

Commodore Perry continues, that—

“In the general operations of a maritime war, they could render good service, and especially would they be useful from their great speed as despatch vessels, and for the transportation of troops, always capable of attack and defence, and of overhauling or escaping from an enemy.

“The Atlantic, Pacific, Baltic, and Arctic have all been built, inspected, and received by the Navy Department.”

The fact that the calculations of the owners of the Collins line were incorrect is cited here against their requests for additional aid, as if mistakes of this kind were not incident to such a concern far more likely to occur against themselves than against the Government, because of the earnestness of the company to connect themselves with the Government. But mistakes of this kind are not unusual. In 1836 Great Britain received proposals to carry these trans-atlantic mails. But in the attempt to fulfil the contract Cunard's company broke down. It is the first step which costs, Mr. Chairman. In 1839 Cunard took the contract for £85,000 per annum. The next year it was found necessary to increase the payment to £110,000 per annum. And with the compensation of \$550,000 a year Cunard failed and went into bankruptcy. The Government of Great Britain then increased the compensation to £145,000 per annum; which sum was continued until 5th April, 1852, when, in consequence of the increase in the size of the steamers—I call the attention of the committee to that fact—the Government gave about £171,000, or more than \$855,000 per annum.

The size of the ships was deemed of consequence to the British Government, and it is worth taking into consideration here.

Cunard's line has seven steamers, with an aggregate tonnage of 12,282, making eighty-five trips a year, or the working of 145,750 tons, for which the exact payment is \$856,871, or \$5 75 per ton.