

TWENTY-SECOND
R E P O R T

OF THE
COMMISSIONERS

OF
Inquiry into the Collection and Management

OF THE
REVENUE
ARISING IN IRELAND AND GREAT BRITAIN.

(Dated 25th June 1830.)

POST-OFFICE REVENUE, UNITED KINGDOM:
PART V.

PACKET ESTABLISHMENTS.—HOME STATIONS.

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
9 July 1830.*

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XXII.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF
HIS MAJESTY'S TREASURY.

THE TWENTY-SECOND REPORT

OF THE
COMMISSIONERS

Appointed by the Acts of the 1st & 2d Geo. IV. c. 90, and 3d Geo. IV. c. 37, and continued by Commission under the Great Seal, for the purpose of inquiring into the Collection and Management of the Public Revenue arising in IRELAND, and into certain Departments of the Public Revenue arising in GREAT BRITAIN.

POST-OFFICE REVENUE, UNITED KINGDOM.

Part V.

PACKET ESTABLISHMENTS.—HOME STATIONS.

THE arrangements connected with the circulation of Correspondence within the United Kingdom, the first of the three general heads under which, in our Eighteenth Report, it was proposed to class the subjects requiring to be comprehended in a review of the different branches of service in the Post-office, necessarily include those by means of which the correspondence is conveyed over sea between different parts of the United Kingdom.

*Eighteenth Report,
p. 7.*

The services to be provided for in the general Establishment of Post-office Packets, of which these arrangements form a part, whether considered with reference to their importance and extent, or to the large annual expenditure which they occasion, require peculiar attention; and this establishment has accordingly been the subject of special remark in the Reports containing the results of preceding inquiries concerning the Post-office.

The attention of the Commissioners of "Fees and Gratuities" in the year 1788 was drawn to the expenditure which had been incurred in the Packet Service during several years preceding their inquiries, an expenditure, according to their expression, "so enormous, as almost to surpass credibility;" the sum of £.1,038,000 appearing to have been paid for the employment of packets in a period of seventeen years, giving an annual expenditure of about £.61,000.

*Report of Commis-
sioners of Fees and
Gratuities, 1788.*

Various abuses, and an insufficient examination of the expenditure, were commented upon by those Commissioners, as having occasioned a loss to the Public in this branch of the service, within the above period, of £.68,000, which they

bid.

TWENTY-SECOND REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS

they pronounced "to have been an unnecessary expense;" and "which might" and ought to have been saved."

Report of Finance
Commissioner, 1797,
p. 186.

The succeeding examination was that by the Select Committee of Finance in the year 1797, from whose Report it appears, that in the year 1796 the expense of the packets amounted to £. 78,439; being a large increase compared with the charge at the close of the preceding inquiry, when it was stated to have been £. 45,927. This increase, however, was to be accounted for by the different circumstances of the respective periods, the earlier having been a period of peace, the later of war; a difference materially affecting the nature and the incidental expenses of this service; and it was acknowledged by the Committee, notwithstanding this increase of charge, that much attention had been paid since the date of the former inquiries to the diminution of expense in this establishment.

No Report on the Post-office Packet Service has been published subsequent to that of the Select Committee of Finance above alluded to.

Appendix,
No. 61.

The expenditure appears to have continued at nearly the same rate until the year 1810. In that year it exceeded £. 105,000. In the year 1813 it amounted to £. 157,016, and in the year 1814 to £. 160,603. These, it must be observed, were years of war; and it will be seen, on referring to the accounts in the Appendix, that a considerable portion of the expenditure in the latter year consisted of compensation allowed for the capture of, or for damage sustained in action by, hired vessels employed as packets.

Appendix,
No. 62.

Subsequent to the termination of the war the expenses of the Packet Service became less, having been as follows:

		£.	s.	d.
Had.	In the year 1817 about	78,000	-	-
	— 1818	89,000	-	-
	— 1819	87,000	-	-
	— 1820	85,000	-	-

The introduction of steam-vessels in this establishment was followed by an increase of charge. The grounds of the adoption of this mode of navigation, founded upon its practicability, ascertained by the results of private enterprise, principally in Scotland, may be found fully described in the Fifth Report of the Select Committee on the State of the Roads from London to Holyhead, whose inquiries extended to the regulations for conveying His Majesty's mails between London and Dublin, and between the northern parts of England and Dublin.

Fifth Report of
Select Committee
on Holyhead Roads,
1822, No. 6.

From this Report it appears that it was not till the year 1818 that a steam-boat was made use of for sea voyages. In this year the *Rob Roy*, of 90 tons, with an engine of thirty-horse power, plied regularly between Greenock and Belfast. In the following year the *Talbot*, of 150 tons and two thirty-horse engines, plied daily between Holyhead and Dublin throughout the summer and autumn; and in the year 1820, the *Ivanhoe*, of 170 tons, with engines of the same power, was placed upon the same station. These vessels were private property, and not employed on the public service; but in the spring of 1821, His Majesty's Postmaster-General introduced steam-boats at this station (and also at Dover) for the conveyance of the mails. Since then, the establishment of steam-boats has been augmented and extended to other stations, both for the purposes of domestic and foreign intercourse; and the following appears to have been the annual expenditure attending these services:

	£.
Appendix, Nos. 64, 63, 64.	1821 - - - - - 184,868
	1822 - - - - - 115,429
	1823 - - - - - 93,725
	1824 - - - - - 116,062
	1825 - - - - - 110,838
	1826 - - - - - 144,592
	1827 - - - - - 159,250
	1828 - - - - - 117,960
	1829 - - - - - 108,305

Year

Your Lordships will understand that the comparative view presented in the preceding statements comprehends the whole of the Packet Establishments; and that the inquiries also above referred to, extended generally, and without particular distinctions, to the services of the foreign and colonial, as well as of the internal communications of the empire. These different branches of the establishment, though offering some points for consideration which are common to both, require, nevertheless, to be made the subject of separate examination.

It is to the maintenance of the intercourse with Ireland that the domestic arrangements are principally directed; and it may be proper to remark that the Commissioners of Inquiry into Fees and Gratuities in Ireland, as appears from their Report on the Irish Post-office, dated 30th December 1809, did not include the Irish Packet Establishment in their inquiries, because that branch of the service was by express stipulation left in the hands of the English Department.

Report of Commissioners of Fees and Gratuities in Ireland, 30 Dec. 1809.

Whatever may have been the official understanding on this point, this portion of the Packet Establishment, though in itself a separate branch of the service, forms a material link in the chain of communication between that country and Great Britain, and must be included in any general view of the system of internal circulation, and of the local official establishments requisite for its management.

Having made the several offices of the Establishment in Dublin the subject of a preceding Report, we propose on the present occasion to put your Lordships in possession of the results of our inquiries into the subsisting arrangements, and the means employed, for the transmission over sea of, perhaps, the most important portion of the correspondence which obtains its distribution principally through that department. This Report will also extend to the other points of domestic communication maintained by similar means.

Nineteenth Report.

Letters are conveyed between England, Scotland and Ireland and the Islands adjacent to Great Britain, either in Post-office packets, the property of, or hired by, the Crown; or in private vessels, under the denomination of "ship letters."

Upon both of these modes of conveyance, and the expense attending, and the revenue derived from each, as well as upon the official practice, and the subsisting law, as it affects this subject generally, it will be necessary to offer some distinct observations.

In proceeding to compare the past and present general expenditure of the Home Packet Service, it is material to advert to the different methods of providing for the Packet Service which have been in use at different periods. At the period of the commission already referred to in the year 1788, the service was carried on chiefly in vessels the property of the Crown. Of this mode the Commissioners disapproved. They recommended that the vessels at that time belonging to the Public should be sold, and that the service should be provided for in future altogether by vessels hired by the year, under contracts entered into by public competition.

Report of Commissioners of Fees and Gratuities, 1788.

The Finance Committee in the year 1798, finding this recommendation not fully acted upon, expressed their concurrence in the opinion of the Commissioners, that the service should be carried on in future by means of hired vessels.

Subsequently, and up to a recent period, the service is described as having been conducted under agreements, in the nature of contracts, between the Postmaster-General and the commanders of the respective vessels employed. No actual contract or agreement, it is stated, was executed. The commander received from the Postmaster-General a commission during good behaviour, undertaking to supply a sufficient vessel, built expressly for the service, in consideration of a certain annual payment, which included the wages and victualing of a certain number of officers and men, wear and tear, and all charges and risks but that of capture by the enemy, for which the Revenue was his indemnity. The rate of hire was calculated much below the cost and maintenance of the vessel, the commander (or contractor) deriving his remuneration from the profits arising from the conveyance of passengers.

Appendix, No. 1.

The expense thus incurred by the Public annually in the ten years preceding the year 1821, may be estimated at about £.8,700.

The introduction of the use of steam-vessels in the Packet Service was accompanied by a revival of the system objected to by the Commissioners in 1788, and by the Finance Committee in 1798, under which the Crown became proprietor of the vessels employed; and the expense of building, repairing and maintaining such vessels, with their various establishments of officers, agents and equipage, has been imposed upon the Public in consequence.

The expense, including outfit and maintenance, which has ensued from the adoption of this plan upon the first introduction of steam-packets to the 5th of January 1830, a period of nine years, confined to the establishments which are comprised in this Report (that is exclusive of the foreign stations), may be stated to have exceeded £.609,000; averaging annually about £.67,000.

In addition to the above expenditure, the compensation allowed to the commanders of vessels for the value of their sailing vessels, rendered unprofitable to them by the substitution of steam-packets, the property of the Crown, has amounted to £.25,216. 1s. 8d., from which sum must be deducted the produce of the sale of such of these vessels as have been disposed of under the authority of the Postmaster-General, estimated at about £.5,245. The gross expenditure, therefore, in the above period may be stated at about £.630,000; averaging about £.70,000 per annum.

Appendix,
Nos. 85, 87.

Nos. 88, 89.

A comparison cannot be fairly drawn between the estimated annual charge and that which has been previously stated as resulting from the different mode of providing for the service antecedent to the introduction of steam-vessels belonging to the Crown; inasmuch as the cost of these vessels forms a very large proportion of the gross charge: but from an estimate of the annual disbursements for maintenance, independent of the amount sunk in outlay, these may be stated to have been from the first introduction of steam-packets in April 1821, to the 5th of January 1830, about £.379,000; making an average annual charge of about £.42,000.

The result of a comparison of the annual charge thus incurred with the charge already shown, arising from the previous system of hiring vessels, shows an increase equal to about £.33,300 per annum, whilst the total receipts for passage-money since the year 1821 inclusive, (estimated at £.257,000,) have very little exceeded the amount sunk in building and outfit, which may be stated at £.290,000, exclusive of any charge for interest on the amount so invested. The annual excess above stated therefore, amounting in the period of nine years to about £.300,000, must be considered a total loss.

If the expenditure for the whole of the Packet Establishment, prior to the year 1788, estimated at £.61,000 per annum, were considered of such magnitude as to call for the animadversion then bestowed on it, it must be admitted that the higher rate of annual charge which has been defrayed out of the Revenue in the last nine years, for the exclusive purposes of the home communications, and principally of the intercourse with Ireland, demands now a strict examination; nor will it, we think, be deemed irrelevant, if, in a comparative view of the acknowledged importance of this object, namely, the maintenance of frequent and rapid communication between different parts of that country and Great Britain, and of the expense incurred towards securing such communication, attention be directed to the sums which have been expended under the authority of Parliament in the construction of piers and other works, and the maintenance of establishments for the superintendance of such works, at the various packet stations, which will fall within the observations offered in this Report. From accounts comprised in the Appendix, and from the votes of Parliament in the last Session, it will be found that the amount appropriated for these purposes at Holyhead, Howth, Dunmore, Portpatrick and Donaghadee, since the year 1810 has exceeded £.800,000.

Report of Commissioners of Fees and Gratuals, 1788.

Appendix,
Nos. 158 to 166.

The works and improvements at some of these harbours are still incomplete. That those which have been perfected have greatly facilitated the Post-office service (independent of other objects for which they may have been designed) is unquestionable; but it deserves to be remarked, that during the progress of

this

this expenditure, which has been bestowed almost wholly in Ireland, that country has enjoyed a comparative exemption from taxation; and that by the Act of the 8th Geo. IV. c 21. a diminution of the rate of postage upon letters conveyed to and from Ireland was effected, which has been estimated by the Assistant Secretary of the General Post-office, at a loss of £.40,000 per annum to the Post-office revenue.

8 Geo. 4. c. 21.

Appendix,
No. 178.

In giving an analysis of the expenditure which has been defrayed out of this revenue, as well as for the better explanation of our views, and of the suggestions that have occurred to us with reference to the respective stations as points of communication over sea between Great Britain and Ireland, it will be necessary to treat of each station separately.

In pursuance of this intension we have procured various returns, which will enable us to bring under your Lordships view, in each case, the Annual Expenditure previously, as well as subsequently, to the use of Steam-packets, and the Amount of the estimated Receipts of Passage-money annually, and to these separate statements, and the accompanying observations, we refer your Lordships for a more particular notice of the details of the services incident to each Establishment; reserving for the conclusion of this Report such general remarks upon the official management of this branch of the Packet Establishment as will be rendered more intelligible, and be better appreciated, upon a review of the actual arrangements, and the system of administration under which they have become established.

H O L Y H E A D .

THIS Port, as well from the peculiar advantages of its situation for the approach and departure of vessels, as from its proximity to the seat of government on the opposite coast of Ireland, naturally presented itself as one of the most eligible stations for the transmission of correspondence between the two parts of the United Kingdom, by means of a Post-office Packet Establishment. The inconveniences arising from the length and difficulty of the land-journey to Holyhead, which had formerly suggested some ground of preference in favour of Parkgate as a place of embarkation for passengers, notwithstanding the objections to that harbour in a naval view, and to a sea voyage of nearly double the distance, were gradually obviated by those improvements in the Holyhead Road which are detailed in the several Reports presented to Parliament by the Commissioners appointed for that purpose. Long before these improvements had approached to their present state of completion, Parkgate was abandoned as a packet station, and the sole line of Post-office communication between London and Dublin was established through Holyhead.

This communication was carried on by sailing-vessels, which landed the mails and passengers at the Pigeon House in the Bay of Dublin, until the uncertainty arising from the difficulties in the navigation of the bay, led to the construction of the harbour at Howth for the purposes of a packet station.

These vessels were engaged by the Postmaster-General, under agreements with their commanders for fixed annual payments for the transport of the mails, leaving the profits from passengers wholly to the captains.

Appendix,
No. 1.

The number of vessels thus engaged for the ordinary service of the Post-office had for some years been fixed at seven, and the annual expense of these vessels to the Public may be stated at about £.3,679, or £.525 for each vessel.

Appendix,
Nos. 93 & 94.

Upon this footing the packet establishment at Holyhead continued until the year 1821, when steam-packets were substituted for sailing-vessels at this station, under circumstances to which it will be necessary to advert.

On the 5th April 1819, a communication was addressed to the Secretary of the Postmaster-General by the proprietors of "The New Steam-packet Company," wherein they announced their intention to establish packets on that station, and that suitable steam-vessels were in preparation for the purpose.

Appendix,
No. 2.

They then state as follows: "The attempt will be made in the face of great difficulties; any trial of steam-vessels is necessarily made at a very heavy expense, and those interested will certainly lose money before the existing prejudices against such conveyance can be overcome; much skill and exertion will be required to prove the vessels successful; and after embarking their property in it, and bestowing their ingenuity and industry on an enterprise, at once hazardous and uncertain, the individuals engaging therein can only hope to derive advantage ultimately, by having their vessels appointed to the public service, when they shall have demonstrated that they can essentially improve the intercourse.

"Those packets which carry the mails, will at all times obtain a preference from passengers; and should the efficiency and superiority of steam-vessels in this passage be proved at the expense and risk of individuals, and it be afterwards judged proper to have the mails carried by steam-packets, it is hoped that those vessels which had first been successful would not be excluded from the service; as, if they were excluded, and vessels similarly constructed were employed, this would have the effect of crushing the parties by whose efforts the improvement had been arrived at.

"It is probable that the average time in which the steam-vessels will perform the passage will be less than ten hours, and combining this with the improvements on the roads, the intercourse between the two kingdoms would be rendered as regular and expeditious as if no channel intervened.

"When, therefore, this important acceleration is attempted, and prosecuted to success, at individual risk, we would hope that our vessels should not be excluded from carrying the mails.

"We beg that it may be distinctly understood, that we take the entire risk of the failure of the undertaking on ourselves, and it is only when we shall have proved it so successful that the Public will derive eminent advantages from the result, that we shall look for the protection and support of the Post-office."

The reply to this application, we have been informed by Sir Francis Freeling, was, that if the company "should think proper to make any proposition for the employment of steam-boats, grounded upon actual experience, it would be taken into consideration."

In the course of this year two vessels, the property of this company commenced plying between Holyhead and Howth. The regularity and safety with which they performed their voyages, and their superior expedition, attracted the preference of the majority of passengers, and occasioned a corresponding diminution of profit to the captains of the Post-office sailing-packets, who had derived their principal income from their receipts from passengers. It became obvious therefore that the service of the Post-office could not continue to be conducted on the footing on which it had been maintained; and the attention of the Postmaster-General having been thus forcibly drawn to the subject of Steam Navigation, a comparison was directed to be made, officially, as to the voyages which had been performed by the vessels of the two different descriptions in the same period.

In a report from Mr. Griffiths, the agent for packets at Holyhead, dated 19th April 1820, it is stated, that in a series of twelve successive voyages, from the 26th of March to the 18th of April 1820, from Holyhead to Howth, the difference of time occupied in the performance of such voyages in favour of the steam-boats, compared with the rigged packets, was 11½ hours and 55 minutes; and in a series of successive voyages, from the 28th March to the 19th April 1820, from Howth to Holyhead, the total difference of time in favour of the steam-boats was 85 hours and 27 minutes; making a total amount of difference in favour of steam-boats in twelve voyages, or twenty-four trips, of 198 hours and 22 minutes, or an average difference on each trip of 8 hours and 16 minutes; nearly equal at that period to the whole time employed in each trip by the steam-packets, and much more than equal to it at present.

The results of this comparison, and the general conclusion in favour of the new mode of navigation to which they necessarily led, were confirmed by various inquiries

inquiries directed to the same object in other quarters where steam had been applied to the purposes of passage vessels, and as the same means by which certainty and dispatch were secured to the intercourse of passengers were obviously no less applicable to the transmission of correspondence, it became the duty of the department to which that correspondence was entrusted, to profit by whatever means were available, with a view to the attainment of the increased facility, certainty and dispatch which the new mode of navigation appeared so well calculated to afford.

In April 1820, it appears to have been determined to employ steam-vessels partially in the service of the Post-office.

The proprietors of the two steam-boats, the Talbot and the Ivanhoe, then plying from Holyhead, having learnt that such was the determination of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, a correspondence ensued between them and the Postmaster-General, the substance of which it seems desirable to bring under your Lordships view.

On the 19th April 1820, a letter was addressed by Mr. Thomas Boyd, on behalf of the proprietors of the Talbot and Ivanhoe, to the Secretary of the Postmaster-General, referring to the letter quoted above, dated in the same month of the preceding year, stating that the proprietors would "be glad to engage those vessels in the service of the Post-office for a fair consideration;" and claiming a preference on the ground of their having lost money in proving the "usefulness of steam-vessels in this Channel."

Appendix,
No. 2.

Mr. Boyd observes: "Without knowing in what particular way it may be thought best to make use of steam-packets, it is difficult for me to make any distinct offer; but as it has been hinted that it may be the wish of their Lordships to hire them for a given time, the conducting of them to be entirely under the Post-office; I may state, that from the very peculiar management necessary for this description of vessels, I fear they will never be kept regular in their operations, or made useful to the Public to any extent, unless they are under the immediate direction of their owners." After some further remarks upon the nature of the property, its cost, and the risk of derangement from carelessness and want of skill, in support of the objections to the supposed plan of hiring, he adds: "The simplest plan, perhaps, would be to employ steam-vessels on terms similar to what sail-packets have at present; and if an annual contract were required to be made for the conveyance of the mails at this station, by two steam-packets and one sail-vessel during the summer, and by four sail vessels and one steam-packet during the winter, this might be done for the same charge to the Post-office as it at present stands; but if it be desired to engage the steam-packets for only six or eight months each year, probably it could not be thought unreasonable that they should be paid for each mail they carry across, the same sum which at present falls to a sail-packet (about four pounds, I understand).

ibid.

"However, as the proprietors of the steam-packets above named are perfectly disposed to accept of moderate terms for whatever services the vessels may be required to perform, may I beg to be informed of what is wished, and I shall endeavour to comply therewith.

"In the meantime, in order that there may be no delay in affording the Public the facilities of the conveyance, I shall order that the steam-packets do carry across such mails as you may direct, leaving the remuneration entirely to the discretion of their Lordships, the Postmasters-General.

In answer to this offer, the agent of packets at Holyhead received instructions to make a communication to Mr. Boyd to the following effect: "That he is at liberty to make a tender through you of the Talbot and Ivanhoe steam-boats, stating the terms on which the owners may be willing to let them for hire per lunar month, till the end of October next.

"These vessels are to be delivered in perfect repair and order, to be sailed by us, and to be entirely and exclusively under the control of this board, to be returned to the owners at the end of the term in the same state of repair."

Appendix,
No. 2.

The proprietors declined hiring their vessels in the manner proposed, but stated that they were "most willing to serve the Post-office in any way that would leave the vessels to the management of their owners, subject, of course, to any regulations that might be necessary for the proper performance of such public services as the vessels should be engaged for;" and after again expressing their apprehension, that "if steam-vessels were placed under any other management except that of their owners, they would probably be rendered of little use to the Public," they proceed to offer "that these vessels will carry the mails between Holyhead and Howth, till the end of October next, for the sum of £.1,000 British sterling, and as a security for the service being well performed, if, during this term, the average of the packets passages shall exceed nine hours and a half, the proprietors will give up altogether any claim to payment; that is, the mails will be carried for nothing;" and further, that "if the Postmasters-General should desire to employ steam-vessels during the winter, the owners of the Talbot and Ivanhoe have no objection to extend their offer beyond the time above specified, on reasonable terms;" and that they "would bargain to carry the mails between Holyhead and Howth, by steam-vessels, for the whole twelve months, keeping the average passage within ten hours, on being paid a sum adequate to the expense;" or if the average exceeded ten hours they "should ask no payment."

In reply to this offer, the following communication was made to Mr. Boyd by the Secretary to the Post-office.

Ibid. "Having laid before my Lords the Postmasters-General your letter to me of the 2d instant, offering two steam-vessels upon certain conditions for the conveyance of the mails between Holyhead and Howth, I lose no time in acquainting you that their Lordships decline that offer."

Ibid. This unqualified refusal was immediately followed by a new offer on the 16th May, "Of these vessels for the purpose of conveying the mails between Holyhead and Howth, from this time till the end of October, without any claim for remuneration, and we shall at the same time leave the Postmasters-General to regulate the hours of sailing, in such manner as to afford the probability of the vessels generally arriving at their destinations with day-light, and they shall have likewise the appointment of the officers if they require it, but with this express understanding, that Government shall in that case be held liable for the vessels and their machinery, and shall be bound to keep and restore them to us at the expiry of the contract in the same condition in which they are on entering into the service of the Post-office. Should the appointment of the officers, however, be left to us, then all responsibility shall remain in ourselves, and we shall engage to fit up at our own expense a place of security for the reception of the mails, and the accommodation of a guard, should such be considered necessary. In this way Government will have an opportunity of trying the merits of such conveyance, and should we in course of such trial obtain the confidence, we shall hope for the future friendship and support of the Postmasters-General. Any complaints from the Government agents against the management or the officers of these vessels shall have immediate attention."

Ibid. Pending this correspondence with the proprietors of the Talbot and Ivanhoe, attempts were made by agents of the Post-office to hire steam-vessels for the Holyhead Station at Greenock and Liverpool.

Ibid. In a report of considerable length, dated 20th May (which as well as the whole of the correspondence here alluded to, will be found in the Appendix), the Secretary apprized the Postmaster-General, that those attempts had been, and were likely to continue unsuccessful; and in transmitting to their Lordships the report of the agent, Mr. Griffith, to that effect, he observes, "that report is unfortunately accompanied by an offer from the Committee of the Proprietors of the Talbot and Ivanhoe steam-packets to convey the mails to and from Holyhead and Howth until the end of October, without any claim for remuneration." Under the conditions which have been already set forth in the preceding extracts from the offer here alluded to of the proprietors (dated the 16th May), this offer appears from the Secretary's Report to have been considered far less eligible than the previous offer (to carry the mails until the

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end of October for £.1,000, at an average rate of nine hours and a half per voyage), which had been rejected; but it appears also that the proprietors were still ready to abide by that previous offer.

Under these circumstances the Secretary expresses his sentiments to the Postmaster-General as follows:

"Certainly on the face of this proposal to convey the mails for nothing, it may seem that we ought to accept it, and any refusal to do so cannot fail hereafter to be misrepresented. It is therefore necessary to bring the prominent parts of this subject to view."

Appendix,
No. 2.

He then proceeds to state, "that it never was intended that the conveyance of the mails to and from Ireland should be left exclusively to any steam-boats."

That the commanders of packets being allowed only £.850 per annum, out of the revenue, the loss of passage-money to them consequent upon the employment of hired steam-vessels in the Post-office service, assuming that these should not be under their command, would entail upon the Public the necessity of purchasing their sailing vessels, and granting compensation for their losses; and that "the object of the proprietors of the steam-boats is ultimately to obtain exclusive possession of the passage."

Ibid.

On these grounds he concludes, that "if the offer be accepted we abandon the station, and involve ourselves in an unnecessary and heavy expenditure."

Should their Lordships concur in his "reasoning and conclusions upon it," the Secretary states, "it remains to be considered what steps we are to pursue in the attainment of our object, and what instructions to give Mr. Griffith. It must appear to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that his idea of hiring proper steam-vessels cannot be realized; we therefore come to our first proposition to him, of purchasing and introducing two fit vessels without delay; I am sure your Lordships will be inclined, as far as is consistent with our object, to do every thing that is right by the company working the steam-vessels. It must at the same time not be forgotten, that they came upon the station as opponents to the British packets."

Ibid.

The following suggestions are then submitted—

1st. That an offer be made "to purchase the Talbot and Ivanhoe at a fair valuation."

Ibid.

2dly. The payment of a moderate sum to the proprietors "in consideration of their immediately relinquishing their concern to us."

3dly. "To offer them the sum of £.1,500 or £.2,000 for the use of their steam-vessels for six months, either to purchase them at the end of that period, at a valuation now to be made by competent persons, or to return them in the same condition as when delivered into our possession." The continuance of the Post-office commanders in their appointment and in the receipt of the passage-money was contemplated in the last of these propositions. The Secretary adds, "should we not succeed in either of these propositions, or fail to obtain vessels on hire, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will see at once the absolute necessity of acceding to the Postmaster-General's first proposition, of purchasing or building two fit steam-boats as auxiliary to the sailing packets at Holyhead."

Ibid.

The result of this representation or report to the Postmaster-General, dated 20th May, was communicated by the Secretary on the 22d, in an instruction to the agent at Holyhead, wherein he states: "I have to inform you that I have obtained Lord Chichester's sentiments upon the subject, and as time presses, I assume that Lord Salisbury must coincide in opinion with his colleague upon it." The agent was directed to decline the offer of the proprietors to convey the mails for nothing, on the grounds laid in the above report of the Secretary to the Postmaster-General. He was informed that their Lordships were inclined to do right towards "the company working the steam-vessels at Holyhead, not forgetting, however, that they were originally placed upon

Ibid.

Appendix,
No. 2.

Ibid.

"that station in direct opposition to the Post-office packets." And authorized to make the propositions suggested in the above report, "in the event of his endeavours to hire two proper steam-boats at Port-Glasgow, Dumbarton or Leith, proving unsuccessful." The failure of these endeavours was communicated to the Postmaster-General in a report from the Secretary, dated on the following day (23d May 1820), from which it further appears, that an estimate had been already obtained (from Messrs. Wood & Co. of Port-Glasgow) for the building a steam-packet fit for the Holyhead Station. In this report the Secretary observes, "in the event of the negotiation with the Steam-packet Company failing (and there is reason to suppose that company will only accede to the proposition Mr. Griffith is empowered to make, if they think it their interest so to do), your Lordships will have done towards that company all that can be expected from you, and you will then be under the necessity of building steam-vessels for the service, and be enabled to judge, when you have the estimates and the commanders report before you, whether you will accede to the terms of Messrs. Wood & Co., or procure tenders for building from other quarters."

Ibid.

Ibid.

After an interval of a few days, namely, on the 2d June, three separate estimates of different ship-builders were brought by the Secretary under the notice of the Postmaster-General; the terms proposed by the Steam-packet Company for the sale of their vessels are represented on this occasion as too exorbitant for their Lordships to entertain, especially as it had been recently stated by the agent that these vessels were insufficiently found or constructed. The Secretary states, that he had instructed Captain Skinner to procure further building estimates; and suggests, "that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be communicated with, in order that no time may be lost in giving directions for the vessels to be proceeded in." This communication of the Secretary appears to be consonant with a report from the agent (Mr. Griffith) dated 30th May, wherein he speaks of the expectation of purchasing or hiring the vessels of the Steam Company at Holyhead as "being now relinquished," and transmits, in consequence, certain documents, consisting of a correspondence between himself and Captains Goddard and Rogers, and a proposal for building, "whereby my Lords the Postmasters-General may be enabled to recover the Holyhead Station." This the report recommends should be done, "by setting about building steam-packets of the power and quality above alluded to, which would render all future competition on the part of individuals utterly unavailing."

Ibid.

A memorandum, dated General Post-office, 10th June 1820, addressed "To the Chancellor of the Exchequer," stating the failure of the agents of the Postmaster-General to hire vessels, the exorbitancy of the demand for the sale of the Talbot and Ivanhoe, and the insufficiency of these vessels, and stating also, that "tenders for building have since been obtained," the particulars of which were detailed, further intimated, that it was "intended, after some preliminary inquiries at the Navy Board, to call upon Mr. Evans to furnish the Department with the draft of a suitable vessel, and the Postmasters-General are much inclined, in the event of Mr. Brodrip's plan being approved by the Committee to whom it may be referred, to build the other steam-vessel, fitted with his machinery, if the Government should think it right."

Ibid.

The concurrence of the Lords of the Treasury in these intentions of the Postmaster-General, if their Lordships "should see fit" to carry them into execution, was signified in a letter to the Postmaster-General from Mr. Harrison, dated 16th June. On the same day a representation from the proprietors of the Talbot and Ivanhoe was addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, wherein they recapitulate their several tenders, state their objections to the conditions annexed to the offers of the Postmaster-General, urge their claim to consideration on the ground of their having, at considerable expense, established the practicability of the passage by steam-vessels, deprecating the competition of the Government, and conclude by a renewed proposal: "We are still most solicitous" they say, "to obtain the friendship of Government, and under this feeling we pray permission to renew our former offer to carry the mails from this time till the end of October for £.1,000, binding ourselves to perform the passages on an average of nine and half hours, or failing our doing

" doing so, to forfeit all claim for remuneration; and we shall undertake to carry the mails throughout the winter if required, on a reasonable allowance being made us for so doing, on the understanding that our vessels shall have a preference thereafter to all others on equal terms.

" In this way the mail may be conveyed with unprecedented rapidity and regularity, at no more than the usual expense to the Public, and without the advance of a single shilling being required from Government." To this they add, " If we are employed to carry the mail during the winter, we shall provide a third steam-packet, which shall be peculiarly adapted for a stormy season."

This remonstrance and renewed offer of the Steam Company appears to have been referred by the Lords of the Treasury to the Postmaster-General, and to have been replied to on the 10th August, when the Secretary adverted to the reasons offered in his report to the Postmaster-General of the 20th May, the minute dated the 10th June, and the authority given by their Lordships to the Postmaster-General on the 16th June to proceed in the building of vessels. In this reply he states that it would not have been " consistent in result with a due and economical expenditure of the public money, to have closed with any of the proposals made by the Steam Company; and that in all the negotiations with the parties, the Postmaster-General evinced every proper attention to their interests. The parties can therefore have no just ground of complaint, the possession of the station having been exclusively with the Post-office from time immemorial. The Postmasters-General are now pursuing the only course in their power, of providing effectually, and in their own way, for carrying on a public service of infinite importance to Great Britain and Ireland, so as to insure, by the joint establishment of steam and sailing-vessels, that punctuality and dispatch in the communication between the two countries which have been enjoined by various Committees of Parliament, and also to perform it in the most economical manner."

Appendix,
No. 2.

In the meantime, that is prior to the date of the above reply to the finally renewed offer of the Steam Company, a contract had been entered into for building one vessel, and subsequently a second was authorized by the Lords of the Treasury.

Preparatory to the introduction of these vessels into active service, the Postmaster-General addressed to the Lords of the Treasury a report, dated 26th March 1821, in which they observe, " The establishment of steam-packets, however, involves a total deviation from this long established principle, (of carrying on the service by implied contracts with the commanders of the vessels employed,) and the necessity of a partial recurrence to the old practice, that the packets should be the property of the department instead of the commander, as the original expense of the outfit is too large for the individuals to undertake. We must therefore be placed in the situation of private adventurers, at the outset at least, but we shall gladly avail ourselves of any means that may suggest themselves in the process of time, for moulding this system to the established practice of the service."

Ibid.

Their Lordships then state the necessary preliminary measures affecting the existing establishment at Holyhead, according to their view, namely, the purchase of the sailing-vessels, seven in number, then employed, of which it was calculated two might be retained for the use of the station in " cases of emergency," and the remainder disposed of; and the reduction of the number of commanders from seven to four, three receiving retired allowances, or being otherwise provided for.

The expense under the first of these heads is calculated at £.14,000, subject to any reduction in the amount that might be obtained for the vessels disposed of; under the last, at £.500 per annum, consisting of an allowance of £.250 to each of two retiring commanders, the third supernumerary being appointed agent at Holyhead.

Ibid.

" The expense of the two steam-packets (then in progress of being built) complete for sea, will be about £.18,000," their Lordships state, " and our annual expenditure, of every description, including a fair and moderate remuneration

Ibid.

“remuneration for the services of the commanders, and an allowance for wear and tear, and for repairs to the machinery, may, perhaps, amount to £.12,000, of which the coals, and the maintaining two sailing-packets will amount to one-third (£.8,450 the annual cost of our present establishment must be taken in diminution of this sum.) We propose to take the sea-risk upon the department, otherwise the insurance alone would amount to above £.2,000 annually.”

Against this expenditure, which their Lordships observe, “appears immense, but inevitable;” they add, “we must seek for a return by the produce of passengers, and we are willing to flatter ourselves that if we are left in the unrestricted exercise of our discretion in the management of this very complicated system, the result may be, that Ireland will derive most important benefits in point of correspondence; that the service will be placed on a more respectable footing than ever; that the actual expense of the passage to persons crossing the Channel will not be increased; and lastly, that this whole arrangement may not only be effected without any ultimate increased annual charge upon the Public, but that we may be enabled gradually to pay off the large sum incurred in clearing the way for the new establishment.”

Their Lordships in conclusion represent that “a third steam-boat will be necessary, as two of these vessels will not be equal to the maintenance of the communication every day in the year, without making any provision for contingencies arising from want of repairs to the vessels or machinery.” This, their Lordships add, “will be attended with no addition to the annual expenditure, as the crew of the vessel, which is laid up for the time, will be transferred to the one that takes her turn of duty.”

We have now brought under your Lordships view the circumstances, as set forth in the official correspondence, which led to the first adoption of steam-navigation in the service of the Post-office, and the grounds and the understanding upon which in transferring the packet duty to steam-vessels at Holyhead, the prescribed and established practice of providing for this service, by the hire of vessels under contracts, was first abandoned.

The documents from which the foregoing extracts are taken suggest also a comparative view of the actual expense of the previous establishment at this station, and of the estimated expense of that which it was proposed in the first instance to substitute for it. But before we proceed to notice the facts which such a comparison presents for observation, or to call your Lordships attention to the details of the expenditure incurred in the creation and maintenance of this establishment, and still further to the pecuniary results of its subsequent extension, we propose to offer such remarks as occur to us upon the principle on which the Postmaster-General deemed it proper to establish this branch of the service, and the circumstances under which that principle was adopted in the exercise of their discretion.

The propriety of seizing the advantage to be gained by the use of steam-navigation in the department of the Post-office, wherever safety and punctuality in the performance of the service can be reasonably calculated upon consistently with economy, will not be controverted; and it may perhaps create some surprise, that during a considerable period, whilst the regular transmission of persons and property between Holyhead and Dublin was carried on by such means, they were not made available under the authority of the Postmaster-General, for purposes, the importance of which is sufficiently urged in the correspondence above referred to.

From a perusal of that correspondence it will, we think, be inferred, that the rejection of the proffered opportunity of expediting the communication with Ireland through Holyhead by the aid of steam-vessels, not the property of the Crown, and the eventual establishment of such vessels at the charge of the Crown for that purpose, were the results of a predetermination to retain that “possession of the station” of Holyhead, which in Mr. Freeling’s letter above quoted, of the 10th August 1800, is described as “having been exclusively with the Post-office from time immemorial;” and, with this design, to introduce government steam-packets there, which, according to the suggestion of the agent employed in the fruitless negotiations with the Steam-packet

Company

Company "would render all future competition on the part of individuals
"utterly unavailing."

Such a resolution may appear inconsistent with the expectation held out in the reply of the Postmaster-General to the first application of the Steam-packet Company, that "any proposition grounded upon actual experience would be
"taken into consideration;" but the reasons assigned for rejecting their several propositions, founded on such experience, must equally have suggested themselves in the first instance, more especially the argument drawn from the imputed intention of the company to offer a direct opposition to the Post-office packets, which appears to have had some weight in the eventual treatment of their claims to the countenance of the Postmaster-General, though, as it seems, not objected against when their project was first submitted with a view to obtain their Lordships sanction.

Appendix,
No. 2.

Ibid.

The defeat of the already established undertaking of the Steam-packet Company at Holyhead, and the prevention of the benefits and convenience to the Public at large, as well as of the aid to the service, which might have resulted from a competition arising out of similar efforts of private enterprise; and the contingent risks incurred by the Postmasters-General in placing themselves "in the situation of private adventurers," under an implied necessity to make sufficient provision for objects beyond the conveyance of correspondence, were foreseen consequences of this determination, which, in our opinion, should have been avoided by a considerate exercise of the powers of the Postmaster-General, or a well-founded calculation of the interests of the Revenue.

The protection of the interests of a particular class of officers, few in number, whose claims to a monopoly of the passage the Postmaster-General could not have been called upon to guarantee, appears to us to have suggested no sufficient reason for this exclusive measure, the expediency or fitness of which could be maintained only, as it seems to us, on the ground of economy, or of some superior exigency which might warrant a comparative disregard of this consideration, and that "total deviation from the long-established principle
"of the service" with which the adoption of the new system was avowedly attended. Under the circumstances set forth in the correspondence above referred to, no such exigency appears to us to have existed. A satisfactory provision for the conduct of the service, we doubt not, might have been made upon the old and approved principle. The contrary course, however, appears to have been recommended for your Lordships concurrence in the reply of the Secretary, dated the 10th August 1820, to the finally renewed offer of the Steam-packet Company, on the ground of its proving eventually economical. We proceed therefore to examine how far the expectations held out in that communication, and in the subsequent report of the Postmaster-General to the Lords of the Treasury, dated the 6th March 1821, have been realised; and in so doing, to institute the necessary comparison between the expenses incident to the former and the present establishments respectively.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

From official returns furnished to us the average annual expense of the Holyhead Packet Establishment in the five years preceding the introduction of steam-vessels, that is, ending on the 5th January 1821, may be stated at £3,079, subject to no diminution by the receipt from passengers, which constituted the profits of the commanders.

No. 94.

In the report recently referred to, the contemplated establishment at the commencement of the new system was to consist of three steam-packets and two sailing-vessels, and the "annual expenditure of every description" was estimated at £12,000. Subsequently it was found necessary to add a fourth steam-vessel, and in the year 1825 two more were placed on the establishment, which have continued to be employed to the present time.

No. 1.

The subjoined Statement is intended to afford a comparative view of the whole Expenditure that has ensued annually from the employment of steam-vessels, the property of the Crown; of the Receipts derived from passage-money or other sources incident to the present plan of conducting this service, and of

the establishment of vessels at Holyhead, in the several years up to the 5th January 1830.

YEARS Ended 5th January.	Number of Steam Vessels.	Number of Sailing Vessels.	PURCHASE OF SAILING VESSELS.			RETIRED ALLOWANCES to Captains.			Building and Outfit of Steam Vessels.			
			£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
1822 - -	2 from May	6 to May	£. 14,081. 16. Paid at different times, but the dates of the several payments are not given.	}	}	146	11	5	-	-	-	
1823 - -	- 3 -	2				266	8	9	-	-	-	
1824 - -	- 4 -	2				400	-	-	-	-	-	
1825 - -	{ 4 to 10 Oct. 3 from 10 Oct. }	3				400	-	-	} 69,716 13 1	-	-	-
1826 - -	- 3 -	4				400	-	-		-	-	-
1827 - -	{ 5 to 10 Oct. 6 from 10 Oct. }	4				400	-	-		-	-	-
1828 - -	{ 7 to 5 July 6 from 5 July }	4				400	-	-		10,317	7	4
1829 - -	- 6 -	4				400	-	-		186	17	4
1830 - -	- 6 -	4				400	-	-		169	7	3
			14,081	16	-	3,213	-	2	80,390	5	1	

Comparisons are to be drawn from the preceding statement between the expense under the old system of the service and the present, and between the actual amount of the latter and the sum estimated in the report of the Postmaster-General to the Lords of the Treasury, upon the commencement of this new establishment.

In the first of these comparisons it is to be remarked that the old practice was free from all speculative outlay, and the amount of the hire of the vessels was an ascertained charge upon the revenue; whilst under the substituted system the reimbursement of the monies advanced was to be relied upon from the appropriation of the passage money to the Revenue, instead of to the remunerative profits of the commanders of the packets, as heretofore, who received certain compensation in consequence.

Your Lordships will perceive that the current expenses of the present establishment, as shown in the above statement, have fallen short of the receipts in the whole series of nine years there included, by £. 3,383. 19s. 6d.; and, if credit be allowed for the annual charge within the same period, according to the previously established practice, a diminution of charge (in comparative current expenses) would appear to the amount of about £. 56,000. But it is to be observed, that in appropriating the passage-money to the Revenue a very heavy outlay was incurred; for example, the sums stated in the accounts furnished to us as having been expended for building and outfit of steam-vessels for the use of the Holyhead Station in the above period amount to £. 80,390. 5s. - 1d., whilst the net charge incidental to the change of system, in the purchase of the sailing-vessels of the commanders and retired allowances, has exceeded £. 15,000, without taking credit for any interest upon the money sunk in building and outfit. It is therefore evident from the preceding comparison that the expectation held out in the report of the Postmaster-General to the Lords of the Treasury, dated the 20th March 1821, that the proposed arrangement "may not only be effected without any ultimate increased annual charge upon the Public, but that we may be enabled gradually to pay off the large sum incurred in clearing the way for the new establishment," has not been sustained hitherto. The probability of such an issue from a perseverance in maintaining this establishment upon its present footing may be more fairly calculated by a more particular reference to the statement given above, which will at the same time bring into view the proposed further comparison of the estimated and the actual expense of the new establishment.

Your Lordships will remark, that for the six years ended on the 5th January 1827,

Expenses of ESTABLISHMENT	TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	RECEIPTS for SAILING VESSELS SOLD.	RECEIPTS for PASSAGE, &c.	TOTAL RECEIPTS
£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	
6,085 16 8	- - -	£. 1,865. Received at different times, but the dates of the several receipts are not given.	14,098 16 7	} 139,365 7 11
13,798 18 8	- - -		16,449 17 5	
12,897 9 9	- - -		17,891 10 11	
12,057 14 1	- - -		18,369 5 1	
12,395 8 6	231,801 9 7½		18,637 18 6	
10,358 17 -	- - -		15,077 5 4	
21,042 18 3	- - -		15,306 15 5	
21,098 14 8	- - -		12,338 10 1	
11,580 11 11	- - -	12,050 10 7		
134,116 8 5	231,801 9 7½	1,865 - -	137,500 7 11	139,365 7 11

1827, the current expenses of the establishment (exclusive of outfit &c.) would appear from the above statement to have been very nearly restricted to the estimated charge of £. 12,000 per annum, and that in this period the receipts for passage-money exceeded those expenses by £. 30,000, whilst in the three subsequent years ended 5th January 1830, the expenses of maintenance exceeded annually £. 21,000, and the receipts fell short of that expenditure upon the whole by £. 26,727, or nearly £. 9,000 per annum; having diminished in each year successively. This heavy increase of charge, and excess of the estimated rate of annual expenditure, arose from the addition of two steam-vessels already alluded to on this station. The grounds of a measure attended with such results to the Revenue require to be stated.

The number of packets proposed to complete the establishment of steam-vessels on this station was four, and we have no reason to doubt that that establishment was found sufficient for the adequate performance of the service, so far as the regular transmission of the correspondence was concerned. That such was the case must indeed be inferred from the very trivial aid which the two additional vessels have afforded towards this object. The correspondence conveyed by these vessels consists only of the mails passing through Chester. From several returns and documents contained in the Appendix, the number of letters comprised in these mails (both ways) may be estimated at about forty thousand in a year, and the amount of the revenue derived from them at about £. 1,700; whilst the expenditure arising from the employment of the vessels in question may be stated at least at £. 7,000 per annum, an increase of charge which the Postmaster-General could not have considered to be warranted for a service so limited and unimportant.

In the correspondence of the department "the personal accommodation of the Public" is given as a reason for the addition of the two vessels in question to the establishment, and in fact it is to be traced to the plan before alluded to, of maintaining, on the part of the Postmaster-General, a monopoly of the passage between Holyhead and Dublin. Objections having been felt by passengers to a departure at midnight, according to the arrangements necessarily made for the dispatch of the London correspondence, it was deemed expedient to provide more agreeably for the conveyance of passengers, by affording an option of embarking in vessels dispatched at an early hour of the morning. The degree of preference given to this latter opportunity at different periods may be seen from returns in the Appendix, showing the numbers conveyed and the amount of passage-money received by the night and morning packets. In a

period of sixteen months, to the 1st May 1828, the following results are shown upon the passage from Holyhead to Howth:—

	BY NIGHT.	BY MORNING.	MORE by LATTER.
Passengers - - - -	3,248	4,425	1,177
Carrriages - - - -	58	372	314
Horses - - - -	8	118	110
Passage Money - - £.	3,219 7 -	4,506 14 6	1,477 7 6

In the four last months included in the above period the excess in the number of passengers conveyed, and in the amount of passage-money, appears to have been rather in favour of the night packets; and the experience of the succeeding six months, to the 1st November 1828, indicates less partiality for the morning Packet than was evinced in a similar period in the preceding year, as the following statement will show:—

	BY NIGHT.	BY MORNING.	MORE by LATTER.
Passengers - - - -	1,857	2,543	456
Carrriages - - - -	64	191	127
Horses - - - -	13	60	49
Passage Money - - £.	1,828 8 -	2,421 3 -	592 15 -

A similar examination, applied to the voyage from Howth to Holyhead, for the year ended 1st November 1828, produces the following results:—

	BY NIGHT.	BY MORNING.	MORE by LATTER.
Passengers - - - -	4,363	7,302	2,959
Carrriages - - - -	123	504	381
Horses - - - -	34	163	129
Passage Money - - £.	4,235 19 6	7,536 18 6	3,300 19 -

From the information we have received with regard to the public opinion at later periods we have reason to believe that the objections to a night passage have abated; but, whatever caprice may be manifested in this respect, the most important fact is to be deduced from the statement previously given, from which it appears that the increased accommodation offered in the establishment of the extra packets, so far from adding to the number of the passengers by the route of Holyhead, has been attended with a gradual decrease of the receipts of passage-money; that in the three years of increased establishment the receipts have been less by £. 14,000 than in the three preceding years; and that the receipt of the last two years respectively have been less than the receipts of any previous year. Amongst the causes of this diminution may probably be reckoned the recent measure, which will be hereafter noticed, of creating a Post-office Packet Establishment at Liverpool; by which means the Postmaster-General became his own competitor for passengers on separate voyages, having the same destination.

The fact already observed upon, that the additional accommodation afforded at Holyhead has been followed by a diminished receipt, seems to indicate a miscalculation on the part of the Postmaster-General in prosecuting this particular speculation, whilst it corroborates the opinion we have already expressed, of the impolicy of their Lordships placing themselves "in the situation of private adventurers."

In adverting to this injudicious increase of the establishment, for a purpose extraneous to the direct and legitimate objects of the department, we cannot but recur to that part of the report of the Postmaster-General to the Lords of the Treasury, which seems opposed to the contemplation or permission of any extension of this system of private adventure. Their Lordships state: "The establishment of steam-packets, however, involves a total deviation from this long established principle, and the necessity of a partial recurrence to the old practice, that the packets should be the property of the Department;" and they add, "we must therefore be placed in the situation of private adventurers, at the outset at least, but we shall gladly avail ourselves of any means

"that

“ that may suggest themselves in the process of time, for moulding this system
“ to the established practice of the service.”

There is indeed much apparent inconsistency in recommending an expenditure involving a heavy investment of capital, (which, in a very limited scope compared with its actual augmented scale, their Lordships described as “immense,”) on other grounds than those of a permanent maintenance of the establishment proposed to be so created; and whatever may have been their Lordships intentions in this instance, we find that in others the principle of extending the establishments of this department, instead of adhering or reverting to “the established practice of the service,” has in fact subsequently obtained great latitude. Some examples of less magnitude than the creation of an entire establishment of packets, the property of the Crown, here, (and as will be seen hereafter elsewhere) are to be found in the arrangements incidental to the introduction of the steam-vessels at this particular station.

One of the objections offered in the treaty with the Steam Company was the necessity of purchasing the sailing-vessels of the established Post-office commanders, a necessity which, as your Lordships have seen, was equally submitted to on the substitution of steam-vessels the property of the Crown. This purchase was “subject to reductions in the amount which we may be able to obtain “for them,” according to the plan proposed by the Postmasters-General, in their report to the Lords of the Treasury. The official returns state the amount of the reduction from this source at £.1,865, leaving a charge of £.12,216 under this head. Upon inquiry as to the disposal of these vessels, seven in number, it appeared that three had been sold, producing the amount above mentioned, that one had been “transferred to Mr. Brodrip, by order of the “Treasury, for the purpose of experiments” in steam navigation, “and three “employed as colliers at Holyhead.” A fourth vessel (the Chichester, from the Dover station) is also returned as having been employed on the same service, but “lost at sea in 1865.”

A statement has been made in an official return of an alleged saving of £.300 in one year from the employment of one of these vessels. We do not conceive it to be necessary to go into an examination of the grounds of this calculation as to this particular vessel. It is, we think, evident that vessels retained for such purposes, whether employed or not, must require a superintendence quite foreign to the duties of the Post-office, which could only be properly exercised by distinct establishments, and that in the employment of them much opportunity of abuse must be afforded.

No difficulty could arise in forming contracts, under proper sanction and control, for the necessary supply of coals at Holyhead or Howth; and it is scarcely to be supposed that the vessels in question, which, according to the agreements with the commanders, should have been built expressly for the packet service, were of a suitable construction for colliers. On this subject, however, the return before alluded to describes one of the vessels (the Countess of Liverpool) as “having good capacities for stowage;” and adds, that “being “scarcely saleable, she has been engaged in the conveyance of fuel for the “steam-packets to and from Holyhead and the Clyde.”

The observation upon the unsaleableness of this vessel leads us to submit the following comparative view of the Prices allowed for her and the other purchased vessels, together with the Sums obtained for such of them as have been sold.

NAME OF VESSEL.	HOW DISPOSED OF.	Price of Sale.			ALLOWANCE to CAPTAINS.		
		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Chichester	sold	1,150	-	-	2,438	-	-
Uxbridge		315	-	-	1,683	-	-
Union		400	-	-	1,624	-	-
Spencer	Transferred to Mr. Brodrip	-	-	-	1,055	-	-
Countess of Liverpool		-	-	-	2,400	-	-
Montrose	Employed as Colliers	-	-	-	1,050	-	-
Pelham		-	-	-	2,014	-	-

Hence it will be seen, that the vessels employed as colliers (one of which, described as “scarcely saleable,” cost the Post-office revenue £.2,400), were purchased

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purchased at the highest rates of allowance, with one exception; and that with the addition of the fourth vessel (the Chichester from the Dover Station), for which the sum allowed was £.1,746, the capital sunk in these vessels amounted to £.8,125. In the last-mentioned vessel an example has been afforded of the disadvantage of the Postmasters-General taking upon themselves the sea-risk which formerly attached to the contractors. By the loss of this vessel at sea her cost has been totally sunk; and if to this be added the difference between the purchase and sales of the three vessels first mentioned in the previous statement, it will appear, that upon these four vessels a positive loss of £.5,636 has been sustained.

It is important to bear in mind that the sea-risk at present undertaken by the Postmaster-General extends to the whole of the establishment, the annual expense of insuring even the smaller number of steam-vessels proposed for the Holyhead Station in the first instance having been considered by their Lordships too great to be incurred. The cost of insurance against this risk would probably exceed the whole annual charge under the former system of conducting this service.

One consequence of the departure from that system has been the establishment at Holyhead of a depot of stores of various kinds, and the practice of sending vessels there from other stations to undergo repairs, under the management of persons employed by the Post-office. This has led to the imprest of large sums of money (amounting in one year to £.11,000, in addition to the receipts for passage-money) to the packet agent there, to meet disbursements and provide stores. On examining this officer we have been surprised to learn that no part of these stores is procured by contract; that he has an unlimited power of addressing requisitions for stores to the Deputy Postmaster at Liverpool, who supplies them, transmits the bills and receipts to the packet agent at Holyhead, and receives from him the amount. The stores thus procured are represented to consist of "oil, tallow, rope, iron, brass-work, fire-bricks, fire-clay, coal sometimes, tar, pitch, rosin, varnish black and white, hemp." We have seen monthly charges in the accounts of the packet agent, under the head of stores, varying from £.490 to £.1,000.

From the evidence of this officer we learn that it has recently been determined to extend still further the operations of the department of the Post-office in the maintenance and repairs of the packets. He states that "it has been considered desirable that the establishment at Holyhead should be of that permanent character that the Post-office should be able to rely on it for any service they may require." In pursuance of this intention an establishment, he states, is under formation, which is proposed to consist of "twelve boiler-makers, six fitting smiths, one millwright, one pattern-maker, and one brazier," to be employed in repairing, and probably, building boilers; in the repair of engines in all the lighter parts; and in such work of this nature as may be executed without a foundry. The services of this establishment are to extend to other packets, as well as those of the Holyhead Station. The wages of the workmen to be employed in this "engine department" are estimated at about £.130 per month, "if they work only the ordinary time, six days a week," and the whole is intended to be under the inspection of the packet agent (who is also the postmaster) at Holyhead. This plan must necessarily involve a large supply of materials and stores of a different description from those above alluded to, and the occupation of premises suitable for the carrying on of such works.

In the Appendix will be found a return of the stores actually in the hands of the officers in the month of April last, the cost of which is there stated to have been £.8,363. These are described as being in the charge of the agent for packets for management and issue for service, and in that of the store-keeper for safe custody.

Thus your Lordships will perceive that since the introduction of steam-vessels under the new system at this station, so far from any measures having been taken for moulding this system to the established practice of the service, the departure from that practice has been progressive, in the increase of the number of vessels the property of the Crown, and in the extension of the outlay, and of contingent establishments connected with the maintenance of the service upon this plan. If the creation of such establishments be supposed necessary to comparative economy in pursuing this plan, it constitutes, in our opinion, an additional objection to the plan itself; and if, with reference to the

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- Appendix,
No. 122.
Nos. 76 & 77.
No. 122.
Ibid.
No. 65.
No. 122.

No. 70.

infinitely less costly and more simple provision for the conduct of the packet service by sailing-vessels, the method of hiring under contract was enjoined on sufficient grounds, the propriety of this injunction appears to us to be now strongly enforced by experience of the results of the departure from it in the case of the steam-vessels at Holyhead.

Of these results, considered peculiarly, a sufficient general view has been given; but we may here advert to the extent and difficult establishment of the income and disbursements, the provision and issue of stores, and the allowance and superintendence of the execution of repairs, both upon the vessels and their machinery, that must be incidental to the continued conduct of this service upon its present and intended footing, in corroboration of our opinion of the inexpediency of the system which has been so extensively brought into operation, and of the necessity of imposing those limitations which it is our intention to propose immediately, as well as in support of some ulterior suggestions as to the future management of this branch of the service.

The whole duty of superintendence over all the parts of the establishment at Holyhead appears to have been hitherto confided to the packet agent, to whom, as has been already observed, it is intended to assign also the direction of the newly formed "engine department;" and besides these various demands upon his attention, he is responsible for the proper Post-office duties, as he holds likewise the situation of deputy postmaster at Holyhead. The competency of the same individual to discharge the whole of these duties may be reasonably doubted. The personal establishments which are thus placed under the superintendence of the packet agent, consist of persons employed constantly or occasionally afloat, and of others whose services are applied on shore, or to the packets in harbour, and may be distinguished as the sea and land establishments. The strength of these establishments respectively appears, from returns made to us, to be as follows:

Appendix,
Nos. 56 & 57.

SEA ESTABLISHMENT:

- 5 Commanders of Packets.
- 1 Chief Officer Commanding a Packet.
- 6 Chief Mates.
- 6 Second Mates.
- 6 Carpenters.
- 40 Seamen.
- 6 Stewards.
- 5 Under Stewards.
- 6 Ship Engineers.
- 12 Firemen.
- 3 Masters } of Colliers.
- 16 Seamen } of Colliers.
- 7 Boatmen in Packet Wherry.

LAND ESTABLISHMENT:

- 1 Agent for Packets.
- 1 Resident Engineer.
- 2 Apprentices to Engineer.
- 1 Storekeeper.
- 1 Extra Carpenter.
- 1 Gatekeeper.
- 1 Chief Blacksmith.
- 14 Blacksmiths.
- 7 Engine Smiths.
- 14 Boiler makers.
- 5 Joiners.
- 4 Sawyers.
- 10 Labourers.
- 1 Sweep.

AT HOWTH:

- 1 Storekeeper.
- 2 Plyers.
- 5 Labourers.
- 1 Extra Labourer.

The total number of persons thus appearing to be employed on this station in the service of the Postmaster-General, is one hundred and ninety-one.

The total disbursement for salaries, wages and allowances at this station may be estimated at £.905 per lunar month. The rates of these respectively may be seen on referring to the Appendix; but as it will be necessary to take a comparative view of the mode and rate of remuneration of the several corresponding classes of officers and persons employed at the different packet stations, it will be convenient to postpone the necessary observations upon the allowances established at this station. On similar grounds we reserve our remarks upon the comparative services imposed upon the respective classes at the several stations, and those suggestions which may result from such comparison, or other considerations, on these subjects. We do not propose, therefore, to trouble your Lordships with any further details as preliminary to the general recommendation we have to submit with respect to the present arrangements, and the mode of providing in future for the conduct of the Packet Service at Holyhead.

Premising that in our view the primary object and sole duty of the Postmaster-General is throughout the service to secure the most punctual and expeditious means of transmitting the correspondence, with reasonable attention to economy, we must necessarily approve of the use of steam navigation for this purpose on the Holyhead Station, even though it had been unproductive of additional income to the Post-office; and here it may be remarked, that the accounts we have obtained, and which will be found in the Appendix, do not enable us to state with certainty that any direct advantage to the Revenue in an increase of postage has been derived from the introduction of steam-vessels.

To the legitimate object of the department of the Post-office, as stated above, we conceive the attention of the Postmaster-General should be limited. We cannot recognize any claim on their Lordships to sacrifice the Revenue for the purpose of affording an accommodation to the Public, for which the Postmaster-General is in no way responsible. The combination of the conveyance of passengers with the correspondence, as a speculative expedient, is one which, in our opinion, the Postmaster-General should not resort to, where the means of carrying on the service without such risk are satisfactorily attainable. That such means were at the command of the Postmaster-General at Holyhead has, we think, been sufficiently shown; and it was, we also think, contrary to official principle, in a double sense, to reject those means; first, as the rejection involved a departure from the approved system of the service; and secondly, as the powers of the Postmaster-General were used in this instance to suppress existing, and to preclude future efforts of private enterprise, at least unnecessarily for any object falling within the proper exercise of his functions, and, as the event has proved, prejudicially to the Revenue.

Under these impressions we are of opinion that the establishment of vessels should be forthwith reduced to four, by ceasing to employ the two vessels which, as your Lordships have seen, contribute so little to the proper service of the Post-office.

Any further immediate change, by a recurrence to the ancient principle of carrying on this service by contract, which it would be understood from the correspondence so frequently referred to it was not the design of the Postmaster-General to abandon permanently, and which, in our opinion, should not be departed from, is impeded by a consideration of the magnitude of the capital invested in the existing equipments. We can, therefore, only now further recommend that the Postmaster-General be strictly enjoined to carry into effect their own declared intention to avail themselves "of any means that may suggest themselves in the process of time, for moulding this system to the established practice of the service."

The vast increase in the number of steam-vessels, the offers formerly made at this station, and the present general competition for employment, leave, we think, no doubt of the practicability of providing satisfactorily for the conveyance of correspondence between Holyhead and Dublin by hired vessels of this description. There are circumstances peculiar to this route which confirm us

in this belief, and in the opinion that there exists at this station, less than any where, a necessity for a special provision for the service of the Post-office, by a costly establishment at the charge and risk of the Revenue. So long as the comparative shortness of the voyage shall continue to secure to Holyhead a preference as the route for passengers between London and Dublin, this consideration may be calculated upon as holding out sufficient inducement to private adventurers enjoying the sanction of Government, with such advantages as may be annexed to the employment of the vessels carrying His Majesty's mails; whilst the wealth and influence of the majority of those who frequent this route may be also relied upon, as tending to guarantee the establishment of the best attainable means of conveyance. On these grounds, therefore, we have to suggest, that as soon as the vessels now employed to carry the correspondence can be satisfactorily disposed of, the whole of the Packet Establishment, the property, or maintained at the charge, of the Crown at Holyhead, in all its branches, should be dispensed with. It is not our intention here to recommend a peremptory disposal of the vessels alluded to by a sale, which must probably be attended with much sacrifice. It will be amongst our objects, in a general revision of the Packet Establishments, to point out how far they may be made serviceable in other quarters, where there may exist a necessity, or sufficient reason, for the Postmasters-General making such provision for the service; and thus to prepare the way for a total recurrence to the practice which was found consistent with and sufficient for the objects of the Post-office Establishment prior to the introduction of steam-vessels at this station.

In the prefatory part of this Report we have alluded to the connexion between the arrangements of the Packet Service and those which concern the internal circulation of the correspondence; and we are desirous to point your Lordships attention to an instance of this in the consequences that would attend a slight change in the time of the packet's departure from Holyhead, a change which, it may be observed, would be rather agreeable than otherwise to passengers.

It has been represented to us by Sir Edward Lees that if the packets were made to leave Holyhead one hour sooner than at present, that is, at half past twelve instead of half past one *a. m.*, the following extensive advantages to the internal communications in Ireland, attended with a saving in official arrangements there, might be calculated upon:—

Appendix,
No. 4.

" 1st.—About 280 mails would reach Dublin in time to be delivered with the Irish letters in the morning.

" 2d.—About 180 mails would reach Howth in time to be transmitted by Swords to the North of Ireland, twenty-four hours each day earlier than at present.

" 3d.—About 350 mails would reach this (the Dublin) office in time to be transmitted to the south of Ireland by the early mail to Cork.

" 4th.—The general delivery of the correspondence in Dublin throughout the year would be considerably accelerated.

" 5th.—Several mails would arrive in time to be dispatched to the interior of the Kingdom, which are now detained twenty-four hours.

" 6th.—The correspondence for the north of Ireland could be arranged at Howth, and transmitted by Swords in place of coming to Dublin, and consequently, would diminish the business of the Sorting-office in Dublin, would accelerate the general dispatch of the mails, and contribute to reduce the expense of the Dublin office."

Your Lordships may observe that similar benefits are here contemplated as to ensue in the general acceleration of the correspondence through Dublin both to the south and north of Ireland; and we may refer your Lordships to documents in the Appendix, in proof of the delays and uncertainty to which each has been subject by proceeding in the established route and under the existing arrangements. It will be seen that within given periods half of the daily correspondence for the south of Ireland has been detained in Dublin seven hours, on the

Nos. 144 & 145.

Appendix,
Nos. 51 & 52.

ground of the arrival of the packet too late to admit of its dispatch by the morning mail. With respect to this correspondence however, it will be for consideration whether the more effectual mode of expediting it (in concurrence with other objects) may not be by another route, and to this we shall point your Lordships attention in treating of the Milford Station. It is more especially with reference to the correspondence with Belfast and the north of Ireland, that we would urge here the necessity of some amendment of the arrangements alluded to.

No. 54.

No. 100.

No. 110.

It has happened ordinarily that this correspondence has been detained in Dublin during the whole of the day, that is, till eight o'clock p. m., instead of being forwarded, as under the arrangements which have been suggested it is stated it might be, by the mail which leaves Dublin for the north at seven a. m. On this subject a representation was received by two of the members of this Commission at Belfast, from a deputation of the Chamber of Commerce of that city, to the effect that by the means suggested "every place in the north of Ireland would get their letters twelve hours sooner than they do at present;" and in the practicability of such an improvement Sir Edward Lees subsequently expressed his concurrence. In order to carry it into execution upon the plan proposed, it is required that this correspondence should arrive at Howth by eight o'clock a. m., whence it would be dispatched across the country, (instead of circuitously through Dublin) so as to meet the mail coaches on their routes to Belfast and other parts of the north. It is calculated that the arrival of the London mail at Holyhead one hour sooner than at present would secure the required time at Howth. Whether it be possible to abridge the time of travelling between London and Holyhead to the required extent or not, the object sought is too valuable not to be accomplished; and it does not appear to us that such an acceleration of speed in the London mail coach is the only or an indispensable means of effecting it. A somewhat earlier departure of the mail from London might obviate the impossibility of such increased speed, or of an equivalent abridgment of distance, if this impossibility be found to exist.

Ibid.

No. 181.

It is possible too that on the other side of the Channel arrangements might be made, either by an adjustment of the time of the departure of the northern morning mails from Dublin, or by varying the route of the Irish correspondence. Some arrangements of detail have been suggested, as calculated to facilitate the desired alteration, and principally on the subject of sorting. We agree with Sir Edward Lees, that the Act of the 7th & 8th Geo. IV. c. 21, having identified the reciprocal duties of the two separate establishments in England and in Ireland, so far as relates to the taxation of letters, by requiring a sole rate of postage to be affixed at once in either country, little additional trouble would attend the sorting of the letters in England for the large towns or for certain districts in Ireland, by which it is represented time would be saved in the dispatch of the correspondence alluded to on its arrival in Ireland. The objections offered to such a practice by a person qualified by experience to afford information on this subject, as having had the management of the Irish correspondence in the inland-office in London, appear to us to be unsupported and undeserving of attention.

The same rule must be applied *vice versâ* to letters passing from Ireland to England.

To the continued separation of the two establishments, and a want of uniformity of system, and concert and co-operation between them, not in official details merely, but in originating and adopting measures of general interest, by a consistent adjustment of the means of communication between and throughout the respective countries upon a combined and comprehensive scale, we cannot but attribute the defective arrangements which have been complained of regarding the correspondence with a very important portion of Ireland, here particularly alluded to.

The inconvenience resulting from this cause we have no doubt will be found capable of being remedied with advantage to the Revenue, upon a review of the existing arrangements, by the mutual attention of the competent authorities in London and Dublin to the different suggestions which have been thrown out.

The

The project which has been stated, of making Howth the point of departure inland for the London correspondence with the north of Ireland, implies an adherence to that harbour as the packet station on the Irish coast. Your Lordships are aware that much inquiry and discussion have been bestowed as to the comparative eligibility of Kingstown (formerly Dunleary), and the course of the actual passage at different times has indicated a doubt on the part of the Postmaster-General as to the preference to be given to one or other of these harbours.

The works at Howth were first undertaken, and have been prosecuted almost exclusively with a view to the formation of a Packet Harbour; and as such it was uninterruptedly used until the month of August 1825.

Subsequently, the construction of a harbour at Kingstown for much more extensive objects received the sanction of Parliament, and great progress had been made in it when His Majesty's Postmaster-General established (in August 1826) Post-office packets to ply from the Port of Liverpool with passengers and correspondence for Dublin. These vessels were of such tonnage as to make the harbour of Howth useless to them, and they proceeded to Kingstown, having there at all times a sufficient depth of water. This measure led of course to double establishments on land for the Post-office service at Howth and at Kingstown. In connexion with, and in some degree in consequence of these arrangements, it was determined by His Majesty's Postmaster-General that the Holyhead packets carrying the London mails should proceed also to Kingstown. This plan was not adopted with the concurrence of the Postmaster-General for Ireland, who remonstrated against it, as inconsistent with their arrangements for the internal circulation of the correspondence in Ireland, and on other grounds.

A correspondence of a controversial character ensued, in which the comparative merits of the respective harbours were for sometime adversely maintained. A series of communications between the Assistant Secretary in London and the Agent at Holyhead appears to have induced their Lordships to adhere for some time to a determination opposed to the views of the Postmaster-General for Ireland; and on the 24th January 1827, we find the following intimation addressed by Mr. G. H. Froeling to Mr. Goddard:—"My Lord, the Postmaster-General has had under consideration the important question of the relative facilities afforded by Kingstown and Howth to the early delivery of the correspondence in Dublin, and I am to inform you that, upon your able and elaborate report of the 17th October last, and your further report of the 11th instant, on the subject of the experience that has now been acquired of those two harbours respectively, my Lord has been pleased to direct that Kingstown shall be considered as the regular station for His Majesty's packets charged with the London mails." In the following month of July a memorial, signed by certain Peers and Members of Parliament, was addressed to the Lords of the Treasury, and by their Lordships referred to the Postmaster-General, praying that these vessels should ply, as formerly, to and from Howth instead of Kingstown. The packet agent at Holyhead was directed to report on this memorial; and we would refer your Lordships to the details of that report, as disclosing some alleged extraordinary inaccuracies in official documents affecting the question of the preference due to either harbour. Upon this point, after controverting the favourable representations of the memorial technically, and stating the objections to the harbour of Howth, Mr. Goddard observes, "The use of Kingstown Harbour is free from all and each of those difficulties, dangers and causes for delay, and the harbour affords security to shipping at all hours of the tide, under every phase of the moon."

Notwithstanding this confirmation of the opinion upon which the Postmaster-General's determination had been taken, as intimated in the letter of the Assistant Secretary above quoted, that Kingstown should be considered the regular station, it appears that, on the 16th August, a contrary determination was announced to the Postmaster-General for Ireland in a letter from the Assistant Secretary. This officer, in requiring from the packet agent at Holyhead a report, whether the packets in question could be sent with safety to Howth, as a preliminary to an acquiescence in the repeated recommendation of the

Appendix,
No. 5.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Appendix,
No. 5.

Postmaster-General for Ireland, states the ground of such conditional acquiescence as follows:—"If the acceleration of the delivery of the London mail in Dublin had been the only point insisted upon, the Postmaster-General would have felt it his duty to object to any alteration, being satisfied from your various reports that the assertions of delay, in consequence of the adoption of the route of Kingstown, are erroneous; it has, however, been recently stated for the first time, that the arrangements of the posts in the interior of Ireland depend in a considerable degree upon the station for the packets, which, if brought under his Lordship's knowledge at an earlier period, might have had much influence in the discussion of the question."—In pointing your Lordship's attention to the limited and unconnected view of the extent of the communications affected by the regulation of the passage over sea, with which it thus appears the first determination of His Majesty's Postmaster-General had been persisted in, it is due to the Postmaster-General for Ireland to observe that, in deprecating a departure from the established passage by Howth, their Lordships had not omitted to represent to His Majesty's Postmaster-General the influence of the alteration upon the internal circulation in that country. A letter from Sir Edward Lees to Sir Francis Freeling, dated 15th September 1826, immediately after the objectionable change, contains the following passage:—"The acceleration of even an hour is of so much importance, as connected with the arrangements which Lords O'Neill and Rosse have in view for circulating the British correspondence *through the interior*, that they consider it very essential that the evidence given by three of the captains of the packets on this station, before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, in the Session of 1819 of the late Parliament, should be brought under the notice of your Board; for the Postmasters-General consider it so incontestibly demonstrates the superiority of Howth Harbour as a position over Kingstown, that their Lordships, the Postmasters-General, are of opinion the latter place should never be resorted to but under circumstances of absolute necessity."

Ibid.

The result of the correspondence referred to was the return to Howth as the station for packets plying to and from Holyhead, contrary to the judgment of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, ostensibly on the ground above stated, of facilitating the communications with the interior of Ireland.

The preference due to the respective harbours in a nautical view continued nevertheless to be matter of dispute and discussion, the Postmasters-General for Ireland considering their view supported by opinions obtained from the commanders of the vessels, whilst His Majesty's Postmaster-General adhered to his declared sentiments, relying, as it would seem, principally upon the judgment of the packet agent at Holyhead, an officer who, in a letter to Sir Edward Lees, dated 24th September 1827, the Assistant Secretary in London states, independent of his general ability, intelligence and integrity, is, from a practical experience of many years, at least as thoroughly acquainted with the Irish Channel as any other seaman can be; and who, moreover, has the advantage of not being actuated by any possible interest or personal feeling whatever upon the question whether the packets are sent to Howth or to Dunleary; fortified by those opinions (the Assistant Secretary observes), my Lord cannot assent to the position that the harbour of Howth is superior to that of Dunleary as a packet station."

Ibid.

Ibid.
No. 5. (A.)

There are other passages of the correspondence which has been communicated to us between the Assistant Secretary and the agent at Holyhead, which imply that some of the opinions given as to the relative facilities of Kingstown and Howth were offered under some irregular bias; and the letter quoted above from the Assistant Secretary to Sir Edward Lees conveys in direct terms a reproof to the Irish Department, as having withheld its co-operation in the measures connected with the change resolved upon by His Majesty's Postmaster-General. The following is the concluding paragraph of this letter, the last of a voluminous collection of correspondence on this subject that has been laid before us:

"I am commanded to add, that my Lord cannot but feel gratified at the assurance on the part of the Postmasters-General of Ireland of their anxious disposition to give every effect in their power to his Lordship's measures, as since the new arrangements for the improvement of the communication
" between

" between London and Dublin, and between Liverpool and Dublin, he has had
 " to observe with regret, that, in appearance at least, he had not met with that
 " co-operation which he had hoped to receive from the General Post-office of
 " Ireland."

We deem it not immaterial to advert to the spirit in which the disputed point appears to have been agitated by the separate branches of the official establishment, both as a proof of the disadvantage to the Public of their disunion, and as qualifying an assent to the opinion maintained by either. There are within your Lordships access the results of parliamentary investigations on this subject, which it is needless here to recapitulate; but it may be proper to state that these, as well as the more recently ascertained sentiments of Sir Henry Parnell, whose authority, as Chairman of the Holyhead Roads Committee in the year 1822, as a most active Commissioner under the Act for the improvement of those Roads, and as a Commissioner also for Howth Harbour, is entitled to consideration, preponderate in favour of this harbour as a packet station.

Appendix,
No. 212.

Whatever attention may be due to the technical opinions of so experienced a seaman as Mr. Goddard upon the nautical question, with respect to which we do not pretend to pronounce a judgment, it may be observed that under ordinary circumstances no positive saving of time is to be calculated upon by preferring the route from Holyhead to Dublin by Kingstown to that by Howth; the difference of the whole distance of the two routes being very inconsiderable. From recent evidence of this officer we find that, in moderate winds, the passage between Holyhead and Howth is performed in from five hours and forty-five minutes to six hours and a half, and that the average passage from Holyhead is considered to be less than seven hours; to it, somewhat longer. We are not aware that the regularity of the intercourse has been interrupted by any impediments peculiar to the position of Howth or its harbour. We feel justified by the general tenor of the testimony of the commanders whose evidence we have taken, sustained by an experience of ten years, in relying upon the approved sufficiency of Howth in the essential points of safety, both of access and egress, and of the internal security of the harbour. And when to these is added the consideration of the superior facility which it affords for expediting the correspondence inland, we cannot withhold our concurrence in the selection of this station, as most eligible for the general purposes of the establishment.

No. 162.

No. 183 to 188.

LIVERPOOL

THE proximity of Parkgate, whilst this place was used as a Packet Station, and subsequently, when the route by Holyhead was substituted, the comparative length and uncertainty of the sea voyage between Dublin and Liverpool, prevented any attempt, whilst the service was carried on by sailing-vessels, to establish a direct correspondence by such means, although private packets plied for the conveyance of passengers and horses, between these ports; and it was not until the year 1826 that a Post-office Packet Establishment was first stationed at Liverpool.

Prior to this time letters for Ireland through Dublin were forwarded from Liverpool at 3 p. m. to Chester, whence they were conveyed, after some delay, by the Chester mail, (as it was called, that is the mail from London through Chester) to Holyhead, and from thence, together with the letters brought by the London mail through Shrewsbury, which had arrived some hours before, on the following morning by the packet for Dublin.

Letters from Dublin for Liverpool were conveyed in like manner with those for London to Holyhead, from thence by the Chester mail to Chester, and from the latter place by the branch mail to Liverpool. The shortest time of the transit, under this arrangement, between Liverpool and Dublin was about twenty-four hours each way.

Besides the time lost in this course, inconvenience arose from the practice of dispatching the mail from Liverpool before the close of the hours of daily business, and the letters sent from Dublin remained the whole of the night in the post-office there. The course of post, therefore, that is, the time necessary for obtaining an answer to a letter thus transmitted, was about sixty-five hours, under the most favourable circumstances.

The acceleration of the London mail through Shrewsbury, and the concurrent change of the time of the packets departure from Holyhead from six to half-past one A. M., precluded a continuance of this arrangement for the transmission of the Liverpool correspondence, which might, however, have been renewed when the morning packets were added to the Holyhead Establishment in the year 1826. Long prior to this time steam navigation had been introduced at Liverpool, and its applicability to the passage between this port and Dublin successfully established. In the year 1823 a regular intercourse had commenced by steam-vessels, the property of companies consisting of English and Irish capitalists, and others interested in the communications between the two countries. There were already, as appears from a report of the Deputy Postmaster at Liverpool, four vessels embarked, which during eight months of this year performed their voyages to Dublin, according to the highest averages, in fifteen hours, and from Dublin in fourteen hours. These vessels were not only resorted to by passengers, but anticipated the communications through the Post-office in the conveyance of intelligence; and the protection of the Revenue, as well as the claims of the Public, dictated the adoption of such improved means for the conduct of the service of this department. The adventurers who had thus ascertained the sufficiency of steam-vessels for this passage, like those who had effected the same object at Holyhead, lost no time in endeavouring to procure the sanction and support of His Majesty's Postmaster-General. Early in the month of April 1824 a memorial reached this department from one of the Steam-packet Companies; and in the same month a petition was addressed by them to the House of Commons, stating, that "in order to accelerate the communication between Liverpool and Dublin," they had "at an expense of £30,000 established steam-vessels of very large dimensions and great power to ply between the two ports;" that the intercourse by correspondence conveyed by these packets would anticipate "the present route to Holyhead nearly twenty-four hours;" and praying that the House would "be pleased to give directions to the Postmaster-General to grant permission for the petitioners packets to carry a letter-bag, under the direction and controul of the Post-office Department."

The opinion of the Postmaster-General upon the prayer of this petition was required by the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury, and conveyed in his Lordship's report, dated 15th May 1824. In this report, which extends to a general view of the communications with Dublin, the inadequacy of the existing arrangements is fully admitted, and different modes of making better provision for the intercourse between Liverpool and Dublin are discussed, to which we shall revert hereafter.

The prayer of the petitioners is objected to on different grounds, affecting the interests of the Revenue and the principle of official management. The Postmaster-General states, "as a measure of finance, a compliance with this proposition would be greatly injurious to the Post-office revenue;" assuming that half postage only could be taken upon letters conveyed in these packets, regarding them as "ship letters." "Independent of this loss, the accommodation to the Public would be but partial, as these passage vessels do not ply throughout the whole year; the communication might or ought to be daily, at present it is not so." "There can be no controul over the commanders, and the correspondence would be exposed to detention, the consequences of which might be ruinous to individuals. The bag of letters would be a consideration very subordinate to the calculation of the profits to be derived from consulting the accommodation of passengers."

The Postmaster-General, in allusion to one of the suggestions contained in this report, for creating a Post-office Packet Establishment at Liverpool, instead of availing himself permanently of the existing means of conveyance, concludes as follows: "I am induced earnestly to request an immediate decision, as I could not hope to be enabled to procure the completion of vessels properly qualified for the service in much less time than twelve months, and

" in

Appendix,
No. 11.

Ibid.

No. 10.

Ibid.

" in the interim, however much I may regret the necessity, I fear there is no alternative but to consent to the proposition, that ship-letter bags shall be forwarded by the private passage vessels, if it should meet with your Lordships approbation."

A letter from Mr. Herries, dated 1st July 1824, signified to the Postmaster-General that the Lords of the Treasury concurred "entirely with the general principle of the plan suggested for expediting the communication between this country and Dublin, by the establishment of steam-packets at Liverpool;" but called upon his Lordship to submit for their approval the plan which he should consider the most expedient for carrying into effect, after the result of further inquiries understood to be then in progress, should have been ascertained.

The suggestion of the Postmaster-General, that bags should be conveyed by the vessels of the Steam Companies as a temporary arrangement, does not appear to have been sanctioned on this occasion.

The first tender of the proprietors of such vessels having been rejected, renewed offers were soon afterwards addressed to the Postmaster-General and to the Lords of the Treasury, under the impression that the Postmaster-General had adopted the intention of forwarding bags by steam-conveyance between Liverpool and Dublin. The memorials containing these offers, dated respectively the 10th and 26th July 1824, were of the same tenor. The memorialists represent that they had invested a capital of £.60,000 in establishing a regular line of steam-vessels between Dublin and Liverpool superior to any in the kingdom; that they had contracted with His Majesty's Secretary-at-War to convey troops at all seasons between Liverpool and Dublin; and they declared themselves ready "to contract for a term of years to carry the mail from Liverpool to Dublin and back, regularly every day during the year; and from the well-known regularity of our packets, as well as the shortness of their passages, which seldom exceed fourteen hours, and are generally under twelve, aided by the great experience of our captains and pilots in the navigation of this coast and the Irish Channel, we feel confident full reliance may be placed upon the letters being conveyed with the greatest possible dispatch and punctuality." In the memorial to the Lords of the Treasury, they undertake to carry the mails "at such hours, and subject to such regulations, as may be judged requisite, and to find security for the due execution of such contract;" and they observe, that, "the only object of the Postmaster-General being the speedy and certain conveyance of the mail and letters, your memorialists humbly conceive the same may be accomplished and carried into full effect by such proposed arrangements;" "that should such offer be rejected, and additional steam-boats built and established at Liverpool under the authority and sanction of Government, it would most materially affect your memorialists, and put in hazard and jeopardy the large capital they have already expended and invested in the said undertaking, and cause an expense and outlay to Government of more than £.60,000, and be attended with a very considerable annual expenditure, without being productive of any other advantage to Government beyond what they might obtain by allowing your memorialists to carry the mail and letters by the steam-packets which they have already established."

The terms of remuneration were left open for adjustment with the Postmaster-General.

This offer was supported by a memorial of the Merchants, and others interested in the trade between Dublin and Liverpool, wherein they pray the Lords of the Treasury to take it into their most serious consideration, and to adopt such measures as will "be alike advantageous to the public service, and protect the property and well-being of private enterprise."

The Assistant Secretary, assisted by Mr. Goddard, the packet agent (and postmaster) of Holyhead, had been employed to prosecute the inquiries alluded to in Mr. Herries' letter of the 1st July; and on the 28th August a report was addressed by the former of these officers to the Secretary, conveying, for the consideration of the Postmaster-General, their sentiments as to the practicability, and the best mode of establishing a packet communication between Liverpool and Dublin.

The experience of the private steam-vessels had left little to be ascertained on the first of these points; but the results of the inquiries of Mr. Goddard, directed to ascertain "the possibility of putting to sea by night in all kinds of "weather" from the Port of Liverpool, were stated by the Assistant Secretary to be "most satisfactory in every respect."

In discussing the mode of carrying on the service, the Assistant Secretary adverts to the offers which had been received from the Steam Companies, and suggests the grounds on which such offers should be rejected. With this view he submits for the re-perusal of the Postmaster-General an extract from a paper which had been transmitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 11th October 1822. The objections urged in this extract, a copy of which is in the Appendix, may be summed up as consisting in the want of sufficient inducement to private individuals to conduct the service with zeal and regularity; the impossibility of arming the department with a sufficient control, and the inadequacy of penalties for failure of performance of a contract to prevent or to afford redress for mismanagement or neglect. On such grounds it is suggested that "even if an offer should be made for the gratuitous performance of this "or any other similar duty, it is presumed that the responsibility on the part "of the Postmaster-General is too great to admit of its being entertained."

In reply to the remonstrance of the Steam Companies against the introduction of steam-vessels the property of the Crown, as being an "infringement "of private property," the Assistant Secretary in his report suggests for the consideration of the Postmaster-General, "that the mere circumstance of any "persons placing vessels upon a particular passage cannot be construed into "affording them any exclusive right to that station."

The report of the Assistant Secretary having been transmitted to the Lords of the Treasury by the Postmaster-General, with an intimation of his "appro- "bation of the plan therein proposed, that packets shall be built expressly for "this service, and in the mode there specified," and a request for "authority "for carrying the same into effect accordingly; the Lords of the Treasury on the 17th September 1824, were "pleased to sanction the plan submitted in the "said Report," and the Assistant Secretary and Mr. Goddard having previously taken preparatory measures, as appears from the report referred to, wherein an estimate of the cost of providing four suitable packets was submitted, the arrangement thus sanctioned, as proposed by the Assistant Secretary, was accordingly proceeded in. Pending its execution, however, and shortly prior to the introduction of the vessels, the property of the Crown, upon the Liverpool station, in the month of April 1825 a further offer was received from the City of Dublin United Steam Company to this effect: "That for two "years the Company's steam-packets have without intermission plied between "Liverpool and Dublin for the conveyance of passengers, horses and carriages, "and merchandize of all descriptions, with the greatest regularity, and without "accident:

"That for the more efficient service of the two ports, and in consequence of "the great increase of trading occasioned by the adoption of steam navigation, "the Company have increased their establishment, and that their capital of "£. 250,000 is a *bono fide* subscribed capital:

"That memorialists are willing to undertake the conveyance of the mail "from Liverpool in the same manner as the Glasgow and Belfast mails are "carried to those ports, leaving the remuneration for such service to the con- "sideration of your Lordships, should it merit any beyond the relaxation of "certain harbour and light dues remitted to packets carrying His Majesty's "mails:

"That memorialists are prepared to place daily a steam-packet under the "orders of the Postmaster at Liverpool and Dublin respectively, to sail with "the mail at such times as he may deem best with reference to the state of "the tides and the weather: And

"That memorialists will also undertake to place additional packets under "the orders of the Postmaster at Liverpool, whenever extraordinary expe- "dition may be required for the conveyances of expresses."

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This proposal was supported by a memorial signed by the mayor, the principal bankers, and many respectable merchants of Liverpool, to the Lords of the Treasury, stating as follows: "That memorialists have every reliance on the very efficient and established steam-packets of this port, which during two years have continued to give the greatest satisfaction, and have materially promoted the commercial interests both of Liverpool and Dublin:

"That memorialists are of opinion the mail from Liverpool, Leeds, &c. may with safety be entrusted to the steam-packets now plying between Liverpool and Dublin, in the same manner as the Belfast, Cork and Glasgow mails are entrusted to the respective Steam Companies to those ports, and therefore pray your Lordships to take such measures as will cause the Dublin mail from this port to be forwarded direct by the steam-packets now established between Liverpool and Dublin, and which, memorialists are informed, would undertake the service on reasonable terms, and under the orders of the Postmaster-General."

On the ground suggested in the report of the Assistant Secretary, that to entrust any part of a service of such importance to private individuals was highly objectionable in principle, which objection the Postmaster-General represented the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury had repeatedly recognised, this final offer of the Steam Company was rejected; and on the 29th August 1826 a mail was conveyed from Liverpool in a steam-packet the property of the Crown.

Entertaining the opinion already generally expressed in noticing the existing arrangements at Holyhead, that the creation of establishments in this department at the charge of the Crown should be avoided, where the exigencies of the service can be otherwise satisfactorily provided for, it has appeared to us necessary to bring into view the circumstances above detailed, under which this second, and perhaps more important, departure from the established practice originated.

The rejected offers of the Steam-packet Companies of Liverpool and Dublin appear to have been so strictly in accordance with the views taken in the Report of the Finance Committee of 1797, that we beg leave here to adduce the opinion of that Committee as there expressed, that, when practicable, it was "much to be desired" to contract publicly "for the conveyance of mails by packets with such individuals or companies as would undertake it at the lowest prices for a term of years upon the different stations, so as to open this lucrative department to public competition."

Your Lordships have seen that in the year 1821 His Majesty's Postmaster-General, consistently with the subsisting rule of the service, in conformity with this opinion, represented the proposed establishment of vessels the property of the Crown at Holyhead, as "a total deviation from a long-established principle," and intimated their intention to seize any opportunity that should present itself "of moulding the system to the established practice of the service."

In the following year an opinion totally opposed to this intention was advocated in the paper, of which the extract before referred to has been communicated to us, intitled, "Extract from a Paper transmitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, relating to the possible application of Steam to the various Communications with the Continent;" and on this occasion "the experience of the Holyhead Station" was urged in support of the objections offered to contracts with private individuals.

It seems needless here to point out the different considerations that might arise in providing for communications "with the Continent," and with parts within the United Kingdom; but, as with respect to the latter, a system so recently admitted by His Majesty's Postmaster-General to be founded on an objectionable innovation, appears to have been now successfully advocated by the department, it does appear proper to advert more particularly to the suggestions which appear to have prevailed in procuring its adoption, in disregard of the established principle.

The interests of the Revenue, the security of the Public, and the claims of individuals to be exempt from a prejudicial competition on the part of the

Appendix,
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Postmaster-General, seem to be the considerations which should have governed the determination of their Lordships on this occasion, and are severally referred to in the statements submitted to the Lords of the Treasury.

It was represented that a great sacrifice of Revenue must ensue from a compliance with the proposition of the Steam-Packet Company; the Postmaster-General assuming that the letters conveyed in these vessels must pass under the regulations of the Ship Letter Acts, the result of which would be, that for each single letter $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ would fall to the Revenue instead of $1s. 1d.$ As a reason for sanctioning the establishment of packets the property of the Crown, it was represented, "that in addition to some return from the proceeds of passengers, this establishment will bring back to the Post-office a considerable revenue, which is now lost to it by the private conveyance of letters; that it will, from the facilities to be afforded, create additional correspondence, and that those facilities cannot in reason be denied."

It was undoubtedly the duty of the Postmaster-General to protect the Revenue from risk of loss, from the adoption of any imperfect arrangement, as well as from that actual loss to which it is here admitted the Revenue was exposed for want of adequate arrangements; and it was the further duty of their Lordships to protect the Public, by all practicable means, from prejudice or inconvenience resulting from a submission to the legal restrictions upon the conveyance of correspondence which their Lordships are authorized to enforce.

Their Lordships must have been aware that, if the Ship Letter Acts presented any obstacle to those legitimate facilities which the joint interests of the Revenue and the Public demanded should not be withheld, it might have been at once removed by an appropriate statutory provision; and it is the more extraordinary that this course was not resorted to in a case where the interests were of such magnitude, because two years before such means had been used towards the establishment of a communication from the same port, but of very inferior importance, through private individuals, in vessels not the property of the Crown.

3 Geo. 4. c. 105.

In the year 1822 the Act of the 3d Geo. IV. c. 105, after declaring that it might be "expedient to establish a packet-boat for the conveyance of letters and packets between the Port of Liverpool in the county of Lancaster, and the Port of Douglas in the Isle of Man," established a rate of packet postage for such letters, and an intercourse was established by the Postmaster-General, on the footing above described, between these ports.

Under these circumstances, and with this precedent in view, it seems to us that the objection to a compliance with the proposition of the Liverpool Steam Company, founded on the assumed prejudice to the Revenue from the alleged operation of the Ship Letter Acts, as a consequence that could not be provided against, could not have been considerably advanced; whilst it is to be inferred from the representations of the Postmaster-General, that, by the neglect of their propositions, "a considerable revenue" was lost to the Post-office.

We are at a loss to understand "the regret" expressed by the Postmaster-General at the apparent necessity of conceding (even temporarily) to the wealthy commercial interests of Liverpool and Dublin an accommodation which had been already granted to the inhabitants of the Isle of Man.

That necessity however, though reluctantly admitted by His Majesty's Postmaster-General, appears not to have been yielded to; and for a period of four years the advantage conferred upon the Isle of Man was withheld from the second commercial town in the empire and the metropolis of Ireland, to the admitted prejudice of the Revenue.

To the objections to the employment of vessels not the property of the Crown, as being incompatible with security to the Public, a conclusive answer may be found, as it appears to us, in numerous instances within the practice of the department. Besides the correspondence between the Isle of Man and Liverpool, bags of letters have been conveyed in vessels not the property of the Crown from this same port, to

Belfast,	Waterford,	Greenock;
Cork,	Glasgow and	

from

from Bristol to Cork and Waterford, and between various other parts of the United Kingdoms; and your Lordships are aware that an important portion of the foreign correspondence of the country is also entrusted to private vessels; some hired as packets to carry what are called mails, others carrying bags under the denomination of "ship letter-bags."

The practice of employing such vessels in the home communications has extended itself (very properly, in our opinion,) during the period of our inquiries, affording a presumption that in fact it has not been found to be attended, necessarily, with the imputed insecurity, and proof, that the principle assumed in the correspondence which has been before quoted, that "even if an offer should be made for the gratuitous performance of this or any other similar duty, (by private individuals) it is presumed that the responsibility on the part of the Postmaster-General is too great to admit of its being entertained," is contrary to the custom of the service.

In the case of the vessels of the Steam Companies of Liverpool and Dublin we have observed no plausible ground of exception to restrict the discretion of His Majesty's Postmaster-General. The number and power of the vessels intended to be placed at their Lordships disposal were abundant and ample. To the proposed contracts were to be annexed such regulations and conditions as their Lordships should require. The parties proposing to contract had a twofold interest in the safe and punctual performance of the service, in the advantage they sought to secure to themselves as the contractors, the forfeiture of which must have attended irregularity; and as being themselves the parties principally to be benefited by the establishment of a rapid and certain communication between Liverpool and Dublin. On these points we may refer your Lordships to the evidence of Mr. Watson, Mr. Williams and Mr. Pym. The competency of the companies, of which these gentlemen were influential members or managers, to carry on the service, may be inferred from some facts stated by them. It has been already noticed, that the capital subscribed in the year 1826 amounted to £.250,000; and it appears that in the year 1828, notwithstanding the opposition encountered from His Majesty's Postmaster-General, the establishments of the two companies had increased to about thirty vessels; that in the year 1827 the tonnage reported by one of the companies in the Port of Liverpool amounted to 105,810 tons; that communications had been established by means of these vessels between Liverpool, Dublin, Bristol, Cork, Waterford, Newry, Dundalk, Douglas and the ports of North Wales, and that the majority of them were sufficiently adapted to the packet service. Mr. Williams states that from observations made at an early period of the service it was found that the company's vessels had never been detained at Liverpool when the Post-office packets had not been detained at Holyhead. A comparison of the time occupied in the transit by the two classes of vessels, that is, between the dispatch of the mail from the Post-office at Liverpool, and its delivery in Dublin from the Post-office packets, and between the departure of the company's vessels from the dock at Liverpool, and their arrival at the Custom-house Quay in Dublin, founded upon returns made to us of passages performed in the year 1827, would show a result during the six winter months somewhat in favour of the latter vessels, and during the remaining six months of summer considerably in favour of the former.

To this we may add, from the evidence of Mr. Pym, that the two companies were in a situation and ready to undertake to convey the mails jointly or separately, and that "rather than not take them," they "should have carried them for nothing."

Had the determination of His Majesty's Postmaster-General been such "as to open this lucrative department to public competition," according to the opinion of the Finance Committee of 1797, it cannot be doubted that with such powers of capital and extent of establishments, and with such a desire on the part of the existing companies, the security and efficiency of the service might have been fully provided for. It may be remarked that the Postmaster-General for Ireland, whose sentiments we had an opportunity of ascertaining by a personal examination in Dublin, did not participate in the objections urged by the English department; and that their Secretary, and other officers of experience, concurred with their Lordships in opinion, that the service might be safely and

Appendix,
No. 10.Nos. 41 to 44-
200 & 201,
207 & 208.
No. 10.Nos. 41, 207, 208,
No. 41.

No. 200.

Nos. 149, 148, 164.

No. 157.

Report of Com-
mittee of Finance,
1797.Appendix to
Nineteenth Report,
Nos. 173, 174, 187.

Nos. 188, 184, 209.

beneficially entrusted to the highly respectable companies whose offers had been submitted to His Majesty's Postmaster-General.

It does therefore appear to us that the principle recently adopted by His Majesty's Postmaster-General, in deciding upon the formation of packet establishments, to the exclusion of private vessels, so far as it rests upon the ground of alleged insecurity, is contrary to experience, and inconsistent with the practice in numerous existing instances; and that the application of this principle on this ground, in the case here referred to, was peculiarly uncalled for.

We cannot avoid offering some few remarks upon the exercise of the powers of His Majesty's Postmaster-General in this instance in opposition to the claims advanced for the protection of private enterprise.

Appendix,
No. 9.

Ibid.

No. 10.

Your Lordships have seen that, in the case of Holyhead, His Majesty's Postmaster-General claimed to have had possession of that port and passage from time immemorial; and that the introduction of the improved means of conveyance by a steam-power on the part of individuals was considered and treated as a measure of "direct opposition to the British packets," then consisting of sailing vessels. The view here suggested of the possessive powers of His Majesty's Postmaster-General on the ground of pre-occupation, untenable as it is in itself, and rendered obnoxious as tending to deprive the Public of an accommodation which the Postmaster-General was not himself prepared to afford, is also inconsistent with the view taken by the department subsequently, when the competition was originated by the Postmaster-General at the Port of Liverpool, where there had not (as at Holyhead there had) existed previously a Post-office Packet Establishment. The Assistant Secretary, in the passage already cited from his report, which appears to have received the sanction of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, opposes the prayer of the memorialists for protection against such competition, by stating, "that the mere circumstance of any persons placing vessels upon a particular passage cannot be construed into affording them any exclusive right to that station." To this opinion we fully assent, extending it on equal grounds to His Majesty's Postmaster-General; and we are further of opinion, that to preclude, or restrict, otherwise than by responsibility for an impartial and discreet exercise of it for legitimate objects, the power of His Majesty's Postmaster-General to provide the most efficient means of administering the department in all its branches, would defeat the purposes of the establishment, and could not therefore be conceded to any individuals or companies however respectable.

What has been already stated, however, must have conveyed to your Lordships our impression, that the powers properly vested in His Majesty's Postmaster-General were not considerably exercised on this occasion, inasmuch as during a long period they were not used to secure the means presented for an amelioration of the service; and it will be found that the exercise of them, in the eventual creation of a Post-office Packet Establishment, whilst it inflicted loss upon the established adventurers, has been prejudicial to the Revenue.

Ibid.

That the first of these consequences would be severely felt must have been foreseen; for we find it stated by the Assistant Secretary, in attempting to suggest some idea of the amount of reimbursement to be expected from the conveyance of passengers in the projected Post-office packets, that "during the six summer months in 1823, the gross amount of the passage-money received on board one of the passage vessels (the favourite vessel) exceeded £9,000."

No. 41, 201.

The actual effects of the introduction of the Post-office packets on the profits of the private passage vessels are described in the evidence of Mr. Williams, and other documents, in the Appendix. This gentleman states the receipts of his company "from cabin passengers had gone on increasing till £6,000 was received in the half-year previously to the establishment of the Government packets. They then descended rapidly; the first year we lost about £6,000." The following is given as a statement of the half-yearly receipts, subsequent to the establishment of the Post-office packets in the Autumn of 1826:—

1826	-	-	-	-	-	£ 3,700.
1827	-	-	-	-	-	2,900.
1827	-	-	-	-	-	2,170.

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The further consequences of the competition thus commenced are represented in a letter from Mr. Watson, and deserve your Lordships attention. He states, that "since the commencement of the Post-office packets, the competition has become so ruinous as to prevent the employment of this class of vessels (those calculated solely for passengers) more than three or four months during the height of summer." He then complains of the measures taken by the Post-office for the regulation of the fares, as "manifesting a determination to prevent other than the Post-office packets sailing on the line again." With a view to retain a participation in the profits of the passage, the managers of the private vessels were induced, and indeed obliged, to lower their charges. This reduction was followed by a corresponding reduction by the Post-office. In the progress of this rivalry passengers are represented to have been carried in His Majesty's packets at the different rates of 27s. 6d. and 10s. on successive days, the latter rate being accepted on the sailing-days of the private vessels. The subject having been brought before the House of Commons, the attention of His Majesty's Postmaster-General was called to it by the Lords of the Treasury. The report of the Postmaster-General, dated 18th June 1828, to the Lords of the Treasury, contains the following explanation of the regulations that had been acted upon: "In no instance whatever has a reduction of fares been commenced by this department, or have the fares been lower than by the private vessels;" and by an account laid before the House of Commons, dated 27th June 1828, "it appears that the cabin fares had been restored to their former standard, with power to the agent to alter them according to circumstances; but on no account whatever is any passenger to be taken for a less sum than the price charged by the passage vessels on the same day." The design of this instruction is represented to be, "that the Public may be carried by His Majesty's packets for the same price at which they can obtain a conveyance in any other vessel."

Appendix,
No. 43.

No. 127.

Parliamentary
Papers 1828,
No. 501.

Ibid. No. 500.

Your Lordships will, we think, concur in our opinion, that it is not fitting that any department of the Government should be engaged in a competition, such as is described in the documents and evidence referred to; or which should require to be sustained by the means pointed out in the regulation quoted above. In order to comply with it, an agent must be employed by His Majesty's Postmaster-General at the port, to keep a constant watch upon the proceedings of all private companies or individuals engaged in the passage trade. The requisite information for adjusting the fluctuating rates of fares (if attainable at all with certainty) could be procured only by an unauthorized and invidious interference of a public officer in matters of private concern. The discretion vested in such an agent must afford opportunity for much abuse, by negligence, partiality or collusion; and the uncertainty of such a system might give rise to endless references to the superior authorities, and call for their attention to the details of transactions frivolous or vexatious in themselves, and foreign to the proper functions of the department.

The measures taken were, however, effectual: the struggle on the part of the private companies ended in a compromise, which is described by Mr. Williams thus: "The result of it was an arrangement by which, in the event of the government packets injuring us no farther, leaving us what we had, we would be satisfied. If they would not interfere further with our trade in carrying deck passengers, goods or parcels, we should complain no further."

No. 201.

By this arrangement the monopoly of the conveyance of cabin passengers was virtually conceded to the Post-office packets, leaving His Majesty's Postmaster-General, either to prescribe such fares as should be adequate to indemnify the Post-office for the expenditure incurred, or to submit to a sacrifice of the Revenue, whilst the companies were subjected to an unrequited loss; a foreseen consequence which, in our opinion, nothing but an ascertained advantage, not otherwise attainable, to the Revenue and to the public service, should have induced His Majesty's Postmaster-General to inflict.

In pursuing the progress and effects of the establishment thus forced into operation according to the course of the events, we shall best enable your Lordships to judge how far such advantage has resulted.

The following Table shows the Expenditure appearing from accounts furnished to us to have been incurred at the Port of Liverpool for the outfit and maintenance

Nos. 82 to 85 & 96.

647.

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nance of the four packets stationed there under the sanction of the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury, from the commencement of the service up to the 5th January 1830.

	Number of Steam Vessels.	Building and Outfit of Steam Vessels.	Expenses of Establishment.	Total Disbursements.	Receipts for Passage, &c.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
29th August 1826 to 5th April 1827	4	62,035 18 2	19,575 1 9	88,610 19 11	6,515 16 6
5th April 1827 to 5th January 1828	ditto	1,320 19 -	18,441 19 8	19,761 18 8	15,245 11 8
5th January 1828 to 5th January 1829	ditto	1,323 3 5½	25,440 18 6	27,154 1 11½	21,676 9 10
5th January 1829 to 5th January 1830	ditto	1,135 17 -	34,804 6 7	34,130 3 7	20,698 19 3
	£.	73,805 17 7½	98,252 6 6	169,643 4 1½	64,136 17 3

The result of this statement is that in this period, comprising nearly four years and a half, the current expenses of the establishment have exceeded the receipts for passage-money by £. 32,115. 9s. 3d.; and if to this excess be added the cost of building and outfit, without charge of interest for money sunk, viz. £. 73,895. 17s. 7½d., the amount remaining to be reimbursed to the Revenue at this station, up to the 5th January last, is £. 105,311. 6s. 10½d. The accounts, however, appear to suggest little expectation of such indemnity: your Lordships will remark that the current expenses in each of the separate periods included in them have exceeded the receipts, and that upon a comparison of the two last years the charge has increased by £. 7,753. 8s. 1d., whilst the income has increased only by £. 977. 10s. 7d. being only £. 489. 11s. 1d. more than the decrease in the receipts for passage-money at Holyhead in the corresponding period.

The advantage to be looked for, as compensating this very heavy ascertained loss, and the prospect of continuing loss from perseverance in the existing arrangements at the Port of Liverpool in concurrence with those at Holyhead (to which must here be added the great sea-risk incurred on the Liverpool establishment), if any such advantage exist, must consist in the contingent effect of these arrangements upon the Revenue, in the receipt of postage, and the amendment of the intercourse by correspondence between the two countries. It therefore became desirable, as well as with a view to ascertain how far the proposed objects may have been commensurate with the measures adopted, to ascertain the scope of the intended and the extent of the actual operation of the newly formed establishment at Liverpool; a subject the more deserving of attention, as it involves the important consideration of the eligibility of the Port of Liverpool as a point of departure for correspondence passing to Ireland.

The Assistant Secretary in his report before referred to, after submitting an estimate of the expense of providing the four vessels, of which, upon the joint recommendation of this officer and Mr. Goddard, approved by His Majesty's Postmaster-General, the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury authorized the building, as necessary for the projected service, (which estimate, it may be observed, fell short of the actual cost by £. 9,305, being £. 69,035 instead of £. 59,730) observes, "considerable as the expense is, I beg leave to offer my opinion, that it should not be suffered to weigh in competition with the vast importance of the objects which it is calculated to accomplish in the combined acceleration of the correspondence between London and Liverpool with Dublin, and a great portion of Ireland."

The mode of effecting this combined acceleration of the correspondence alluded to had been previously suggested by the Assistant Secretary, upon consultation

consultation with Mr. Goddard, and submitted by His Majesty's Postmaster-General in his Report of 15th May 1824, to the Lords of the Treasury, in consequence of complaints of the tardiness of the communication between Liverpool and Dublin, and the delay of the London correspondence at Holyhead, awaiting the arrival of that coming from Liverpool in the Chester mail. Two distinct methods of obviating these inconveniences, affecting the separate branches of communication had been under the consideration of His Majesty's Postmaster-General. To remedy the former, the establishment of steam-boats, the property of the Crown, for the conveyance of the mails direct between Liverpool and Dublin had been proposed. The dispatch of a packet with the London mail from Holyhead immediately on its arrival there was suggested to meet the latter; and, connected with this was the expedient of a second dispatch from Holyhead in the morning, which should carry the Liverpool correspondence as formerly.

Appendix,
No. 10.

The first of these projects was objected to in the report of the Postmaster-General, on the ground that the correspondence to be expedited by it, being limited to the letters for Dublin only, and its delivery, "the expense of such " new establishment might be more than the object could justify."

Ibid.

The second was objected to also on account of increased expense, and because it would contribute nothing towards accelerating the Liverpool correspondence.

At the same time the idea was entertained of a joint transmission of this with the London correspondence, and two modes of effecting this object still occurred for consideration. The simple one, of making Liverpool the point of departure for the London correspondence, being, however, pronounced to be impracticable, the alternative suggested, as already stated by the Assistant Secretary, was adopted; and it was attempted accordingly to carry the following arrangement into execution.

The newly-established packets, which it was considered could not securely use the harbour of Howth, owing to the insufficiency of water there for vessels of their tonnage, were directed to touch at Holyhead on their appointed voyage to Kingstown; it being calculated that the time of their arrival off Holyhead would correspond very nearly with that of the mail coach from London, and enable them to receive the London mail on board without material delay, and so as to effect its delivery, under ordinary circumstances, in Dublin about 10 A.M. Such correspondence as, under this arrangement, was still to be brought in the Chester mail, was to be forwarded as previously from Holyhead in the morning packet, which was to bring back the mail for London, whilst the correspondence from Dublin to Liverpool was to be carried by the Liverpool packet, sailing direct from Kingstown to Liverpool.

Ibid.

Had this scheme been practicable, with sufficient certainty and punctuality, the advantage secured by it would have consisted in a direct communication between Liverpool and Dublin (with the exception of the deviation by touching at Holyhead), and in dispensing with the dispatch of separate packets from Holyhead with the London mail.

It was, however, foreseen by the officers who suggested it that its failure at certain seasons, and under certain circumstances, would be "inevitable." But, in contrasting its advantages with those attending other modes of accelerating the correspondence, Mr. Goddard concludes, "on the whole, I consider it will " prove more advantageous to the Post-office Revenue arising from passengers, " with nearly equal advantage to the Public, from the acceleration of the " London mail to its delivery in Dublin, than by the establishment, according " to Sir H. Parnell's aim, of a double line of vessels from hence, which must " divide the travelling on this road exclusively, but which would with greater " certainty and regularity accelerate the London mail to Dublin, to the ex- " clusion, however, of the Liverpool correspondence, which you state to be of " so much greater importance than the other, whilst in either case the expense " to the Post-office would be pretty nearly equal."

No. 11.

The results of the experiment did not justify the calculations which had led to its adoption. It was found that, within a period of seventy-seven days, (from 29th August to the 14th November 1825) the Liverpool packet failed to
647. F effect

No. 120.

effect twenty-five, or about a third, of her voyages to Holyhead by the appointed hour; and on these occasions extra packets were employed to carry the London mails.

Great inconvenience ensued, both to the Public, and in the official departments of the establishment in Ireland, from the uncertainty and irregularity incident to this plan of communication whilst it was enforced; and complaints were addressed to two of the members of our Board (then occupied in Dublin in investigating the complaints of the merchants respecting the management of the docks, the property of the Crown at that port), which, together with the arrival there of the Assistant Secretary of the English Department of the Post-office, led to an inquiry by them into the grounds and probable results of the measure recently brought into operation. With respect to the former, we may refer your Lordships particularly to the examination of Mr. G. H. Freeling, and to those of Lords Rosse and O'Neill, and of Sir Edward Lees. From these it will be seen that no correspondence whatever between the English and Irish branches of the establishment preceded the determination taken to attempt this course of communication. Mr. G. H. Freeling, to whom it appears to have been left by His Majesty's Postmaster-General to devise and carry into execution the arrangements connected with the required improvement of the intercourse between Liverpool and Ireland, informed us that no communication was had with the Postmaster-General of Ireland as to the practicability of the plan proposed, "it being considered as a nautical question, and as a matter of English arrangement entirely with regard to the delivery of letters in Dublin;" and further, that he did not take into his view at all the internal communications to Ireland, "considering that, as that rested with the Postmaster for Ireland, it was their province to do it." Nothing could be less conducive to that skilful combination and calculation of arrangements throughout their extent, upon which the successful management of the circulation of the correspondence is essentially dependent, than the limited and disjointed view which thus appears to have circumscribed the design of the Assistant Secretary; and accordingly it may be observed that the proposed transmission of the London and Liverpool correspondence in the manner above described, so as to arrive in Dublin (generally) at 10 A.M., must have defeated two important objects of the Postmaster-General of Ireland, namely, that which has been before alluded to, of expediting the English correspondence for the north of Ireland by the Dublin morning mails, and the combination of the delivery of English with the Irish letters at so early a hour in the morning in Dublin.

The expediency of this project having been described by Mr. G. H. Freeling as resting upon "nautical" considerations, we were led to inquire into the authority for its adoption on such grounds; and finding that, in prosecuting the inquiries he had been charged to make as to the best means of establishing the more direct intercourse between Liverpool and Dublin, and in pointing out the course of touching at Holyhead as presenting such means, no officer of "nautical" experience, acquainted with that station, had been consulted by him, with the exception of Mr. Goddard, we felt it our duty to seize the opportunity of examining three of the commanders of the Post-office packets there, namely, captains Skinner, Stevens and Duncan. The evidence of these officers is concurrent, that had their opinions been required as to the eligibility of the adopted project, they would have been decidedly opposed to it. The sentiments also of Lords Rosse and O'Neill, and of Sir Edward Lees, were the same, but derived confirmation from the effect of the plan upon the inland arrangements. This appears to have led very speedily to a remonstrance on the part of the Postmaster-General for Ireland, in a letter addressed by Sir Edward Lees to Sir Francis Freeling, which will be found in the Appendix, as well as the reply to that remonstrance. To these documents we cannot but direct your Lordships attention, as being peculiarly illustrative of a want of concert and a jealousy of interference in matters assumed to be exclusively within the province of the English department, prohibitory, as it would seem, of suggestion from the Irish department, upon an occasion where the operations and the responsibility of the two departments were evidently mutually affected.

In consequence of a representation of the Postmaster-General for Ireland, in the letter of Sir Edward Lees referred to, that the recent measure had led to the

Appendix,
Nos. 177, 209.
Appendix to
Nineteenth Report,
Nos. 173, 174.

No. 177.

Appendix,
Nos. 185, 186, 187,
188.

No. 209.
Appendix to
Nineteenth Report,
Nos. 173, 174.

No. 14.

the employment of five packets on one day, and that on another four had been to sea together, and that a perseverance in it must entail an increase of the packet establishments, we find in the reply of His Majesty's Postmaster-General the following passage:—"With regard to the number of packets which this or any other arrangement may require in the execution, my Lord has only to observe, that the management and responsibility of the water conveyance, the means by which it is to be carried on, and the expenditure, rest entirely with him; that the arrangement was made with the full concurrence and approbation of the Lords of the Treasury and of His Majesty's Government, and his Lordship will always be prepared to justify his proceedings to that Board, to which alone he is accountable." And in answer to a suggestion for dispensing with a double dispatch of packets from Holyhead, we find the following observation:—"My Lord conceives that it is in his province alone to judge of the expediency and advantage of dispatching a second packet from Holyhead."

Appendix,
No. 11.

Ibid.

Notwithstanding the discountenance with which the objections of the Postmaster-General of Ireland appear to have been thus met, it was deemed proper by His Majesty's Postmaster-General to discontinue the indirect passage of the Liverpool Packets after a very short trial, of less than three months; and in the month of November 1826 they ceased to touch at Holyhead.

Your Lordships have seen that one of the objects of this attempt was to prevent a double departure from Holyhead. Its failure confirmed the necessity of a permanent arrangement for the dispatch of packets to carry the London mail immediately on its arrival at this place; and the morning packets being still retained for the accommodation of passengers, carrying only the comparatively unimportant correspondence, which has been before mentioned, brought in the Chester mail, the various projects ended in the establishment of a double dispatch, daily, from Holyhead to Howth; one carrying the London, the other the Chester letters; and a daily dispatch from Liverpool to Kingstown, for the conveyance of letters between those two places; upon which footing the service has since been maintained, notwithstanding the objections stated in the report of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, of 15th May 1824, that the expense of a new establishment at Liverpool, confined to the conveyance of correspondence from that port to Dublin, "might be more than the object would justify;" and that the employment of duplicate packets at Holyhead would be attended with a very great expense, and be of no advantage to Liverpool. Upon the continuance of the latter of these arrangements we have already expressed our opinion. The combined acceleration of the London and Liverpool correspondence, the object of the former, which was represented by the Assistant Secretary as of such importance as to outweigh the consideration of the contemplated expense of the new establishment, having been supposed eventually to be impracticable, and being no longer attempted by means of it, a question must naturally have arisen as to the propriety of maintaining it for the more limited purpose which, prior to its commencement, His Majesty's Postmaster-General had considered to be inadequate to the expense.

No. 10.

It was, however, not until after the lapse of twelve months from the commencement of the intercourse with Dublin through Liverpool, that His Majesty's Postmaster-General, in a letter addressed by the Assistant Secretary to Sir Edward Lees, wherein the measures that had been adopted are described as in a great degree "experimental," requested to be informed of the "sentiments of the Postmaster-General of Ireland as to the result of the new arrangements upon the mercantile and general interests of the correspondence of Dublin." Sir Edward Lees, in conveying those sentiments, observes generally, that "the only room which is left for regret in the consideration of the important advantages which have been effected, is the great expense which they have occasioned, and the sacrifice of revenue which they (the Postmasters-General) apprehend has been unavoidably made to obtain them." He then states: "The separate establishment which has been formed for the transit of the Liverpool mails Lords O'Neill and Rosse feel to have constituted the whole of this sacrifice; and their Lordships can only lament that the extent of the correspondence of this country has not made to your revenue a return, in their judgment adequate to the liberality which has

No. 12

Ibid.

Appendix,
No. 15.

“ placed at their disposal so superior an establishment for conveying the letters “ from Ireland.” In a subsequent part of this communication it is stated that “ the entire postage arising from the correspondence conveyed by the Liverpool “ mail into Ireland their Lordships estimate at about £.8,000 last year, and “ they calculate that of this produce £.5,000 arose from the letters transmitted “ to the interior of the kingdom.” It is then stated that the delays, by the arrival of such letters too late to be forwarded from Dublin on the day of their arrival, had been equal in corresponding periods by the route of Holyhead and the direct passage from Liverpool; and consequently, that “ if any consideration “ regarding this portion of the correspondence should make it a question with “ Lord P. Montague, the continuance or discontinuance of this establishment, “ Lords O’Neill and Rosse can have no hesitation in affording his Lordship “ the weight of their opinion, that it need not be continued a day.” Some inconvenience from the arrival of the Liverpool correspondence generally, or frequently, too late to allow the letters for Dublin to be delivered with the London letters for that city, and the necessity of an increased establishment to effect the separate delivery of this correspondence promptly on its arrival, are next adverted to, as objections to the separate transmission over sea; and contemplating a determination of His Majesty’s Postmaster-General to discontinue wholly or periodically the voyage between Liverpool and Dublin, Sir Edward Lees intimates that, “ in so far as the correspondence of Ireland “ is concerned, his Lordship’s decision will meet the full concurrence of Lords “ O’Neill and Rosse.”

Ibid.

No. 10.

It thus appears that the opinion of the Postmaster-General for Ireland, when called for by His Majesty’s Postmaster-General after a year’s experience, was in concurrence with that expressed nearly three years before by His Majesty’s Postmaster-General—that the expense of a separate establishment of packets at Liverpool, to convey only the correspondence between that place and Dublin, could not be justified by the value of such service.

It seems scarcely necessary for us to add our opinion that the arrangement which still subsists, in contradiction to the recorded sentiments of the responsible authorities who preside over the respective branches of the establishment, and the heavy and unnecessary expenditure attending it, should be no longer permitted; and that His Majesty’s Postmaster-General should be instructed to provide for the transmission of the correspondence between Liverpool and Dublin in the manner prescribed in the Report of the Finance Committee already quoted, and according to the existing practice in other cases which have been referred to in a former part of this Report; for the extension of which practice peculiar facilities seem to present themselves at the Port of Liverpool.

We desire to be understood to submit this recommendation as proper to be adopted under the actual circumstances, and upon the supposition, which appears to have been acted upon, that the combined acceleration of the London and Liverpool correspondence, that is, the transmission over sea of the letters from London and from Liverpool, without prejudicial delay to either branch of these communications, cannot be effected by the same conveyance: but, in order to enable your Lordships to appreciate this supposition more correctly, as the fact assumed is of great importance in its influence upon the general circulation of the correspondence between, and in, the two countries, we shall advert to two different projects which have been entertained in opposition to it.

No. 217.

The first of these, suggested, as your Lordships will see, upon the authority of Sir Henry Parnell, consists in a recurrence to the old route for the conveyance of letters from Liverpool *via* Holyhead through Chester. Sir Henry Parnell calculates that the great improvements effected upon the roads and ferries between Liverpool and Holyhead admit of such an acceleration of the conveyance by coach as might bring the letters on this line to Holyhead by one o’clock A. M., so as to proceed with the London letters; and that during the winter months this route would be upon an average a few minutes more expeditious, and generally more certain, than the direct course by packet from
Liverpool

Liverpool to Dublin. The time taken by Sir Henry Parnell in this calculation is,—

	Hours.	Minutes.
For the mail-coach from Liverpool to Holyhead, at nine miles an hour, including the ferry over the Mersey - - - - -	11	40
Passage to Howth - - - - -	7	-
From Howth to Dublin - - - - -	-	45
	19	25

But presuming Sir Henry Parnell to be correct in his calculation, and in relying upon the practicability of what is proposed, there is a twofold objection to it. First, it is required that the departure of the letters from Liverpool should be four hours earlier than at present, and two hours earlier than under the former arrangement for the transmission of the correspondence by this route, whilst the inconvenience of the last-mentioned time of dispatch (namely, 3 o'clock p. m.) was counted amongst the principal objections to that arrangement, as being prior to the hours of general business on the Exchange. The second objection lies in the incompatibility of this plan with the object so much insisted upon by the Postmaster-General of Ireland, and so desirable to be accomplished, of procuring an earlier departure of the Packet from Holyhead for Howth by an acceleration of the London mail, with a view to expedite the circulation of the English correspondence in Ireland, for were the packet dispatched, as it is calculated it might be, an hour earlier, the arrival of the Liverpool mail at Holyhead, according to the arrangement proposed by Sir H. Parnell, would still be too late to admit of its joint transmission with the London mail.

It is therefore to be feared that this project, unless practicable with even greater speed than Sir H. Parnell contemplates, would conflict with other efforts to expedite the communication, and would not upon the whole contribute to convenience, or to an improvement of the circulation generally.

The other project for effecting a joint transmission of the London and Liverpool correspondence, to which we have proposed to direct your Lordships notice, depends upon the possibility and expediency of making Liverpool the place of dispatch over sea for both. This project appears to have been entertained, but to have been abandoned on different grounds, by the Post-office authorities. In a letter which has been laid before us from the Assistant Secretary to Mr. Goddard, dated 19th April 1824, the former expresses his sentiments as follows:—"My object, therefore, is to see if I cannot make some arrangement which shall give Liverpool what she is entitled to, and at the same time accelerate the arrival of the London mail in Dublin. If Liverpool had been twenty miles nearer London, it would have been simple enough to have made that the port for Dublin; but as this is unfortunately out of the question, we must do the best we can under these disadvantageous circumstances of the *locale*." In the report of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, dated in the following month (15th May 1824) to the Lords of the Treasury, it is stated, "If it were not for the difficulties presented by the navigation of the Mersey, Liverpool would appear to be the proper point from which the correspondence from London should be forwarded, as the same packet would convey the letters between the two capitals, as well as the mass originating in the commercial districts; this, however, would be impracticable, even with a considerable acceleration of the mail-coach from London." From these extracts it would seem that difficulties were considered to exist both with regard to the passage from and the route over land to Liverpool. The former, it is to be concluded from the report of the Assistant Secretary to His Majesty's Postmaster-General, dated 28th August 1824, were not only less in reality than had been anticipated, but from the result of the inquiries made by this officer and Mr. Goddard at Liverpool, subsequent to the report of His Majesty's Postmaster-General above referred to, it appeared that those difficulties were by no means insuperable. The report of the Assistant Secretary states it to have been the expressed conviction of some of the "most competent and experienced pilots," whom they had consulted "as to the possibility of putting to sea by night in all kinds of weather,"—"that when the intended lighthouse shall have been erected at the Rock Perch, there

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Ded.

114.

" will not be any greater difficulty in going to sea by night than by day, in any weather in which a ship ought to put out under any circumstances." Various points of consideration affecting the voyage are discussed in this report, to which we beg leave to refer your Lordships. The practicability of the passage, and the possibility of accelerating the Liverpool correspondence by means of it, have been sufficiently ascertained; and it seems manifest that if this be an eligible passage for this correspondence, which has been represented to be infinitely more valuable than that circulated through Holyhead, it must be at least equally proper to make it available for this latter correspondence, if in so doing any contingent advantage can be secured; and that with respect to sea-risk, any argument that can be objected must apply alike to both portions of the correspondence. Under this view, therefore, the question for consideration, in adopting or rejecting Liverpool as the general port of departure for Dublin, would regard solely the proximity of London; that is, the time necessary for conveying the letters thence to Liverpool, so as to coincide with the appointed departure of the mail for Dublin from that port.

No. 11.

7 & 8 Geo. 4.
c. 35-

Your Lordships are aware that the improvement of the road from London to Liverpool had long been a subject of attention, prior to its being placed by statute under the superintendence of Commissioners, and that numerous surveys have been made with this object. From the reports of Mr. Telford, founded upon such surveys, it is evident that a much greater saving of distance and time than the Assistant Secretary seems to have considered requisite, for securing a preference to Liverpool as the port of departure for the correspondence from London, might be effected between these places; and from the same authority it may be stated that had the discretion of His Majesty's Postmaster-General extended and been directed to an application of the Revenue towards executing the necessary works and alterations for perfecting the inland communication between these places, equivalent to the expenditure which has been and continues to be, defrayed out of it, in creating and maintaining a superfluous establishment of steam-vessels to compete with private enterprise for the passage between Liverpool and Dublin, the intercourse between two of the greatest commercial ports of the United Kingdom, as well as that of intermediate places, might have been materially expedited: the ulterior object of a combined acceleration of the London and Liverpool correspondence for Ireland, by the same conveyance over sea, might have become practicable; in which case a great saving would have arisen from the reduction of the establishment at Holyhead; whilst indemnity might have been secured, by temporary imposts, under suitable provisions, and a vast permanent advantage might have been conferred upon the Public, without detriment to private interests, or to the Revenue.

Eighteenth Report,
p. 6.

This observation is designed less to add comment upon what we conceive to have been an injudicious use of the powers of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, than to recall your Lordships attention to the defectiveness of those powers; to that "obvious dependence of the operations of this department upon the condition and management of the roads," which, in the general remarks preliminary to our Eighteenth Report, was pointed out as interposing partial obstacles to extensive improvements; and to the necessity of a well-considered combination of arrangements in attempting such improvements for the purposes of the Post-office Establishment.

In order to understand the extent of the actual impediments inland to the joint transmission of the London and Liverpool correspondence over sea from the latter port, it is necessary to advert to the subsisting separate arrangements of the mail-coach communication with Liverpool, and the departure of the packet thence for Dublin.

No. 47.

The time allowed for travelling the distance of 202 miles from London to Liverpool is twenty-two hours and seven minutes, which dates the arrival at Liverpool at seven minutes past six o'clock P.M. The fixed hour for the dispatch of the mail-bags from the post-office at Liverpool, to be put on board the packet for Dublin, is five o'clock P.M., leaving a difference of one hour and seven minutes only between the two. If the acceleration of the London mail on the one hand, and a postponement of the dispatch from Liverpool on the other, so as to afford the little additional time that is required to make these

now

now unconnected establishments auxiliary to each other, be impracticable, or incompatible with other arrangements, it is evident that even a partial adoption of the plans of Mr. Telford (or possibly of others which may still be suggested as preferable) would render the joint transmission of the London and Liverpool correspondence from the latter port easily practicable; and if the interests involved in the execution of those plans were of sufficient magnitude to countenance the suggestion of them, when the communication with Ireland was unconnected with the design, this additional object would seem to call for some effort to secure their completion. It is, besides, important to bear in mind the probability, that at no remote period some of the inland communications of the Post-office will be forced, under the instigation of private enterprize, into new lines, by a different application of the same power which has so materially influenced those over sea. If the introduction of the use of steam in conveyances over land should prove successful, it will be the object of His Majesty's Postmaster-General to consult economy, and seek acceleration, by such means. These cannot be expected to extend beyond the populous and wealthy commercial districts. Between Liverpool and the Metropolis, directly or indirectly, the establishment of such improved conveyance may be, if any where, reasonably calculated upon; and the transmission of correspondence for Dublin, would thus necessarily be diverted from the route of Holyhead to Liverpool.

We are aware it has been contended that the selection of the route for the objects of the Post-office should be determined by the comparative shortness of the sea voyage; but to this opinion we do not give an unqualified assent. It may be stated from experience that the voyages from Holyhead to Howth, and from Liverpool to Howth or Kingstown, under proper regulation, may be performed with equal safety, and, under ordinary circumstances, within estimated periods. If by abridgement of distance or increased speed the transit between London and Liverpool were so reduced as to make Dublin accessible over sea from that port in a considerably shorter period (reckoning from the time of departure from London) than by the route of Holyhead and Howth, whatever might be the preference of passengers for this route, the protection of the Revenue, independent of other considerations, would compel His Majesty's Postmaster-General (as on the occasion of the introduction of steam-packets) to avail himself of the more speedy means of transmitting the correspondence; and in this event Liverpool must become the port of departure for the London correspondence sent to Dublin. This result, can be regarded only prospectively. But its eventual certainty, and the apparent impossibility of otherwise commanding the various advantages that would ensue from the acceleration of the London and Liverpool correspondence together, lead us to suggest the precaution of directing the expenditure, which your Lordships may think fit to sanction towards the further improvement of the communications between London and Dublin, in such way as may be conducive to this ultimate object, with sufficient attention to the maintenance of the route by Holyhead in the meantime; and of instructing His Majesty's Postmaster-General to govern himself by the same view, in originating or regulating any establishments, or other arrangements, affecting these communications, which may be attended with charge upon the Revenue.

If the maintenance of a Post-office packet establishment at Liverpool were now, or should become hereafter, necessary for, or could promote, the attainment of this most valuable object, we should acquiesce in the propriety of it, as a measure calculated to extend accommodation to the Public, and both directly and indirectly to benefit the Revenue. Its continuance is not so justified at present; and it is probable that, in the contemplated event of Liverpool becoming the more expeditious route between London and Dublin, the profits of the passage being thrown open to competition, the advantages attaching to the sanction of His Majesty's Postmaster-General would enable his Lordship to command a conveyance for the mails under satisfactory regulations, without any speculative outlay, and possibly, with a total exemption from charge to the Revenue.

We have placed in the Appendix a statement, showing the exact time occupied in each voyage from Liverpool to Dublin, in three summer months (June, July and August), and in three winter months (December, January and February), within the last twelve months. This statement is important, as it proves that the performance of this voyage by steam-vessels may be calculated upon with equal certainty in all seasons; and your Lordships will perhaps be surprized

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Nos. 141, 142.

to learn that the average of the time necessary for its performance in the two periods of winter and summer appears from the statement in question to have varied only by one minute. The subjoined Table of the number of voyages, and their average length in each of the above-mentioned months, besides this result, shows that the passage was made, upon an average, more quickly in December than in July, and in January and February more quickly than in August :

		NUMBER OF PASSAGES.						AVERAGE of PASSAGES.	
								Hours. Mins.	
1829.	June	-	49	-	-	-	-	-	13 34
-	July	-	51	-	-	-	-	-	14 19
-	August	-	50	-	-	-	-	-	15 28
-	December	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	13 52
1830.	January	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	14 28
-	February	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	14 24

The General Average given is as follows :

		Hours. Mins.	
Summer Months	- - - - -	14	25
Winter - ditto	- - - - -	14	24

To this must be added fifteen minutes for conveying the bags to the packet at Liverpool, and forty-five minutes for conveyance from Kingstown to Dublin, making the average period occupied in conveyance about fifteen and a half hours. Allowing the same averages for the passage from Kingstown to Liverpool, and including the interval between the arrival of the mail in Dublin and the departure of the mail from thence, the course of post (or the time necessary for receiving an answer) may be stated at about forty hours. A comparison with the before-stated course of post under the old arrangements, namely, sixty-five hours (under the most favourable circumstances), shows an acceleration of twenty-five hours.

It cannot be doubted, therefore, that the commercial interests have derived great advantages, whilst it is to be regretted that the Revenue has suffered, unnecessarily, from the mode in which His Majesty's Postmaster-General has judged it proper to conduct the service.

The above Table suggests also a comparison with the estimated result of the proposed recurrence to the route by Holyhead. The time allowed by Sir Henry Parnell between Liverpool and Dublin, being nineteen hours and twenty-five minutes, it appears that the time saved upon an average in the direct passage may be estimated at about four hours; and that in the winter months no superior advantage of time could be calculated upon, under ordinary circumstances, by resorting to this route, if it were practicable, as proposed by Sir Henry Parnell, and consistent with convenience in other respects.

But a still more important comparison lies between the periods occupied in the transit from London to Dublin by Holyhead (through Shrewsbury) and by Liverpool. It has been already stated that the time allowed for the London mail to Liverpool is twenty-two hours seven minutes, and if this be added to the average time of the passage thence to Dublin, as stated above, the whole time required for conveyance between London and Dublin through Liverpool, will appear to be thirty-seven hours and thirty-two minutes.

	Hours.	Minutes.
The time allowed for the mail to Holyhead is	29	17
Passage thence to Howth estimated at	7	-
Conveyance from Howth to Dublin	1	-
Making in the whole	37	17

In the actual state of these communications, therefore, the Holyhead route would appear to have the advantage in time, of about twenty minutes.

It remains however to be observed that the passage included in the computation of time from Liverpool is to Kingstown. Notwithstanding the preference contended for, as your Lordships have seen, by the English department

as due to this harbour, in arranging the line of communications from Holyhead, it appears from the correspondence of the Assistant Secretary and Mr. Goddard respecting the Liverpool Establishment, that it was originally intended that the Liverpool packets should proceed to Howth; and that the alternative of resorting to Kingstown was adopted in consequence of the alleged insufficiency of water at that time in the harbour of Howth for these packets. Such an objection, it would appear from the more recent reports of Mr. Telford and the harbour-master of Howth, could not now be offered to the use of that harbour by vessels of tonnage suitable to the passage from Liverpool. Mr. Goddard, in replying to certain queries of the Assistant Secretary with reference to this passage, and an intermediate touching at Holyhead, calculated that the proposed voyage might be performed under the most favourable circumstances in 13½ hours, and that the arrival at Howth of a steam-vessel leaving Liverpool under such circumstances at six p. m. might be "marked for 7½ a. m." In this calculation the deviation by calling at Holyhead is estimated at from 6½ to 8 miles, and the time lost in the harbour at half an hour. Supposing Mr. Goddard's calculations to be well founded the time necessary for making a direct passage from Liverpool to Howth, under the most favourable circumstances, would scarcely exceed twelve hours; and if the time allowed for the London mail to Liverpool be added, the whole time requisite for the conveyance between London and Howth by Liverpool, thus estimated, will be two hours and ten minutes less than the time taken, as above stated, for the conveyance from London to Howth by Holyhead. If, however, it were practicable to make the voyage from Liverpool to Howth in fourteen hours, the route by Liverpool, without any of those inland improvements of which it is capable, would, in point of time consumed in conveyance, stand upon an equality with the route by Holyhead; and in proportion as time shall be gained by those improvements of the road, the allowance of time for the voyage and its casual delays may be extended. We are not unaware of the occasional disadvantages of the departure from the Port of Liverpool, which militate against a certain arrival of the mails in Dublin at a fixed period, with the uniform regularity which it is desirable to preserve in the operations of this establishment. Your Lordships will find in the Appendix documents which show the instances of variation from the fixed hour for the dispatch of the mail from the Post-office at Liverpool; and we also beg to refer your Lordships to some suggestions offered with a view to obviate some inconveniences attending the departure of the packet, which may deserve consideration.

It is possible that means may be devised to diminish or evade the impediments that lie in the way of embarkation in the channel of the Mersey, within a certain distance of the Port of Liverpool at a fixed hour, by an approach over land to an eligible station for packets beyond those limits; but on this point we have not sufficient information to enable us to offer any further suggestion.

The actual local objections, upon the whole, to the Port of Liverpool, are not such, in our opinion, as to be weighed in comparison with the various advantages that must ensue from effecting one general transmission and delivery of the mass of commercial correspondence for Ireland passing to Dublin.

Relying upon the calculations of Mr. Goddard and the reports before alluded to of the present state of the harbour of Howth, we can see no reason for the continued use of the harbour of Kingstown by the Liverpool Post-office packets, involving, as it does, an additional establishment and provision of stores. The particulars of these will be found included in a Return in the Appendix, from which it appears that eighty-six officers and persons (exclusive of stewards) are comprised in the personal establishment connected with the Liverpool packets; that the estimated expense per lunar month is £,325. 3s. 4d.; and that the stores in custody are estimated at £,919. 3s.

MILFORD.

THE advantages of situation for the approach and departure of vessels, and of proximity to the opposite coast of Ireland, appear to have pointed out the Port of Milford as an eligible station for the transmission of the correspondence between the southern portions of the two kingdoms.

Appendix,
No. 11.

Nos. 6 & 7.

No. 11.

Nos. 140 to 143.

No. 44.

Nos. 57, 67, 78.

The communication was carried on by sailing-vessels, which were taken upon contracts with their respective commanders, in the same manner as at other stations.

During the latter part of the continuance of this system, and up to the introduction of steam-packets, the establishment consisted of seven sailing-vessels constantly employed in the service, at an annual expense of £.403. 16s. for each vessel.

Appendix,
No. 1.

The profits arising from the conveyance of passengers were at this, as at the other stations, left wholly to the commanders. These profits, however, in consequence of the inconsiderable amount of the ordinary intercourse by this route, are stated to have been so small that it was frequently found necessary, in order to make up a sufficient income for the captains, and to enable them to keep up the necessary equipments for the service, to grant them additional allowances out of the Revenue, under the express sanction of your Lordships. The incidental expenses on this station were also increased from the frequency of the occasions when it became necessary to hire extra vessels for the conveyance of the mails, in the absence from the port of all regular packets in consequence of unfavourable weather. In the last year of the employment of sailing packets it appears that the sum of £.211. 4s. 7d. was added to the incidents under this head. In the same year the total expenditure on the station amounted to £.3,259. 14s. 2d.

Ibid.

The frequent employment of extra vessels, in addition to the seven established packets, must be attributed to the uncertain performance by sailing-vessels of the passage between Milford and Dunmore.

The success which had attended the introduction of steam-packets for the conveyance of the mails between Holyhead and Dublin naturally attracted attention to the means of effecting a similar improvement in the communications of this station; and with this view meetings were convened of the persons representing the commercial and other interests on both sides of the Channel, and various representations and memorials were presented to the Postmaster-General from the counties and cities of Cork and Waterford, the county of Tipperary, the counties of Pembroke and Caermarthen, and the town and port of Swansea. The general purport of these representations was to impress upon the Postmaster-General, and through him on His Majesty's Government, the importance of maintaining a direct communication between the south-western districts of England and Ireland, with respect to which a question had been entertained, and the expediency of providing for this by an establishment of steam-packets to ply between Milford and Dunmore (or Waterford).

In the month of January 1822 a plan was submitted by a company at Liverpool for opening a Post-office communication by means of steam-vessels, their property, between Milford or Bristol and Waterford; in answer to which Sir Francis Freeling stated the impossibility of His Majesty's Postmaster-General considering the subject speedily, but intimated his opinion, that if His Majesty's Government should "decide to send any other mails by steam-boats, " it will be by establishments of their own."

No. 13.

It appears from a report from the Secretary to the Postmaster-General, dated 25th May 1822, and a report founded upon it from His Majesty's Postmaster-General to the Lords of the Treasury, that the expediency of maintaining the communication through Milford had been under consideration.

Ibid.

The Secretary in this report represents that its continuance could be provided for under actual circumstances only by means of steam-packets; and that "as a measure of Revenue such an establishment upon this station appears to "be wholly out of the question," on account of the excess of the estimated expense beyond any probable receipt, and beyond the value of the correspondence which it would serve to expedite; leaving it for His Majesty's Government, however, to determine whether other grounds suggested themselves for the maintenance of this communication.

Ibid.

Subsequently offers were made of private steam-vessels for the service of the Post-office through His Majesty's Government in Ireland, with a view of lessening

sening the estimated expense to the Post-office. One of these, to undertake the conveyance of the mails for the specific sum of £.3,000, is referred to in a paper transmitted by Sir Francis Freeling to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 23d October 1822, wherein the principle of excluding private individuals from participation in the service is insisted on, as recognized by His Majesty's Government, and a decision is urged with respect to the Milford Establishment. On the following day the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury referred for the consideration of His Majesty's Postmaster-General a letter from Mr. Goulburn, at that time Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, inclosing by his Excellency's desire, for the favourable consideration of the Lords of the Treasury, a copy of a letter and enclosure from the President of the Chamber of Commerce at Waterford, containing "A proposal to establish steam-packets between Milford Haven and Dunmore, without additional expense to the Post-office;" a proposal which (it is stated) appeared to the Lord Lieutenant "to remove the only objection made to such an establishment, and to afford the means of conferring a very great advantage on the south and west of Ireland, without any additional charge to the Public."

Ibid.

Ibid.

To this reference His Majesty's Postmaster-General replied, by adverting to the objections offered in the paper before mentioned, addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the employment of private vessels; adding that, "if His Majesty's Government should come to the decision that, on the ground of public and general expediency, it will be right to maintain a communication between Milford and the southern and western parts of Ireland, this department has the means of carrying that intention into effect more advantageously, both to the public service and to the revenue, than any private individuals."

Ibid.

This was followed by an instruction from the Lords of the Treasury to His Majesty's Postmaster-General to furnish them with an estimate of the probable expenses which would attend the establishment of Government steam-vessels at this station; in reply to which the Postmaster-General by their letter of the 2d December 1822, stated that they were "inclined to think that on a rough calculation £.30,000 may be taken as the cost of establishing steam-packets between Milford and Waterford, and that the annual expenditure in wages, fuel, and wear and tear for both vessels and machinery, may be taken at nearly £.8,000 per annum."

Ibid.

Ibid.

Upon this representation the Lords of the Treasury were pleased, by their Secretary's letter of the 1st January 1823, to sanction the immediate establishment of steam-packets upon the Milford Station; and accordingly four steam-packets, of sizes varying from 237 to 189 tons each, fitted with engines of eighty-horse power, were placed upon the station on the 5th of April 1823, from which date the service has been regularly performed by them; and the following Table shows the annual Expenditure and Receipt that has attended it to the 5th January 1830.

Ibid.

YEAR ended 31 Jan.	Number of Steam Vessels	Purchase of Sailing Vessels.	Salvage and Outfit of Steam Vessels.	Expense of Establishment.	TOTAL Disbursements.	Receipts for Sailing Vessels sold.	Receipts for Passage, &c.	TOTAL Receipts.
1825 -	4	£. 10,496 11 6 Paid at different times, but the dates of the several payments are not given.	43,103 16 6	19,490 15 10	100,190 6 10	£. 2,780 Received at different times, but the dates of the several receipts are not given.	2,500 11 11	13,150 4 4
1826 -	ditto			13,073 7 6			4,408 16 8	
1827 -	ditto			18,511 10 0			3,064 17 9	
1828 -	ditto			10,350 11 3			1,052 17 -	
1829 -	ditto			16 14 10			9,085 9 2	
1830 -	ditto			106 7 2			7,158 11 10	
	£.	10,496 11 -	53,577 9 9	96,006 6 1	100,190 6 10	2,780 - -	16,270 4 4	13,150 4 4

Appendix,
No. 15.

Before we remark upon the actual expenditure of this establishment, we think it right to advert to the two estimates which were submitted to the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury, in the representations from the Post-office above referred to, dated respectively the 20th May and the 2d December 1822. The report of the Secretary to His Majesty's Postmaster General, upon which their Lordships representation to the Lords of the Treasury of the former date was founded, estimated the expense of placing steam-boats on the station at "above £.50,000," including the purchase of the six sailing-boats, and the annual expenditure at "many thousand pounds;" whilst the passage-money was then estimated at less than £.3,000 per annum, and as scarcely sufficient, "if at all, to pay the coals and wages, leaving nothing to defray the remainder" of the expenditure, and without the prospect of any return for so large a "capital."

The amount of the correspondence conveyed by this route was stated to be "not more than £.9,000 per annum."

Ibid.

In the subsequent estimate, furnished in December 1822, upon which the sanction of the establishment was obtained from the Lords of the Treasury, and which is described as "taken in the extreme," the cost of establishing steam-packets between Milford and Waterford is calculated at £.30,000, in which amount His Majesty's Postmasters-General state they have included the cost of the *Ivanhoe*, which was purchased for the Holyhead Station, and has been paid for, but the services of which being no longer necessary there, it was proposed should be transferred to Milford.

On this occasion the purchase of the sailing-packets was considered not to be an expense dependent upon the proposed measure, and various sources of income, or saving, exceeding the supposed annual charge of £.8,000, were stated, viz.:

£.3,500, estimated produce of passage-money :

£.3,500, present expense of sailing-packets :

£.1,200, compensation to the six commanders if the establishment should cease :

£.600, increased rates of postage.

"It is our duty," their Lordships state, "at the same time to point out to your Lordships, that we may doubtless expect that upon the introduction of an improved mode of conveyance, the number of passengers by this route will be very considerably increased; and it may be fair to calculate upon some addition to the Revenue from an increased number of letters. Any excess of passage-money or postage may be taken as in aid of the re-payment of capital, a calculation into which we have not entered, from the want of experience as to the durability of vessels propelled by machinery."

What circumstances had intervened between the dates of the respective representations here referred to, a period of little more than six months, which could suggest the altered view, and the diminished estimate, which the latter conveyed, we are not aware. The results shown in the above Table, however, prove their erroneousess.

The expense incident to the creation of this establishment exceeded even the higher estimate of £.50,000, although the estimate of £.30,000 was stated to have been "taken in the extreme."

No. 97.

The annual charge for maintenance of this establishment, your Lordships will observe, has been double its estimated amount, averaging £.16,034, instead of £. 8,000.

Ibid.

The amount of passage-money in the six years comprised in the accounts, has fallen short of the estimate, upon an average, being £.2,728, instead of £.3,500; and instead of a very considerable increase, which was calculated upon under this head, the three last years, compared with the three preceding, show a decrease of £.3,976.

No increased rate of postage has been established, nor are we aware that the Revenue has benefited otherwise from this establishment. The annual expenses have

have exceeded the receipts for passage-money by £.79,836. 1s. 9d., or about £.13,000 per annum; and the total unrepaid expenditure up to the 5th January 1830, according to the above Table, may be stated at £.141,040.

The expense of carrying on this service upon the old plan, or by means of the private vessels offered for the purpose, without increase of that expense, may be estimated, according to the preceding statement of the annual charge, at £.3,259. 14s. 2d.; and the annual excess incurred by the rejection of that offer, and the establishment of vessels the property of the Crown, at Milford, at £.10,000, exclusive of all charge for interest on the gross expenditure.

Appendix,
No. 1.

In weighing the probabilities of improving income at this station from that source to which His Majesty's Postmaster-General has here, as elsewhere, directed the attention of the Lords of the Treasury as promising some reimbursement, namely, the receipt of passage-money, and the means which, in rejecting the offer of private vessels, the department was represented to possess of carrying on the service "more advantageously to the Revenue," we find nothing in the existing arrangements to encourage such an expectation.

No. 13.

Whilst, for the use of passengers proceeding to Dublin, the Postmaster-General has himself created a double establishment (at Liverpool and Holyhead); and thus, in precluding private competition there, contributed to divert the receipts from one station to another, the establishment of Post-office packets at Milford has not prevented a formidable competition for passengers in the neighbouring Port of Bristol, which may be expected to be maintained with success in proportion to the increased accommodation which means have been taken to provide at that port, whilst corresponding improvements have been neglected or remain incomplete on the Milford route.

It is the more necessary, therefore, to consider in what extent this establishment is, or might be, conducive to the more direct objects of the Post-office service.

The correspondence with the city of Cork is perhaps the most important to be considered, but by no means exclusively, in this view; and it must be observed that the course for many years adopted with regard to that correspondence had rendered the establishment at Milford an object of less immediate importance to Cork than from its situation might have been expected. So long ago as the year 1804 it appears that the merchants of Cork, in consequence of the inconvenience to which they had been subjected by the uncertainty and delay which attended the transmission of their correspondence by way of Milford during the time of the sailing-packets, had joined in an earnest solicitation to the Post-office that the established route for their mails should be by Holyhead and Dublin. This had been accordingly, ever since, the course of the great bulk of their correspondence, not only with London, and places to the north of it, but a large portion of the letters even from Bristol and the south-western parts of England, to which the passage by Milford offered so direct a route, were, under special directions, sent round by Holyhead and Dublin. These circumstances are adverted to in the representation made by the Post-office in May 1822, and are offered as an argument against the proposed improvement of the Milford Station, on the ground that the benefits would extend only to Waterford, and a comparatively limited district between that city and Cork; and, after referring to a former report in the year 1804, in which an opinion is expressed that, "if the Milford establishment of packets can only be beneficial to Waterford, and a small number of towns short of Cork, the expense of nearly £.2,000 per annum is laid out without obtaining a commensurate object;" it is added, "If the propriety of the continuance of Milford as a packet station could be a question when the expenditure was £.2,000 a year only, it must form a more important consideration now that the station costs £.3,553. 12s. per annum, with the necessity for a further increase."

166.

We have already referred generally to the representations from the counties and cities principally interested in the measure in question, which are directly opposed to the view taken of it in this report from the Post-office, and hold out strong expectations of the benefits which would result from the proposed establishment of steam-packets. The Committee of Merchants of Cork on this occasion stated, in reference to the arrangement respecting their correspondence

264.

above alluded to, that although they had "latterly been prevented by the uncertainty of the Milford sailing-packets from availing themselves of that line in correspondence, yet that it would become of the greatest importance to them if steam-packets were to be established. That by such establishment, and by an alteration in the hours of the Cork and Waterford mail-coach, their letters would be delivered to them by nine A. M. on the third day from London, giving the whole of that day for attention to the contents, the answers would be received on the morning of the sixth day, which far exceeds the utmost possible dispatch elsewhere."

His Majesty's Postmaster-General having so recently expressed his opinion that the establishment of Post-office packets at Milford, as a measure of Revenue, was "out of the question," it was to be expected that when, with his concurrence in the different view subsequently suggested, this establishment was created, attempts would have been made to extend the benefits to be derived from the proposed establishment beyond its former limited operation, as described by the letter from the Post-office above referred to. It does not, however, appear that sufficient measures have been taken with this object, and consequently the correspondence from London to Cork, as well as to the whole of the south-west of Ireland, and *vice versa*, is still forwarded *via* Holyhead and Dublin, in the same manner as prior to the introduction of steam-packets at Milford.

No. 107. So little advantage appears to have been derived from the Milford Establishment under existing circumstances that in a return furnished to us from the department in London it is stated that letters from "Bristol to Cork are sent by way of Holyhead, unless specially directed *via* Milford;" and the total number of letters sent by way of Milford is estimated at about "eight or ten in the course of a week."

No. 21, 24, 32, 36, 40. In the prosecution of our inquiries on this subject, we have communicated with the Chambers of Commerce at Cork and Waterford and Bristol, each of which bodies has severally directed its attention to a special consideration of the arrangements in which they have so strong a common interest. The representations from the Chambers at Cork and Waterford, as well as that from the Committee of Merchants at Cork, and the representation from the Chamber of Commerce at Bristol, and the documents which accompany it, will be found to contain much information, and some suggestions which appear to us to be entitled to attention.

No. 206. We also beg to refer to the evidence of Mr. George Lunell, the chairman of the committee for the management of the private steam-packets at Bristol, and of Mr. Gilmore, one of the acting managers of that establishment, who attended us in London for the purpose of affording information generally upon the nature and extent of the communications already established by means of steam-vessels between the Port of Bristol and various parts of Ireland, more particularly the southern districts; and also in regard to the navigation of the Bristol River and Channel.

No. 202, 203, 204. We have further received information upon the same subject from Mr. Scott, a member of the Chamber of Commerce at Bristol; Mr. Vincent Stackey, one of the principal bankers in that city, and Mr. Redmond O'Driscoll, of the city of Cork.

On a consideration of the facts and statements brought forward in the examinations and representations above referred to, and upon general grounds, the expediency of maintaining a direct communication by post, between the southern districts of England and Ireland, is, we think, apparent; and the application of steam navigation to the passage of the Irish Channel has removed the principal obstacle that was heretofore opposed to such an intercourse.

The selection of the passage where, as in this case, different points are presented, and the mode of conducting the service upon the line that may be deemed preferable, as well as the expense required, are subjects of necessary consideration.

Of the various routes by which the proposed communication might be maintained the following appear to call for remark on the present occasion:

1st. The

- 1st. The established Post-office route by the passage of Milford and Waterford :
- 2d. By a passage from Milford to Cork :
- 3d. By a passage from Bristol to Waterford :
- 4th. From Bristol to Cork.

The preference due to either of these routes is not obvious, if the conflicting advantages and disadvantages peculiar to each be taken into account, with reference to a divided opinion as to the objections arising from a comparatively long sea voyage. If this were admitted to be a conclusive objection, the departure from Bristol could not stand in competition with that from Milford; but we have already stated that, in our opinion, other circumstances may countervail the advantage that is attached to the more limited sea-risk; and the rule by which here, as in our comparative view of the merits of the Holyhead and Liverpool routes, we should be governed in assigning a preference, would be the rapidity with which the whole service, by land and by sea, could be performed with sufficient punctuality, between the extreme points deemed to be of the most importance upon the line of communication required to be maintained.

There are on each side of the Channel two ports, through which, reciprocally, the proposed intercourse might be established. But, consistently with the above rule, regard must be had to the inland communications connected, or which might be usefully connected, with each of these ports, in seeking to effect an extended improvement of the general circulation of the correspondence between the two countries. London and Cork may be considered at first view as the remote points of most importance upon the proposed line; and from the following comparative estimate of the time requisite for passing between those points by the several routes traced above, it will appear that the exchange of correspondence between these two places might be expected to be most expeditiously conducted by resorting to the passage from Bristol to Cork.

	Hrs.	Ms.
Time allowed from London to Milford - - -	32	52
Passage to Waterford - - - - -	12	-
Waterford to Cork - - - - -	10	-
Total - - - - -	54	52
Time allowed to Milford - - - - -	52	52
Passage to Cork - - - - -	17	-
Total - - - - -	49	52
Time allowed from London to Bristol - - -	13	14
Passage to Waterford - - - - -	27	-
Waterford to Cork - - - - -	10	-
Total - - - - -	50	14
Time from London to Bristol - - - - -	13	14
Passage from Bristol to Cork - - - - -	32	-
Total - - - - -	45	14

This route, however, could not be preferred (as, on the sole ground of expedition in effecting the communication so limited, and presuming the voyage to be practicable in the time stated, with sufficient certainty and punctuality, it must be) without disregarding intermediate objects, which might be provided for by the adoption of a different course; and these occur on both sides of the Channel. For example, Bristol, being the English port of departure, the circulation of the English correspondence westward of that port could not be connected, as at present, with the transmission of the correspondence to and from Ireland through Milford, whilst, in a comparative view, much greater advantages would be lost to Ireland by making Cork the port of arrival there. This will appear on referring to the evidence given by Sir Edward Lees before a Select

Report of Select
Committee on the
Communications
with Ireland by
Milford Haven,
14th April 1877.
p. 72.

Committee of the House of Commons respecting the arrangements for the better circulation of the correspondence in the south and western parts of Ireland, which would be rendered practicable by projected improvements on the route by Milford, at Waterford, and between the latter place and Cork. From that evidence (and, indeed, from an inspection of the map,) it is apparent that Waterford, considered as a point for the dispatch inland of correspondence from England, and for the collection of correspondence to be transmitted to England, possesses in its local position an advantage which Cork could not afford. The circulation emanating from Waterford, under the circumstances contemplated by Sir Edward Lees, your Lordships will find, would extend to the counties of Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Limerick, Clare, Cork, Kerry, and possibly others, embracing no inconsiderable portion of the post-towns in Ireland, and some of first-rate commercial importance.

This distribution could not be effected without prejudice from Cork, whilst to the city of Cork itself the disadvantage of preferring Waterford as a packet station, and the point of circulation, under the system designed by Sir Edward Lees, would be unimportant; and upon a comparison with the present route for letters passing from England to Cork, there would be a gain of six hours to that city.

For these reasons we cannot concur in the suggestion of the Chamber of Commerce of Cork, that Cork would be found a preferable point of communication for the general objects of the Post-office; and to these it may be added, that although the longer voyage might be unobjectionable to many passengers, the passage to Cork could not be expected to be resorted to by those whose destination might be eastward of that port; whereas to all passing from the south of England to the south and western parts of Ireland, the route by Waterford, recommended by the shortness of the passage, might be conveniently available.

The foregoing objections must apply equally to Cork as an intermediate point of dispatch, if the passage lay between Milford and that port; and the advantage of the comparative shortness of this passage would not, in our opinion, afford to the city of Cork any benefit equivalent to the sacrifice of the more general interests, which it is the object of the establishment to promote.

It follows that, in our judgment, Waterford is the most eligible destination for the correspondence transmitted in this direction from and to England; that it, and not Cork, is to be kept in view as the point for calculation on the Irish coast, and that the choice to be determined lies between the English ports of Bristol and Milford. The former is of course open to the objection already pointed out as arising on this side of the Channel; namely, that in intercepting the Irish letters at Bristol, the arrangements now made for the joint transmission of letters passing to and from Ireland, with the correspondence westward of Bristol on the Milford route, must either be continued at an expense exceeding still more than at present the value of the service, or the communication through that district must be provided for by some other separate establishment. But confining our present view to the question of comparative expedition in effecting the transit between London and Waterford by Bristol and by Milford, it will appear from the estimate given above, that the calculation is in favour of Bristol by four hours thirty-eight minutes.

We cannot, however, contemplate the continuance of those obstacles which now protract the communication between London, Milford and Waterford, and prolong the period included in this estimate for the performance of the distance between these points.

In the estimates given above, following the evidence of Captain Nuttall, the average voyage between Milford and Waterford is stated at twelve hours; whereas in the offer of the Liverpool Company to undertake the duty by means of private vessels, we find the following proposal:—"Should you, however, feel
" indisposed to the Bristol route, probably the conveyance of the Waterford
" mail to this port (Milford) by our packets may merit your attention, for we
" could secure its regular delivery here in from seven to ten hours, and upon
" something like the terms allowed to the present establishment of sailing-
" packets, relying upon passage-money for our chief support." The vessels
proposed

Appendix,
No. 169.

No. 15.

proposed to be employed by this company are described to have been of 100-horse power, whilst 80 is the greatest power of the Post-office packets, and their inferiority is mentioned in the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons amongst the defects of the existing arrangements on this route.

In the general remarks preliminary to our Eighteenth Report, we adverted to the absence of "any attempt upon a comprehensive scale towards bringing up the general circulation to the level of those improvements which have been found practicable from time to time, and especially in recent instances, where particular interests and individual zeal, not favoured by any peculiarity of local circumstances to facilitate such undertakings, have led to more than ordinary efforts, or to the adoption of means not possessed by the Postmaster-General, for giving effect to them." Of the inequality of the advantages conferred upon different portions of the empire, owing to such causes, we find proofs in pursuing the comparisons which have been instituted in this respect; and it may be not without use to place in contrast the different results of the performance of the corresponding services on the inland routes which have been alluded to.

Report of the Select Committee on the Milford Haven route, 11th April and 14th June 1827.
Eighteenth Report, p. 60.

PLACES.	DISTANCE by TIME-TAKES.		TIME ALLOWED.		RATE PER HOUR.	
	Miles.	Fms.	Hours.	Mins.	Miles.	Fms.
London to Liverpool - - -	305	3	22	7	9	1
London to Holyhead - - -	264	2	29	17	8	7
London to Bristol - - - -	122	2	13	4	9	2
(45 minutes allowed at Bristol for office business.)						
Bristol to Milford - - - -	149	7	19	58	7	5

Appendix,
Nos. 45 to 48.

From this comparison it appears that the difference in performing the journey between Liverpool and London, and between Bristol and Milford, is equal to one mile and a half per hour:—as between the Holyhead route and that from Bristol to Milford it is equal to one mile and a quarter per hour; whilst a still greater difference than either of the above may be remarked between the two portions of the route from London to Milford, divided at Bristol.

The disadvantage to Milford, calculated from the preceding comparison, is, with reference to Liverpool, twenty-nine and a half, or nearly equal to one-fifth of the whole distance (or time taken) from Bristol, and, compared with the Holyhead rate of performance, it is twenty-four miles, approaching one-sixth. It is to be observed too, that the route of the mail-coach to Milford is the most circuitous of what are called the "direct" roads from London to that place, and exceeds the shortest by sixteen miles.

Were the same skill and zeal bestowed to improve and curtail the inland route to Milford which have been so successfully applied on the route to Holyhead, where impediments of much greater magnitude presented themselves, and the same speed consequently attainable, together with the acceleration of the voyage to Waterford, which seems also practicable, there can be no doubt, that on the score of expedition and exemption from the casualties of the Bristol Channel, the southern line of communication from London to Ireland must pass through Milford. The Appendixes to the Reports of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on this subject contain abundant information as to the practicability and the mode of effecting such improvements. In the opinion of that Committee we infer your Lordships concurrence from the aid which has been afforded, under the sanction of Parliament, towards one of the works recommended by them at Milford. A partial adoption of their suggestions may, perhaps, be inconsistent with economy, whilst it is insufficient to secure the object to which those suggestions were pointed, of accelerating a direct

Appendix to the Reports of the Select Committee on the Milford Haven route.

Post-office communication on this route. This may be stated to depend now almost entirely upon the removal of obstacles over which His Majesty's Postmaster-General has not a controul. The Committee represent that means may be found "considerably to shorten" the road between London and Bristol, without injury to the great towns lying thereon, and suggest other and similar improvements on the route from Bristol, of the practicability of which there appears to be no doubt.

Towards the removal of the impediments of a similar nature on the inland route from Waterford to Cork, alluded to by this Committee, we are informed considerable progress has been made since the date of their Reports.

These partial steps may be considered as indicating an intention, and enforcing the expediency, of completing their design; and as having, in some degree, predetermined the question as to the line of communication; since by an abandonment of these preparatory works any expense already incurred might become wholly unprofitable. On looking, therefore, to this route, as capable of being rendered the most expeditious by the completion of the different improvements upon it that have been contemplated, it will be for your Lordships consideration how far it may be advisable to adopt or encourage such further measures as may hasten and secure the completion of them with as little delay as possible.

We are the more disposed to offer this suggestion, because, in looking to the means of maintaining the proposed daily communication between the south of England and the south and south-west of Ireland, we are of opinion, that the chances of indemnity, on the supposition of the service being conducted through an official establishment, or the certainty of commanding private vessels on reasonable terms, if this mode were deemed preferable, are more likely to be realized upon the adoption of the short sea passage, that is, from Milford to Waterford, rather than from Bristol.

The average passage between Bristol and Waterford being estimated at twenty-seven hours, it must be calculated, that four vessels would be usually at sea in the ordinary course of the service, and that less than six could not be counted upon as a sufficient strength for a daily intercourse at this station. Hitherto only two vessels have been established between Bristol and Waterford, and your Lordships have seen how inadequate, owing in part to this competition, have been the receipts at Milford to support the actual establishment of four Post-office packets at that station.

Appendix,
Nos. 22, 189, 210.

The grounds of the preference given to the private vessels plying from Bristol are stated in a representation from the Chamber of Commerce of that city, and in the evidence of Captain Nuttall and Sir Edward Lees in the Appendix, as well as in the Evidence annexed to the Reports of the Select Committee of the House of Commons already referred to.

The transfer of the Post-office packets from Milford to Bristol, with a view to maintain a daily communication from that port, could scarcely be expected to invite an additional number of passengers by that voyage throughout the year, equal to the expenditure of the establishment limited to its present complement; which, as has been before observed, would not suffice for the service.

What might be the effect in this respect of the various improvements of which the route by Milford is capable, if completed, we do not venture to predict; but we may repeat our opinion, that the completion of those improvements is essential towards securing the primary objects of the department in maintaining this line of communication, whether the service be conducted in private vessels, or vessels the property of the Crown, the former of which modes should be preferred, and attempted, by inviting competition in forming the necessary contracts.

Looking at the whole of the arrangements depending upon this branch of the packet service, it should be observed that, as under the proposed plan the distribution of the whole of the correspondence with the south and south-western parts of Ireland would be effected through Waterford, some saving of expense in the Dublin Establishment might be calculated to ensue.

We cannot close our observations on this subject without adverting to the opinion advanced by the Committee of Merchants of Cork, and concurred in by Sir H. Parnell, that little can be done to facilitate correspondence between England and Ireland beyond making the Holyhead communication as perfect as it can be made; and that the correspondence here more particularly alluded to may be preferably carried on throughout the year by Holyhead and Dublin.

Appendix,
Nos. 40, 41.

The time allowed for the transmission of a letter from London to Cork by this route, under ordinary circumstances, is sixty-one hours; but if the packet reach Dublin after eleven o'clock, *A. M.* it is sixty-nine hours. The time requisite for the transmission of a letter from London to Cork *via* Milford and Waterford, has been already estimated at about fifty-five hours, under all the unfavourable circumstances which have been stated or alluded to affecting the land-journey to Milford, and the passage thence to Waterford under existing arrangements. In the communication containing the offer before quoted from the company at Liverpool, the possibility was suggested of performing the passage and journey between Waterford and London (through Bristol) in thirty-eight hours, to which if ten hours be added for the journey between Waterford and Cork, the whole time would be forty-eight hours. The length and uncertainty of this passage do not appear to us to admit of our adopting this calculation as one to be generally relied upon. But we are of opinion that, with the improved means proposed to be afforded on the Milford route, which the Chamber of Commerce of Waterford represent as having been "heretofore" most unaccountably neglected, the periods above stated will be sufficient for the punctual transmission of correspondence from London to Waterford and Cork, respectively; and that at least twelve hours will be gained to Cork, whilst a very extensive district will be at least equally benefited. In order to show the circuitousness of the route by Holyhead, which has been considered preferable for correspondence, even between the northern and southern parts of England and the northern and southern parts of Ireland, we may state the comparative distances between Bristol and Cork by Holyhead and by Milford.

Nos. 48, 51, 52.

No. 13.

	Miles.	Fer.
Bristol to Holyhead	- - - -	238 2
Holyhead to Howth	- - - -	60 -
Howth to Cork, through Dublin	- - - -	169 -
TOTAL	- - - -	467 2
<hr/>		
Bristol to Milford	- - - -	149 7
Milford to Waterford	- - - -	90 -
Waterford to Cork	- - - -	91 -
TOTAL	- - - -	330 7

Nos. 50, 51, 48, 53.

Hence it appears, that a communication at a distance of 467 miles (all intermediate stoppages being included) is effected under the present arrangements in a less space of time, than at a distance of 330 miles. These examples further prove the inequality of the Post-office operations, and the comparative imperfection of this latter line of communication; whilst the deviation from the direct line is attended with the consequence adverted to in the preliminary remarks to our Eighteenth Report, of enhancing the charge for conveyance. A letter from Bristol sent *via* Holyhead to Cork is taxed sixteenpence, *via* Milford fourpence.

Eighteenth Report.

In not recommending the discontinuance of a southern Post-office communication for the adjacent portions of the two countries by the line of Milford in preference to that by Holyhead, we necessarily assume a sufficient provision for its maintenance with the requisite punctuality. From a return made to us, which is in the Appendix, your Lordships will see that there has been reason to complain of the insufficiency of the packet establishment at this port. It has happened, since the introduction of the steam-vessels, that three and even four mails have been detained at the same time at Dunmore, and that the detention has extended to fifty, sixty and eighty hours. The inconvenience of such interruptions naturally led to an application from the Chamber of Commerce of Waterford, praying for an addition to the establishment, which, on the score of expense, was refused by His Majesty's Postmaster-General.

Nos. 150, 151.

Appendix,
No. 151.

By a more recent return however, this ground of complaint will appear to have been removed, and the service to have been carried on with regularity. Between the month of June 1898 and July 1899 three mails only are stated to have been detained at Dunmore for want of a packet, and these were delayed but for short periods. We must nevertheless observe that the comparative strength of the establishments at Holyhead and at Milford, to the former of which stations six vessels have been allotted, whilst the latter has been confined to four, has not been measured by a just calculation of the natural exigencies of the service at those ports respectively, nor by an equal view to the accommodation of the Public in the different portions of the kingdom, of which these separate establishments form the connecting links.

The adoption of our previous recommendations would facilitate an addition to the Milford Establishment, should this be found indispensable (which, however, from recent experience seems highly improbable,) to render it effective; and we are of opinion, that whenever there exist sufficient grounds for the maintenance of an establishment by the Post-office, it should be maintained upon an efficient footing.

In conclusion we may observe that although the present interests of this department, estimated by an exclusive calculation of Revenue, might not demand or suggest a continuance of this establishment, it is not, in our opinion, expedient to dispense with an adequate provision for carrying on the correspondence of the two countries upon a southern route, either in reference to existing circumstances, or on the ground of prospective contingencies.

Amongst the latter we may call your Lordships attention to a project which has been submitted to us for creating a foreign packet station at the Island of Valentia, on the western coast of Ireland, with respect to which it will be our duty in reporting upon the present arrangements in this branch of the service to submit our opinion. In the meantime it will be evident, that should the advantages which such a station (considered nautically, and with reference to its geographical position as a point for departure and arrival) will, we are inclined to think, be admitted to possess, be found, on mature consideration, to outweigh objections which may be perhaps officially urged against it, the route by Milford must become an object of paramount importance, and the perfection of the inland line of communication, which we have on other grounds already recommended to your Lordships attention, must be an indispensable preliminary measure.

No. 57.

We subjoin a statement of the Establishment at Milford, upon which some observations will be found in our comparative view of the corresponding establishments at the other stations.

1	Agent for Packets.
1	Clerk to ditto.
4	Commanders of Packets.
4	Chief Mates - ditto.
4	Second Mates - ditto.
4	Carpenters - - ditto.
4	Stewards - - ditto.
24	Seamen - - - ditto.
8	Firemen - - - ditto.
4	Engineers - - ditto.
1	Resident Engineer.
2	Boiler-men.
1	Smith
1	Carpenter.
1	Storekeeper
5	Labourers.
1	Sweep.
1	Chief Boatman.
3	Boatmen.

AT DUNMORE:

1	Storekeeper.
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No. 67 & 73.

The estimated expense per lunar month is £. 405. 7s. 4d., and the stores in custody are estimated at £. 2,109. 3s.

PORT PATRICK

A regular Post-office Establishment has for a long period existed at Port Patrick, consisting of four sailing-vessels, which plied between this place and Donaghadee, until the substitution of steam-packets in the year 1825.

In conformity with the Report of the Select Committee of Finance in 1788, the sailing-packets were taken up on contracts, as at other stations, but with this difference, that instead of being hired from the commanders, they were furnished by a company of individuals at an annual charge, varying from £. 700 to £. 1,000, determinable upon six months notice from either party. The vessels were of forty tons burthen, with a complement of five men each, the commander included.

The uncertainty attending sailing-packets was strikingly illustrated at this station. Such were the peculiar casualties of the passage, that notwithstanding the very inconsiderable distance from port to port, it was found impossible to calculate the duration of the voyage with any accuracy. In a representation from the Commissioners of the Port Patrick Harbour, dated the 31st May 1823, it is stated, that in the previous year there were ninety-seven days on which, in consequence of storms, calms or contrary winds, the packets could not make a passage; and the duration of passages is stated to have varied from two and a quarter to twenty-five hours. It had frequently occurred that eight mails were due between Dublin and Glasgow; and, owing to the great inconvenience of such uncertainty, much of the correspondence between Scotland and Ireland was conveyed circuitously by the way of Holyhead.

In the year 1823 a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the state of the roads from Glasgow to Port Patrick, who recommended the substitution of steam-packets for the existing sailing-vessels at Port Patrick; and the opinions of the Commissioners of Port Patrick Harbour and of the Postmaster-General having been expressed to the same effect, the authority of the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury for the establishment of steam-packets was finally conveyed to the Postmaster-General on the 31st December 1824.

In pursuance of this authority two steam-packets, each of 130 tons burthen, and with engines of forty-horse power, which had been built for the Dover Station, were placed on this station in the month of May 1825, and they have continued to perform the whole of the service between Port Patrick and Donaghadee up to the present time.

From the Report of the Select Committee above referred to, and especially from the evidence of the Assistant Secretary to the Post-office, which is annexed to it, it will be seen that expectations were entertained, that from the disposition of the Public to avail themselves of the shortest passage between Great Britain and Ireland, the establishment of steam-boats at this station would eventually pay its own expenses, or in any event would not exceed the sum formerly paid for the hire of the sailing-vessels. That these expectations have not been verified, may, we apprehend, be attributed to the extension of steam-navigation to numerous other points of communication, and to the change which that mode of navigation has produced in the feeling of the Public with respect to sea voyages. The opinion expressed by the Select Committee "that the line of communication on which there is the shortest distance by sea will always be preferred, where the roads are such as to admit of convenient travelling," must now be taken in a limited sense. The certainty and regularity with which voyages are performed by steam-boats, and the material diminution of the expense of travelling which is thereby effected, have induced a large portion of the Public to prefer those routes by which a long land-journey can be avoided, by adding to the length of the passage by sea.

The constantly increasing intercourse which is now carried on direct between the ports of Liverpool and Dublin, Liverpool and Belfast, Liverpool and Glasgow, and Glasgow and Belfast, in preference to the formerly accustomed routes by Holyhead and Port Patrick, afford evidence of the feeling above described. To this, and to the established competition, may be ascribed the loss which the subjoined Table shows to have ensued from the employment of steam-vessels at Port Patrick, amounting, upon a comparison of the annual charge with the receipt within the period of five years, to £. 10,852. 15s. 4d. ; to which, if the cost of building and outfit be added, the amount remaining to be reimbursed at this station on the 5th January 1830, may be stated at

Appendix,
No. 93.

No. 17.

Report of Select
Committee on the
Glasgow and Port
Patrick Roads,
24 June 1823.

Ibid.

Appendix,
No. 17.Report of Select
Committee on the
Glasgow and Port
Patrick Roads,
24 June 1823.
p. 25.

Ibid. p. 4.

Appendix,
Nos. 163, 166, 168,
170, 174.

£. 25,736. 16s., exclusive of any charge for interest upon the money sunk. The rate of the annual expense may be estimated to be fourfold that of conducting the service upon the former plan, although half the number of vessels only are employed.

Appendix, Nos. 82 to 85, and 98.	YEAR ended 5th January.	Number of STEAM VESSELS.	Building and Cost of STEAM PACKETS.		EXPENSE of ESTABLISHMENT.		TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS.		RECEIPTS for PASSAGE, &c.	
			£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
	1826 - -	1	14,874	- 8	4,433	18 1	25,296	- 4	1,886	- 6
	1827 - -	ditto			5,088	1 7			2,008	3 6
	1828 - -	ditto			3,045	11 8½			1,798	12 -
	1829 - -	ditto			3,648	17 7			2,031	12 6
	1830 - -	ditto			3,375	18 5			1,905	3 6
		£.	14,874	- 8	20,492	7 4½	35,966	- 5½	9,609	12 -

From the nature of the passage between Port Patrick and Donaghadee, the use of steam was particularly appropriate; but notwithstanding the increased regularity and dispatch in the transmission of correspondence which have attended its adoption, it was found, upon inquiry at Donaghadee by one of the members of the Commission, in the month of October 1826, that the arrival of the packets there was by no means punctual to the appointed time; and from a statement more recently furnished to us by the Postmaster, as well as a representation from the Chamber of Commerce at Londonderry, it appears that such irregularity still existed to a considerable extent.

No. 190.

Nos. 190, 36.

No. 135.

No. 154.

In consequence of this irregularity, in the year ended 5th October 1826 no less than sixty-six expresses were sent by the postmaster at Donaghadee, at an expense of nearly £. 40., to "Newtownards and Belfast, with late mails;" and in the same period eighteen mails from Donaghadee and thirty mails from Port Patrick were conveyed by private boats, in consequence of the steam-packets either not having been in harbour, or having been under repair.

From these facts it is evident that much still remains to be done in order to insure a more regular and punctual conveyance of the mails by this route, and especially of the Greenock and Glasgow, and other Scotch mails, to which we allude more particularly, because they contain by far the largest proportion of all the correspondence which is conveyed by the Port Patrick route. Here, however, as upon the Liverpool and Milford routes, it is material to bear in view the state of the inland communications, in proposing the means of improving the system of circulation generally, and some of the impediments to regularity, above alluded to, appear to have arisen from the defectiveness of the roads.

Nos. 166, 168, 169,
170, 171.

From the foregoing statement of the income and expenditure, it must be presumed that this station cannot be maintained upon its present footing without loss to the Revenue, as was expected, by an income derived from passage-money, a source which, from the growth of competition, is likely gradually to fail still more. There are now north of Dublin five Irish ports with which an intercourse is carried on by steam-vessels plying from Liverpool; and in addition to the packet station at Port Patrick, there is a constant communication between Scotland and the eastern coast of Ireland by steam-vessels plying between Glasgow and Belfast.

No. 109.

Ibid.

No. 117.

The correspondence with England through this station has been very limited. The average amount of postage of letters conveyed to Donaghadee through Port Patrick, coming by the London and Carlisle mails in three years, as stated in an account in the Appendix, scarcely exceeded £. 1,300 per annum. The average amount of postage upon letters passing through Port Patrick from Donaghadee for the same mails, in the same period, according to the same account, did not exceed £. 190 per annum. This great difference in the postage, upon the letters transmitted through this station reciprocally to and from Ireland, must be attributed to the different arrangements of the routes in the two countries. Since the date of the account just referred to, it appears, from a statement furnished to us by Sir Francis Freeling, that the Postmasters-
General

General for Ireland have recommended that letters from London (including those passing through it) for the north of Ireland should be forwarded by the routes of Holyhead, a measure which must diminish the Revenue obtained through the Port Patrick Station; and it appears to us that a further portion of the English correspondence for Ireland is circuitously directed through Port Patrick. Your Lordships will see, on referring to this statement, that letters are forwarded on this route from the counties of Bedford, Buckingham, Hertford, Northampton, and others, which, under different arrangements, might be probably more expeditiously conveyed through Holyhead; and that in some instances letters are sent to Port Patrick from post-towns within the above-mentioned counties through which the mails actually pass to Holyhead. In pointing out this apparent inconsistency, it is not our purpose here to enter into any observations upon the general plan of the Post-office circulation. It is evident that, if the Holyhead line be preferable for letters proceeding through and from London to the north of Ireland, it must be equally so for letters dispatched for the same destination from other forward points on that line, and consequently that the Port Patrick route should be still further disused. The establishment of a Post-office communication from Liverpool to Dublin must also be diverted to as opening a new route, which might be made available for the transmission of the correspondence of, perhaps, a considerable portion of the northern districts of England.

Thus, the principal object of the establishment at Port Patrick would be confined to providing for the correspondence already mentioned as constituting the greater portion of that which now passes through Port Patrick, namely, the Greenock and Glasgow mails. The average annual amount of this postage, estimated according to the account above referred to, may be stated as follows:—

To Port Patrick - - - - -	£. 4,840,
From Port Patrick - - - - -	2,569,

or about £. 7,000 per annum, a receipt by no means adequate to the sacrifice and risk incurred in the maintenance of vessels, and of works requisite for the permanent establishment of a Post-office station at Port Patrick and Donaghadee. To these considerations may be added the facilities afforded by the private vessels trading between Glasgow and Belfast, and other ports of the two countries, which, it may be observed, are, reciprocally, themselves amongst the most important points of communication on the respective sides of the Channel; whilst the towns of Port Patrick and Donaghadee possess an claim or recommendation, but such as might attach to intermediate relative local position; and we are inclined to think that, by relinquishing the unprofitable competition hitherto maintained by His Majesty's Postmaster-General at this station for the conveyance of passengers, this branch of the service of the Post-office may be more economically, and without inconvenience, provided for by transmitting the correspondence between Scotland and the north of Ireland in private vessels (as is now partially done) direct from Glasgow to Belfast.

Should this, however, be found impracticable, we are of opinion that the provision to be made at this station should be, as your Lordships have seen it was prior to the introduction of steam-packets, conformable to the former practice of the department, and to the recommendation of the Finance Committee, namely, by contract formed by competition with individuals or companies willing and competent to undertake the service, if such can be found.

A statement of the Personal Establishment at this station is subjoined:—

1 Agent for Packets.
2 Commanders of Packets.
2 Mates - - - ditto.
1 Carpenter - - ditto.
7 Seamen - - - ditto.
2 Stewards - - ditto.
2 Ship Engineers - ditto.
2 Firemen - - ditto.
5 Boatmen.
1 Store-keeper.
1 Carpenter.

The estimated expense per lunar month is £. 151. 16s. 2d.; and the stores in custody are estimated at £. 438. 1s. 9½d.

ISLE OF MAN.

SO long since as in the year 1766, it has been stated by Sir Francis Freeling, a weekly packet was established between Whitehaven and the Isle of Man, and, prior to the introduction of steam-navigation, no other communication between that Island and Great Britain or Ireland appears to have been conducted under the direction of His Majesty's Postmaster-General.

The vessels of this description, which, on their passage between Liverpool and Scotland, touched at the Isle of Man, afforded new means of maintaining such a communication; and in the year 1822, by the Act referred to in a former part of this Report it was declared that it might be found expedient to establish a packet-boat for the conveyance of letters and packets between Liverpool and the Port of Douglas in the Isle of Man; and a rate of postage was imposed upon letters so conveyed. From this date the service was carried on under agreements made by the Postmaster-General, from time to time, with the proprietors of steam passage vessels plying between Liverpool and Glasgow, who contracted for the delivery of two mails at the island in each week during the summer months, and of one mail per week in the winter, until the year 1828, when a contract was entered into for the delivery of a mail three times a week, from the 1st of April to the 1st October, and once a week during the other half year, in a vessel plying only between Liverpool and the Isle of Man. An account will be found in the Appendix, which shows that during the period to which it extends, the number of mails delivered exceeded the condition of this contract.

For the performance of this service, in the first instance, the sum of £300 only was paid by the department for one year, but under this arrangement the contractor is described as having been "a considerable loser by his contract." The annual payment was subsequently raised, successively, to the comparatively extravagant sums of £600, £700 and £800, for the years ended in August 1825, 1826, 1827. At the expiration of the latter period the service was contracted for at £409 for the succeeding year; but for the ensuing year, when the duty was undertaken, as before stated, by a vessel plying only on the direct passage, instead of the Scotch trading vessels, and the number of deliveries was increased, the contract price was again raised to £650.

This arrangement was adopted in consequence of representations from the authorities and principal inhabitants of Man, stating the uncertainty and inconvenience that occasionally attended the delivery of the mails by trading vessels, which, it was alleged, made the Post-office service a secondary object, and used little exertion to call at the Port of Douglas, which was described as the only proper place for landing the mail and passengers.

In acceding to these applications for a vessel employed solely in the service of the Post-office (but carrying passengers), His Majesty's Postmaster-General considered he was justified "in paying a higher price for a service of this nature, than when attended with the uncertainty that must attach to vessels merely landing and taking up the bags on the route to another destination." This reasoning, however, is not in accordance with the sentiments expressed in a letter from Sir Francis Freeling to the Postmaster-General, dated 17th March 1826, that "the communications would not be so certain or so frequent, if confined to one vessel, as they have been by the employment of boats of various descriptions, as opportunities offered;" and it must be remarked also, that under this arrangement, the opportunity of combining a communication direct with Glasgow from the Isle of Man, with that to it from Liverpool by the same vessels, was relinquished, and the expense incurred solely for the accommodation of Liverpool and the Isle of Man.

The gross revenue of postage of the Isle of Man may be estimated from returns in the Appendix at about £1,500 per annum. The packet-hire alone constitutes, therefore, a charge of forty-three per cent. upon this revenue.

The mode which has been elsewhere rejected, of providing for the service by contract with private vessels, having been adhered to here, on this point it only remains to be recommended that the principle of competition should be fairly brought into operation in framing future contracts. But we cannot avoid

remarking

3 Geo. 4. c. 105.

Appendix,
Nos. 20, 21, 20,
21, 22.

Nos. 156, 157.

No. 20.

Nos. 20, 21, 20.

No. 21.

No. 22.

No. 20, 21.

No. 20.

Ibid.

Nos. 114, 115.

remarking that, had the objections to this mode, which have been insisted upon in other cases, been consistently extended to this communication, the intercourse between Liverpool and the Isle of Man might have presented that inducement to the establishment of packets the property of the Crown, which had so much influence at other stations, with less risk of miscalculation than has been found to attend it in the cases alluded to.

In the memorial referred to above from the inhabitants of the Isle of Man, it is stated that the average number of passengers in the summer, during seven years, in the trading vessels, objected to as the medium of communication, had exceeded 100 each trip, three times a week; and Captain Oman, formerly a commander of the packet, states that the voyage is considered an exceedingly pleasant excursion.

Appendix,
No. 20.

No. 192.

With vessels to which so lucrative a traffic is open we should conceive that the advantages attaching to the sanction of the Post-office might weigh so as to procure the performance of the service (attended with no expense, and very trifling labour) at less cost than has been hitherto incurred by His Majesty's Postmaster-General, if pains were taken to invite an active competition.

Upon the conduct of the service in its present extent at this station we have no further remarks to offer; but the capability of the Isle of Man to afford a medium of more extensive communication becomes a consideration of interest, in looking to the means of improving the general circulation, with the powerful aid of steam-navigation, and of other facilities thus rendered available.

The situation of this island, midway between the western coast of England and the eastern coast of Ireland, at a moderate distance from both, with ports accessible to steam-vessels, strongly suggests the possibility of effecting a more direct communication between the districts adjacent to those ports, and, probably, from comparatively remote parts, than has been hitherto attempted. The intercourse formerly carried on between Whitehaven and Ramsay was limited to correspondence with the Isle of Man. A project has been long entertained for improving the communication between Ireland and the Isle of Man, by a passage between Ardglass and Peel, with respect to which several representations made to us will be found in the Appendix; but, so far as we are aware, the connexion of the two countries, Ireland and Great Britain, by a Post-office communication by the short sea line which has been mentioned, and traversing the Isle of Man, has not been contemplated. An inspection of the map is sufficient for estimating the great abridgment of distance that would be effected by resorting to this route for a considerable portion of correspondence between parts of England, Scotland and Ireland, as compared with the length of the existing routes by Liverpool to Dublin, or by Port Patrick to Donaghadee. A letter from Whitehaven to Belfast, sent by the first of these routes, would travel 376 miles. By the second route, the distance may be stated at 225 miles.

No. 30.

No. 45.

The time requisite for the transmission by these routes respectively, is as follows:

By Liverpool - - - - -	63 hours.
By Port Patrick - - - - -	46 hours.

The distance from Whitehaven to Ardglass, and thence to Belfast, may be estimated at about 110 miles; and allowing the same rate of speed by land and by sea as on the other routes, the time of performance would be about fourteen hours. With the local impediments which may at present oppose the transit through the Isle of Man, we are unacquainted; but considering the narrowness of this island, they must be within a very limited space, and probably be removable at small expense. But it is rather for the purpose of attracting attention to the opportunities afforded by the introduction of the use of steam, and the progress of public works, calculated to facilitate the intercourse by such means, than of submitting any positive recommendation, that we have directed these observations to the apparent possibility of making the provision for a communication with the Isle of Man subservient also as a link of connection in the correspondence between the two neighbouring coasts. The sanction given by Parliament to the maintenance and improvement of the harbour of Ardglass, must be favourable to the establishment of such a route, which would render the station at Port Patrick still less important, and might likewise supersede the necessity of a communication by the longer sea passage from Liverpool to the Isle of Man, and of the charge incurred thereby.

WEYMOUTH.

THE correspondence between Great Britain and the Islands of Guernsey, Jersey and Alderney, is conveyed by means of the establishment at this station.

Appendix,
No. 1.
The service appears to have been carried on upon the same system as at the other stations prior to the introduction of steam-packets. Three sailing-vessels were employed in the conveyance of the mails twice a week. These vessels were the property of the commanders, who received formerly each the sum of £.408. 16s. 1d., the Post-office claiming a certain portion of the freight in diminution of the expenditure; but in the year 1819 a new arrangement was made, under which the hire of each vessel was reduced to £.258. 16s. 1d.; the official proportion of the freight was abandoned, and the whole of the passage-money appropriated to the commanders.

Ibid.
The total expense of the station, including incidental expenses, is stated to have amounted in the year ended 5th January 1823, to £.778. 3s. 5d.

No. 12.
The increased certainty and dispatch consequent upon the application of steam to navigation naturally gave rise to applications from interested parties for a participation in those advantages. Accordingly, as early as the month of July 1823, a letter was addressed by Sir Colin Halkett, the Lieutenant Governor of Jersey, to the Postmaster-General, in which he stated from authentic returns, that 687 passengers had arrived in that island from Southampton during the previous year (1822); and he added, "I am satisfied that a much greater number have sailed from Jersey for the same port. It appears to me, therefore, and it is the opinion of the principal merchants here, that if the mail were conveyed by steam from Southampton or Portsmouth to these islands, the revenue of the Post-office would be increased, and our communication with London rendered more expeditious." On these grounds he requests Mr. Freeing will have the kindness "to recommend the establishment of Government steam-packets on this station."

Ibid.
In the course of the same year a project was set on foot by some of the inhabitants of Portsmouth and Jersey respectively for establishing a steam-packet to ply between the former port and the Isles of Jersey and Guernsey; and in the month of March 1824 it appears that application had been made to the Post-office that the mails might be sent by it. To this application it was replied that, if the mails were conveyed by steam-boats, it would be in vessels belonging to the Post-office.

Ibid.
In the month of June 1824, an offer appears to have been made to the Postmaster-General by Mr. Price, on behalf of the proprietors of the Lord Beresford steam-vessel, to carry a mail-bag once a week to the islands *via* Portsmouth, leaving the compensation for such service to the consideration of the Postmaster-General. The reply to this application was to the same effect as the preceding.

Ibid.
The expediency of establishing Post-office steam-packets at Weymouth, and the comparative merits of the ports of Weymouth and Southampton respectively, as points of departure for such vessels for the islands, are entered into in two memorandums, addressed by Sir Francis Freeing to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, dated the 18th March and April 1824; and on the 11th of August following the subject was again brought especially under the notice of Government, in a communication from the Postmaster-General to the Lords of the Treasury, founded in part upon "Memorials" presented by the commanders of the packets on the Weymouth Station, "praying for relief in consequence of the falling off in their receipts, occasioned by the great competition they had to encounter from private passage-vessels of all kinds, especially from Southampton."

In consequence of the representations contained in this communication from the Postmaster-General, the Lords of the Treasury were pleased, by a letter from Mr. Harrison, dated the 3d December 1824, to convey to the Postmaster-General their approval of his Lordships' suggestions upon this subject, and to "desire that the necessary measures might be taken for giving effect to them;"

requesting

requesting at the same time to be furnished with an estimate of the probable expense of this arrangement, which in his letter dated 11th August 1824, the Postmaster-General had proposed to submit.

The memorandum submitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in April 1824, represented that "two steam-packets would be sufficient for the purpose;" and adverted to the extent of the intercourse with the islands, held out the expectation that "much revenue (by passage-money) would be the result of " establishing steam-packets at Weymouth."

No estimate of the expenses of the proposed establishment of vessels is found amongst the papers communicated to us. But it appears from the correspondence, that on the authority of Mr. Harrison's letter above referred to, means were taken towards providing an establishment, although these did not take effect before the month of July 1827. This delay is accounted for in the report of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, dated 18th March 1828, to the Lords of the Treasury, wherein it is stated, that it was found expedient to employ the steam-vessels intended for Weymouth on other and more important stations. In this report his Lordship, adopting the views submitted by the Assistant Secretary, under whose personal superintendance the service is stated to have been commenced, submitted for the approbation of the Lords of the Treasury the establishment requisite for the conduct of the service, and a scale of allowances to the commanders, agents and other persons intended to be employed.

The addition of a third steam-vessel, and the purchase of the only sailing-vessel then belonging to the station, as well as the scale of passage-money, which the Postmaster-General on this occasion expresses his hope in the result "will go far towards defraying the expenditure of the station," were at the same time submitted for the sanction of the Lords of the Treasury.

Their Lordships concurrence in the various recommendations of the Postmaster-General was signified on the 20th March 1828. The addition of a third packet was, however, directed to be considered "as an experiment, but not to be continued unless the earnings of the packets should be more than sufficient to defray the expense." The following Table brings under view the pecuniary results of the undertaking thus recommended by the Postmaster-General, and sanctioned by the Treasury. The total disbursement in the period of three years appears to have amounted to £25,490. 5s. 10½d.—the total receipts to £9,957. 12s. 10d. leaving the sum of £15,532. 13s. 11½d. to be reimbursed at this station, up to the 5th January 1830, exclusive of any charge for money sunk.

YEAR ended 31 Jan.	Number of Steam Vessels.	Purchase of Sailing Vessels.	Building and Outfit of Steam Vessels.	Expenses of Establishment.	TOTAL Disbursements.	Receipts for Sailing Vessels sold.	Receipts for Passage, &c.	TOTAL Receipts.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1825	2	- - -	7,158 19 4½	1,826 17 -	- - -	- - -	1,291 6 5	
1826	3	1,677 14 8	- - -	6,840 8 8	15,849 8 3½	600 - -	4,145 12 -	9,957 12 10
1830	3	- - -	869 5 9	7,465 2 10	- - -	- - -	3,350 14 5	
		1,677 14 8	8,028 5 1½	16,145 8 6	15,849 8 3½	600 - -	9,357 12 10	9,957 12 10

A comparison of the current expenses of the establishment (independent of first cost) with the receipts from passage-money, shows an excess of £6,785. 15s. 8d. in the former, or an annual average loss of about £2,200; but your Lordships will remark, that the deficiency of the passage-money to defray the expense has been progressive in amount in the last two years, being

In 1829	- - - -	£ 2,694 16 8
1830	- - - -	4,145 8 5

Here, therefore, as at each of the other stations, the calculation of indemnity from this source appears to have totally failed; nor are we aware of any reasonable ground for speculating upon future advantage in this case from perseverance in the present establishment, which has been maintained, inconsistently as it would seem with the conditions of the original limitation placed upon the complement of vessels to be permanently employed at this station.

Your Lordships have seen that the means available in private offers of service have been here (as elsewhere) rejected; and that this rejection had the effect of subjecting the public service of this department, during a period of two years and a half, to a privation of the advantages which have been open for all the purposes of private communication; and there can be little doubt of the indirect prejudice to the Revenue from the inferiority and anomalous condition of the Post-office arrangements under such circumstances.

In the items of expenditure there is nothing peculiar at this station that will not be found adverted to in our comparative view of the several personal establishments, if we except the loss incurred, consisting in the great difference of the purchase and sale of the sailing-vessel, viz. £1,077. 14s. 8d. The price, paid out of the Revenue is represented to have been fixed by two surveyors of the Navy; but it seems difficult to suppose that their estimate of the worth of this vessel could have exceeded the marketable value, as the result would make it appear, in the proportion of 179 per cent.

Amongst the reasons offered by the Postmaster-General for an increase of the salary of the agent, whose situation is described as "totally altered in character" and duties by the introduction of steam-packets," is the charge and management of these vessels, with their stores of every description.

On calling for a return of stores provided for the Packet Establishment, in store at Weymouth, Jersey and Guernsey, it has been stated that there are none; and that the method which we have recommended of procuring the necessary supply of coals by contract, has been resorted to here, contrary to the practice at other stations. The number of persons employed is thirty-seven, and the monthly expenditure is estimated at £241. 11s. 11d.

SHIP LETTERS.

LETTERS known under this description, are those which are conveyed in vessels neither the property of nor hired by the Crown. The regulations affecting letters so conveyed are contained in several statutes, the general object of which appears to have been, to prevent the circulation of transmarine correspondence otherwise than through the Post-office, with certain exceptions.

9 Geo. c. 10. s. 7. "The General Post-office Act of the 9th of Anne, c. 10, exempts from postage
 "letters of merchants and masters, owners of any ships, barques or vessels of
 "merchandise, or any the cargo or lading therein, sent on board such ships,
 "barques or vessels of merchandise,"—"or by any other person employed by
 "them for the carriage of such letters according to their respective directions,
 "so as such letters be delivered to the respective persons to whom they shall be
 "directed, without paying or receiving any hire or reward, advantage or profit
 "for the same in anywise."

55 Geo. 3. c. 153. s. 34. 55. This exemption appears to have been revived and continued by the Act of
 the 55 Geo. III. c. 153, by the thirty-second and thirty-third sections of
 which it is enacted, "That it shall and may be lawful for the owners, charterers
 "or consignees of vessels resident in Great Britain, to receive their letters by
 "their own vessels from any place within His Majesty's dominions or countries
 "beyond the seas, free from the sea postage, provided that such owners,
 "charterers or consignees shall be described as such in the address and super-
 "scription of such letters; and that such letters to any one owner, charterer
 "or consignee, shall not, if coming from any place in the East Indies, exceed
 "collectively the weight of twenty ounces, and if coming from any other part
 "beyond

“ beyond the seas, exceed collectively the weight of six ounces;” and further,
 “ that it shall and may be lawful for the owners or consignees of goods on
 “ board ships arriving from abroad, to receive letters free from the sea postage
 “ by such ships, provided that such owners or consignees shall be described as
 “ such in the address and superscription thereof, and provided it shall appear
 “ by the ship’s manifest, that such persons actually have goods on board such
 “ ships, and that the letter or letters addressed to any one such owner or con-
 “ signee shall not collectively exceed the weight of six ounces.”

By the forty-seventh section of the same Act it is enacted, “ That if any
 “ person whatsoever shall falsely superscribe any letter, as being the owner,
 “ charterer or consignee of the vessel conveying the same, or the owner,
 “ shipper or consignee of the goods shipped in the vessel, every such person
 “ or persons so offending shall for every such offence forfeit and pay the sum
 “ of £.10.”

55 Geo. 3. c. 153.
s. 47.

These enactments apply to the receipt of letters in Great Britain. Under
 the first of the above recited clauses (viz. sect. 32.) it would appear that the
 privilege of receiving letters free of the sea-postage “ from any place within
 “ His Majesty’s dominions” is confined to the “ owners, charterers and con-
 “ signees, of the vessels” resident in Great Britain. The privilege which is
 granted by the succeeding section to “ the owners or consignees of goods,” is
 confined to cases of “ ships arriving from abroad,” and does not therefore
 appear to contemplate the cases of ships arriving from Ireland. By the Act of
 the 39th Geo. III. c. 76, intitled, “ An Act for the more secure conveyance
 “ of Ship-letters, and for granting to His Majesty certain rates of postage
 “ thereon;” the Postmaster-General was authorized “ to collect and receive
 “ letters and packets of letters, directed to places within His Majesty’s do-
 “ minions, also to any the kingdoms and countries beyond the seas, and to
 “ forward the same by any ships or vessels that he in his discretion shall think
 “ fit, (although not packet-boats);” and “ to demand, have, receive and take
 “ for every letter and packet which shall be delivered to him or his deputies
 “ for conveyance in the manner hereinbefore specified, a sum not less than one
 “ half part of the rates and duties payable by law for such respective letters
 “ and packets, if the same were conveyed by packet boats;” and by the third
 section of the same Act it was left to the discretion of the Postmaster-General
 to cause the rates of postage “ to be paid, either prior to such letters and
 “ packets being forwarded, or on delivery thereof.”

39 Geo. 3. c. 76.
s. 1.

Ibid. s. 3.

By the Act of the 54th Geo. III. c. 169 it was rendered legal for any
 individual to forward letters “ to places within His Majesty’s dominions, and
 “ to kingdoms and countries beyond the seas,” by any ships or vessels “ other
 “ than packet-boats,” upon payment of “ one third part of the rates and
 “ duties payable by law for such respective letters and packets, if the same
 “ were conveyed by packet-boats;” and by the eighth, ninth and tenth sec-
 tions of the same Act a penalty was inflicted of £.5 for every letter found on
 board any ship or vessel “ without having the official mark of the postage having
 “ been paid thereon,” such letter not being the letter of the owners; and the
 officers of the customs were empowered and required “ to search every ship or
 “ vessel in any port or place for letters or packets which may be on board,”
 contrary to the provisions of the said Act; and to administer an oath to such
 master before he departed, that he had not any letters which had not paid the
 rates of postage imposed by the said Act on board his ship or vessel, not being
 the letters of the owners of his said ship or vessel.

54 Geo. 3. c. 169.

Ibid. s. 3.

Ibid. s. 8.

Ibid. s. 9.

Ibid. s. 10.

These latter enactments, in as far as regarded the penalty of £.5, and the
 power of the officers of the customs to search for letters on board of vessels
 outward bound, were repealed by the 47th section of the 55 Geo. III. c. 153.

With regard to Ireland it appears that the privilege of exemption from charge
 was granted by the Act of the Irish Parliament of the 25d and 24th Geo. III., by
 which the office of Postmaster-General in Ireland was constituted, in nearly the
 same terms as those which we have quoted from the 9th Ann. c. 10. By an
 Act of the 55th Geo. III. c. 103, intitled, “ An Act to regulate the Postage of
 “ Ship-letters to and from Ireland,” the same enactments respecting the im-
 position of a penalty of £.5 upon every letter found on board any ship or vessel
 ; 617.

23 & 24 Geo. 3.

55 Geo. 3. c. 103.
s. 8, 9, 10.

not having the official mark of the postage having been paid thereon, and the power of the officers of the customs to search vessels for such letters, and to administer an oath to masters of vessels before their departure, that they have not any such letters on board, which by the Act above cited of the same session (55 Geo. III.) were wholly repealed with respect to England, were enacted and declared to be in full force as regards Ireland, the penalty being attachable upon all letters not properly marked, except any letters and packets of the owners of the ships or vessels; from which it would seem that letters even of owners of goods on board such vessels were not contemplated as exempt from charge of postage.

55 Geo. 3. c. 103,
s. 2.

By the same Act the Postmasters-General for Ireland were authorized and empowered to receive a ship-letter postage upon all letters brought by ships and vessels other than packet-boats from places within His Majesty's dominions (other than Great Britain) at the rate of 6*d.* Irish currency for every single letter, and of 1*s.* Irish currency for all letters exceeding a quarter of an ounce in weight, brought from any kingdoms and countries beyond the seas into Ireland; and to permit letters to be sent from Ireland "to places within His Majesty's dominions (other than Great Britain), or to kingdoms and countries beyond the seas," by any ships or vessels not being packet-boats, upon payment of one-third of the rate of postage which would be payable upon such letters if conveyed by packet-boats.

Ibid. s. 3.

7 & 8 Geo. 4. c. 37,
s. 17.

The above enactments, with other clauses of the same Act, were made to include Great Britain, by the Act of the last Session of Parliament, 7th & 8th Geo. IV. c. 21, by which so much and such parts of the Act of the 55th Geo. III. c. 103, "as except or refer to Great Britain" were repealed, and by which also certain penalties of ten pounds imposed by the Act of the 53 Geo. III. c. 158, in cases of the illegal conveyance of letters, by sea or by land, in any coach or vessel or boat, or conveyance or conveyances whatever in Ireland, were declared to "remain and continue in force."

55 Geo. 3. c. 158.

By the Acts also to which we have alluded, viz. 55 Geo. III. c. 103, as regards Ireland, and the 55 Geo. III. c. 158, as regards Great Britain, the Postmasters-General of either country are authorized to grant to all masters of ships or vessels the sum of 2*d.* for every letter delivered by them upon their arrival; although, upon referring to the 28th section of the latter Act, it does not clearly appear whether masters of vessels arriving in this country from Ireland are legally entitled to such remuneration, the words of the clause being, "on their arrival from parts beyond the seas;" whereas it is evident from the 6th section of the former Act, coupled with the 17th section of the Act of last Session, c. 21, which repealed so much of the former as excepted Great Britain, that masters of vessels arriving in Ireland from Great Britain are legally entitled to such remuneration.

The penalties imposed upon masters of vessels opening any sealed bag or parcel of letters which may have been intrusted to them, or taking out therefrom any letters, or delaying to deliver such sealed bag immediately on arrival, amount in Ireland to £. 500, and in England to £. 200; the former penalty having been imposed in regard to Ireland in the same Session, viz. 55 Geo. III. in which a similar amount of penalty which was then in force in Great Britain was reduced to the last-mentioned sum of £. 200.

From the above statements and extracts it will be apparent that on the subject of ship-letters the law as applicable to Great Britain and Ireland respectively, differs; and it will be seen from the annexed evidence of Sir Francis Freeling that great doubt prevailed at the Post-office how far, with respect to such letters, Ireland was to be considered as a part of the kingdom. In reply to a question as to the practice of his department on this subject, he stated, "When we were applied to to send letters by private vessels and steamers, the first thing which occurred to me was, that perhaps we had not the power of doing so; as the Act of Parliament then stood, it gives to the Postmaster-General a discretionary power of making up bags to convey letters by private ships to places beyond seas. In consequence, a case was made for the law officers of the Crown, who gave as their opinion, that Ireland was beyond seas, consequently bags of letters were made up."

Notwithstanding

Appendix,
No. 176.

Notwithstanding the above declaration as to the authority of the Postmaster-General to make up ship-letter-bags for Ireland, it would appear, from the annexed series of instructions which have been issued during the last few years to the deputy postmaster at some of the principal out-ports, that the permission to carry letter-bags at all to ports in Ireland has only been granted upon special applications from the proprietors of steam-vessels, and not upon any general rule or principle; and that in some instances such applications have been altogether refused.

The grounds upon which these facilities have not been resorted to by His Majesty's Postmaster-General have been already adverted to, viz. the assumed necessity of treating letters sent in private vessels as ship-letters, whence a loss of Revenue would ensue, and the objections offered to the employment of such vessels in the service.

With respect to these objections it may here be observed, that the power the legislature has expressly intrusted to the Postmaster-General of sending letters by vessels other than packet-boats, is distinctly at variance with the principle implied in them; and in availing himself of this power in carrying on the service in the United Kingdom, and at the same time declining to contract with private vessels for this service, much inconsistency appears to us to have crept in; for whilst the Public is deprived of the additional security of a contract, and is simply guaranteed by the penalty to which the master of a vessel would subject himself by opening a bag intrusted to his charge under the "Ship-letter" Acts, the Revenue is sacrificed to the nominal distinction of the vessel not being called a packet, and to the want of a provision for affixing a rate of packet postage.

It appears that in the year 1827 ship-letter-bags were conveyed by passage-vessels between the following ports; viz.

Liverpool and Waterford,
Liverpool and Cork,
Liverpool and Belfast,
Bristol and Waterford,
Bristol and Cork,
Glasgow and Belfast,

No. 29.

in no one of which instances was any contract or agreement entered into, the letters having been made up in sealed bags, under the provisions of the Act 39th Geo. III. c. 76; the parties receiving the usual ship-letter gratuity of twopence upon each letter for their conveyance.

From a return subsequently furnished to us it appears that the instances in which ship-letter-bags were conveyed between ports in Great Britain and Ireland had been reduced to four; viz.

No. 133.

From Bristol to Cork.
Liverpool to Belfast.
Liverpool to Cork.
Liverpool to Waterford.

The extent to which communications by means of steam-vessels have been for a considerable time established between ports of the United Kingdom, may be seen from detailed statements which we have obtained and annexed in the Appendix. A Return more recently ordered and printed under the authority of the House of Commons, still further shows the progress of steam-navigation in Great Britain.

Nos. 166 to 175-
Parliamentary
Papers,
19th April 1829,
No. 323.

From a return supplied to us by His Majesty's Board of Customs it appears, that 269 steam-vessels were registered within a period of five years, the tonnage of which amounted to 27,743 tons; of which were registered

Appendix,
No. 263.

	VESSELS.	Tons.
In England	- - - 186	18,310
Scotland	- - - 61	5,388
Ireland	- - - 22	4,145
	269	27,743

Parliamentary
 Papers,
 59th April 1836.
 No. 293.

The parliamentary paper before adverted to states the number of steam-vessels in ports of Great Britain in the present year to have been 316, and their tonnage 261,264.

The statements and documents above referred to place in a strong point of view the difference of the present means of correspondence over sea between different ports of the United Kingdom, from those which existed when the Ship-letter Acts were passed. With such convenient and constantly available opportunities for the interchange of mercantile correspondence, whilst His Majesty's Postmaster-General declined to give them a legitimate sanction, it was to be expected that the means thus offered would be clandestinely resorted to, and the consequence would be, to divert into private channels the conveyance of a large portion of that correspondence which ought to have been transmitted under the security and responsibility of the Post-office; and accordingly there is reason to believe that the existing regulations of the Ship-letter Acts have been contravened or evaded, and the Revenue consequently injured, to a great extent by such means.

Appendix,
 No. 206.

In our observations upon the Milford Station we have adverted to the refusal of the Postmaster-General of an application on the part of the proprietors of the Bristol and Dublin steam-boats for permission to carry a letter-bag.

No. 199.

The consequences of a refusal of a similar application for permission to carry a letter-bag direct from Belfast to Liverpool were represented to us by a deputation from the Chamber of Commerce of Belfast, and the same with respect to a similar mode of communication with Glasgow, by which the Revenue suffered much.

No. 191.

Mr. Whinnery the postmaster at Belfast, having been examined to this point, stated, that he had "no doubt letters were sent in considerable numbers by "the steam-packets," and that a great number also "come in that way." Upon being asked, whether he had ever known a hundred come by one vessel, he answered, "Yes, I have reason to believe that is so, from Glasgow particularly." The evasions practised, and the loss incurred, were more particularly corroborated by one of the Post-office surveyors, whom we examined in Ireland on this subject.

No. 211.

No. 205.

From the more recent evidence of Mr. M'Tear, a merchant of Belfast, and a proprietor and managing director of the "Fingal," a private steam-boat of 202 tons register and 100 horse power, which plies between the ports of Belfast and Greenock and Glasgow, it appears that a box has been kept in the agent's counting-house for the reception of what are termed "consignees" letters; that many persons have access to the box to put in letters; that there is no means of knowing whether they are consignees letters; that the box is opened by the agents on the other side, and the letters distributed without examination; and that he has little doubt that it is made use of by those who are not consignees.

No. 176.

Sir Francis Freeling, after expressing his concurrence in the opinion that many letters pass from Liverpool to Cork and Waterford, and contrarywise, clandestinely, adds, "but that must be merely matter of supposition; when I find "that every conveyance in this country is resorted to for the purpose of evading "the duties of postage, I presume it cannot be denied that persons would do "the same at other places."

Ibid.

An agreement, which is stated to have been entered into with "the agents "for the steam-traders between Liverpool and the various ports in Ireland"— "by which the agents will cause to be delivered immediately on the arrival of "their vessels, at the Post-offices in Liverpool and the ports of Ireland respectively, all letters that may come into their possession, not *bonâ fide* relating "to, and to be delivered with goods on board," the agents to "be entitled to "the gratuity of twopence per letter," was designed to catch some portion at least of the letters which had been clandestinely conveyed; but this arrangement being confined to the Port of Liverpool and the ports in Ireland to which steam-traders from that port ply, its operation can be but limited; whilst it is the opinion of the Secretary of the Irish Post-office that "there is scarcely

No. 209.

"a pipe

" a place from which there is a possibility of sending them (ship-letters) from which they are not sent, but without their being put into the Post-office."

From what has been stated, we apprehend that the general prevalence of the practice referred to must be inferred; but, although an infraction of the law must be to the same extent established, it would be in vain to look for the suppression of, or a sufficient remedy for, such evasions, either in the more general or rigid enforcement of the present provisions of the law, or in the application of new or more efficient penalties or enactments. It is the duty of His Majesty's Postmaster-General to provide the most expeditious means of correspondence; and the disadvantage to which the Revenue has been exposed, in the manner pointed out, must be most properly, as well as most effectively, obviated by seizing every opportunity that is presented of securing, by means of steam-vessels, a regular periodical communication, where this can be so effected with greater expedition than by other modes of conveyance.

In a former Report we have suggested that much advantage would result from the employment of coaches established by companies or individuals, for the conveyance of inland correspondence; and in our present Report we have already strongly recommended a recurrence to the rule prescribed by the Finance Committee for the conduct of the Packet Service.

It appears to us to be consonant with that rule, and it falls within the intended scope of our recommendation, that His Majesty's Postmaster-General should preclude, as far as possible, a pretext for clandestine conveyance, by giving a legitimate sanction, under the form of contracts or agreements, to the transmission of letters over sea within the United Kingdom by established steam-vessels upon every eligible route.

We are not aware that the law as it now stands precludes such an exercise of the discretion of His Majesty's Postmaster-General; but if any valid objection exist in those enactments of the Ship-letter Acts, which have been construed so as to create a distinction between letters conveyed over sea in different vessels (that is, in vessels hired or owned, and vessels not hired or owned, by the Crown) though sent equally through the Post-office, with the sanction of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, this absurd distinction, so far as it relates to the correspondence within the United Kingdom, should be abolished. The same principle of prohibition, whereon the Revenue from, and the conduct of the Post-office Establishment is founded, should, in our opinion, be applied alike at sea and on land within the United Kingdom. The privilege of carrying letters over sea free of postage within the United Kingdom is, we apprehend, by no means essential to commercial interests. The necessity of it would imply that the communication by post was more tardy than by a trading vessel; and on these grounds we should be disposed to limit the exception from charge to papers representing, or descriptive of, the merchandize or other property on board, as invoices, bills of lading, receipts, or similar documents, which under any contingencies it may be requisite to produce on board, or on arrival, for the protection of the property, and the fair convenience of the responsible or interested parties.

Such a restriction of the exemption would very little exceed that which is actually in force under the Act of 55 George III. c. 153, s. 33, with respect to vessels arriving "from abroad," which are permitted to bring free letters only for persons appearing by the ship's manifest to have goods on board. The reason for this exemption, where the means of transmitting such correspondence are provided by the Post-office, as within the United Kingdom, does not exist.

We have before adverted to some differences of the law regarding the separate services of the Post-office Establishment in England and in Ireland.

On referring to the evidence of Mr. Thompson, solicitor for the Irish department, and to that of Sir Edward Lees, it will be seen that much inconvenience had arisen from the introduction of separate and practically conflicting provisions applicable in the two countries.

Some of the doubts arising out of the construction of these separate provisions have been removed by a recent Act, but there are still points of variance

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1846 Report,
No. 196.
Appendix,
No. 209.

7 & 8 Geo. 4. c. 11.

to be adjusted to produce that total assimilation of the laws, which must be incidental to the incorporation of the two establishments under one system and power of management; and for the adoption of this measure, as it appears to us, additional grounds present themselves in every branch of our investigation.

Amongst the discrepancies alluded to were different rates of sea-postage upon letters passing to and from Great Britain and Ireland, which, by the Act above referred to, have been equalized, so far as the Act of the 55 George III. c. 102, extended.

The multiplication, however, of the passages across sea in post-office communications will call for some general provision to create or regulate this portion of the postage.

The scale now in use for inland correspondence, your Lordships are no doubt aware will demand deliberate revision, and may possibly be found to require or admit of some alteration in principle. There are, we think, no obvious reasons for a division of the charge of postage within the limits of the United Kingdom, under different heads of sea-rates and land-rates; and on the score of convenience in taxation and the keeping of accounts one gross charge is preferable.

This plan has been lately adopted in regulating the receipt of inland postage on letters passing to different parts of England and Ireland, and we should be disposed to pursue the same method in adjusting the total charge to be imposed on every route, comprising both sea and land; for which reasons we abstain from proposing any partial scale, or rate of charge, under a distinct head of sea or packet postage.

The following is a statement furnished to us of the Amount of Revenue received (and the payments thereout) for Ship-letters conveyed between Great Britain and Ireland, so far as regards postage collected in Great Britain, in the three years ended the 5th January 1830:—

	Revenue received.			Payments thereout.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
1828 - - - -	24	9	3	3	19	9
1829 - - - -	8	17	5	1	17	8
1830 - - - -	628	5	4	112	14	8

The vast increase in the last year must be attributed, it is presumed, to the additional employment of private vessels without the sanction or security of a contract.

The several regulations which we have suggested, whereby all letters passing through the Post-office from and to parts of the United Kingdom would be subjected to the same treatment and proportionate rate of charge, and the distinction of "ship-letters" would cease as to such correspondence, we have no doubt would prove in their operation productive of very considerable advantage to the Revenue, as well as of accommodation to the Public.

IN the preceding separate portions of this Report a general view has been given of the Total Expenditure and Receipt annually at each of the Packet Stations. To this it is necessary to add some comparison of the respective Charges which have occurred alike at all, or most of them, at different rates.

These may be divided under two heads, first, the charges which have been incurred in the building, outfit, and maintenance of the vessels, and in the provision of stores; and secondly, those which constitute the remuneration of the persons employed in various ways in this branch of the service at the different stations.

The sources of Income, also, under corresponding heads at the several stations will call for some observation.

With reference to the first of these heads, it is material to advert to the method of providing vessels for the service.

The arrangement of the packet establishments, both in their formation and conduct, seems to have been confided almost exclusively to the Assistant Secretary

Secretary; and we have therefore addressed to him more particularly our inquiries on this subject. He informs us that the vessels the property of the Crown (with one exception, that of the *Ivanhoe*.) have been built under contracts assented to by His Majesty's Postmaster-General.

Appendix,
No. 178

The tenders for such contracts have not been produced by public competition, nor invited by any advertisement or general notification circulated amongst the principal builders, under the authority of the Postmaster-General. The course pursued is described by Mr. G. H. Freeling to have been as follows:

At the commencement a clerk in the Secretary's office was sent down the river to inquire what shipbuilders would undertake the work, and the respective prices, and the lowest tenders were adopted. Subsequently, various applications have been made to some of the principal builders, without giving any "specification," but informing them of the class of vessels required, and directing them to send in specifications to be examined by persons in whom confidence has been placed at the Post-office, and upon such specifications, altered as judged necessary by these persons, tenders have been received from the builders furnishing them.

D6d.

The builders thus applied to, Mr. G. H. Freeling states, have been generally selected by himself. The Postmaster-General has been informed of the persons applied to, and their terms, and his sanction of a contract thereupon obtained at his discretion. The persons on whose judgment Mr. G. H. Freeling has relied in framing the contracts, so far as relates to the construction of the vessels and the machinery, are stated to have been, chiefly, Mr. Goddard, the Post-office agent at Holyhead, and the confidential agent of Messrs. Boulton and Watt, in London.

D6d.

The vessels have been built at different ports, and the arrangements for their inspection whilst in progress of being built, have been different and uncertain. In some instances it is stated that this duty has been performed at Liverpool by Captain Goddard, in occasional visits from Holyhead, for a couple of days at a time; in others, by the occasional superintendence of officers of His Majesty's dock-yard. Mr. G. H. Freeling states that he cannot say with certainty that such inspection may not have been dispensed with in some cases, and he admits that they have not had in all cases a regular inspector; but that latterly an inspector has been constantly attached to vessels whilst being built, nominated by the Navy Board for the purpose.

It is the practice for each vessel to undergo a survey when completed before final payment is made, and officers of the Navy Board have been employed on this service.

From a further examination of Mr. G. H. Freeling it appears that Mr. Laing, a surveyor of the Navy Board, and Captains Skinner and Rogers of the Holyhead Station, were consulted and employed in the arrangement of the first contracts for building steam-vessels; and to this examination we would beg to refer your Lordships for a fuller description of the mode of conducting this part of the business.

No. 179.

Upon the practice as explained by the Assistant Secretary we have to observe that, in carrying into execution, as well as in adopting, the resolution to create establishments of vessels the property of the Crown, His Majesty's Postmaster-General appears not to have availed himself sufficiently of the principle of public competition; that from this system disadvantages have ensued which would have been avoided had the vessels required for this public service been built upon tenders resulting from a general competition, or in His Majesty's dock-yards, under the responsibility of the Navy Board, from specifications suggested by, or agreed upon, officially, in concert with, the intelligent and skilful officers of that establishment, and subject to their superintendence, according to the practice of that service.

This will appear from the evidence of Mr. Stone, master shipwright at Deptford, and Mr. Feamall, formerly surveyor to the Transport Board, to which we beg particularly to direct your Lordships attention, as being descriptive both of the practice in the King's yards, and of the course pursued with respect to some of the vessels built for His Majesty's Postmaster-General, in the very important points of inspection and survey.

Nos. 195, 196.

We must also observe that the delegation of the selection of persons to whom the option of contracting should be offered to a subordinate officer (however respectable that officer may be) is objectionable.

Some of the contracts appear to have been entered into unadvisedly, without sufficient regard to the stability of the contractors; no doubt with a view to economy. In the evidence of Mr. G. H. Freeling, two contractors are described as having been ruined, in consequence of the contract prices not having been "saving prices;" and he alludes to large extra bills incurred for necessary alterations

Appendix,
No. 174.

STATEMENT of the COST of BUILDING and OUTFIT of the several Post-Office Steam-
of each Vessel, by whom and where built, Date of Contract, Rate per Ton for which built,

VESSEL.	STATION.	TON- NAGE.	BY WHOM AND WHERE BUILT.	DATE OF CONTRACT.	Rate per Ton for which Built.
					£. s. d.
Escape - - -	Holyhead - - -	237	George Graham, Harwich -	20 Mar. 1825	25 - -
Wizard - - -	ditto - - -	237			
Harlequin - - -	ditto - - -	234	Wigram & Green, Blackwall	15 Apr. 1825	20 5 -
Cinderella - - -	ditto - - -	234			
Aladdin - - -	ditto - - -	230	R ^d L. Symers, Little Falmouth	26 February -	18 15 6
Dragon - - -	ditto - - -	237	George Graham, Harwich -	17 Mar. 1827	21 - -
Dolphin - - -	Liverpool - - -	277	ditto - - -	1 Nov. 1824	23 5 -
Thetis - - -	ditto - - -	301			
Etna - - -	ditto - - -	300	Humble & Henry, Liverpool	25 - -	20 - -
Comet - - -	ditto - - -	300			
Crocodile - - -	Milford - - -	237	George Graham, Harwich -	1 July - -	20 10 -
Sovereign - - -	ditto - - -	205	William Evans, Rotherhithe	17 - - - 1820	16 10 -
Vixen - - -	ditto - - -	189	Naval Yard, Deptford -	- - -	26 6 -
Sybil - - -	ditto - - -	227	Humble & Henry, Liverpool	10 Mar. 1827	21 - -
Dasher - - -	Port Patrick - - -	120	W ^m Paterson, Rotherhithe -	11 June 1821	19 - -
Arrow - - -	ditto - - -	130	William Evans, Rotherhithe	9 June - -	19 5 -
Waterpate - - -	Weymouth - - -	166	George Graham, Harwich -	22 Mar. 1825	22 - -
Ivanhoe - - -	ditto - - -	158	Purchased by the Post-office	- - -	- - -
Meteor - - -	ditto - - -	139	William Evans, Rotherhithe	22 Aug. 1820	16 10 -

Your Lordships will not fail to observe the great difference of the total cost of vessels of similar tonnage and power. For example, the tonnage of the six several vessels assigned to the Holyhead Station varies only by seven tons, the engine-power being the same in all; yet there is a difference in the total cost of two of these vessels, the Wizard and Aladdin, of not less than £2,759, exceeding £10 per ton in the "rate per ton to sea."

Amongst the four vessels stationed at Liverpool three differ from each other only by one ton, and all have equal power of engine; whilst there is a difference of £2,918 between the total cost of two of these vessels, the Thetis and the Etna, or £9 per ton in the "rate per ton to sea."

The general heads of charge included in the total cost may be stated to consist of the rate per ton for building, the cost of engines, and the subsequent equipment and fitting up for the accommodation of passengers.

In comparing vessels at the same station, no allowance is to be made under this last-mentioned head, to account for the difference of their total cost,

all

alterations of the vessels built by one of these contractors. In these cases either the specifications must have been imperfect or insufficient, or the work must have been performed without proper inspection during its progress, to insure its conformity with the contract.

The Statement which we subjoin of the charges of building and outfit of each vessel that has been employed at the stations treated of in this Report seems to supply proofs of the disadvantage of neglecting the principle of public competition, and affords ground for additional remark upon the results of the management of the contracts entered into for this service.

PACKETS at Holyhead, Liverpool, Milford, Port Patrick and Weymouth; showing also the Tonnage Power of Engines, Cost thereof, and by whom supplied, and Expense per Ton to Sea.

POWER of ENGINES.	COST of ENGINES.		BY WHOM SUPPLIED.	EXPENSE per TON to SEA.		TOTAL COST of Building and Outfit.	
	£.	s. d.		£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
Horse.							
80	5,800	- -	Boulton and Watt	51	- ½	15,135	14 10
80	5,800	- -	ditto	51	3 -	12,170	7 8½
80	4,700	- -	H. Maudslay	44	11 1	10,428	10 8
80	4,600	- -	Boulton and Watt	45	7 ½	10,614	11 8
80	4,553	18 -	Fawcett and Preston	40	18 5½	9,410	14 8
80	5,400	- -	Boulton and Watt	43	17 9½	10,506	10 5
140	5,300	- -	ditto	62	5 3½	10,511	10 4½
140	3,000	- -	ditto	63	7 3½	10,216	- 9
140	7,500	- -	Fawcett and Preston	54	6 6½	16,897	16 10
140	7,400	- -	H. Maudslay	57	15 8½	17,370	- 8
80	4,600	- -	Boulton and Watt	46	14 8½	11,159	7 4
80	5,600	- -	ditto	51	- 6½	10,460	15 8
80	5,222	5 1	ditto	67	15 4½	12,808	5 9
80	4,850	- -	Fawcett and Preston	46	3 9	10,317	6 1
40	3,240	- -	Boulton and Watt	53	8 9½	6,813	11 6
40	4,540	- -	ditto	62	- ½	3,060	9 2
	(Copper Bolens.)						
60	4,550	- -	ditto	56	11 10½	9,658	4 6
- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	6,352	18 6
60	4,300	- -	Boulton and Watt	46	9 3½	3,691	14 11

all being equipped and fitted up alike; though in this respect there is a considerable variance between the vessels of different stations.

The two former heads of charge are specified in the above statement. Under the first of these, namely, the rate per ton for building (for the Holyhead Station), the difference of the contract prices amounts to £.s. 4s. 6d. per ton, equal to an addition of seventeen per cent. upon the lowest rate. These contracts were entered into at different periods, the lower rate occurring in 1823, the higher in 1825, at which latter date the prices of both materials and labour were comparatively lower. The comparison lies also between vessels built in the river and at an outlet, by Messrs. Wigram of London, and Mr. Graham of Harwich. Between such vessels a very considerable difference is stated to exist in general. Mr. Wigram represents that river-built vessels stand in the registered book at Lloyd's for a greater number of years in the first class; and he estimates the difference in the building-price in the river and at the outlets at from ten to fifteen per cent., less at the latter. Mr. Feamall's evidence rates the difference at fifteen per cent. in favour of river-built vessels.

Appendix,
No. 154.

Ibid.

No. 195.

Appendix,
No. 195.

Mr. Stone's estimate of the comparative value of vessels built in the river and at out-ports is much more in favour of the former. He says, "we make it a general maxim that we give to the out-port built ships but three-fourths of the value of river-built ships."

A comparison of the contract prices for building for the Liverpool Station, where no difference of period occurs, and for which none of the vessels were built in the river, shows an excess of £.3. 5s. per ton, equal to a similar excess of sixteen per cent. upon the lowest contract price.

In all the instances here referred to the excessive rates have been under contracts with the same builder, Mr. Graham, of Harwich.

In building vessels of corresponding tonnage (the *Escape*, *Wizard*, *Dragon* and *Crocodile*), prices differing considerably (to the amount of seven per cent.) have been contracted for with this same builder, Mr. Graham, by whom your Lordships may observe more than a third of the vessels have been built. Your Lordships will further remark that the rates of the contract prices with this gentleman have been (in corresponding cases as to tonnage), with one exception, uniformly higher than those of any other private builders, and in the proportions already stated in the cases which have been compared above. These facts having suggested inquiry, Mr. G. H. Freeling stated that the difference in the contract prices of Mr. Graham for vessels built by himself were, in some measure at least, owing to the different modes of fitting up; but your Lordships will perceive that this explanation cannot extend to a comparison with vessels furnished by other builders, and similarly fitted up, as in the cases of the *Holyhead* and *Liverpool* vessels respectively. Neither does it appear to us to account for the excess of the tonnage rate under the contracts with Mr. Graham, compared with other builders prices, both in the river and the out-ports.

Much abuse having formerly arisen from official persons having an interest in the Post-office packet vessels, we felt it proper further to inquire whether any of the builders who have been employed had been recommended by agents of the Post-office, or by any officer in the employment of the Post-office.

No. 178.

To this inquiry Mr. G. H. Freeling replied, "I think not; Graham, at Harwich, is the son-in-law of one of the captains, one of the *Dover* captains;" and on being asked whether he mentioned this fact as founding any inference, his answer was, "No, I merely mention it because Captain Hamilton may have mentioned Mr. Graham's name. I rather think the first recommendation of Mr. Graham to the Post-office came through the Treasury; I think so."

No. 195.

Appendix,

In speaking of the comparative value of vessels which he had been employed to survey, Mr. Stone expressed his opinion that Mr. Graham's vessels were "exceedingly well turned out;" and he elsewhere bears testimony to Mr. Graham's character, as a builder, of skill and integrity. So far as concerns the quality of the work, or the construction, this opinion appears to have proceeded upon a superficial view in the case of one vessel, the *Thetis*, built by Mr. Graham, and surveyed by Mr. Stone; for from the evidence of Mr. Goddard it will be seen that a very large sum of money was disbursed by him upon her about a twelvemonth after she was launched, in consequence of her "having proved inefficient;"—"and she was strengthened in every particular, and put into the hands of Messrs. Boulton, Watt & Co. for the re-erection of new boilers." This vessel cost in building and outfit £.1,800 more than any vessel in the service, with the exception of the *Dolphin*, built also by Mr. Graham, which again exceeded the cost of the *Thetis* by £.1,300, the two vessels together having cost £.39,728; whereas the two vessels built at the same time, for the same station and service, by Messrs. Humble & Hurry of Liverpool, cost £.33,067, more than 6,000 less than the payment for the vessels built by Mr. Graham.

A portion

A portion of the excess always apparent in the total cost of building and outfit of the vessels supplied by Mr. Graham will be found to arise from engines of the highest price having been always provided for these vessels; but the difference of expense under this head, (though sufficient to require observation hereafter,) is not such as to account for the greater proportion of that excess, which it has been shown has arisen principally from the contract price of building, and has not been, in our judgment, satisfactorily explained.

In pursuing our inquiries generally, with respect to private vessels, instances of building contracts have been stated to us upon much lower terms than have been acceded to by His Majesty's Postmaster-General; and we may particularly refer your Lordships to the evidence of an experienced officer, Captain Oman, on this head. He mentions vessels of greater tonnage than any of His Majesty's packets, which have been built at £.15 and £.19 per ton; but those, M. G. H. Freeling states would not have suited the Post-office service, on account of a difference in their fastenings. These vessels, however, had continued to ply (principally during the summer) for several years on more distant voyages than His Majesty's packets, whence there is some reason to infer that the latter have been unnecessarily expensive.

With respect to the charge per ton for building, in order to prevent prejudice or misconception of the practice in the King's yards, as well as in illustration of the grounds of proceeding on the part of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, in consolidating the contracts for building His Majesty's packets altogether to private individuals or companies, it is necessary to point your Lordships attention to the instance of the single vessel, the *Vixen*, which has been built for the Post-office, under the responsibility and superintendance of the officers of the Navy Board in the dock-yards. On the subject of this vessel, Mr. G. H. Freeling observes as follows:—"There is one fact I should mention with reference to the price of one of these vessels, the *Vixen*, built in the Navy Yard in September 1822. After the first experience of the *Lightning* and *Meteor*, and the *Arrow*, we found the price of ship-building so much raised, the terms were so much higher than what we had paid for the first vessels, that we thought it better to apply to the Navy Board to build for us, as they would not look for profit as a builder would; and they built the *Vixen* for us, of 189 tons; she came out at £.36. 6s. per ton, and from that we thought we had better not apply to build in a government yard any more."

On reference to the statement given above your Lordships may remark the extraordinary apparent difference between the tonnage-rate for building of the *Vixen* in the Naval Yard at Deptford, and the *Meteor*, of the same number of tons, built by Mr. Evans of Rotherhithe, amounting to nearly £.20 per ton. The latter vessel, however, is one of those already noticed as having been built for less than a "saving price," and having required an additional expenditure. But there is in fact a fallacy in the tonnage-rate of the *Vixen*, assumed by Mr. G. H. Freeling to be the cost to the Public of building this vessel, arising out of the method pursued in His Majesty's dock-yards, of affixing artificial prices to the materials, in conformity with the system of keeping the accounts of the establishment.

This method and system are referred to in the evidence of Mr. Stone, who attributes the excess of charge for the *Vixen*, compared with private-built vessels, "to a certain extent," to "the mode of valuing the materials" in the dock-yards. The result of this practice in the dock-yards, as shown in the Post-office accounts, would make it appear that the building of a vessel of 189 tons cost about £.3,000 (or about 67 per cent.) more in the Naval Yard at Deptford, than a vessel of the same tonnage built in the Thames under private contract with His Majesty's Postmaster-General; as may be seen on comparing the cost stated in the preceding Table (deducting the charge for engines) of the *Vixen* and the *Meteor* respectively.

Appendix,
No. 194.

No. 195.

No. 198.

144.

No. 196.

Appendix,
No. 175.

Mr. G. H. Freeling appears to have been ignorant of the reasons for this apparently excessive charge, and to have acted under misapprehension in assuming this as a ground for abandoning the dock-yards altogether. However expensive to the department, no loss was really incurred by the Revenue in paying this excessive rate out of the funds of the Post-office into those of the Navy Board, although so apparently extravagant, and actually prejudicial, if adopted as suggesting any criterion of the rates of the contract prices to be allowed to private builders; and in measuring the reasonableness of the actual rates of such contracts, no reference can be had to this charge of the Navy Board.

Ibid.

The superiority of vessels built in the Navy Yards appears to have been well established and understood; and Mr. G. H. Freeling admits that in point of wear and tear, and expense incurred subsequent to the original outfit, a comparison with other vessels would probably be favourable to the Vixen. The employment of private companies or individuals, therefore, unattended with precautionary arrangements, such as might naturally have been adopted according to the practice described in the evidence of Mr. Wigram, on occasions of the Navy Board entering into contracts in times of war with private builders for vessels for the King's service, seems upon the whole to have been injudicious.

No. 194.

No. 178.

With respect to the supply of the machinery Mr. G. H. Freeling states, that when any steam-engine is wanting, application is made to some of the principal houses (Messrs. Boulton & Watt, Messrs. Maudslay, or Mr. Fawcett at Liverpool) to know the terms, and (what has been a great object with the Post-office), the time in which they can undertake to complete them. The agreement, he states, "is not a contract with them; it is the acceptance of an offer: they undertake to furnish a pair of engines within a given time, and I think there has not been a single instance of that time having been adhered to." It is to be collected from the same evidence, that there is no guarantee of the machinery for any time; no survey of it at all; nor any report of the result of the trial submitted for consideration, or for the satisfaction of the Postmaster-General.

Ibid.

The working engineers employed are recommended by the persons who have supplied the machinery; "when the machinery is fixed, the engineers try the ship, and if it works properly in their estimation, the ship is then, as it is termed, given up to the owner." There is sometimes a verbal communication, sometimes a written one, Mr. G. H. Freeling states; "the captain" (he adds) "I believe does that."

Ibid.

Upon the whole it seems to be admitted that the sufficiency of the machinery, and its conformity with the agreement, are taken for granted upon the responsibility of the character of those who supply it.

The great disparity of the charges for the cost of engines of the same power will not fail to strike your Lordships, on referring to the statement given above. The engines supplied by Messrs. Boulton & Watt have exceeded in price those obtained from other manufacturers in a proportion in which it seems difficult to suppose them superior. For example, a difference of £1,100 may be observed between the prices of the engines of equal power supplied by Messrs. Boulton & Watt, and by Messrs. Maudslays, for packets (the *Escape* and the *Harlequin*) at Holyhead, the former having cost £5,800, the latter £4,700. A still greater difference occurs in comparing the cost of engines of the same power provided by Messrs. Fawcett and Preston, for the *Aladdin*, at the same station. In this instance the price is stated to have been £4,553. 18s., making an excess in the charge of Messrs. Boulton & Watt of upward of £1,200. A similar excess of £900 in the price of engines furnished by Messrs. Boulton & Watt for the Liverpool packets will be found on comparing the charges for the engines of corresponding power of the *Comet* and the *Dolphin*.

The

The extreme difference in the prices here alluded to is more than twenty-seven per cent. excess upon the lowest rate.

The circumstances mentioned by Mr. G. H. Freeling, in explanation of this difference, and to account for the preference given to Messrs. Boulton & Watt, by whom two-thirds of the machinery for the vessels included in the above statement have been supplied, will be found stated in his evidence. The superiority of their machinery, which the Assistant Secretary describes as "the best in the world," may probably be admitted in some degree, without injustice to their competitors. And the comparative cheapness of the engines alluded to in one of the above instances (that of the *Aladdin*) Mr. G. H. Freeling attributes to the desire of the contractor to bring himself known to the Post-office. Another reason for the extra charges of Messrs. Boulton & Watt, the Assistant Secretary states, is that Messrs. Boulton & Watt, besides demanding a higher price for their machinery, supply in addition to it a great quantity of duplicates, which the other parties do not supply.

Appendix,
No. 17B.

Ibid.

A remarkable difference appears in the cost of engines of the same power furnished on different occasions by the same manufacturers. Your Lordships will find in the above statement the various sums of £.5,800, £.5,600, £.5,400, £.5,200 and £.4,900 stated as the cost of engines of equal power, provided by Messrs. Boulton & Watt; amounting in the extreme cases to a difference of more than eighteen per cent.

With a view to estimate the compensation for the higher price in the first instance, which might be found in the durability or other advantage in wear and tear of the more costly machinery, we have compared the expenses incurred subsequently for repairs or alterations of the engines supplied by the respective manufacturers, so far as the accounts furnished enable us; but this comparison, which is probably very imperfect, must also be very limited; both as the number of engines supplied by other contractors than Messrs. Boulton & Watt are very few (six) in number, and as it must further be confined to engines supplied at the same period. In the year 1824 engines of the same power were procured from each of the three parties who have been employed by His Majesty's Postmaster-General, for the *Harlequin*, *Cinderella*, and *Aladdin*. Adding to the first cost the repairs, as they appear stated in the accounts submitted to us, in each case, the result would be as follows:

Vessel.	Contractor.	Charge.
<i>Aladdin</i> - - -	Fawcett & Preston - -	£.7,900
<i>Harlequin</i> - - -	Meadsley - - -	6,100
<i>Cinderella</i> - - -	Boulton & Watt - -	5,500

The means of a similar comparison are to be found only in the year 1826, with reference to the *Thetis*, *Dolphin*, *Edna*, and *Comet*, and produce the following result:

Vessel.	Contractor.	Charge.
<i>Thetis</i> - - -	Boulton & Watt - -	£.11,600
<i>Dolphin</i> - - -	ditto - - -	10,000
<i>Comet</i> - - -	Meadsley - - -	9,600
<i>Edna</i> - - -	Fawcett & Preston - -	7,600

We are extremely doubtful of the exactness of the accounts from which the above comparisons are drawn, and do not venture to found upon these results any conclusive opinion. Judging, indeed, from the accounts furnished to us, there would appear to be great uncertainty in the quality and wear of engines supplied by the same makers; for it would seem that upon the engines of the *Cinderella* only £.584. 12s. 3d. had been expended since the year 1824, whilst upon those of the *Escape*, supplied in 1826 (both by Messrs. Boulton & Watt) there has been an expenditure of £.1,174. The total disbursement for repairs, according to an account in the Appendix, appears to have been £.54,167. 7s.

Appendix,
No. 81.

and the gross annual payment to the respective contractors for machinery and repairs since the commencement of this service, as follows :

	1821.		1822.		1823.		1824.		1825.	
	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
Bolton & Watt, 11 pair of engines - - -	10,100	- -	- - -	- - -	5,222	5 1	4,050	- -	4,050	- -
- - - - - Repairs - - -	48	13 9	1,063	8 8	1,189	7 3	3,701	3 -	9,244	12 3
Massey, 3 pair of engines - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	4,731	8 2	1,175	- -
- - - - - Repairs - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	968	9 4
Fawcett & Co., 3 pair of engines - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	4,553	18 -	- - -	- - -
- - - - - Repairs - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	135	14 6	698	12 5
Laird & Co. - - -	- - -	- - -	1,012	8 8	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Thomas Inmay - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	6	4 6
John Clarke - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	217	13 5	39	11 2	2	- 5
Leidner & Welch - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Mather, Dixon & Co. - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
T. Vernon & Co. - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
William Clark - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
R. Baker - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	18	15 10
Boyd & Co. - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Giffingham - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Stephens - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	227	11 10	428	2 8
Bailey & Co. - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
£.	10,148	13 9	2,075	17 4	6,629	5 8	18,450	6 8	2,801	17 5

Appendix,
No. 8a.

Under the head Repairs, exclusive of Machinery, the Total Expenditure may be stated from an account furnished to us at £.13,692. 4s. 11½d. and the following appear to have been the Gross Sums paid annually to the respective Builders :—

	1820.		1821.		1822.		1823.		1824.		1825.	
	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
W. Evans, 2 vessels } First Cost	4,000	- -	2,804	2 11	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
- - - - - Repairs - - -	- - -	- - -	39	10 -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Wignans & Green, 2 vessels - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	8,000	- -	1,478	6 -	- - -	- - -
- - - - - Repairs - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
G. Gosham, 7 vessels } First Cost	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	7,000	- -	15,000	15 3
- - - - - Repairs - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	495	1 -
R. Symonds, 1 vessel } First Cost	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	3,500	- -	965	18 3	- - -	- - -	- - -
- - - - - Repairs - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	1,365	- -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Humble & Hurry, 3 vessels - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	4,000	- -	6,500	- -	- - -
- - - - - Repairs - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	11	4 -
Navy Board, 1 vessel } First Cost	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	6,890	18 11	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
- - - - - Repairs - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	260	14 11
H. & W. Fisher's } First Cost	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	74	13 -
- - - - - Repairs - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Fletcher & Co. - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
J. & R. Fisher - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	324	1 8	- - -	- - -	86	2 3	- - -	- - -
Grayson & Co. - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Scott & Son - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	77	14 11	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
A. Hill - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	409	4 8½	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
R. Field - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	145	- 5	228	7 6
C. Beant - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
J. Valpy - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
G. Hampton - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
£.	4,000	- -	3,933	12 11	324	1 8	10,000	18 6½	13,075	6 8	20,696	15 8

It would have been satisfactory, where so much was to depend upon experiment, had an exact separate account been kept of the expenditure incurred for each vessel, both in the hull and in the machinery. Mr. G. H. Freeling stated

to

1820.			1827.			1828.			1829.			FIRST COST.			REPAIRS.			TOTAL FIRST COST and REPAIRS.		
£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
18,120	-	-	14,100	-	-	5,480	-	-	-	-	-	63,072	5	1	-	-	-	98,081	11	6
3,574	2	2	5,689	14	8	4,209	1	-	13,749	3	9	16,831	8	2	35,009	6	5			
10,965	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18,073	18	1
68	19	2	-	-	-	1,196	18	8	214	2	9	-	-	-	1,742	9	11			
7,000	-	-	-	-	-	4,850	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24,050	8	6
278	-	7	1,497	8	4	1,518	10	11	1,026	9	1	-	-	-	7,146	4	6			
53	12	9	1,246	10	9	1,076	6	3	1,838	16	3	-	-	-	5,108	6	-	5,108	6	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	62	10	6	30	7	9	-	-	-	6	4	6	6	4	6
-	-	-	69	-	9	-	-	-	484	8	6	-	-	-	333	3	3	333	3	3
-	-	-	69	17	-	337	8	3	804	1	11	-	-	-	553	9	3	553	9	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	228	19	11	1,097	12	3	-	-	-	1,811	7	2	1,811	7	2
31	19	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,339	12	2	1,339	12	2
57	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	19	1	21	19	1
-	-	-	2	18	14	2	16	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	85	-	10	85	-	10
-	-	-	80	11	7	225	1	10	121	14	8	-	-	-	5	14	4	5	14	4
274	15	8	14	2	10	-	-	-	3	9	-	-	-	-	493	8	1	493	8	1
-	-	-	111	2	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,007	19	-	1,007	19	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	111	2	6	111	2	6
41,080	11	5	22,886	6	6	20,181	13	6	18,814	5	11	96,807	11	3	56,167	7	-	150,974	18	3

1826.			1827.			1828.			1829.			FIRST COST.			REPAIRS.			TOTAL FIRST COST and REPAIRS.		
£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,894	2	11	-	-	-	7,033	12	11
332	9	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	10	-	-	-				
11,128	3	-	6,396	6	5	1,898	-	3	-	-	-	9,710	15	7	-	-	9,710	15	7	
2,433	12	7	2,091	4	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	41,043	4	11	-	-	41,043	4	11	
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,465	18	3	5,019	12	4	4,465	18	3
1,082	19	3	-	-	-	76	17	-	-	-	-	1,355	-	-	1,355	-	-	1,355	-	-
445	7	7	811	13	6	679	5	3	934	11	8	13,160	16	3	2,822	2	-	15,042	18	3
152	2	4	1,794	4	2	832	9	11	-	-	-	6,850	18	11	-	-	6,850	18	11	
39	10	9	96	17	2	39	16	10	-	-	-	3,028	11	4	-	-	3,028	11	4	
819	-	7	-	-	-	39	11	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	320	17	9	320	17	9
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	11	9	39	11	9
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	3	11	410	3	11
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	819	-	7	819	-	7
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77	14	11	77	14	11
141	2	1	962	7	-	265	1	6	128	1	5	499	4	8	499	4	8	499	4	8
-	-	-	60	15	9	46	29	3	65	12	11	1,273	19	8	1,273	19	8	1,273	19	8
-	-	-	47	15	2	10	19	3	-	-	-	173	4	11	173	4	11	173	4	11
-	-	-	-	-	-	18	4	4	28	27	3	-	-	-	58	14	5	58	14	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	47	2	-	47	2	-
16,075	7	9	11,061	-	11	3,300	5	4	1,157	3	8	85,204	8	2	13,652	4	11	98,856	13	2

to us the impossibility of making out satisfactorily such an account, and besides our inability to procure such an account from the Post-office, we have not had the means of ascertaining the present state of each vessel, which must

be considered in any general calculation of comparative worth and efficiency. It must be observed too that a sufficient time has not elapsed to justify a conclusion with respect to many of the vessels.

The best information, therefore, we are able to lay before your Lordships, with a view to such a general estimate, is given in the statement of the amount of the expenditure at each station, which is contained in a previous part of this Report.

It has been already stated that the whole of the vessels now in the service have been built expressly for it, with the exception of the *Ivanhoe*. This vessel is one of those which first plied as a private passage-vessel between Holyhead and Dublin, and which the proprietors offered in various ways to place at the disposal of the Postmaster-General. Amongst the proposals respecting these vessels, one was for the purchase of them. In the report, dated 30th May 1820, of Mr. Griffith, the agent employed in the treaty, it is stated, that it would be "inexpedient for the General Post-office to become the purchasers of the *Talbot* and *Ivanhoe* steam-boats, inasmuch as the former of these vessels is built of very slight and insufficient materials, and the engines of both are of inferior quality, and the whole concern calculated to serve a temporary purpose only." Notwithstanding this opinion, in the following year the Postmaster-General purchased the *Ivanhoe*. The price stated to us as the cost and outfit of this vessel (£6,352. 18s. 6d.) is less than that of any other; but on referring to the accounts, it appears that the repairs subsequently bestowed on her, up to the 5th January last (including new engines) have amounted to £9,889. 19s. 9d. making the actual outlay upon her £15,742 which exceeds, so far as the accounts enable us to estimate, what has been incurred for the respective cost and repairs of two-thirds of the other vessels, although her tonnage is less by seventy-nine tons than several of these vessels, and in different proportions less than all the other packets, two only excepted; her machinery also is of inferior power. The *Ivanhoe*, however has been longer in the service than the other packets of equal or superior dimensions and power, with two exceptions. The *Meteor*, which vessel is of the same class with the *Ivanhoe*, and has been as long in the service, from the accounts in our possession, appears to have cost £1,500 less than the *Ivanhoe*.

Mr.

PACKET

A Comparative Statement of the Number and Description of Persons employed both at Sea and *Weymouth*; showing also the Salary, Wages and Allowances

DESCRIPTION of PERSONS EMPLOYED.	HOLYHEAD. Six Vessels of 80 Horse Power each, and averaging 235 Tons.			LIVERPOOL. Four Vessels of 140 Horse Power each, and averaging 307 Tons.		
	Number of Persons Em- ployed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.	Number of Persons Em- ployed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.
Agents for Packets -	1	{ £. 380 per annum £. 110 for clerk, rent of office, &c. £. 10 for stationery }	£. s. d. 500 - -	1	£. 500 per annum -	500 - -
Clerks to - ditto -	-	-	-	-	-	-
Commanders of Packets	5	{ 3 at £. 800 p' ann. 2 - 500 - 1 - 300 - }	5,000 - -	4	- - £. 250 per annum, and 250 on each passen- ger (1/3 on each child), on which he provides stewards, &c.	1,000 - -
Chief Officer - ditto -	1	{ £. 6. 7. per lunar month. £. 9. 9. 2 1/2. stag- ing-money. }	85 - 2 1/2			

Mr. G. H. Freeling explains the reasons for the purchase of the *Ivanhoe*, notwithstanding Mr. Griffith's report, attributing it to the temporary necessity of the service, which, however, it seems plain might have been equally provided for by hiring under contract. He states his belief that the purchase of this vessel was made after a survey by officers of the Post-office Establishment; but that it was discovered whilst under repair that she had the dry rot, and she appears to have been almost wholly rebuilt, and supplied with engines.

Appendix,
No. 179.

The authority upon which the expenditure for repairs is ordinarily incurred, is given by the Postmaster-General, according to the evidence of Mr. G. H. Freeling, on the representation of the Post-office agent at the station. His opinion, he states, must be taken, as the Postmaster-General has no other means of judging. This fact is the more important, looking to the magnitude of this expenditure, which, within the period of the account, has amounted to £.67,799; because, whilst the limitation of it seems to be practically confided to subordinate officers of this establishment, out of the department of the Post-office no control is exercised over it; and this, as has been before suggested, seems to us to constitute a serious objection to the creation and maintenance of establishments under the nominal sanction of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, which persons, who may be suitably employed in the duties properly belonging to the Post-office, cannot be supposed to be well qualified to superintend.

ibid.

No. 80, 81.

The same observations may be applied to the consequent practice of providing various stores under similar authority for the purposes of such establishments. From Returns in the Appendix it will be seen that the cost of such stores in custody at the several stations, at the date of those Returns was estimated at £.6,180. 1s. 2½d. The mode of obtaining such stores, and the unrestricted expenditure on this account, at the principal station, Holyhead, has been already noticed; and it seems unnecessary to add any further suggestion on that head.

No. 70 to 75.

The next subject to be observed upon is the establishments of persons of various descriptions connected with the packet service, at the several stations alluded to, and comprehended in the subjoined Comparative Statement.

No. 57.

- - - - - ESTABLISHMENTS.

and on Shore, at the several Packet Stations at *Holyhead*, *Liverpool*, *Milford*, *Port Patrick*, of each Individual, and the Annual Amount of the whole.

MILFORD.			PORT PATRICK.			WEYHOUTH.		
Four Vessels of 80 Horse Power each, and averaging 217 Tons.			Two Vessels of 40 Horse Power, and of 130 Tons each.			Three Vessels of 60 Horse Power each, and averaging 170 Tons.		
Number of Persons Employed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.	Number of Persons Employed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.	Number of Persons Employed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.
		£. s. d.			£. s. d.			£. s. d.
1	{£.250 p' annum {£.10 for stationery}	260 - -	1	£.320 per annum	320 - -	1	{£.300 p' annum {£.10 for stationery}	310 - -
1	£.80 per annum	80 - -						
4	£.300 per annum	1,200 - -	2	£.250 per annum	500 - -	3	£.280 per annum	840 - -

A Comparative Statement of the Number and Description of Persons employed, - - - -

DESCRIPTION of PERSONS EMPLOYED	HOLYHEAD. Six Vessels of 80 Horse Power each, and averaging 235 Tons.			LIVERPOOL. Four Vessels of 140 Horse Power each, and averaging 307 Tons.		
	Number of Persons Em- ployed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.	Number of Persons Em- ployed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.
			£. s. d.			£. s. d.
Masters of Packets - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chief Mates - ditto - -	6	{ £ 5. 6. per lunar month.	428 3 3	4	£ 6 per lunar month, and provisions.	312 - -
Second Mates ditto - -	6	{ £ 3. 9. 2½. sling- ing money.	287 15 3	4	£ 5 - - ditto, and provisions.	260 - -
Mates - - - - ditto - -	-	{ £ 2. 9. 2½. ditto.	-	-	-	-
Carpenters - ditto - -	6	{ £ 5. 17. per lunar month.	315 1 3	4	£ 4 per lunar month, and provisions.	208 - -
Cooks - - - - ditto - -	-	{ £ 2. 9. 2½. sling- ing money.	-	4	£ 2. 10. - ditto, and provisions.	130 - -
Scamers - - - ditto - -	40	{ £ 3. 5. per lunar month.	1,710 8 4	24	£ 2. 10. - ditto, and provisions.	780 - -
Ordinary Scamers ditto	-	{ £ 2. 9. 2½. sling- ing money.	-	8	£ 1. 10. - ditto, and provisions.	156 - -
Stewards - - ditto - -	6	-	-	4	Paid by the Com- manders.	- - -
Under Stewards ditto -	5	-	-	4	- - ditto.	- - -
Female Stewards ditto	-	-	-	4	- - ditto.	- - -
Engineers - - ditto - -	6	£ 10 per lunar month	780 - -	4	£ 11 p' lunar month	572 - -
Second Engineers ditto	-	-	-	4	£ 7 - - ditto -	264 - -
Pleasers - - - ditto - -	12	£ 4. 6. per lunar month.	670 16 -	10	£ 3. 10. per lunar month, and provisions.	728 - -
Masters of Colliers - -	3	{ 3/3 per ton of coals brought to Holy- head, and 5/ to Howth.	-	-	-	-
Seamen - - - ditto - -	16	-	-	-	-	-
Chief Boatmen - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boatmen - - - - -	7	{ £ 1. 6. & £ 1. 1. per week.	300 6 5½	5	{ 1 at £ 1. per week } { 4 - 18/ - ditto - }	241 16 -
Resident Engineers - -	1	£ 180 per annum -	180 - -	-	-	-
Apprentices to ditto -	2	-	-	-	-	-
Storekeepers - - - -	1	£ 100 per annum -	100 - -	-	-	-
Carpenters - - - - -	1	17½ per week -	45 10 -	-	-	-
Gatekeepers - - - -	1	15/ - ditto - -	30 - -	-	-	-
Chief Blacksmiths - -	1	£ 1. 15. - ditto -	91 - -	-	-	-
Blacksmiths - - - -	14	2/8 to 3/ per diem -	702 12 6	-	-	-
Engine Smiths - - - -	7	3/6 to 6/ - ditto -	606 16 3	-	-	-
Smiths - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boiler-makers - - - -	14	4/4 to 6/ per diem -	1,320 1 8	-	-	-
Joiners - - - - -	5	2/6 - - - ditto -	228 2 6	-	-	-

- - - - both at Sea and on Shore, at the several Packet Stations, &c.—continued.

MILFORD.			PORT PATRICK.			WEYMOUTH.		
Four Vessels of 20 Horse Power each, and averaging 217 Tons.			Two Vessels of 40 Horse Power, and of 130 Tons each.			Three Vessels of 60 Horse Power each, and averaging 170 Tons.		
Number of Persons Employed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.	Number of Persons employed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.	Number of Persons Employed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.
		£. s. d.			£. s. d.			£. s. d.
-	- - - -	- - -	-	- - - -	- - -	3	£.6 per lunar month.	234 - -
4	£.4 p' lunar month and provisions.	208 - -	-	- - - -	- - -	-	- - - -	- - -
4	£.3. 10. ditto, and provisions.	130 - -	-	- - - -	- - -	-	- - - -	- - -
-	- - - -	- - -	3	£.4. 10. per lunar month.	117 - -	3	£.3. 14. per lunar month.	144 6 -
4	£.2. 15. per lunar month, and provisions.	142 - -	1	£.3. 10. per ditto	45 10 -	3	£.3. 10. per ditto	135 10 -
14	£.3. 5. per lunar month, and provisions.	702 - -	7	£.2. 10. 6. per lunar month.	298 17 6	12	£.3. 5. per lunar month.	507 - -
4	£.3 p' lunar month	120 - -	2	£.2. 15. 6. per lunar month.	68 5 -	3	£.1. 17. per lunar month.	72 3 -
4	£. 130 per annum	500 - -	2	£.8. 8. per lunar month.	218 8 -	3	£.8. 8. per lunar month.	327 12 -
8	£.4. 16. per lunar month, and spots.	449 4 -	2	£.3. 18. per lunar month.	101 8 -	6	£.4. 4. per lunar month.	327 12 -
1	£.1. 1. per week	54 12 -	-	- - - -	- - -	-	- - - -	- - -
3	17s. 6d. ditto -	136 10 -	5	£.2. 12. per lunar month.	169 - -	-	- - - -	- - -
1	£.160 per annum	160 - -	-	- - - -	- - -	-	- - - -	- - -
1	£.4. 4. per lunar month.	54 12 -	1	£.50 per annum	50 - -	-	- - - -	- - -
1	£.4. 16. ditto -	62 8 -	1	£.54. 12 ditto -	54 12 -	-	- - - -	- - -
1	£.6. 8. per lunar month.	83 4 -	-	- - - -	- - -	-	- - - -	- - -
2	{ 1 at £.8. 8. per lunar month. 1 at £.7 ditto - }	200 4 -	-	- - - -	- - -	-	- - - -	- - -

A Comparative Statement of the Number and Description of Persons employed, - - - -

DESCRIPTION of PERSONS EMPLOYED	HOLYHEAD.			LIVERPOOL.		
	Number of Persons Em- ployed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.	Number of Persons Em- ployed.	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.
			£. s. d.			£. s. d.
Sawyers - - -	4	2/6 per diem -	120 10 -			
Labourers - - -	10	2/- ditto - -	255 - - -			
Sweeps - - -	1	£. 14 per annum -	14 - - -			
At Howth, Kingstown, and Dunmore.						
(Donoghadee & Gurnsey & Jersey - N ^o .)						
Clerks to Agents - - -				1	£. 80 per annum -	80 - -
Storekeepers - - -	1	18/5½ per week -	47 19 10	1	18/- per week -	45 15 -
Boatmen - - -	2	{ 1 at 15/6 per week 1 at 10/6 - ditto - }	67 12 -	2	12/- ditto - -	62 8 -
Labourers - - -	5	6d. per diem -	45 12 6			
Boats ditto - - -	1	2/- ditto when em- ployed.	- - -			
	191		£. 12,113 8 -	98		£. 6,041 - -

The total number of persons employed in this branch of the Post-office service is 427; and the total estimated amount of the annual payment £. 27,786. 13s. 6d.

The appointment of the whole of these establishments, with the regulation of their ordinary allowances, appertains to the office of His Majesty's Postmaster-General; and in this respect a very material change has attended the discontinuance of the system of conducting the service in hired vessels. Under that system the patronage (if it may be so called) of His Majesty's Postmaster-General was confined to granting a commission to each commander of a vessel during his contract, (the subordinate officers and crews being left to their selection, in the manner, and upon the terms before explained,) and the appointment of the necessary packet agents at the respective stations.

The number of persons nominated by, and in the service, and under the control, of the Postmaster-General, according to that system, with the complement of vessels here alluded to, would not have amounted to thirty.

The remarks which we shall offer upon the existing establishments will have reference to the Numbers, Duties, and Rates of remuneration of the Officers and Persons employed on the respective stations.

At each station an agent is established. The ordinary duties of a packet agent may be stated to consist in a general superintendance of the packets, in ascertaining their fitness for service, and the punctual observance of the prescribed regulations by the commanders, and other responsible persons, as to departure and arrival, and in all other respects; it being his duty to report all irregularities or casualties that interfere with the service, and fall within his knowledge, to the Postmaster-General.

The agent of each station is required to receive and disburse money, and to keep accounts of the receipt and expenditure, and to furnish such accounts, and to remit the surplus to the Postmaster-General. The duties of this latter description have been much extended by the new system, under which the

whole

both at Sea and on Shore, at the several Packet Stations, &c.—continued.

MILFORD, Four Vessels of 80 Horse Power each, and averaging 517 Tons.			PORT PATRICK, Two Vessels of 40 Horse Power, and of 130 Tons each.			WEYMOUTH Three Vessels of 60 Horse Power each, and averaging 170 Tons.		
Number of Persons Em- ployed	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.	Number of Persons Em- ployed	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.	Number of Persons Em- ployed	Salary, Wages, and Allowances of each.	Amount per Annum.
		£. s. d.			£. s. d.			£. s. d.
5	£. 2. 8. per lunar month.	156 - -						
1	£. 1. 8. - ditto -	31 4 -						
1	-- £. 2. 8. per lunar month, and £13. 4. 4 per annum in extra costs of a Milford Packet.	31 4 -						
75		£. 4,808 9 -	26		£. 1,805 - 6	37		£. 3,833 3 -

whole of the passage-money is to be accounted for as part of the Revenue, and the total expenditure in its various details, must practically be checked by the agent of each station respectively.

To these duties, which occur more or less at each station, must be added the provision of stores, at those where the repairing of vessels is conducted by establishments of the Post-office; and the arrangements for such repairs under contracts or private agreements; where there are not Post-office establishments for such purposes. In the former case, the superintendence of the repairs devolves also upon the agent; and on this subject we beg to subjoin the following extract from a letter of Captain Goddard, which is included in the Appendix, as it shows the diversity of knowledge and attention that has been requisite in the discharge of the office of agent at his station.

Appendix,
No. 25.

"Destitute as Holyhead is of master shipwrights, master joiners, and heads of all other trades usually and necessarily employed in the general repair of shipping, in which, as respects steam-vessels, must be comprised those of repairing engines and boilers, I have felt myself called on, from the necessity of the case, and the specific nature of the orders from the General Post-office at these times, to make the survey, to devise the repair in every branch, and to superintend the execution of the work throughout, to the completion of the refit of the vessel for duty." It has been to remedy in part the deficiencies here mentioned that the establishment of mechanics before alluded to has been recently introduced at Holyhead, and placed under the general superintendence of the agent, in consequence of the selection of this station for the repair of the vessels, upon the plan already adverted to.

This selection, under the circumstances described by Captain Goddard, is not easily to be accounted for. The steam-vessels belonging to the Post-office are the only vessels of this description that frequent Holyhead, whilst in the Port of Liverpool, where the number of steam-vessels is so great, and so much experience has been had, the means of every description necessary for the

repair

No. 179.

repair and maintenance of such vessels might be commanded, without the cost of any establishment to the Post-office. The facilities presented at the Port of Liverpool are fully admitted by Mr. G. H. Freeling, but he contends that the repairs are more cheaply effected by the Post-office Establishment than by means of private agreements; a supposition which we are disposed to doubt, if all the incidental risks and charges of the establishment are taken into account, including the provision and safe custody of stores, and the cost of personal superintendence.

Besides the technical direction of works so different in their nature as ship-building and the mechanism of steam-engines cannot be supposed to be advantageously entrusted to a person whose qualifications might be suitable for the subordinate duties of a packet-agent, either at Holyhead or elsewhere.

At Milford His Majesty's dock-yard affords the opportunity of procuring all necessary repairs not required for the machinery; but this has not been resorted to.

Amongst the consequences of the present system, has been already mentioned that of placing large sums of money, both in receipt and expenditure, at the disposal of these agents. The sums annually accounted for through these officers at the respective stations may be seen on referring to the Table of Expenditure and Receipt which has been given under the head of each station.

Upon an average within the period of that Table the receipts have amounted annually, at the respective stations to the following Sums, to which the securities given by the respective agents bear no regulated proportion:

STATION.	RECEIPT.		SECURITY.	
	£.		£.	
Holyhead - - -	15,277		800	
Liverpool - - -	16,034		1,000	
Milford - - -	2,228		1,000	
Port Patrick - - -	1,625		500	
Weymouth - - -	3,119		500	

From these receipts, and from sums impressed into their hands, large balances have in some instances accrued, to be accounted for by the agents.

The receipts are passed through the hands of the steward of each vessel, under the responsibility of the captain, as Captain Goddard states, to the agent. The imposts are obtained upon the requisition of the agent. The expenditure, which, so far as relates to repairs and stores, is incurred at the discretion and under the responsibility of the agent, is sustained by vouchers and receipts periodically transmitted to the head office. The method of accounting is more particularly detailed in the evidence of Captain Goddard, to which we beg to refer your Lordships, as showing how much rests upon the judgment and fidelity of the agent (and more especially at the Holyhead Station), under the present arrangements for the conduct of this branch of the service.

No. 182.

The remuneration of the several officers who act as agents is very unequally apportioned, if measured by the extent of their duties. At Holyhead, where there are six vessels and an establishment of 191 persons, and where the agent joins to his numerous and responsible avocations already described in this capacity, that of deputy postmaster, the gross allowance, including the stipend of a clerk, is £500 per annum. The agent at Liverpool, who acts only as agent, and has no establishment of mechanics or labourers under his control, receives, for the superintendence of four vessels, and an establishment of ninety-eight persons, an equal amount. The Milford agent, with the same complement of packets and an establishment of seventy-five persons, is allowed (including a salary of £80 for a clerk) only £340; whilst the persons employed at Port Patrick and Weymouth, the former having under his charge only two vessels and twenty-six persons, the latter three vessels

vessels and thirty-seven persons, receive respectively £.300 and £.310. Some consideration must be given to the pecuniary responsibility of these officers, and on this ground the allowance to the agent at Liverpool might be rated in a higher proportion than others, but not to such an extent as to equalize his remuneration with that of the agent at Holyhead, whose services, comparatively measured, have been, in our opinion, inadequately paid for.

We cannot conceive any necessity for a separate officer in the capacity of agent at Port Patrick, or at Milford, or Weymouth. The salary assigned to the first of these seems particularly disproportionate to the extent of his duty compared with others.

We see no objection to the union of the offices of packet agent and deputy postmaster, when the duties assigned to the former are limited, as under the system of conducting the service in hired vessels they used to be. Mr. G. H. Freeling has suggested no reason but "usage" for appointing a distinct officer as agent at one station and not at another; and we recommend that the duties of packet agent, confined as above, should be annexed to those of the Deputy Postmaster at each, with such additional remuneration as may be proportionate to the quantum of such duties arising at the respective stations.

The introduction of steam-packets the property of the Crown, besides inducing the necessity of purchasing the sailing-vessels engaged under contracts with the commanders, led to a further charge in adjusting the remuneration of such of those commanders whose services were transferred to these packets, under the arrangement which deprived them of the profits previously derived from the carriage of passengers. To this consideration, and the further claim founded on length of service, is to be referred the higher allowance made to the two senior commanders on the Holyhead Station (Captains Skinner and Stevens), which will be remarked, on comparing the various rates of payment of the officers acting in this situation at the respective stations. It appears from the evidence of Captain Skinner that the income of the commanders of the sailing-packets, on an average of several years, had exceeded the annual stipend of £.800, assigned to him and Captain Stevens under the new arrangement; and considering this allowance, as it is represented by Mr. G. H. Freeling, in the light of compensation as well as pay for present service, regard being had also to the length of service of the two officers alluded to, and especially of Captain Skinner, it does not appear to us to be excessive.

Appendix,
No. 135, 24.

A comparison of the rates of allowance to the several other commanders will bring under view as great inequalities as have been noticed with respect to the agents; and we cannot avoid observing that the allowances assigned to the newly appointed commanders of vessels at Holyhead, exceed in an inverse and undue proportion to the difference of service, the stipend allotted to the commanders of the Milford Station, and more especially to that of Captain Nuttall; who after twenty-five years service receives £.200 per annum less than two of those commanders, neither of whom has served more than five years, and an equal sum with the third junior officer, whose appointment is still more recent. The newly appointed commanders on the Liverpool Station, whose services cannot have exceeded four years, also receive £.100 per annum more than the above-mentioned officer at the Milford Station.

No. 55.

In one instance it will be remarked that the duty of a commander (on the Holyhead Station) has been performed by an officer styled a "chief officer," upon a monthly allowance, which, together with a perquisite derived from what is called slinging-money, may be estimated at about £.85 per annum.

This, Mr. G. H. Freeling states, to have been intended as a temporary arrangement, consequent upon the addition of two vessels to the complement of packets at Holyhead, and to have been adhered to on grounds of economy, instead of appointing a sixth commander at that station. The subaltern officer, in whom this confidence continues to be placed, is described by Mr. G. H. Freeling as fully qualified in point of nautical experience; but, if he be further considered eligible, notwithstanding the responsibility now annexed to the situation in other respects, it may be inferred that the service might be conducted by officers of less consideration, and requiring much smaller emolu-

No. 178.

ments, than those who are now, in all other instances, employed as commanders of packets.

It may not be irrelevant, in reference to the discipline of the service and the scale of remuneration to the commanders at the respective stations, to advert to the system which has been in force in this department of inflicting fines or mulcts in cases of absence from duty.

Appendix,
No. 24.

The fines vary in amount, and have been levied at different rates on the same station. The authority for their collection is stated to be "the Postmaster-General." The severity of the system in practice formerly may be inferred from the reply of Sir Francis Freeling, dated 5th August 1811, to an application from Captain Judd for a remission of fines imposed upon him, in consequence of absence occasioned by a severe injury received whilst in the execution of his duty. In this reply Sir Francis Freeling states, "I can assure you, that if ever the rule of our service had been dispensed with, your general good conduct and your misfortune would entitle you to an exemption from the usual mulct; I need only mention one case, that of Captain Dodd, who had been many years in the service, who broke his thigh twice in the discharge of his public duty, and was not exempted. The rule is occasionally a severe one on individuals, but the reason and experience of every Postmaster-General have pointed out the necessity of its being persisted in."

No. 178.

The evidence of the Assistant Secretary as to the present practice is that in no case but one of accident on duty a fine is remitted. On this ground in two recent instances fines to a considerable amount have been returned, viz. to Captains Skinner and Stevens, although in the former instance not until after strong representations had been made to the department by the officer upon whom the fines had been inflicted. On referring to the return made to us by Captain Smithett of the Port Patrick Station, we find that on two occasions in the year 1827 he obtained leave of absence without the imposition of any fine. The principle laid down by the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary would seem therefore to be no longer invariable in its application.

No. 23.

No. 24.

No. 183, 185, 186,
187, 188, 24.

The subject generally of the fines or mulcts on the commanders of packets will be found adverted to in the evidence of Captains Skinner, Stevens and Duncan, to which we beg to refer your Lordships.

Eighteenth Report,
pp. 18, 69.

In our Eighteenth Report we had occasion to remark upon the system of fines or stoppages in some of the offices of this department, in terms of objection; both on the ground of its want of uniformity throughout the establishment, and its indiscriminate severity within the range of its application.

We cannot concur in the sentiment expressed in the letter of Sir Francis Freeling quoted above, that the necessity of an indiscriminate infliction of a penalty is supported by "reason and experience;" nor admit that misconduct and "misfortune" in the discharge of public duty, can be treated alike, justly towards those who serve, or consistently with the interests of the service.

The ground of exemption in such cases as are referred to, from a liability, which it may be salutary and necessary to enforce under reasonable rules, seems obvious; no officer should be punished for inevitable non-performance of his duty, where his inability is sufficiently shown to have been caused by, or to have arisen out of, his attention to it.

The fines which have been deducted from the Captains on the Holyhead, Milford, Port Patrick and Weymouth Stations, appear, from accounts which are annexed in the Appendix, to have amounted in eleven years, ended 5th January, to the following sums; viz.:

Appendix,
No. 6a.

	Net Amount of Fines.		
	£.	s.	d.
Holyhead - - - - -	1,022	18	6
Milford - - - - -	188	-	-
Weymouth - - - - -	53	-	-
Port Patrick - - - - -			Nil.

These returns show also the proportion of fines deducted from each captain. The appropriation of these fines has been differently stated: A portion of the stoppages

stoppages was formerly paid to the mate of the vessel who took charge of her in the captain's absence; and the rest has been either paid into the Revenue, or applied to what is called the Widows' Fund, of which these fines form a small proportion, a considerably larger receipt accruing from the similar system of fines in use at the foreign packet stations. Latterly we understand that no part of the fines here alluded to has been paid over to the Revenue; but that they have been transferred wholly to the widows' fund, the management of which is superintended by the Secretary. In the distribution of it a discretion has been exercised by the Postmaster-General.

This is one of the several funds alluded to in our Eighteenth Report, as forming extraordinary sources of allowances in the way of remuneration for present service, or of pensions or superannuations to persons who have ceased to be employed; and with respect to which we proposed to submit some general arrangements for your Lordships consideration.

Eighteenth Report,
p. 31.

In all the subordinate ranks, some of which are classed under different denominations, similar varieties in the rates, and in some, additional differences in the modes of payment, will be observed on referring to the foregoing Table. In some cases the allowances consist of fixed pay and perquisites; in others, of pay and provisions or spirits; and in others, of pay without provisions. So far as relates to the nautical establishments of the steam-packets, the custom of the English port is described by Mr. G. H. Freeling as having been adopted in regulating the pecuniary or other allowances. Besides these there are nineteen sailors, three of whom are classed as masters, employed in the sailing vessels before alluded to on the Holyhead Station, used as colliers, who are differently paid, by a rate per ton upon the coals conveyed; which rate varies according as the coals are carried to Holyhead or to Howth.

Appendix,
No. 179.

In the pay and allowances of persons similarly classed, whose services relate to the engine department in the respective vessels at sea, the same want of uniformity may be observed: so also in the expensive branch of the establishment of mechanics whose services are given on shore there is a great latitude in the allowances to persons classed under the same denomination. At Holyhead there are fifteen blacksmiths whose daily wages vary from 5s. to 2s. 6d. per day, besides seven engine-smiths variously paid at from 3s. 6d. to 6s. per day. There are also fourteen boiler-makers, who receive permanent pay, at rates varying from 4s. 4d. to 6s. per diem. The total number of artificers of this description at Holyhead is forty-six, with a superior "resident engineer," who is allowed £.180 per annum. At Milford there is likewise a resident engineer, with a salary of £.160 a year, who has under his controul only one smith and two boiler-makers.

It is unnecessary to pursue in detail the further instances of unequal allowances which may be traced by an inspection of the foregoing comparative Table; with respect to the whole of which, as well as to the numerical differences in the complements of persons composing the respective establishments at the several stations, we beg to refer your Lordships to the explanatory evidence of Mr. G. H. Freeling.

ibid.

Our principal motive for pointing attention to the existing arrangements as particularized in the Table, besides showing that the new establishments have not been placed upon any regulated footing or scale of remuneration, applicable in common, has been to convey to your Lordships some impression of the multiplicity of details requiring strict attention in the formation and maintenance of those establishments; and of the extent and nature of the superintendance and controul, independent of what necessarily belongs to the circulation of correspondence, which is indispenable to economy in the expenditure incident to the system of providing for this object by steam-vessels the property of the Crown.

With the same view it remains for us to add some notice of the Sources of Income, and the method of levying and accounting for them under this system.

These consist in the receipts for the conveyance of passengers, carriages, horses, &c. to which, upon the Holyhead line, parcels have been added.

Whilst, with a view to reimbursement or indemnity for the very great expenditure defrayed out of the Revenue in creating the existing establishments of packets, which was to be sought from these sources principally, it was natural for His Majesty's Postmaster-General to adopt a proportionate scale of charges, the establishment of a monopoly prescribed, at the same time, such limits as should be consistent with the moderation the Public had a right to expect from the department, when it deprived them of the advantage they might otherwise have had in the results of private competition.

The charges originally fixed at Holyhead, having become a subject of complaint, were revised by the Select Committee of the House of Commons upon the Holyhead Roads in the year 1822, who recommended a considerable reduction, as appears from the subjoined Table taken from their Report :

Fifth Report,
Select Committee
on Holyhead Roads.

	PRESENT FARES.	PROPOSED FARES.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Cabin Passengers and Female Servants - - -	1 5 -	15 - -
Deck Passengers - - - - -	- - -	7 6 -
Foremast Passengers - - - - -	- 5 -	3 - -
Children under ten years of age - - - - -	- 12 6 -	7 6 -
Men Servants - - - - -	- 12 6 -	5 - -
A Coach, Barouche or Landau - - - - -	3 5 -	1 1 -
Shipping ditto - - - - -	- 10 6 -	2 6 -
A Chaise - - - - -	2 10 -	15 - -
Shipping ditto - - - - -	- 10 6 -	3 6 -
A Two-wheeled Carriage - - - - -	1 10 -	10 6 -
Shipping ditto - - - - -	- 5 - -	2 - -
A Horse - - - - -	1 10 -	10 6 -
Shipping ditto - - - - -	- 5 - -	2 - -

This recommendation was partially though not immediately acceded to. In the year 1824 the rates of charge set forth in the following Table were published by the agent at Holyhead, by order of the Postmaster-General :

Appendix,
No. 131.

	£. s. d.
Each Cabin Passenger - - - - -	1 1 -
Female Servant - - - - -	1 1 -
Child under ten years of age - - - - -	- 10 6 -
Man Servant - - - - -	- 10 6 -
Four-wheeled Carriage - - - - -	2 2 -
Shipping ditto - - - - -	- 10 6 -
Two-wheeled Carriage - - - - -	1 1 -
Shipping ditto - - - - -	- 5 - -
Horse - - - - -	1 1 -
Shipping ditto - - - - -	- 3 6 -
Couple of Dogs - - - - -	- 5 - -
Menial Servant out of place, operative Mechanic, or Irish } Harvest-man, taken across for - - - - - }	- 5 - -

Notwithstanding this reduction dissatisfaction was expressed; and subsequent to the creation of a packet establishment at Liverpool the rivalry thus occasioned upon the routes by that port and by Holyhead led to several representations to the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury from interested parties, whose complaints were directed less against the amount than the inequality of the rates of charge at different stations, and especially at Holyhead and Liverpool.

The rates have, however, remained the same at Holyhead.

That the representations above alluded to were not unfounded will appear from the following comparative statement, extracted from the Accounts of the Fares

Parliamentary
Papers, 1826;
Nos. 377 & 500.

Fares at the respective Stations, which are inserted in the Appendix, with the addition of the estimated length of each passage.

Appendix,
Nos. 121, 126, 128,
129, 130.

	Holyhead and Howth.	Liverpool and Kingstown.	Milford and Kinsale.	Port Patrick and Donaghadee.	Weymouth and Gosport & Jersey.
	Distance 50 Miles.	Distance 120 Miles.	Distance 60 Miles.	Distance 22 Miles.	Distance 105 Miles.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Cabin Passengers - - -	1 1 -	1 7 6	1 10 -	8 -	1 1 -
Ditto, between the Islands - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	5 -
Children - - - - -	10 6	14 -	15 -	5 -	10 6
Female Servants - - - -	1 1 -	14 -	1 5 -	- - -	15 -
Male Servants - - - - -	10 6	12 -	15 -	- - -	12 6
Deck Passengers - - - -	5 -	- - -	5 -	5 -	10 -
Ditto, between the Islands - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	2 6
Poor - - - - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	7 6
Four-wheeled Carriages - - -	2 2 -	3 3 -	3 10 -	2 - -	3 - -
Shipping ditto - - - - -	10 6	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Two-wheeled Carriages - - -	1 1 -	1 11 6	1 15 -	15 -	1 10 -
Shipping ditto - - - - -	5 -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Horses - - - - -	1 1 -	1 11 6	1 15 -	8 -	1 10 -
Shipping ditto - - - - -	3 6	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Couple of Dogs - - - - -	5 -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -

Hence your Lordships will perceive at one view how totally disproportionate are the respective rates of charge, measured by the scale of comparative distance. For example, the distance from Liverpool to Kingstown is more than double that from Holyhead to Howth, whereas the rates of the charges on the Liverpool Station, generally do not exceed by one-third those at Holyhead. The Milford passage is shorter by one-third than that from Liverpool; yet the charges at the former exceed the latter in every instance.

A comparison of the rates at Port Patrick and at Holyhead shows equally a disregard of any ascertained rule of adjustment; and we have been unable to learn from Mr. G. H. Freeling that any principle has prevailed in the regulation of these charges.

Appendix,
No. 179.

He states that they are for the most part the same that were in use in the old sailing-packets; but, supposing this very inapplicable scale for steam-vessels to have been adopted, the inconsistency of the rates would not be satisfactorily accounted for.

The effect upon the Revenue of different charges, which induce a preference, applying to routes upon which the competition lies only between His Majesty's packets at one station and another, as at Liverpool and Holyhead, is neutralized by counteraction; but under such circumstances the sum exacted is an arbitrary charge, and individual convenience should not be unequally taxed.

The case is different where competition exists, as on the passage to Waterford, between the King's packets from Milford and private vessels from Bristol. Here it is optional with the Public to submit to the Post-office charge; but, with reference to the principal of management, it seems extraordinary that, whilst efforts have been made elsewhere, successfully, to preclude competition, this should have been encouraged practically at Milford, by adhering to the highest rates of demand, which may be reasonably considered to have contributed to deter passengers from that route on the score of expense.

It has been shown that the existing rates have proved greatly inadequate to indemnify the Revenue at every station. Mr. G. H. Freeling, however, gives us reason to suppose that it is in contemplation to propose a reduction of the rates at Holyhead. From such a measure we can foresee only increased loss;

Id.

inasmuch as its effect must be confined to influencing a preference between that route and the voyage from Liverpool, whilst the interests of the Revenue are staked alike at both of these ports.

We have before adverted to the twofold consideration, which should govern the adjustment of rates prescribed under the existing monopoly of the passage to Dublin from Liverpool and Holyhead, referring to the interests of the Revenue, and the claims of the Public to protection from undue charge under that monopoly.

These would in fairness limit the rates to what the same service and accommodation would cost under a system of competition; but it seems beyond doubt that a further sacrifice of Revenue must follow such a limitation; and, judging from results, we cannot concur in the opinion expressed by Sir Francis Freeling, that the Postmaster-General has it in his power, consistently with the protection of the Revenue, to afford a sufficient facility of passing between the two countries in steam-vessels on equal terms with private adventurers.

In treating of the various Allowances to the several establishments, as well as of the Receipts, we have forborne to suggest any scale by which the one or the other should be hereafter regulated; because, in our opinion, (already frequently stated) both should be superseded by the restoration of the system of providing for this service by hire, subject to competition; by which means the cost of the whole service in each case would be reduced to a sum ascertained under a contract.

If a deviation from this rule be found necessary, we are of opinion that the nautical establishment should be put upon a footing similar in point of remuneration to that of persons performing similar service on board the King's ships, but that they should be transferable from one vessel to another, instead of confining the service to one vessel.

On referring to the correspondence of Sir Francis Freeling on the occasion of a proposed addition to the establishment of vessels at Holyhead, we find it suggested that a portion of the further incidental charge would be avoided by turning over the crew of one vessel to another. This plan, however, does not appear to have been acted upon. Each vessel has its full distinct complement.

The engineers and mechanics afloat should be procured under agreements sufficiently liberal to ensure a competent establishment.

The business of building and repairing vessels should be removed altogether from the department of the Post-office.

With respect to the Charges which His Majesty's Postmaster-General, or those in his employment, should in any case be empowered to levy on board His Majesty's packets, we are of opinion that they should be considerably apportioned and fixed by the consent of Parliament. This sanction would serve to preclude demands of doubtful authority; such as those which have in some instances been preferred by stewards and others, on the ground of usage, or the absence or insufficiency of other emoluments, which tend practically to increase the expense of the passage beyond its apparent and understood official limit; whilst, it may be presumed, that such indirect receipts have not always gone in abatement of the remunerative charges upon the Revenue, but have been treated as perquisites, and not appropriated as a part of the Income of the Post-office.

THE Report which we now submit to your Lordships affords a strong illustration of one of the peculiarities noticed in the remarks preliminary to our Eighteenth Report, as belonging to the administration of the Post-office; namely, "that discretionary application of funds for the advancement of the general objects of the institution which is in effect the most important, as well as the most responsible, duty to be performed in the superintendance of this establishment."

From

Appendix,
No. 13.

No. 3.

Eighteenth Report,
p. 4.

Appendix,
No. 2.

From the unrestricted exercise of the discretion of His Majesty's Postmaster-General, in the management of the Steam-packet Service, the Lords of the Treasury were led, in its commencement, to expect that great benefits would ensue, without any increased annual charge upon the Public. The results of our inquiries are very contrary to this expectation. Unless it be affirmed that private competition would have failed to place satisfactorily in the service of the Postmaster-General vessels equally efficient with those which have been provided altogether at the public cost,—and such failure, we think, cannot be reasonably assumed,—we apprehend it cannot be stated that even a limited positive advantage has been gained by the exercise of their Lordships' discretion in incurring this expenditure; which has progressively entailed an increasing loss upon the Public, already estimated as your Lordships' have seen, at not less than 300,000*l.* exclusive of any charge for interest on the capital invested; verifying a further observation, prefixed to our Eighteenth Report, that the speculative outlay in this department must be "profitable or prejudicial" to the Post-office Revenue, according as it is governed, or not, by just "calculations."

Eighteenth Report,
p. 4.

There has been, in our judgment, both an improvident Outlay, and a defective system of Management and Controul, in this branch of the service. The one appears to us to have been incurred, the other to have been conducted, without a sufficient direct interference on the part of the Postmaster-General. And if it were deemed expedient, contrary to our opinion, that the new establishments referred to in this Report, with the numerous extraneous objects of superintendence, and heads of Expenditure, which are incidental to them, should continue to be added to the ordinary duties of the department, the necessity suggested on other, and, as it seems to us, sufficient grounds, in the same Report, of "constituting a managing power adequate to the infinitely more" extended scheme of administration which the circumstances of the present "times demand, would become, in our opinion, more manifestly imperative."

Eighteenth Report,
p. 6.

WALLACE. (L.S.)
W^m J^r LUSHINGTON. (L.S.)
HENRY BERENS. (L.S.)
T. P. DICKENSON. (L.S.)

Office of Revenue Inquiry, }
25th June 1830. }

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APPENDIX

TO THE TWENTY-SECOND REPORT.

REPORTS, PAPERS, &c.

Appendix, No. 1.

STATEMENT of the Mode in which the PACKETS are supplied and repaired, and a Specification of the ESTABLISHMENTS paid by the Post-Office relating thereto.

Reports,
Papers, &c.

No. 1.
Made in which
Packets are supplied
and repaired, &c.

THERE are Six Stations at which Packets have been established by the Postmaster-General; viz.

HARWICH,*
DOVER,*
WEYMOUTH,
MILFORD,
HOLYHEAD,
PORT PATRICK.

With the exception of the last-mentioned station, the packet service was formerly carried on in the nature of a contract between the Postmaster-General and the commander of each vessel respectively. No actual contract or agreement was executed, but the commander introduced a vessel, built expressly for the service, in consideration of a certain annual sum; which included the wages and victualling of a certain number of officers and men, wear and tear, insurance against sea-risk, and all charges whatever; with exception of risk of capture by the enemy, for which the General Post-office was liable.

The commander received a commission from the Postmaster-General; his interest in the service was during good behaviour, and, consequently, if his ship was worn out in the service he was required to produce another.

The hire or established allowance was calculated at a rate much below the sum at which the vessel could be found and maintained, the commander (the contractor) deriving his remuneration from the profits arising from the conveyance of passengers and hullon, a portion of which was also reserved by the Post-office in aid of the expenditure.

This system of contract is still pursued upon some of the stations; on others it has been abandoned, in consequence of the introduction of steam-packets.

WEYMOUTH.

THERE are three packets upon this station employed in the conveyance of the mails, twice a week, to and from Guernsey and Jersey; viz.

	Tons.
Hinchinbrook - - - - -	90
F. Freeling - - - - -	85
Countess of Liverpool - - - - -	104

each manned with a complement of nine men, officers included.†

These

† 1 Commander.
1 Master.
6 Able Seamen,
1 Ordinary crew.

* These Stations form the subject of a further Report.

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These vessels are the property of the commanders, who receive each 25*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.* only from the Revenue; having to defray their surplus expenditure in the maintenance of their ships, and to derive their remuneration for personal services from the contingent profits of passengers.

The sum of 408*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.* was formerly allowed to the establishment of these packets by the Post-office, which received a certain portion of the freight in diminution of the expenditure; but in the year 1819 a new arrangement was made, under which the hire was reduced to 258*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.* and the official proportion of the freight was abandoned to the commanders.

The commanders are applicants for an addition to their establishment, but the Post-masters-General are not satisfied that they are entitled to consideration. It is evident that the passage from Southampton is a formidable competition with that *via* Weymouth; and there has been a representation from the authorities in the islands, urging the expediency of establishing steam-packets from and to Southampton.

The total expense of this station, including incidental expenses, for the year ended 5th January 1823, was 778*l.* 3*s.* 5*d.*

MILFORD.

SUPPLY AND REPAIR OF PACKETS:—Seven packets are employed in maintaining a daily communication between Milford and Waterford; *viz.*

	Tons.
Comden	61
Gower	80
Freeling	88
Auckland	82
Iris	69
Mansfield	80
Montrose	84

which are manned with ten men each, including officers.*

The same principle obtains upon this station as at Harwich, that the vessels are furnished by the commanders upon an implied contract, the sum paid for each from the Revenue being 404*l.* 16*s.* per annum.

The profits from passengers are very small; pecuniary aid has upon various occasions been given to the commanders, with the sanction of the Treasury. The establishment of steam-packets at Holyhead has tended still further to diminish their formerly inadequate receipts; and the consideration of their cases has been only postponed in consequence of the proposed introduction of steam-packets (now building) upon this passage, by directions of the Lords of the Treasury.

One of the Milford packets having been wrecked in 1822, the Postmaster-General, in lieu of appointing a new commander with a vessel which they would ultimately have to take off the hands of the commander at a valuation, in the event of a change in the station (which has since been determined on), directed the temporary employment of the Montrose, one of the Holyhead packets, which they were under the necessity of purchasing on the introduction of steam-packets there. She is manned and equipped as the private vessel; and her expenditure from the 23d May 1822, when she was first employed in this service, to the 5th January 1823, after deducting the receipts of passage-money, (104*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.*) has been 425*l.* 0*s.* 9*d.*

The incidental expenses upon this station must be considerable, from the nature of the passage; no less a sum than 213*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.* having been paid in the year ended 5th January 1823 for the hire of extra vessels, when there was no packet in port for the conveyance of mails.

The total expenditure of every description during that period has been 3,059*l.* 14*s.* 2*d.*

HOLYHEAD.

HOLYHEAD.

THE Holyhead Station is entirely in the hands of the Postmaster-General, who employ three regular steam-packets, and one extra vessel of the same description, together with one sailing-cutter, to be used in case of emergency. They are as follows:

Royal Sovereign	80	horse power	-	-	-	Tons.
Meteor	60	ditto	-	-	-	205
Vixen	80	ditto	-	-	-	189
Ivanhoe (temporary)	56	ditto	-	-	-	189
Pelham, sailing-cutter	-	-	-	-	-	153
						98

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The establishments of these vessels differ in some respects on account of their tonnage, but chiefly in the wages of the engineers, so as to form a graduated scale for that class of persons.

VIKEN :						£.	s.	d.
Commander.								
Engineer	-	-	per annum	-	-	180	-	-
Mate	-	-	per month	-	-	4	4	-
2d Mate	-	-	-	-	-	2	8	-
Carpenter	-	-	-	-	-	3	10	-
Two firemen (each)	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	-
Steward.								
Steward's Mate.								
Six scamen (each)	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
ROYAL SOVEREIGN :								
Commander.								
Engineer	-	-	per annum	-	-	160	-	-
Mate	-	-	per month	-	-	4	4	-
2d Mate	-	-	-	-	-	2	8	-
Carpenter	-	-	-	-	-	3	10	-
Two Firemen (each)	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	-
Steward.								
Six Steward's Mates.								
Five Scamen (each)	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
METEOR :								
Commander.								
Engineer	-	-	per annum	-	-	130	-	-
Mate	-	-	per month	-	-	4	4	-
2d Mate	-	-	-	-	-	2	8	-
Carpenter	-	-	-	-	-	3	10	-
Two Firemen (each)	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	-
Steward.								
Steward's Mate.								
Five Scamen (each)	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
IVANHOE :								
Commander.								
Engineer	-	-	per annum	-	-	120	-	-
Mate	-	-	per month	-	-	4	4	-
2d Mate	-	-	-	-	-	2	8	-
Carpenter	-	-	-	-	-	3	10	-
1st Fireman	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	-
2d ditto	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	-
Steward.								
Steward's Mate.								
Five Scamen (each)	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-

In addition to the pay, the crews, with the exception of captain, engineer and firemen, are allowed provisions, which, by the contract price, amount, on the average, to something less than 1s. per man per diem.

The first three of the steam-packets were built expressly for the service of this department. The Ivanhoe was purchased when two only were upon the station, for the purpose of assisting in carrying on the duty, and is now retained, whilst one of the regular vessels is under repair. When she can be dispensed with at Holyhead, she will be applied advantageously to some other service under the Postmaster-General.

The regular complement of this station consists of three vessels; and there are four captains, who in turn take the command. Three of these captains, who were formerly in the command of the sailing-packets under the old system, receive £.800 per annum each, as

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and repaid, &c.

well in the nature of a compensation for loss of passage-money converted into revenue, as of remuneration for personal service.

The fourth, or junior, who has been nominated since the introduction of steam-packets, receives 500*l.* per annum, which is settled to be the pay of those who may be hereafter appointed.

The *Polham Cutter* was one of the sailing-packets under the old establishment, and is employed in the conveyance of the mails when no steam-packet is in port, in carrying stores, or any other purpose advantageous to the packet service of this department. Her constant or harbour complement consists of a mate at 4*l.* 4*s.* per month, and four seamen at 3*l.* each, with provisions; and three additional seamen are employed at the same rate of wages when under orders for sea. Her crew, when in port, are employed in filling coals and other duties. If it should be found at the end of the year that the steam-packets will be able to perform the whole of the duty, the *Polham* will be sold and her crew paid off.

The *Countess of Liverpool*, another of the former sailing-packets upon this station, having good capacities for stowage, and being scarcely saleable, has been engaged in the conveyance of fuel for the steam-packets to and from Holyhead and the Clyde; she is 114 tons burthen by measurement, but will stow 130 tons of coal, and is manned with a mate and six seamen, who are not upon any particular establishment, but are paid at a certain sum per ton, according to the quantity of coals delivered into the stores at Holyhead or Howth respectively. By an account lately made out of the sums paid to the crew of this vessel whilst she has been employed, of the quantity of fuel conveyed, and of what would have been the fair average rate of freight, had the same quantity been brought by trading vessels, it appears that in the course of a year a saving has been effected of nearly 300*l.*

Notwithstanding the great acceleration of communication between England and Ireland, the increased accommodation to passengers, and the expensive nature of the establishment, the proceeds, although the fares are not greater than by the old sailing packets, have not only covered the current expenditure of all sorts, but the surplus for the year ended the 31st January 1823 has been 4,284*l.* which has been brought to the credit of the Revenue.

PORT PATRICK AND DONAGHADEE.

SUPPLY AND REPAIR OF PACKETS :—There are four packets employed to convey the mails daily between Port Patrick and Donaghadee; they are of 40 tons burthen, with a complement of five men each, the commander included.

They are furnished by a company of individuals at the price of 1,000*l.* per annum, determinable upon six months notice from either party.

The Postmasters-General have it under consideration to establish a steam-packet upon this station for the conveyance of the important correspondence by this route.

LIVERPOOL AND THE ISLE OF MAN.

THE Mails are conveyed between Liverpool and the Isle of Man by the steam-passage vessels, once a week in the winter, and twice a week in the summer months, for which service the sum of 300*l.* is annually paid to the proprietors.

MAIL-BOATS :—In addition to the packets in England, seven mail-boats are employed in the West Indies under the direction of the Postmasters-General; their burthen is from thirty-eight to sixty-six tons (each) manned with seven men; they are supplied by contract at the sum of 3,100*l.* per annum for the whole.

These vessels are employed in the conveyance of the mails taken out by the packets to Barbadoes, throughout the Leeward Islands, and the colonies on the coast of Guinea. The routes have been altered within the last three years, for the better accommodation of the Public and consequent interests of the Revenue; and it is uncertain whether the present number of boats can continue permanently to perform the whole of the duty required.

General Post Office
May 31st, 1823.

Francis Freeling, Secretary.