

32. It must be remembered, however, that throughout the whole year, two rival Offices in Japan and the North of China have been offering communication with America and Europe at rates less than half of ours (5*d.* on letters for instance as against 1*s.* 2*d.*) and that, for Shanghai and Ports North of Shanghai, the route via San Francisco is at least as speedy as that via Suez. At Yokohama alone nearly 10,000 letters and 6,000 papers less were posted for the Suez route in 1876 than in 1875. It has been learnt that the Mail despatched from that port via San Francisco has been as much as fifty bags by one Packet. Much of the contents would no doubt be papers, &c., which but for the low rates would not have been posted at all; but a few years since all the rest would have passed through this Office.

33. The usual tables are appended. After what has been said above they call for no special remark, except to point out the large decrease of £2,530 in the total amount remitted to England by Money Orders, a decrease due, no doubt, to the extremely unfavourable rates of exchange, which have been as low as 3*s.* 6½*d.* per dollar.

34. The quickest passages home have been made by the Messageries Packets, the Mail carried by which vessels four times reached London in 35 days. The P. & O. Packets have delivered the Mail in 38 days six times. The *Oceanic* left for San Francisco on December 4th, and reached that port in 23 days.

35. The quickest passages out have been made by the P. & O. Packets, which have delivered the Mails eight times within 36 days. The Messageries Packet *Sindh* arrived on August 5th with the Mail 37 days from London. The *Oceanic* arrived on May 13th after a voyage of 26 days from San Francisco.

36. Tables B. & C. afford the following averages:—

	Average voyage allowed.	Average voyage taken.
British Packets, Outward,	40½ days.	38½ days.
French Packets, Homeward,	42½ "	38½ "
French Packets, Outward,	41½ "	40¾ "
British Packets, Homeward,	42½ "	41 "

37. It is to be hoped that the next Annual Report will be more encouraging, if not with regard to Revenue (for Revenue is in all probability a thing of the past) at any rate in something to show for the Revenue which may have ceased to exist. The chief characteristic of 1876 has been waiting for better times. It must not be expected, however, that the Postal Union machinery will work smoothly all at once. Much experience and a vast deal of correspondence will be required to settle things into their new groove. Perplexing questions are almost sure to present themselves. It is hoped that public forbearance will be extended to delays which, vexatious as they are, are inevitable where correspondence with distant Offices is involved.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

ALFRED LISTER,
Postmaster General.

The Honourable H. E. WODEHOUSE,
Acting Colonial Secretary,
HONGKONG.

APPENDIX.
(A.) GENERAL RETURN OF POST OFFICE BUSINESS.

	SENT.								RECEIVED.							
	1875.		1876.		INCREASE.		DECREASE.		1875.		1876.		INCREASE.		DECREASE.	
	Letters.	Books and Papers.	Letters.	Books and Papers.	Letters.	Books and Papers.	Letters.	Books and Papers.	Letters.	Books and Papers.	Letters.	Books and Papers.	Letters.	Books and Papers.	Letters.	Books and Papers.
UNITED KINGDOM.																
Per British Packets,	135,525	98,787	131,580	83,898	...	...	3,945	4,889	No record	No record	No record	No record	...	...	...	...
Per French Packets,	62,379	27,335	67,620	27,722	5,241	887	...	...	"	"	"	"	...	...	...	...
UNITED STATES.†																
Per United States Packets,	31,670	42,414	32,827	46,821	1,157	4,407	...	...	19,970	"	20,003	"	33	...	...	...
REGISTERED CORRESPONDENCE.																
United Kingdom,	4,178	...	3,871	...	...	...	307	...	2,454	...	2,169	...	...	...	265	...
Continent,	622	...	648	...	26	...	...	...	934	...	923	...	...	...	11	...
Australia,	87	...	127	...	40	...	...	...	305	...	486	...	181	...	...	...
Ports of China and Japan,	785	...	1,249	...	464	...	...	...	1,108	...	1,189	...	86	...	...	...
Straits, Ceylon, India, &c.,	637	...	795	...	158	...	...	...	1,560	...	1,771	...	211	...	...	...
Total, Registered Correspondence,	6,309		6,690		688		307		6,356		6,538		478		296	
Total do., Increase or Decrease,					381								182			
					Increase.								Increase.			
Ship Mails,	1,571		1,939		368		...		1,710		1,696		...		14	Decrease.

† Including a very small Mail for Yokohama by each U. S. Packet.
* Registered Papers, Books, and Patterns, not being numerous, are included under Registered Letters.

Sale of Postage Stamps.

Denomination.	1876.		1875.		INCREASE.		DECREASE.	
	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.
2 Cents.	241,370	\$ 4,827.40	240,808	\$ 4,810.16	562	\$ 11.24	...	\$ c.
4 "	181,805	7,274.00	121,308	4,854.72	60,497	2,419.88	...	...
6 "	65,004	3,900.24	121,279	7,276.74	...	...	56,275	3,376.50
8 "	167,788	13,423.04	183,077	14,718.16	...	...	16,189	1,295.12
12 "	42,634	5,116.08	41,845	5,021.40	789	94.68	...	...
18 "	40,900	7,962.00	14,009	2,592.42	26,831	4,820.58	...	...
24 "	71,718	17,212.32	75,860	18,206.40	...	...	4,142	904.08
28 "	43,518	12,185.04	...	...	43,518	12,185.04	...	...
30 "	80,087	24,090.10	166,183	49,854.00	...	...	86,096	25,828.80
48 "	20,260	9,727.68	22,196	10,654.08	...	...	1,930	926.40
60 "	10,955	16,270.80	10,484	18,704.04	...	...	2,529	2,427.84
2 Dollars.	2,000	4,138.00	2,200	4,592.00	...	...	227	454.00
5 "	1,000	3,288.00	1,289	3,807.00	...	...	193	579.00
10 "	303	3,030.00	263	2,630.00	40	400.00	...	...
Total,.....		\$131,787.30		\$147,728.02		\$10,040.42		\$35,881.74

	1876.	1875.	Increase.	Decrease.
Total Sale, Hongkong,	\$74,518.72	\$78,236.78	...	\$3,718.06
" Shanghai,	40,186.50	45,074.94	...	5,888.44
" Yokohama,	10,947.40	16,227.54	...	5,280.14
" Other Ports of China and Japan,	6,134.68	7,589.36	...	1,454.68
	\$131,787.30	\$147,728.02	...	\$15,941.32
Total Decrease in 1876,				\$15,941.32

MONEY ORDER BUSINESS.

(1.)—Orders drawn upon the United Kingdom.

1876.			Colonial Commission.	1875.			INCREASE.		Colonial Commission.	DECREASE.		Colonial Commission.
At	No. of Orders drawn.	Amount.		No. of Orders drawn.	Amount.	Colonial Commission.	Number.	Amount.		Number.	Amount.	
Hongkong,	1,249	£ 6,415.14.11	\$ 206.92	1,626	£ 7,457. 6. 8	\$ 208.59	...	£ ...	\$...	377	£ 1,041.11.0	\$ 62.27
Shanghai,	715	3,286.12.11	125.14	769	3,754. 8. 1	179.52	...	...	...	54	407.15.2	54.38
Yokohama,	372	1,552.13. 2	63.00	577	2,574. 2. 9	90.08	...	...	...	205	1,021. 0. 7	30.08
Total,.....	2,336	11,255. 1. 0	394.46	2,972	13,785.17. 6	547.10	...	...	...	636	2,530.16.0	152.73

(2.)—Orders drawn in the United Kingdom.

1876.			Colonial Commission.	1875.			INCREASE.		Colonial Commission.	DECREASE.		Colonial Commission.
Upon	No. of Orders drawn.	Amount.		No. of Orders drawn.	Amount.	Colonial Commission.	No. of Orders drawn.	Amount.		No. of Orders drawn.	Amount.	
Hongkong,	94	£ 384.10. 7	\$ 15.60	73	£ 258. 0. 8	\$ 13.50	21	£ 126.18.11	\$ 2.70	...	£ ...	\$...
Shanghai,	28	59.10. 7	4.55	26	95. 0.11	4.96	2	...	...	...	£ 5.10. 4	\$ 0.41
Yokohama,	24	90. 1. 0	4.46	24	103. 2. 8	5.35	...	...	...	...	£ 13. 1. 8	\$ 0.89
Total,.....	146	564.11. 2	24.61	123	456. 4. 3	23.81	23	126.18.11	2.10	...	18.12. 0	1.30
							Deduct Decrease,	18.12. 0	1.30			
							Total Increase in 1876,	108. 6. 1	0.80			

(3.)—Local Money Orders.

DRAWN IN	1876.			1875.			INCREASE.			DECREASE.			
	No. of Orders.	Amount.	Commission.	No. of Orders.	Amount.	Commission.	No. of Orders.	Amount.	Commission.	No. of Orders.	Amount.	Commission.	
Hongkong on Shanghai,	55	\$ 1,432.88	11.10	27	\$ 456.21	4.82	28	\$ 970.67	0.28	...	\$...	\$...	
Hongkong on Yokohama,	10	342.14	3.30	17	301.92	3.15	...	40.22	0.15	1	...	...
Shanghai on Hongkong,	95	2,297.92	20.25	120	2,741.51	24.30	...	...	...	25	443.59	4.05
Yokohama on Hongkong,	07	1,321.72	12.60	104	2,386.12	21.30	...	...	...	37	1,064.40	8.70
Total,.....	233	5,394.00	47.25	268	5,885.70	53.57	28	1,010.80	6.43	63	1,507.99	12.75	
										Deduct Increase,	28	1,010.89	6.43
										Total Decrease in 1876,	35	491.10	6.32

(B.) ARRIVALS OF THE CONTRACT PACKETS DURING 1876.

BRITISH.										FRENCH.										AMERICAN.									
Packet.	Date due.	Reached Hongkong.	Number of Days.						Packet.	Date due.	Reached Hongkong.	Number of Days.			Packet.	Left San Francisco.	Reached Hongkong.	Number of Days from											
			Via Southampton.			Via Brindisi.						Allowed.	Taken.	Lost.				Allowed.	Taken.	Lost.	San Francisco.	London.							
			Allowed.	Taken.	Lost.	Allowed.	Taken.	Lost.																					
Teheran,	Mar. 2	Feb. 28	47	3	...	42	30	3	Feb. 25	Feb. 26	44	44	1	Jan. 4	Feb. 6	84	67												
Geelong,	" 16	Mar. 26	50	4	...	42	38	4	Mar. 10	Mar. 9	43	42	...	Jan. 18	" 15	29	62												
Mongolia,	" 30	" 9	50	4	...	42	38	4	Mar. 24	Mar. 24	43	42	...	Feb. 15	Mar. 10	29	72												
Gwalior,	Apr. 10	Apr. 9	47	1	...	39	38	1	Apr. 7	" 6	43	42	...	Feb. 15	Mar. 20	36	68												
Hindustan,	Apr. 24	Apr. 22	47	2	...	39	37	2	Apr. 18	Apr. 19	40	41	...	Mar. 1	" 6	37	71												
Lombardy,	May 8	May 6	47	2	...	39	37	2	May 18	May 2	40	40	...	Mar. 16	Apr. 13	29	62												
Teheran,	May 22	June 30	47	55	8	39	47	8	" 16	" 14	40	38	...	" 16	" 28	28	52												
Thibet,	June 5	" 2	47	44	3	39	36	3	" 30	" 30	40	40	...	Apr. 18	May 13	26	49												
Mongolia,	July 19	" 17	47	45	3	39	37	2	June 13	June 12	40	39	...	May 18	June 3	34	50												
Peshawar,	July 3	" 30	47	44	3	39	36	3	June 27	June 28	40	41	...	May 1	June 16	32	66												
Indus,	July 17	July 20	47	50	3	39	42	3	July 11	July 11	40	40	...	June 16	July 7	37	51												
Siam,	" 31	" 28	47	44	3	39	36	3	July 25	" 23	40	38	...	June 16	" 19	31	58												
Kashgar,	Aug. 14	Aug. 11	47	44	3	39	36	3	Aug. 8	Aug. 5	40	37	...	July 16	Aug. 1	32	80												
Zambesi,	Aug. 28	" 25	47	44	3	39	36	3	Aug. 22	Aug. 22	40	40	...	July 18	Aug. 15	29	53												
Kashgar,	Sept. 11	" 8	47	44	3	39	36	3	Sept. 5	Sept. 3	40	38	...	Aug. 18	Sept. 4	35	54												
Geelong,	Sept. 25	Oct. 22	47	44	3	39	36	3	Sept. 19	Sept. 18	40	38	...	Aug. 16	Sept. 18	34	73												
Deccan,	" 9	Oct. 7	47	45	2	39	37	2	Oct. 8	Oct. 5	40	42	...	Sept. 1	Oct. 7	37	75												
Khiva,	Oct. 23	" 22	47	44	3	39	36	3	Oct. 20	Oct. 17	40	40	...	Sept. 16	Oct. 16	31	56												
Lombardy,	Nov. 9	Nov. 6	50	47	3	42	39	3	Nov. 3	Nov. 2	43	42	...	Oct. 16	Nov. 3	32	72												
Travancore,	Nov. 23	Nov. 19	50	46	4	42	38	4	Nov. 17	Nov. 16	43	42	...	Oct. 18	Nov. 20	34	53												
Malwa,	Dec. 7	Dec. 4	50	47	3	42	39	3	Dec. 1	" 30	43	42	...	Nov. 18	Dec. 8	38	60												
Kashgar,	Dec. 21	" 20	50	49	1	42	41	1	Dec. 15	Dec. 14	43	42	...	Nov. 16	Dec. 16	31	77												
Geelong,	" 1877.	" 1877.	50	48	2	42	40	2	" 29	" 29	43	43	...	" 16	" 1877.	31	No mail.												
Khiva,	Jan. 4	Jan. 2	50	48	2	42	40	2	1877.	1877.	43	43	...	Dec. 2	Jan. 3	33	54												
Lombardy,	Jan. 18	" 20	50	52	2	42	44	2	Jan. 12	Jan. 11	43	42	...	Dec. 16	" 16	32	No mail.												
Zambesi,	Feb. 1	" 31	50	49	1	42	41	1	Jan. 26	Jan. 24	43	41	...	" 1	" 1	32	No mail.												
Travancore,	" 15	Feb. 13	50	48	2	42	40	2	Feb. 9	Feb. 9	43	43	...	" 16	" 16	32	No mail.												

(C.) DEPARTURES OF THE CONTRACT MAIL PACKETS DURING 1876.

Packet.	BRITISH.				FRENCH.				AMERICAN.						
	Via Southampton.		Via Brindisi.		Via Brindisi.		Via Southampton.		Packet.	Reached London.	Number of Days.		Reached San Francisco.	Number of Days to	
	Date due.	Reached London.	Allowed.	Taken.	Allowed.	Taken.	Allowed.	Taken.			San Francisco.	London.			
Thibet,	Feb. 21	Feb. 13	40	39	1	...	47	47	Meikong,	Feb. 21	Feb. 17	40	31	31	52
Kashgar,	Mar. 6	" 13	40	39	1	...	47	47	China,	Mar. 6	Feb. 24	40	39	39	No mail.
Ceylon,	Mar. 21	Mar. 13	40	40	...	...	47	48	Gaelic,	Mar. 15	Mar. 28	40	26	26	"
Gwalior,	Apr. 3	Mar. 25	40	38	2	...	47	47	City of Pekin,	Mar. 15	Mar. 15	40	39	39	49
Golconda,	Apr. 17	Apr. 8	40	38	2	...	47	47	Oceanic,	Mar. 31	Apr. 19	40	31	31	No mail.
Lombardy,	May 1	Apr. 23	40	39	1	...	47	47	Great Republic,	Apr. 15	Apr. 15	40	36	36	"
Telaran,	May 15	May 6	40	38	2	...	47	46	Belgie,	Apr. 15	May 19	40	35	35	"
Geelong,	" 28	May 21	40	39	1	...	47	46	Colorado,	May 15	May 29	40	35	35	"
Mongolia,	June 12	June 4	45	41	1	...	52	51	Gaelic,	May 15	June 10	40	36	36	"
Gwalior,	June 26	June 18	45	41	1	...	52	53	City of Pekin,	June 15	June 10	40	37	37	"
Hindustan,	July 10	July 3	45	45	...	...	52	53	Oceanic,	June 15	June 10	40	37	37	"
Lombardy,	July 24	July 17	45	44	...	...	52	52	Alaska,	July 15	July 18	40	31	31	"
Telaran,	Aug. 7	" 13	45	45	...	...	52	58	Belgie,	July 15	Aug. 17	40	30	30	"
Thibet,	Aug. 21	Aug. 14	45	41	1	...	52	52	Great Republic,	Aug. 15	Aug. 17	40	31	31	"
Mongolia,	" 28	Aug. 20	45	43	2	...	52	51	Gaelic,	Aug. 15	Aug. 28	40	28	28	"
Peshawar,	Sept. 3	Sept. 11	45	43	2	...	52	51	City of Pekin,	Sept. 15	Sept. 7	40	24	24	"
Ludus,	Sept. 18	Sept. 9	45	41	1	...	52	51	Oceanic,	Sept. 15	Sept. 7	40	24	24	"
Siam,	Oct. 2	Oct. 24	45	41	1	...	52	49	Alaska,	Sept. 15	Oct. 2	40	29	29	43
Zambesi,	Oct. 16	Oct. 9	45	41	3	...	52	52	Belgie,	Oct. 15	Oct. 18	40	31	31	43
Kashgar,	" 30	Oct. 23	45	41	1	...	52	52	Great Republic,	Oct. 15	Nov. 18	40	31	31	43
Deccan,	Nov. 13	Nov. 6	45	44	1	...	52	52	Belgie,	Oct. 15	Nov. 18	40	31	31	43
Canton,	Nov. 27	Nov. 20	40	40	...	...	47	50	Gaelic,	Nov. 15	Nov. 21	40	33	33	56
Canton,	Dec. 11	Dec. 4	40	38	2	...	47	48	Great Republic,	Nov. 15	Dec. 6	40	33	33	51
Khiva,	" 25	Dec. 18	40	38	2	...	47	48	City of Pekin,	Dec. 15	Dec. 13	40	29	29	48
Lombardy,	Jan. 8	1877.	40	38	2	...	47	51	Oceanic,	Dec. 15	" 26	40	23	23	41
Lombardy,	Jan. 22	1877.	40	40	...	...	47	47	Alaska,	Jan. 15	Jan. 15	40	...	...	...
Lombardy,	Jan. 22	Jan. 1	40	40	...	...	47	47	Alaska,	Jan. 15	Jan. 15	40	...	...	...
Travancore,	Feb. 5	Jan. 15	40	38	1	...	47	46	Alaska,	Jan. 15	Jan. 15	40	...	...	...
Malwa,	Feb. 5	" 29	40	39	1	...	47	46	Alaska,	Jan. 15	Jan. 15	40	...	...	...