

Cunard line; similar advantages will be obtained by Newfoundland through the Galway line, while Canada alone (so far as assistance from the British Government is concerned) is without any service, and the interests of the province have been and are imperilled through the refusal of the Imperial authorities to extend to it similar consideration and relief. It has been asserted that Canada is sufficiently served with postal communication by the Cunard line, although those vessels ply to United States ports; but to prove how utterly unfounded is this assertion, and how necessary it was that Canada should establish the existing service, I take the liberty of enclosing herewith a Table compiled from authentic and accurate returns in the Canadian Post Office department, showing that correspondence is actually retarded, rather than expedited, by that mode of conveyance. It has happened not unfrequently during the past year that the mails forwarded on Thursday by Canadian steamers have reached the Canadian cities in advance of the mails forwarded by the Cunard steamer which sailed on the previous Saturday. The mails for Europe have obtained still more marked advantages by being forwarded by Canadian, instead of by Cunard ships; under the circumstances, it cannot be held that any portion of the subsidy paid to the Cunard line is fairly chargeable to Canadian purposes; but even were it otherwise, the material and commercial interests of the province, far more important than questions of mere postal convenience or accommodation, are involved in this question, and should be considered. That such matters are taken into consideration even by the British Post Office authorities is manifest, from the fact that while they insist that the Treasury is not reimbursed through the postages upon correspondence carried by Cunard ships for the subsidy paid to that line, they have nevertheless unceasingly exerted themselves with the United States authorities to bring about a reduction of the sea postage upon that correspondence. It may not be out of place to mention, that not only is correspondence for Canada delayed when diverted from the Canadian steamers, and forwarded by Cunard ships, but Canada is deprived of the postage thereon, and the Canadian public are subjected to a higher rate of postage for the inland American rate, which goes into the coffers of the United States.

In addition to the delay and expense attending the transmission of Canadian correspondence by Cunard steamers, the establishment of Queenstown as a port of call for Cunard steamers, by which the Canadian line have been driven to abandon it, and seek another port, and in addition to the inability of the British Government to concur in the arrangement for the transfer of the Galway contract to which I have alluded, in the last report of the Postmaster General, published in the month of March last, it is stated, "that a contract has been concluded, by giving an additional mail once a fortnight to the United States and Canada, by means of packets to ply alternately between Galway and Boston and Galway and New York. The service is to begin not later than next June." The effect of this arrangement (if carried out) will be to divert from the Canadian steamers another large portion of correspondence, both for Canada and the United States; this correspondence will be more delayed than that conveyed by the Cunard line, in consequence of the detention occasioned by calling at St. John's, Newfoundland: again will Canada be deprived of a source of revenue to which it is fairly entitled. The correspondence of the Canadian people will be subjected to greater delay and expense than if it were transmitted through the channel provided and paid for by their own Government; and again will they be compelled to contribute to the finances of the United States Government.

It is now felt to be a serious grievance that Canada is not allowed to do her own business by means which the province has provided and paid for, and from which it would in a measure be reimbursed the outlay. This new arrangement will much increase the evil.

If it could be alleged that the service was more efficiently performed by the other lines of steamers, and that the Canadian people desired their correspondence forwarded through channels other than their own, or could it be asserted that the sum paid by the British Government to the Cunard line was largely in excess of the revenue derived from the service, the necessity or desirability of the existing state of matters could be understood; but such, as it appears to me, are not the facts.

By the report of the British Post Office, just published, it is stated, that the amount paid for the service by Cunard line (embracing a sum of 14,700 £. for the line