

was founded by enterprising merchants in the Mother Country. This Company was formed in 1836, within three years after the passage of the "Royal William," and immediately the construction of the "Great Western" specially for the Atlantic voyage was undertaken; the "Sirius" was chartered for the same purpose. These were the first steamships to cross the ocean after the "Royal William." The "Sirius" left London on April 4th, 1838, the "Great Western" left Bristol three days later, and by a singular coincidence they both steamed into New York Harbour on St. George's day. Other steamships followed in rapid succession, among them I may mention the "Liverpool" and the "Royal William;" both were built in England, and both began their trips a few months after the "Sirius" and "Great Western." The latter "Royal William," the second of this name has led to some confusion, from being better known than the Quebec vessel built eight years or so earlier; and it has caused the first "Royal William" somewhat to pass out of memory.

To my mind it is incontestably established that the memorable voyage of the Canadian built "Royal William" from Quebec to London in 1833, must be held to be the first passage across the Atlantic under steam; that passage triumphantly demonstrated the practicability of steam navigation on a voyage between the two continents, notwithstanding the declaration of Dr. Lardner, who at that date pronounced it "perfectly chimerical, and" to use his own words, "they might as well talk of making a voyage from New York or Liverpool to the moon."

The Canadian built "Royal William" undoubtedly proved to be the pioneer of Atlantic steamships. It cannot be disputed that she was the forerunner of the Cunard line, and as such she was equally the forerunner of the thirty-four other lines which to-day run regularly between America and Europe. It must certainly be admitted that this pioneer ship has had no small influence on the ocean steam service of the globe—a service which embraces the great lines running to India, China, Japan, South Africa, South America and Australia, a service consisting of ships which may be counted by thousands with a gross tonnage of 12,000,000 tons. And to us Canadians and British subjects it is interesting to note that *two thirds* of this enormous tonnage belong to Great Britain, Canada and the Colonies, while the remaining *one third* may be claimed by all the other nations of the world.

We must all regard with satisfaction the circumstance that Canada has the proud distinction of having taken the initiative in applying science and mechanical skill to a purpose which has led to such splendid results. Is it not a national duty that we should honour the memory of the men