

obtaining steam vessels; and, at that time, they could only be built at a great advance over usual prices. It may be well here to state that the object I had in view by the establishment of these ocean mail steamers will be better understood by my quoting an extract from my Public Works Report, dated August, 1852:

"A contract has been completed (subject to approval by Parliament) with an eminent firm in Liverpool, by which a line of powerful screw steamers, of not less than 1,500 tons burthen, and capable of carrying 1,000 tons of cargo, will commence running on the opening of the navigation next Spring, between the ports of Liverpool and Quebec and Montreal, every fortnight during the season of navigation; and to Portland, in the State of Maine, during the Winter months, at a cost of £24,000 stg. per annum, for fourteen fortnightly trips to the St. Lawrence and five monthly trips to Portland; or for £16,000 stg., for twelve monthly trips. The St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad Company, in Canada, the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad Company, in the United States, and the City of Portland, pay to the contractors a sum of £5,000 stg., as part of the above sums, leaving the annual cost to the Province, for the period of the contract, to be £19,000 stg. for the fortnightly line to the St. Lawrence and monthly line to Portland in Winter; or the sum of £10,000 stg. should the line run only once per month to the St. Lawrence during navigation, and once per month to Portland in Winter. The contract is to extend over a period of seven years, to commence from the starting of the first steamer from Liverpool. The cabin passage shall not exceed the sum of £21 sterling; the second cabin the sum of £12 12s; and the steerage passage the sum of £6 6s., and to be found in everything required. The rate of freight from Liverpool not to exceed 60s. per ton measurement; nor the freight of produce not to exceed the current rates demanded by sailing vessels. It is believed that the establishment of this line of steamers from Liverpool will have the effect of diverting, through the St. Lawrence, a portion of that vast stream of emigration destined for the Western States, which now pours into the Atlantic cities of the United States, and of turning public attention to the superior facilities now existing on the St. Lawrence for transport of freight and passengers. Upwards of 300,000 emigrants arrived in 1851 at the Port of New York. These emigrants arrived in 2,211 vessels, measuring, on the aggregate, over one million of tons. The return freight of these vessels to Great Britain consists chiefly of flour and grain; and the competition among so large a number has reduced the prices of freight to more than one-half of the aver-