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Miscellaneous.

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of that vessel and the employment of a sailing vessel, and these evils we shall continue to be exposed to, unless a reserve steamer be kept in Halifax to serve in case of need.

WILLIAM BOYD.

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THOMAS R. SMITH, Esq., Merchant,—

The irregularity with which letters are transmitted by the present mail conveyance causes great inconvenience and loss to the Trade. Competent judges thought the *Merlin* should have been taken off the line some months ago, owing to the very defective condition of her boilers. The breakdown appears the necessary and dreaded consequence of her continued employment. If the amount now paid for the conveyance of the mails were offered to competition, it would procure the efficient carrying out of this service. The vessels required for this service should not be permitted to engage in any casual employment.

THOS. R. SMITH.

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PATRICK TASKER, Esq., Merchant,—

The feeling of dissatisfaction is general with regard to the carrying out of the mail service between Halifax and this port—particularly in consequence of the occasional employment of sailing vessels which causes great uncertainty in the operations of Trade. In Trade arrangements, such as orders for Insurance and Bill transactions, serious consequences must almost necessarily result from a deviation in the regular transmission of the mails. I see no remedy for these evils but in the restoration of the clause in the original contract by which the contractor was obliged to keep a reserve steamer in case of accident. I know as a matter of fact that the *Merlin* was unfit for service for months before her recent breakdown, arising from the defective condition of her boilers, &c., and as this fact was well known to the contractor, he was not warranted in employing the *Ospray* for mercantile purposes, and would not have done so had he cared to carry out the spirit and intention of his contract.

PATRICK TASKER.

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EWEN STABB Esq., Merchant,—

I have heard Mr. Tasker's evidence, and concur generally therein. The community were naturally much annoyed when on a recent occasion, they saw the *Ospray* steamer, which was usually employed in the mail service, arrive here to take away wrecked goods, while the mails were being conveyed in a sailing vessel which took eight days to get here. The communication with Sydney which is a part of the mail contract was entirely suspended by this circumstance. The employment of sailing vessels has often taken place during the last few years.

E WEN STABB.