

siderable share of the travel across the north Atlantic to and from Europe, we must show some advantages in our route. Take first the passenger's standpoint. Whatever may come about in the course of years, as the trade grows and people abroad become used to our more northern route, it is undeniable that just now we cannot offer to the first-class passenger such desirable landing-places as New York or Philadelphia. Nor can we offer railway service to the interior equal to that of these ports if our Atlantic fast steamers were to be equipped to-morrow. As to fast freight, we are perhaps better equipped; but the volume of merchandise inward or outward that we could depend upon to traverse our railway routes to and from Atlantic ports would necessarily bear but a small proportion to that pouring through United States channels. Where, then, is the advantage to be possessed by Canadian fast Atlantic steamers, supposing them to be provided by 1904?

The greatest claim to preference possessed by the Canadian trans-Atlantic route is its relative shortness. In this respect, it has the advantage of New York by hundreds of miles, Quebec or Halifax being chosen for purposes of comparison. Having this great and attractive superiority in respect of two cities, it behooves Canada to consider how best to use her advantage. To choose any but the most profitable point of landing is to deprive ourselves of a possible benefit. The claims of the port of Halifax as the best port have been within the past few days upheld by two influential Montreal gentlemen. One of these is Hon. George A. Drummond, who declares this week that Halifax must be, not the winter port of Canada only, but the terminal port all the year round. This pronouncement from a man whose business life has been spent in Montreal, whose business interests are mainly there, and who might be expected to prefer that port if he could in justice do so, speaks volumes for Halifax.

Another strong advocate of Halifax as the port for the fast line is Mr. Robert Reford, who has been for years the agent of freight steamers from Montreal to various ports in the United Kingdom. He outlined the other day in the London Times his views on the subject of transatlantic travel, and his letter has now been reproduced in Canadian journals. In this he deprecates a subsidized passenger and mail weekly service to Quebec in summer and Halifax in winter, as being no better than what we possess to-day. "A weekly service," he says, "very little inferior to that now proposed, has caused three-fourths of Canada's mails and passengers to find transit via the United States." Nor is a weekly service sufficient, in his opinion, for the wants of Canada. Mr. Reford's argument against the feasibility of a 20-knot service (23 1-3 miles an hour), between Liverpool and Montreal or Quebec is thus strongly stated: This service "cannot safely be given, owing to the congested nature of the Irish Sea near Liverpool, and the dangerous navigation of the gulf and river St. Lawrence, through ice, snow, and fog in spring and autumn, and the St. Lawrence route's dangerous and intricate waters."

A thousand miles of ocean sailing may be saved, he points out, by adopting a sea route between Galway, in Ireland, and Halifax, Nova Scotia. This, he

years ago claimed—and the manager of the South-Western Railways of Ireland, who recently published a monograph on a like subject, agrees with him—is the shortest sea route between Europe and America.

The distance between Galway and Halifax is about 2,150 miles, as against 3,150 between Liverpool and New York, or 2,940 between Liverpool and Montreal. The ocean can be crossed from Galway to Halifax, by steamers of 24 or 25 knots speed, in three days, as against seven to eight by the St. Lawrence or New York routes. "Add to this ocean passage of three days, twelve hours between London and Galway, and fifteen hours between Halifax and Montreal, and you obtain a possible time of transit between London and Montreal of a fraction over four days, or less than one-half what is possible via New York or any other route. This is a condition of things of such importance to the interests of Great Britain and Canada, as to lead, I think, to this route having claims above all others, even if the working of it cost double the money necessary to subsidize the slower routes and it possessed no other advantages."

The first economic advantage to be cited in favor of such a route is that owing to its shortness it can be maintained by half the number of steamers demanded by sailings between Liverpool and New York or Montreal. This being true, the expenses are relatively reduced: only half the initial cost of steamers is required, half their maintenance, fuel, insurance, wages, food, interest, depreciation. And furthermore, as vastly less fuel would be required, the space occupied on other vessels by fuel could in this line be devoted to cargo. At the English end of the journey, passengers and mails going to London via Kingston and Holyhead, and to Scotland via Larne and Stranraer, could be embarked on ferry steamers able to accommodate the trains and passengers without change of car from Galway to destination. Mr. Reford attaches to his letter interesting schedules of comparative items, from which he deduces a saving of £1,650,000 in the maintenance of a line of five steamers from Galway to Halifax, as compared with nine steamers from Liverpool to New York.

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## INDUSTRIAL AND FINANCIAL CONDITIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

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It will probably be found, we think, that the majority of the opinions which reach our eyes or minds upon the commercial decadence of Great Britain come from persons who, however disinterested or competent as observers, have had only a limited time or area in which to observe. A man from this side the Atlantic, for instance, accustomed to methods in travel or in hotel life prevalent in the United States, thinks they are the best. If Britain does not adopt them, she's "behind the age" in his estimation, and he tells the papers so. In certain processes of manufacture American visitors to the United Kingdom have found her deficient. This is doubtless a competitive disadvantage; but England may be superior in her methods in half a score of other lines of which Americans take little heed. Then, again, the tyranny of trades unions has without doubt handicapped the productive power of the Old Country. In this respect the Great Republic may well pray not to be compelled to follow her. Still the wealth and power of England are marvellous, and before we mourn her so-called decay,