

Permit us to hope that this project may receive your further attention, and that you will prepare a chart, exhibiting the routes suggested, so laid off as may, in your judgment, best answer the purpose in view, of lessening the liability of collision without materially lengthening the passage.

By thus carrying out a proposition which strongly recommends itself to many, you will add another important service to the many for which we would express our thanks.

Lieut. M. F. MAURY,

*National Observatory, Washington.*

*Reply to above, dated February 15, 1855.*

GENTLEMEN: I duly received your communication of the 8th ultimo, requesting me to carry out the proposition contained in my letter of the 8th of November last, to Walter R. Jones, esq., of New York, by projecting the two steam-lanes across the Atlantic, viz, one for the steamers to go in and the other for them to come in.

I at once addressed myself to the task, and after a careful examination of the somewhat ample materials afforded by this office, I have at length the pleasure to submit charts with the lanes projected on them, together with other matter bearing upon the subject.

I have examined a number of the logs both of the Collins and the Cunard lines. The part of the ocean used by them in their voyage to and fro, between the meridians of  $15^{\circ}$  and  $65^{\circ}$  west, is, for the American, 300 miles broad, and for the English, 150 miles broad. The American roadway overlaps and includes the English; consequently there is a breadth of ocean 300 miles wide, in any part of which a sailing-vessel, by night or in the fog, is now liable to be brought into collision with the steamers.

Now, suppose we take this same breadth of ocean and lay off a lane, twenty or twenty-five miles broad, near its northern border, and another, fifteen or twenty miles broad, near its southern border, and recommend the steamers, when coming westwardly, to use the former, and, when going eastwardly, to take the latter: would not the adoption of the recommendation contribute to the safety both of steam and sailing vessels, of passengers and crews? I think so.

I do not mean to create the impression by anything I