

important centre of Irish industry and commerce, is the nearest city in the United Kingdom to Loch Ryan, much closer in fact than the nearest Scottish city. There is at present an excellent steam ferry across the narrow channel between Ireland and Scotland, by which Belfast is brought within little more than two hours of Loch Ryan. By this ferry the trans-Atlantic mails could be delivered in Belfast from Loch Ryan in considerably less time than they are now delivered from Moville, and thus, paradoxical as it may seem, Ireland would share in the general advantage which would accrue from transferring the mail service from Moville to Loch Ryan.

The foregoing remarks bear on the practicability of a fast Canadian steamship service more than on the policy of establishing one. The evidence adduced goes to show that the great river of Canada with its affluents penetrating so far into the continent, is, and always will be of immense value as a highway for conveying under certain limitations, the staple products of the country. But our national waterway is, I fear, but ill-suited for a fast service. We find in the western half of the voyage between Montreal and Liverpool natural and unalterable conditions which forbid the running of ships at a uniform high rate of speed with safety. If we had no ice, no fog, no snow, if we had always daylight or clear nights, there would be no difficulty in maintaining at full speed on the route the fastest steamships now or hereafter to be constructed. To every Canadian, it would be no little gratification to have, on our St. Lawrence route, the fastest mail service between the two continents, but we must recognise that the essential conditions to attain it are wanting. If the ocean is to be crossed rapidly with any degree of regularity from the Dominion to the Mother country and at the same time with safety, every fact and all experience goes to show, that it will be expedient to leave the St. Lawrence to its proper functions, and seek a more suitable route for a fast service from one of the splendid open harbours on the Atlantic seaboard.

In considering this phase of the question, we must recognise certain underlying principles which to a large extent govern the transportation of the two great divisions of traffic. In passenger traffic, *speed and regularity* are held to be primary considerations, while in the transportation of freight, *economy* in transit is the first