tools while in office. What are such men, when subject to a system like this, but *political paupers*? We do not say that men in the post-office should not be the friends and supporters of the party in power: on the contrary, they are expected to be. But cannot a man be the friend and supporter of the government under any administration apart from his political bias, more particularly if he is placed in a position of honor and trust not easily supplied by another, without being subject to instant dismissal? Previous to 1860 this should have been a governmental axiom; but the rebellion changed the whole system, because there arose a divided sentiment in relation to the union of States, originating the treasonable idea that secession was a constitutional principle. Men who advocated this doctrine were not considered worthy of a place of trust: hence, in the different post-offices throughout the loyal States, the oath of allegiance was administered to the employees,—a most important movement; for a disloyal clerk would have been a powerful auxiliary to the rebel cause. Although during the rebellion—nay, even up to its very close—portions of the press were favorably disposed towards traitors, the post-office made no distinction in its distribution of newspapers: unlike the South in its days of *slavish* triumph and during the incipient stages of the rebellion, it exercised no espionage even over the Copperhead presses of the North,—an oversight on the part of our government for which it has dearly paid; for it led to the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, by furnishing to the South the information of its having friends in the North. His death, however, only accelerated the downfall of all their plans and the final surrender of all their armies.

And here, although perhaps out of place in a work like this, we ask how an editor, dipping his pen in the black blood of treason and tracing the dark lines of crime along the columns of his paper, 205 could claim postal protection while aiming to destroy the very power under which he claimed the right to publish his incendiary sheet?

That press should cease to be considered a part and portion of an institution when its columns maintain the right not only to utter treason, but to claim on constitutional grounds, according to its idea, the privilege of expressing sentiments calculated to destroy the union of the States.[40]

We have alluded to the frequent changes that are made in our post-offices: we annex parallel passages from the English post-office administration and that of our own:—

ELEMENTS OF THE BRITISH SYSTEM.

In the English postal system there are potential elements which render it a success, while in ours it is a failure.

One of these elements is that the *personnel* of their postal administration is more permanent, and the establishment is placed purely on a business footing. It is administered by experienced men. Once thoroughly instructed in the laws, the regulations, and their duties, the department measures their claims to office by their continued fidelity and attention to its interests. In some branches of the service, candidates are admitted upon both a physical and mental examination of their qualifications. A medical officer examines the aspirants for clerkships and for the places of carriers and laborers. Post-office savings-banks are connected with the establishment. Provision for life-assurance, the premiums being deducted from weekly or monthly wages, is also a part of their system. They thus combine nearly all interests to procure a permanent and faithful devotion to duty.

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ELEMENTS OF THE AMERICAN POST-OFFICE.

The elements which make up our postal department are those which politics create. These are constantly changing, and every change produces its own creatures. The very resignations are the consequences of these changes, and not of the desire to secure other employment. Men would rather owe to themselves the right of leaving a position than submit to the pompous notice from an official, commencing with, *"Your services are no longer required," &c.*

The number of resignations alone during the year ending on the 30th of June, 1862, was 2902,

the removals 2786, out of 19,973 officers in the loyal States and districts. The resignations were nearly fifteen per cent. of the whole number, and resignations and removals combined about twenty-eight per cent. of the whole number. The new appointees must acquire a practical postal education before they can promptly and accurately discharge their duties. It is evident that a system so liable to constant and large changes in its administration must be defective in many elements of completeness. The theory of our government requires a direct official responsibility to the executive head, and that the term of office should be limited to the proper discharge of that responsibility. The principle is correct. But the proper compensatory principle requires retention of good officers, as truly as it requires the discharge of incompetent incumbents. This principle can be carried into effect only when public sentiment shall be so clear and uniform as to make itself felt by all public representatives influencing appointments.

NUMBER OF POST-OFFICES.

The number of post-offices established on the 30th of June, 1865, including suspended offices in Southern States, was 28,832; number subject to appointment by the President, 702; by the postmaster-general, 28,170; number of persons engaged, 85,000.

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APPOINTMENTS

Made to fill vacancies caused by resignations	3,575
Removals	925
Deaths	229
Changes of names and sites	132
Establishment of new offices	586
Total appointments	5,447

The number of offices in the late disloyal States is 8902, of which 1051 were reopened on November 15, 1865.

Number of route-agents, 387; aggregate compensation, $229,522. Number of local agents, 51; aggregate compensation, $30,949. Number of special agents, 33; aggregate compensation, $82,790. Number of baggage-masters, 110; aggregate compensation, $6600. Number of postal railway-clerks, 64; aggregate compensation, $75,000.

John Milton Niles.—This gentleman was born in Windsor, Connecticut, August 20, 1787, and was bred to the bar, and went to Hartford in 1816 to practise law; in 1817 he was there concerned in publishing the "Times," which he edited for a time; in 1820 he was appointed postmaster at Hartford by President Jackson, and held the office until made a Senator in Congress in 1835, in which position he remained until 1839; in 1840 he was appointed postmaster-general by President Van Buren; in 1842 he was again elected to the United States Senate, served six years, retired to private life, and died May 31, 1856.

Francis Granger.—Born at Suffield, Connecticut, December 1, 1792; graduated at Yale College in 1811; admitted to the bar in May, 1816; he was elected a member of the New York Legislature in 1825, and again in 1826, 1827, 1829, and 1831; in 1828 he was a candidate for the office of Lieutenant-Governor, but was defeated; and in 1830 and again in 1832 he was run for Governor with the same result; in 1834 he was elected to Congress; in 1836 he was a candidate for Vice-President, and received the electoral votes of the States of Massachusetts, Vermont, New Jersey, Delaware, Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky; he was again elected to Congress in 1838 and in 1840; appointed postmaster-general March 6, 1841, but resigned the following September. His successor in Congress thereupon resigned, and Mr. Granger was again elected to that body. On the 4th of March, 1843, he finally retired from public life.

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Francis Granger, immediately on entering upon the duties of his office, made the same discovery as had others before him,—that the postal department was not self-sustaining. Had the postmaster-general been acquainted with the business of the office before entering upon its duties, he would have been fully enabled to reconcile the warring elements of statistics and figures which the books of the office presented. The post-office department is not a self-sustaining one, nor will it be until there is a reconstruction of the whole system. In several portions of this work we have alluded to some of the causes tending to such deficiencies, and pointed out the remedy. As this remedy, however, is connected with certain abuses not unknown to high officials, it is questionable if any action will ever be taken upon it. Mr. Granger says, "When first entering upon my official duties, my attention was forced to the constant demands for payment beyond the ability of the department to pay; and, with a view to ascertain as nearly as might be its undisputed liabilities and probable means, on the 21st of March [1841] last a letter was addressed to the Auditor of the Treasury for the post-office department, requesting from him information on those subjects."

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Mr. Granger became considerably enlightened, no doubt, when the auditor furnished him with the following, which he recognized thus:—"By an examination of that statement, it will be seen that there was due and unpaid to contractors of ascertained balances on the 1st of January last the sum of $447,029, a considerable portion of which has been paid from the revenues of the quarter ending on the 31st of March. A report from the auditor upon the outstanding contracts will undoubtedly increase this amount of indebtedness to a total exceeding *half a million* of dollars: in addition to which, heavy demands are frequently made on the department upon unliquidated claims." ... "Under these circumstances," he asks, "how is the department to be

sustained under its present embarrassments? and what are its financial hopes for the future?”

“He also states that the amount demanded by railroad companies for transportation of the mails is more than two hundred per cent. higher than is paid for coach service upon the roads connecting links between different railroad companies upon the same main route, and that, too, where the night-service upon the railroads is less than that performed in coaches.” He illustrates this by the following:—“Boston is one of the most important points of railroad concentration in the Union. Its business prosperity is proverbial; and yet in that city the quarter ending the 31st of March shows, as compared with the corresponding quarter of the year before, a decrease in postage receipts of *three thousand one hundred and ninety-five dollars*, being double the amount of diminution to be found within the same time in any other post-office in the nation, with the single exception of Philadelphia, which is another great *terminus* of railroad communication.”

[210] Charles A. Wickliffe.—Born at Bardstown, Kentucky, June 8, 1788, and was admitted to the bar at an early age. He was twice elected to the State legislature during the war of 1812; he twice volunteered in the Northwestern army, and was present at the battle of the Thames; in 1820 he was again elected to the legislature; in 1822 he was elected to Congress, and was four times re-elected. During his service in that body he was appointed by the House as one of the managers in the impeachment of Judge Peck. Upon leaving Congress in 1833, he was again elected to the legislature, and upon its assembling was chosen Speaker. In 1834 he was elected Lieutenant-Governor of the State; and in 1839, by the death of Governor Clark, he became acting Governor. He was appointed postmaster-general September 13, 1841. In 1849 he was chosen as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of Kentucky; and under the new Constitution he was appointed as one of the revisers of the statute laws of the State.

This gentleman’s views of the postal department were more practical and business-like than those of his predecessor. He says in his report, dated December 2, 1841, “As has already been remarked, the original design in the establishment of the post-office department was that its income should be made to sustain its operations. That principle ought never to be abandoned. Whilst the department should not be regarded as a source of revenue to the nation, it never should become an annual charge to the treasury. Upon assuming the discharge of the duties pertaining to the office of postmaster-general, my first object was to investigate its financial condition; and it becomes my duty to inform you that I did not find it in that prosperous state which the demands upon it require.

“The income of this department is liable to be affected by the fluctuations of the business of the [211] country. It is increased or depressed in proportion to the increase or depression of that business.”

Mr. Wickliffe also took another sensible view of the department: he says, “Besides this cause of fluctuation in its income, other causes of a reduction, more or less in every year, may be found in the increased facilities which the travel upon railroads and steamboats furnishes for the transmission of letters and newspapers by private conveyance; secondly, in the great extension, to say nothing of the abuse, of the FRANKING PRIVILEGE; thirdly, in the recent establishment of what are called private expenses upon the great mail-routes of the United States; fourthly, in the frauds practised upon the department in evading by various devices the payment of the postage imposed by law.”

Cave Johnson.—Born January 11, 1793, in Robertson county, Tennessee. His opportunities for education were limited, but made available to the greatest extent. In his youth he acted as deputy-clerk of the county, his father being clerk. He was thence led to the study of the law. In 1813 he was appointed deputy-quartermaster in a brigade of militia commanded by his father, and marched into the Creek nation under General Jackson. He continued in this service until the close of the Creek War in 1814. In 1816 he was admitted to the bar; in 1817 he was elected by the legislature one of the attorneys-general of the State, which office he held until elected a member of Congress in 1829. He was re-elected in 1831, 1833, and 1835, defeated in 1837, again elected in 1839, 1841, and 1843. Appointed postmaster-general March 5, 1845. In 1849 he served for a few months as one of the circuit judges of Tennessee, and in 1853 was appointed by the Governor and Senate as President of the Bank of Tennessee, at Nashville.

[212] Jacob Collamer.—Born at Troy, New York, about 1792, and removed in childhood to Burlington, Vermont, with his father; graduated at the State University at that place in 1810; served during the year 1812 a frontier campaign as a lieutenant in the service of the United States; admitted to the bar in 1813; practised law for twenty years, serving frequently in the State legislature. In 1833 he was elected an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the State, from which position he voluntarily retired in 1842. In the course of that period he was also a member of a convention held to revise the Constitution of the State. In 1843, elected to Congress to fill a vacancy, and re-elected for a full term in 1844, and again in 1846. Appointed postmaster-general March 7, 1849, —thus forming one of the Cabinet of President Taylor. He resigned in 1850, with the rest of the Cabinet, on the death of the President, and was soon afterwards reappointed on the Supreme bench of his State, which office he held until 1854, when he was elected a Senator in Congress from Vermont for six years from 1855; and in 1861 he was re-elected for the term ending in 1867, serving as chairman of the Committee on Post-Offices and Post-Roads, also that on the Library, and as a member of several other important committees. He received the degree of LL.D. from the University of Vermont and from Dartmouth College, New Hampshire.

He died on the 9th of November, 1865, at Woodstock, Vermont, in the seventy-fourth year of his age. Mr. Collamer was one of the most distinguished of our statesmen, and one of the oldest

members of the Senate.

Nathan Kelsey Hall.—Born at Skaneateles, New York, March 28, 1810; removed to Aurora, in the same State, in 1826, and commenced the study of the law with Millard Fillmore; removed with the latter to Buffalo in 1830; admitted to the bar in 1832; appointed First Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in 1841; in 1845 elected a member of the State legislature, and in 1846 a member of Congress. He was appointed postmaster-general July 20, 1850, and in 1852 United States Judge for the Northern District of New York. 213

It was during his administration that the change was made in the rates of postage, by making letter-postage three cents to every part of the United States, except California and the Pacific Territories,—the weight of letter one-half ounce, and prepaid.

Samuel Dickenson Hubbard.—Born at Middletown, Connecticut, August 10, 1799; graduated at Yale College in 1819. He was admitted to the bar in 1822, but subsequently engaged in manufacturing enterprises. He was mayor of the city of Middletown, and held other offices of local trust. In 1845 he was elected a member of Congress, and re-elected in 1847. He was appointed postmaster-general September 14, 1852. Died at Middletown, October 8, 1855.

James Campbell.—Born September 1, 1813, in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; admitted to the bar in 1834, at the age of twenty-one years; in 1841, at the age of twenty-eight, he was appointed Judge of the Common Pleas Court for the city and county of Philadelphia, which position he occupied for the term of nine years; in 1851, when the Constitution of the State was changed, making the judiciary elective, he was nominated by a State convention of his party as a candidate for the Supreme Court of the State, but was defeated after a warmly-contested and somewhat peculiar contest, securing, however, 176,000 votes; in January, 1852, he was appointed Attorney-General of Pennsylvania, which he resigned to assume the duties of postmaster-general: he was appointed to that office on the 8th of March, 1853. 214

There was no particular feature in the postal department to render this gentleman’s name in its connection popular during his term of office. It is somewhat curious, however, that the administrations of Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan—*both peculiarly political*—should have furnished to the Southern Confederacy more prominent men who were engaged with them in office than did all the other administrations combined. Is this accident, design, or the effect of their political education under their reign?

Aaron Vail Brown.—Appointed postmaster-general under James Buchanan’s administration in 1857; was born August 15, 1795, in Brunswick county, Virginia; graduated at the University of North Carolina, at Chapel Hill, in 1814; studied law and soon commenced practice in Nashville, Tennessee; he was partner in the law business of the late President Polk; served in almost all the sessions of the legislature of Tennessee between 1821 and 1832; he was a member of the House of Representatives from 1839 to 1845, and was in that year elected Governor of Tennessee.

In his first report as postmaster-general, made December 1, 1857, he very modestly stated that, “entering on the administration of the Post-Office Department,” he “ventured on no new theories, nor attempted any innovations on the well-tried system established and practised upon” by his predecessors.

It was during his administration that the route from New York to New Orleans was considerably improved and transportation facilitated;[41] also the mail-service on the Mississippi River below the Ohio was materially changed and improved. 215

The overland mail-service to California by the Southern route by contract became an agitating subject, and under proposals approved by an act of Congress, March 3, 1857, various bids were made by parties for carrying the mail. The contract was made on the 16th of September, 1857, with certain parties, at a cost of $600,000 per annum. (*See Report for the year 1857.*)

Joseph Holt succeeded Aaron Vail Brown, who died March, 1858, in alluding to which Mr. Holt uses the following language:—

“Post-Office Department,
December 3, 1859.

“Sir:—In the month of March last, the sudden decease of my enlightened and deeply-lamented predecessor, immediately preceded as it was by the death of the Third Assistant Postmaster-General,—so long and so honorably connected with the administration of the postal revenues,—filled this department with discouragement and gloom. Associated with this double calamity came another, which awakened painful anxieties, not only from its intrinsic magnitude, but from the fact that the history of the government, from its foundation, furnished no parallel for such a disaster. My allusion is, of course, to the failure of Congress to pass the customary appropriation bill for the support of the Post-Office Department, whereby, with all its responsibilities resting upon it and the fulfilment of all its duties demanded by the country, it was still deprived of the use of its own revenues, and thus, necessarily, of all means of complying with its engagements to the faithful officers toiling in its service. The ordeal so unexpectedly prepared for it was, in all its aspects, as novel as it was perplexing; and disquieting apprehensions were naturally felt for the result.” 216

This was rather discouraging to Mr. Holt, who, however, displayed much business tact and perseverance under the circumstances, for he immediately issued the following notice:—

“To Postmasters and other Agents and Employees of the Post-Office Department.

“Congress having failed to make the necessary appropriation at its last session for the publication of a Manual of Post-Offices, Laws, and Regulations, now greatly needed, and the department not having sufficient clerical force at its disposal for the preparation of such a work, I have deemed it proper, in accordance with the course pursued by two of my predecessors, to purchase, for the use of the department, the necessary number of copies of a private edition, having first caused an examination to be made as to its correctness.

“The volume now sent is adopted as official, and you will be guided by it accordingly.

“J. Holt, *Postmaster-General.*

“Post-Office Department, May 15, 1859.”

The consequences resulting from the failure of Congress to make the necessary appropriation alluded to by Mr. Holt were materially felt by those who in good faith had performed their duty, by being compelled to obtain advances on their claims at a fearful sacrifice. Mr. Holt, alluding to this, says,—

“It is to be feared, however, that those whose circumstances obliged them to dispose of these securities have in many cases been compelled to submit to a heavy discount. I would most earnestly urge upon Congress the necessity of making an early appropriation to meet all the existing liabilities of the department. As the faith of the government has been broken, not only should the principal of these debts be promptly paid, but interest on them should also be allowed. In many instances this may prove but an imperfect indemnity for the damage which the creditors of the department have actually sustained; but this much, at least, is due, from the gravest considerations of public justice and policy, and cannot, in my judgment, be withheld without national dishonor.”

Horatio King was postmaster-general for a short time. He had, of course, no opportunity of displaying those qualities which a long connection with the postal department had enabled him to acquire. The appointment of Montgomery Blair, which was a settled matter, as the successor of Mr. Holt, limited his services. Glancing over official postal documents, we find his name frequently coupled with important matters in the department. It was during his short service as postmaster-general that the celebrated additional articles were made to those of the convention of March 2, 1857, between the post-office of the United States and the general post-office of France. (*See Report of the Postmaster-General for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1861.*)

Montgomery Blair.—This gentleman was appointed postmaster-general in 1861, forming one of the Cabinet under the administration of Abraham Lincoln.

Perhaps history affords no parallel to the state of affairs in our country when Abraham Lincoln took the Presidential chair. Our readers are all familiar with the history of this rebellion. We will not go over the grounds, dark and bloody as they are: suffice to say, the blow was struck, and treason assumed a bold and formidable front. The Constitution, even from its adoption, with all its amendments, has ever been a fruitful subject of dispute, more particularly with those whose interests were identified with the institution of slavery. To keep that peculiar institution—a relic of barbarism—intact, with their ideas of labor, men South advocated the idea that a sovereignty of States and their separate independency of the Union were guaranteed to them by the Constitution. This fatal error misled the ignorant: men of intellect, men educated in the Union, living under its Constitution and heretofore abiding by its laws, preached up a Utopian scheme to these misguided men. The South was to become the Eden of the world, and slavery its *Magna Charta*.

In the early part of Mr. Lincoln’s administration we edited a paper established for the purpose of maintaining his position and opposing the spirit of treason working its way North. We annex the following extract from an editorial article we wrote in 1861, being one of the editors of the “National Guard,” a paper devoted to the cause of the Union, the whole Union, and nothing but the Union:—

“When this distinguished man was first nominated for the Presidency, the grounds taken by the opposition were his abolition proclivities. Few people in the North were willing that the institution of slavery should go down beneath the Lincoln banner, and hence the increased opposition to the nomination and the powerful efforts to frustrate his election. *He was elected*: he became the President of these United States lawfully in the sight of men and of nations, and equally so in the sight of the Almighty. As President of the whole Union he took his seat. Men who expected to hear the thundertones of his official voice, “down with the South and slavery,” were surprised when they read his opinion upon the subject as President, differing in some respects from that expressed as a mere citizen. Being President, the various State interests had to be consulted: the South was upheaving with the curse of slavery upon it, and four millions of human beings were crying out for mercy. The position in which Mr. Lincoln was placed was a most delicate one: he could not maintain the high fanatical notions of many Northern men, nor would he indorse the actions of the Southerners, who feared that if the administration limited slavery it would ultimately lead to a decadency in their trade in human flesh. This was the state of matters when, in his appeal to the people for aid, he assured the South that he did not intend, in his official capacity, to interfere with their peculiar institution. Then the South dashed back the

offered cup of peace presented to them in good faith, and spurned the hand that held it towards them. They feared the man; they feared the popular opinion uprising against slavery, and, deeming a portion of the North favorable to their cause, reared at once the standard of rebellion.

“Let our readers glance back to that period; let them take a view of a tall, pale man seated in the chair of state; let them look into his eyes, his soul, and see and even hear the beating pulse of the nation’s heart in his every fibre; let them look out and over the land and hear the maniacs of treason crying for his blood; let them look North, and even there hear the rebel sympathizers breathing curses loud and deep; let them read the first call for 75,000 troops, written with a nervous hand and a quailing heart; then look! behold! a nation obeys the call of the President, and the voice of the Union-loving people cheers and upholds him in his seat. The rebels find *no open aid North*. Covert, treacherous scoundrels, descendants of traitors, thieves, and murderers, met, it is true, in secret councils, but soon fell into their earthly hell before the indignant glance of an aroused people.

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“Where now is slavery? Who struck at its very root and sent it shivering into pieces throughout the land? The very men who perfected and planned this revolution.

“Serpent-like, they bit themselves, and are now dying of the poison. Throughout the whole of these trying scenes—from the firing on Fort Sumter to the present—Abraham Lincoln has stood up firmly and consistently for the nation. Party questions have been repudiated and all sectional distinctions laid aside; for he had but one object, *that of saving the Union*! If to do this the destruction of the institution of slavery was necessary, its being powerless, helpless, and dead cannot be laid to his charge: it fell a victim to the acts of men who attempted to place it above the Constitution, and in the doing of which they have *crushed it and themselves out of the Union*. Thank God for this, the only good they have done!”[42]

Mr. Lincoln’s Cabinet was composed of men who set themselves to work in earnest. What they have done is now our country’s glory, our nation’s triumph.

Mr. Blair, in his first report, speaking of the commencement of his term of office, says,—

“Soon after the commencement of my term of office, the country felt the shock of internecine arms. In view of the great crime attempted against the existence of the nation, it became the duty of this, in common with the other departments of the government, to put forth all its energies to prevent the consummation of that crime. By the existing laws, all postmasters and mail-carriers, and all other persons engaged in handling the mails of the United States, or in clerical service, were required to take

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the usual oath of allegiance to this government, as well as for the faithful performance of their duties. Whenever it was made apparent by their declarations or by their conduct that there was a practical repudiation of the obligation of this oath, whether the party was a postmaster or a postal contractor, I ordered a removal from office in the one case and the deprivation of contract in the other. Not only was it unsafe to intrust the transportation of the mails to a person who refused or failed to recognize the sanctions of an oath, but to continue payment of public money to the enemies of the government and their allies was to give direct aid and comfort to treason in arms. I could not thus permit this branch of government to contribute to its own overthrow. No other course could have reasonably been expected by such contractors. The *bonâ fide* observance of that oath, and the duty of allegiance itself, entered into and became a condition, a part of the consideration, of the contract itself. This failing, the department was equitably and legally discharged from its literal obligations. Protection on the part of the government and allegiance on the part of the citizen are correlative, and are conditions mutually dependent in every contract; and the highest public interest demanded the rigid enforcement of this rule of action. Occasional local and transient inconvenience resulted of necessity, but far less than would reasonably have been expected. Loyal men everywhere sustained this action, and speedily furnished the requisite means for continuing the service without increased expense. These changes were mainly called for in parts of Virginia and Maryland and in Kentucky and Missouri.

“In the same and in neighboring districts the duties of the appointment-office have been very onerous, from the great number of changes required in post-offices, according to changing phases of public sentiment, individual action, and military occupancy. It is believed that these positions, with rare exceptions, are now held by men of unquestioned loyalty. Where such men could not be found, the offices have been discontinued rather than they should be held by repudiators of public faith and used for purposes hostile to the perpetuity of our national institutions.”

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On the 23d of September, 1864, Montgomery Blair tendered his resignation of the office of postmaster-general, and the resignation was accepted by the President.

The causes which led to this action on the part of Judge Blair were of a political character, and of such a nature as to clash with the opinions of men who could have no feelings of sympathy with rebels in arms. Among the charges brought against Blair were those of opposition to the general acts of the administration. In answer to one of these, made by the editor of the “National Republican,” the judge wrote as follows:—

“Washington, September 26, 1864.

“Editor of the National Republican.—Dear Sir:—The statement contained in your paper and other journals that my resignation was caused by the resolution of the Baltimore Convention referring

to the Cabinet, has, I observe, led to the inference that the principles adopted by that body were objectionable to me. This is not true. On the contrary, my offers were made in good faith, with a view to allay animosities among the friends of those principles, and in order to secure their triumph.

"Yours, respectfully,
M. Blair."

The editor of the "United States Mail," a most valuable post-office assistant, published in New York, noticing Judge Blair's resignation and letter, says,—

"That the official course of Judge Blair as postmaster-general has furnished no cause of dissatisfaction, and had no connection with his resignation, is a fact vouched for by the President, who, in his letter of the 23d, says,— 223

"'While it is true that the war does not so greatly add to the difficulties of your department as to those of some others, it is yet much to say, as I most truly can, that in the three years and a half during which you have administered the general post-office I remember no single complaint against you in connection therewith.'

"Judge Blair's administration of the post-office department has given evidence of a sincere desire to promote the efficiency of the service, and has been marked by the introduction of many important improvements and reforms,—among them the establishment of the money-order system and the new travelling post-office, the simplification of post-office accounts by the substitution of salaries in lieu of commissions as compensation to postmasters, the free delivery of letters by carriers, with various other plans calculated to increase the postal accommodation of the public and further the interests of the service. He has been a faithful and efficient head of the department, and, as such, leaves a record of which he has no cause to be ashamed."[43]

There is no question whatever that Postmaster-General Blair studied the interest of the department with an eye to its future destiny. He nourished it, watched it, and we may well say the postal tree is now known and appreciated by its fruit. In 1863 the "Boston Weekly Gazette" thus speaks of him:—

"At a time when war and finance are the all-absorbing themes, nationally speaking, but little attention is paid to the most quiet of our government departments, but none the less important,—the post-office. Of the management of this department too much cannot be said in its praise. 224 When every thing is confused with crowded railroads and the interruption of conveyance threatened by the exigencies of other public service, every thing proceeds in the post-office department with almost the regularity of clock-work. Scarcely a mail fails in its destination, any more than if peace prevailed in the land and men had nothing to do but to think of duty connected with transportation exclusively. We think Postmaster-General Blair entitled to the warmest praise for this state of things, that certainly redounds greatly to his credit. No man has ever filled his position who has received more unanimity of approval; and not a complaint is heard of his management. We make these remarks simply because it has surprised us that our own papers to the farthest points reach with such regularity and promptness, and letters from all parts of the country come to us strictly on time."

The history of Judge Blair since his resignation is identified with that of our politics, in which he seems to take *a peaceful interest*.

William Dennison.—On the resignation of the Hon. Montgomery Blair, the President appointed this gentleman postmaster-general. This appointment, of course, was made to reconcile political interest and extend to Ohio the right hand of government friendship, and not from any great knowledge Mr. Dennison was supposed to have of postal matters. In this country prominent positions under government are the result of the recipient's *status* in political circles. It is, therefore, evident that a knowledge of its duties is not an important requisite qualification for the office.

William Dennison was born in the city of Cincinnati, on the 9th day of November, 1815. His father was well known through more than half a century as a popular and prosperous innkeeper 225 in the young and rapidly growing city, no citizen in the whole community being more respected for probity and general worth among the pioneer settlers of Ohio and their descendants. He took great pride in his promising son, young William, and largely devoted his pecuniary means to secure the boy a thorough and solid classical education. In preparation for his college course he had the benefit of the best schools and teachers in his native city, and in the year 1831 he entered freshman in the Miami University at Oxford, Ohio, then and now a flourishing and highly-respected institution, which has educated many of the most prominent and powerful minds of the great and populous region north of the Ohio River, among whom are Caleb B. Smith, late Secretary of the Interior and formerly United States judge in Indiana, now deceased, Major-General Robert C. Schenck, Samuel Galloway, William S. Groesbeck, George E. Pugh, and others of equal note.

In September, 1835, near the close of his twentieth year, he graduated with high honor to himself and the university, then under the long successful presidency of the Rev. R. H. Bishop, D.D., a learned and venerated Presbyterian clergyman, who had early been induced to migrate from Scotland to the Northern United States by the solicitation and in the company of a renowned divine, John Mason, of the Scotch Presbyterian Church in New York, who at that time brought over a very useful and famous little clerical colony to this country.

Young Dennison then immediately returned to Cincinnati, and there commenced the study of law in the office of Hon. Nathaniel G. Pendleton (father of the Democratic candidate for the Vice-Presidency) and Stephen Fales, one of the most eminent lawyers of the West, in his youth a classmate of Daniel Webster at Dartmouth College and always his intimate personal friend. 226 Completing his legal studies and admitted to the bar, he began the practice of his profession in his native city. Soon afterwards he married the beautiful and highly-educated daughter of William Neil, of Columbus (the State capital), a famous and extensive mail-contractor throughout the Northwest, whose name was very familiar to travellers and newspaper-readers twenty or thirty years ago, in the days of stage-coaches, when railroad enterprise was in its infancy at the West.

In 1840 he formed a law-partnership with the once famous, but now infamous, Albert Pike, poet, jurist, and rebel general, Indian savage by adoption and taste, leader of scalping-parties, &c. In the execution of that arrangement he removed to Little Rock, the capital of Arkansas. But the conditions—moral, intellectual, social, and political—by which he found himself there surrounded induced him, after a brief residence and experience, to terminate the connection and return to Cincinnati, where he resumed his professional business. In 1842, at the earnest solicitation of his father-in-law, he removed to Columbus, which became thenceforth his home. He was made solicitor of the Clinton Bank, of that city, then president of the Bank of Columbus; and he finally accepted the entire management and control of all the vast mail-contract and post-road business of Mr. Neil throughout the region between the Ohio and the great lakes.

In politics Mr. Dennison was an original Whig. Throughout the existence of that party organization he was a firm, consistent, and zealously-active member of it. In 1847 he was elected to a two-years term in the Ohio Senate. He next served as president of the Columbus & Xenia Railroad until 1859, when, having been chosen by the Republican party Governor of the State, he resigned his position in connection with corporations. The great rebellion found him commander- 227 in-chief of Ohio. He immediately organized and placed at the disposal of the Federal Government seventy thousand troops, and in offering them gave to George B. McClellan and William S. Rosecrans their first commissions as general officers.

Governor Dennison is a working business-man. He is an impressive orator, tall in person, of courtly but winning manners. He is a good specimen of a Christian gentleman, a devoted member of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Mr. Dennison, immediately upon entering the precincts of the postal bureau, commenced the study of the peculiar as well as intricate business of the department. His active mind, tact, and general knowledge soon mastered many of its intricacies, and, with a precision which surprised the more knowing ones of the office, arranged and alphabeted its business in such a manner as to facilitate operations and lessen actual labor. By this time Governor Dennison is, no doubt, quite familiar with the business of a post-office.

MAILS TO CHINA AND JAPAN.

One of the most important postal arrangements under this gentleman’s administration is the establishing by steamships a postal communication with China and Japan. Congress passed a law, February 17, 1865, authorizing the postmaster to contract for such conveyance. The tender of “The Pacific Mail Steamship Company,” the only one offered, was accepted and engaged for the service. The compensation therefor is $500,000 per annum for the performance of twelve round trips between San Francisco and Hong-Kong, China, touching at Honolulu in the Sandwich Islands, and Kanagawa in Japan.

228 This is one of the greatest events of the day, and inaugurates a new era in the commerce of our country. Unless the United States, however, unites all her great advantages and brings them to bear upon her foreign relations in such a manner as to place her commerce on a footing with that of other nations, the mere fact of a new era with these is simply a postal experiment. It is for us to become masters of the commerce of the world; and with this line of steamers regularly established, and the completion of the Pacific Railway, there is nothing to stand in the way of success.

Postmaster Dennison, taking this view of it, says, in his annual report, 1864,—

“There are other ocean-routes besides the one to Brazil which can be safely and profitably occupied by American lines of mail-steamers,—among which the route between San Francisco, Japan, and China, at present unoccupied by foreign mail-packets, is perhaps the most important in a commercial point of view, and may be made available in securing to us a large participation in the commerce of the East, the greater portion of which is now enjoyed by Great Britain through her mail-steamship connections *viâ* Suez in the Indian Ocean and China Seas.

“The central position of the United States, between Eastern Asia and Western Europe, affording routes but little longer, if any, than those now traversed between these distant regions, aided by the superior expedition of railway transportation between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, will furnish such facilities as will make their adoption a practical necessity for the commercial intercourse between Europe and the populous countries of Eastern Asia. These considerations, and others which will readily suggest themselves, render it important that the Pacific routes properly belonging to us should be occupied by American mail-steamers, the profits of which, with the addition of a small subsidy for the mail-service, would justify the establishment of one or 229 more steamship-lines which would be remunerative to the proprietors.”

Now that the rebellion is ended, those steamers which were withdrawn during its progress, thus

affording foreign powers all the advantage of ocean lines, will no doubt resume their voyages for the benefit of our own.

XII.

Philadelphia—1793.

The prospects of Philadelphia were brightening up under the influence enterprising men exercised over its commercial interest; and up to 1794 the manufactures, trade, and general business were rapidly extending and improving. Mathew Carey, speaking of our city and prospects, in a pamphlet published in 1793, says,—

“From the period of the adoption of the Federal Government, at which time America was at the lowest ebb of distress, her situation had progressively become more and more prosperous. Confidence, formerly banished, was universally restored. Property of every kind rose to, and in many instances beyond, its real value; and a few revolving years exhibited the interesting spectacle of a young country with a new form of government emerging from a state which had approached very near to anarchy, and acquiring all the stability and nerve of the best-toned and oldest nations.” In this prosperity, which revived the almost extinguished hopes of four millions of people, Philadelphia participated in an eminent degree. Numbers of new houses in almost every street, built in a neat, elegant style, adorned, at the same time that they greatly enlarged, the city. Its population was extending fast: even at that period the number of vessels that entered the port was 1050. Philadelphia still retained its predilection for old sites and associations; for up to this period, and even long afterwards, the main place of business was Front and Water Streets, extending along those streets from Race down to Almond. Front Street below Market, extending down to Walnut, was the great commercial centre of trade. It was here Thomas Bradford, the root of the present generation of that name, was prominent as an editor of the newspaper called “The True American:” his office was on the west side of Front Street, below Market, No. 8. This property was subsequently sold to John Moss, Esq., upon the site of which he built a store especially for his business. Bradford sold out “The True American” to Thomas T. Stiles.

In 1791 the post-office was at No. 7 South Front Street, on the east side. Robert Patton was postmaster: he was appointed to that position August 25, 1791. In 1793 it was removed to No. 36, in the very centre of the trade and commerce of the city.

The building of the “Insurance Company of North America” stood at the southeast corner of Front and Walnut Streets. Ebenezer Hazard, formerly postmaster-general, was the Secretary. The custom-house was also on Front Street near Walnut Street: it occupied seventy-six feet front, and ran through to Water Street.

Much of the early prosperity of this city was due to Benjamin Franklin, who early in life made it his dwelling-place. His business motto was PROGRESS.

The fever of 1793, the most malignant scourge our city ever witnessed, not excepting the cholera of 1832, threw a saddening gloom over all things, paralyzing the energies of men and carrying terror among the women and children. A writer of the time, speaking of it, says, “The consternation of the people of Philadelphia at this period was carried beyond all bounds. Dismay and affright were visible in almost every person’s countenance. Most of those who could by any means make it convenient fled from the city. Of those who remained, many shut themselves up in their houses, being afraid to walk the streets.”

Business was at a stand, if not entirely suspended. That of the post-office went on as usual. In September, however, the postmaster informed the public that, in consequence of the indisposition of two of the letter-carriers he deemed it necessary to request all those who dwelt south of and in Chestnut Street, and in Front and Water Streets and north of Market Street, to call or send for their letters for a few days. Some of the postmasters in the different States used the precaution to dip Philadelphia letters into vinegar with a pair of tongs before they handled them! Several of the subscribers to Philadelphia papers made their servants sprinkle them with vinegar and dry them at the fire before they would venture to touch them.

One hundred years ago, Benjamin Franklin, seeing that Philadelphia was gradually declining in the scale of progress, awoke the Rip Van Winkles of Quakerdom by imparting to them new ideas, furnishing to their mental view more enlarged notions of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and inaugurating a system of education and philosophy which has made his name famous in the world’s history.

His connection with the postal department placed it before the people in a new and improved light, extending trade and commerce by its means to such an extent that in the year 1810 Philadelphia was the leading commercial city in the Union.

Philadelphia, however, lost sight of one important fact in connection with her commercial interest, and that was (to use a speculating phrase) “never to lose a trick” in the game of opposition with others. Thus, while New York was studying the taste of the town in regard to fashions of dress and works of art, for which European nations were then celebrated, Philadelphia was engaged in looking after her manufacturing interests. The consequence was that in the year 1811 New York, taking advantage of her seaboard situation, took the lead in importations, and her market became celebrated for its rich style of dress-goods, and her stores equally so for their gorgeous display of Parisian finery. Instantly that current of trade which had set in so favorably for Philadelphia changed its course to her rival city, and merchants from the South and West flocked there for what, we regret to say, our city was unable to furnish to the extent its facilities afforded.

It seems as if Philadelphia succumbed at once to New York, and permitted the Western and Southern trade to pass away from her without a struggle. For years the commerce of Philadelphia had kept pace with the general progress of the country, but in a moment of weakness, or from some local or political cause, her merchants, whose industry and enterprise had been proverbial in all countries, gave up their shipping interest to a rival city, which the latter has successfully maintained ever since. *By this act Philadelphia became an inland city.*

If we neglected our shipping, it cannot be said we neglected our manufacturers. They have had ample reason to be grateful for such encouragement, as the city has the honor of being considered second to none in the country,—at least in this department. We have surpassed New York in many important branches of mechanics, and excelled every other city in the Union, perhaps in the world, in manufacturing locomotives and other essential auxiliaries to steamboats, railroads, &c.

As trade and commerce progressed, the postal department extended its operations, and the Philadelphia post-office was not behind those of other cities in furthering the cause of the great postal institution of the country.

The postal boundaries of our country extend over an area ten times greater than those of England and France combined; three times as large as the whole of France, Britain, Austria, Prussia, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Holland, and Denmark together; one and a half times larger than the Russian Empire, and only one-sixth less than the area covered by sixty states and empires of Europe. The entire area in 1853 was 2,983,153 square miles.

Claiming for Philadelphia, and justly, too, credit for its postal as well as its commercial reputation, we will pass over some years and bring our readers down to a later date. First, however, we annex a list of postmasters of Philadelphia from 1791.

Perhaps no other city in the Union can boast of a list of names in their postal department of men, both as regards character and business qualifications, equal to those we furnish here, and who filled the office with so much honor and credit. We are not, however, so clannish in our notions of locality as to include all the names mentioned here as being entitled to such credit: we make a few exceptions: those exceptions and the reasons are a part of the secret history of *post-offices*. Several of them have gone to that “bourn from whence no traveller returns,” and those that still *live* live honored and respected.

Robert Patton, appointed August 25, 1791.
Michael Leib, appointed February 14, 1814.
Richard Bache, appointed Feb. 26, 1819.
Thomas Sargeant, appointed April 16, 1828.
James Page, appointed April 11, 1833.

OFFICE BECAME PRESIDENTIAL, JULY 9, 1836.

James Page, reappointed July 9, 1836.
John C. Montgomery, appointed March 23, 1841.
James Hoy, Jr., appointed June 26, 1844.
George F. Lehman, appointed May 5, 1845.
William J. P. White, appointed May 9, 1849. 235
John Miller, appointed April 1, 1853.
Gideon F. Westcott, appointed March 19, 1857.
Nathaniel B. Browne, appointed May 30, 1859.
Cornelius A. Walborn, appointed April 20, 1861.

The past history of our city shows that the post-office was but a minor consideration on the part of the historian who attempted to speak of its institutions. Even those whose business it was to furnish statistics and local facts invariably overlooked the post-office. A glance back through the vista of time presents to the eye a panoramic view of the buildings which were used for postal purposes; and a more motley architectural picture scarcely ever presented itself to sight. From the time Benjamin Franklin had his office in a portion of his printing-shop to the present, we cannot find the department ever blessed with even a decent building for postal purposes until the one now occupied for that special service was erected.

True, the Old Coffee-House on Second Street was the centre of trade, and merchants often met there to discuss commercial matters and secure their foreign papers and letters: still, it was not calculated for the general business of the postal service. From 1793, passing along from street to street, we at last come to Dr. Jayne's gloomy building, where, amid the sound of steam-engines, the fumes from eating-houses, and the *dead-rat* smell from lager-beer saloons, we find the operations of the great postal business of the city moving on. The very atmosphere was as injurious to the health of the employees as its dark and dingy appearance was painful to those who visited it.

Emerging from this, we come into a new and beautiful building, erected on Chestnut Street below Fifth. For this edifice, so conveniently situated, so light and airy, so admirably adapted to 236 postal business, the community is solely indebted to Postmaster CORNELIUS A. WALBORN, Esq.

A GLANCE AT THE PHILADELPHIA POST-OFFICE FROM AN ARCHITECTURAL POINT OF VIEW.

The Philadelphia post-office was completed and ready for the transaction of business on the 23d of March, 1863. It is situated on Chestnut Street, between Fourth and Fifth Streets, adjoining the custom-house. The contrast between these two buildings is most remarkable: one presents the view we have in classic illustrations of the Parthenon of Athens; the other, disdaining all the associations which the history of Greece and Rome throws around our ideas of classic architectural beauty, looms up before us, blending the style of the rural districts of France (*Alaon*) with that of the city of Paris in the seventeenth century.

The Exchange of Paris (*La Bourse*), in the Rue Vivienne, seems, at least in part, to have furnished for our post-office the idea for its architectural construction. This is more observable in its Attic design, known in the modern French school as the “masked Attic.” The front of the Philadelphia post-office is cased or veneered with white marble, and, in connection with the peculiar Attic style, presents an appearance by no means flattering to the architect who designed it.

Modern architects consult variety rather than harmony in drawing their plans. Thus, foreign ornaments of a more classic form are occasionally mingled with them: hence we have presented to us an incongruous style, offensive alike to good taste and judgment.

The Philadelphia post-office reminds us very much of the Paris post-office (*Hotel des Postes*), which is situated east of the Palais Royal: it has a handsome front, but in its *tout ensemble* does not present to view much architectural beauty either in style or design. France, like England, never considered the architecture of a country as being inseparable from its history: hence her public buildings present to view the combined peculiarities of the styles and eras of the sixteen different orders which have marked the progress of architecture since the building of the great temple of Samos.

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In this country, with few exceptions, we have not studied architecture with an eye to a national feature: on the contrary, our artists have copied the styles of all nations, from which designs are made to please the eye only, without regard to originality or the age in which we live. This cannot be called an architectural construction, but rather an adaptation of Grecian models to the buildings of our own time. *There is no originality here.*

A building may be well arranged for all purposes of mere convenience, but in reality, if destitute of harmony in its outward appearance, it cannot be called an architectural construction. This remark will apply to the buildings in our country generally, and equally, as stated, to those of England and France.

If the Philadelphia post-office is devoid of these requisites as regards its exterior, its interior makes full amends.

Every department is so constructed and arranged that there is no clashing or cause of impediment in the general routine of its business. Each man has his position, each *bureau* its place, and over all the chief clerk, from an elevated position, has an eye to every action and movement of the employees. To Cornelius A. Walborn, Esq., the present efficient postmaster [1866], is the department indebted for the admirable arrangements of the Philadelphia post-office.

In speaking of the outward appearance of “our post-office,” we may be singular in our ideas of what constitutes architectural beauty, and others may appreciate what we censure. It is not, however, altogether a matter of taste with us, but a sense of what constitutes harmony. In every thing that owes its existence to nature alone, there is harmony. It is, in fact, the music of the spheres joining chorus with the growth of plants and flowers, which the ancients believed came blooming into life with music; or, as the poet says, it may be “the language of some other state, born of its memory.” Thus, in all things imitative of nature there should be harmony. Why not in art?

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Perhaps there is no other block of buildings in this city that presents a greater variety of architectural incongruities than does that wherein stands the Philadelphia post-office. It may be called a picturesque view of brick, marble, and mortar thrown together without regard to order, style, or *harmony*.

Let the classic reader cast his eyes over the topographical view of Olympia as seen from the walls of Altis, glancing down through the “Sacred Grove” and along the Alpheus River: you will see even at that period, 440 B.C., how strictly the ancients adhered to harmony. The Temple of Jupiter and the Prytaneum or Senate-house, although widely different in their architectural designing, bore nevertheless a remarkable similarity in style, so as to preserve what might be termed classic harmony. Near to the Mount of Saturn stood the Temple of Juno. In the Temple of Vesta, the Theatre, the Hypodrammon, even to the Stables of Œnomaus and the Workshop of Phidias, the same harmonic traits in style and design were observable. Every thing was classic, every thing artistic.

How is this feature observed with us? Speaking of the block alluded to above, embracing the custom-house, the post-office, the Philadelphia Bank, the Farmers’ and Mechanics’ Bank, &c., perhaps the following scene from R. B. Sheridan’s “School for Scandal” will give a better description of the style of architecture characterizing each than any thing we could furnish.

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The several characters are describing the personal appearance of a lady:—

“*Crabtree.*—She has the oddest countenance, a collection of features from all corners of the globe.

“*Sir Benjamin.*—She has, indeed, an Irish front.

“*Crabtree.*—Caledonian locks.

“*Sir Benjamin.*—Dutch nose.

“*Crabtree.*—Austrian lips.

“*Sir Benjamin.*—The complexion of a Spaniard.

“*Crabtree.*—And teeth *à la Chinoise*.

“*Sir Benjamin.*—In short, her face resembles a table d’hôte at Spa, where no two guests are of a nation.”

The outside of a post-office before the opening of its doors reminds one of a vast sleeping city, cold and calm, though containing within itself all the elements that make up a living, sleepless world. As the stars shine down on the earth and move on in their spheres, so feeble lights gleam up from the post-office windows to denote that “watchers” of the night are there, and thus, like the machinery of the great world, move on the wheels of this epitomized one.

Dull and heavy glide on the hours of night; silence like that of the prairie rests for a while on and around the city, save the howl of some watchful dog and the far-off sound of a tinkling bell. A city at night, wrapped in the curtains darkness throws around it, is like a vast sepulchre, and visited alike with ghosts from the *spirit*-world. Presently the dark panorama begins to move: there is an uprising of a long stream of light in the eastern sky; a vast and mysterious movement, as impulsive and as sudden as that of light, agitates the city; sounds quick and incessant come upon the ear,—rattling of wheels, ringing of bells: the world and its inhabitants are awake. The night dream is over; reality assumes its power once again. Moving on, men, women, and children take their respective ways to business or pleasure, for this world is made up of both. There you see the mechanic, there the merchant looking for the “early worm,” there the newsboy hurrying to his morning traffic in literature, himself its evil genius, there the housebreaker moving quietly away from the scene of his villany, and there the man of pleasure staggering to his wretched home. There is one point at which, however, many assemble: there, clustered around a marbled veneered building,—for it is not *all marble*,—you can read in the looks of the crowd the world’s history, and alike the name of the building: it is the Philadelphia post-office. The sun that awoke millions from their sleep now shines down and sheds its light around this “mimic world:” it awakes; its night slumber is over; the hour has arrived—action, action. The doors open—the crowd rush in. Ah! what is life?—one scene of struggle and strife, and for what? That’s the question. 240

“Quid sit futurum eras fuge quærere”

is not a bad idea of the poet Horace: its literal meaning is, “Avoid all inquiry with respect to what may happen to-morrow.” We should not look so anxiously into the future as to preclude all present enjoyment.

Action, action is the motto of our land. This the effect of a cause,—that cause the Revolution. It changed alike men and the opinion of nations upon the subject of sovereignty. Mental, physical, political, speculative, and financial revolutions are all the results of one great cause,—a cause bearing date 1776. Here we are; here in the post-office, one of the branches of the General Government. This is the little world of letters, this the index to the inner history of man. It is a book of thoughts. 241

The Deposit-Windows.—These are surrounded by a motley crew; letters are dropped in hastily, some carefully by those who write in doubt and seem to hesitate the sending until the last moment. Why? Ah! reader, there is a mystery in all things: here mystery becomes secrecy. There you see an old lady carefully depositing a letter: she glances down the opening, takes one last look, and, sighing, silently moves away. What are the contents of that letter? It is her secret.

Pass on to the newspaper—not window; for newspapers are a wholesale article: singly they are mere letters; in bulk they are *legion*. You must go to a door, and there you will see bags piled Olympus high: these are opened and distributed into their respective pouches to go to all parts of the habitable world; for newspapers now are, like letters, “the world’s correspondents.” The inside of the office is now wide awake, the world outside is in arms and “eager for the fray.” Millions of letters go and come, millions of hearts are made glad by a mere stroke of the pen, which passes lightning-like through this postal medium, millions of hearts are alike made sad, and mourn and sob over the one line that brings news of sickness and of death.

The post-office in many points of view presents the appearance of a besieged fort. The chief clerk is at his post: he stands on a platform somewhat elevated above the line of the main floor; his eye glances along the line of clerks, some of whom are at the (port-holes) delivery-windows, awaiting the outward attack. The assault commences, the windows are assailed. Loud voices are heard, one above the rest shouts 2400: this is answered by an immediate discharge from within, which silences battery 2400. These attacks continue along the “box line” until the demand for surrender on the one side is answered by a furious discharge of *epistolary* ammunition on the other. Both parties retire satisfied with the result. The victory, however, is always on the side of the post-office: the effect of the fire from their port-holes is felt when all within its lines are quiet. The wheels of the department uninjured move on. Let us take a glance through yonder opening. We are on the outside, looking into the interior of this postal fortress. Hundreds of active business-men are moving about in their shirt-sleeves, looking fierce and desperate: they are engaged in a great struggle,—a *struggle with time*. Some are dragging along the vast extent of flooring large leather pouches, others huge canvas bags: it seems, as you gaze, that they are the bodies of the dead and wounded, the result of the recent attack. Not so; they are mail-bags. See how furiously one is thrown down: it is seized upon as if a victim to be sacrificed. “Brass lock,” yells one. “Iron,” screams another. Brass or iron, they are quickly unlocked, and in an instant their contents are scattered like chaff, and away they go to the four quarters of the globe as fast as busy hands, wind, tide, and steam can take them. 242

No fort—not even Sumter, Darling, or the defences of Vicksburg—ever presented a more busy scene of life and death than does the post-office on the opening of mail-bags: it may indeed be

compared to “life and death;” for, as we have said, it is a “struggle with time.”

And yet what to an outsider might seem all chaos, system has reduced to perfect order; and if the same observer will look once more into the office after these sudden attacks on mail-pouches and bags, he will see the parties sitting quietly down, seemingly well contented with the result of the strife between *time*, *matter*, *and motion*,—the conquerors they. 243

Mr. William Lewars, author of “Her Majesty’s Mails,” thus describes the scenes which daily occur from 5.45 to 6 o’clock in the London post-office:—

“It is then that an impetuous crowd enters the hall, and letters and newspapers begin to fall in quite a literary hail-storm. The newspaper-window, ever yawning for more, is presently surrounded and besieged by an array of boys of all ages and costumes, together with children of a larger growth, who are all alike pushing, heaving, and surging in one great mass. The window with tremendous gape is assaulted with showers of papers which fly thicker and faster than the driven snow. Now it is that small boys of eleven and twelve years of age, panting, Sinbad-like, under the weight of huge bundles of newspapers, manage somehow to dart about and make rapid *sorties* into other ranks of boys, utterly disregarding the cries of the official policemen, who vainly endeavor to reduce the tumult into something like post-office order. If the lads cannot quietly and easily disembogue, they will whiz their missiles of intelligence over other people’s heads, now and then sweeping off hats and caps with the force of shot. The gathering every moment increases in number and intensifies in purpose; arms, legs, sacks, baskets, heads, bundles, and woollen comforters—for who ever saw a veritable newspaper-boy without that appendage?—seem to be getting into a state of confusion and disagreeable communism, and ‘yet the cry is still they come.’ Heaps of papers of widely-opposed political views are thrown in together; no longer placed carefully in the openings, they are now sent in in sackfuls and basketfuls, while over the heads of the surging crowd come flying back the empty sacks thrown out of the office by the porters inside. Semi-official legends, with a very strong smack of probability about them, tell of sundry boys being thrown in, seized, emptied, and thrown out again *void*. As six o’clock approaches still nearer and nearer, the turmoil increases more perceptibly, for the intelligent British public is fully alive to the awful truth that the post-office officials never allow a minute of grace, and that “Newspaper Fair” must be over when the last stroke of six is heard. *One*, in rush files of laggard boys who have purposely loitered in the hope of a little pleasurable excitement; *two*, and grown men hurry in with their last sacks; *three*, the struggle resembles nothing so much as a pantomimic *mêlée*; *four*, a Babel of tongues vociferating desperately; *five*, final and furious showers of papers, sacks, and bags; and *six*, when all the windows fall like so many swords of Damocles, and the slits close with such a sudden and simultaneous snap, that we naturally suppose it to be a part of the post-office operations that attempts should be made to guillotine a score of hands; and then all is over so far as the outsiders are concerned. 244

“Among the letter-boxes, scenes somewhat similar have been enacted. Letters of every shape and color, and of all weights, have unceasingly poured in; tidings of life and death, hope and despair, success and failure, triumph and defeat, joy and sorrow; letters from friends and notes from lawyers, appeals from children and stern advice from parents, offers from anxious-hearted young gentlemen and ‘first yeses’ or refusals from young maidens, letters containing that snug appointment so long promised you, and ‘little bills’ with requests for immediate payments, ‘together with six-and-eightpence;’ cream-colored missives telling of happy consummations, and black-edged envelopes telling of death and the grave; sober-looking advice notes, doubtless telling when ‘our Mr. Puffwell’ would do himself the honor of calling upon you, and elegant-looking billets, in which business is never mentioned, all jostled each other for a short time; but the stream of gladness and of woe was stopped, at least for one night, when the last stroke of six was heard. The post-office, like a huge monster,—to which one writer has likened it,—has swallowed an enormous meal, and, gorged to the full, it must now commence the process of digestion. While laggard boys, to whom cartoons by one ‘William Hogarth’ should be shown, are muttering, ‘Too late,’ and retiring discomfited, we, having obtained the requisite ‘open sesame,’ will make our way to the interior of the building. Threading our course through several passages, we soon find ourselves among enormous apartments well lit up, where hundreds of human beings are moving about, lifting, shuffling, stamping, and sorting huge piles of letters, and still more enormous piles of newspapers, in what seems at first sight hopeless confusion, but in what is really the most admirable order. In the newspaper-room, men have been engaged not only in emptying the sacks flung in by strong-armed men and weak-legged boys, but also in raking up the single papers into large baskets and conveying them up and down ‘hoists’ into various divisions of the building. Some estimate of the value of these mechanical appliances, moved, of course, by steam-power, may be formed from the fact that hundreds of tons of paper pass up and down these lifts every week. As many of the newspapers escape from their covers in the excitement of posting, each night two or three officers are busily engaged during the whole time of despatch in endeavoring to restore wrappers to newspapers found without any address. Great as is the care exercised in this respect, it will occasionally happen that wrong newspapers will find their way into loose wrappers not belonging to them; and, under the circumstances, it would be by no means a matter of wonder if—as has been more than once pointed out—Mr. Bright should, instead of his ‘Morning Star,’ receive a copy of the ‘Saturday Review,’ or an evangelical curate the ‘Guardian’ or ‘Punch,’ in place of his ‘Record’ paper. 245 246

“In the letter-room the officers are no less busily engaged: a number of them are constantly at work, during the hours of the despatch, in the operation of placing each letter with the address

and postage-label uppermost, so as to facilitate the process of stamping. In the general post-office the stamping is partly effected by machinery and partly by hand, and consists simply in imprinting upon each letter the date, hour, and place of posting, while at the same time the queen’s head with which the letter is ornamented and franked gets disfigured. It will easily be imagined that a letter containing a box of pills stands a very good chance of being damaged under this manipulation, as a good stamper will strike about fifty letters in a minute. Unpaid letters are kept apart, as they require stamping in a different-colored ink and with the double postage. Such letters create much extra labor, and are a source of incessant trouble to the department, inasmuch as from the time of their posting in London to their delivery at the Land’s End or John O’Groat’s, every officer through whose hands they may pass has to keep a cash account of them. The double postage on such letters is more than earned by the post-office. All unfastened and torn letters, too, are picked out and conveyed to another portion of the large room; and it requires the unremitting attention of several busy individuals to finish the work left undone by the British public. It is scarcely credible that above two hundred and fifty letters are daily posted *open*, and bearing not the slightest mark of ever having been fastened in any way; but such is the fact. A fruitful source of extra work to this branch of the office arises through the posting of flimsy boxes containing feathers, slippers, and other *récherché* articles of female dress, pillboxes containing jewelry, and even bottles. The latter, however, are detained, glass [247] articles and sharp instruments of any sort, whenever detected, being returned to the senders. These frail things, thrown in and buried under the heaps of correspondence, get crushed and broken: yet all are made up again carefully and resealed.

“When the letters have been stamped, and those insufficiently paid picked out, they are carried away to undergo the process of sorting. In this operation they are very rapidly divided into ‘roads,’ representing a line of large towns: thus, letters for Derby, Loughborough, Nottingham, Lincoln, etc., might be placed in companionship with one division or ‘road,’ and Bilston, Wednesbury, Walsall, West Bromwich, etc., in another.”

As we have stated, the immense amount of business transacted in the post-offices of large cities is not unfrequently lost sight of,—business transactions of a nature that few understand or comprehend, and which exercise an influence on men and nations equally as powerful as that of the press.

Few persons are acquainted with the inner arrangements of a post-office. Let any one glance into it as he passes, and he will be struck with the vast pile of mail-matter constantly arriving and departing, as well as the number of hands engaged in their arranging and distributing. Forty mails arrive and depart in the twenty-four hours,—making over three hundred pouches, besides canvas bags containing newspapers, &c.: these are estimated more by bulk than numbers.

Mind, intellect, strength, quickness of action and of thought, are all required here, *and found*. Without this, confusion worse confounded would ensue, and the pulsation of this little world would cease to throb.

A post-office is a little world: it is peopled with the thoughts of men that go and come, pass and repass, move on afar and away over land and water to other cities, and return again,—some [248] oppressed, some elated: “so runs the world away!”

What is the romance of a post-office but its reality? It is a history of letters. Peep into their contents, and you read a volume far surpassing the wildest flights of the imagination. And yet they are as a sealed book to all except those to whom they are directed. Yet you can read it in the action of the recipients, trace its effects, the moral is there.

Glance at the ladies’ window: see that tall female, upon whose face you can trace the dark lines of sorrow. Day after day has she called, asking in a trembling voice for a letter. She had told the clerk a sad story of an absent son,—told it for the purpose of explaining the cause of her frequent visits. Did she but know that beneath a blasted tree, scathed by the lightning flash of a thousand rebel muskets, he lies buried,—deep, deep down in the cold ground, with hundreds of others, both friends and foes, who fell there in bloody strife. But when the startling news did come, her tall form was seen no more at that window. She was alone in the world! Watch that window: it is an index to a volume of life. Not alone the broken-hearted and the sorrowing, not alone the forsaken wife and the expectant maiden, not alone the anxious mother, but the gay, the frivolous, the abandoned, all flock here; for all are mixed up in the great struggle of life.

Pass on to the box-window. There you read the history of men in trade and commerce. There you have a compendium of that wonderful thing known as and called ‘Change. There you will observe the various and peculiar characteristics of men as they eagerly clutch their letters and rush away. Watch their actions, and you will find that a line or two in a letter convulses the market, and for a while there is a commotion on ’Change. Watch the politician: by his looks you can read the secret [249] of his heart. If you follow his footsteps and read the name of the publication-office into which he plunges, the chief editorial next day tells its contents. Perhaps it will read, “Reliable Intelligence from Richmond. The Rebel Army well supplied with Ammunition. Probable Recognition by England, &c.” Or, perhaps, if the publication-office should be on Fourth or Third Street, it may read, “Glorious News from Grant’s Army, &c.”

There is another portion of a post-office which adds another page to its romantic history; and that is the “Carriers’ Department.” Many a sad tale has the carrier to tell,—many a strange incident connected with his “constant round.” A glance into this room shows you a number of men busily engaged in assorting or “blocking” the letters on their route. These they receive in bulk from the

distributor, which are passed to them from a smaller room through a series of pigeon-holes. And here we have a most remarkable illustration of what the human mind is capable of accomplishing. Let us explain. In 1854 the corporate limits of the city of Philadelphia were made coextensive with those of the county, covering an area of one hundred and twenty square miles, and placing twenty-one towns and villages under the guardianship of one Mayor and City Council. In nearly all of these there were separate post-offices. The bringing of all these rural districts under one general postal head was one of the first suggestions that Mr. C. A. Walborn made to the department shortly after he became postmaster of this city. Postmaster-General Blair entered fully into his views upon this subject, and thus the whole rural district embracing the area named above is under one general postal head. Mr. Walborn established station-offices, engaged carriers; and letters are distributed within an area of over one hundred miles, with as much ease and facility as they were in the limits of the old city proper. 250

For the accommodation of persons residing at points remote from the general post-office, in Chestnut Street, stations have been arranged to which four mails are sent daily. In the extreme rural sections, three daily deliveries are considered sufficient by the residents, but four collections are made of matter for delivery or mailing. These stations are located as follows:—A, 41 South Eighteenth Street; B, Market Street, west of Thirty-Seventh, West Philadelphia; C, southeast corner of Broad and Coates Streets; D, 1206 North Third Street; E, corner Richmond and William Streets, Port Richmond; F, 90 Main Street, Frankford; G, Main Street, below Railroad Depot, Germantown; H, Main Street, below Church Lane, Chestnut Hill; I, Main Street, below Grape, Manayunk; K, Washington Street, near Fifth.

The carriers deliver letters and papers within the following bounds:—Delaware River on the east; Montgomery county line on the west; upper end of Frankford, Chestnut Hill, and Andora on the north; Delaware county line on the south, including the old districts of Kensington, Port Richmond, Bridesburg, Frankford, Rising Sun, Nicetown, Germantown, Mount Airy, Chestnut Hill, Falls of Schuylkill, Manayunk, Leverington, Andora, Blockley, Haddington, Hestonville, Belmont, and Kingsessing. If thrown into a square, this would form a territory of about ten by fifteen miles.

Sixty-three carriers are employed, making four deliveries daily, within the following boundaries: Delaware River, Schuylkill River, Canal Street, and York Street. There are thirty-four persons also employed exclusively in collecting letters from places of deposit within the same district. They make five collections daily. The rural districts, including that territory which is contained within the limits of Delaware county line on the south, Montgomery county line on the west, 251 Delaware River on the east, and on the north the northern boundary of Chestnut Hill, Germantown, and Frankford, occupy twenty-four persons, making at least three trips per day to collect and deliver letters. There is, therefore, a force of one hundred and twenty-one carriers and collectors employed.

The number of letters received by mail and delivered by carriers amounted, last quarter, to 1,134,111. They collected and delivered, in the same period, 389,233 local or drop letters, making a total delivery of 1,523,344.[44]

The number of papers received by mail and delivered during this period was 117,010; the number of local or drop papers was 35,257, giving a total delivered, 152,267. The number of letters returned from misdirection, removal, refusal to pay postage, and similar reasons, was 8742. The number of letters for the mail collected from lamp-posts and other located boxes of deposit was 744,723; and the number of newspapers similarly obtained, 59,292,—a total of 804,015.

But few persons have any adequate idea of the vast number of letters which day after day pass through the post-office into the hands of the carrier, to be delivered at their final destination. The following list gives the number of letters delivered and collected in the four largest cities during the month of June, 1865:—

	Mail Letters Delivered.	Drop Letters Delivered.	Letters Delivered.
New York	799,389	253,434	785,990
Philadelphia	492,004	168,330	361,068
Chicago	118,200	9,200	100,591
Cincinnati	84,370	7,714	47,201
Total	1,493,963	438,678	1,294,850

During the same period there were collected from pillar or lamp-post boxes 1,294,850 letters.

The annexed statement gives the number of letters delivered in three principal cities:—

Boston	284,440
Baltimore	152,230
Chicago	130,819
Total	567,489
Philadelphia	516,836

So, according to this, the amount of business transacted through the Philadelphia post-office is almost equal to that of Boston, Baltimore, and Chicago combined. Statistics further show that it is nearly equal to the combined business of Brooklyn, St. Louis, Washington, Cincinnati, and Cleveland.

From the little room which we have termed the “distribution-room,” letters are sent and scattered over the area named above, to the full amount of 18,000 daily, not including those called “city drops.” The distributor is to know, *or is supposed to know*, apart from consulting the directory, the name of every street, lane, and alley, as well as their locality, so that he can place the letters so directed into their separate pigeon-holes, both for the city carriers and the “subs.” He has to observe the limits of certain routes, and see that his letters do not go astray, thus causing a delay in the delivery of at least twenty-four hours. Many letters are received without direction, and others, again, so imperfectly given that it requires the exercise of a little of Job’s patience, assisted by an imperfect directory, to find out where they actually belong. The carriers, however, to whom these letters are submitted, being familiar with the names of persons on their routes, select from this *débris* of letters those that they *think* belong to the parties to whom they are so carelessly directed. A good carrier never brings back a letter to the office until he is fully satisfied that it is not on his route. *Philadelphia can boast of such.*

This retentive quality is also powerfully exercised at the box-windows. There are 2600 boxes, which we may say will average six letters each daily, thus making an aggregate of 15,600. These letters are selected from the “pile” by clerks, who actually know not only the names of the owners of the boxes, but the names of those who are entitled to their use,—as, for instance, the clerks and porters of the parties engaging them. This is what we term a wonderful exercise of memory and its practical application. Newspapers are distributed on the same principle as are the letters.

The newspaper department of a post-office is one that may well be called the “reservoir” of the press: here flows all that makes up that vast institution, here comes the highest standard of our literature, down to the meanest sheet venality produces. A number of men are constantly employed in the newspaper room, or, as we term it, “the rotunda of literature.” This is emphatically the wholesale room; for they deal in bulk. Papers coming singly, directed to individuals, pass through the same process as do the letters. The packages directed to neighboring cities find their way through the “rotunda” in canvas bags to their respective places of destination. Let us here say one word of

It has identified itself with, and forms one of the main features of, our great republic. Its very liberty is essential to the nature of a free state. Its complicity and power claim for it a consideration which no other department of literature and science, however popular, can attain. The press of our country is now the medium, if not, in fact, the very source, of that knowledge of which as a nation we are so justly proud.

The work of the post-office is of such a nature, changing its character with every new incumbent, that it is utterly impossible to reduce it to a system of permanent order during one term of office. Move, however, it must, right or wrong: hence it is that some portion of its machinery may get out of order and thus militate against the probability of reaching perfection. Perfection! and who seeks perfection in any of the institutions established by man? Nature alone “is perfect indeed.” It was so from the beginning, not only in its elements and principles, but in its members and its organs. 254

“The post-office,” says a writer in “Fraser’s Magazine” for September 2, 1862, “no longer assumes to be perfect, and its conductors have renounced their claims to infallibility. Suggested improvements, if they can sustain the indispensable test of rigid scrutiny, are welcomed, and not, as of old, frowned away. The department acts under the conviction that to thrive it must discard the confidence heretofore placed in legal prohibitions, and seek its continuance of prosperity only by deserving it.”

The English post-office has far better opportunities of rendering its system more perfect than it is, from the fact that its clerks are not discharged on every change made in the heads of the department by the government. They are fixtures. But in this country no one engaged in a public office under one administration can calculate being continued under another.

A clerk in the post-office, being appointed for an especial duty, troubles himself very little about that of any other. He takes no interest in the general business or details of the office, from the fact *that his situation is not a permanent one*: hence it is that few postmasters are enabled, within four years, to bring the office out of the chaos into which a previous administration had reduced it, so as to congratulate himself upon making one step towards perfection. He has to study the political elements outside first, and by the time these are reconciled, nearly one-third of his term has expired. In another portion of this work we have alluded to this political clog placed against the wheels of the postal department, and retarding, if not materially impairing, its social, moral, and financial interests. 255

Letter-carriers are a very important class of men,—important, we mean, in their connection with the postal department. We speak of them here because their duties are not generally known to the public, nor their services properly appreciated or rewarded by the department. They are the "walking posts," and carry with them daily thousands of dollars, which rarely are lost on their way to the recipients. The instances are so few of dishonest carriers that we have often been surprised that the fact has not been recorded ere this, so as it might be placed in juxtaposition with those *élite* rogues in office who are daily robbing the government of millions. Is it because they are generally faithful? or is it because the position of a letter-carrier is one that requires no consideration from the department beyond the annual—rather limited—stipend for their services? The letter-carriers of our country represent a political class: they come forth from their respective wards under, as it were, leading politicians. The postmaster, in fact, has scarcely a voice in making these appointments. We have no objection to this system, as it is one peculiarly allied to the institutions of our country and mode of election; but we do object to good and honest men being discharged simply from the fact that a few politicians outside of an office want to get their particular friends in. This can scarcely be called rotation in office, as it frequently assumes an unjust, if not an intolerant, exercise of power.

We have alluded to the English post-office as being perhaps the best-ordered and best-conducted in the world, *for there changes are not made*. 256

In England carriers are classified. The lowest class are not so well paid, receiving only from 18 to 25 shillings per week. They are allowed by government, however, to receive presents, and their Christmas boxes and New-Year gifts,—thus realizing a nice little sum of money, as well as many useful and ornamental articles.[45] If the salary of a letter-carrier in England is not high, the position is so identified with the governmental patronage that he becomes a part and portion of the great institution itself. If he is taken sick, he has medical attendance and medicine furnished gratis. When unfitted for work, he may retire upon a pension, for which he has not to pay a farthing; and during service, if he insure his life for the benefit of his family, the post-office will assist him to pay the premium: this is done by allowing him twenty per cent. on all his payments. Every year the letter-carriers are allowed a fortnight holiday without any deduction from their pay. Many spare hours each day may be devoted to other pursuits; for, if when at work at the office his hours of duty exceed eight hours daily, he is at full liberty to ask for investigation and redress. See p. 205, Kendall.

The higher grade of carriers are distinguished from the lower by wearing a livery of the department and at its expense, viz.:—a scarlet coat with a blue collar, and buttons stamped with an impression of the royal arms. The carriers of the two-penny post wear the common citizens' dress.

We have alluded to the general character of the letter-carriers of our city, and, we may justly and proudly say, of our country, being equal in point of moral standard, correct deportment, and honesty of purpose, to any other (public) class of men in the Union. Of this fact the writer has opportunities of knowing; and when we take into consideration the extremely low salaries they receive,—scarcely sufficient to support them,—the fact impresses itself upon us, as it should on the government, that a "*carrier's fidelity, diligence, and experience should be properly rewarded.*" We quote here nearly every postmaster-general's language, *but as yet the words only stand on the record*! 257

During the writer's connection with the department, there were but two instances of carriers being detected in opening letters and appropriating their contents to their own use. One of these men died suddenly while under heavy bonds for his appearance at court to answer for his crime; the other is now expiating his crime in the Penitentiary.

We have spoken more particularly about carriers and their general good character; but our remarks will apply to those who occupy positions in every department, from the chief clerks down to the wounded soldier who sweeps out the office.[46] It certainly must be a source of satisfaction to postmasters generally, that peculation, fraud, and robbery in their departments are of very rare occurrence. Many losses have been charged to the department, but in nine cases out of ten they have been traced to parties *who act as carriers between the post-office and merchants' counting-houses*. These are boys and clerks who are authorized by merchants to take letters from their boxes,

many of which, as we can prove, never reached their employers, but were opened and the money extracted. Under the old State laws this was laid down as simply a breach of trust: it is now made a criminal offence, and subjects the guilty party to imprisonment. Since the passage of this law there have been *but few such breaches of trust*. 258

In another portion of this work we have alluded to the decoy system as being uncalled for and insulting to the employees. It does seem as if the public and even postmasters themselves have an idea that *dishonesty is a national calamity*, and that it becomes a duty with them to suspect alike all who are in their employ. Suspicion, however, is no proof; and we are inclined to think that many *open robberies* of the government can be traced to the fact that high positions *seem* to sanction the deed. The poor wretch who steals a loaf of bread to keep his family from starving finds no mercy at the hands of the law, while the wholesale robber, the thief of millions, is simply required to make the amount stolen good! Where one public official robber is convicted for appropriating the public funds to his own use, thousands are annually tried and punished for

taking a penny loaf! It is no wonder, therefore, that suspicion should haunt the guilty mind, and every man in power judge of others by the example set in high places.

Some years ago, long before the postal system became the mighty engine of power that it is now, a Philadelphia postmaster, since gathered to his fathers, openly stated that no man should intrust a clerk in the post-office (his own office) with the knowledge that a letter posted contained money!

How different is the English post-office in this respect from ours! There the employees are considered a part and portion of its national character, identified with it by all those ties which protection gives and justice sanctions. The government not only studies the present interest of all connected with the postal department, but amply provides for that of the future. (See p. 147.) Their confidence is not easily shaken; but like Othello, when they doubt, they prove; and on the proof there is no more but this:—Away at once!

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The following tables, carefully prepared, fully prove that there is no surer test of the advance of business and commercial enterprise than that which is learned from the increase of postage. A glance at the table from 1790 shows a wonderful increase in the short space of eight or ten years, entirely unexampled in the history of the world; and taken in connection, as we think it may be, with a similar increase in other statistics, it sets all previous examples completely aside. The fact is, the country is ignorant of the history of our postal department, a knowledge of which would tend materially to strengthen that love of country which a state of ignorance naturally lessens. The post-office department should no longer be as a sealed book to the nation.

Statement of Receipts and Expenditures of the Post-Office Department under Various Heads, and by States, for the Year ending June 30, 1862.

States and Territories.	Letter postage.	Newspaper postage.	Registered letters.	Stamps sold.	Total receipts.	Compensation allowed postmasters.
Maine	$16,151 48	$15,143 32	$364 75	$174,250 15	$205,909 70	$87,437 05
New Hampshire	5,270 41	10,600 40	245 15	112,674 66	128,790 62	57,605 44
Vermont	5,040 02	13,210 71	107 80	111,001 79	129,360 32	62,723 43
Massachusetts	53,960 83	26,017 85	938 25	630,945 54	711,862 47	178,302 36
Rhode Island	4,597 27	3,138 61	124 00	71,259 82	79,119 70	18,723 46
Connecticut	10,360 68	16,560 24	200 55	199,995 04	227,116 51	78,643 49
New York	186,079 59	82,877 23	2,462 60	1,543,349 08	1,814,768 50	375,647 15
New Jersey	17,902 57	11,681 08	254 10	145,255 42	175,093 17	69,264 81
Pennsylvania	70,982 27	41,634 24	2,054 20	770,025 27	884,695 98	248,695 26
Delaware	1,782 20	2,265 95	50 95	26,431 57	30,530 67	10,867 93
Maryland	19,330 33	9,053 54	412 15	178,566 52	207,362 54	48,059 82
District of Columbia	8,113 23	3,295 38	714 85	220,399 83	232,523 29	4,974 33
Virginia	8,261 65	3,526 45	301 50	129,284 88	141,374 48	30,212 30
North Carolina	86	1 00	...	1 17	3 03	1 37
South Carolina	693 54	16 68	31 25	8,734 47	9,475 94	1,173 96
Georgia	...	...	...	...	...	...
Florida	224 29	238 44	27 10	3,702 27	4,192 10	2,181 17
Alabama	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mississippi	768 82	45 39	2 10	2,598 46	3,414 77	571 74
Texas	410 41	303 63	3 25	3,774 49	4,491 78	1,568 48
Kentucky	10,853 71	10,413 86	225 36	156,383 79	177,876 71	56,134 80
Michigan	18,627 77	20,035 00	565 60	198,002 35	237,230 72	96,342 58
Wisconsin	20,500 74	21,160 79	706 15	200,304 73	242,672 41	92,140 83
Louisiana	413 88	12 50	1 55	1,063 97	1,491 90	164 83
Tennessee	346 25	294 67	9 65	13,242 05	13,892 62	1,722 39
Missouri	17,158 44	12,012 51	419 45	197,941 27	227,531 67	54,391 22
Illinois	35,528 66	40,921 73	1,516 90	512,537 84	590,505 13	192,517 25
Ohio	51,011 36	46,777 68	1,608 15	601,087 26	700,484 45	242,660 99
Indiana	30,056 54	28,366 16	720 55	258,659 00	317,802 25	133,765 80
Arkansas	...	46	...	12 26	12 72	45
Iowa	12,736 41	18,866 91	444 60	151,436 63	183,484 55	80,201 30
California	24,430 64	9,869 93	402 55	218,540 19	253,243 31	48,672 41
Oregon	2,211 07	1,467 34	7 25	10,390 35	14,076 01	5,975 93
Minnesota	5,907 22	6,336 24	159 05	41,850 41	54,253 22	24,693 39
Kansas	1,842 71	2,348 60	44 25	26,236 61	30,472 17	13,592 51
Utah	1,436 81	174 49	2 40	1,348 58	2,962 28	1,597 13
Nebraska	843 61	1,023 34	9 35	7,876 64	9,752 94	4,846 26
Washington	1,013 85	258 66	2 45	2,017 39	3,292 35	1,852 25
New Mexico	240 54	95 00	95	1,246 42	1,582 91	815 24
Colorado	1,639 00	569 83	3 70	6,404 97	8,617 50	4,478 89
Dakota	569 76	72 23	50	817 40	1,459 89	810 78
Nevada	1,905 54	862 01	6 25	3,200 68	5,974 48	3,500 44
	649,205 26	461,550 08	15,151 20	6,942,851 22	8,068,757 76	2,337,531 21
Deduct miscellan’s items.	1,297 20	745 22	1 85	32,719 33	34,763 60	...
Add miscellaneous						3,236 07
	647,908 06	460,804 86	15,149 35	6,910,131 89	8,033,994 16	2,340,767 28
On acc’t of route ag’ts, mail messengers, special transportation, for’n mails, &c.						
Add receipts on account of emoluments, &c.						
Deduct excess of receipts.						

[Transcriber’s note: Table below is the right side of the table above, with first column repeated.]

States and Territories.	Incidental expenses of	Total compensation and incidental	Amount of transportation certified to the Postmaster General	Total expenses.	Excess of expenditures over	Excess of receipts over

	post-offices.	expenses.	for payment and credited to contractors.		receipts.	expenditures.
Maine	$17,489 69	$104,926 74	$103,483 36	$208,410 00	$2,500 40	...
New Hampshire	5,118 38	62,723 82	53,929 30	116,653 12	...	$12,137 50
Vermont	1,344 44	64,067 87	73,958 60	138,027 47	8,666 15	...
Massachusetts	112,309 47	290,611 83	177,787 29	468,399 12	...	213,463 35
Rhode Island	9,676 44	28,399 90	11,369 87	39,769 77	...	39,349 93
Connecticut	17,295 78	95,939 27	82,471 38	178,410 65	...	48,705 86
New York	323,254 45	698,901 60	479,342 89	1,178,244 49	...	636,524 01
New Jersey	8,691 96	77,956 77	98,778 11	176,734 88	1,641 71	...
Pennsylvania	103,911 87	352,607 19	365,907 08	718,514 21	...	166,181 77
Delaware	2,335 17	13,203 09	18,730 29	31,933 38	1,402 71	...
Maryland	34,410 10	82,469 92	232,202 13	314,672 05	107,309 51	...
District of Columbia	62,304 15	67,278 48	...	67,278 48	...	165,244 81
Virginia	19,062 42	49,274 72	53,319 09	102,593 81	...	38,780 67
North Carolina	...	1 37	...	1 37	...	1 66
South Carolina	...	1,173 96	...	1,173 96	...	8,301 98
Georgia	...	...	...	...	...	...
Florida	91 49	2,272 66	...	2,272 66	...	1,919 44
Alabama	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mississippi	395 08	966 82	...	966 82	...	2,447 95
Texas	50	1,568 98	...	1,568 98	...	2,922 80
Kentucky	19,066 27	75,201 07	216,073 18	291,274 25	113,397 54	...
Michigan	23,322 77	119,665 35	187,149 80	306,815 15	69,584 43	...
Wisconsin	14,584 80	106,725 63	151,010 16	257,735 79	15,063 38	...
Louisiana	465 51	630 34	...	630 34	...	861 56
Tennessee	2,639 96	4,362 35	...	4,362 35	...	9,530 27
Missouri	42,601 09	96,992 31	1,340,613 47	1,437,605 78	1,210,074 11	...
Illinois	90,703 04	283,220 29	386,610	669,830 50	79,325 37	...
Ohio	35,636 32	328,297 31	558,771 56	887,068 87	186,584 42	...
Indiana	18,836 84	152,602 64	283,193 46	435,796 10	117,993 85	...
Arkansas	...	45	1,089 29	1,089 74	1,077 02	...
Iowa	13,272 81	93,474 11	204,283 26	297,757 37	114,272 82	...
California	35,259 26	83,931 67	297,072 52	381,004 19	127,760 88	...
Oregon	67 37	6,043 30	23,474 00	29,517 30	15,441 29	...
Minnesota	2,860 03	27,553 42	123,278 10	150,831 52	96,578 30	...
Kansas	790 06	14,382 57	73,703 60	88,086 17	57,614 00	...
Utah	39 87	1,637 00	17,226 00	18,863 00	15,900 72	...
Nebraska	88 71	4,934 97	51,904 37	56,839 34	47,086 40	...
Washington	6 84	1,859 09	32,685 45	34,544 54	31,252 19	...
New Mexico	...	815 24	19,825 14	20,640 38	19,057 47	...
Colorado	124 76	4,603 65	1,327 60	5,931 25	...	2,686 25
Dakota	8 75	819 53	...	819 53	...	640 36
Nevada	59 93	3,560 37	...	3,560 37	...	2,414 11
	1,068,126 38	3,405,656 59	5,720,570 56	9,126,228 15	2,439,584 67	1,382,114 28
Deduct miscellan's items.						
Add miscellaneous items		3,236 07	65,143 61	103,143 28	103,143 28	
	1,068,126 38	3,408,893 66	5,785,714 17	9,229,371 43	2,542,727 95	1,382,114 28
On acc't of route ag'ts, mail messengers, special transportation, for'n mails, &c.			1,207,899 58			
			6,993,613 75			
Add receipts on account of emoluments, &c.						265,826 74
Deduct excess of receipts.					1,647,941 02	1,647,941 02
					894,786 93	

Note.—The following items of revenue are not embraced in the above statement, viz.:

Receipts on account of emoluments	$93,842 25
Receipts on account of letter-carriers	167,662 16
Receipts on account of fines	1,455 00
Receipts on account of dead letters	1,052 51
Miscellaneous receipts	1,814 82
Total	265,826 74

Excess of expenditures over receipts		$894,786 93
Add amount paid for foreign mails and expenses of government mail agents	$405,249 22	
Route agents	274,081 30	
Supply of special offices and mail messengers	238,916 10	

Ship, steamboat, and way-letters	6,860 11	
Letter-carriers' fees	167,662 16	
Dead-letter money refunded	...	
Amounts allowed and paid to Department, viz.:		
Interest to contractors, under Act of February 15, 1860	400 36	
Amount carried forward	$1,093,169 25	$894,786 93

Amount brought forward	$1,093,169 25	$894,786 93
Wrapping paper	18,179 70	
Office furniture	213 31	
Advertising	24,120 73	
Mail bags	47,902 35	
Blanks	89,557 44	
Mail locks, keys, and stamps	16,690 00	
Mail depredations and special agents	48,320 06	
Clerks for offices	14,697 63	
Postage stamps and stamped envelopes	93,291 04	
Miscellaneous payments	27,723 43	
Foreign postage collected and returned to foreign governments	167,238 40	
		1,641,103 34
Total excess of expenditures over receipts		$2,535,890 27
Add difference between *accrued* and *paid* transportation		289,652 96
Add amount charged to "bad debts" and "suspense" accounts		601 12
	Total amount	$2,826,144 35

The aggregate receipts for 1863 were	$11,163,789 59
" " expenditures for 1863 were	11,314,206 84
Deficiency	$150,417 25

Number of Post-Offices, Extent of Post-Routes, and Revenue and Expenditures of the Post-Office Department; with the Amount paid to Postmasters and for Transportation of the Mail, since 1790. 262

Year.	No. of Post-Offices.	Extent of Post-Routes in Miles.	Revenue of the Department.	Expenditures of the Department.	Amount paid for Compen. of Postmasters.	Amount paid for Transport'n of the Mail.
1790	75	1,875	$37,935	$32,140	$8,198	$22,081
1795	453	13,207	160,620	117,893	30,272	75,359
1800	903	20,817	280,804	213,994	69,243	128,644
1805	1,558	31,076	421,373	377,367	111,552	239,635
1810	2,300	36,406	551,684	495,969	149,438	327,966
1815	3,000	43,748	1,043,065	748,121	241,901	487,779
1816	3,260	48,673	961,782	804,422	265,944	521,970
1817	3,459	52,089	1,002,973	916,515	303,916	589,189
1818	3,618	59,473	1,130,235	1,035,832	346,429	664,611
1819	4,000	67,586	1,204,737	1,117,861	375,828	717,881
1820	4,500	72,492	1,111,927	1,160,926	352,295	782,425
1821	4,650	78,808	1,059,087	1,184,283	337,599	815,681
1822	4,709	82,763	1,117,490	1,167,572	355,299	788,618
1823	5,043	84,860	1,130,115	1,156,995	360,462	767,464
1824	5,182	84,860	1,197,758	1,188,019	383,804	768,939
1825	5,677	94,052	1,306,525	1,229,043	411,183	785,646
1826	6,150	94,052	1,447,703	1,366,712	447,727	885,100
1827	7,003	105,336	1,524,633	1,468,959	486,411	942,335
1828	7,530	105,336	1,659,915	1,689,945	548,049	1,086,313
1829	8,004	115,000	1,707,418	1,782,132	559,237	1,153,646
1830	8,450	115,176	1,850,583	1,932,708	595,234	1,274,009
1831	8,686	115,486	1,997,811	1,936,122	635,028	1,252,226
1832	9,205	104,466	2,258,570	2,266,171	715,481	1,482,507
1833	10,127	119,916	2,617,011	2,930,414	826,283	1,894,638
1834	10,693	119,916	2,823,749	2,910,605	897,317	1,925,544
1835	10,770	112,774	2,993,356	2,757,350	945,418	1,719,007
1836	11,091	118,264	3,408,323	3,841,766	812,804	1,638,052
1837	11,767	141,242	4,236,779	3,544,630	891,353	1,996,727
1838	12,519	134,818	4,238,733	4,430,662	933,948	3,131,308
1839	12,780	133,999	4,484,657	4,636,536	980,000	3,285,622
1840	13,468	155,739	4,543,522	4,718,236	1,028,925	3,296,876
1841	13,778	155,026	4,407,726	4,499,528	1,018,645	3,159,375
1842	13,733	149,732	4,546,849	5,674,752	1,147,256	3,087,796

1843	13,814	142,295	4,296,225	4,374,754	1,426,394	2,947,319
1844	14,103	144,687	4,237,288	4,296,513	1,358,316	2,938,551
1845	14,183	143,940	4,289,841	4,320,732	1,409,875	2,905,504
*1846	14,601	152,865	3,487,199	4,084,297	1,042,079	2,716,673
*1847	15,146	153,818	3,955,893	3,979,570	1,060,228	2,476,455
*1848	16,159	163,208	4,371,077	4,346,850		2,394,703
*1849	16,749	163,703	4,905,176	4,479,049	1,320,921	2,577,407
*1850	18,417	178,672	5,552,971	5,212,953	1,549,376	2,965,786
*1851	19,796	196,290	6,727,867	6,278,402	1,781,686	3,538,064
*1852	20,901	214,284	6,925,971	7,108,459	1,296,765	4,225,311
*1853	22,320	217,743	5,940,725	7,982,957	1,406,477	4,906,308
*1854	23,548	219,935	6,955,586	8,577,424	1,707,708	5,401,382
*1855	24,410	227,908	7,342,136	9,968,342	2,135,335	6,076,335
*1856	25,565	239,642	7,620,822	10,405,286	2,102,891	6,765,639
*1857	26,586	242,601	8,053,952	11,508,058	2,285,610	7,239,333
*1858	27,977	260,603	8,186,793	12,722,470	2,355,016	8,246,054
*1859	28,539	260,052	8,668,484	15,754,093	2,453,901	7,157,629
*1860	28,498	240,594	8,518,067	19,170,600	2,552,868	14,281,655
*1861	28,586	140,399	8,349,296	13,606,759	2,514,157	9,173,274
*1862	28,875	134,013	8,299,820	11,125,364	2,340,767	6,993,613
[47]*1863	29,047	139,598	11,163,789	11,314,206	2,876,983	6,541,580

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Comparative Statement of the Value of Stamps and Stamped Envelopes issued during the Three Years 1860-61-62.

Years.	Stamps.	Envelopes.	Total.
1860	$5,920,939 00	$949,377 19	$6,870,316 19
1861	5,908,522 60	781,711 13	6,690,233 73
1862	7,078,188 00	756,904 00	7,835,092 00

Increase over the issue of 1860 $964,775 81

Increase over the issue of 1861 1,144,858 27

Statement showing Postal Revenue and Expenditures of the United States, in toto and per capita, according to Population, at Eight Successive Decades, from 1790 to 1863, inclusive.

Years.	Revenue.	Expenditures.	Population.	Revenue per capita	Expenditures per capita
1790	$37,935	$32,140	3,929,827	9/10 of a cent.	8/10 of a cent.
1800	280,804	213,994	5,305,925	5-3/10 cents.	4 cents.
1810	551,684	495,969	7,239,814	7-6/10 "	6-8/10 "
1820	1,111,927	1,160,926	9,638,131	11-1/2 "	12 "
1830	1,919,300	1,959,109	12,866,020	14-9/10 "	15-2/10 "
1840	4,543,522	4,718,236	17,069,453	26-6/10 "	27-6/10 "
1850	5,499,985	5,212,953	23,191,876	23-7/10 "	22-1/2 "
1851	6,410,604	6,278,402	23,873,717	26-9/10 "	26-3/10 "
1852	5,184,527	7,108,459	24,575,604	21-1/10 "	28-9/10 "
1853	5,240,725	7,982,756	25,298,126	20-7/10 "	31-1/10 "
1854	6,255,586	8,577,424	26,041,890	24 "	32-9/10 "
1855	6,642,136	9,968,342	26,807,521	24-8/10 "	37-2/10 "
1856	6,920,822	10,405,286	27,595,662	25 "	37-7/10 "
1857	7,353,952	11,508,058	28,406,974	25-9/10 "	40-1/2 "
1858	7,486,793	15,754,093	30,101,857	26-1/2 "	52-3/10 "
1860	8,518,067	14,874,601	31,445,089	27-1/10 "	47-3/10 "
1861	8,349,296	13,606,759	32,577,112	25-6/10 "	41-8/10 "
1862	8,299,821	11,125,364	33,749,888	24-6/10 "	33 "
1863	11,163,790	11,314,207	34,762,384	32-4/10 "	32-9/10 "

Note.—The population from 1851 to 1863, excepting the year 1860, is estimated by the standard ratio of increase.

The following will exhibit the principal changes and reductions in the rates of postage on domestic letters at various dates from 1792 to 1863. The *single* rate for *land* transit is referred to in every case.

Act of February 20, 1792. Rates for a single-sheet letter,—30 miles or under, 6 cents; 30 to 60 miles, 8 cents; 60 to 100 miles, 10 cents; 100 to 150 miles, 12 cents; 150 to 200 miles, 15 cents; 200 to 250 miles,

17 cents; 250 to 350 miles, 20 cents; 350 to 450 miles, 22 cents; over 450 miles, 25 cents.

Act of 2d March, 1799. Rates for a single-sheet letter,—40 miles or under, 8 cents; 40 to 90 miles, 10 cents; 90 to 150 miles, 12-1/2 cents; 150 to 300 miles, 17 cents; 300 to 500 miles, 20 cents; over 500 miles, 25 cents.

The revenue act of 23d December, 1814, added 50 per cent. to the rates last above; but the addition was repealed February 1, 1816, which restored the rates of 1799.

Act of April 9, 1816. Rates for a single-sheet letter,—30 miles or under, 6 cents; 30 to 80 miles, 10 cents; 80 to 150 miles, 12-1/2 cents; 150 to 400 miles, 18-1/2 cents; over 400 miles, 25 cents.

Act of 3d March, 1845. Rates for a single-sheet letter,—300 miles or under, 5 cents; over 300 miles, 10 cents.

Act of 3d March, 1851. Rates for a half-ounce letter,—3000 miles or under, if prepaid, 3 cents, if unpaid, 5 cents; over 3000 miles, double.

Act of 3d March, 1855. Rates for a half-ounce letter,—3000 miles or under, 3 cents; over 3000 miles, 10 cents.

Under this act prepayment was not compulsory, and after January, 1856, prepayment by stamps was required.

[The issue of postage-stamps was first authorized by an act of 3d March, 1847, and subsequently by the act of 3d March, 1851.]

Act of 3d March, 1863. Rate for half-ounce letter, 3 cents everywhere throughout the United States.

The law requires postage on all letters (including those to foreign countries when prepaid), excepting those written by officers of the government, addressed to the department with which they are connected, and on official business, to be prepaid by stamps or stamped envelopes, prepayment in money being prohibited.

All drop-letters must be prepaid, at the rate of two cents per half-ounce or fraction of a half-ounce, by postage stamps. If not prepaid, the double rate to be charged.

The single rate of postage on all domestic mail-letters throughout the United States is three cents per half-ounce, with an additional rate of three cents for each additional half-ounce or fraction of a half-ounce. The former ten-cent (Pacific) rate is abolished.

Postage on *Daily Papers* to subscribers when prepaid quarterly or yearly in advance, either at the mailing-office or office of delivery,	per quarter	(three months)	35 cts.
Six times per week,	″	″	30 ″
For Tri-Weekly,	″	″	15 ″
For Semi-Weekly,	″	″	10 ″
For Weekly,	″	″	5 ″

Weekly Newspapers (one copy only) sent by the publisher to actual subscribers within the county where printed and published, *free*.

Postage per Quarter (to be paid quarterly or yearly in advance) on Newspapers and Periodicals *issued less frequently than once a week*, sent to actual subscribers in any part of the United States:

Semi-monthly,	not over 4 oz.	6 cts.
″	over 4 oz. and not over 8 oz.	12 ″
″	over 8 oz. and not over 12 oz.	18 ″
Monthly,	not over 4 oz.	3 ″
″	over 4 oz. and not over 8 oz.	6 ″
″	over 8 oz. and not over 12 oz.	9 ″
Quarterly,	not over 4 oz.	1 ″
″	over 4 oz. and not over 8 oz.	2 ″
″	over 8 oz. and not over 12 oz.	3 ″

Publishers of Newspapers and Periodicals may send to each other from their respective offices of publication, free of postage, one copy of each publication, and may also send to each actual subscriber, enclosed in their publications, bills and receipts for the same, free of postage. They may also state on their respective publications the date when the subscription expires, to be written or printed.

Religious, educational, and agricultural newspapers of small size, issued less frequently than once a week, may be sent in packages to one address at the rate of one cent for each package not exceeding four ounces in weight, and an additional charge of one cent is made for each additional four ounces or fraction thereof, the postage to be paid quarterly or yearly in advance. 266

Newsdealers may send newspapers and periodicals to regular subscribers at the quarterly rates, in the same manner as publishers, and may also receive them from publishers at subscribers' rates. In both cases the postage to be prepaid, either at the mailing- or delivery-office.

Publications issued without disclosing the office of publication, or containing a fictitious statement thereof, must not be forwarded by postmasters unless prepaid at the mailing-office at the rates of transient printed matter.

A letter over 500 miles cost thirty-seven and one-half cents in 1815; now it is carried to the extreme portion of our country, traversing mountains, passing deep ravines and rivers, for the small sum of three cents!

Harpers' Magazine, had it been in existence in 1815, would have cost for each one twenty-seven cents, whereas now they only cost three cents to all parts of the country. What an age for literature! what an era in learning!

In 1779, in consequence of the increased nature of the postal business and the necessity for a more extended ramification of the system, the postmaster-general was to receive $5000 per annum, and the comptroller $4000,—meaning, of course, Continental money. Besides these two offices in the postal department, there was a secretary who acted as clerk to the postmaster-general. The comptroller settled the accounts, and was the book-keeper. There were three surveyors, who were to travel and inspect the conduct of the riders, agents, &c. There was also an inspector of dead letters, at a salary of $100 a year.

What is now called the post-office department was established in 1789 as the "post-office," and subsequently as the "general post-office," under the power given to Congress by the Constitution "to establish post-offices and post-roads," and the exclusive privilege and control of all postal affairs, &c. 267

Congress shall have power "to establish post-offices and post-roads." This short, concise, yet *embracing* sentence sums up the constitutional basis of this department. It is comprehensive enough to all who fully understand the economical and practical workings of our government. Its conciseness is its very history; and that history becomes a mighty *tome* in the library of nations.

The direction and management of the post-office department are assigned by the Constitution to the postmaster-general. That its business may be the more conveniently arranged and prepared for its final action, it is distributed among several bureaus, as follows:—the Appointment-Office, in charge of the First Assistant Postmaster-General; the Contract-Office, in charge of the Second Assistant Postmaster-General; the Finance-Office, in charge of the Third Assistant Postmaster-General; and the Inspection-Office, in charge of the Chief Clerk.

The duties of the several departments named above are thus defined:—

The postmaster-general "is further directed to superintend the business of the department in all the duties that are or may be assigned to it, and he is required once in three months to render to the Secretary of the Treasury an account of all the receipts and expenditures in the department, to be adjusted and settled as other accounts." The postmaster-general may establish post-offices and appoint postmasters on the post-roads which are or may be authorized by law, at all such places as to him may appear expedient. He regulates the number of times the mail shall go from place to place, and he is authorized to contract for carrying the mail, and to establish post-roads.

APPOINTMENT-OFFICE.

The Appointment-Office not only has supervision of the appointment and regulation of all postmasters, and the establishment and discontinuance of post-offices, but also the distribution of blanks, wrapping-paper, and twine to all post-offices; the supervision of pay of clerks in post-offices; of allowance for furniture of post-offices; of extra allowances to postmasters under the acts of Congress; of the appointment and pay of special agents, route-agents, local agents, and blank-agents, and of baggage-masters in charge of mails; of the foreign mail transportation and foreign correspondence; together with some other miscellaneous duties.

CONTRACT-OFFICE.

The Contract-Office is charged with the conduct of mail-lettings, and all contracts and allowances for inland mail transportation, with the mail messenger service; the supervision and regulation of mail-contractors, and the routes of mail-transit, including distributing-offices; and with the increase and diminution of service on mail-routes.

FINANCE-OFFICE.

To this office are assigned the issuing of postage-stamps and stamped envelopes for the prepayment of postage and the accounts thereof; the preparation of warrants and drafts in payment of balances reported by the Auditor to be due to mail-contractors and other persons; and the superintendence of the rendition by postmasters of their quarterly returns of postages. It embraces, also, all the operations of the dead-letter office, and the accounts connected therewith.

The Inspection-Office is charged with the observation of failures and delinquencies in the service of contractors and route-agents; with fines and remissions thereof; with the subject of mail-depredations, and prosecution of violators of postal laws; with the duty of procuring and distributing mail-bags, locks and keys, and some other duties of detail.

Perhaps no institution in this or any other country requires more enterprise, general knowledge of business, and geography, than does that of the post-office. We have already alluded to the fact of its being considered by many as a "mere workshop" of the general department, and whose operations are simply mechanical; but our readers ere this have been undeceived as regards such a construction, and it must loom up before them a prominent intellectual branch of our government.

That England has a high estimate of her post-office department is evident from the encouragement given to every one connected with it, and sustaining alike its literary character in historic publications. We make the following extract from a recent work entitled "Her Majesty's Mails":—

"There is no postal service in the world so well managed as that of Great Britain. It is now not merely a self-supporting but a productive institution; whereas there was a deficiency of half a million in the post-office of America before the rupture between North and South. Though America for ninety years has been, next to England, the most commercial country in the world, yet, compared with the population, five times as many letters pass through the English post as through the American. London and its suburbs alone, with its less than three millions of inhabitants, sends forth a greater number of letters than the whole of America.

"The next best-managed post-office to our own is that of France; but in France, by the law of 1856, there are five different tariffs of postages. Judged by the revenue produced, the English post-office, notwithstanding its low rate of charges, stands first.

"The Austrian post-office produces a revenue of 3,714,200 florins, or £378,000; the Belgian, 2,960,000 francs; the French, 66,452,000 francs; and the English, £3,800,000; being more than a quarter of a million beyond the proceeds of 1862.

"A comparison of the year 1839—the year immediately preceding the penny postage—with the year 1861 gives these results: An increase nearly eightfold in the chargeable letters; a threefold increase in the receptacles for letters; a fortyfold increase in the number of money-orders; a fiftyfold increase in the amount of money-orders; and an increase of the gross revenue in round numbers from £2,390,000 to £3,402,000. The amount of the correspondence of a country will measure, with some approach towards accuracy, as Mr. Matthew Hill says, the height which a people has reached in true civilization. The town of Manchester equals in its number of letters the Empire of all the Russias both in Europe and Asia; and this fact we owe, as many of the marvels we have stated, to Sir Rowland Hill. The poor and the lowly, the domestic servant and the humble artisan, can now correspond with each other from one end of the kingdom to the other at the trifling expense of 1*d.*; and for this civilizing, Christianizing, and eminently social good we are indebted to a late post-office secretary, whose merits have been recognized, but who cannot be overpaid in money or money's worth. As Lord Palmerston said on the 10th of June, Sir R. Hill showed, in relation to the post-office, great genius, sagacity, perseverance, and industry, and he was the first to prove that the department was a public institution for the performance of services, rather than for the collection of revenue. If, as the first minister of the crown stated, and as we believe, the cultivation of the affections raises men in their own estimation, improves their morals, and develops their social qualities, Sir R. Hill has been amongst the greatest benefactors of the human race, and he well deserves the vote that was agreed to on the 10th of June without a dissenting voice."

Postmaster-generals up to the period when railroads superseded that of post-coaches and post-horses had a much harder time in their “vocation” than have their successors since. The difficulties then were to overcome the opposition of parties interested in contracts. Coaches and post-horses, routes and agents, became important items in such contracts; and the least favoritism on the part of the postmaster-general called forth not only censure from those immediately interested, but not unfrequently from those high in authority. During the postal administration of W. T. Barry, Esq., considerable political feeling was mixed up with these complaints. Mails at that period (1835) were carried on horseback from central points, and by four-horse post-coaches from city to city. Lines of stages were established in several sections of our country. The number of post-offices was 10,693. The line of stages extended to the western boundary of Missouri; to St. Augustine, in Florida; through Indiana, by the seat of government in that State; through the whole Territory of Michigan and State of Illinois; from Detroit to Chicago; and from Chicago to St. Louis, in Missouri; thence to New Orleans, in half the time which it formerly occupied. This facility, however, was afforded by connecting the coaches with steamboats in the mail-transportation. Lines of post-coaches were also established in this year from Nashville to Memphis, on the Mississippi River, in Tennessee; from Tuscumbia in Alabama to Natchez in Mississippi; and to Tuscaloosa, the seat of government in Alabama; and from Tuscaloosa to Montgomery; completing a direct line from Nashville in Tennessee, and all the other Western States, to the city of New Orleans.

A semi-weekly line of two-horse stages was added to a tri-weekly line of four-horse post-coaches from Washington City, through Lynchburg in Virginia, Salisbury, N.C., Yorkville, S.C., and Augusta, to Savannah in Georgia; from thence to the northern part of Georgia, through that State to Tallahassee, and to Pensacola in Florida.

We have given this statement for the purpose of showing the amount of labor essential to the transportation of the mails at that period, compared to what it is now. It is, however, somewhat strange that railroads were not established in many places, which would have obviated the necessity of coaches.

Railroads, although evidently of ancient origin, were first used near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in 1650. Wooden rails four to eight inches square, resting upon transverse sleepers two feet apart, were in use for many years, when railroads of the same description covered with thin plates of iron were substituted.

In another part of this work we speak of the lost arts. Proofs of their existence are found in the excavated cities, and even in those vestiges which establish the belief of an antediluvian state of society equal to any that has existed since. Egypt abounds with antiquities. Where are the ramparts of Nineveh, the walls of Babylon, the palaces of Persepolis, the temples of Baalbec and Jerusalem? Where are the fleets of Tyre, the docks of Arad, the looms of Sidon, and the multitude of sailors, pilots, merchants, and soldiers? Where are those laborers, those harvests, those flocks, and that crowd of living beings which then covered the face of the earth?[48]

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The temples are crumbled down, the palaces are overthrown, the ports are filled up, the cities are destroyed,—all,—all. Earth itself is only a desolate place of tombs. Yet specimens of high art remain, and also indications of a classic taste far superior to that which boasts of refinement since. We have every reason to believe that railroads were known to the Asiatics long, long before these cities fell in their ruins, carrying along with them the charts by which we could have traced their cause of greatness. The cities of the desert—that of Palmyra, for instance—could never have been built so far away from “marble-quarries” if railroad facilities had not been known and afforded the means of conveying those vast blocks of marble which formed its pillars.

The cities of Palmyra and the spot which marks the site of Tadmor present an imposing spectacle in rising from the sands of the desert. It looks like a forest of columns. The great avenue of pillars leading to the Temple of the Sun, and terminated by a grand arch, is 1200 feet in length. The temple itself is a magnificent object. The city is a vast collection of ruins, all of white marble. How were these huge columns of marble conveyed to this city of the desert?

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The sculptures of the Memphite Necropolis say that Memphis once held a palace called the “Abode of Shoopho.” Shoopho was the owner of vast copper-mines: he was termed “pure king and sacred priest.” Historians doubted the power he exercised over Egypt, and also the amount of labor performed in erecting pyramids and monuments,—as, for instance, it is maintained that he employed 100,000 men for twenty years in erecting a monument for which ten preceding years were requisite in preparing the materials and the *causeway* whereon the stone was to be carried. The monument, as described by historians, was of immense proportions, the base of which was 764 feet each face, the original height 480 feet, containing 89,028,000 cubic feet of solid masonry and 6,848,000 tons of stone. The distance these materials were carried was twenty miles from the quarries on the eastern side of the Nile. What sort of a *causeway* was that which could transport these huge masses of stone a distance of twenty miles? Again, this great pyramid is lined with the most beautiful and massive blocks of sienite, of red granite, not one particle of which exists twenty-five miles below the first cataract of the Nile, at Aswan, distant six hundred and forty miles up the river from the pyramid. Blocks of this sienite are found in this pyramid’s chambers and passages of such dimensions, and built in such portions of the masonry that they must evidently have been placed there before the upper limestone masonry was laid above the granite. There not being in its native state a speck of granite within six hundred and forty miles from the pyramid, is a proof that Shoopho did rule from Memphis to Aswan, and from Migdol to the tower of Syene. How he conveyed the material that distance involves the question of the origin of *railroads*.

Let us pass on to Alexandria. Pompey’s Pillar stands upon a pedestal twelve feet high. The shaft is round, and, with the Corinthian capital, one hundred feet in height; the diameter is nine feet. Cleopatra’s Needle is of one shaft of granite, covered with hieroglyphics: it is sixty-four feet high, and eight feet square at the base. There are a great number of pyramids scattered over Egypt, but the most remarkable are those of Djizeh, Sakhara, and Dashour. When seven leagues distant from the spectator they seem near at hand, and it is not till after having travelled several miles that he is fully sensible of the size. The largest is ascribed to Cheops. They are on a platform of rock situated one hundred and fifty feet above the level of the desert. Ten years were consumed in preparing a *road* whereon to draw the immense blocks of stone, and the labors of 100,000 men were employed, who were relieved once in three months.—*Herodotus.*

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What sort of a road and the manner these blocks were carried are matters of conjecture. *We incline to the opinion of railroads.*

The stones used in building the pyramids of Egypt, it is supposed, were raised to their places by piling up immense inclined planes of sand, up which the blocks were pushed with rollers. If inclined planes were used to raise large blocks to a great height, is it to be supposed that a similar mode, or *railroads*, were not used to convey them on a level plane?

The statement, often repeated on high authority, that the pyramids were built before the Egyptians acquired the art of writing hieroglyphics, however, which they do contain, do not convey that full knowledge of the state of the arts among them, at the time the pyramids were constructed, which is to be learned from the writings and pictures in their tombs and temples, in regard to the state of their arts at a subsequent period. But we have the less valuable authority of Herodotus that the blocks of stones were lifted from one course to the other up the steps of the pyramid. Remains of Cheops' grand causeway, for transporting the blocks quarried from the rocks on the east bank, are still seen leading up the great pyramid from the plain, a shapeless ridge of ruinous masonry and sand. According to Herodotus, it was one thousand yards long, sixty feet wide, and forty-eight feet high, was adorned with figures of animals, and was a work of ten years. Some of the stone used for the coping over the passages are seven feet thick and more than seventeen feet long. Lifting these stones up the side of a pyramid four hundred and fifty feet high was certainly a work of great labor; but as a feat of engineering it was mere child's play compared with some of the triumphs of modern science and skill,—for instance, lifting the Menai bridge on to its piers, or raising on end and placing on its pedestal the monstrous monolith which adorns the city of St. Petersburg.

In 1760, wooden railroads were in pretty general use to facilitate mining operations. Tram-roads, with rails of cast iron, first introduced at the Colebrookdale Works, at the instance of Mr. Reynolds in 1767; at the Sheffield colliery in 1776. Stone props for the support of the rails substituted for timber in 1797, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Edge rails were brought into use by Mr. Jessop in 1789, at Loughborough. Malleable iron edge rails adopted at Newcastle in 1805, and at Tinsdale Fell in 1808. The improved malleable edge rail now in use was invented by Mr. Birkinsaw in 1820. A locomotive engine propelled by steam was employed for the first time on the Merthyr-Tydvil Railroad in Wales in 1804. Blenkinsop’s locomotive engine, which operated by means of cog-wheels and rack rails, was invented and applied on the Leeds Railroad in 1811. But the locomotive engine that has obtained the greatest reputation and been most generally adopted was that invented by Mr. George Stevenson in 1814. This engine has undergone a variety of improvements up to 1829, and was deemed at that period more efficient than any of its predecessors.

RAILROADS IN THE UNITED STATES.

(Abstract of the Seventh Census.)

In no other particular can the prosperity of a country be more strikingly manifested than by the perfection of its roads and other means of internal communication. The system of railroads, canals, turnpikes, post-routes, river navigation, and telegraphs possessed by the United States presents an indication of its advancement in power and civilization more wonderful than any other feature of its progress. In truth, our country in this respect occupies the first place among the nations of the world.

From returns received at this office in reply to special circulars, and other sources of information, it is ascertained that there were, at the commencement of the year 1852, 10,814 miles of railroads completed and in use, and that 10,898 miles were then in course of construction, with a prospect of being speedily brought into use. While the whole of these 10,898 miles will, beyond reasonable doubt, have been finished within five years, such is the activity with which projects for works of this character are brought forward and carried into effect, that it is not extravagant to assume that there will be completed within the limits of the United States before the year 1860 at least 35,000 miles of railroads.

The Quincy Railroad, for the transportation of granite from the quarries at Quincy to Neponset River, and the Mauch Chunk Railroad, from the coal-mines to the Lehigh River, in Pennsylvania, were the first attempts to introduce that mode of transportation in this country; and their construction and opening, in the years 1826 and 1827, are properly considered the commencement of the American railroad system. From this period until about the year 1848, the progress of the improvements thus begun was interrupted only by the financial revulsion which followed the events of 1836 and 1837. Up to 1848, it is stated that about 6000 miles had been finished. Since that date an addition of 5000 miles has been made to the completed roads, and, including the present year, new lines, comprising about 14,000 miles, have been undertaken, surveyed, and mostly placed under contract.

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The usefulness and comparative economy of railroads as channels of commerce and travel have become so evident that they have in some measure superseded canals, and are likely to detract seriously from the importance of navigable rivers for like purposes. In a new country like ours many items of expense which go to swell the cost of railroads in England and on the continent are avoided. Material is cheap, the right of way usually freely granted, and heavy land damages seldom interpose to retard the progress of an important work. It is difficult to arrive at a clear approximation to the average cost of railroad construction in the United States. Probably the first important work of this class undertaken and carried through in the Union was the cheapest, as it has proved one of the most profitable, ever built. This was the road from Charleston, in South Carolina, to Augusta, on the Savannah River. It was finished and opened for traffic in 1833. The entire expense of building the road and equipping it with engines and cars for passengers and freight was, at the date of its completion, only $6700 per mile; and all expenditures for repairs and improvements, during the eighteen years that the road has been in operation, have raised the aggregate cost of the whole work to only $1,336,615, or less than $10,000 per mile.

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It is estimated that the 2870 miles of railroads finished in New England have cost $132,000,000,—which gives an average of nearly $46,000 per mile. In the Middle States, where the natural obstacles are somewhat less, the average expense per mile of the railroads already built is not far from $40,000. Those now in course of completion—as the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, Pennsylvania Central, and other lines, the routes of which cross the Alleghany range of mountains—will probably require a larger proportionate outlay, owing to the heavy expense of grading, bridging, and tunnelling. In those States where land has become exceedingly valuable, the cost of extinguishing private titles to the real estate requires, and the damages to property along the routes form, a heavy item in the account of general expenses of building railroads. In the South and West the case is reversed: there the proprietors along the proposed line of a road are often willing and anxious to give as much land as may be needed for its purposes, and accord many other advantages in order to secure its location through or in the vicinity of their possessions. In the States lying in the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi the cost of grading, also, is much less than at the eastward. Where the country is wooded, the timber can be obtained at the mere cost of removing it from the track; and through prairie districts Nature seems to have prepared the way for these structures by removing every obstacle from the surface; while fine quarries of stone are to be found in almost every region. These favorable circumstances render the estimate of $20,000 per mile in all the new States safe and reliable.

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The primary design of nearly all the great lines of railway in the United States has been to connect the sea-coast with the distant interior, to effect which object it was necessary to cross the Alleghanies, which intersect every line of travel diverging to the West from the great commercial cities of the seaboard.

The Eighth Census (1860), continuing the line, makes this addition to that of the Seventh:—

Previous to the commencement of the last decade, only one line of railroad has been completed between tide-water and the great interior basins of the country, the products of which now perform so important a part in our internal and foreign commerce. Even this line, formed by the several links that now compose the New York Central Road, was restricted in the carriage of freight except on the payment of canal tolls in addition to other charges for transportation, which restriction amounted to a virtual prohibition. The commerce resulting from our railroads

consequently has been, with comparatively slight exceptions, a creation of the last decade.

The line next opened, and connecting the Western system of lakes and rivers with tide-water, was that extending from Boston to Ogdensburg, composed of distinct links, the last of which was completed during 1850. The third was the New York & Erie, which was opened on the 22d of April, 1851. The fourth in geographical order was the Pennsylvania, which was completed in 1852, although its mountain division was not opened till 1854. Previous to this time its summit was overcome by a series of inclined planes, with stationary engines, constructed by the State. The fifth great line, the Baltimore & Ohio, was opened in 1853 still farther south. The Tennessee River, a tributary of the Mississippi, was reached in 1850 by the Western & Atlantic Railroad of Georgia, and the Mississippi itself by the Memphis & Charleston Railroad in 1859. In the extreme north the Atlantic & St. Lawrence, now known as the Grand Trunk, was completed early in 1853. In 1858 the Virginia system was extended to a connection with the Memphis & Charleston and [281] with the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad.

The eight great works named, connecting the interior with the seaboard, are the trunks or base-lines upon which is erected the vast system that now overspreads the whole country. They serve as outlets to the interior for its products, which would have little or no commercial value without improved highways, the cost of transportation over which does not equal one-tenth that over ordinary roads. The works named, assisted by the Erie Canal, now afford ample means for the expeditious and cheap transportation of produce-seeking Eastern markets, and could without being overtaxed transport the entire surplus products of the interior.

Previous to 1850 by far the greater portion of railroads constructed were in the States bordering the Atlantic, and, as before remarked, were for the most part isolated lines, whose limited traffics were altogether local. Up to the date named, the internal commerce of the country was conducted almost entirely through *water* lines, natural and artificial, and over ordinary highways. The period of the settlement of California marks really the commencement of the new era in the physical progress of the United States. The vast quantities of gold it produced imparted new life and activity to every portion of the Union, particularly the Western States, the people of which, at the commencement of 1850, were thoroughly aroused as to the value and importance of railroads. Each presented great facilities for the construction of such works which promised to be almost equally productive. Enterprises were undertaken and speedily executed which have literally converted them into a network of lines, and secured their advantages to almost every farmer and producer.

The progress of these works in the aggregate, year by year, will be seen by the tabular statements at the close of the report. The only important line opened in the West, previous to [282] 1850, was the one from Sandusky to Cincinnati, formed by the Mad River and Little Miami Roads. But these pioneer works were rude, unsubstantial structures compared with the finished works of the present day, and were employed almost wholly in the transportation of passengers.

With the advantages arising from the railroad routes, it is not at all surprising that our postal facilities have increased to such an extent that, next to the telegraphic wires, it may rank as one of the most extraordinary operative institutions in this or any other country in the world.

It will be perceived that in speaking of the department the author has paid little or no attention to the rebellion in connection with its operations. Situated as he is in the department, his opportunities are such that if the business of the office has lessened, as is supposed, in consequence, there is not a man engaged but must truly say that, instead of such being the case, their labors, as well as the business of the office, never presented a more stirring and flourishing appearance. In some respects it may have affected the general income, but upon the whole the vast increase of army letters and newspaper circulation, added to sundry articles of wearing-apparel coming under postal regulations, we question if this deficiency has not been partially, if not entirely, overcome. To a certain extent it affected foreign postage. The following statement, however, will convey a better idea of the postal finances than that of any theory established upon “why and whereof.” Figures, they say, never lie; but may not the master-hand forming them occasionally err in their formation?

The postal revenues for the year ending the 30th of June last were $12,438,233.78, and the expenditures of this department during the same period were $12,644,786.20, showing an excess of the latter of $206,532.42. The average annual receipts of this department from 1859 to 1861, [283] inclusive, were $8,745,282.62, and the average annual expenditures for the same period were $14,482,008.44, showing an average annual excess of expenditures over receipts of $5,736,725.82; and the average annual receipts from 1862 to 1864, inclusive, were $10,871,530.97, and the expenditures, $11,694,785.72, showing an average annual excess of expenditures over receipts of $823,254.75.

The excess of receipts in 1864 over 1861, the first year of the rebellion, was $4,088,957.38.

Although the proportion of receipts as against the expenditures has doubtless been increased on account of the suspension of the postal service in the insurrectionary States, the above furnishes the evidence of an improving financial condition of the department highly creditable to the administration of my immediate predecessor.

The estimate of expenditure for 1864 was fixed at $13,000,000, in which was included the sum of $1,000,000 specially appropriated for the overland mail-service, being $355,213.80 more than the amount actually expended.

On the other hand, the revenues of 1864 were estimated at an increase of five per cent. on those of 1862, making $8,714,000, while they actually reached $12,438,253.78, or $3,724,253.73 more than the estimate. This increase equals 42-5/8 per cent.

The increase of expenditures in 1864, compared with those of 1863, is 11-5/8 per cent., and the increase in the revenues for the same year 11-3/8 per cent.

This exhibit promises an increase of the revenues for 1865 over the estimate submitted in the report of last year.

The revenues of this department for the year ending June 30, 1865, were $14,556,158.70, and the expenditures $13,694,728.28, leaving a surplus of $861,430.42.

The ratio of increase of revenue was 17 per cent., and of expenditure 8 per cent., compared with the previous year.

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ESTIMATES FOR 1866.

The expenditures of all kinds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1866, are estimated at	$14,098,500 00
The gross revenue for the year 1866, including foreign postage and miscellaneous receipts, is estimated at an increase of six per cent. on the revenue of 1864, making	13,184,547 79
Estimated deficiency of revenue compared with estimated expenditures	913,952 21
From this sum must be deducted the amount of the permanent appropriations to compensate the department for carrying free mail-matter, under acts of March 3, 1847, and March 3, 1851	700,000 00
By which the estimated deficiency is reduced to	$213,952 21

The grants for the transportation of free mail-matter for the last two fiscal years have not been expended. Assuming that the amount of $700,000 for the last year is still available, no appropriation for any deficiency in the revenues will be required.

In making the estimate of probable expenditures for 1866, the amounts actually expended under the several heads during the past fiscal year have been taken as a basis; but an increase in several of the items named has become necessary, particularly in the appropriation for postage-stamps and stamped envelopes, the estimated cost of the latter being increased $140,000 per annum, according to the terms of a new contract elsewhere referred to in this report.

The maximum annual receipts of the postal department, previous to the rebellion, from all the States was $8,518,067.40, which was exceeded in the sum of $6,038,091.30 by the receipts of the last year from the loyal States alone. The revenues during the past four years amounted to $46,458,022.97, an average of $11,614,505.74 per annum. Compared with the receipts of the four years immediately preceding, which amounted to $32,322,640.73, the annual average increase of revenue was $3,533,845.56, which has not resulted from any considerable additions to the service, the ratio of receipts to expenditures having been larger than, with few exceptions, at any previous period. A proper regard to economy in administration, aided by larger contributions from all the States of the Union, will enable the department to increase its usefulness from year to year in all its legitimate functions. But it must not be overlooked that the ability to fully perform its mission as the postal agent of the Government is greatly impaired by the burdens imposed by the franking privilege and expensive service upon routes established for other than postal purposes, the receipts from which are largely unremunerative. However much the establishment of these routes is to be commended for national objects, in which regard they command the approval of the country, it is not possible to see upon what principle they are wholly chargeable to the postal fund, which belongs to those by whom it has been contributed, and is pledged to meet the wants of the postal service.

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The subjoined table illustrates the misapplication of the postal funds:—

Routes.	Pay.	Receipts.	Excess of pay.
Salt Lake City to Folsom	$385,000	$23,934 44	$726,065 56
Atchison to Salt Lake	365,000		
Kansas City to Santa Fé	35,743	6,536 57	29,206 43
Lincoln to Portland	225,000	24,791 67	200,208 33
The Dalles to Salt Lake	186,000	5,660 77	180,339 23
Total	1,196,743	60,923 45	1,135,819 55

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This system, which was suggested by the celebrated Rowland Hill, originated at a period in English postal history when the requirements of trade and commerce demanded a revisal of the code. Perhaps no man was better qualified for the purpose than was Mr. Hill. In 1839 railroad post-offices were in use for mail-bags. Each railway company provided a car, when desired to do so by the postmaster-general, for the exclusive use of the mails. These cars were fitted up with boxes to facilitate the distribution and reception of the mails. On the London and Liverpool Road (1839) it required the constant and active employment of two clerks to assort, receive, and hand out the mails: such is the rapidity of travel, and so numerous are the post-offices upon this route. Subsequently these cars were used for the distribution of letters in large cities, by assorting them on the routes. Not only were such distributions made on the cars for all the principal stations on the line of the railroads before the arrival of the cars, but distributions for the offices connected with the stations, and therefore incidentally for the entire district of country through which the lines are in operation. It was some time before our postal department could be made *sensible* of the necessity of the system in our country. Perhaps no other country in the world possessed a larger amount of railroad travel and postal extent than ours, and yet the spirit of old fogyism was hard to be subdued in the encounter Young America had with it on this subject, nor was it until the cars were almost forced upon the department (experimentally) that they were first introduced. These experiments were made on the routes from Chicago, Illinois, to Clinton, Davenport, and Dubuque, Iowa, with the most satisfactory results, as were those between Washington and New York. The attention of the public was called to this new postal system by the postmaster-general (William Dennison) in his report for the fiscal year 1864, who stated “that cars requisite for the purpose are prepared for one daily line between New York and Washington, and, by means of clerks taken temporarily from the post-offices at Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, letters intended for distribution at either of these points are distributed in the cars, and so arranged that they can be despatched without delay on connecting routes.”

Among the railroads upon which these cars are placed are the Pennsylvania Central, between Philadelphia and Pittsburg: in fact, the system is now so fully established that it has become an essential element in the whole organization of the postal department. Those employed in the several post-offices from which the light of order radiates, under this new system, can fully appreciate the advantages resulting from it, as merchants and others already acknowledge

“This radiated head of the Phœnix,”

as it rises above the ashes of the old *fogy* system.

Mail-matter from every direction will reach our citizens much earlier,—in most cases several hours sooner. This will show at once how essential to our merchants is this new improvement: nor can we at this early period of its introduction calculate all the advantages likely to result from it. The idea of a post-office performing its distributing duties on a railway, going at the rate of thirty miles an hour, is one of those scintillations of genius which only emits light once in a century,—that century the present.[49]

THE FRANKING PRIVILEGE.

"I have said so much, that if I had not a frank I must burn my letter and begin again."—Cowper.

It is the abuse of certain privileges, which all governments accord to a portion of its officers, which leads to fraud, crime, and corruption. Among these, that of the franking system may be ranked as a most prominent one. Had it been checked at an earlier period of our postal history, how many evils would have been prevented, and how far more plethoric would have been its treasury!

As early as 1782, even in its incipient state, far-seeing men objected to its exercise. In December (6th), 1782, an ordinance extending the privilege of franking letters to the heads of all the departments was reported and taken up. Various ideas were thrown out on the subject at large,—some contending for the extension proposed, some for a total abolition of the privilege as well in members of Congress as in others, some for a limitation of the privilege to a definite number or weight of letters. Those who contended for a total abolition represented the privilege as productive of abuses, reducing the profits so low as to prevent the extension of the establishment throughout the United States, and throwing the whole burden of the establishment on the mercantile intercourse. On the other side, it was contended that in case of an abolition the [289] delegates or their constituents would be taxed just in proportion to their distance from the seat of Congress,—which was neither just nor politic, considering the many other disadvantages which were inseparable from that distance; that, as the correspondence of the delegates was the principal channel through which a general knowledge of public affairs was diffused, any abridgment of it would in so far confine this advantage to the States within the neighborhood of Congress, and that as the correspondence at present, *however voluminous*, did not exclude from the mail any private letters which would be subject to postage, and if postage was extended to letters now franked the number and size of them would be essentially reduced, the revenue was not affected in the manner represented. The ordinance was disagreed to, and the subject recommitted with instructions to the committee, giving them ample latitude for such report as they should think fit. Whether the report was ever made we are not advised; but its latitude has increased with the introduction of every new State and Territory. Since the above date, almost every postmaster-general has alluded to the franking privilege. Mr. Blair, in his report of 1863, says,—

"I renew the recommendation made last year, that the franking privilege of postmasters be abolished, except for correspondence between them and other officers of the department upon official business.

"It should be abolished also as to the correspondence of all persons addressed to the several departments and executive officers of government, except upon official correspondence addressed by an officer of the government.

"Both these privileges, as they now exist, have been much abused, and have no proper place in a correct postal system."

[290] Mr. Blair, however, falls into the same error that many official rulers commit,—that of calculating chances of success, instead of commanding them. In the report alluded to, we find this passage:—that "the postal revenue has nearly equalled the entire expenditures,—the latter amounting to $11,314,206.84, and the former to $11,163,789.59, leaving a deficiency of but $150,417.25. Good reason, therefore, exists for the expectation that within a brief period this important department of the General Government will become self-sustaining."

We do not think so. The postal department is not, nor can it ever be made, a speculative one. It is based on the increase of trade and commerce throughout an extent of country unparalleled in history, as uniting in one system of rule upwards of thirty millions of people. To keep up the routes over such a vast space, connecting State to State, Territory to Territory, passing over lakes, rivers, mountains, even over the land-route to California, through almost impassable sections, contending with difficulties scarcely to be realized in descriptions, the expense is necessarily great. Previous to 1850 many of the routes bordering the Atlantic were for the most part isolated lines, near to which trade and traffic had not approached. The settlement of California, and the opening of a trade which has ultimately proved a second Peru, as regards gold, may be dated as the commencement of a new era in the physical progress of our country. In connecting a line of posts, establishing post-offices, and furnishing modes of conveyance, the question of dollars and cents is but a secondary consideration. The word profit was repudiated, and the sole purpose of the government was to establish the post, no matter at what cost. The time may come when it shall prove self-sustaining, but never if at the expense of the public interest, nor while the franking system exists.

[291] We contend that every letter, document, or newspaper, no matter by whom mailed, or how high the functionary, should be prepaid; for men in authority are the servants of the people, and have no more claim upon the *public treasury* than has the lowest worker in any of the departments. *The postal department, however, in its official correspondence, should be the only exception to the rule.*

Nor is it the mere privilege we complain of, but its abuse. Reduce it to an honest and equitable use, and we venture to say the public will endure the act.

Mr. George Plitt, in his report while a special agent of the post-office department, made February 3, 1841, speaking of the franking privilege, says, "The actual number of franked packages sent

from the post-office of Washington City during the week ending on the 7th of July last was 201,534; and the whole number sent during the last session of Congress amounted to the enormous quantity of 4,314,948. All these packages are not only carried by the department into every section of the country *free of charge*, but it is actually obliged to pay to every postmaster whose commissions do not amount to $2000 per annum, *two cents for the delivery of each one*! Supposing all the above to have been delivered, the department would lose from its revenue for this one item upwards of $80,000, besides paying for the mail-transportation."

In 1834 the "Washington Globe," speaking upon this subject, used the following language:—

"Particular cases of gross abuse upon the post-office are within our knowledge, and the postmaster-general will be informed of hundreds of others. The opinion of those acquainted with the subject, which we have no doubt is correct, is that the department has lost within the last year, by the extension of the franking privileges of the members of Congress, and by abuses of law, more than *one hundred thousand dollars*. This revenue would in a short time pay off the debts of the department, and leave the people all the mails they now have. Who loses this sum? Not the department only, but the people,—the honest correspondents by the post, who prefer paying postage on their letters to obtaining franks. In fact, the abuses are growing so rapidly as to justify a fear of their endangering the establishment. The restrictions of the law seem to have been by some men wholly borne down and prostrated, and the franking privilege is rapidly extending itself over, and covering a great part of, the ordinary private correspondence of the country."

The post-office is an establishment of the greatest utility. The law throws it upon its receipts for postage as its sole support. When these fail, the mails must stop; and every dollar that is taken from them is so much drawn from the service of the public. The duty, therefore, of protecting the department from the loss of its revenue is imposed upon the postmaster-general not only by the general principle of the law, but by the necessity of saving the establishment from annihilation, total or partial. The sentiment of the people, ever against abuse and the improper use of privilege, will sustain the postmaster-general in his course.

The "Globe," after alluding to the further abuse of the franking privilege, says,—

"If the government had been placed upon the footing of citizens, and had paid during Mr. Barry's administration one-third even of what these would have paid for the same services, would the department have been in debt? Strike an account with the executive government only, even for the last year, and we find that the balance due to the department, including the losses by abuses, would more than pay its whole debts. To those, then, who charge that the department is 'insolvent,' we say that its unrequited labors have justly earned for it a revenue more than sufficient to meet all the demands against it."

In connection with this subject,—and it is one that, when fully exposed, will astonish the country, —we annex the following from the "American Merchant," New York, for July, 1859. "There is not the slightest doubt that very extensive frauds may be successfully carried on in the department; but we incline to the opinion, however, that the most aggravated 'frauds' perpetrated on the department, and which are the more hard to be borne that there is no remedy for them under the existing law, are those which grow out of the franking privilege. It would astonish the world, could the figures be correctly ascertained, to see to what extent this evil is carried. From a statement made by the postmaster of Washington City to the Post-Office Committee of the House of Representatives, in January, 1854, we gather the following items of 'franked' matter sent during *one month* from Washington alone:—

	Pounds weight.	Postage.
Letters from members of Congress	3,446	$4,664
Documents " "	693,508	110,961
Letters from Departments	7,065	6,782
Newspapers (numbering 1,110,020)	111,002	11,100
	————	————
Total for one month	815,021	$133,507
For twelve months	9,780,242	1,602,087
Postage for one year, if not prepaid		3,158,390

"Let it be remembered that this amount of $2,500,000, which is a fair average for one year, is actually *taken out* of the revenues of the department in one city. Is it strange that our postal system should be non-supporting?

"If it be right that the General Government should defray the expenses of sending 'pub. docs.' and the public and private correspondence of members of Congress to every part of the country, then a sufficient appropriation should be made for that purpose, and there should be some means of fixing a limit to this system of dead-heading. And if letters, papers, and public documents were the only commodities transported under this talismanic 'frank,' it would be less a matter of concernment; but when, as has been the case, members of Congress send home their dirty linen to be washed, at the expense of the post-office department, the subject assumes a more serious aspect, and the sovereign people—very impudently, perhaps—persist in knowing why such things are. From the statements of the department for the ten years ending with 1856, the total expenses were $68,136,197, and the revenue from postages $54,014,652, leaving a deficiency of $14,121,545. The appropriation by government during the same space was $5,626,682,—which reduces the actual deficiency to a little more than $9,000,000."

Many of the packages thus franked, even when received by the parties, to whom they are sent, are rarely opened, for the simple reason that the newspapers (*which also go free*) containing the same documents or speeches have already been received, read, and commented upon. For instance: it is well known to every member of Congress, and to every one connected with the post-office, that long after the President’s message has been published in every newspaper throughout the country, thousands upon thousands are sent daily under frank from Washington. This was our written objection to the privilege in 1841. Now the same thing extends to “Annual Reports” of the respective heads of departments, other reports, and speeches of members of Congress, which are never read in pamphlet form by the masses to whom they are sent. Many of these speeches, which attracted no attention in the House and created little or no sensation out of it, are handsomely gotten up, neatly printed, artistically stitched, and mailed by the members at the expense of the government to their constituents, to whose literary merit and classical beauties the words of Virgil would most aptly apply:—

“Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademtum.”

There are two meanings to this terrible passage from the Latin poet. The learned reader will apply the less terrible to the subject in question.

It would present a painful picture were we to sum up by number, bulk, and character the public documents which weigh down the mails passing from Washington City to every other in the country,—not cities alone, but towns, villages, hamlets, grog-shops, and places *not reputable, either to the sender or the recipient, to name*. Documents, such as valuable books, find their way as per direction to ignorant blacks and foreigners, many of whom can neither read nor write. Wholesale and ponderous as are these costly matters, they are few in comparison to the speeches which members of Congress send to their constituents. We refrain from alluding further to these matters, as we feel humiliated as a citizen of the United States when we consider that it is done under the law.

J. Holt, postmaster-general, in his report (1859), speaking of the franking privilege, says,—

“It may be added, if it is proper that the government shall be charged with the expense of conveying the matter now passing free through the mails, justice alike to the public and to the department requires that the amount thus due shall be precisely ascertained,—which can best be done by prepayment at the mailing-offices. There can be no enlightened administration of the postal system without a complete knowledge of its financial resources and liabilities, which can never be attained while the incubus of the franking privilege is hanging over it. Under the stifling pressure, too, of this incubus, the department is forced to continual efforts to ameliorate its condition, which must often result in curtailments to be deplored, because they deprive the public of mail-accommodations for which they have fully paid, and which they are, therefore, entitled to enjoy.

“Another potent reason for the abolition of the franking privilege, as now exercised, is found in the abuses which seem to be inseparable from its existence. These abuses, though constantly exposed and animadverted upon for a series of years, have as constantly increased. It has been often stated by my predecessors, and is a matter of public notoriety, that immense masses of packages are transported under the government frank which neither the letter nor spirit of the statute creating the franking privilege would justify; that a large number of letters, documents, and packages are thus conveyed, covered by the frank of officials, written, in violation of law, not by themselves, but by some real or pretended agent; while whole sacks of similar matter, which have never been handled nor seen even by government functionaries, are transported under franks which have been forged. The extreme difficulty of detecting such forgeries has greatly multiplied this class of offences, whilst their prevalence has so deadened the public sentiment in reference to them that a conviction, however ample the proof, is scarcely possible to be obtained. The statute of 1825, denouncing the counterfeiting of an official frank under a heavy penalty, is practically inoperative.”

The French deputies and peers have no franking privilege; in England it was abolished for members of Parliament since the establishment of the penny post. For an amusing account of an abuse of the franking privilege in England, see page 66.

Having expressed our opinion and given that of others on the abuse of the franking privilege and on the propriety, in a national point of view, of doing away with it entirely, it is by no means implied that a different construction of the right would not do away with our objections, and also those of the many who consider its abuse a growing, if not a dangerous, evil. Whatever may be done to lessen the evil, as well as the heavy expense which it inflicts upon our government, and which will bring about a state of things that will redound to the credit of those who inaugurate a reform in this department of our government, will be cordially endorsed by the people.

Our members of Congress, it is true, stand politically very differently as regards positions from the representatives of other nations; but, still, that is no reason why governmental privilege should be abused to the extent it is.

By an act of Congress passed at the Third Session of the Thirty-Seventh Congress, December 1, 1862, to March 4, 1863, “The postmaster-general may arrange for the delivery by route-agents of newspaper bundles not taken from, or intended for, any post-office. The postmaster-general may regulate the manner of wrapping mail-matter not paying letter postage, so that it may be easily examined; and postmasters are allowed to tear off the wrappers to see if letter postage is evaded.

Publishers dealing with the post-office must swear to their statements: there is a fine of $50 for each offence in sending papers to other than subscribers at quarterly rates. The franking privilege is limited as follows: first, the President, by himself or his private secretary; second, the Vice-President; third, the chiefs of the several executive departments; fourth, such principal officers, being heads of bureaus or chief clerks, of each executive department, to be used only for official communications, as the postmaster-general shall prescribe; fifth, Senators and Representatives, including delegates from Territories, the Secretary of the Senate and Clerk of the House, to cover correspondence to and from them, and all printed matter issued by authority of Congress, and all speeches, proceedings, and debates in Congress, and all printed matter sent to them,—their franking privilege to commence with the term for which they are elected, and to expire on the first Monday of December following such term of office; sixth, all official communications addressed to either of the executive departments by an officer responsible to that department: in all such cases the envelope should be marked ‘official,’ with the signature thereto of the officer; seventh, postmasters have the franking privilege for official communications to other postmasters: in such cases the envelope shall be marked ‘official,’ with the signature of the writer, and for any such endorsement of ‘official’ falsely made, the person making the same shall forfeit $300; eighth, petitions to either branch of Congress shall pass free in the mails; ninth, all communications addressed to any of the franking officers above described, and not excepted in the foregoing clauses, must be prepaid by postage-stamps. The franking privilege shall be limited to packages weighing not exceeding four ounces, except petitions to Congress and congressional or executive documents, and publications published, procured, or purchased by order of either house, which shall be considered as public documents and entitled to be franked as such; and except, also, seeds, cuttings, roots, and scions, the weight of the packages of which may be fixed by regulations of the postmaster-general. Publishers of periodicals, magazines, and newspapers which shall not exceed sixteen ounces in weight shall be allowed to interchange their publications reciprocally free of postage, such interchange to be confined to a single copy of each publication.”

This act took effect July 1, 1863: all acts inconsistent with it were thereby repealed.

Here is an extensive pull upon the postal department, yet one that if strictly adhered to would not create such an opposition to the system as its abuse has caused. *Barrels of flour, dirty clothes, and other family matters* certainly are not included in the above. If so, then will the postal department have to connect with its legitimate business that of an express. A “National Franking Privilege Express” would not be a bad title.

Although the idea of the government becoming a common carrier of *dirty linen, barrels of flour, immense masses of book-matter and documentary papers*, was never entertained, yet the franking privilege is gradually preparing the way for its accomplishment. It is, therefore, evident to us that the system is gradually destroying the whole theory on which the post-office is founded, and if carried out still further will cripple its operations materially. It has been suggested that in lieu of the franking privilege now allowed by law to members of Congress and others, they should be furnished with postage-stamps, to be paid for out of the contingent fund of the House. If the privilege is to be extended in any shape, let it be under that of the franking system; for the moment stamps are substituted, that very moment a rush for “cash representatives” will be most eagerly sought for, and the contingent fund, to use a modern phrase, will “be soon swallowed up.” There would, of course, be less *franking of public documents* by the use of *stamps*, but a far more extensive use of them for *other purposes*. This has been clearly illustrated in some of our States where the *stamps* have been substituted for *franking*. If, however, the postage-stamp system should be adopted, let the transmission of books, &c. be forwarded, under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate and Clerk of the House, by the ordinary mode of conveyance. This would be a check on those extravagant members who consider it a duty due their constituents to supply them with books enough to make a library. In one single instance, a member from Utah, in 1858, cost the government over seven thousand dollars by the transmission of books, &c.

As a clear and explicit definition of the limits of the franking privilege of members of Congress, the following letter to certain members of Congress who claimed certain (extended) privileges will be found interesting. The members had asked leave to frank certain documents intended to aid a praiseworthy object not strictly entitled to that privilege, as well as other favors not sanctioned by either the letter or the spirit of postal laws, rules, and regulations:—

“Post-Office Department, 1865.
“Appointment-Office, Washington.

“Gentlemen:—I am instructed by the postmaster-general to acknowledge the receipt of your joint letter of the 15th instant, and to say that while he fully appreciates the importance of furnishing the public with correct information on the subject of the treatment and sufferings of our brave men who, unfortunately, are prisoners in the hands of the rebels, and would willingly lend all proper aid in his power to accomplish this object, he cannot, with his sense of official duty, direct the postmaster of Boston to respect at his office the franks of members of the Senate or House of Representatives while they are sojourning at the seat of government. Nor can he authorize the use of *fac-simile* stamps for the purpose of franking matter passing through the mails.

“The franking privilege to Senators and members of Congress is a personal one, and travels with the party entitled to it, and cannot be exercised in two or more places at the same time. By the terms of the law, it is ‘to cover correspondence to and from them, and all printed matter issued

by authority of Congress, and all speeches, proceedings, debates in Congress, and all printed matter sent to them,’ thus limiting the privilege to the matter herein named. Consequently, if it come to *the knowledge* of a postmaster that a package bearing a proper frank is composed of matter not named in the law, it becomes his duty to disregard such frank and charge postage thereon.

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“The standing regulations of the department provide that ‘no privileged person can authorize his clerk or any other person to write (or stamp) his name for the purpose of franking any letter or packet.’ ‘The personal privilege of franking travels with the person possessing it, and can be exercised in but one place at the same time.’

“‘No privileged person can leave his frank behind him to cover his correspondence in his absence.’ ‘If letters or papers be put into a post-office bearing the frank of a privileged person who notoriously has not been in that vicinity for several days, ... it is the duty of the postmaster to treat them as unpaid.’ ‘Postmasters are requested to report to the department all violations of the franking privilege.’

“The use of a *fac-simile* stamp for franking letters or packets by Senators or members of Congress has never been authorized or approved by this department in any way; but, on the contrary, the postmaster-general has invariably decided against the use of such stamps whenever the question has been brought to his notice, for the reason, among others, that it affords opportunity to perpetrate frauds upon the department and its revenues to an almost unlimited extent.

“From the foregoing you will see that the postmaster-general cannot with consistency or propriety comply with the request contained in your letter.

“I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

“A. W. Randall,
“*First Assistant Postmaster-General*.

“Hon. ——,
“Hon. ——, } *United States Senate*.”

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"Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy."

Ever since the postal system was established, an opposition has been made to its operations on the Sabbath. It is not for us to question the moral principle upon which these objections were based. The law for the observance of the Sabbath comes to us in language that cannot be mistaken and from a source not to be denied. But we question whether it applies to the wheels of a government, which, in the same order as that of the spheres, must move on for its maintenance.

The Rev. Thomas Scott (whose authority we annex, not feeling capable of giving a religious view ourselves) says, speaking upon the subject of the Sabbath,—

"'Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work,' was merely an *allowance*, and not an *injunction*; for the Lord forbade, by other precepts, all labor on some of these days, but they were assigned for the diligent performance of the business which relates to this present life, while the seventh was consecrated to the immediate service of God. The concerns of our souls must indeed be attended to, and God worshipped, every day, that our business may be regulated in subserviency to his will; but on the other days of the week 'we shall do *all our work*,' reserving none for the Sabbath, except WORKS OF CHARITY, PIETY, AND NECESSITY; for these alone consist with the holiness of that sacred day of rest, and are allowable, 'because the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.' All works, therefore, which arise from avarice, distrust, luxury, vanity, and self-indulgence, are entirely prohibited.

"Buying and selling, paying wages, settling accounts, writing letters of business, reading books on ordinary subjects, trifling visits, journeys, excursions, dissipation, or conversation which serves only for amusement, cannot consist with 'keeping a day holy to the Lord;' and sloth is a *carnal*, not a *spiritual*, rest. 303

"Servants, and some others, may, however, be under a real *necessity* of doing things which are not necessary in themselves: though good management might often greatly lessen the evil," &c.

Speaking of cattle, the learned author says, "The cattle must also be allowed to rest from the hard labor of husbandry, journeys, and all employments connected with trade or pleasure; though doubtless we may employ *them too* in works of necessity, piety, and charity; and thus they may properly be used for the gentle service of conveying those to places of public worship who could not otherwise attend or perform the duties to which they are called."

It will be observed that, indirectly, the author sustains the argument we advanced above, that the wheels of a government, like the works of creation, must necessarily move on "without impediment," and that any labor performed on the Sabbath connected with such operations comes under the head of "necessity."

Governments are formed and their laws based upon those of nature: we imitate and follow them as being essential to sustaining and perpetuating their stability and usefulness.

Nor do we think our preachers are disposed to interfere with the mails running on the Sabbath; for they invariably are the most anxious on a Monday morning to receive their letters and newspapers, which, as we all know, are invariably assorted and distributed throughout the office on the Sabbath for an early delivery on Monday. *We allude to this important clerical fact because in several instances they have threatened to report clerks for neglecting their duties on the Sabbath, simply because that labor was not devoted, as it would appear, for their especial benefit!* This want of consistency on the part of a portion of the clergy seems more tinctured with hypocrisy than it is with Christianity. 304

Return J. Meigs, the postmaster-general under James Madison in 1815, in reply to certain petitions remonstrating against the mails running on the Sabbath, makes use of the following language (we give extracts only):—

" ... The usage of transporting the mails on the Sabbath is coeval with the Constitution of the United States; and a prohibition of that usage will be first considered." He then gives the various mail-routes on the principal roads, and says,—

"If the mail was not to move on Sunday on the routes enumerated, it would be delayed from three to four days in passing from one extreme of the route to the other. From Washington to St. Louis the mail would be delayed two days; from Washington to New Orleans the mail would be delayed three days; from New Orleans to Boston it would be delayed from four to five days; and, *generally*, the mails would, on an average, be retarded equal to one-seventh part of the time now employed, if the mails do not move on the Sabbath.

"On the smaller cross-roads or routes the transportation of the mail has been avoided on the Sabbath, except when necessary to prevent great delays and to preserve connections with different routes."

In relation to *opening* the mails on the Sabbath, it may be noticed that the ninth section of the "act regulating the post-office establishment" makes it the duty of the postmaster to attend to the duties of his office "every day" on which a mail shall arrive at his office, and at "all reasonable hours" on every day of the week. When a mail is conveyed on the Sabbath, it must be opened and exchanged at the offices which it may reach in the course of the day. This operation at the smaller offices occupies no more than ten or twelve minutes; in some of the larger offices it 305

occupies one hour, and, it is believed, does not greatly interfere with religious exercises as to the postmasters themselves.

The practice of “delivering letters and newspapers on the Sabbath” is of recent origin, and, under the above-quoted section, commenced in 1810. Prior to that period, no postmaster (except the postmaster at Washington City), was required to deliver letters and newspapers on the Sabbath. The “reasonable hours” were to be determined by the postmaster-general, who established the following regulations, now existing:—“At post-offices where the mail arrives on Sunday, the office is to be kept open for the delivery of letters, &c. for *one hour* after the arrival and assorting of the mail; but in case that would interfere with the hours of public worship, then the office is to be kept open for one hour after the usual time of dissolving the meetings for that purpose.”

Also, if the mail arrives at an office too late for the delivery of letters on Saturday night, the postmaster is instructed to deliver them on Sunday morning, at such early hour as not to encroach upon the hours devoted to public religious exercises. If these regulations are not strictly attended to, it must be imputable to the urgency of applicants and the complaisance of postmasters.

After the preceding statement, it is to be observed that public policy, pure morality, and undefiled religion combine in favor of a due observance of the Sabbath.

Nevertheless, a nation owes to itself an exercise of the means adapted to its own preservation and for the continuance of those very blessings which flow from such observance; and the nation must sometimes operate by a few of its agents, even on the Sabbath; and such operation may, as in time of war, become indispensable, so that the many may enjoy an uninterrupted exercise of religion in quietude and safety. In the present state of the nation it may be supposed necessary *daily* to convey governmental orders, instructions, and regulations, and to communicate and receive information. If the daily carriage of the mail be as relates to the safety of the nation a matter of *necessity*, it also becomes a work of *mercy*.

When peace is fully established, the necessity will greatly diminish, and it will be at all times a pleasure to this department to prevent any profanation of the Sabbath, as far as relates to its official duty or its official authority.

In England the postal regulations for the Sabbath are as follows. They differ very little from our own:—

“During the time the office is open on Sunday (viz. from 9 to 10 in the morning, and one other hour), the public are allowed to prepay foreign and colonial letters, to purchase stamps, and to have letters registered; and all other duties are performed as usual, except money-order and savings-bank business,[50] which on that day is wholly suspended.”

At no provincial town in England or Ireland is there more than one delivery on Sunday or the sacramental fast-days; and any person is at liberty to prevent even this delivery, so far as relates to himself, as shown by the following regulations:—

“1st. Any person can have his letters, &c. retained in the post-office on Sunday, by addressing to the postmaster a written request, duly signed, to that effect; and such request will be held to include newspapers and all other postal matters, even such as may be marked ‘immediate,’ as no distinction is allowed.

“2d. No letters, &c. the non-delivery of which by the letter-carrier on Sunday has been directed can be obtained from the post-office window on that day.

“3d. Private box-holders have the option of applying for letters at the office while it is open for delivery on Sunday, or of abstaining from so doing, as they may think proper; but no person can be permitted to engage a private box for Sunday only.”

"And thus there were many dead."—Gower.

It would fill a volume were we to attempt any thing like a history of this department of the general post-office. One thing, however, would impress itself forcibly upon the minds of our readers, were we to furnish such a history, and that would be to establish the fact beyond the possibility of a doubt that "the fools are not all dead yet."

As far as the employees of the post-office are concerned, if not irreverent, this would be a "consummation devoutly to be wished."

Many of these letters, containing important information and large amounts of money, are so villanously directed that a modern mesmeriser would find himself at fault, or a spiritual medium confounded, if put in connection with the writers, in their endeavor to arrive at the mystery of such superscriptions as it has been our misfortune to encounter during our connection with the post-office. In another portion of this work we furnish the reader with numerous specimens of such directions. Would we could give specimens of their chirography also! In connection, however, with "dead-letters," we annex the following superscriptions to letters which contained money and drafts, and of course found their way to the "dead-letter office:"—

Miss Jeannie Wuterez,

Bile. 677 Auen

N.J. 34 S.A.

Is it likely that such a direction would carry a letter to Miss Jeannie? or the following to its direction?—

Miss S. Sorerie,

beckie if Hossee if H.
grltne et persep Yell
oone hundder 45

Neither town nor State, it will be perceived, is here given. We furnish another:—

To Genitz Dengkenson
Ap. Risen. Coolkill Kounty, near Genezene.

A letter was received in this city by John Smith (we will not give the real name), containing a draft for three thousand dollars. The letter simply stated, "Enclosed you will find a draft on T—— D——, Washington City, for three thousand dollars, being a part of the proceeds of property sold. The balance will be forwarded soon, &c." Now, this John Smith was anxiously awaiting the proceeds of a sale of property in England, he being one of the heirs expectant, and had been previously notified of the sale in question. As a matter of course, he imagined this to be the first instalment, coming as it did from the very town from which he expected it. The letter was simply directed to "John Smith, Catharine Street, Southwark, Philadelphia." The carrier on that route, aware of Smith's anxiety to hear about his property, delivered the letter as directed, at least as near as it was possible without the number of the house. Smith opened the letter in presence of the carrier, and exclaimed, "It is all right, old fellow!" The draft was presented, the money paid, and Smith went on his way rejoicing. By the time he had spent one-third of the money, it was discovered that he was not *the* John Smith. He returned the two thousand dollars, and the right party was willing to await John Smith the Second's remittance for his thousand dollars. The cause of this could alone be attributed to the carelessness of the remitting party in not giving the particulars or name of the person from whom the legacy came. The names of the expectants being exactly the same, and living on the same street, no other result could be expected.

The following report of Postmaster Dennison (1865) furnishes an epitomized view of the dead-letter department:—

"The number of dead-letters received, examined, and disposed of was 4,368,087,—an increase of 856,262 over the previous year.

"The number containing money and remailed to owners was 42,154, with enclosures amounting to $244,373.97. Of these, 35,268, containing $210,954.90, were delivered, leaving 6886 undelivered, with enclosures to the value of $33,419.07. The number containing sums less than one dollar was 16,709, amounting to $4647.23, of which 12,698, containing $3577.62, were delivered to the writers.

"The number of registered letters and packages was 3966.

"The number of letters containing checks, bills of exchange, deeds, and other papers of value was 15,304, with a nominal value of $3,329,888, of which 13,746, containing $3,246,149, were delivered, leaving unclaimed 1558, of the value of $83,739.

"The number containing photographs, jewelry, and miscellaneous articles was 69,902. Of these, 41,600 were delivered, and 28,302 remain for disposal, or, being worthless, have been destroyed. The number of valuable letters sent out was 107,979,—an increase of 38,792 over the previous year.

“There were returned to public offices, including franked letters, 28,677.

“The number containing stamps and articles of small value was 8289, and of unpaid and misdirected letters, 166,215.

“The number of ordinary dead-letters returned to the writers was 1,188,599, and the number not delivered was 297,304, being about 23 per cent. of the whole. Of those not delivered, less than 4 per cent. were refused by the writers. 310

“The number of foreign letters returned was 167,449, and the number received from foreign countries was 88,361.

“In the last report the attention of Congress was called to the expediency of restoring prepaid letters to the owners free of postage. The measure is again commended, with the additional suggestion that letters be forwarded at the request of the party addressed from one post-office to another without extra charge.

“The number of letters conveyed in the mails during 1865 is estimated at 467,591,600. Of these, 4,368,087 were returned to the dead-letter-office, including 566,097 army and navy letters, the non-delivery of which was not chargeable to the postal service, they having passed beyond its control into the custody of the military and naval authorities. Deducting 1,156,401 letters returned to writers or held as valuable, the total number lost or destroyed was 2,352,424, or one in every two hundred mailed for transmission and delivery. Fully three-fourths of the letters returned as dead fail to reach the parties addressed through faults of the writers, so that the actual losses from irregularities of service and casualties, ordinary and incidental to the war, did not exceed one in every eight hundred of the estimated number intrusted to the mails.

“The returns of dead-letters from cities are largely in excess of proportions based upon population. To them special efforts have been directed to secure the most efficient service, and it is believed improvements in operation, chiefly that of free delivery, will diminish the number of undelivered letters at offices in densely-populated districts.

“The number of applications for missing letters was 8664,—an increase of 3552 over the previous year. A misapprehension prevails in regarding the dead-letter-office as a depository for the safe keeping of undelivered letters, and not as the agent for their final disposal, to correct which the regulations are appended. 311

“The amount deposited in the treasury under act of 3d of March last were:—

On account of sales of waste paper	$9,420 67
Unclaimed dead-letter money	7,722 70
	$17,143 37

“Less than twenty-five per cent. of advertised letters are delivered. In some of the larger offices the proportion does not exceed fifteen per cent. The payment of two cents for each letter advertised involves a yearly expenditure of about $60,000 for letters returned as dead to the department. Measures have been adopted to reduce the expense, and the advertising is now secured at one-half the rate allowed by law. An obstacle to this economy is found in the law requiring the list of letters to be published in newspapers of largest circulation, which should be repealed, and the mode of advertising left to the discretion of the postmaster-general.”

We have stated that imperfect direction is in nine cases out of ten the cause of the miscarriage of letters. We would here suggest to the department the propriety of having competent clerks to superintend this office, so that the letters returned to the writers should not give the same cause of complaint. Many of the clerks so employed make sad havoc of this portion of postal literature, and exercise little or no judgment in their direction of letters to the parties to whom they are returned, or at least for whom they are intended. Name of street and number of house are alike omitted, and thus a letter comes from the dead-letter-office as difficult to decipher or make out as it was when sent thither. Haste in that direction seems to be the chief cause of this display of hieroglyphical knowledge. 312

In the subjoined extracts from a letter which appeared in the “Chicago Journal” (1864) are some practical hints to letter-writers:—

“I have just seen a letter of three pages, and not a word in it,—the work of a poor crazed soldier; not a character of any tongue in Babel, but only a little child’s meaningless imitation of writing; and in that letter were ninety dollars. It came here; the department discovered the writer, his regiment, and death. The money waits. Letters sometimes have most interesting histories. Thus, an officer here in Washington writing a letter to his wife, who is in New York, simply signed it with his given name, and carelessly subscribed it ‘Washington.’ The letter came hither; and now who and where was the writer? In the body of the letter was a chance allusion to some brigade: ‘upon this hint’ the department played Othello and ’spake.’ The brigade was inquired after and of, was found, and it answered: the writer was a major, and was dead. His wife had removed from her old desolate home, but she was discovered, and the money placed in her hand as if by the hand of the dead.

“*Every* letter, no matter what trifles are in it, should begin with the post-office, State, and poor terrestrial date, day, month, and year. It is all very fine to write from ‘Clover Lawn,’ or ‘Willow-Tree,’ or ‘Sweet Home,’ and date it ‘Sunday Eve,’ ‘Birthday,’ or ‘Moonshine;’ but suppose the

post-mark is dim, and the letter gets into this marble cemetery, what then? And then as to the superscription. By the present fashion we have first the name, life-size, and, if the sex will possibly allow it, Esquired; then the post-office; last and least, and tucked in a corner like a naughty boy, the State.

"Now, is not this reversing the order of things,—cribbing the greater and magnifying the less? People, I presume, will not be persuaded to change their mode of address, letters dead or alive; but how would it do to direct a letter thus?—

'MASSACHUSETTS, *Boston*,

'DR. O. W. HOLMES.'

"The little traveller would be sure to get into the right State at the first dash, make straight for the post-office, and finding the funny doctor would be an easy business."

The large number of letters written by persons in the military service of the United States, whose locality could not be ascertained, contributed very considerably to the increase of "dead-letters." But the great proportion of ordinary dead-letters which were returned was decidedly those of the careless order. Many were not even signed, and others so imperfectly directed that it was totally impossible to decipher even the name or residence of the writer. Time after time have postmasters called public attention to this state of things, and, strange as the fact may appear, this very timely (as it was supposed) suggestion had the contrary effect: *the number of ill-spelt and ill-directed letters increased!*

Among the "mail-matters" which had accumulated at the dead-letter-office in Washington since 1848, and which were sold to the highest bidder on the 6th of December, 1859, were the following articles:—coats, hats, socks, drawers, gloves, scarfs, suspenders, patent inhaling-tubes, gold pens, pencils, ladies' slippers *half worn*, all kinds of jewelry, undersleeves, fans, handkerchiefs, box of dissecting-instruments, pocket-Bibles, religious books, others not quite so acceptable to the moral portion of the community, shirts, bed-quilts, boots, spurs, gaffs for game-fowls, shawls, gaiters, tobacco, razors, &c. &c.

ADVERTISED LETTERS.

Advertised letters, uncalled for and sent to the dead-letter-office, cost the government annually over $60,000! This is a *dead* loss, as, from the very nature of the superscription and imperfect direction, such letters have no more chance of reaching their places of destination than a sinner has of going to heaven.

Devices employed for the public good, if predicated on the principles that maintain *all men dishonest* and are themselves deceptive, both in theory and practice, cannot be considered either honorable or complimentary to our public men. The system, more particularly in its connection with the postal department, originated, we are inclined to think, from some suspicious postmaster or his chief clerk, and thus was established a plan to test the employees, alike unjust and questionable in equity. It is said that these decoy-letters can never injure honest men. Are we to understand from this that men of questionable character and thieving proclivities are employed by the government? Is it customary to appoint rogues to office, and, after appointing them, lay traps for their detection? If this is the fact, then may we well exclaim, with Cowley,—

“Man is to man all kinds of beasts,—a fawning dog, a roaring lion, a thieving fox, a robbing wolf, a dissembling crocodile, a treacherous *decoy*, a rapacious vulture.”

Once establish the decoy system as a general one, extending it to all branches of the government, trade, and commerce, introduce it into stores and factories, and we shall soon have the flag of suspicion waving over that of the Stars and Stripes: we will constitute ourselves a nation of rogues, and become in the eyes of the world a huge “DECOY DUCK,” instead of the proud heretofore emblem of our country, the glorious Eagle!

We care very little about the opinion of Judge Betts, who on one occasion maintained the principle in a very *learned speech*, which when summed up amounted simply to this, that all men are rogues and require watching,—in fact, in morals as well as honesty they are *lame ducks*, and a *decoy* is necessary to watch their actions. The learned judge said,—

“I am persuaded that letters would rarely be intercepted in their transmission by post if every person concerned in mailing or carrying them could be impressed with the idea that each package enclosing valuables may be but a bait seeking to detect whoever may be dishonest enough to molest, and to become a swift witness for his conviction and punishment.”

If this is logic, it lacks one important principle in theory to establish its practical application, and that is, *common sense*. We consider the decoy system, at least as a national means to detect rogues, beneath the dignity and character of the nation. Reason and philosophy teach us that God never puts evil into our hearts, or stirs it up there by any positive influence. A man is tempted by his own lust, and enticed into sin by the influence, acts, and example of wicked men. “Lead us not into temptation,” is one of those wise and holy lessons which the Saviour of the world instructed his disciples to pray for, so as they might carry it out in their holy mission, strengthened by the Divine blessing resting upon it. Men, however, are not unfrequently placed in situations “as have a tendency,” says Scott, “to give our inward corruptions and the temptations of Satan and his agents peculiar advantage against us.”

 Is it, therefore, to be wondered at that a government like ours should assume a Satanic form, and employ agents for the express purpose of leading men into temptation? We consider the “decoy-letter” system exactly a case in point. It may not be uninteresting to some of our readers to give the origin of this ridiculous and equally *sinful* manner of testing men’s honesty.

As might be supposed, it never could have originated in an enlightened nation, and yet enlightened nations indorse its antiquity of folly. We trace it to China and as far back as the dimness of its history can carry us. It may surprise some to hear the term unenlightened applied to China, the land of classic works, and the richest and most important in all Asia. Philosophers have made the works called “Kings” the basis of their labors in morality and politics. History has always received the attention of the Chinese, and their annals form the most complete series extant in any language. Poetry, the drama, and romantic prose fictions are among the productions of the Chinese *literati,—*“*Literæ inhumaniores*” meaning learning rather of an inhuman or barbarous tendency.

The Chinese were in possession of three of the most important inventions or discoveries of modern times long before they were known to the nations of the world, besides which they were the inventors of two remarkable manufactures,—silk and porcelain. The art of printing was practised at least as early as the tenth century; but the use of movable types instead of blocks seems never to have occurred to this ingenious people. The knowledge of gunpowder among them dates at a very early period; but the application of its use to fire-arms they learned from the Europeans. Finally, the peculiar directive properties of the loadstone were applied to purposes of navigation by the Chinese several centuries before they were employed in Europe.

 We have given a sketch of the arts and sciences of China, but it would be totally impossible to give the reader any thing like an idea of the character and morals of its inhabitants. When China was first explored by European travellers it was believed to be a nation that had alone found out the true secret of government, where the virtues were developed by the operation of the laws: indeed, judging from what they had read, an almost perfect people was expected to greet their sight. Alas! how is history falsified! Few nations, it is now agreed, have so little honor or feeling, or so much duplicity, cunning, and mendacity. Their affected gravity is as far from wisdom as their ceremonies are from politeness.

The government of China is one of fear; and it has produced the usual effects,—duplicity and meanness. Suspicion is one of their leading features, and thus every man is not only suspected of being a rogue, but in reality every one is a rogue. Expert thieving is considered an art, yet if discovered is punished. The merchants cheat each other by rule: hence it is not strange that the

DECOY SYSTEM should have originated in that country.

Laws were enacted to punish those who laid the decoy, as well as those who fell into the trap. These punishments consisted of the bastinado, the pillory, banishment, hard labor, death. These two first are almost constantly in use: indeed, the merchant who is bastinadoed for leading his clerk into crime by the "decoy means," as well as the clerk himself, looks upon it as a "paternal correction," and thanks the judge for the care bestowed upon his morals. And yet although this system was practised some three thousand years ago, it is still followed and, of course, still punished.

Even in Jewish history we have instances of this system being pursued. See 1 Kings xiii.

It was also extensively practised in France during the rebellion. Mechanics and others who followed labor for maintenance were subjected to these "decoys," which presented themselves in various shapes. An old lady residing in this city told the author that her husband found a doubloon on his work-table, placed there by a nobleman in whose house he was fitting up tapestry. Indignant at the insult offered a Frenchman and a citizen, he nailed the coin to the table, from which not without great difficulty the tempter could remove it.

Is it, we ask, consistent with our form of government and the national character of the people that this relic of barbarism, like that of slavery, should be permitted to exist or be practised by its chief officers?

Detectives only should adopt the system to aid them in their search *for a criminal*, but an agent detective has no right to set a decoy to test the honesty of men upon whom, even before and after his appointment, no suspicion rested. We again pronounce it mean and contemptible.

XIII.

Special Agents.

“The special agents are the eyes and hands of the department to detect and arrest violators of the law, and to render the mails a safe and rapid means of communication. In their selection I have endeavored to secure the qualities of integrity, sagacity, and efficiency.”—*Report of Postmaster-General Montgomery Blair, June 30, 1861.*

In England “special agents” are considered among the most important adjuncts of the post-office department. In this country they are equally important, and hold the most responsible positions in the general arrangement and organization of its managerial system.

It was under the administration of Amos Kendall, whose devotion to the interests of the office forms one of the most interesting features of our postal history, that the special-agent system was introduced. As Mr. Blair observes, in the passage quoted above, “special agents are selected for their integrity, sagacity, and efficiency:” it required more than mere political influence for an applicant to obtain an appointment, simply from the fact that *party* studies its own interest first and leaves the consequence of its intrigues to time and opportunity. But the postal department, aware of the sort of material which generally makes up the political elements of party, very wisely made the selection of special agents a matter of more serious consideration. And yet we are fearful that even this department will, if it has not already, become one of the links which bind and connect it with the spirit of party and to the chain of its political power. As far, however, as we are able to judge of the character of those who now fill these offices, the *upas power* of *party* has not been exercised to any great extent in procuring their appointments. We do not implу that from the political ranks there cannot be found men in every respect calculated to fulfil any office in the postal department, but we do mean to say that in numerous cases men are selected not for their ability to perform the duties intrusted to them, but for a blustering, roystering reputation they had gained in their respective wards. Every failure in our state department, the want of energy, the lack of intelligence, the confusion attendant on improper amusements, can invariably be traced to these improper political appointments.

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Special agents, apart from those qualities alluded to by Mr. Blair, should be men of intelligence and character, and possess an intuitive knowledge of physiognomy, phrenology, philosophy, or the ancient Moshical, or, rather, the Mosaical, so as to be able at a glance to read men and become acquainted with their “inward dispositions and with the faculties of their souls,” and be enabled to say, with Mr. Evelyn, who studied the science, “that man is all dissimulation.” But we contend that there are men who, having made the subject of detection a study, not by examining the features or watching the actions of others, but by analytical observations, are alone capable of fulfilling these positions.

The system of ferreting out losses, or, rather, its process, is a science, and one that to succeed must be closely studied.

Science is knowledge, art, power, and skill in the use of such knowledge: if it be directed to one particular object, exercising caution in such connection, the result will inevitably be favorable.

The duties of a special agent are such that these qualifications are essential to success. And we may say that in the selection of men—men who now hold these positions—the postal department has not been governed by petty political influence, but on the principle involved in our popular maxim, “*The right man in the right place*.”

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The duties of a special agent are, in a measure, “secrets of the office,” and his movements are generally so quiet that few persons in and out of the office have the least idea what those duties are: hence the mystery in which all his operations seem involved. Perhaps it would not be proper, or, at least, so far as the interest of the department is concerned, for us to explain the exact position these special agents hold. They have a wide range of duties, which, however, it is not necessary to particularize and, as stated, explain, except so far as either of them may have a bearing upon the object of this work. All losses of valuable letters or depredations on the mails are submitted to them for investigation. The particular means to be used in discovering the exact locality of a theft from the mails or in ferreting out and arresting the perpetrators, are left entirely to their intelligence, vigilance, and ingenuity. It is natural that a special agent should become reserved, unobtrusive, quiet in all his actions, no hurry or bustle, ever cautious, so that he may be enabled to make discoveries without leading to suspicion and alarming the guilty. Indeed, such an effect on a man’s natural temperament would be the consequence of his peculiar business. His means, however, depend upon his observation: he first learns the amount of loss, the nature of the theft, the character of the money, and the line of postal communications between the sender and the expectant recipient. These are his ground-works, upon which he erects his superstructure, theoretical and practical, for the detection of the criminal.

Were we to give our readers some account of these discovered thefts, romance would lose half its charms of enchantment, truth being more powerful and impressive than fiction. To do this would be to betray the secrets of the office and to stimulate the rogues to form new plans of avoiding detection, as well as in their system of thieving.

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These agents, as we have observed, keep themselves aloof from the general business of the office, and not unfrequently mystify those with whom they occasionally come in contact. They are not the tempters of the clerks by *meaningly* employing the decoy-letter practice, but the silent workers of justice in pursuit of the guilty: hence the honest employees of the office can boldly say

with Macbeth,—

> “Thou canst not say I did it; never shake
> Thy gory locks at me.”

or with Hamlet,—

> “Let the galled jade wince,
> Our withers are unwrung.”

1. He should have a thorough knowledge of the laws and regulations of the department.

2. Apart from his special duties, he is to report and make known to the department any unnecessary expenditure on the part of those who have control of the mails, and at the same time report where there is any deficiency of agents, &c.

3. He is intrusted with keys to the several mail-locks in use, and is, by virtue of his commission, authorized to open and examine the mails whenever and wherever.

4. He is also empowered to enter and examine any post-office which, in his judgment, may lead to the success of his investigations.

5. He should, when travelling, attract as little attention as possible, and conceal his official character from observation as much as possible.

6. He must make himself acquainted with mail-routes, and their connection with the office of a special agent.

It is not possible for the department to instruct an agent in the particular means to be employed in discovering the exact locality of an ascertained robbery of the mail, or in ferreting out and arresting the perpetrators. These must be as various as the circumstances which surround each case, and he must exercise his own ingenuity and acuteness to effect his purpose.

We have, probably, furnished our readers with sufficient information upon this peculiar branch of the postal department. A writer speaking upon this subject says,—

“From the nature of their employment, special agents are constantly brought in contact with the most intelligent and prominent men in the community, who justly expect to find the post-office department represented by men of gentlemanly bearing, fair education, correct deportment, and sound discretion. The absence of any of these qualities, especially of all of them, would lower the standing of the department with those whose good opinion is most valuable, and would naturally cause speculations on the reasons why persons so deficient in the qualities necessary to make them acceptable to people of discernment should have been appointed to such a responsible post.”

Since the introduction of the free-delivery letter system the position of a carrier has become one of considerable importance, from the fact of his duties being not only doubled, but the amount of responsibility considerably increased. At first there was considerable opposition in some places to having carriers at all; and even in large cities postmasters opposed it, as a general thing. Mr. C. A. Walborn, postmaster of Philadelphia, was among the first to favor the abolishing the one-cent system, and the making four trips a day, instead of two, as heretofore. It is true, this added materially to the labor of a carrier, but by lessening the routes it was soon found as practicable as it was beneficial to the community. Perhaps no city in the Union can boast of a better-organized system of the carriers' department than that of Philadelphia. Gradually, as merchants became aware of the facilities it afforded them, and the energetic movements and attention shown by the carriers to their interest, and of letters being delivered free of charge, they hailed the system as an important era in the postal department. In all large cities and populous towns the system became general, and four deliveries of a letter a day added materially to the confidence it had inspired.

In view of the importance attached to this department, Postmaster-General Montgomery Blair appointed Joseph W. Briggs, Esq., of Cleveland, Ohio, "special agent" to superintend the operations of the letter-carriers' department throughout the United States. Mr. Briggs in every respect was qualified for the position. His acquaintance with postal matters, and the interest he took in the general delivery of letters, well qualified him to undertake the important duty. We met Mr. Briggs in the Philadelphia post-office, September, 1865, while on his postal tour; and it afforded us an opportunity of exchanging opinions upon the subject of the carriers' system, in which he expressed himself in terms of one who had studied it with an eye to the interest both of the carriers and that of the department.

Apart from his special duties in large cities, he was authorized by the department to establish the system in all places requiring it: hence in a short time the having letters brought to our very doors, even in the rural districts, will become general.

 Mr. Briggs goes into the philosophy of the subject: he calculates first the amount of labor a carrier has to perform in the office; secondly, the amount of physical labor required in the performance of his duty as a carrier of letters. Thus the mental and physical are properly inquired into, and their respective duties classified. The result of the latter, as calculated by Mr. Briggs, is as follows:—One hundred and twenty-eight carriers of the Philadelphia office travel daily 2652 miles,—being an average of over twenty-two miles per day each man. *This is no sinecure!*

Apart from this statement, the author of this work called the attention of the agent to an additional item in this calculation; and that was the travelling up several pair of stairs, passing through long corridors and galleries of large public and other buildings, to deliver letters to the several occupants, would make up an additional mile or two to the above statistic of figures. Perhaps one good result will arise from the report which Mr. Briggs has made to the department; and that will be to increase the number of carriers, and add some twenty-five per cent. to their salaries.

In the months of April and May, 1861, a large number of registered letters from points in the State of New York, passing through the New York and Philadelphia offices to Egg Harbor City and other places in that section of New Jersey, failed to reach their destination. Before Mr. C. A. Walborn took charge of the office at Philadelphia, the attention of special agent Mr. S. B. Row had been drawn to these losses by the late lamented Mr. James Holbrook, who was the oldest special agent in the employ of the post-office department. In June, Mr. Row went to New York City, and had a consultation with Mr. Holbrook; and, although they differed in opinion as to the precise locality where the trouble probably existed, it was determined to put through some *decoy-letters*. One of these letters "turned up missing," but, for reasons not necessary to repeat here, nothing was said about it then, but Mr. Row was perfectly satisfied that the abstraction of letters took place in the Philadelphia post-office; and, after an interview with one of the clerks whom he had taken into his confidence, suspicions were directed to Franklin M. Reed. Reed was an old post-office clerk, who, with an intermission of perhaps twelve months, had been in the office for twenty odd years. Efforts were frequently made to "trap" Reed, but none of them succeeded, until, on the evening of the 8th of August, a "decoy" was jointly prepared by Mr. Row and Mr. William M. Ireland, the present chief clerk (1865) of the Philadelphia post-office.

This decoy had all the appearance of a regular registered letter from New York, and was addressed to an imaginary Mrs. Green, at Atlantic City, from her devoted husband, who enclosed her two dollars to relieve her present wants, and promising to visit her at the end of the week. This letter was, at a favorable moment, slipped into the New York package, which Reed was then about "casing up." Next morning Mr. Ireland examined the Atlantic City mail, and found that the letter for the *imaginary* Mrs. Green was missing. At 7 A.M. Mr. Reed quit work. A short time previous, Mr. Row had seen Mr. Ireland, who was acting under the instructions of the former, and, on learning the condition of affairs, it was determined to wait for Mr. Reed at the corner of Third and Carter's Streets, when he should make his appearance there on leaving the office. Soon Reed came out, when he was accosted by the special agent, who informed him that he required about five minutes of his time in the postmaster's private room. On his way there, Reed drew out his watch several times; but he was too closely watched to admit of his dropping any thing on his way back. On entering the room, Mr. Row told him that a certain letter was missing, and that, as it had last been in his hands, it became his painful duty to search him. Reed quietly submitted; and in his watch-fob was found the money which had been enclosed in the Green letter.

Reed was taken before United States Commissioner Hazlitt, and, after a hearing, was committed to prison in default of $3000 bail. On the 20th of August the United States District Court convened, and the grand jury found a true bill on the indictment. On the 27th Reed was tried, and the jury rendered a verdict of "guilty." Reed was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania.

Some time in the year 1860, a man by the name of Pardon Barrett made his appearance at Jackson Corners, Susquehanna county, Pennsylvania. He was a shoemaker by trade, and opened a shop for business. He had no family, kept bachelor's hall, and associated very little with men, simply confining himself to business relations with them. He, however, seemed to take pleasure in the company of boys, and, by insinuating himself into their good graces, soon succeeded in making his domicile a sort of rendezvous, or place of meeting, for a select few, upon whom he seemed to have some special design. In the winter of 1862-63, Barrett's shop became a sort of *pleasure-place* for these youngsters,—pleasure to eat oyster-suppers, play cards and dice, until he obtained an influence over them that their parents could never have obtained either for good or evil.

Were we writing an essay on juvenile depravity, one of the strongest arguments used would be that of parents losing sight of the vacant hours of their children. Associations formed at these times have not unfrequently laid the foundation of their ruin. This will be illustrated as we proceed. 328

Among the lads who visited Barrett was Henry W. Fletcher, a bright, intelligent boy of thirteen years: he was the son of the village postmaster. Barrett seemed to have a more than ordinary fondness for this boy,—associated and talked with him wherever and whenever he met him. It was for the purpose of cementing this friendship still closer, and strengthening the influence he was gradually obtaining over him, that the oyster-suppers and card-playing were inaugurated. No one would have taken such pains with young Fletcher, mastering his timidity, establishing a friendship, and ministering to his youthful pleasures, if he had not something in view,—some purpose, some object. Those who have read Oliver Twist cannot have forgotten the character of "Old Fagin," and how he gathered around him a number of boys and taught them the art and mystery of stealing. Barrett, no doubt, had read Oliver Twist, and, as we shall see, imitated his plan and followed his example in preparing boys for the gallows.

On the occasion of one of the oyster-parties, Barrett suggested to young Fletcher that, as our soldiers were sending money home, he might, if he were sharp, get some of it. Fletcher started: he could not at first comprehend how, *honestly*, he could hold the soldiers' money. "Easy enough," remarked Barrett; "by taking the letters out of the post-office." An associate of Barrett's, and perhaps the only one he had, was present. For reasons not necessary to give here, we conceal his name. This man urged the boy also to commit this serious offence of robbing the post-office, but stated, as if he possessed the power, "that he would see him out of the scrape if he was detected." The imagination of the boy was excited by the programme laid out by these villains,—how they would take him with them to Buffalo, then across the lake into Canada, "where," as Barrett remarked, "nobody could find them." Then they would proceed to the Western States, seek a wild, retired place in the forest, build a hut, and pass their time in hunting, fishing, and other wild-wood sports. To a lad naturally sprightly, romantic, and possessing more than ordinary intelligence, such a prospect was quite fascinating. All arch-villains, whenever they want tools to work with, invariably excite the imagination, which oversteps the bounds of discretion, and carries the victim on to his ruin. When Aaron Burr planned his great scheme of revolutionizing the South, and, no doubt, with an eye to the subjugation of the North, he selected out a wild enthusiast, one Herman Blennerhassett, for a sort of leader. Blennerhassett was an adventurer, romantic and chivalric: he lived on an island of the Ohio River, still retaining his name. Here he built a splendid mansion, and possessing, it is said, great wealth, he expended vast sums of money in decorating both the mansion and the island. The ruins of the former are still to be seen.[51] Like the man Barrett, Aaron Burr and Blennerhassett enticed to their island a number of young men, whose imaginations became excited by the descriptive scenes given them by these arch-traitors of Mexico and the South,—gardens of beauty and Golconda's of wealth. High commissions were promised them; but the bubble burst, their plans were detected, the parties arrested and tried for high treason. 329

Barrett pictured to young Fletcher the wild sports of the far West, and how they would enjoy themselves when once settled in some vast wilderness. Three months, however, elapsed before young Fletcher consented, and it was in the early part of May, while his father, the postmaster, was absent at New York, that he commenced operations. The first step he made in his career of crime yielded twenty dollars. When this was shown to Barrett, he remarked, with a friendly smile, "Good! you have made a fine beginning; keep it going, and the wild-wood sports will soon be our pastime." 330

Fletcher, now that his hand was in, did keep it going, and in three weeks the fund was increased to two hundred and twenty-five dollars. Barrett had given him certain instructions, which he strictly followed: these were, not to take more than one package of letters at a time, and then only such as were passing through the office; nor was he to take any belonging to the Jackson office; also, he was to take no letters unless they had Washington City post-mark on them. The understanding between them was that Fletcher was to retain all the money until their final departure; then it was to be divided among them, or a treasurer appointed until they reached their wild-wood destination. Fletcher kept the money hid away, as Barrett told him it was dangerous to carry it about him. On several occasions, however, he tried to get money out of Fletcher, but the latter invariably refused to advance a cent, holding the former to the bond, which was not to use any of the money until their general meeting previous to their departure West. It seems, however, that about this time the losses were being looked to by the post-office department, and, for reasons which are foreign to the matter in hand, young Fletcher exhibited a

more liberal spirit to a boy named Brownson than he did to Barrett, by furnishing him with forty dollars to enable him to run away from home. It was not a very difficult matter on the part of the department to trace the robbery as soon as the money from letters was missing. Once on the *railroad* of suspicion, the detective soon reached the *depot*,—the scene of theft.

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The boy Fletcher was at first supposed to be the only person concerned in the affair; but the investigation developed the facts above stated, and Barrett, who had suddenly left for New York, was arrested at Genesee on the 9th of June. On the 16th he was taken to Williamsport, Pennsylvania, where the United States District Court was held; on the 17th he was put on trial; on the 18th found guilty; and on the 20th he was lodged in the Western Penitentiary at Alleghany City, Pennsylvania, the court having sentenced him to three years' imprisonment. Barrett's age was fifty-six, which influenced the court in shortening the term of imprisonment.

The principal witness against Barrett was young Fletcher. A large number of letters was found at a place designated by him. One hundred and sixty dollars and other mailable matter were found where he said they were concealed. The most important item of testimony, however, was that which related to a silver half-dollar, which Fletcher alleged he had taken out of a letter, and which he had sold to Barrett for sixty cents in currency. It was ascertained that a drafted man, on leaving for the army, had taken inadvertently with him a half-dollar belonging to his little son. At the time the tampering was going on with letters at the post-office, he had enclosed a half-dollar in a letter to his wife to replace the one he had taken away with him. This letter had to pass through the Jackson office, but it never reached its destination. Doubtless this was the one out of which Fletcher got the half-dollar sold to Barrett. It is a curious fact in the history of criminals that their detection, in nine cases out of ten, is caused by some very trifling incident connected with the operations. So it was in this case.

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The 126th section of the act of Congress of March 3, 1825, makes the opening, embezzling, or destroying of mail-letters or packages containing articles of value an offence punishable with imprisonment not less than two, nor more than ten, years. The 129th section of the same act provides "That every person who, from and after the passage of this act, shall procure and advise, or assist, in the doing or perpetration of any of the acts or crimes by this act forbidden, shall be subject to the same penalties and punishments as the persons are subject to who shall actually do or perpetrate any of the said acts or crimes, according to the provisions of this act." It was under this clause Barrett was convicted, and it is, perhaps, the only case of the kind on record.

This interesting case—and were all the details given it would prove highly so—came under the official management of S. B. Row, Esq., special agent of the post-office department for the State of Pennsylvania. The moment the first intimation was received of the mails being tampered with, he fixed upon his starting-point, and, with a sure eye to the end, he pursued his course until he arrived at Jackson, and by a little stratagem the whole plot was discovered. He traced it from the first step young Fletcher made into crime, after receiving his lesson from Barrett, up to the loss of the silver half-dollar. The case, if fairly written out, with all the details, would make an invaluable paper for some Sunday-school tract-publishing institution. It is, indeed, a lesson for youth.

Crime in high places has of late become fashionable; law itself has become aristocratic, and maintains its character for partiality by shielding aristocratical rascals beneath its wings. Justice is no longer blind,—at least, one of its eyes is open,—and the distinguishing marks on a greenback, denoting its value, are readily discerned by the goddess. The poor wretch who steals a loaf of bread to save his children from starvation invariably gets on the blind side of Justice, and, of course, the sense of hearing, and not of seeing, is exercised in his case. Bacon, in his Essay of Judicature, says, “The place of justice is an hallowed place, and, therefore, not only the bench, but the foot-pace, and precincts, and purprise thereof, ought to be preserved without scandal and corruption.” The fate of the bread-snatcher is an evidence that the precincts of justice and the foot-pace to its throne must be paved with gold, or his chance, or that of any other poor man, from escape is totally impossible. The man who steals a loaf of bread commits a crime: he should be punished: so should the man who swindles the government, robs the widow, commits forgery, nay, even murder, but whose wealth paves the way for his acquittal. (*See records of our courts.*)

In the following case it will be observed that the postal department, having some knowledge of the manner business is conducted in our courts, took the matter into its own hand, the chief clerk acting as *detective, judge, and jury*, and who settled the case in a manner, without loss of time or money, highly satisfactory to all, save the guilty party, who, shortly after the scene we are about to describe, was compelled to quit the city and left for parts unknown.

The gentleman(?) who is the hero of the narrative—for he was recognized as a gentleman in society—had been in the frequent receipt, by mail, of remittances in large and small sums. Not long since he made his appearance at the desk of the chief clerk in the post-office, and alleged that he had just taken from his box a letter from which a draft on a city bank for about one hundred dollars had been fraudulently abstracted, and, as the point from which the letter had been mailed was but a short distance from Philadelphia, he was confident that the draft had been abstracted by some one in the post-office here. This imputation on the character of the office nettled the chief clerk, and that functionary determined to sift the matter to the bottom and ferret out the criminal, if such there was. He made the necessary inquiries as to the day the letter was due here, closely cross-examined the clerks, and, after a diligent investigation, proceeded to the bank on which the draft was drawn. He found that *it had been paid*, and bore the indorsement, or seeming indorsement, of the loser. He borrowed the draft and brought it to the office. On comparing the apparently-forged signature of the loser on the back of the document with the handwriting of a certain night-clerk, a remarkable resemblance was discovered. Several experts were called in, and declared that the handwriting of the clerk and the chirography of the “forger” were one and the same. A clerk in the bank was privately shown the suspected clerk, and he identified him as the man *to whom the money had been paid*! The network seemed to be closing around the poor night-clerk, and it was determined that he should be arrested. The chief clerk, jubilant at his discovery, sent for the merchant who said he had lost the draft. While the chief clerk and the merchant were closeted in the postmaster’s private office, and the former was detailing his success to the merchant, he observed, as he proceeded with the recital, that the merchant began to wear a livid hue; his countenance assumed a pallid aspect, in which a guilty conscience seemed to come to the surface to horrify and disgust the beholder. Trembling lips, too, were seen, and, as the truth in all its damning meanness flashed across the mind of the chief clerk, he at once boldly charged the merchant with having written his own signature *in a feigned hand*, so as to secure the spoils of his own guilt and ruin an innocent man. The guilty, miserable creature, overwhelmed with confusion, confessed his guilt and implored mercy. He acknowledged his criminality in the whole transaction,—a transaction which was about to stain forever the reputation of an honest, hard-working man, whose only capital was his skill as a scrivener and his integrity in his clerical position. The chief clerk, determined that the reputation of the night-clerk should be vindicated, threatened to have the guilty merchant exposed and punished unless he proceeded to a magistrate at once and made an affidavit confessing the crime in all its details. The merchant humiliated himself by signing and swearing to the odious confession, and the matter there rested.

LETTERS ADDRESSED TO CITIES ONLY.

Many persons are in the habit of addressing letters and circulars for firms and individuals, simply, “Philadelphia,” “New York,” &c. This practice not unfrequently occasions delay in such letters reaching their rightful owners. In all cases, however well the firm may be known, it is most essential, to insure their correct delivery, that the street or locality in which they reside, and the number of the house, should form a portion of the address. Many of these circulars are prepared with great care and considerable expense: yet they are so carelessly directed that not more than one-half of them ever reach their place of destination, simply because that place is not designated.

There is another matter to which we would call the attention of merchants and others, and that is, to be very careful in putting postal currency on their letters, and not revenue-stamps.

This carelessness on the part of those forwarding letters has led to much loss and inconvenience, and if persisted in they cannot blame the department, which has from time to time called public attention to the fact. Some put on their letters revenue-stamps, others no stamp at all; and in many instances letters of importance have thus lain in the office until the parties have received through the dead-letter office information of their whereabouts.

“Letters attempted to be sent with stamps previously used or stamps cut from stamped envelopes.

“Unpaid letters for foreign countries, on which prepayment is required by the regulations.

“Letters not addressed, or so badly addressed that their destination cannot be known.

“Letters misdirected to places where there are no post-offices.”

It will be here seen that the government is not responsible for the ignorance and stupidity of all epistolarians.

In some instances, however, postmasters are to blame in not paying more attention to the mode of stamping letters.

The examination of dead-letters discloses much carelessness on the part of postmasters in post-marking letters, and also in cancelling postage-stamps.

The latter clause of the regulations of 1859, section 397, is repealed, and the use of the office-rating or post-marking stamp as a cancelling instrument is positively prohibited, inasmuch as the post-mark, when impressed on the postage-stamp, is usually indistinct, and the cancellation effected thereby is imperfect. The postage-stamp must, therefore, be effectually cancelled with a separate instrument.

Special attention is directed to the duty imposed upon postmasters by Regulation 396, which is as follows:—

“If the cancelling has been omitted on the mailing of the letter, packet, or parcel, or if the cancellation be incomplete, the postmaster at the office of delivery will cancel the stamp in the manner directed, and forthwith report the delinquent postmaster to the postmaster-general, as the law requires.”

We have under other heads alluded to the carelessness of persons in addressing their letters. To make them legible and complete, give the name of the post-town, and if there be more than one town of that name, or if the post-town is not well known, be careful in giving the name of the county, which in all cases is as essential as that of the State. The number of the house, too, if in a street, is a great assistance. It must not be supposed that because a letter will eventually reach its destination without a number, the omission is not a cause of hesitation and delay in the process of sorting for delivery; and when such small delays occur again and again, they tend greatly to retard the general distribution. In the case of letters for places abroad, the name of the *country*, as well as the town or city, should be given in full. Attention to this latter precaution will often assist in deciphering the name of the town or city, and will prevent the letter from being mis-sent when there are towns of the same name in different countries.

The following is an expressive lesson:—

A gentleman posted a letter containing drafts, checks, &c., to a well-known New York house. Its failure to arrive at the proper destination, of course, created great anxiety, and all the ordinary and some extraordinary means were employed to head off any attempt by the “mail-robber” to negotiate the “stolen” remittances. Journeys were made to and fro between the mailing point and the Empire City, the newspapers were liberally patronized with notices of “stolen from the mail,” circulars descriptive of the lost enclosure abounded,—all at an aggregate expense, according to confession, of over one hundred dollars.

During this short season of precaution and excitement, the letter in question had been making the official acquaintance of the worthy postmaster of New Haven, Connecticut, and that of his clerks, then, under the rule, skipping off to shake hands with our friends of the dead-letter office, and from thence finding its way back to the writer, who says he “never before did such a stupid thing as to write New Haven, Ct., instead of New York, N.Y.”

It is only necessary to give this section of the postal law to show its inconsistency and the necessity of its repeal (Section 131, Printed Regulations, 1859):—

"*Bonâ fide* subscribers to weekly newspapers can receive the same free of postage, if they reside in the county in which the paper is printed and published, even if the office to which the paper is sent is without the county, provided it is the office at which they regularly receive their mail-matter."

In justice, however, to many publishers, who look upon the law as too *liberal*, they disdain taking advantage of it.[52]

POSTAGE ON TRANSIENT PRINTED MATTER.

Books not over 4 ounces in weight, to one address	4 cts.
″ over 4 ounces and not over 8 ounces	8 ″
″ over 8 ounces and not over 12 ounces	12 ″
″ over 12 ounces and not over 16 ounces	16 ″
Circulars not exceeding three in number, to one address	2 ″
″ over three and not over six	4 ″
″ over six and not over nine	6 ″
″ over nine and not exceeding twelve	8 ″

Persons anxious to possess a general knowledge of the post-office laws, rules, and regulations are referred to "Appleton's United States Postal Guide," published quarterly, by the authority of the postmaster-general, New York. It contains the chief regulations of the post-office, and a complete list of post-offices throughout the United States, &c. The following accompanies each number:—

"WASHINGTON, D.C., ——, 1865.

"This volume has been prepared with my sanction, and is an authorized medium of information between the post-office department and the public."

"POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

"Gazettes sent gratis down and franked,
For which thy patron's weekly thanked."

The question of the right to send and receive letters and packets through the mail free of postage is not denied, for it is so expressly stated in the "Laws and Regulations of the Post-Office Department," chap. xviii. sect. 228. It is viewed in the light of "personal privileges," or as an official trust for the maintenance of official correspondence. In both its forms the right varies in respect to different classes of officers and individuals, in the kind as well as weight of matters which may be so sent or received. An interchange between publishers of pamphlets, periodicals, magazines, and newspapers of their respective publications is allowed for the purpose of promoting the dissemination of this kind of information, of which they are the vehicles. This is the head and front of the franking privilege, nothing more, but should be considerably less. 340

"There are many other channels of knowledge, and of very important knowledge, too, which are not privileged. Newspapers are daily or weekly letters, written to a number of persons at once. They may be good or bad, sound or vicious, as any other letters; and the intensity of their action is increased by the multiplying process of printing. This action may be good or bad: if, therefore, the community is believed to stand in want of newspapers, as we certainly believe it does in a very great variety of ways, it is already going very far to grant them the privilege of a greatly-reduced rate of postage [1841]."[53]

Since the above was written, these rates have been reduced to almost a nominal value. Indeed, we cannot see any reasonable objection to be made for such exchange, both as regards the franking privilege and the postage on exchange-newspapers. Patriotism on the part of those claiming the right of the first would induce them to forego it, while those who enjoy the latter should remember that, as they derive profit from their labor, the government should not be the sufferer in consequence. Upon this subject we consider the following article from the very able report of Postmaster Joseph Holt in 1859 as containing the best and the most forcible arguments that can be used to correct what we consider more in the light of an error than that of an abuse. 341 The press of our country is too enlightened to persist in claiming a privilege that militates against the financial interest of the government; and we feel assured that, if the subject is properly brought before them, they will readily conform to any law that may be established to correct the error or do away with an abuse.

(From the Report of the Postmaster-General.)

"POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT, 1859.

"The act of 1825 authorized 'every printer of newspapers to send one paper to each and every other printer of newspapers within the United States free of postage,' and such is the existing law. However slight the support which this statute may seem to give to publishers, it imposes in the aggregate a heavy and unjust burden on the department. The advantage thus conferred inures to the benefit alike of the publisher who sends and of him who receives the paper in exchange. I have in vain sought for any satisfactory explanation of the policy indicated by this provision. It seems far more exceptionable than the franking privilege, since the latter professes to be exercised on behalf of the public, whereas the exemption secured by the former is enjoyed wholly in advancement of a private and personal interest. The newspapers received in exchange by the journalist are, in the parlance of commerce, his stock in trade. From their columns he gathers materials for his own, and thus makes the same business use of them that the merchant does of his goods, or the mechanic of the raw material which he proposes to manufacture into fabrics. But as the government transports nothing free of charge to the farmer, the merchant, or the mechanic, to enable them to prosecute successfully and economically their respective pursuits, why shall it do so for the journalist? 342 If the latter can rightfully claim that his newspapers shall be thus delivered to him at the public expense, why may he not also claim that his stationery and his type, and indeed every thing which enters into the preparation of the sheets he issues as his means of living, be delivered to him on the same terms? It has been urged, I am aware, that postage on newspaper exchanges would be a tax on the dissemination of knowledge; but so is the postage which the farmer, merchant, and mechanic pay on the newspapers for which they subscribe, a tax on the dissemination of knowledge, and yet it is paid by them uncomplainingly. If it be insisted that the publishers of newspapers, as a class, are in such a condition as to entitle them to demand the aid of the public funds, it may be safely answered that such an assumption is wholly unwarranted. Journalism in the United States rests upon the broadest and deepest foundations, and is running a career far more brilliant and prosperous than in any other nation of the world. The exceedingly reduced rates at which its issues pass through the mails secure to it advantages enjoyed under no other government. Under the fostering care of the free spirit of the age, it has now become an institution in itself in this country, and controls the tides of the restless ocean of public opinion with almost resistless sway. It is the *avant-courier* of the genius of our institutions, and is everywhere the advocate of progress and of the highest and noblest forms of human freedom. Is it not, therefore, to the last degree unseemly, if not worse, that in its own enterprises, and in furtherance of its own pecuniary interests, it should claim permission to violate habitually a great principle of which it is the constant advocate, and which underlies our whole political system,—the principle of equal rights to all and special privileges to none? If, however, from the grandeur and beneficence of its mission, the press is to be excepted from the operation of this wholesome democratic doctrine, and is to be subsidized to the extent of its 343 postages by the government, then undeniably such subsidy should be contributed from the

common treasury, instead of being imposed, as at present, on the oppressed revenues of the post-office department, which, under all circumstances, should be maintained inviolate.

"Into the same category, but for more cogent reasons, must fall that class of weekly newspapers which the statute of 1852 requires shall be delivered free of postage to all subscribers residing within the limits of the county in which they are published. This requisition is less sound on the score of principle than even the discrimination in favor of the press. There may be something in the characteristics of the latter—ennobled as it is as the organ of the intellect and heart of millions of freemen—which might induce many to grant to it special and distinguishing immunities; but why a citizen who chances to reside on one side of a county line shall be exempted from a postage on his newspaper, which his neighbor on the other side of that line is obliged to pay on the same paper, surpasses my comprehension."

To Nathaniel K. Latting this letter I write,
With the hope that the contents his mind may delight.
If it don’t make him good, it can’t do him evil,
For it comes from a friend, and not from the d—l.
In Mount Vernon village, New York State,
He works for his daddy, both early and late.

To Miss J. E. Peck this letter is sent,
To be read by herself it only is meant.
In “Sandy Hook,” Conn., she leads a gay life,
Where Yankees make nutmegs and hams with a knife.

P. M., this letter cannot wait,
To Burlington County send it straight.
To Jos. Wright this message give,
Who in Medford, New Jersey, himself doth live;
At least he did six months ago,
And still does if the *draft* or the *small-pox* has not laid him low.
If he is alive he will read this letter,
And if he is dead so much the better.

Over the plain and over the level,
Carry this letter like the Devil;
Let it not stop for flood or fire,
Until it reaches Bill Crawl, Esquire.

To Lexington, Sanilac Co.,
Oh, swiftly, swiftly let me go,
To cheer the heart, or cloud the brow,
Of Mrs. Anna M. Monro.
Mich.

Mr. James Smith, Fort Wayne,
Antwerp, Ohio, in care of William
Herring, Cayuaga Co., N.Y.

To Mrs. Jane Gleason send this away;
Please send it off without delay
To Ripleyville P. O., if it goes aright;
She will surely get it on Thursday night,
In Huron county, Ohio State:
There she lives, or did of late.
Send it in haste, it will give her joy,
For she wants to hear from her soldier boy.

To John Gillespiee
Camp. Cade.
Dell. A Ware. Pa.

Meaning Camp Cadwalader.

To Peter Smith
1209 Cartridge St.
3. Este. Av.
near 3 Esher.

Mr. Isaac Bakerson
Cam. Cal. Walter
Ner. Filladelphy
R. 2 1 N. E.

To Phil. Monitze
n care of mister John dick
filladelfy. Kensession. America.

To My Mother—
America

Connected with this letter is the following incident: it fortunately came to Philadelphia, and, of course, from its superscription was placed apart to find its way to the dead-letter-office. One day a poor Irishwoman came to the window and asked for a letter from her son, giving no name. The simplicity of the question struck the clerk, and the letter addressed "To My Mother" flashed upon his mind. He turned to the case and selected the letter.

"Where does your son reside? what part of Ireland?"

"Belfast, sir." Belfast was the post-mark.

"What is his name?"

"Patrick McLaughlan."

"Open that letter," handing her the one in question. She did so, and, casting her eyes on the signature, exclaimed, "From my son! from my boy!" Sure enough, there was the name,—Patrick McLaughlan.

The clerk gave her some instructions for future correspondence which probably proved of advantage to her.

Somebody sent a newspaper through the mails the other day directed as follows: "To Honest Father Abraham, God bless him, Washington, D. C."

The following is a literal copy of the superscription of a registered letter received from Ireland, written, strange as it may seem, in a "clerkly hand":

—

To this letter I pray attend
To A lady Late of Ireland
To the maiden's name ascribe the thing
To Late miss Eliza King
To get success in your routes
Take this to america or thereabouts.

The Army is the tightest place
I ever did get into,
I cannot pay the freight on this,
Although I really want to;
I've "nary red," but five months due—
Don't think it's "on the level"—
Postmaster, you may send this through,
Or chuck it to the d—l.

To Patrick Larkin who moved to his brothers at Adamsville in haste to the care of Bernard Larkin State of Penlyva.

To Albert Walker, an awful talker,
Who lives in Salina—you won't find a meaner
If you travel all day through the State of I-O-A.

My fair is paid in postel rate,
To Kingston Township, New York State,
To Frederick Johnston, from a friend in Troy,
'Tis how are you, my conscript boy?

To a Mr. Service this letter I write,
And I'll start across the plains to night;
For the over-land mail is now running through
Down the South Platte, and across the Big Blue,
The Sioux, and the Cheyennes, have failed in their plan
To stop the mail of Old Uncle Sam,
And over the plains, I now can go straight,
To the Old Quaker City, and the Keystone State.

Across the river quickly send me,
In doing so do not rend me,
Take me to Gussie Wurderman,
Carry me quick and do it well,
Or Corney Walborn will catch——*rats!*

To Sxl2 Thes. Johnes
Haile Alley towne. Des.
Unetede Stateese.
Pencil.
Deth, in hast.

We doubt if this letter ever reached its destination.

It is somewhere along the Jersey shore
Thirty miles belong long branch and more,
For if this should fail to set you right
Its about 28 miles above Barnegets light.
To Miss ——x.

To Jno. Tripler
Ridge avenue
Deap Pot.
Sleep Eaves
Phila

To John Jones, a laboring man
This letter must go if e'er so lucky
He shoes can make, and leather tan
In Lexington town, in old Kentucky.

If the Postmaster knows an alley
In the city, called—Vandally
No 10—this letter, may by chance
Reach the sight of Mary Hance.

To Patric Gonegan
Pisin road, South Work
Knavee yarde, or theire somware
filedelphirea

John Shmeet
Shermummerbauner Roth
began Wester
And Jamphen St.

A literal translation, after much study of the dead languages, the following was the result:—

John Smith
Germantown Road
Between Master & Thompson

Ns Duniel
lesunt Yost
nrpfflen pliladelpha
Pa in Ceuse ob
obed
Eas make

All Greek to the clerks.

Gasnot Hill
Hoss Spittall, for
Mrs. C. Gellengham.

For Dan, that was
In Smith’s Store.

No other direction.

In care of mister John Dick
filladelfy
King’s Sessions, mericai

The “New York Tribune” gives the following amusing addresses, in rhyme and otherwise, that have passed through the post-office in that city:—

To be forwarded to
Margaret Flynn
and from you Margaret
to your brother Jack
and Sister Honora
Sister Ellen and Michael
In care of Mr. Wm. H. Baldwin E. S. K, America.

Another:—

To John Barry, if living,
but if not, to his wife, or some of the children if living, and if not to some respectable neighbor.

Speed on little missive to Marble Head,
And find old Joe Sweet either living or dead,
If he’s living of course he’ll read this letter
But if he’s dead why all the better.
Mass.

Swift as the dawn your course pursue
Let nought your speed restrain
Until you meet Miss Mary Drew
In Newfield State of Maine.

Here is a lucid address, which speaks for itself:—

Thimothe O flanigan
State of Masekeivitts
or elswhare.

The geographical knowledge of the gentleman who penned the following was somewhat extensive:—

To Mr barthol owen
Kelly, O’s tate
Rhode Island
Connecticut.

The following reminds us of the innocent country-girl who said she had an uncle living between the Battery and Central Park:—

Bridget Ware
New York, 29
New York City
22 America.

Who can tell of the whereabouts of Miss Foster?

Miss Louise Foster 36th street *some wheres* Penny Post please deliver.

The following is encouraging to the postman:—

To Mike Donovan
or to his cousin Eliza Mac Farrelly.
Postman will find him by findin Betsy Brennen who was engaged to Mike before they left Ireland and may be married.

Mr. Ford must be a well-known individual in Maine, else he never received the following letter:— 350

Mr. Henry Ford
who lives in the same place in the
State of Maine.

An amusing postscript to a postmaster:—

P. S.—Please give this letter to the man what's *got a sow* in my barn, as he wants to get away.

In Byberry Township, near the mill
And in a house upon the hill,
Lives a young lady in the same
Miss ——x she calls her name
Below the House on Comly's lot
A son of Vulcan has a shop
Now Ross, I know, you'll oblige the fair
Just have the kindness to send it there.

To Leughellyn Weintz
Pass. yhunk Rode
Below Tom Pitchers bar Room
who selles most infurnell bad
whiskee—Southwerke,
Philadelphy.

The money-order system, which in England is so popular, has partly failed here. It went into operation on the 1st of November, 1864, under circumstances which promised a decided success. The amount to which the law limited the order-system was not less than one dollar, and not more than thirty dollars. This was to accommodate a certain class of people, and at the same time test the utility of the system for the purpose of hereafter creating a more extensive operation of the principle and also increasing the amount of money sent.

That it is an important step in postal progress its operation in Europe is sufficient proof; but here we started wrong. What should have been a plain, simple transaction between the parties—the paying money and receiving an order—has become perfectly mystified by the ambiguity of the language of the law, as well as the numerous technicalities thrown around it. A poor woman applies to the window for a postal order on New York for ten dollars: she expects the order made payable to herself or to the party to whom she sends it, which on presentation would be immediately paid. It will be observed, upon reading the “General Principles of the Money-Order System” and the “Instructions to Postmasters at Money-Order Offices,” that if this poor woman was requested to read the “laws and regulations” it would be to her “all Greek.” Were the amounts named thousands of dollars instead of pennies, those interested would be of a class whose education and business knowledge would enable them to comprehend it: as it is, we know several instances of poor persons resorting to the old custom of forwarding their money rather than undergo the ordeal of a clerk’s explanation of the law.

I. Money-order offices are divided into two classes. Offices of the first class are depositories, in which those of the second class deposit their surplus money-order funds.

II. Any office in either class may draw upon any other office in the list of money-order offices for a sum, upon one order, from *one dollar* to *thirty dollars*. But when a larger sum than the latter is required, additional orders to make it up must be obtained.

III. When money-orders exceeding one hundred and fifty dollars in aggregate amount are issued in one day, and to the same person, by one or more offices, upon a second-class office, the postmaster at the office so drawn upon will be permitted to delay the payment of such orders for five days. 352

IV. The money-orders shall be made out upon printed forms supplied by the post-office department, and no order will be valid or payable unless given upon one of such forms.

V. Any person applying for a money-order will be required to state the particulars upon a form of application which will be furnished to him for that purpose by the postmaster.

VI. If the purchaser of a money-order, from having made an error in stating the name of the office of payment, or for other reasons, desires to have the said money-order changed, the issuing postmaster will take back the first order and issue another in lieu thereof, for which an additional fee shall be charged and exacted as for a new transaction. The order so taken back must be cancelled by the postmaster and entered in his books and returns, in its proper numerical order, as "cancelled."

VII. Parties procuring money-orders should examine them carefully, to see that they are properly filled up and stamped. This caution will appear the more necessary when it is understood that any defect in this respect will throw difficulties in the way of payment.

VIII. When a money-order is presented for payment at the office upon which it is drawn, the postmaster or authorized clerk will use all proper means to assure himself that the applicant is the person named and intended in the advice; and upon payment of the order care must be taken to obtain the signature of the payee (or of the person authorized by him to receive payment) to the receipt on the face of the order.

IX. When, for any reason, the payee of a money-order does not desire, or is unable, to present the same in person, he is legally empowered, by his written indorsement thereon, to direct payment to be made to any other person; and it is the duty of the postmaster upon whom the order is drawn to pay the amount thereof to the person thus designated; provided the postmaster is satisfied that such indorsement is genuine, and that the second party shall give correct information as to the name and address of the person who originally obtained the order. MORE THAN ONE INDORSEMENT IS PROHIBITED BY LAW, AND WILL RENDER AN ORDER INVALID AND NOT PAYABLE. 353

X. Any money-order office may repay an order issued by itself if repayment is applied for on the day of such issue, but then only to the person who obtained it, except in special cases. The fee or charge shall not in any case be refunded. If, however, repayment of an order is desired later than one day after its issue, the postmaster must refer the application to the money-order office of the post-office department.

XI. The fees or charges for money-orders will be as follows:—

For an order of $1 or more, but not exceeding $10, 10 cents.

For an order of $10 or more, but not exceeding $20, 15 cents.

For an order of $20 or more, but not exceeding $30, 20 cents.

Fractions of cents must not be introduced into any order.

XII. When a money-order has been lost by either remitter or payee, a duplicate thereof will be issued to the party losing the original, provided he shall furnish a statement, under oath or affirmation, setting forth the loss or destruction thereof, and a certificate from the postmaster by whom it was payable, that the said order had not been paid, and would not thereafter be paid if presented. A second fee will be charged and exacted for the issue of duplicate orders. 354

"The Instructions to Postmasters at Money-Order Offices" take up too much space for our book: indeed, we omit even a synopsis of them, as we feel perfectly satisfied that our readers would have to study law before they could fully comprehend their mysteries. We call the attention, however, of the public to the following rules to be observed as a cautionary measure:—

"1. To take all means to prevent the loss of a money-order.

"2. Never to send the order in the same letter with the information required on payment thereof.

"3. To be careful, on taking out a money-order, to state correctly the Christian name, as well as the surname, of the person in whose favor it is to be drawn.

"4. To see that the name and address of the person taking out the money-order are correctly made known to the person in whose favor it is to be drawn.

"Neglect of these instructions will risk the loss of the money, besides leading to delay and trouble

in obtaining payment.

"Under no circumstances can payment of an order be demanded on the day of its issue."

If the money is not called for within ninety days after the date of the order, there will be difficulty in obtaining it. The regular form of the order must not be clipped or mutilated. When the payee of an order desires the same to be paid to any other person, he must fill up and sign a form of indorsement, and furnish such second party with the information required to obtain payment of his order, who upon receiving payment must sign his name upon the face of the order. More than one indorsement is prohibited by law, and will render the order invalid and not payable.

It is to be regretted that the system had not been laid down so as to come within the comprehension of all, and so simplified that the explanations from the clerks would not tend to involve it in a greater mystery. It reminds us strongly of a passage in Haddock's Chancery Practice, vol. 1, p. 125, intended as a definition of law:— 355

"When a person is bound *to do* a thing, and he *does* what may enable him *to do* the thing, he is supposed in equity *to do* it with the view of *doing* what he is bound *to do*."

The freedom of the press, as understood and secured by high constitutional authority, consists in its identification with every principle which is involved in our Declaration of Independence. It dare not aim its shafts at the existence of the government, the Constitution, and the Union. And yet has not the press—a portion of it, we mean—aimed to do so during this rebellion, and that, too, at a time while claiming that government's protection? A press devoted to the cause of traitors is as much a traitor to the government as are those who are arrayed in arms for its destruction. It ceases to be considered the palladium of liberty, and assumes at once the character of a rebel and a spy, the moment it strikes at the root of the tree whose fruit is freedom!

Our government, unfortunately, at the outbreak of the rebellion did not claim the power to suppress such treasonable publications, but actually left them free to publish what they pleased. The consequence *was*, and *is*, that that portion of the press is as hostile to the administration now as it was in the beginning, *silence giving them consent to commit crime*. Nor was this all: our very postal department assisted in disseminating their papers by allowing them to go and come with impunity. Thus the mails established by the United States Government were and, we are afraid, are still used for its own destruction. Is there any principle of law or of justice to sanction such leniency on our part?

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Judge Story, of the Supreme Court, on one occasion, commenting on that clause of the Constitution securing the freedom of the press, says,—

"That this amendment was intended to secure to every citizen an absolute right to speak or write or print whatsoever he might please, without any responsibility, public or private, therefor, is a supposition too wild to be indulged in by any rational man. This would be to allow to every citizen the right to destroy at his pleasure the reputation, the peace, the property, and even the personal safety of every other citizen. A man might, out of mere malice or revenge, accuse another of the most infamous crimes, might excite against him the indignation of all his fellow-citizens by the most atrocious calumnies, might disturb, nay, overturn all his domestic peace, and embitter his parental affections, might inflict the most distressing punishments upon the weak, the timid, and the innocent, might prejudice all a man's civil and political and private rights, and might stir up sedition, rebellion, and treason, even against the government itself, in the wantonness of his passions or the corruption of his heart. Civil society could not go on under such circumstances. Men would then be obliged to resort to private vengeance to make up the deficiency of the law; and assassinations and savage cruelties would be perpetrated with all the frequency belonging to barbarous and cruel communities. It is plain, then, that the language of this amendment imports no more than that every man has a right to speak, write, and print his opinions upon any subject whatever, without any prior restraint, so always that he does not injure any other person in his rights, person, property, or reputation, *and so always that he does not thereby disturb the public peace or attempt to subvert the government*."

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There are many curious things daily occurring in the post-office under this head. In "Chambers's Journal" we find the following:—

"A formal but most essential rule makes letters once posted the property of the postmaster-general until they are delivered as addressed, and they must not be given up to the *writers* on any pretence whatever. One or two requests of this kind related to us we are not likely soon to forget. On one occasion a commercial traveller called at an office and expressed a fear that he had enclosed two letters in wrong envelopes, the addresses of which he furnished. It appeared from the account which he reluctantly gave, after a refusal to grant his request, that his position and prospects depended upon his getting his letters and correcting the mistakes, inasmuch as they revealed plans which he had adopted to serve two mercantile houses in the same line of business, whose interests clashed at every point. Another case occurred in which a fast young gentleman confessed to carrying on a confidential correspondence with two young ladies at the same time, and that he had, or feared he had, crossed two letters which he had written at the same sitting. Writing of this, we are reminded of a case in which a country postmaster had a letter put into his hand through the office-window, together with the following message, delivered with great emphasis:—'Here's a letter; she wants it to go along as fast as it can, 'cause there's a feller wants to have her here, and she's courted by another feller that's not here, and she wants to know whether he's going to have her or not.'"

The Fatal Letter.—A tradesman's daughter, who had been for some time engaged to a prosperous young draper in a neighboring town, heard, from one whom she and her parents considered a creditable authority, that he was on the verge of bankruptcy. Not a day was to be lost in breaking the bond by which she and her small fortune were linked to penury. A letter, strong and conclusive in its language, was at once written and posted, when the same informant called upon the young lady's friends to contradict and explain his former statement, which had arisen out of some misunderstanding. They rushed at once to the post-office; and no words can describe the scene,—the reiterated appeals, the tears, the wringing of hands, the united entreaties of father, mother, and daughter, for the restoration of the fatal letter. But the rule admitted of no exception, and the young lady had to repent at leisure of her inordinate haste.

In this country we are not so strict, as any person posting a letter can have it restored to him by simply signing his name to the fact of its being by him written. We would, however, suggest to the department the propriety of establishing the English system; for we feel confident that the moment rogues turn their attention to the post-office for the purpose of plunder, taking advantage of this loose way of doing business will be the consequence. Another thing: it will make men more careful, and thus save the department an immense deal of trouble.

Although we have strict laws upon the subject of *trifling* with newspapers, our postmasters do not enforce them to the extent they should. The following is a provision of the English law which does not remain, as with us, a "dead letter:"—

"Newspapers are always to be considered of equal importance with letters; and postmasters are forbidden to open them for any other purpose than that required by law, and are also forbidden to lend them to any person." 359

(From the "English Postal.")

"By Weight.—If the weight be exceeded to the smallest extent, even though the balance be merely turned, the book or printed paper becomes liable to a higher postage. To provide, therefore, for errors in scales, &c., it is well to allow a little margin, or to pay the postage of the next greater weight. It should be remembered that a newspaper when wet weighs more than when dry. Forgetfulness on this point sometimes causes groundless complaints about charges for newspapers,—the complainant erroneously supposing, on weighing the newspaper on its arrival, and when it had had time to dry, that he had been overcharged. The foregoing observations apply also to books, &c. sent abroad.

"Information.—No information can be given respecting letters which pass through a post-office, except to the persons to whom they are addressed; and in no other way is official information of a private character allowed to be made public.

"Return Letters.—Postmasters are not allowed to return any letter to the writer, or sender, or to any one else, or to delay forwarding it to its destination according to the address, even though a request to such effect be written thereon; as every letter must be delivered to the person to whom it is directed (and to him alone) at the address it bears.

"Forbidden Articles.—The rule which forbids the transmission through the post of any article likely to injure the contents of the mail-bags or the person of any officer of the post-office is, of course, applicable to the pattern-post; and a packet containing any thing of the kind will be stopped and not sent to its destination.

"Articles such as the following have been occasionally posted as patterns, and have been detained as unfit for the post, viz.,—metal boxes, porcelain and china, fruit, vegetables, bunches of flowers, cuttings of plants, spurs, knives, scissors, needles, pins, pieces of machinery, watch-machinery, sharp-pointed instruments, samples of metals, samples of ore, samples in glass bottles, pieces of glass, acids of various kinds, curry-combs, copper and steel engraving-plates, and confectionery of various kinds." 360

In many of our large post-offices postmasters have baskets placed inside for the reception of letters. These are invariably too small, and it not unfrequently occurs that the aperture through which letters pass gets choked up, the basket being full to its mouth. Any person could from the outside take a handful of letters without any one being aware of it. Honest men, however, making the discovery, notify the clerks of the situation of the letters, but not until it is very natural to suppose some letters may have been stolen. This will account in some measure for the mysterious disappearance of letters which have caused many an innocent person to be suspected and the business operations of an office justly censured. These baskets, instead of being wide and shallow, are deep and narrow. If properly constructed and arranged, there would be no necessity for clerks shouting out, “Swamp on the baskets.” This is very much like locking the stable-door after the horse has been stolen.

We would suggest, therefore, that when dropping a letter, newspaper, &c. into a letter-box, always to see that the packet falls into the basket or box, and does not stick in its passage.

The following sensible suggestions are taken from “The British Postal Guide:” let us advise our readers to pay some little attention to them:—

“To see that every letter, newspaper, or other packet sent by post is securely folded and sealed, and that, when postage-stamps are remitted, they are enclosed in paper sufficiently thick to prevent them from being seen or felt through the cover. It should be remembered that every such packet has to be several times handled, and that even when in the mail-bag it is exposed to pressure and friction. Unless, therefore, the article be light and pliant, it should be enclosed in strong paper, linen, parchment, or some other material which will not readily tear or break. The observance of this precaution is especially necessary whenever any fragile articles of value are forwarded by post. These should always be enclosed in a wooden or tin box. Owing to neglect of these precautions many postal packets burst open, causing much trouble to the department and risk to the owners, it being sometimes impossible to determine to what packet a particular article belongs.

“To fasten the covers of newspapers firmly, so as to prevent the contents from slipping out. When, for additional security, the address is written on the newspaper itself, such address (if the newspaper be franked by an impressed stamp) must in case of re-transmission be cut off; otherwise the newspaper will become subject to a postage of 2*d.* It is not sufficient that the old address be *obliterated*, as the rules forbid writing or marks of any kind in addition to the true address.

“In affixing stamps, to wet slightly the corner of the envelope and the gummed side of the stamp, and then gently to press the stamp till it is firmly fixed. The practice of dipping the stamp in water is objectionable, because, unless the stamp be immediately withdrawn, and care be taken by the use of blotting-paper or some other absorbent to remove any excess of moisture, the gum may be washed off, or the stamp may be rubbed off the letter. By the use of envelopes bearing an *embossed* stamp (which can be purchased at any post-office), all risk of the stamp being detached may be avoided.

“Never to send money or any other article of value through the post, except either by means of a money-order or in a registered letter. Any person who sends money or jewelry in an unregistered letter not only runs a risk of losing his property, but exposes to temptation every one through whose hands his letter passes, and may be the means of ultimately bringing some clerk or letter-carrier to moral ruin. Every letter which contains money or other valuable article, even when registered, ought to be securely sealed.”

“Postmasters are instructed not to receive any letter, &c. which there is good reason to believe contains any thing likely to injure the contents of the mail-bag or the person of any officer of the post-office. If such a packet be posted without the postmaster’s knowledge, or if at any time before its despatch he should discover any such packet, he is directed not to forward it, but to report the case, with the address of the packet, to the secretary. The following are examples of the articles referred to:—

“A glass bottle, or glass in any form; razors, scissors, needles, knives, forks, or other sharp instruments; leeches, game, fish, meat, fruit, or vegetables; bladders or other vessels containing liquids; gunpowder, lucifer matches, or any thing which is explosive or combustible.”

"Letter-carriers shall be employed as the postmaster-general shall direct, at a compensation not exceeding $800 a year, which may be increased to $1000 at offices where the income will allow, on proof of the carrier's fidelity, diligence, and experience. Carriers must give bond. Deliveries shall be made as frequently as the public interest may require. No carrier's fee or extra postage shall be charged on letters delivered or collected by carriers. Separate accounts must be kept of the expenses of the carrier-service and of the receipts from *local* mail-matter; and all such expenses must be paid from the income of the office employing the carriers. Letter-carriers may be employed, under contract between postmaster and publishers, to deliver newspapers, periodicals, circulars, &c., but such contracts must be first approved by the postmaster-general; and the postmaster-general may also provide for delivery by such carriers of small packets, not exceeding four pounds each, at the rate of two cents for each four ounces."

Attempts were made subsequent to the passage of this law (1862) to have the salaries increased to $1000, urged by the applicants in consequence of the high price of provisions. In 1864 they were coolly informed that there were plenty of people *outside* ready to step *inside* at the same salary. The post-office would present a strange appearance if this system was adopted, for the duties of the office are not learned in a day. Under former administrations it was the chief object of men in power to pay their employees living wages and reward honesty, sobriety, and attention to business by preferment. *It is not so now.*

The law authorizing the free delivery of mail-letters and all other mail-matter by carriers took effect on the first day of July, 1863. We much question if the change has benefited the treasury of the department.

Although we have expressed a doubt in relation to this system with us, it may not apply to other countries. Here it is expected that the income of an office will sustain its own expenses, and hence every postmaster is anxious to make his report to the department favorably to this system. Carriers now receive a regular salary; before, they depended in a great measure on the one-cent system, which lessened the department's expense for carriers' pay more than one-third what it is now. The one cent was received from the recipients of letters and papers, which they paid freely, and not unfrequently made it two when they came to settle with the carriers. Merchants and others still consider the old plan the best, *having an idea that they are better served*.

Austria.—Brought to the door. In all larger places, without carrier's fee; in smaller places (villages and farms), a fee of two kreutzers (one cent) is charged.

Belgium.—Brought to the door throughout the kingdom.

England.—By carriers without fee.

France.—By carriers without fee (to the door) in both city and country. Poste restante exists for letters so addressed, and when the person's address is not found.

Hanseatic Cities—Bremen.—By letter-carriers to the door.

Italy.—To the door by carriers without fee.

The Netherlands.—By carriers without fee.

Prussia.—By carriers. In larger cities the fee will soon be abolished entirely; in the rural districts it is six pfennige (about one and a quarter cent) per letter.

Switzerland.—By carriers without fee.

XIV.

Miscellaneous.

The following touching lines, by George H. Hollister, Esq., of Litchfield, Connecticut, are descriptive of an incident in the *pen* of the Union prisoners at Andersonville, Georgia. The war has elicited nothing more beautiful in description or of sadder interest:—

“No blanket round his wasted limbs,
Under the rainy sky he slept,
While, pointing his envenom’d shafts
Around him Death, the archer, crept.
He dream’d of hunger, and held out
His hand to clutch a little bread,
That a white angel with a torch,
Among the living and the dead,
Seem’d bearing, smiling as he went:
The vision waked him, as he spied
The post-boy follow’d by a crowd
Of famish’d prisoners, who cried
For letters—letters from their friends.
Crawling upon his hands and knees,
He hears his own name call’d, and, lo!
A letter from his wife he sees!

“Gasping for breath, he shriek’d aloud,
And, lost in nature’s blind eclipse,
Faltering amid the suppliant crowd,
Caught it and press’d it to his lips.
A guard who follow’d, red and wroth,
And flourishing a rusty brand,
Reviled him with a taunting oath,
And snatch’d the letter from his hand.
‘First pay the postage, whining wretch!’
Despair had made the prisoner brave:
‘Then give me back my money, sir!
I am a captive,—not a slave.
You took my money and my clothes;
Take my life, too,—but let me know
How Mary and the children are,
And I will bless you ere I go.’

“The very moonlight through his hands,
As he stood supplicating, shone,
And his sharp features shaped themselves
Into a prayer, and such a tone
Of anguish there was in his cry
For wife and children, that the guard—
Thinking upon his own—pass’d by
And left him swooning on the sward.
Beyond the ‘dead-line’ fell his head:
The eager sentry knew his mark,
And with a crash the bullet sped
Into his brain, and all was dark.
But when they turn’d his livid cheek
Up toward the light, the pale lips smiled,
Kissing a picture fair and meek
That held in either hand a child.”

“The Wheeling Intelligencer” (1865) gives the following “chapter of accidents”: it says,—

“We received a letter several days ago from a gentleman, enclosing an announcement of his marriage, and stating that he had also enclosed the sum of seventy-five cents to pay for it. The letter did not enclose the money; but the next day we got another letter from the same gentleman, stating that it had occurred to him, after he had mailed the first note, that he had not enclosed the money; ‘and I therefore,’ says the second epistle, ‘enclose to you the amount;’ but, instead of seventy-five cents, the letter only contained twenty-five. A day or two afterwards we received two more letters from the same person, each enclosing fifty cents. The first of the two letters stated that the writer, having discovered his mistake, enclosed fifty cents more to make up the amount. In the second letter the gentleman says, that ‘having learned that the mail containing my last letter was destroyed by fire, I enclose now another fifty cents.’ Our friend’s singular confusion is no doubt attributable to the fact which in his original note he requested us to announce.”

Didn't like the idea.—A single female, apparently forty-five years of age, with a very scraggy neck and weazened features, made her appearance yesterday afternoon at the ladies' window in the post-office.

"I want to get back a letter."

"What for, madam?"

"Why, I dropped it in the box over yonder. I want to take it back again."

"That's against our rules, ma'am; I am not allowed to give back a letter unless I know all about it."

"Well, then, there'll be a fuss here, that's all: I want my letter again."

"I'll call the chief clerk, then, ma'am. You can make the fuss with him, if you must have one."

Mr. Booth was summoned. With his usual blandness he asked the lady how the letter was directed, and to whom. He obtained a prompt reply. He found that the lady had dropped the letter into the box under the general delivery-window. He produced it from the basket after a little search, and returned it to her. She appeared considerably pleased, brushed off the letter with her handkerchief, and at once dropped it into the basket under the ladies' window, before which she was standing.

"Why, I thought you wanted to take out the letter!" said Mr. Booth, in some surprise. "Here you've mailed it again."

"That's all right now," said the woman. "That's what I wanted. I dropped the letter in the wrong place fust, among the men's letters. I hate the men, so I do. I hain't goin' to have my letter mixed up with men's letters, nohow."

"You dislike the male sex then, madam?"

"I don't hate you mail folk, as I know on, wuss than the rest on 'em."

"I mean the men, madam; you dislike them?" said Mr. Booth, emphasizing the title of masculinity.

"Oh, the men! Of course I hate 'em. I wouldn't trust one of 'em anigh me. They're a deceivin', lyin'"——

How the sentence would have been completed is more than we can say. At this moment somebody trod upon the tail of a vixenish-looking dog that followed the lady, and, as she rushed out, others took her place at the window. Mr. Booth feels flattered that, while hating the male sex in general, she doesn't hate the mail folks in particular.

THE POST COMES IN.

BY WILLIAM COWPER.

“Hark! ’tis the twanging horn o’er yonder bridge,
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood; in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright.
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spatter’d boots, strapp’d waist, and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumb’ring at his back.
True to his charge, the close-pack’d load behind.
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn,
And, having dropp’d the expected bag, pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold, and yet cheerful; messenger of grief

Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some;
To him indiff’rent whether grief or joy.
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
With tears, that trickled down the writer’s cheeks
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charged with amorous sighs of absent swains
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.”

Task, Book IV.

WATCH THE WASTE PAPER.

One of the postal regulations (sect. 217) is as follows:—

"The postmaster, or one of his assistants, in all cases, *immediately* before the office is swept or otherwise cleared of rubbish, is to collect and examine the waste paper which has accumulated therein, in order to guard against the possibility of loss of letters or other mail-matter which may have fallen on the floor or have been intermingled with such waste paper during the transaction of business. The observance of this rule is strictly enjoined upon all postmasters, and its violation will constitute a grave offence. Postmasters should be careful to use, in mailing letters or packets, all wrapping-paper fit to be used again; and the sale of any such paper is strictly forbidden."

A neglect of this section might lead to serious consequences, inasmuch as letters are continually falling from the tables and trays to the floor, and, unless looked after, would unquestionably find their way to the "waste-bags."

The proprietor of a paper-mill informed us that one of the girls employed by him in separating the waste paper purchased from postmasters had found several letters, one of which contained $30 in Treasury notes, and another contained a note for $500 and an order to cancel stamp placed upon a note since it was signed, as stamps could not be obtained at the place where the note was signed.

The above letters had been thrown into the waste paper by some careless postmaster or clerks, and sold at two and a half cents per pound; and some other postmaster or clerks have been under suspicion of committing a depredation upon those letters; and had this girl been dishonest they might never have been able to convince the parties interested of their innocence.

This is inexcusable carelessness; and postmasters who read this article should see that they or their clerks are not caught in this way.

SEALING-WAX.

Under no circumstances use sealing-wax for postal purposes. Wax should only be used for letters or documents when a person is anxious to *display his seal or coat of arms*, or where it may be required for a legal purpose, and only then when they are more effectually secured.

The practice of sealing letters passing more particularly through warm climates with wax is attended with much inconvenience, and frequently with serious injury, not only to the letters so sealed, but to the other letters in the mail, from the melting of the wax and adhesion of the letters to each other. The public are, therefore, recommended in all such cases to use either wafers or gum, and to advise their correspondents in the countries referred to to do the same.

English newspapers—indeed, nearly all European printed matter—come to us sealed with *bad wax*; and if many of them were not secured by thread, few would ever reach the parties to whom they are addressed.

When complaint is made of letters or newspapers lost, miscarried, or delayed, to furnish information as precise as possible regarding all the facts of the case, and to enclose whatever documents may throw light upon it. The day and hour at which the letter or newspaper was posted, as well as the office at which and the person by whom this was done, should always be stated, and, when possible, the cover or wrapper, in an entire state, should be sent, in order that the place of delay may be ascertained by an examination of the stamps. Cases frequently occur in which complaint is made against the post-office and redress expected, although little or no means of tracing the error and of guarding against a repetition of it is supplied by those who alone are able to do so.

In 1806 a case was tried in the District Court of Maryland, "United States *vs.* Barney," which we deem essential to the nature of our work.

"Winchester, J.—The indictment in this case, which charges the defendant with having wilfully obstructed the passage of the public mail at Susquehanna River, is founded on the act of Congress of March, 1799.

"The defendant sets up as a defence and justification of this obstruction of the mail that he had fed the horses employed in carrying the mail for a considerable time, and that a sum of money was due to him for food furnished at and before the time of their arrest and detention.

"On this state of the facts, two questions have been agitated:—

"1st, Whether the right of an innkeeper to detain a horse for his food extends to horses owned by individuals and employed in the transportation of the public mail. And,

"2d, Whether such right extends to horses belonging to the United States, employed in that service.

"The first question involves the consideration of principles of some extent, and to decide correctly on the second it may be necessary to state them generally. 372

"Lien is generally defined to be a tie, hold, or security upon goods or other things which a man has in his custody, till he is paid what is due to him. From this definition it is apparent that there can be no lien where the property is annihilated or the possession parted with voluntarily and without fraud. 2 *Vern.* 117; 1 *Atk.* 234.

"The claim of a lien otherwise well founded cannot be supported if there is—

"1st, A particular agreement made and relied on. *Sayer's* Rep. 224; 2 *R. A.* 92. Or,

"2d, Where the particular transaction shows that there was no intention that there should be a lien, but some *other security is looked to and relied upon*. 4 *Burr.* 2223.

"If, therefore, in this case the agreement between the defendant and the public agent actually was that he should be paid for feeding the public horses on as low terms as any other person on the road would supply them, he could not justify detaining the horses; for the particular agreement thus made, and under which the food was furnished, is the foundation of the remedy of the defendant, and it can be pursued in no other manner than upon that agreement. Or, if there was no particular agreement, this case is such that between the defendant and a private owner of horses and carriages employed in transporting the mail I incline to think it could not legally be presumed a lien was ever intended or contemplated. A carrier of the mail is bound not to delay its delivery, under severe penalties; and it can scarcely be supposed that he would expose himself to the penalty for such delay by leaving his horses subject to the arrest of every innkeeper on the road for their food, or that in such case the innkeeper could look to any other security than the personal credit of the owner of the horses for reimbursement. But the law on 373 such a case could be only declared on facts admitted by the parties or found by the jury, and is not now before the court.

"3d, The great question in this case rests on a discrimination between the property of the government and individuals."

After defining the constitutional rights of the government and its general power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excise, to pay the debts and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States, and quoting numerous authorities, the judge concludes with the following:—

"*A stolen horse found in the mail-stage.* The owner cannot seize him.

"The driver being in debt, or even committing an offence, can only be arrested in such way as does not obstruct the passage of the mail.

"These examples are as strong as any which are likely to occur; but even these are not excepted by the statute; and probably considerations of the extreme importance to the government and individuals of the regular transmission of public despatches and private communications may have excluded these exceptions. But whatever may have been the policy which led to the adoption of the law, which the court will not inquire into, it totally prohibits any obstruction to the passage of the mail. It is the duty of the court to expound and execute the law, and therefore I am of opinion and decide that the defendant is not justified."

Connected with stamps, whether used as a currency or for the increase of revenue, there are many curious and interesting circumstances. The idea of producing a revenue by the sale of stamps and stamped paper in America was promulgated almost forty years before its final development in legislative enactment in 1765. Sir William Keith advised the policy as early as 1728. In 1739 the London merchants advised the ministry to adopt the measure, and public writers from time to time suggested various schemes predicated upon the same idea. In 1770, Douglas, in his work on "British America," recommended the levying of a stamp duty upon all legal writings and instruments. Dr. Franklin regarded the plan favorably, and Governor Sharpe, of Maryland, was confident in 1754 that Parliament would speedily make a statute for raising money by means of stamp duties. Lieutenant-Governor Delancey spoke in favor of it in the New York Assembly in 1755, and the following year Governor Shirley, of Massachusetts, urged Parliament to adopt a stamp tax. The British press urged the measure in 1757, and it was confidently stated that at least three hundred thousand dollars annually might thus be drawn from the colonies without the tax being sensibly felt. The tax bill became a law in 1765 and was repealed in 1766. Had not ministers been deceived by the representations of the stupid and selfish governors in America, it probably would never have been enacted. Those men were frequently too indolent or indifferent to make themselves acquainted with the real temper of the people. Regarding the mass as equally servile as their flatterers, they readily commended that fatal measure which proved the spark that lighted the flame of the Revolution and severed forever the political connection between Great Britain and the thirteen American colonies. The stamp so carefully and so artistically prepared, bearing upon its imposing front the crown and its motto, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*," and intended to enhance the power and might of kingly rule, sealed the doom of monarchy in the colonies forever! 374

The use of stamps, however, apart from tax purposes, is not of modern invention, but for postal purposes they bear date quite recent. Stamps of one penny and twopence each were first introduced in England on the 6th of May, 1840. 375

When Victoria succeeded to the British crown—midsummer, 1837—there were eleven thousand parishes in England and Wales, and only three thousand post-offices. A fourth of the population were entirely destitute of postal accommodation. Four hundred of the registration districts, the average extent of which was nearly twenty square miles, were without a post-office. In 1839 the number of chargeable letters was in the proportion of *four* a year to each person of the population of England and Wales, *three* in Scotland, and *one* in Ireland. In 1864 the proportion of letters is twenty-four a year to each of the population of England and Wales, nineteen in Scotland, and nine to Ireland. The increase from 76,000,000 letters in 1849 to 600,000,000 in 1864 is really an increase of nearly seven hundred per cent. A stamped envelope was used at first (consisting of a very absurd allegorical group, said to have been improved by Mulready, the eminent painter, from a drawing by Queen Victoria herself!); but this was superseded, in a few months, by a stamp called 'penny blac' compulsory prepayment, which was begun in England, has become the rule in the many countries which have adopted Hill's postal reform. This reform, which went into operation in England on January 10, 1840, was not adopted in the United States until July 1, 1845.

Perhaps no country in the world has ever yet produced such a number of stamps as the United States of America. Foreign nations limit their postal stamps; we issue them in quantity and variety to meet the demands of the public without stint or hindrance. The denominations of postal stamps in the United States are 1 cent, 2 cent, 3 cent, 5 cent, 10 cent, 12 cent, 24 cent, 30 cent, and 90 cent.

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The amount of stamps and stamp-envelopes issued during the year 1860, ending June 30, was	$6,870,316 19
Total amount for 1861	6,690,233 70
″ ″ ″ 1862	7,078,188 00
″ ″ ″ 1863	9,683,384 00
″ ″ ″ 1864	10,974,329 50

The postage-stamp system has been adopted in all parts of the world, by over ninety different kingdoms, states, provinces, colonies, islands, and free cities,—in fifty different parts of Europe, in over a dozen parts of Asia, including China, in some twenty parts of the New World, in every province of British North America, in seven parts of Africa, and even in St. Helena on one side and the Sandwich Islands on the other. There are postage-stamps used in Ceylon; but the Japanese have not as yet arrived at that period in perfection which would lead them towards its attainment.

The stamps of the secessionists command a high price in foreign markets,—probably as much for their having the head of "Jeff Davis" on them than for any artistic skill or beauty attached to them. When the rebellion broke out, of course a line was drawn between the two sections of our country, leaving the South in possession of slavery and its fruits, and the North, with its vast amount of wealth, intellect, and artistic power, to contend against the world. Of course the South, heretofore dependent on the North for every thing genius, art, and skill produced, found they could not have a stamp cut that would even do credit to their bogus government. The first ones produced presented a most *counterfeit*-like appearance of something once belonging to art: even Jeff Davis became ashamed of them, and he applied to his good friend and secret ally, Napoleon

of France, for assistance. Something better was produced by a French artist; and thus the stamps came over with a variety of other things to strengthen the Southern Confederacy and assist her in maintaining something of the appearance of a people who could claim some consideration among other *advanced* nations of the world.

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Connected with the issue of postal stamps is that strange mania which seizes upon a certain class to collect and treasure up every thing that is termed *unique* or new in art or science. These stamps in time will become relics, and possess an interest for the antiquarian equal to that of old coins.

To such an extent is this passion carried, that in Europe cabinets are formed and albums invented wherein these stamps are fancifully arranged. In many instances men make such collections a matter of business, and these receptacles for stamps bring very high prices,—in fact, like old coins, many of them command fabulous prices. The collection of these miniature paper currency circulating mediums is decidedly a British institution. Periodicals devoted to the interest of dealers are established in various parts of the kingdom, and agents employed, not only to furnish information upon the subject of new issues, but to procure various stamps for orders. The demand in England for American stamps is great, and they command—more particularly those of the Southern Confederacy—very high prices.

We have no objection to this, although a strange fancy on the part of those who are seized with the mania, because it opens a new trade for the enterprising speculator on the infirmity of human nature. A house in New York advertises for “correspondents all over the world,” for furnishing and supplying it with *stamp news*. Another in Montreal advertises “stamps cheaper than ever:” these consist of foreign, British colonial, and European stamps of all kinds. The number of North American is enumerated at fifty varieties.

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Connected, however, with the various stamps now in use in this country is the necessity of teaching to our youth their use and application to banks, custom-houses, railroads, post-offices, pawnbrokers, and, in fact, as stamp tax to every trade, business, and department of government.

In several of our commercial colleges an actual stamp department is invented, and mock-banks, custom-houses, steamboat-offices, post-offices, &c., are fitted up for the purpose of familiarizing youth with their use in the various mercantile and governmental departments of the country. This is what we term the best and most useful knowledge that the stamps can impart to those who are so anxious to treasure them up in albums and cabinets.[55]

We annex the following article from Appleton’s “United States Postal Guide”[1864]:—

“By the *Sonora*, a few days since, says a Californian correspondent, some two hundred of Uncle Sam’s orphans arrived, and were distributed around. Some were sent to Fort Alcastra, some to the barracks at the Presidio, and the remainder were quartered at Benicia barracks, preparatory to being assigned to the different companies of the regiments in this department. They will soon be scattered from Oregon to that most delightful post, Fort Yuma, in Arizona,—a place where they have to put rocks on the roofs to keep the ends of the boards from curling over like little dogs’ tails. It is a wretched place to live at, and to be ordered there is enough to make any officer resign, unless a Catholic, who acknowledges the justice of being sent to purgatory. They have a little fun even in that awful place sometimes, and an officer was telling me the other day of how he lost his postage-stamps. He had sent up here for some twenty dollars’ worth, and had left them on his table. Now, the habits, manners, and customs thereabouts are considerably on the free-and-easy style, and the Indians are allowed to roam around the garrison *ad libitum*, if they behave themselves and do not steal. On this occasion a young squaw, who had the run of the quarters, and was very much at home anywhere and everywhere, happened to stray into my friend’s room, and, seeing the postage-stamps, began to examine them with great curiosity. She discovered they would stick if wet, and forthwith a happy idea struck her. Now, the fashionable dress of the ladies of her class in that warm climate is of the briefest description. She was ambitious to dress up and excite the envy of the other Pocahontases. So she went in on the postal currency, and, much to the astonishment of the garrison, made her appearance presently on the parade-ground entirely covered over with postage-stamps. She was stuck all over with Benjamin Franklin, and the Father of his Country was plastered all over her ladyship’s glossy skin indiscriminately, regardless of dignity and decency. The ‘roar’ that greeted her, from the commanding officer down to the drummer-boys, was loud enough to be heard nearly at head-quarters in San Francisco; but, Indian-like, she preserved her equanimity, and did not seem at all disconcerted, but sailed off with the air and step of a genuine princess, while my friend rushed into his quarters to discover himself minus his twenty dollars’ worth of postage-stamps, and that what was intended for the mail had been appropriated to the female. She might have been put in the overland coach and gone through: she certainly could not have been stopped for want of being prepaid.”

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Amos Kendall, postmaster-general from 1835 to 1840, anxious to have the postal department as perfect as human efforts can avail towards such a state of things, sent the gentleman whose name heads this article to Europe for the purpose of adding to our store of knowledge on postal matters. Mr. Plitt was well calculated for this mission, having served seven years in the New York post-office, and was familiar with its operations. He left New York in the month of June, 1839, and returned in August, 1840, after having visited "the post-office departments of England, Scotland, France, Belgium, Saxony, Prussia, Austria, Bavaria, Wirtemberg, Baden, and the free Hanseatic cities of Frankfort, Hamburg, Bremen, and Lubeck."

Among other reforms and suggestions made in Mr. Plitt's report are the abolition of the franking privilege, the prepayment of all letters, as well as of newspapers and all printed matter. He strongly urges the reduction of postage, and quotes the English postal law as an evidence of its pecuniary advantages. As many of the reforms suggested, based on the European system, have been introduced into ours, and nearly every other improvement carried into the department, it is not necessary for us here to name them; but, at the same time, it is due to Mr. Plitt to state that his report met with a cordial response from the department, whose instructions he had so ably carried out, and whose ideas on and about foreign mail arrangements afforded it an opportunity to improve those of our own.

He also suggested the establishing special agents and mail-guards. In Europe they form a prominent feature in their system; but as regards the necessity of the latter in this country, we doubt if their services would be required, unless in time of war, frontier insurrections, or disgraceful rebellions, such as a vile portion of the land had inaugurated, and over whose downfall and ruin our nation's flag is now proudly uprising. It will float again,—float in its might and power over every foot of land that Columbia calls her own; but not until 381

"Bold rebellion's blood has all been drain'd."

The subject of the reduction of postage had been agitated in Congress before Mr. Plitt's visit to Europe. In 1836, Edward Everett proposed measures for that purpose, but no well-digested plan was brought forward. *There was no Benjamin Franklin there to propose one.* In 1843, three years after Mr. Plitt's return from Europe, the general discontent of the people on the subject of postage was expressed in the form of resolutions by the legislatures of several States, instructing their Senators and requesting their Representatives in Congress to take some measures for a reduction. Mr. C. A. Wickliffe, at that time postmaster-general, made some investigation in regard to the English system, and in an elaborate report advocated some reduction, but not a radical one, on the ground that the department would become a heavy charge upon the government if large reductions were made. Subsequent reductions far greater than those proposed at that period show how much the postmaster-general and those who sustained him in this idea were mistaken. It was not until 1845 that Congress was enabled to pass a bill for a reduction. March 3, 1845, a bill was passed, which went into operation July 1, 1845. Its rates were as follows:—for a letter not exceeding a half-ounce in weight, whether of one or more pieces of paper, under three hundred miles, five cents; over three hundred miles, ten cents, and an additional rate for every additional half-ounce or fraction of a half-ounce. Advertised letters, two cents; pamphlets, magazines, &c., per ounce, two cents, and each additional ounce, one cent. 382 Newspapers, under thirty miles, free; over thirty and under one hundred, or any distance within the State where published, one cent; over one hundred and out of the State, one and a half cent. At various periods since, changes have been made, until it is now reduced to a system based on the lowest rates, which under proper and efficient management must, and no doubt will, result in self-sustaining the department: certain abuses have of course to be corrected.

Mr. Plitt states in his report that the number of persons employed in the English post-office, London, is one thousand nine hundred and three.[56] This number comprises all the letter-carriers and receivers employed within a circle of twelve miles from the post-office. In this circle letters are delivered at the residence of the person addressed and taken up from the receiving-houses five times per day. There is besides an inner circle of three miles from the post-office, within which there are seven deliveries per day, and also seven collections from the receiving-houses, to go by the general post, as late as five o'clock P. M.[57]

“This privilege is entirely abolished under the late new law. Members of Parliament, even before the law was passed, were restricted as to the number of letters they were allowed to frank, and were, besides, obliged to put the day of the month upon each letter franked by them.” The privilege, however, was not *entirely* abolished, inasmuch as it was granted to the Minister of Finance and some of his agents.

Stamps of one penny and twopence each were first introduced on the 6th of May, 1840, and since that period there has been an increase of nearly three hundred thousand letters. Mr. Plitt strongly advocates the cheap postage system.

In Paris, where there are six deliveries of the “Petite Poste” per day, the carriers of the General and “Petite Poste” letters are the same. In a report made by Rowland Hill on the French post-office, in October, 1839, speaking of this plan, he says, “The plan of employing one set of letter-carriers for the delivery of all letters appears to work exceedingly well in Paris. All that I heard and saw in Paris tends to confirm the opinion I have already expressed, that great convenience and economy would result from the union of the two bodies in London.”

"Sec. 16. *And be it further enacted*, That no obscene book, pamphlet, picture, print, or other publication of a vulgar and indecent character shall be admitted into the mails of the United States; and any person or persons who shall deposit or cause to be deposited in any post-office or branch post-office of the United States, for mailing or for delivery, an obscene book, pamphlet, picture, print, or other publication, knowing the same to be of a vulgar and indecent character, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, being duly convicted thereof, shall for every such offence be fined not more than five hundred dollars, or imprisoned not more than one year, or both, according to the circumstances and aggravations of the offence."

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Apart from this act, there is an understanding between the postmaster-general and postmasters generally relative to obscene and vulgar postal matter. So far as the secrets of the office are concerned, that understanding is "contraband." But this is not sufficient. If the post-office is to be used as the medium through which the vilest works of art pass so readily, and calculated to corrupt the innocent and excite the passions of youth by high-colored pictures, the public, at least, should know how and why so many reach the persons to whom they are directed, and to what extent this espionage extends. It would require no breach of the observance of postal rules to ascertain almost at a glance the nature of the book or picture which comes under the head of "indecent postal matter." These publications, varying in accordance to the artistic taste of the originators, pass through the office in the shape of splendid photograph albums, handsomely-bound books, embossed prints, transparent cards, and "yellow-cover pamphlets," *à la Dr. Young*, and photograph cards of a most indecent character. At other times they are posted as letters, addressed chiefly to young ladies, containing a card and making the most dishonorable proposals. In several instances the parents have shown the author these letters, and upon a close examination he feels satisfied that the only motive the writer had was to corrupt and demoralize, without the most distant idea of ever reaping the fruits of his villany. The imagination cannot conceive or pencil paint a more hideous picture of a fiend than one who would thus attempt to corrupt the young and innocent by such means. The idea could only have been suggested by the devil, and as readily carried out by his agent. Artists of well-known reputation lend themselves to this work of destruction; and specimens denote the highest order of talent, as well as the most exquisite workmanship of art,—art devoted to the production of the most vulgar and disgusting subjects the human mind ever conceived or a diseased imagination conjured. That very intellect which should have shed a halo over the pure things of earth is here devoted to the production of things evil.

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A tendency to sap the foundation upon which rest the pillars of morality, and to poison the minds of youth, seems to be a prevailing vice. High literary attainments, great mental powers, have been brought into the arena to battle for crime, lasciviousness, and vice. In all ages the vile corruption of man's nature, aided by genius and talent, has been manifested in the production of things evil. The rapid and, we may say, alarming increase of crime, the callousness manifested at the recital of human suffering, the want, or, rather, the absence, of a correct moral standard in every thing appertaining to social life, the sneering at the tenets of our holy religion, the assumption as it were of omniscient powers on the part of sinful men, have led to a state of things which will require stronger measures than that of mere reasoning to remedy.

Our streets of a night are flooded with the daughters of vice; temples are dedicated to licentiousness, sanctioned by the authorities, who grant them "license" as it were to corrupt youth and demoralize the masses. Intemperance and pauperism are the results of the "law's license" to common crime. Thus the dark shadow of vice extends its fatal power over that portion of the human family from whose domestic circle the voice of prayer never ascends. There instead is heard the sound of rattling glasses: loud oaths, the bacchanalian song, there throw around the circle of which they form the nucleus an atmosphere to poison and destroy. Much of all this can be traced to the estimate men place upon the modern mode of education. If genius invents something that places vice in a brilliant light, in and through which all that is startling in picture-view or description presents new features to the novice in licentiousness, it becomes at once an institution from whence flows a stream that poisons a city. In an instant these productions take miniature shapes: art combines with the genius of the originators, and, lo! they go forth through the post, spreading ruin and desolation everywhere. It is that very facility which the post affords that gives power and influence to these fiends; and, alas! how many, dazzled by the "refinement of vice,"—refined by the touch of art,—fall into the snare by the very excitement they produce! Many of these photographs of the more vile character reach "young ladies' seminaries." Many books of a similar character find their way hither, and thus corruption works its way to the ruin of their inmates.

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We would have—what under no other circumstance would we suggest to the department—*an espionage over all suspicious postal matter*.

That country must be in a bad way where the heads of the several departments find it necessary to resort to the most infamous means of tracing out suspected traitors. Thus, in the postal department, every letter is subject to the system of espionage, and the innocent as well as the guilty alike suspected and their private correspondence betrayed. In time of rebellion, insurrection, or an attempt to assassinate a king or an emperor, there might be some excuse for the exercise of such precaution; but in the absence of such startling causes the system is both mean and cowardly. In France, at the present time (1865), private letters, newspapers, and pamphlets are subjected to the most anxious scrutiny. A large portion of every day is devoted to such examinations by a skilful and energetic body of men. Between the time when letters are received at the chief office from the district-offices and the time they are sent out again, two hours elapse. *During this period they are in the hands of the police.* The police have a list of certain addresses, and are furnished with examples of the handwriting of every one in whose correspondence the government is interested. With these and practised eyes the officials set to work, carrying all suspected letters into the Cabinet Noir, where they are read, copied, delayed, stopped at discretion; and the police are very discreet about seizing letters: it is done as seldom as possible. The system is so perfect, it works so well, that the only chance of evading it is to correspond under assumed names, changed with every letter; and this is actually done by people who are not more treasonable than the majority of Frenchmen, but who, being eminent and powerful, are condemned to the degradation of shifts like these, or every letter they write would be read by the police. Governments maintained thus are never safe in power.

The following article we take from the "Philadelphia North American and United States Gazette" of the 13th July, 1865. The view the editor takes is simply, however, from a hastily-arranged statement made shortly after the appointment of Mr. Dennison as postmaster-general. We have our doubts about its accuracy, inasmuch as the short time for reductions of salary and other expenses would not lessen the debt against the postal department and yield a surplus of seven hundred thousand dollars. Well may the editor say, "*How long this is likely to continue we cannot say.*" 388

"For the first time in many years the United States Post-Office Department has become a paying institution, the revenues of the last six months having yielded a surplus of more than seven hundred thousand dollars above the expenses, and the ensuing six months will tell still better. How long this is likely to continue we cannot say. During Mr. Blair's administration of this department he reduced the expenditures to such an extent as to afford an astonishing contrast with the old Buchanan dynasty, when the annual deficit of the department was five millions of dollars. We thought Mr. Blair's management unprecedently good; but still he could not bring the department to a paying standard, which his successor has now done very handsomely. Mr. Dennison has done this by means of a system of the most stringent and searching economy, reducing the force of employees everywhere, cutting down salaries and allowances, examining carefully into items of expenditure, the management and compensation of contractors, &c.

"In fact, Governor Dennison brought to the conduct of our postal affairs the excellent training he had received in the executive government of Ohio, like his predecessor in that office, Mr. Chase, and he has looked carefully into every thing under his charge with an eye to economy and efficiency, and the service, instead of suffering by this scrutiny, has been largely benefited. But with the renewal of our authority in the South comes back a region wherein before 1860 the postal service was always carried on at a heavy loss to the National Government. It hardly admits of a doubt that this deficit was owing solely to the running of great numbers of useless mails to gratify local influences. This was consequent upon the predominance of Southern politicians at Washington. Their demands for favors of this kind were incessant, and, as they were generally with the ruling element in Congress, they got whatever they asked for. It may be inferred that modesty was not one of their faults, and that they did not lose any thing for the want of asking. 389

"In places where a weekly mail would have answered, a daily, semi-weekly, or tri-weekly mail was run, and so where a place of somewhat more consequence needed a semi-weekly mail a daily mail would be run. Instead of making every post-office a paying one, by making it the depot for a sufficient population, swarms of unnecessary offices were created to gratify local politicians, the effect of which was that none were remunerative. We are sorry to say that this evil afflicts the service in many parts of the North, and that there is great need of discontinuing offices now in existence. Sometimes the ambition or the jealousy of villages led to this multiplication of useless offices, but generally it was caused by the Congressmen catering for their political supporters. Since the year 1860 the necessities of the government have compelled the department to reduce both the number of these offices and of the mails run. The deficiency always visible in the postal revenues at the South, aside from the causes we have referred to, arose also from the evil policy of the slaveholding oligarchy. Four millions of the Southern population were prohibited from a knowledge of reading and writing, and of course the post-office was not needed for them. The planter had no right to complain of being reduced to a weekly mail; for in a region of six square miles there might not be more than three families using the post-office, the rest being all slaves, or illiterate 'poor white trash.'

"Yet these planters would make a vast deal of fuss about their mail facilities, and to satisfy them the National Government sustained an annual loss of millions of dollars. It was not only the prohibition of letters toward the slaves that caused the loss, for the poor whites labored under no such prohibition, and yet were as ignorant as the slaves; but it was the total absence of all provision for the education of the masses of the population throughout the South. The poor whites could not read newspapers if they received them; they could not write letters, nor could they read them. Moreover, the mail-matter was still further reduced by the refusal to allow anti-slavery newspapers to circulate at all in the South. A merchant could not receive the commercial papers of the North, because of their sentiments about slavery; a clergyman could not receive the religious papers of the North, for the same reason. If a man in any of the interior districts received frequent letters from the North, he would be sure to find them a matter of inquisitorial questioning, and would be obliged to give an idea of the nature of his correspondence. 390

"The question how the postal service can be rendered permanently remunerative at the South involves three distinct and very important considerations:—

"How can the ignorant masses of the Southern population be educated in a knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and insured hereafter the benefits of a well-established common free-school system for their children?

"How can we relieve the national mails of that infamous espionage which, down to the present time, has been rigidly enforced in every hole and corner of the South, sometimes by the post-office itself, but generally by outside parties, though always in the interest of the plantation aristocracy and their political agents and domination?

"How can we prevent the renewal of the old evil of supernumerary post-offices and superfluous mails all over the South, and so gauge the service that each office shall pay expenses and each 391

mail be well filled with paying matter?

“These are the problems to be solved, and it behooves us all to reflect upon their exceeding difficulty when we complain that our postal department is not better managed. Although the franking system is bad enough in all conscience, it is not responsible for the bulk of the postal loss. From what we have said above, it must be plain that the despotic social system, established for the benefit of the plantation aristocracy, has been annually paid for largely out of our pockets. We have paid five millions of dollars annually as a premium upon Southern ignorance. We have helped the planter to keep his slaves and his poor white neighbors in ignorance and degradation, and, in order the better to enable him to enforce his cruel and abominable despotism, we have given him the surveillance of our mails, and allowed him to terrorize over them as he saw fit. Mr. Dennison, we can readily believe, is not the man to put up with this hereafter; but it requires vigilance to prevent it altogether, and the exercise of other powers than his to remedy the great evil,—Southern ignorance.”

Under the old postal arrangement, the salary of postmasters of the principal cities was limited to $2000. This compensation was derived from a commission out of their receipts, which could not exceed the amount named. This would appear at first as small pay for such an important position,—more particularly as under the administration of Postmaster Blair the salary was raised to $4000: yet there is not a postmaster but would willingly go back to the old system. Under the former provision of the postal law postmasters were allowed the amount arising from the rent of letter-boxes in their respective offices as a perquisite, and also certain other matters, which shrewd men knew well how to place under this head. During the existence of this system the desire for the office far exceeded that which was and is likely to be manifested under the latter, inasmuch as $4000 per annum and *no perquisites* is scarcely a desirable position for an ambitious and popular politician. Many a business-man, outside of the political ring, would consider it quite sufficient, however: *business-men are not cormorants*. It is true, even under the old law, by an act passed March 3, 1847, the rent of boxes to be credited to the postmaster was limited, restricting the amount so received to $2000,—consequently limiting his salary to $4000: for all over and above that amount he had to account to the department. Under some administrations postmasters became rich, whether by husbanding their actual income or the perquisites are questions simply of conjecture.

The first attempt to establish the penny post in the United States was in the years 1839-40. It was simply a speculation, and resulted at first in almost total failure, but revived again under more enterprising parties. Previous to this, however, contrary to the laws of Congress,—particularly the law of 1825, sect. 19, which enacts that no stage or other vehicle which regularly performs trips on a post-road or on a road parallel to it, and no packet, war, or other vessel which regularly plies on a water declared a post-road, shall convey letters,—certain persons, actually availing themselves of these modes of conveyance, *constituted* themselves “private posts,” travelling as passengers, and carried packages containing valuable letters, documents, and other available matter: these were, of course, transported as baggage or freight. The conveyances used by these men passed regularly over post-roads, and thus they travelled in company with their powerful opponent, “the post-office department.” It was also well known to the department; but as they *were not special posts*, the law of 1825 did not reach them. Still their system was a secret one, and hard to be detected. The law, however, of 1827, sect. 3, enacts that no person other than the postmaster-general or his authorized agents shall set up any foot- or horse-posts for the conveyance of letters and packets upon any post-road which is or may be established as such by law.

This law paved the way for the establishing penny posts by individuals in cities and even in rural districts. At first they were called expresses, but soon they assumed a more postal shape. The postmaster-general’s annual report of December 2, 1843, stated that “numerous private posts, under the name of expresses, had sprung within a few years into existence, extending themselves over the mail-routes between the cities and towns, and transporting letters and other mailable matter for pay to a great extent.” Suits were commenced against parties residing in New York, Massachusetts, and Maryland. It appears from the postmaster-general’s report of November 25, 1844, that the government had been unable to suppress the private expresses, which were still continued “upon the leading post-routes.” In this and in the former annual report he recommended legislation by Congress for their suppression. There is yet no law of Congress to suppress these expresses. Governments, more particularly that of ours, cannot enact laws that will interfere with the commercial interests of the people. It may facilitate every movement by such laws as are legitimate; but taking out of the hands of individuals their *legitimate* business, connected with no department of the government, becomes at once not only a monopoly, but assumes the complexion of tyranny. The decision of the judges in the cases referred to settled the question, until compromise stepped in and the government came down to the “penny system,” and thus satisfied the public.

In 1860 Mr. Holt, the postmaster-general, by virtue of the act of March 3, 1851, by a formal order declared all the streets, lanes, avenues, &c. within the corporate limits of the cities of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, to be post-roads, and notified all engaged in the transportation and delivery of letters for compensation in said cities, that they would expose themselves to the penalties imposed by the third section of the act of March, 1827. The private expresses in the cities named acquiesced in the legality of the step, with the exception of one in Philadelphia long and familiarly known as “Blood’s Express,” and subsequently, “Despatch.” In despite of the act of 1851, or the penalty imposed under that of 1827, Blood’s Express continued its regular delivery of letters in defiance of the department. A bill in equity was filed with a view of restraining the company from this habitual and persistent violation of the postal laws; but, upon full argument and consideration had on the questions involved, the injunction was denied.

The mere existence of a postal department of the government is not an establishment of monopoly. No government has ever organized a system of posts without securing to itself a monopoly of the carriage of letters and mailable matter; but this was never intended to control individual enterprise in the express line. Judge Grier, who indorses the decision of this case, says,[58] “The business of private carriers of letters and mailable packets, even on principal mail-routes, is lawful unless legislatively prohibited. A private monopoly, secured by prohibitory legislation, cannot require the suppression of a rival business of competitors who do not infringe the prohibition, merely because the continuance of their business would lessen or destroy the profits of his monopoly. A like rule applies in determining the effect of a government’s legislative prohibitions to secure its own postal monopoly. The monopoly cannot be extended beyond the legislative prohibitions, merely because the continuance of a specific business which has not been prohibited would reduce the postal earnings of the government, or even frustrate the purposes of its exclusive policy.” Streets, lanes, alleys, and avenues were not, in the opinion of the judge, “post-routes.” Public streets intersecting a municipal town are as highways distinguishable specifically from the general public highways of a State beyond the town limits. The streets are, indeed, as thoroughfares, general public highways of the State; but, independently of this character of thoroughfares, the streets are specially *local highways* of the town. Internal affairs of municipal towns affecting their local interests alone are always regulated more or less by their local governments. So far as these streets over which the mail may be carried are entitled to be termed “post-roads for the passage of the mail,” there is no question; but whether Congress has the right to declare the streets of a city post-roads for any purpose is questionable.

When Blood’s Express was first established, its main object was to accommodate merchants, mechanics, and professional men generally, by furnishing a medium of communication with their customers, clients, &c., which would anticipate the slow movements of the old postal mode of delivery. If this continued to be its legitimate object, it is very probable the commercial

community would have taken a much greater interest in it than they did; but, unfortunately for this new postal system, it assumed the character of a “Parisian Bureau,” for the reception and delivery of small documents, wherein “love, courtship, and marriage” were all treated with an eye to *excitement* rather than as a virtuous incentive to their study and moral consequences. Young and inexperienced girls were gradually led into (initial) correspondence with “fast young men;” foolish widows and old maids to advertise for husbands, and equally silly, weak-minded elderly gentlemen to imitate their example. Added to this, many made this penny system the medium to originate practical jokes, and thus the “express” became a sort of Pandora’s (*postal*) box for “all sorts of people” to try experiments with fickle fortune, either by marriage or swindling. Both in some instances succeeded.

The same was attempted when the government took charge of the “express;” but the department soon put a stop to this nonsensical practice by ignoring as legitimate matter every thing of an *initial* character. Young girls, foolish widows, old maids, and weak-minded men, who could without much publicity send and receive communications through “Blood’s Express,” found a post-office somewhat too dignified an institution for their *childish* intellects.

Still, this class of people,—and it takes all kinds to make up a world,—added to another class who make of crime a pastime and licentiousness a pleasure, adopted other modes of carrying on their “vocation,” which we here allude to under the head of “Indecent postal matter.”

XV.

Tales of the Post-Office.

THE VICTIM OF LOVE.

> “Oh, grief beyond all other griefs, when fate
> First leaves the young heart lone and desolate
> In the wide world, without that only tie
> For which it loved to live or feared to die!”

I was seated at my desk; the index-box was filled with letters,—the great Southern mail having just arrived.

“Are there any letters for me, sir,—Henry Middleton?”

I glanced my eyes at the applicant: there was something in his voice, look, and manner which for a moment riveted my attention. He appeared by no means annoyed at my scrutiny of his person, no doubt ascribing it to the nature of our situation. He was apparently about twenty-three years of age; eyes dark and penetrating; a shade of melancholy passed over his countenance and withered the sunshine of hope; a mouth of the most marked character conveyed to the observer a knowledge of his; the lower lip firmly compressed, and the curl of the upper denoted strong and agitated feeling, and an irritable temperament. Having gathered this much from Henry Middleton’s personal appearance, I took out from the box M a handful of letters. One was addressed to him: the handwriting was evidently that of a female. He seized it with a nervous grasp, a momentary gleam of hope lighted up his shadowy countenance, and he rushed out of the office. For the first time in my life I felt a degree of curiosity to know the contents of another’s letter: it was a strange and to me a new feeling. In vain I battled with the demon which seemed rising within me; in vain I turned over letter after letter to withdraw my mind from this dangerous focus of thought: it was utterly useless. That night I dreamed of being condemned for breaking open letters intrusted to my charge.

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Towards evening on the day following, to my extreme joy Henry Middleton stood at the window.

“I wish to pay the postage of this letter, sir.”

Twenty-five cents I informed him was the charge. The letter was in my hand: Middleton had departed. The address, Miss Amelia Templeton,—a small seal with the impression M upon it,—was the padlock to my curiosity. My brain grew giddy with the intensity of desire. I held the epistle up to the light,—the paper was coarse and thick. I peeped into the folds: ah! what is that?—part of a sentence visible:—

“Love, Amelia, acknowledges no tie but that of its own creation.”

What a sentence! In vain I tried to follow it up; not a word beyond this could I make out. Here I was left in the dark: then my imagination completed a volume of surmises. He, Middleton, was endeavoring to persuade Amelia to elope with him, or rather to follow him here, and the above line constituted a portion of the argument used by him to effect this object.

Such were my conjectures relating to the affair, derived from such evidence as the reader is now acquainted with.

A month passed over, and my note-book contained several incidents of an interesting nature; but the lovers, as I concluded them to be, occupied so much of my thoughts that I could pay but very little attention to the rest. I awaited impatiently the return of the mail which should bring the answer from Amelia. At length it came. To Henry Middleton. I instinctively caught it up. I felt as if I were an interested person, and had a right to see—that is, without breaking the seal—as much of the letter as I could; but Amelia had folded it so carefully that it defied all attempts to gather any connected sentence. Gracious heavens! what do I see? By turning up a portion of the inner fold with the blade of my knife, I read,—

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Yours, affectionately,

Amelia Sinclair.

It was now certain that Amelia was lost to Henry. She had proved faithless by marrying another. How would he bear up against the thunderbolt aimed direct at his heart? I again endeavored to penetrate further into this letter: another fold was carefully raised; the words, “a parent’s curse,” “cruel necessity,” “your absence,” “forced into marriage,” burst upon my sight. I had actually worked myself into a fever, and had partly determined to keep the letter from Middleton, feeling assured that its contents would prove a death-blow to his hopes. While debating the subject with myself, he appeared at the window. I held the letter in my hand. A tremor of almost conscious guilt passed over me, and, if he had watched my countenance, he could not have failed to detect something indicative of my crime. I handed him the letter: he gazed upon the well-known hand, a smile of joy irradiated his visage; he tore it open, hastily devouring its contents; a sudden and awful change came over his face; the exclamation of “oh, God!” escaped him: he raised his right arm, pressing the distended fingers against his forehead, and fell upon the floor in horrid convulsions!

* * * * * * *

He lay upon the bed of death,—his eyes partly closed, and his hands clasped together in convulsive agony. I stood beside him, awaiting the result of the paroxysm. In a few moments he regained consciousness: he gazed languidly around the room, exclaiming, “Where am I? Who did

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this?”

“One,” I replied, “who is willing to serve you.”

“Oh, then, as you are my friend, burn that fatal letter! While it exists, I am wretched: it is the curse of the few short moments I have yet to live. I have read it until each word, nay, each letter, seemed as a coal of fire consuming my very heart-strings. It is chained to my brain, and each thought I bestow upon it acts as an electric shock to heighten my misery. I essayed to destroy it; but dared not,—cannot.”

I took the letter and deliberately burned it: he watched its disappearance with a maddening glare, and, when it was entirely burned to ashes, he burst into a hysterical laugh, and fell back upon the bed.

It is scarcely necessary to inform the reader that, after the scene at the post-office, I caused him to be conveyed to my room, and he had continued in a state of delirium during the whole of that time. On recovering from the hysterical affection caused by the excitement of destroying the letter, he became more calm.

“I thank you,” he muttered; “I remember it all, and you have been my true friend. Heaven will bless you for it: my prayers—they are all I have to offer—shall be breathed for thee and thine.”

“Compose yourself,” I answered; “think of nothing now but your recovery and return to your friends.”

“Friends!—ha, ha, ha! Who talks of friends? Ah! yes; you that are a real one, and never felt the venomed tooth of a smiling hypocrite in your flesh. No, I will speak; bear with me a while. Think, only! he was my chum at college, the companion of my youth, the friend of my more matured age, and we lived in the hope of ending our days beneath the same roof; but now the broad canopy of heaven cannot shelter both of us alive. One or the other should—must die, and fate accords it to me.”

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“You distress yourself. Do not speak of these things.”

“I speak of them, my dear sir, to drive away the curse of recollection. Left alone to dwell upon them, I would go mad. I will relate to you something of my short but eventful history. It is simple; there is no romance in it: it is one of those incidents which occur in every life among men of the world. I was not suited for the world: it has crushed me. Amelia has wounded the heart that loved her. But no more of that. We were cousins, destined at an early age by our parents for each other. We grew up in the perfect knowledge of the happiness which awaited us: we were young, we were lovers. There is not a stream, there is not a mountain of our native home, but could tell a tale of our early loves. We have wandered over the one and sat beside the other, when the moon shed her pale and silvery light upon its waters. There nature smiled upon us, and we in return rejoiced that she was so good. Pardon my folly, sir; but those were moments of pure, unalloyed bliss. There came one among us, who, in my dreams and my waking hours of madness, I have cursed. It was Sinclair, my friend. I will not enter further into the details of my history. I will not relate to you the causes which induced me to quit home: suffice it, however, to say that I was unfortunate. I wrote to Amelia. The fatal answer and the result of it you are already acquainted with, and it is to your kindness that I am indebted for those few days added to a life of insupportable wretchedness. My nervous system, susceptible of the slightest shock, my mind weakened by the hereditary disease of our family, consumption, could not battle against the accumulation of domestic misfortunes, and a jealous feeling which I harbored of Amelia. I left home: my misery is now complete; my former suspicions have proved true. She is faithless! This, sir, is all: bear with me but a short time, and then I will tell you the rest. I feel myself sinking; listen. Oh, God! oh, God!—I—I——” He gasped for breath; the muscles of his face worked as if struggling to retain life; his eyes became fixed; his lips muttered sounds,—they were unmeaning. I took his hand: it was cold and stiff. I gazed upon his face: Death’s seal was set forever!

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In the Episcopal churchyard, near C—— Street, is to be seen a neat marble slab, with the following inscription:—

Sacred
to the
Memory of
HENRY MIDDLETON,
aged 24 years.
Sic transit gloria mundi.

THE WIDOWED MOTHER.

“Though grief may blight, or sin deface
Our youth’s fair promise, or disgrace
May brand with infamy and shame.
* * * *
A mother, though her heart may break,
From that fond heart will never tear
The child whose last retreat is there.”

It was a cold, dreary morning in the month of December, a heavy snow lay upon the ground, and the wind whistled around the northeast corner of the post-office; the streets were nearly deserted; none ventured out but those whose business rendered it absolutely necessary. I sat at the window watching the flakes of snow as they peeled from the roofs of the opposite houses and scattered their whitened particles on the pavement beneath.

The Southern mail had arrived, and all the business-letters were delivered; a drowsy feeling crept over me, and I was just falling into the Lethean lake of forgetfulness,—that dreamy portion of our life, without which this paradise, this glorious world, with its riches and its charms, would be as a howling desert. 403

“Sleep, sweet restorer, balmy sleep.”

But I am digressing. I was awakened from my slumber by a slight touch upon the elbow and a tremulous voice uttering the words, “Sir! sir!”

“Madam!” cried I, starting up.

“I am sorry to disturb you, sir, but I wish to know if there are any letters from my son?”

Honest creature: she looked the picture of distress; the widow of hope as well as kin, her age apparently about fifty, her dress neat but indicating poverty,—the hand of Time had furrowed her cheek and left his impress there.

“From your son, madam?”

“Yes, sir, my only son: a good, brave boy, and my only dependence; he lives in New Orleans, and sends me my little allowance every month. Is there any, sir?”

“What is your name?”

“Williams, sir,—Mary Williams.”

“Here are two letters, ma’am, for Mary Williams.”

“That is me, sir; and that is his handwriting, dear, good boy! he never will forget his aged mother.”

“Fifty cents, ma’am.”

“Fifty cents, sir! my William always pays for the letters.”

“In this instance he has failed to do so.”

“What shall I do?”

“I think you said, ma’am, that your son sends you a monthly allowance: so probably one of these letters contains it.”

The letter was opened, and, as I anticipated, a ten-dollar bill was enclosed. 404

After the departure of the old lady I began to weave an imaginary tale from the simple incident attending her appearance. Her son was in New Orleans: it was true, the season was healthy,—the winter there being in point of salubrity the very antipodes of the summer,—still, an undefined presentiment of a something yet in embryo glided across my brain. I noted down the facts that had already occurred, and in the mean time gathered materials for other tales.

Two months passed away, and a letter remained in the post-office for Mrs. Mary Williams. In taking it up I accidentally noticed the careless manner in which it was folded. The following scraps of sentences were distinct and legible:—

“Business very dull—but two dollars a day—sickness—doctor’s bill—I never go to the gambling-house—what made you think so?—send money next week.”

It was evident from this that William had got into bad company, and although he denied frequenting the gambling-houses, those sinks of iniquity, those common sewers for draining from the weak and dissipated their hard earnings, yet I felt assured that he was lost, and his mother left in her old days poor and destitute, relying upon the cold charity of the world for the common means of subsistence. Her brave and noble boy, as she had fondly called him, was now drawn into the vortex of vice, from whose baneful and impetuous influence the tears, the cries, the agonizing grief of her who doted upon him, to whose existence her whole soul seemed linked, could not rescue him. The spark of filial affection was extinguished, and the love of pleasures, the gratification of passions, dissipation, and debauchery, had usurped its place. The winter was now passed away with its wrath: storms and tempests with their hail, rain, and snow were rushing 405 down the tide of time, and spring was seen smiling in the dim perspective. It was, I think, in the early part of March, when Mrs. Williams stood at the window. Her whole appearance was changed. I forgot to mention she had previously sent for and received the letter to which I have above alluded. Sickness and sorrow had done their work. Her eyes were sunken, her cheeks more furrowed, and poverty still more strikingly displayed in her person. To her question, “Are there any letters for me?” that powerful monosyllable “No!” was another shock to the poor mother. She stood a while in silence, the tears rolled down her cheeks, she struggled a while to restrain her

feelings, then fast flowed the sorrowing waters from a heart surcharged with grief. She turned to depart, but faltered, and at length overcome, she sat down upon the steps of the post-office and wept aloud.

There is something unnatural in the weeping of the aged. Youth is the seed-time of the harvest, and hath its sunshine and clouds. But age is the garnered fruit, the sere and the yellow leaf of all that was beautiful. When age weeps, ’tis for youth, not for itself. I gazed on the heart-broken woman before me, and thought of her many nights and days of anguish. I thought of all her bright visions of hope and joy which shone through her son and lighted the path of her future. They were all vanished, and here she lay in utter darkness and desolation.

I spoke to her: she looked up. I told her if she would leave her address I would send a letter, as soon as it came, to her home.

“Home!” she exclaimed; “I have none! Yes, yes, I have!” Reader, it was the poor-house!

Week after week elapsed: no letter came for the aged widow. One day I accidentally took up a New Orleans paper. Curiosity prompted me to read it more carefully than usual: the paper fell from my hand; my worst apprehensions for Mary Williams were realized.

*   *   *   *   *   *   *

I stood at the bedside of the widow,—she lay on one of straw, beside which stood a table containing sundry bottles of medicine, and near her a Bible, upon which were a pair of common steel spectacles, black and rusted with age. She instantly recognized me.

“Ah! you have brought me a letter from my dear boy. I knew he would not, could not, desert his poor mother. How is he? where is he?”

*   *   *   *   *   *   *

Reader, here I close my sketch, the remembrance of which haunts me still, and the last sigh, the last pang of the heart-broken widow will be as the monitor to prompt me to deeds of charity, with a heart alive to the cries of the suffering, and a feeling of joy at their alleviation which I could not previously have experienced.

The morning was one in May, the first of the month. All nature was smiling and putting forth, like the gay daughters of earth, her ever-beauteous charms. I had just returned from a long ramble in the country, and reluctantly seated myself at the window to distribute the thoughts, the opinions, the love, the hatred, the wisdom, and the follies of mankind through the medium of letters.

Passing over several commonplace, every-day applicants, I was at last struck with the interesting appearance of a young lady who could not have attained the age of eighteen. There was, however, a certain expression of the countenance, a lurking devil—if I may use the expression—in her eye, denoting alike ungovernable passions and a reckless disregard of the consequences attending their gratification. The study of human nature for years, and a close observation of all its wire-workings *and mappings of the face*, which my position had a tendency to improve, have made me conversant with many of those signs which the bad passions of the human heart cannot keep in its deep recess, but send forth as warnings to the young and unwary to shun them as they would a pestilence. She gave her name as Caroline Somerville. There were fourteen letters to her address, the postage of which amounted to nearly three dollars. Her correspondence seemed to embrace the four quarters of the globe: for amongst them were two ship letters,—one from Bordeaux, the other from a small town in Scotland. I immediately set her down as one of our best female customers.

I think it was on the third day from her first application at the office that I noticed in her handwriting a note addressed to a merchant of this city,—a man of family and reputed a model of his sex, and a pattern for husbands. This excited an unusual excitement within me.

What could she have to do with Middleton? There was nothing in common between them. His situation in life, his moral character and standing in society were all opposed to the bare supposition of such a thing.

In the mean time, by the usual method, I deciphered the following words: “Pardon the freedom”—“No. 26 Gaskill Street”—“alone, seven o’clock”—“drop a note”: these were all I could make out; but they were sufficient. The character and plots of the siren were no longer a subject of doubt. I knew her as well from those unconnected sentences as if her whole history had been written out before me. She was, in the literal sense of the word, A FEMALE SEDUCER.

The next question that presented itself to my mind was, would Middleton pay any attention to her? That he would not admitted scarcely a shadow of doubt: he might probably reply to her note, but only to refuse and remonstrate with her upon the folly and imprudence, if not guilt, of her conduct.

I handed him the letter myself: he remarked immediately that it was not one of business. The seal was broken and the letter was read with an eagerness that surprised me. He placed it carefully in his pocket-book and departed. Towards evening Caroline received through me an answer from Mr. Middleton, in which I discovered he promised to meet her. From that period there came a change over his dream of life: I could not but mark the wasted form and haggard looks which others would attribute to different causes. I possessed the key to unlock the truth, but *that* formed no part of my *vocation*.

Weeks, nay, months, elapsed, and I was only reminded of this circumstance by the daily appearance of Middleton. The few short months were as years upon the calendar of his face, while the curse of memory was dragging him with an iron grasp to an early tomb. One day he told me, in a manner evidently intended to convey the request more as a matter of business than otherwise, to deliver his letters to no person but himself: “remember,” he repeated, “to *no one*, if you please, sir.” I promised to follow his instructions strictly. He had his reasons, and I knew it.

As I had anticipated, his wife, a lovely woman, in the fulness of life’s bloom, rich in accomplishments, the *observed* of all *observers*, called at the office; I could detect beneath the bland smile the canker-worm of domestic sorrow; the seeds of misery were sown, the harvest was ripening.

“Are there any letters here for Mr. Middleton?”

If I detest any thing in the world, it is the telling of a white lie; it soon leads to a black one. I replied that there were, but orders had been given to deliver them to no person but himself.

“Orders, sir?—did he leave such orders?”

“He did, madam.”

She struggled with passion; it was, however, in vain. The words, “perjured villain,” escaped her, and she left the office.

I could now imagine their domestic scenes,—conscious guilt on the one side, injured and insulted innocence on the other. But even this was doomed to have an end.

A report ran through the city that a murder had been committed at No. 26 Gaskill Street. Good heavens! The dwelling of Caroline! I hurried to the scene of blood, and there lay the dead body of Middleton, and beside him, in the custody of two officers, his murderer,—a youthful paramour of this modern Jezebel.

He forfeited his life upon the gallows, and Caroline Somerville died of *mania a potu* in the alms-

house.

What became of the wife of the unfortunate Middleton? the reader may inquire. Do you see that little red frame-house which stands alone; that one with the neat little garden connected with it? There resides Mrs. Middleton, the once happy wife, together with her four small children: to maintain them she takes in washing. Yes, reader, such, alas! is her destiny.

The tide of public opinion rolls from crime, even while it carries upon its bosom many a bark freighted with the unhallowed cargo, and involves many an innocent victim in its reckless and overwhelming course. She is now alone in the world, with none to sympathize, none to alleviate her anguish. Her little ones are the peopled world in which she moves; beyond that all is chaos.

XVI.

Addenda.

We had written this portion of our work with feelings of gratitude to the brave men who achieved the glorious victory over the rebellious armies of the South, and looked forward to the time when Abraham Lincoln in triumph could repeat his words, uttered long before the surrender of Lee’s army: “*When the rebellion is crushed, my work is done.*” That work was done, and four millions of people were rescued from slavery; not alone from the fact of any determined opposition to the institution as it was and existed under the Constitution, but the effect of the rebellion itself.

Freedom under the administration of Abraham Lincoln became a reality, what before was but a name,—a shadow! He had just reached that point: his labor was nearly done, armies had surrendered, and the power of the government fully sustained. The shout of gratitude went up from the four points of our country, North, South, East, and West, and was carried to other nations with a rapidity unequalled in telegraphic or steam history. In the midst of this rejoicing, at a time when every heart throbbed with pleasurable emotions and a nation’s gratitude was about being manifested by brilliant illuminations and rejoicings, the demon of hell sent a fiend forth to destroy the life which had given a new one to our nation.

Our country was an Eden on the morning of the fatal day whose evening shrouded it in the deepest gloom. All nature was joyous, all men happy save those who inaugurated the rebellion and looked upon the downfall of slavery as the end of an institution upon which they sinned and grew rich,—vampire-like living on the blood of their fellow-creatures! Abraham Lincoln stood in the garden, the Eden of our country, the Adam of a new order of things,—a recreated world! The tree of liberty had been planted, its apples had been eaten eighty years before, and the curse of slavery followed. But now the tree was clear of its “Dead Sea fruit,” which had withered its branches; anew it blossomed, anew the rich, ripe fruit of freedom loaded its stems, and hung suspended,—bright jewels on a living tree. It was, is, and ever will be the tree of knowledge to a free and independent people, the golden fruit of all that is good, whose roots were watered by the tears of the grateful, and whose soil was enriched by the blood of those who died in defending it. Abraham Lincoln stood in this garden, the man of the people, as was the first man of God. There came up from the four corners of our land in lightning flashes the congratulations of twenty-five millions of *free* people. Proudly there he stood; the smile on his face was lighted up by the sunshine of his heart. Then it was that a wretch, whose vocation and associations had totally demoralized him, crept into this Eden, wherein all was joy and happiness,—his vile nature, envying a nation’s return to peace, aimed to destroy it. The name of this serpent was J. Wilkes Booth, the tool of Southern chivalry, the assassin by whose hand Abraham Lincoln fell. The moment that the spirit of this martyr passed from earth to heaven, the chains fell from the limbs of four millions of people, and the doom of slavery was sealed forever! The 14th of April, 1865, may be dated as an era in our country’s history long to be remembered, for Abraham Lincoln died in carrying out his great work of emancipation. He lived to see the last battle fought, lived till the power of the rebellion was broken, and then, having finished the work for which God had sent him, he passed away from this world to that high and glorious realm where the patriot and the good shall live forever.

“For the stars on our banner grown suddenly dim,
Let us weep in our sorrow, but weep not for him;
Not for him who departing leaves millions in tears,
Not for him who has died full of honors and years,
Not for him who ascended fame’s ladder so high,
From the round at the top he has stepped to the sky:
It is blessed to go when so ready to die.”

OUR NATIONAL GRIEF.

The murder of Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, on the 14th of April, 1865.

WRITTEN BY LAURA L. REES.

The drapery of death enshrouds,
In its dark, funereal pall,
Each quiet home. Its gloomy shade
Reveals the grief of all.
A country mourns. The moaning winds
Sigh requiems of woe;
E’en from the shifting clouds the tears
In crystal showers flow.

Our Father’s dead! from our sad hearts
Goes up one burden’d strain,
Till every trait of his great life
As monuments remain.
We fondly, thro’ the vista dim,
Our tearful visions cast,
And live in memory o’er again
Each history of the past.

We watch him in the ship of state,
On a treacherous, bloody tide:
’Neath his firm hand the nation’s bark
In triumph on shall ride.

His eagle eye, through shadows dark,
Still saw the beacon light;
His heart, unwavering, placed its trust
In God and freedom's right.

Now came the promised shore in view,
Now dawned the glorious day;
The darksome river brighter grew,
Reflecting victory's ray
Rebellion falls—a bleeding form—
Upon the crimson deck;
While Slavery sinks beneath the stream,
A black, dismantled wreck.

A peaceful rainbow bends its hues
Across the mighty strand;
It faded soon:—a ruler loved
Fell 'neath a traitor's hand.
Mid festive scenes the assassin comes
To act the dastard deed:
The nation's heart was wounded
When she saw the patriot bleed.

The stripes that deck Columbia's flag
Grew pallid at the sight;
The brilliant galaxy of stars
Flashed with a vivid light.
The unseen spirit of our land
Seem'd living in her wrath,
And threw the starry banner's folds
Across the murderer's path.
But from her clasp the assassin fled,
Like all the rebel horde,
Who spurn our colors with their heel,
And grasp the traitor's sword.

Centuries ago, that day,
A saddening act was done,
That rocked the earth in horror
And dimmed the radiant sun.
The Anointed One was crucified,
Mid agony and shame.
"Father, forgive them!" still he prayed,
Whilst *they* reviled his name.

Towards the mount of Calvary
The heavy cross was borne
By one of Afric's sons, a race
Now abject and forlorn.
The cruel yoke was on their life,
Its curse upon their head,
Till another raised its ponderous weight:
For it his blood was shed.

Upon Good Friday's holy eve
The stalwart Roman band
Removed the cross, lest its dread form
Pollute the Jewish land.
Upon Good Friday's holy eve
Columbia's noblest son
Laid down the weighty cross he bore:
The martyr crown was won.

When in the capital to him
A monument shall rise,
The record of a nation's love,
The tribute of her sighs,
We'll vow that traitorous deeds no more
Shall desecrate our fame;
No more the blot of slavery
Shall stain Columbia's name.

PHILADELPHIA, April 19, 1865.

FOOTNOTES:

1 In 1516 a regular line of posts was established in the Tyrol, connecting Germany and Italy, by Roger, Count of Thurn and Taxis. His successors received from the Emperor of Germany repeated *enfeoffments* of the imperial post, and extended it over the greatest part of Germany and Italy. Venice, Genoa, Leghorn, and Naples were thus connected with Hamburg, Bremen, Lubeck, and Frankfort-on-the-Main; and the active commerce which had sprung up between these cities became facilitated by such postal advantages as the system afforded. The Counts of Thurn and Taxis retained their postal monopoly till the fall of the German Empire.

2 Ambassadors and heralds—those sacred ministers of the kings of Greece in that primitive age of civilization and the cultivation of the arts—were the “posts” by which demands were made by one power from another, and redresses and grievances settled. These heralds were equally respected by friends and foes. They travelled in safety through the midst of embattled hosts, proclaimed to the silent warriors the commissions with which they were intrusted, or demanded, in return, truce, or time to consult and settle disputes, &c.

3 “And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus’ name, and sealed it with the king’s ring, and sent letters *by posts* on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries.”—*Esther* viii. 10.

“There is no doubt every available means of conveyance were adopted to carry these important letters throughout the kingdom, as the greatest speed was needful in the emergency. He sent men on horseback, and upon other creatures as swift as horses, and upon mules, both young and old, according as the places were nearer or farther off. So he ordered the letters to be sent by post.”—*Bp. Patrick.*

4 The ruins of the palace of Persepolis are still to be seen near Istaker, on the right bank of the united waters of the Medus and the Araxes. Travellers speak of them with admiration, not unmixed with awe. Many pillars still remain standing,—a melancholy monument of the wealth, taste, and civilization of the Persians, and, in this instance, of the barbarian vengeance of the Greeks.

5 See Oddy’s European Commerce; Anderson’s History of Commerce, and Historical Disquisitions of India.

6 Dr. James Mease. 1811.

7 Historical Sketch of the Progress of Trade (1811).

8 To Cadmus, who founded the kingdom of Thebes [1448 B.C.], is ascribed the introduction of alphabetical writing into Greece. At least sixteen letters of their alphabet claim him as the author. But as the order, names, and form of the characters greatly correspond with the Phœnician, it seems very probable that the Greek letters were formed from them, and that Cadmus did not invent, but copy them.

9 And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon *these* tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest.—Exodus xxxiv. 1.

In the ark of the covenant, so carefully preserved by the Jews, was Moses required to put the two tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written with the finger of God. We are expressly told that the ark contained nothing besides these tables. Aaron’s rod, the pot of manna, and the copy of the law were *by*, but not *within* the ark.—1 Kings viii. 9.

10 Meerman, well known as a writer upon the antiquities of printing, offered a reward for the earliest manuscript upon linen paper; and, in a treatise upon the subject, fixed the date of its invention between 1270 and 1300. But Mr. Schwandner, of Vienna, is said to have found in the imperial library a small charter bearing the date of 1243 on such paper. But more than one Arabian writer asserts the manufacture of linen paper to have been carried on at Samarcand early in the eighth century, having been brought thither from China; and, what is more conclusive, Casiri positively declares many manuscripts in the Escurial of the eleventh and twelfth centuries to be written on this substance. —*Bibliotheca Hispanica Arabica*, t. 11, p. 9.

11 The scuttle-fish emits a liquid strongly resembling ink.

12 The Rosetta stone, or rather a fragment of it, was discovered by a French officer of engineers, Mons. Bouchard, in August, 1799, when digging the foundations of Fort St. Julien, erected on the western bank of the Nile, between Rosetta and the sea, not far from the mouth of the river. It was deposited in the British Museum in 1802.

13 Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book 1, chap. iv.

14 These epistles of Solomon and Hiram are those in 1 Kings v. 3-9, and in 2 Chronicles ii. 3-16.

15 Letters were generally in the form of rolls, round a stick, or, if a long letter, round two sticks, beginning at each end and rolling them until they met in the middle. Books of every size were called *rolls*. Our word volume means just the same thing in its original signification. Jer. xxxvi. 2; Ps. xl.; Isa. xxxiv. 4. The roll, book, or letter was commonly written on one side: that which was given to Ezekiel, in vision, was written on both, within and without.—Ezek. ii. 10. Letters then, as is the custom in the East at present, were sent in most cases without being sealed; while those addressed to persons of distinction were placed in a valuable purse, or bag, which was tied, closed over with clay or wax, and so stamped with the writer’s signet. The Roman scrinium, or book-case, a

very costly cabinet, shows how these rolls were preserved. They were put in lengthwise, and labeled at top.

16 The mail was carried on horseback with the ancient pack-saddle, vulgarly called "saddle-bags." In passing along, he announced his approach by blowing a "ram's horn."

17 The number of letters annually transmitted throughout the kingdom is estimated at about 77,000,000; the gross receipts for postage (1837) were £2,339,737 18*s.* 3*d.*; the total cost of management and transportation, £698,632 2*s.* 2*d.*,—leaving a balance of £1,641,105 10*s.* 1*d.* as the revenue received by the government from the department. The number of franked letters was 7,000,000,—and 44,500,000 newspapers, which were free of postage.

18 Since the text was written,—namely, on the evening of Monday, the 6th of June,—the Lord Chancellor in the one house and Viscount Palmerston in the other communicated a message of the queen of her majesty's gracious intention to confer on Sir Rowland Hill a sum of £20,000, and asking her faithful Commons to make provision for the same.

19 Condensed from a work entitled "Her Majesty's Mails: an Historical and Descriptive Account of the British Post-Office." By William Lewins. London, Sampson Low, Son & Marston, 14, Ludgate Hill. 1864.

20 "He fills his mind with a vain or idle picture;" or, "He feeds his mind with empty representations. He dwells with eagerness upon the painted semblance," &c.

21 "A mind regardless of life [if sacrificed in a good cause]."

22 Hinton.

23 That such scenes should have taken place here is not so strange, when we take into consideration the fact that all England was witch-mad, and the epidemic raged there subsequent to those atrocities which disgraced our colonial history. Even now the blush of shame reflects its hue on those pages devoted to witchcraft in New England, from the cheeks of those who cannot read our country's history without referring to them. During the seventeenth century 40,000 persons are said to have been put to death for witchcraft in England alone. In Scotland the number was probably, in proportion to the population, much greater; for it is certain that even in the last forty years of the sixteenth century the executions were not fewer than 17,000. In 1643 the madness may be said to have reached its highest pitch; for in that year occurred the celebrated case of the Lancashire witches, in which eight innocent persons were deprived of their lives by the inherent falsehoods of a mischievous urchin. The civil war, far from suspending the prosecution, seemed to have redoubled it. In 1644-45 the infamous Matthew Hopkins was able to earn a livelihood by the profession of witch-finder, which he exercised, not indeed without occasional suspicion, but still with general success. And even twenty years later the delusion was still sanctioned by the most venerable name of the English law!

24 It was enlarged in 1737, burned down in 1776, rebuilt in 1778. The present building has a steeple 198 feet high.

25 The building occupied by the post-office originally belonged to the corporation of the Middle Dutch Church, and was their place of worship from the close of the seventeenth century until 1844. Up to that period it was the oldest church-edifice remaining in the city. A great part of the wood-work of the steeple, completely wrought, was brought from Holland. The building itself was of stone. During the Revolution it was near the upper verge of the city, its location being upon Nassau, Cedar, and Liberty Streets. When the British took possession of the city in 1776, they used it as a barracks for the soldiers. It was afterwards converted into a hospital, and finally the pews were removed and it was made a riding-school. In 1790 it was repaired, and again devoted to the worship of God. It was purchased by the General Government in 1861, for the purpose of a post-office, for $250,000.

26 "Ten Years among the Mail-Bags." By J. Holbrook. 1856.

27 Thomas Makin appears to have been one of the most early settlers in the province of Pennsylvania. In 1689 he was second master of the Friends' grammar-school in Philadelphia, which was the first of the kind in the province, and instituted about that time. In 1699 he was clerk for the Assembly, at four shillings per day. He was called "a good Latinist."

In the "Mercury" of November, 1733, his death is thus announced:—"Last Tuesday night, Mr. Thomas Makin, a very ancient man, who for many years was a schoolmaster in this city, stooping over a wharf-end to get a pail of water, unhappily fell in, and was drowned."

28 Watson's Annals.

29 This building, known for many years as "The London Coffee-House," stood at the southwest corner of Front and Market Streets. It was erected in 1701 by Charles Reed, and was first used as a "coffee-house" by William Bradford, the printer.

30 On very meagre authority it is stated that there was a "play-house" in New York in 1733. In an advertisement in "Bradford's Gazette" of that period, a merchant gives his place of business as being "next door to the play-house." This reference is all that has been found respecting it. What kind of a play-house is alluded to here remains a secret to those who take an interest in dramatic reminiscences.

31 This gentleman was mayor of the city in the years 1750 and 1755.

32 The play on this occasion was "George Barnwell."

33 This lady was drowned, together with her maid-servant, in the winter of 1767.

34 A manuscript note in the file of the American Mercury, preserved in the City Library, says that Franklin wrote the first five numbers and part of the eighth of this series. The rest were written by J. B., probably Joseph Breintnail, a member of the *junto*, whom Franklin describes as a "good-natured, friendly, middle-aged man, a great lover of poetry, reading all he could meet with, and writing some that was tolerable; very ingenious in making little nicknackeries, and of sensible conversation."

35 As an improvement on the above, cartridge-paper of a peculiar kind was used in 1778. When the American army entered Philadelphia, in June, 1778, upon the evacuation of the English troops, there was a want of paper fitted for the construction of cartridges. It was advertised for, and but a small quantity procured. An order was then issued demanding its instant production by all people in that city who had it. This produced but little, and most probably on account of its scarcity. A file of soldiers was then ordered to make search for it in every place where any was likely to be found. Among other places visited in July, 1778, was a garret in a house in which Benjamin Franklin had previously had his printing-office. Here were discovered about twenty-five hundred copies of a sermon which the Rev. Gilbert Tennent had written (printed by Franklin) upon "Defensive War," to rouse the colonists during the French troubles. They were all taken and used as cases for musket-cartridges, and at once sent to the army; and most of them were used at the battle of Monmouth. The requisites in cartridge-paper were, of course, thinness, strength, pliability, and inflammability; and such paper was necessarily scarce then.

36 In 1776 was adopted the standard to be used by the commander-in-chief of the American navy, "being a yellow field, with a lively representation of a rattlesnake in the middle, in the attitude of striking;" underneath were the words, "*Don't tread on me*."

The same year the cruisers of the colony of Massachusetts hoisted a white flag, with a green pine-tree and the motto, "*Appeal to Heaven*."

37 The author is indebted for the chief sources of information contained in this table, to that admirable and useful annual entitled "The Old Franklin Almanac," a title as modest as its contents are useful and instructing. It should be found in every house.

38 This article appeared about the time Judge McLean was a candidate for the Presidency, and was brought out to bear upon his success. There is no denying the fact but what there was more truth than poetry in the charges.

39 A man by the name of Carroll, residing in Charleston, South Carolina, was accused of being intimate with slaves, and also as a receiver of stolen goods, particularly the article of cotton. He was dragged from his house (August, 1835), and received twenty lashes; he was then stripped from his waist upwards, tarred and feathered; he was then marched in procession through the streets and lodged in the jail; he was also compelled to leave the city. The law, it seemed, sanctioned the action of the mob; for he was actually received in the prison from this self-constituted authority.

40 Constitution of the United States, art. ii. sect. 2.

41 This took place on the 1st of July, 1857, by which the mails were to be conveyed between Washington and New Orleans in four days and a half, by way of Richmond and Lynchburg, Virginia, Bristol, Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Grand Junction, Tennessee, and Jackson, Mississippi,—all by railroad, with the exception of a gap of ninety miles in Mississippi.

42 See Addenda.

43 The postal money-order system was approved by Congress, May 17, 1864. It went into operation July 4, 1864.

44 February 1, 1864.

45 Other classes of carriers receive higher salaries and other considerations from the government, which renders the office one of considerable importance, and requiring influence to obtain.

46 At this present writing a soldier who lost a leg at the battle of Gettysburg occupies this position.

47 The returns from 1846 to 1851 are for the six years under the law of March 3, 1845. Those from 1852 to 1863 are under the reduced rates established by the acts of March 3, 1851, and March 3, 1855.

48 Volney.

49 The postal history of Russia, like that of all other countries, is based upon its trade and commerce. Its railroads and canals, running through its vast extent of country, afford equal facility for its mails. Russia has her distributing cars for mails, and from its every post they are rapidly carried throughout the kingdom.

Recently the French Government has introduced mail-cars on the routes from Paris to Brest and from Paris to Calais. Mails to Germany, or at least to certain portions of its postal latitude, are thrown out at a point between Paris and Calais, at what is termed the "Junction Road." To follow up this portion of postal history would furnish a most interesting account of the whole system, and show to the world how insignificant are all other policies of rule, political, scientific, and military, when compared with that of TRADE AND COMMERCE.

50 In connection with the English post-office there is a savings-bank, which is also a money-order office. This bank is open for business during the same hours as for money-orders.

51 The island is situated in the Ohio River, one hundred and eighty-eight miles below Pittsburg, and two and a half miles from the beautiful little town of Parkersburg.

52 We were told by an officer of the department that the meaning of this section of the postal law is not made sufficiently clear, but it is generally understood by those who have control of an office. This is not the case; for we know one large newspaper (weekly) proprietor who, taking the section literally, sends a very large edition of his paper through the Philadelphia post-office to all his subscribers, and defends himself under this order from the general post-office:— "*Weekly newspapers (one copy only) sent by the publisher to actual subscribers within the county where printed and published, free.*"

53 New York Review.

54 For a number of these addresses the author is indebted to that excellent paper entitled the "United States Mail."

55 There is a small paper published in Albany, New York, entitled the "Stamp Collector's Record." It is entirely devoted to the *cause* of stamps and their collectors. It furnishes also considerable information upon the subject in connection with foreign stamps.

56 The number of individuals employed in the English post-office is very considerable. On the 31st of December, 1857, it gave employment to twenty-three thousand seven hundred and thirty-one persons, while the number has been since considerably increased. More than two thousand of these clerks are employed in the chief office in London. The number of persons employed in the post-office of France amounts to twenty-six thousand and seventy-one; but then it should be remembered that the extent and population of France are greater than the extent and population of Great Britain.

57 It may be added here that these deliveries are distinct from what is termed the "general delivery." As all the principal mails arrive in London in the morning, there are but three deliveries a day by the carriers of the general post. These carriers are distinguished from those belonging to the two-penny post or city delivery by wearing the livery of the department, viz.: a scarlet coat with a blue collar, and buttons stamped with an impression of the royal arms.

58 Persons anxious to examine more closely into this subject, which, however, is now settled, no doubt finally, by a compromise with the parties, are referred to the opinion of the court, "United States *vs.* Kochersperger," in report of the postmaster-general for the year 1860.

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