

fall of 1864, and during the following winter traded between New York and the British ports. The following spring the "Canada" and the other vessel then just finished—the "Indian"—were chartered by the British Government for the same urgent Crimean transport service. In which they continued until the close of the Russian war, doubtless to the no small profit of their owners. Meantime two other steamships were constructed by the Messrs. Allan, and they entered into contract with the Canadian Government for a fortnightly mail service during summer between Montreal and Liverpool, and once a month during winter from Portland. This was the fair and full beginning of the now well-known "Allan line," commencing in the spring of 1866. Three years later, a new contract was made, whereby the service was changed into a weekly one, both summer and winter. That contract expired by afflux of time, but was renewed not long ago for another term of years. During these years the Messrs. Allan kept adding steamer after steamer to their splendid fleet. Though they met with many melancholy and—as they were and are their own insurers—most costly disasters, they persevered unremittingly until at length the early difficulties have not only disappeared, but are almost forgotten.

In 1860 the firm started a line of trading steamers between Montreal and the Clyde, and this has prospered like the other. It has now become a regular weekly line, doing a heavy and no doubt a profitable business.

This company are also cultivating a carrying trade between Baltimore and England—already a regular monthly line has been established; and are also carrying the mails between Halifax and Great Britain.

During the past season the Allan steamers made seventy-two voyages between Great Britain and Canada, and their sailing craft thirty-three, on the same route. These vessels brought 2,234 cabin and 24,285 steerage passengers, and 125,861 tons of freight. They took from Canada 1,823 cabin and 2,164 steerage passengers, besides cargo equivalent to 1,650,975 barrels flour. The management of such an immense business requires not only great care at the head office, but the most exact discipline and the most complete appointments throughout all departments. To meet these requirements the Messrs. Allan have the most ample arrangements. A fleet of tug-steamers and lighters for river service; out-fitting and repairing establishments at Liverpool, &c. Their employees number about five thousand men, so that on the ordinary computation their business may be said to give direct support to 25,000 human beings. This is exclusive to the large bodies of workmen almost constantly employed in the construction of their new vessels, the parties engaged in furnishing supplies, &c. These facts speak more eloquently than words of the vast importance to Canada of the enterprise, energy and business talent of the proprietors of the "Allan line."

—*Montreal Witness.*

RUNNING THE RAPIDS.—We published a few days since a letter written by a New England Press excursionist to the *New York Tribune*, in which occurred:—"To my mind the first man who ever took a steamboat down the Lachine Rapids is worthy of a monument greater than that to the one who swal-

lowed the first oyster. I believe history records the first man was an Indian, and until recently he was the sole pilot of the rapids." We are now in a position to state who was the first man to whom the honor of taking the first steamboat down the rapids is due, and it gives us pleasure to inform our readers that being still in the flesh he does not care at present to have that monument erected of which the correspondent above alluded to thinks he is deserving. In August, 184—nearly thirty years ago—it was deemed desirable to transfer the steamboat Ontario, owned by Mr. John Hamilton, from the Upper St. Lawrence to the section between Montreal and Quebec, and Captain L. Hilliard offered to take her down from Prescott where she was then lying, to Montreal. Captain Hilliard had been prior to 1831 a boatman on the St. Lawrence and had become acquainted with all the channels of the rapids, which he had frequently navigated on rafts.

Previous to making the experiment of running the rapids with his steamboat he took soundings to discover whether there was water enough to carry her through. These soundings could only be taken from rafts, nor would the currents admit of the usual lead and line. Captain Hilliard prepared a number of withes of various lengths, and sharpened at one end to so fine a point that the latter would be broken up on the slightest contact with the river bed, then these were attached to the rafts which were to be used in taking soundings. After making the passage it was found that all the withes up to six feet in length were free from breaks or bruises, while those that extended to a greater depth were bent and broken, showing that there was at least six feet of water in all parts of the channel. After satisfying himself of this fact, Captain Hall made the trip on the Ontario, and in due time arrived in Montreal. For this Mr. Hamilton presented him with a handsome gold watch, which bears on the inner case the following inscription:—"Presented to Captain L. Hilliard by John Hamilton, to commemorate the safe arrival of the steamboat Ontario at Montreal from Prescott, U. C. being the first descent over the rapids of the St. Lawrence by steam, 19th, August, 1840." This watch is still in possession of the Captain, who is at present in Toronto, and by whom it was shown to us yesterday.

—*Toronto Telegraph.*

Heath and Home.

AMUSEMENTS AND EXERCISE.

What shall we do with our leisure hours? How shall we get necessary out-door exercise? Where-withal shall we be amused? are questions always pertinent, because never fully answered. We resort to a game which finds favor with the people, and we say in our haste that this shall be our national sport and we will adopt it and perfect it and get health by it and by it while away the tedium of our idle hours, when lo, the experts at that game improve it and practice so much at it that common people are ashamed to be seen playing at it lest opprobrious epithets be cast at them because of their incapacity; or the innocent, pleasant game is made