

POST OFFICE.

The advancement made by the Post Office in British America, as noted in the *Year Book* of 1867, may well lead to the consideration of what will be the progress attainable by this important branch of the public service in future years. We are now, without doubt, on the eve of marked changes. The one which appears to have taken the firmest hold on the public mind, is the desire for a cheaper postage, both by land and sea. This subject has already occupied the attention of those at the head of the administration of postal affairs, in the separate Provinces, and will no doubt be adopted by the Confederate Postmaster General at no distant day. The Hon. James Morris, who was appointed Postmaster General when the British authorities handed over the Post Office of Upper and Lower Canada to the Provincial Government, succeeded in greatly reducing the inland postage. Before the transfer, which took place on the 6th April, 1851, a uniform rate was unknown in British America; distance, and the number of sheets of paper composing a letter being then the guides to the amount of postage levied.

It was computed that the average amount charged on inland letters, previous to the transfer, amounted to about 15 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. letter; this was reduced to 5 cents. At the same time Box or Drop letters were reduced from 2 to 1 cent each; the charge on newspapers was to a great extent removed, and the rates on books and other printed matter, considerably modified. Notwithstanding these reductions, which amounted to over 66 per cent., the postal revenue of 1852 was over two-thirds of that collected in the previous year, the number of letters sent by post having a good deal more than doubled.

Mr. Morris's 5 cent rate is now looked upon by the public as the first step in the direction of a further reduction to 3 cents—which sum is perhaps the nearest approach we can as yet make to the penny postage of Great Britain.

The larger Provinces of Quebec and Ontario have hitherto been the first to take up any postal reforms found practicable in the mother country. This progress will henceforward be uniform, and those Provinces whose revenues were too limited to undertake extended improvements will now have new benefits conferred upon them at the same time as the wealthier portions of the Dominion, instead of having to wait to ascertain how these measures would suit on this side of the Atlantic before adopting them.

In looking to the future of postal operations, although perhaps not so near at hand as the reduction of internal, Ocean, or United States postage, yet it may not be out of place to consider the propriety of at some future day employing the Telegraph, either by purchasing the wires or by subsidising the companies, so as to obtain the privilege of sending messages for so many hours per day, at a cheap and uniform rate.

Savings Banks may also be looked upon as a future accessory, especially as they have been tried and found of such convenience to the public of the United Kingdom. But the scheme best calculated to add to the postal revenue is that of the interchange of Money Orders with the United States. Some arrangement whereby this benefit could be conferred, would doubtless ere this have been arrived at, but unfortunately the currency of the United States is in such an unsettled condition that so far this method of remitting money has not been found practicable, but it is to be hoped that some plan may soon be discovered to obviate this difficulty, as little if any security at present exists to parties who send small sums across the lines in letters. It was not until the 1st November, 1864, that the Money Order system was established in the American Union. Since then, 833 offices have been opened for the transaction of business, and on the 30th June, 1866, all charges for salaries, books, stationery, and other expenses, had been paid out of the commission accruing to the Government and a balance left on hand of \$90.82. Now that the system has been working so well in the two countries, it would seem most unfortunate if this new bond of unity could not be favourably adjusted.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.—DOMINION OF CANADA.

General Post Office.

Postmaster-General, Hon. Alex. Campbell; Deputy, W. H. Griffin; Accountant, H. A. Wicksteed; Secretary, W. White; Cashier, J. Ashworth; Superintendent Money Order Branch, P. Le Sueur.

Letter Rates.

Local letters if pre-paid. 5 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. | Local letters if unpaid. 7 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.
If a letter is posted partially unpaid the charge on delivery will be the same as if wholly unpaid, deducting, however, any amount that may have been pre-paid upon it. Letters mailed for delivery at the office where posted, 1 cent each. Letters are re-directed from one place to another without any further charge. On letters re-mailed from the Dead Letter Office, 3 cents additional; 2 cents for letters delivered by letter carriers.

Letters to Non-commissioned Officers and Privates, whether in Her Majesty's Service or Canadian Volunteers, whilst on active service, pass if pre-paid for two cents each, when not over the $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; if over $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., ordinary letter rates.

On letters circulating within the Dominion, or for the Island of Prince Edward, the charge is 5 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., pre-payment optional; to Newfoundland, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents.

Letters may be sent fortnightly by "Royal Mail Steamer" from Boston for Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, but must be pre-paid 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

Letters sent to the United States, British Columbia, California, Oregon, Red River, and Sandwich Island, when forwarded *via* United States, and not through England, the postage is 10 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Letters for British Columbia, however, can only be pre-paid as far as San Francisco. Those for British Columbia, California, and Red River, must be pre-paid.

Letter postage to Cuba *via* United States is 20 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; to Bermuda, Porto Rico, 23 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., which must be pre-paid.