

day: the former in 18½, the latter in 14½ days. The Sirius was only a coasting steamer; but the Great Western was built expressly for the trade. Both vessels consumed the same quantity of coals—453 tons—but the Sirius was obliged to make use of about thirty tons of resin to complete her voyage.

The practicability of the scheme was now triumphantly proved, though Dr. Lardner's calculations were still held up with confidence to show that the attempt *ought* to have failed: so slow are mankind in general to relinquish a favourite theory. The Great Western proved an excellent sea boat, and continued on the station for a period of nearly ten years, performing her voyages generally with great regularity—averaging 15 days outward, and 13½ home. She forms, at present, part of the fleet of the West India Mail Company. She is about 1300 tons burthen, 450 horse power, and 250 feet in length; so that even now she would be entitled to some consideration, both in point of size and power.

The success of the Great Western speedily brought competitors into the field; and the same year found two others—the Royal William, and the Liverpool—plying between England and America; then came the British Queen, and subsequently the President. Neither of these vessels continued very long upon the route; and their performances appear to have been much inferior to those of the Great Western. What became of the Royal William we do not know; the Liverpool was sold to the Peninsular Mail Company, and was afterwards wrecked. The melancholy fate of the President is well known: she made only three voyages across the Atlantic. On the 10th of March, 1840, she left New York for Liverpool, and what became of her will, in all human probability, never be known. The President was built upon the Thames, had two funnels, and stood high out of the water—an unfortunate property, which has belonged to almost every English built Ocean Steamer. The British Queen, a consort to the President, was also built upon the Thames, but engined by the celebrated Robert Napier of Glasgow. Her trips were generally successful; but for some unexplained reasons she was soon afterwards sold to, and is now in possession of, the Belgian Government.

The possibility of large steamers performing long voyages was now thoroughly proved; and the public convenience, as well as the many facilities opened up to commerce, were very great. It was felt by Government, and the public generally, that a new and most important means of carrying on trade was now presented to them; and that it was susceptible of great improvement by introducing something like system, and securing as far as possible that undeviating regularity of despatch, which is the pride of the English merchant. Above all, it was anxiously desired to bring our British American possessions somewhat closer to the mother country. And accordingly a tender for carrying the Mail by Steamships, between England, Halifax, and Boston, was published in 1838. The Great Western Company made an unsuccessful offer; and for some time no other seemed disposed to run the risk.