

STEAM-LANES ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

The disaster which befell the United States mail-steamer *Arctic* on her passage from Liverpool to New York, in the month of October, 1854, in consequence of her coming in collision with the French steamer *Vesta*, in a thick fog, forty or fifty miles to the eastward of Cape Race, first appalled the public mind with its enormity and then aroused it. Men inquired of each other if science or ingenuity could not devise means or invent plans for preventing the recurrence of similar accidents, or, in case of their recurrence, of providing against the terrible loss of life which attended the foundering of that noble ship. Of passengers and crew—men, women, and children—there perished, on that occasion, with her, to the number of about three hundred, owing, in a great measure, to improper management and to the dastardly conduct of a part of the officers and crew.

Among the many benevolent persons who favored the public with the results of their thoughts upon the subject, some suggested measures remedial and some preventive. Life-boats and life-preservers, water-tight compartments, station-bills for passengers and crew to “save ship” were among the remedial plans, and among those for prevention were fog-signals, true compasses, rate of sailing, lookout, and lanes, or a double track for the steamers crossing this part of the Atlantic, viz, a lane for them to go in and another for them to come in. All or any of these plans would, if adopted, tend more or less to diminish or mitigate the dangers of steam-navigation and the risk of life that passengers incur at sea; but those plans which tend to *prevent* accident, rather than those that look to affording relief after the occurrence of accident, seemed to come within the scope and objects of this work; and among these the lanes were most inviting. It will be found that, by establishing a lane or strip of ocean for the steamers to go in