

NORTH AMERICAN SCREW STEAM SHIP COMPANY. 13

— No. 14. —

London, Liverpool, and North American Screw Steam Ship Company.

Sir,

No. 11, Leadenhall-street, 29 Nov. 1852.

WHEN you honoured a deputation on behalf of the company with an interview on the 27th instant, you desired to be informed whether the company would be willing that provision should be made in the Royal charter of incorporation for which the company has applied for securing the following objects: viz.

1. That it should be obligatory on the company to adopt and perform the conditions of the contract existing between the Government of Canada and Mr. Robert Lamont and others;

2. That the company should be bound to send at least one steam ship each month to an Irish port;

And I am requested to convey to you the sentiments of the provisional committee on these two propositions.

1. The contract in question does not give any authority to the contractors to assign their interest in it, and it will consequently not be possible for this company to perform its conditions, unless with the concurrence of the Canadian Government, application for which has already been made. This committee has entered into a provisional agreement with the contractors, by which the company will be bound to assume the liabilities of the contract, if the assent of the Government of Canada be obtained, which agreement is necessarily contingent upon the Royal charter being granted; and the committee are ready to come under any further obligation that you may deem requisite to the same effect; but they respectfully submit to you that it would be inconvenient to introduce such a contingency into the body of the charter.

2. The committee beg to refer to the heading of their prospectus which has been issued to the public, and contains these words, "calling at Plymouth, Queenstown, and Belfast (any or either of them), as the directors may determine." It has always been, and still is, the intention of the committee that their vessels should call at those ports, but being aware of the great danger of committing themselves beforehand to the minor details of their arrangements, which must be subject to alterations from the force of circumstances, they purposely left the ports of call open in their prospectus; and it would be obviously much more objectionable that they should be tied up in that respect in the charter, which would not, under any circumstances, be susceptible of alteration. The ships proceeding to Canada under the present contract cannot call at an Irish port without the consent of the Government of Canada.

The Legislature of Newfoundland has appropriated a grant of 2,500*l.* per annum for five years to parties who shall first run steamers to that island, under certain conditions, which do not admit of the vessels calling in Ireland. This committee is in communication with the Government of Newfoundland, with a view of obtaining the grant in question, together with permission to call at port or ports in Ireland.

It is the opinion of many persons that a large portion of the trade of this country will ultimately be carried on by screw steamers; if this expectation should be realised, each of the principal Irish ports will have such vessels belonging to them proceeding to North America, and in such case an absolute obligation upon the vessels of this company to call at Irish ports would be productive of nothing but injury to the Irish owners of screw steamers as well as to this company.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Thomas H. Brooking,*
Chairman of the Provisional Committee.

To the Right Hon. J. W. Henley, M. P.,
President of the Board of Trade,
&c. &c. &c.
Whitehall.