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The New Atlantic Mail Service Contract.

The Postmaster General announced in the House of Commons, Apr. 7, that a contract had been entered into for the carriage of mails between Great Britain and Canada. He stated that up to the present, the Atlantic mail service had been performed by practically four steamships, on a weekly basis. Some other lines had received small amounts in connection with the service, but in the past, a great part of the mail had been carried via New York. During the past six years, the Dominion had been paying about \$185,000 a year for its mails going to Great Britain by way of New York. The Canadian service had been performed by the steamships Victorian and Virginian of the Allan Line, and the Empress of Britain and Empress of Ireland of the C.P.R. Under the new contract there will be a mail service three times a week in the summer and twice a week in the winter, instead of once a week as under the former contract, and instead of four vessels engaged, there will be 12. The contract includes four companies, viz.: Allan Line Steamship Co., C.P.R., Canadian Northern Steamships, and White Star-Dominion Line. During the summer the Allan Line will employ the steamships Victorian, Virginian, Corsican and Tunisian, and, until the Alsatian and Calgarian are ready for service, the Grampian and Hesperian will also be used; the C.P.R. will use the Empress of Britain and Empress of Ireland; the Canadian Northern Steamships, Ltd., the Royal Edward and Royal George, and the White Star-Dominion Line, the Laurentic and Megantic. In the winter service, the Alsatian, Calgarian, Victorian, Virginian, Empress of Britain, Empress of Ireland, Royal Edward, and Royal George will be employed, while the White Star s.s. Teutonic will act as an extra vessel both summer and winter, to take the place of any of the others that may be laid up.

The summer sailings will be on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, from any port that the companies may please, provided they are Canadian ports, the ones named being, Montreal and Quebec in summer, and Halifax and St. John in winter. The annual subsidy to be paid for the service, both ways, is \$1,000,000. The landing ports in Great Britain are also at the option of the companies, either Liverpool, or Bristol, but the Hesperian and Grampian, which will only be in service for a short period, will continue to make Glasgow their port, until the Alsatian and Calgarian are ready. For the purposes of apportionment of the amount of the subsidy, the total is to be divided into weekly portions, and then divided among the vessels engaged, on a basis to be agreed upon, thus while the total amount paid for the winter service is the same each week, as in the summer, the amount for each vessel will be greater, owing to the lesser number engaged, and the increased difficulties of the service. The White Star-Dominion Line vessels will not carry mails during the winter as their winter port is at Portland, Me., but the Teutonic will be at the call of the Dominion Government, in case of accident to any of the other vessels.

The keel of the first vessel to be built by the Coquitlam Shipbuilding Co., was reported to have been laid down at the yards at Pitt River, recently. The vessel will be steam driven, using liquid oil as fuel, and she will measure 236 ft. over all, with 187 ft. keel and 43 ft. beam, and will have capacity for about 1,500,000 ft. of lumber.