

General with the carriage of a mail bag, as is frequently done in the case of private ships starting at times convenient for the Post Office.

About that time, a contract made by the Government of Newfoundland, subject to the approval of the Home Government, for a postal service between that colony and Great Britain, on the one hand, and the United States on the other, had fallen through, from that approval being withheld in consequence of a Report by the Admiralty as to the insufficiency of the vessels proposed to be employed. On this a negotiation was opened by Mr. Lever's Company with the Newfoundland Government, under the sanction of the Home Government, for a contract for the same service, but making Galway the port on this side the Atlantic, instead of Liverpool, the port contemplated in the disallowed contract. This negotiation was successful, and a contract for a monthly service, at a yearly subsidy of 13,000 £., was entered into by the company with the Colonial Government, and (1st December 1858) approved of for one year by the Home Government, who were to contribute a portion of the subsidy. The first vessel under this contract sailed from Galway on the 11th January 1859.

No. 230, 1859,
pp. 16-17.

P. 20-1.

P. 26.

During the same autumn, and while the negotiations as to this Newfoundland contract were going on, the same parties had set on foot another and more extended scheme of packet service, between Galway and America, by fortnightly voyages, to be conducted by a joint stock company proposed to be instituted with greatly augmented capital, and large and swift vessels, which, in addition to their other objects, might take messages to be delivered at St. John's, Newfoundland, and thence transmitted, by telegraph, to different parts of America, affording the means, as was anticipated, of possibly communicating between London and Washington in six days.

This scheme excited considerable interest, especially in Ireland, and several deputations in the course of the autumn of 1858 waited on the First Lord, and on the Secretary, of the Treasury, urging the importance of its being encouraged by Government; while numerous memorials were presented from Chambers of Commerce, and other public bodies, setting forth their sense of the advantages which it would confer on the trade of the country.

In consequence of the publication of reports of interviews on the part of such deputations with members of the Government, Mr. Inman, the manager of the Liverpool and New York Steam Packet Company, already mentioned, wrote to the Secretary of the Treasury, of date 15th October, remonstrating against any mail grant to the Lever Company, as having no ground of preference to theirs, which had been established for eight years, and had more than once offered to carry Her Majesty's mail free, for ocean postage, and concluding thus: "If any mail grant is to be given between Galway and any other port, I beg to submit it ought to be put up to public competition."

No. 230, p. 45.

In a second letter, of date 25th October, addressed to the Lords of the Treasury, the company set forth more fully their claims, and the capacity of the vessels then possessed by them; and their trust, "that your Lordships will take their case into consideration, and will see that, in any extension of postal service, this company have a prior claim to any other steam company, and they trust they will be allowed to tender accordingly."

14.

In reply to these communications, the following letter, dated 9th November, was addressed by Sir Charles Trevelyan to Mr. Inman: "I am desired by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to inform you, in reply to the letter addressed by you to this Board, on behalf of the Liverpool, New York and Philadelphia Steam Ship Company, that when a new postal service is about to be established by the Government, it is the practice of their Lordships to invite tenders by public advertisements, thereby affording to all parties the opportunity of competing for such services, provided they conform to the required conditions."

No. 230, p. 46.

No further communication was made to this company before the contract with that of Mr. Lever was concluded.

No. 230, p. 47.

A collateral matter requires here to be adverted to. In the course of this same autumn a memorial was addressed to the Lords of the Treasury by the Chamber of Commerce of Limerick, praying that a Commission of Inquiry, then understood by

Q. 2675.
No. 257, 1859,
pp. 89-91.