

The Atlantic Steamship Service.

MR. SANDFORD FLEMING'S article on the "Steamship Service between Canada and Great Britain" is a strong and well-reasoned plea for calm consideration of a very difficult question. His attitude is that of an experienced traveller and an expert observer toward different proposed routes and termini, with all of which he is personally acquainted. His conclusions, after discussing the various phases of the case, are as follows:

- (1) That any attempt to establish on the St. Lawrence route a line of fast trans-Atlantic steamships to rival those running to and from New York would result in disappointment.
- (2) That our great waterway will always be employed to the greatest advantage in conveyance of staple products and all ordinary cargo merchandise at the lowest possible rates, and that to secure low rates, it must be carried in steamships of moderate speed.
- (3) That steamships suitable for the trade of the St. Lawrence in summer, would at the close of navigation find an open harbour at St. John, New Brunswick, the nearest eligible Canadian seaport for the cities on the St. Lawrence.
- (4) That if we desire to establish a Canadian line of passenger steamships, equal in power and speed to any on the ocean, it will be necessary to make it an "all year round line" from one of our best Atlantic sea-ports.
- (5) That there is no more eligible harbour on the western side of the Atlantic than Halifax in Nova Scotia, or on the eastern side than Loch Ryan in Scotland; and that between these two points will be found the shortest available route across the ocean, which can be used by fast steamships at all seasons of the year.

One of Mr. Fleming's most forcible arguments is that by which he sustains the thesis that there is a marked and essential difference between passenger and freight traffic which must be recognized in finally dealing with this problem:

In considering this phase of the question, we must recognize certain underlying principles which to a large extent govern the transportation of the two great divisions of traffic. In passenger traffic, *speed and regularity* are held to be primary considerations, while in the transportation of freight, *economy* in transit is the first consideration, and speed takes a secondary place. These principles have long been recognized on railways, and they are now beginning to be considered in steamship navigation. Rapidity of transit is not attained without enhancing the cost, and the ratio of increase is greatly enhanced as the speed is accelerated, especially at sea. There are few articles of merchandise that can profitably be transported at express passenger train rates, and few persons, when they can avoid it, desire to travel by slow freight trains.

That these principles will in the end govern in the Atlantic steamship service, there can be no doubt. Hitherto it has been the practice to combine passenger and freight traffic by the same ship, but all the circumstances point to the desirability of a change of system. The combination is not necessary for speed or the comfort of passengers, and it in no way lessens the cost of transporting merchandise. A ship constructed for the combined traffic is a compromise; as such it is either too slow for passengers, or too fast for freight, or it suffers from both objections and consequently is unprofitable and unsatisfactory. So long as passengers were content to travel at the low rate of speed suitable for freight the combination was justifiable and shipowners had no incentive to improvement. Travellers are no longer satisfied, and there is a pressure to have the speed increased, but to accelerate the speed and at the same time continue to carry freight with passengers would obviously be a mistake.

Mr. Fleming's objection to the St. Lawrence route for a fast passenger service are climatic and insuperable. The prevalence of fogs in the Strait of Belle Isle is sufficient to cause the fastest steamer to make slow time, and even after the Strait is open in summer it is liable to become dangerous to fast vessels on account of drifting icebergs. The follow-

ing table of relative distances prepared by Mr. Fleming shows the advantage of the route from Halifax to Loch Ryan:—

Routes Between London and Halifax.	SEA VOYAGE.		TIME TO LONDON.		
	Distance, Sea Miles.	Hours at 20 knots.	Hours via Dublin and Holyhead.	Hours rail only.	Total hours between Halifax and London.
<i>By Irish ports:</i>					
Moville	2264	113	17	....	130
Blacksod	2113	106	17	....	123
Valencia	2155	108	18	....	126
Queenstown	2225	111	17	....	128
<i>By other ports without calling at Ireland:</i>					
Liverpool	2465	123	....	4	127
Holyhead	2421	121	....	6	127
Milford	2370	119	....	6	125
Southampton	2530	127	....	2	129
Loch Ryan	2340	117	....	8	125

"In the table the speed is reckoned at twenty knots an hour at sea, and the time between the several points and London is estimated on the basis of the speed at present attained by railway trains on land, and by steam packets between Dublin and Holyhead. A lower speed than twenty knots at sea would obviously give a somewhat greater difference in time in favour of Loch Ryan than above stated.

"The table brings out the fact that mails from Halifax could be delivered in London via Loch Ryan in five hours less time than by the Moville route, and in two hours less than by direct steamship to Liverpool. If such be the case, it is perfectly clear that the establishment of a trans-Atlantic mail service by way of Loch Ryan would be the means of accelerating the delivery of letters to every portion of England and Scotland more expeditiously than by any existing route."

It does not follow from Mr. Fleming's argument in favour of the route between Halifax and Loch Ryan as the best for a fast passenger steamship line, that the development of the St. Lawrence freight traffic should be made to wait on the adoption of the more ambitious scheme. It may be possible for Parliament to do much to improve the facilities for the export of Canadian produce, and especially of such as is perishable, while the project of a first-class passenger service is under investigation. The best means of doing this should be a subject of early and careful inquiry on the part of the Government of the Dominion.

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A Brother of Sir Walter Scott at Quebec.

MR. PIERRE GEORGES ROY, of Quebec, contributes this interesting article in French to his little historical monthly, the Bulletin des Recherches Historiques:

Some one has said of Xavier de Maistre that the fame of his brother Joseph, the great Christian philosopher, had almost wholly thrown him into the shade. The same thing could not be said of Thomas Scott, the subject of this little article. Had he not been the brother of Sir Walter Scott very few would stay their footsteps to-day before the humble stone in the old cemetery of St. Matthew's Church at Quebec, which marks the resting-place of his remains.

Walter Scott, the father of Thomas and Sir Walter, belonged to an old family of which several members, at different times, had played certain parts in Scottish history. He practised for many years the honourable profession of a Writer to the Signet. His honesty and scrupulous attention to business brought him a large clientele and at his death he was possessed of a modest competency. By his marriage with Anne Rutherford, daughter of Dr. John Rutherford, professor of medicine at Edinburgh University, he had twelve children. Six—Anne, born March 10th, 1759; Robert, born August 22nd, 1760; John, born November 28th, 1761; Robert, born June 7th, 1763; Jean, born March 27th, 1765; and Walter, born August 30th, 1766—died early. The others were: