

whose representations to the Dominion Government on the subject have been met by an assurance that the service will be strictly maintained. At the present moment negotiations are about being consummated which will provide for an immediate resumption of the service with every possibility of the number of trips per month being largely increased. A temporary contract has meanwhile been completed which provides for the carrying of mails by steamer direct, at least once a week, commencing to-morrow, July 7th.

The Board has also been engaged in making representations to the Dominion Government regarding serious irregularities and delays in connection with the mail service between Victoria and Puget Sound and between Victoria and points in Oregon and California *via* Puget Sound. In the opinion of your Committee the inefficient character of the overland service makes it all the more necessary that the alternative service by steamer between this place and San Francisco should be maintained.

The efforts of the Board in connection with the non-calling at this port of the mail steamers to and from China and Japan, have not been productive thus far of very satisfactory results, inasmuch as the steamers in question do not yet call off Victoria regularly on the inward and outward passages for the purpose of landing and embarking mails, passengers and freight.

Pending construction of the new steamers which are destined for the service in question, the present means of transport can merely be looked upon as provisional, and there is ample room for the expectation that upon the replacing of the present temporary conveyances by the vessels which are to form the nucleus of a permanent service the claims of this port (Victoria) as the commercial centre of the Province will be fully recognized. In the meantime arrangements are in progress with a view to meeting any possible objection which might be urged on the ground of insufficient harbor and