

he really left nothing undone that might insure success; he delighted Letitia with the specimens of rare mountain-ferns that he brought her, and arranged carefully in a cabinet her valuable collection of various kinds of ore.

When Mr. Hobday finally made up his mind that the time had come to give up his roving life and to establish himself in a settled home, Miss Letty's preference guided him in the selection of a few acres of choice land within convenient driving distance of Alberta; and it was Miss Letty who was asked to criticize the architect's plans and to suggest improvements. The size of the house and its many

conveniences in the shape of presses and cupboards—conveniences which Letitia declared were absolutely necessary—made it evident to all that Mr. Hobday had no intention of being its sole occupant.

Strange to say, it was on the very same bluff, overlooking the narrows of the inlet, where Letitia had long ago been kissed by Neville, that Mr. Hobday advanced the idea of a trip to San Francisco for the purpose of buying furniture.

"And I've come to depend so much on your taste, Letty," he said, "that you must not desert me now."

M. E. Angus.

THE OCEAN POSTAL SERVICE.



FOR many years after the founding of New Amsterdam, in 1614, there seems to have been no officially recognized post-office in what is now known as the city of New York. The arrival of a ship was looked upon as the most important event in the life of the colony. There was always a crowd at the wharf, and, in course of time, when a little system was applied to the proceeding, it was the custom to deliver to the merchants letters relating to the

ship's cargo, after which the general correspondence was distributed to the waiting and impatient crowd. If the owner of a letter could not be found, it was given to some responsible resident, who kept it until it was called for. In 1657 we find that a law was passed forbidding any person going on board any newly arrived ship from the fatherland, or elsewhere, until the letters had been delivered to the Honorable General of the colony. In explanation of this order it was stated that many mistakes had occurred, and many complaints had been made that letters and invoices were lost; thereafter letters were not to be delivered to the general public before a proper list of them had been made. The necessity of this law would certainly seem to argue that the mail-delivery was a little too exciting for our Dutch ancestors, and that the proceeding was not conducted in the slow and stolid manner that usually characterizes the doings of the race. Two years later, on the complaint that outgoing letters were lost through being badly directed by private skippers, a law was passed forbidding skippers, sailors, and passengers who were sailing out from taking

with them any private letters. "In order that letters may accordingly be conveyed more certainly and better, a box is appropriated at the office of the Secretary of the Director-General and Council, in which letters are to be deposited; and if any one require a receipt for his letter, it shall be given him by one of the clerks, and the letter recorded on the list, on condition of paying three stivers in wampum therefor." The introduction of the collection-box and the registry system seems thus to have been first used at this very early day in connection with the ocean postal service.

As early as 1673 it was proposed to establish a post between New York and Boston, but, owing to the Dutch war and other causes, the project fell through, although Massachusetts afterward appointed a local postmaster at Boston. Governor Dongan, in 1684, proposed to set up post-houses along the coast from the Carolinas to Nova Scotia.

The first parliamentary act for the establishment of a post-office in the English-American colonies was passed in April, 1692, and the royal patent was granted to Thomas Neale for that purpose. He was to transport letters and packets "at such rates as the planters should agree to give." The rates of postage were accordingly fixed and authorized, and measures were taken to establish a post-office in each town in Virginia, when Neale began his operations. His patent expired in 1710, when Parliament extended the English postal system to the colonies. The chief office was established in New York, to which letters were conveyed by regular packets across the Atlantic. A line of post-offices was soon after established on Neale's old routes, north of the present city of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and south to Philadelphia, and irregularly extended, a few years later, to Williamsburg, Virginia. The

post left for the South as often as letters enough were deposited to pay the expense. The rates were fixed, and the post-riders had certain privileges to travel.

What was called "the coffee-house delivery" of letters was probably the most unique feature connected with the early ocean postal service. The system originated from the fact that masters of vessels and the residents of Breucklyn, Pavonia, and Hackensack left letters at some well-known tavern previously agreed upon. This system of delivering the ocean mail lasted for many years, until after the English took possession of New York. The first printed mention of the coffee-house proper is found in the "New York Gazette" for March 1, 1730. Mention is there made of a sale of land by public vendue at the Exchange Coffee-House. This building was the first or Old Exchange. It was constructed in 1691, and was located at the foot of Broad street. After having been used for a long time as a shambles, it was repaired and became a resort for dealers in food-products and for merchants generally. The water-front during this period was a favorite resort for the maritime portion of the community, who patronized the small taverns located along the wharves.

In 1743 the Merchants' Coffee-House, located on the southeast corner of Wall and Queen (now Water) streets, was a popular resort. A third famous coffee-house, with which a few of the oldest inhabitants are probably familiar, and which was demolished only a few years ago, was the Tontine. This was erected between 1792 and 1794 by an incorporated association called the Tontine Association, in honor of Tonti, a Neapolitan, who introduced a similar scheme into France in 1653. The word Tontine designated a loan advanced by a number of associated capitalists for life annuities with benefit to survivorship.

From the time when the coffee-house was started until after the Revolutionary period it filled the place now occupied by two very distinct institutions, the exchange and the club. The old Dutch and Knickerbocker merchants believed in "living by the way," and were in the habit of combining sociability with business. They were accustomed to meet at their resorts in the middle of the day, and, over a glass of ale or coffee (it was pretty sure to be schnapps in the case of the Dutch), to talk about social happenings and business prospects. In the smaller seaport towns along the coast it was the custom for the people to turn out *en masse* to greet the arrival of every vessel, receiving such mail as the officers of the ship brought over, and exchanging news and gossip with the ship's crew. When vessels arrived at the harbor of New York, the captain took the mail intended

for the general public to the coffee-house, where the letters were put into a box, or stuck behind strips of tape that were drawn tightly over a good-sized board covered with green baize. Here they would remain until called for, and sometimes it would be a long time before the owners of them could be found. In the days when the Dutch had possession of the town there was an unusual effort on the part of the frequenters of these resorts to see that the correspondence was promptly delivered.

After the war of 1812, when the rights of American commerce had been secured, the packet service was brought into existence by the growing trade between the United States and Europe. The Black Ball Line, started in 1816, was the first of several lines of vessels which in those days were unrivaled for strength, beauty, and speed. It was not until 1843 that the United States had any regular mail service on the ocean, and after 1812 letters were sent upon sailing ships that were bound for the ports to which they were addressed. The facilities for foreign correspondence were very much better than they had been; the trips were made more frequently and in better time. The passage from New York to Liverpool was made several times in fourteen days, which was then considered a quick trip. In 1817 packets sailed from New York to Providence, Rhode Island, every week, sometimes taking eighteen hours and sometimes a whole week. Over the cabin stairs hung a mahogany letter-box, and on arrival there would be a rush of people to the packet to get letters in advance of the slow mail that came over the post-roads. As soon as the immediate business of landing was over, the captain would pour the contents of the letter-box upon a table, and, after the distribution of letters, decanters were produced and everybody drank the captain's health.

After the packet service came the brilliant era of the clippers, from 1840 to 1855. These ships were built expressly for speed. The growing trade of the United States with China and India, and the discovery of gold in California and Australia, developed this craft. In 1851 the *Flying Cloud* went to San Francisco from New York in eighty-four days—the fastest trip ever made by a sailing vessel. In 1854 the *Dreadnought* became celebrated by reaching Sandy Hook as soon as the Cunard steamer *Canada*, which had left Liverpool one day earlier, reached Boston. In 1846 the *Toronto*, a packet-ship of the Morgan Line, beat the Cunard steamer from Liverpool, bringing a copy of the London "Times" containing news from Europe forty-two days later than the last paper received. The paper was given to a reporter of "The New York Herald," which

published an "extra" the same afternoon. The packets and clipper-ships unofficially carried mails, and the increase of speed in ocean travel was especially appreciated by the letter-writing public.

In the year 1845 Congress passed the first law having reference to ocean mail transportation. This law authorized the Postmaster-General to make contracts, not exceeding ten years, for the transportation of mails to any foreign port. All such contracts were to be made with citizens of the United States, and the mail was to be transported in American vessels by American citizens. By this time the foreign mail had become a very important factor from both a business and a governmental point of view. The Government was then paying to the Cunard line about a million and a half dollars annually for postage and freight, and that line had become so prosperous that a duplication of the steamers was contemplated. Another provision of the act referred to was that preference should be given to the tenders of persons proposing to perform the service in steamships suitable for vessels of war and claimable by the Government when needed for that purpose at an appraised valuation. This act seems to have been intended as a first step toward the creation of a steam navy,—in imitation of the policy pursued by Great Britain at that time,—the national defense and the protection of commerce in the emergency of a foreign war being the principal objects in view, the conveyance of the mails being subordinate. After experiments on a considerable number of lines, extending over a period of ten years, Great Britain found that the employment of steamers of the navy in the postal service was inefficient, costly, and cumbrous, and finally abandoned the method.

In the United States Senate, the following year, ocean mail transportation was the subject of a spirited debate, the discussion being on a resolution authorizing the Postmaster-General to apply \$25,000 of the money appropriated for mail transportation for a line of steamers from the United States to Bremen, and \$25,000 for a line of mail-steamers from the United States to Liverpool. The people of Germany and Prussia looked upon this enterprise as very important. A special agent was sent by the German authorities from Bremen for the express purpose of aiding in the completion of the work of beginning direct communication between the United States and the German states, and with a view to enlarging the commercial and political intercourse between the two countries. There were some senators who strongly objected to this scheme. It was argued that the ocean mail could not be carried on profitably, that a line of steamers should

not be granted to New York to the exclusion of other ports. Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston, New Orleans, and all the principal cities on the coast would be petitioning for the establishment of mail-lines to Europe. Merchants would demand a line not only to Liverpool, but to the East Indies and to Buenos Ayres. It was urged that the Government might better establish more post-offices in the interior of the country instead of appropriating money for the ocean service. One senator treated the whole subject sarcastically, saying that the Government, after being made bankrupt by carrying letters at home, was going to be enriched beyond all calculation by carrying letters to Europe! He said it was not a new thing to hear of splendid projects by which the Government was to be made rich: he had heard of a project for filling the coffers of the treasury by boiling salt water; there was also a scheme for raising live oak in Florida. He had made a calculation, and had found that for every foot of live oak they would put into their ships they would be out a cubic foot of silver or gold—he did not remember which, but he would stick to the gold.

Postage on letters sent by the ordinary English steamers was twenty-five cents, and in private ships six cents, and of this postage the Government received nothing.

To aid in carrying out the provisions of the act of 1845 Postmaster-General Johnson in the summer of 1847 sent one of his assistants abroad, and he made the first international postal treaty. Under this arrangement the city of Bremen became the transatlantic exchange office for all mails sent by the new ocean line. The rates of postage curtailed one half the previous expense for correspondence, and the results, both social and commercial, were highly important. Under the act of 1845 the Government made a contract for ten years with "The Ocean Steam Navigation Company" for the transportation of the United States mails to Southampton, Havre, and Bremen. The arrangement went into effect in 1848; the sum paid to the company increased from \$100,500 in 1848 to \$200,000 in 1857. On the expiration of this contract, the company being unwilling to continue the service on the terms offered by the Government, the contract was given to Cornelius Vanderbilt, who at this time had three ships out of employment, two of them being the *North Star* and *Ariel*. From 1861 to 1865, inclusive, he conveyed the mails to the Isthmus and South Pacific.

When once the foreign mail service was started, its improvement and development were very rapid. In 1851 a general law was passed authorizing the Postmaster-General to make contracts "for better postal intercourse with

foreign countries," and within the next few years the service was greatly extended. In 1864 Congress passed what was known as "The Compulsory Act," which required steamships bearing the flag of the United States to accept mails from any port in this country, or from any foreign port to the United States. This law was repealed in 1884, the compensation of two cents per letter being strongly objected to by the masters of American vessels, who argued that the basis of payment should be on the number of miles traveled. Under the act of 1885, the Postmaster-General now contracts for the transportation of the foreign mails with the lowest responsible bidder. When the foreign mail service was established, the rate of postage was twenty-four cents per half-ounce. It was gradually reduced until, in 1874, the United States entered into what is known as the "Postal Union," under which postage was fixed at five cents a half-ounce to all countries represented in that body.

One steamship company—the Pacific Mail—is closely connected with the early development of the ocean mail service, and with the progress of our Pacific territory. The corporation was chartered by the New York Legislature in 1848, and at the beginning of its business there was a large and growing passenger traffic between the port of New York and what subsequently became the city of San Francisco. The steamer *California*, which left New York on the 6th of October, 1848, was the first to bear the American flag to the Pacific ocean. The gold crisis made the enterprise very successful for the first few years.

Even as late as 1855 the condition of the foreign mail service presented some remarkable features. At that time a letter destined for Brazil, 4000 miles distant, had to be sent via England, Portugal, the coast of Africa, Madeira, and the Cape Verd Islands, thus traveling 8000 miles, and this, too, in a British packet. One destined for the Pacific coast of South America went to Panama, where it was obliged to await the arrival of an English packet with London letters more recently dated, before it could proceed to Callao, Lima, and Valparaiso. Letters for the West Indies went to Havana only in American steamers, and there they met British vessels which distributed them to the various islands, the Spanish Main, the Guianas, Venezuela, and New Granada. Letters for the continent of Europe went by the Cunard line to England, and thence by English steamers to the British Channel, Baltic Sea, the White Sea, the Mediterranean, Egypt, Constantinople, or the Black Sea. Letters to places along the coast of Africa, and to the Cape of Good Hope were sent by the English packet-ships.

About thirty years ago some of our American economists urged that it was the duty of our Government to establish and maintain an extensive, well-organized, and rapid steam mail marine, for the benefit of production, commerce, diplomacy, defenses, the character of the nation, and the public at large; and that this enterprise should be paid for liberally out of the funds in the national treasury.

In view of some legislation recently suggested in Congress, and to which I will refer further on, it will be interesting to note the arguments made at that time in favor of the scheme. In a condensed form they were as follows:

"We have not established ocean mail facilities commensurate with our national ability and the demands of our commerce; and we are largely dependent on, and tributary to, our greatest commercial rival, Great Britain, for the postal facilities which should be purely national, American, and under our own exclusive control.

"Fast steamers alone can furnish rapid transport to the mails; these steamers cannot rely on freights; sailing vessels will ever carry staple freights at a much lower figure, and quickly enough; while steam is eminently successful in the coasting trade, it cannot possibly be so in the transatlantic freighting business; the rapid transit of the mails, and the slower and more deliberate transport of freight, is the law of nature.

"Ocean mail-steamers cannot live on their own receipts; self-support is not likely to be attained by increasing the size of steamers; the propelling power in fast steamers occupies all of the available space not devoted to passengers and express freight.

"Sailing vessels cannot successfully transport the mails; we cannot, in any sense, depend on the vessels of the navy for the transport of the mails; individual enterprise cannot support fast steamers; not even *American* private enterprise can, under any conditions, furnish a sufficiently rapid steam mail and passenger marine.

"The Government can discharge the clear and unquestionable duty of establishing foreign mail facilities only by paying liberal prices for the transport of the mails for a long term of years, by creating and sustaining an ocean postal system, by legislating upon it systematically, and by abandoning our slavish dependence upon Great Britain."

The legislation proposed some time since, and to which I referred, is a bill reported by Senator Frye from the Committee on Commerce. It provides for ocean mail service between the United States and foreign ports, and is intended to promote commerce. It seems to be similar to the subsidization scheme of thirty years ago and to be recommended on similar grounds.

It provides that the Postmaster-General may make contracts for the carrying of the United States mails in United States ships, owned by American citizens, between United States ports and all foreign ports. He may make the contract for not less than five years', and for not more than ten years', duration. The bill provides for four classes of steamships for which he may contract, the first class being steel ships of a registered tonnage of not less than eight thousand tons, capable of maintaining at sea, in ordinary weather, twenty knots an hour. It provides that only that class of ships shall be used for the transportation of the mails between the United States and Great Britain. A second class of ships is provided for, of not less than five thousand tons' register, and capable of maintaining eighteen knots an hour at sea in ordinary weather. It provides for a third class of fourteen knots an hour, and not less than two thousand tons; and for a fourth class of not less than fifteen hundred tons, which may be of iron, steel, or wood. The pay for the first class is not to exceed \$6.00 a mile, outward-bound voyage; for the second class, \$3.00; for the third class, \$1.50; and for the fourth class, \$1.00. It provides that the vessels heretofore built and contracted for by the Postmaster-General shall first be inspected and receive a certificate of fitness for the service from the Secretary of the Navy; that the first three classes hereafter built shall be constructed according to plans and specifications approved by the Secretary of the Navy; that they shall be of the highest maritime rating known to American or foreign registers; that they shall be capable of sustaining four six-inch guns; and that they shall in all respects be built so as to be converted into auxiliary cruisers for the navy within ten or twenty days, with sufficient strength for all purposes that the navy would require them for. The bill also provides that they shall carry American apprentices as petty officers, one for each one thousand tons; and that they shall educate and train them in seamanship. It provides that they shall carry the mail-messenger of the United States, and furnish him with the necessary accommodations for himself and his mail. The United States, the bill provides, may take the ships whenever they please, paying whatever may be agreed upon, or, if there is a disagreement, whatever impartial appraisers may determine.

Thirty-two years ago the suggestion that the United States should employ vessels in the navy for the ocean mail service was met by the argument (which would probably be equally good at the present time) that such vessels were not adapted for such service; the navy did not require great speed, while the post did. It was also urged at that time that the vessels of the

navy would be weighted down with guns, stores, men, and a thousand things which would be in the way if they were employed for the mails. As they had no accommodations for passengers and freight, they would be deprived of those sources of income, and would have to fall back on the Government for their expenses, which would be very much more than would have to be paid to private companies for carrying the mails.

In my opinion, the proper way to manage the financial part of the ocean postal service is to pay the ships a fair compensation for carrying the mails, the same as we pay the railroads, or to make contracts with them for transporting the mails for certain distances. The British government, for instance, does not grant subsidies, in the general sense of that term, to any steamship company, but the post-office authorities make contracts for the conveyance of mails to different parts of the world with the steamship companies having steamers sailing for those parts. It will be well for us to follow the example of a government whose experience we have for nothing.

The American system of not having any exclusive contracts with steamships of any particular line, and of sending the mail by the first fast steamer, has been found to work successfully, and has received praise from such a conservative English journal as "The Saturday Review." Some months ago that paper complained of the tardiness of the English mail service. The article stated that letters written in London on Sunday rarely arrived in New York more than thirty-six hours before letters written in London on the Saturday six days later. This came about from the giving exclusive contracts for the carrying of the mails. Most of the countries of Europe send their mails to the United States by the fastest steamer offered, without regard to where the vessel hails from. Great Britain, however, despatches its regular mails by the Cunard and White Star lines, sailing from Queenstown. The time required for the conveyance of mails from London to Queenstown is eighteen hours and thirty-five minutes; and from London to Southampton, two hours and forty-five minutes. The North German Lloyd steamers sail from Southampton the same day that the White Star vessels sail from Queenstown, and they arrive at New York before the White Star steamers. More than a day could be saved if the English government followed the American rule. If the German vessels were allowed to convey from Southampton the mails that accumulate after the departure from London of the mails to be sent by the Cunard or White Star vessels from Queenstown, it would not only save the difference in the time required to convey the

mails from London to Queenstown and Southampton, but would advance the despatch of the mails held to be sent by the next Cunard or White Star steamer sailing from Queenstown two days after the German vessel sails from Southampton. Goods coming to the United States by the fast ships are thrown on the dock as unclaimed goods, and are taken possession of by the Government and put into a general-order store, mails containing the bills of lading coming, later on, by the slow ships. All that expense has to be borne by our people simply because the English government is determined to send its mails by a line it wishes to support.

One of the most important postal reforms needed at the present time is a reduction in the rates of ocean postage. I believe I was the first one to advocate publicly this reform, which I did at a banquet given in London in 1883. The suggestion was favorably received by my auditors, among whom were a number of distinguished English statesmen and men of affairs. The London "Telegraph" published a favorable article on the subject, but the suggestion did not meet with the approval of the postal authorities at Washington. On mature reflection, and further examination into the subject, I have not changed my opinion in regard to the need of this reform, and since that time I have publicly advocated it by speech and pen.

Our foreign correspondence has increased wonderfully of late years. During my recent visit abroad, Mr. Rich, the postmaster at Liverpool (one of the ablest post-office officials in the world), told me that he, as a clerk in the British post-office, when a boy, put the foreign mail on board the steamship *Great Western* about the year 1840, and it amounted to two sacks; at the present time it amounts to five or six truck-loads. In 1873, when I was postmaster at New York, the English out-going mail was considered very large if it reached 20,000 letters. At the present time over one hundred thousand foreign letters are sent from New York every sailing day, and nearly the same number are received. The total weight of the mails despatched to foreign countries during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1888, was 643,616 pounds, representing letters and postal cards, and 3,022,992 pounds, representing other articles. The percentage of mail-matter despatched to different countries is represented as follows, the calculation being based on an actual count of the articles contained in the mails, made during two weeks of the year: Great Britain, 51.22; Germany, 20.27; France, 7.60; Italy, 4.41; Norway, 1.44; Switzerland, 2.28; Cuba, 8.67; United States of Colombia, 5.51; Chile, 3.86; Mexico, 2.99.

In my opinion, the letter rate of ocean postage should be reduced to two cents an ounce,

and newspapers and periodicals from the office of publication should be carried for one cent per pound. Under the present system a letter going across the ocean requires a five-cent stamp, or 2½d., English money, the weight of the letter not to exceed half an ounce; for three cents more a letter could be sent all the way from England to Hong Kong. The same high rates apply, relatively, to Germany and other nations on the Continent. We boast of having cheap domestic postage, but notwithstanding the great increase of foreign correspondence, there has been no reduction in the postal rates. We can send a letter from New York to Alaska, a distance of 5000 miles, for two cents, while it costs five cents to forward one from New York to London, a distance of 3000 miles.

I believe, also, that there should be a reduction in the rate on international money-orders. At present it is eight cents on a \$10.00 order, and forty-five cents on a \$100.00 order. These rates should be reduced one half. Dr. C. F. MacDonald, Superintendent of the Money-Order System, has recommended the increase of the maximum amount of a single international money-order from \$50.00 to \$100.00. Such a change would produce uniformity in respect to the maximum amount between the domestic and the international money-order, and would, besides, tend to reduce the expenses of the international money-order system, inasmuch as for sums from \$50.00 to \$100.00 a single order would be required in lieu of two, as at present. Since the postmasters and clerks who issue the orders, and the exchange officers who certify them, are compensated for their labor, not upon the basis of the amounts of the orders, but upon that of the number of transactions at a fixed rate per transaction, the lessening of expense in the item of clerk-hire in post-offices would be by no means inconsiderable. There is a steady increase in this branch of the Government's business.

The ocean mail service has been greatly improved during the past year. The sea post-offices established on the steamers of the North German Lloyd, between New York and Bremen, and on those of the Hamburg-American Packet Company, between New York and Hamburg, have been a great success. Incoming foreign mail is now received from two hours to a week sooner than it used to be. Postmaster-General Wanamaker has not been able, however, to complete a similar arrangement with the Post-Office Department of Great Britain, though the owners of the White Star and Inman steamships were in favor of the change.

In England, at the present time, there is a strong effort being made in favor of universal international penny-postage. The Hon. J.

Henniker Heaton, M. P. for Canterbury, is at the head of this movement; he recently visited the United States, with the view of interesting some of our leading officials and public men in the proposed reform.¹ Mr. Heaton takes the ground that the state has no right to make a profit out of the post-office. So much of the business life of the community, he says, is now dependent on the postal service that a large part of the postal revenue is derived from a tax on the machinery of trade, while another large part of the revenue is taken from the poorest class of citizens who are obliged to use the mails. He says he can understand the state charging a tax of sixpence a ton on coals actually sold, but he cannot understand a tax of sixpence on the correspondence leading to that business transaction. The state should encourage those operations of commerce which ultimately furnish work to English workers, and thus benefit the entire community. A reduction in the cost of postage would be a benefit to the entire community, and would reap a harvest of universal gratitude. It is also urged that penny-postage would promote a more brotherly feeling between the mother-country and the millions of Englishmen dwelling in her colonies, and would also tend to avert the wars which so frequently disgrace humanity, because the people of countries in constant communication would be less likely to quarrel than those which remain in savage isolation.

In this connection it may be said that the present Postmaster-General of Great Britain,

Sir James Ferguson, has steadily opposed the ocean penny-postage scheme as it has been presented from time to time by Mr. Henniker Heaton and his followers. This is not surprising when we recall the fact that the postal reforms of the great Rowland Hill were opposed, not only by the officials of his day, but by some of the most prominent men of the period, including the witty Rev. Sydney Smith.

One of the London weeklies (I think the "Echo"), not long since, in commenting on the dullness of the postal officials to appreciate this valuable reform, observed that the only thing to do was to "keep pegging away," and, in the course of time, as experience had shown, even the official mind, adamant though it might be at the outset, would succumb to the continued effort that had been made upon it.

Many improvements have been made in our domestic postal service during the last few years. Every now and then we hear of the proposition to reduce the rate of postage on domestic letters to one cent, to make use of the pneumatic tube or some similar underground system of transportation in our larger cities, and to introduce the free-delivery system into our smaller towns and villages. These suggestions are very good in their way, but it would seem as though the reform most needed at the present time is a reduction in the rates of ocean postage. With a growing public sentiment, both in England and in the United States, in favor of such a change, it will not be long before it will be brought about.

*Thomas L. James.*²

¹ In a letter to "The New York Times," published in January last, the interesting statement is made that "Mr. Henniker Heaton has just made an important offer to Mr. George J. Goschen, Chancellor of the Exchequer, which, if accepted, will institute an ocean penny-postage. Mr. Heaton, with two friends, an Australian millionaire and an English capitalist, has offered to guarantee the British government against all loss if a penny-postage be established between the English-speaking peoples of the British Empire and the United States of America.

The probable loss was estimated by Mr. Goschen himself at £75,000 per annum, but Mr. Heaton maintains that the loss would not extend over more than three years, and that after that ocean penny-postage would make a profit, as has been the case with the inland penny-postage. Mr. Goschen says the Government cannot accept Mr. Heaton's offer. The latter will bring the matter before Parliament."

² In the preparation of this article I have had the assistance of Mr. George J. Manson.

THE CYCLAMEN.

OVER the plains where Persian hosts
Laid down their lives for glory
Flutter the cyclamens, like ghosts
That witness to their story.
Oh, fair! Oh, white! Oh, pure as snow!
On countless graves how sweet they grow!

Or crimson, like the cruel wounds
From which the life-blood, flowing,
Poured out where now on grassy mounds
The low, soft winds are blowing;
Oh, fair! Oh, red! Like blood of slain;
Not even time can cleanse that stain.

But when my dear these blossoms holds,
All loveliness her dower,
All woe and joy the past enfolds
In her find fullest flower.
Oh, fair! Oh, pure! Oh, white and red!
If she but live, what are the dead!

Arlo Bates.