

**THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND
COMMERCIAL ADVANTAGES OF DIRECT
STEAM
COMMUNICATION AND RAPID POSTAL
INTERCOURSE BETWEEN EUROPE AND
AMERICA, VIA GALWAY, IRELAND**

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The Social, Political, and Commercial Advantages of Direct Steam Communication and Rapid Postal Intercourse Between Europe and America, via Galway, Ireland by Pliny Miles

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original

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

EARL OF EGLINTON AND WINTON, K.T., P.C.,

LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND, &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD:

The deep interest which your Excellency takes in everything that relates to the prosperity of Ireland, and the happiness and well-being of the Irish people, is, I presume, the reason that I am indebted for the gracious permission to dedicate this little work to your Excellency. Acquainted as you are, my Lord, with the practical details of commercial affairs, your Excellency does not require, at my hands, any elaborate arguments or illustrative facts to prove that the industrial interests of the Irish people would be enhanced by a regular steam mail communication between Galway and America.

I know the warm interest which has ever been taken by Her Majesty the Queen, in all that concerns the happiness of Her Majesty's people throughout these kingdoms, and on each occasion of a royal visit to Ireland this feeling has been responded to by the most affectionate demonstrations of attachment and loyalty to Her Majesty's person and throne.

When Mr. John Orrell Lever, an enterprising English merchant, commenced running a line of steamers from

Galway to New York, the leading members of Her Majesty's Government at once saw the great national importance of the undertaking, and gave it their cordial approbation, not to the surprise, but the gratification of every one interested in the commercial greatness and prosperity of the kingdom at large. But no one, my Lord, was more alive to the advantages of this enterprise than your Excellency, and from no one has the spirited projector and his great undertaking received more cordial and earnest support than from yourself. If I have succeeded in bringing together any facts of interest that have a direct bearing on the necessity and importance of increased steam communication between Great Britain and Her Majesty's colonies, and other countries in North America, no one will more readily appreciate their force than your Excellency.

In a report made to Parliament, in 1853, by the Committee on Contract Packets, of which Lord Canning was Chairman, it is stated that "the object of Government in undertaking the trans-marine postal service, is to provide frequent, rapid, and regular communication between this country and other states," and, particularly, "with those distant ports which feed the main arteries of British commerce, and with the most important of our foreign possessions; to foster maritime enterprise, and to encourage the production of a class of vessels which would promote the convenience and wealth of the country in time of peace, and assist in defending its shores against hostile aggression. The reasons for desiring such communication are partly commercial, and partly political."

Is it not, my Lord, a pertinent and self-evident fact that the objects of "frequent, rapid, and regular communication between this country and other states," and particularly with those countries which supply "the main arteries of British commerce," will be best carried out by having such commu-

nication over the *shortest* and most direct route between Europe and America, particularly as that route begins and ends on British territory? The commercial and political condition of the British Empire, and of the world at large, have undergone vast changes since the "SIRIUS," the pioneer vessel of ocean steam communication, first crossed the Atlantic, in 1838. If it were an act of policy, politically and commercially, on the part of the British Government, in 1840, to pay a large subsidy for trans-Atlantic mail service, how much more is that service in need of encouragement and support at this time, when the population of America has nearly doubled, and the commercial and social intercourse between Great Britain and America has more than quadrupled since that service was commenced?

I will not, however, bring the dryness of statistical detail before your Excellency in this dedicatory address, but, wishing your Excellency a long life, and a lengthened period to do good in that eminent office which Her Majesty has been pleased to confer upon you, I have the honour to subscribe myself,

My Lord,

Your Excellency's

Most obedient

Humble Servant,

PLINY MILES.

London, November 16th. 1858.

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