the timid minds of the Lords of the Treasury to sanction, and after some delay they made an uniform rate of *fourpence*. But this half-measure was universally felt to be utterly inadequate to the requirements of the time, and the Government within two months were compelled to make another minute, ordering, as an experiment, the adoption of an uniform penny rate.

Six months' experience proved the principle on which this step was based to be sound and advantageous. On the 10th of August, 1840, the minute of the Treasury was embodied in an Act of Parliament, and became the law of the land.

A Government appointment was now given to Mr. Rowland Hill, "to assist in carrying the penny postage into effect." But the career of a reformer is not one in which smooth water only is found; and Mr. Hill soon found himself bowed out of office, under the plea that his offspring was able to take care of itself, and required no leading-strings. Some idea, indeed, may be formed of the general success of the scheme, from the fact that in the four years, 1838 to 1842, the number of letters passing through the General Post Office increased from seventy-five millions to two hundred and nineteen millions, and the increase continued to advance year by year. But although Mr. Hill was dismissed from his post for a time, the services of such a man were obviously of too much importance, in many branches of Post Office business, to be dispensed with for any lengthened period, and in 1846 he was made Secretary to the Postmaster-General, the Marquis of Clanricarde. In 1854 he was appointed Secretary to the Post Office—the highest permanent office in the establishment; the Postmaster-General being appointed from time to time by the existing Government.

Mr. Rowland Hill's career had been that of an invaluable public servant. In all branches of Post Office business his influence and his talents had been constantly exerted for the national good; and when in 1860 he received the honour of knighthood, it was felt to be a just recognition of his public services. His recent retirement is much regretted by the nation, but his great work of postal reform was

fully and satisfactorily achieved, and has been followed by a handsome recognition of his services on the part of the Government and the country. Some idea of the beneficial influence of the penny postal system in England may be gathered from Sir Rowland Hill's own summary of its results, in which he states that "A comparison of the year 1863 with 1838 (the last complete year under the old system) shows that the number of chargeable letters has risen from 76,000,000 to 642,000,000; and that the revenue, at first much impaired, has not only recovered its original amount, but risen—the gross from £2,346,000 to about £3,870,000, and the nett from £1,660,000 to about £1,790,000."

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