

LETTER

OF

A. DUDLEY MANN,

TO THE

*Citizens of the Slaveholding States,*

IN RELATION TO A

WEEKLY ATLANTIC FERRY LINE

OF

IRON STEAMSHIPS OF THIRTY THOUSAND TONS,

BETWEEN

THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND MILFORD HAVEN.

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LONDON:

JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA STREET,

COVENT GARDEN.

1856.

# A LETTER,

ETC. ETC.

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LONDON, *August 12, 1856.*

TO THE CITIZENS OF THE SLAVEHOLDING STATES,—

WITH your co-operation, if it can be secured, I propose to establish, in conjunction with certain associates to be hereafter designated, a *Weekly Iron Steamship Ferry Line* between the Chesapeake Bay and Milford Haven. The distance by the Southern route from the one to the other of those waters is about 3150 miles,—shorter by at least 100 miles than that at present traversed by the American steamers from New York to Liverpool. The route is entirely free from the dangers incident to coastwise navigation and icebergs.

The town of Milford is situated one hundred and twenty miles southward and westward of Liverpool, one hundred miles westward of Bristol, and two hundred and seventy miles westward of London. It is connected with each by railway, with the exception of a space of three miles, which will be completed next spring. To London, the line—broad gauge throughout—will be run over by

express trains inside of seven hours. To Waterford the distance is seventy miles by water, at which port there is a connexion by railway with Cork, Kilkenny, Limerick, Dublin, and Belfast. To Havre the distance is about two hundred and twenty-five miles.

It is estimated that all the navies of Europe could "ride in safety and swing at their anchors" in Milford Haven. This haven enjoys in an eminent degree the essential requisites for rendering the town of Milford the first port of Europe. It has length and breadth of compass, deep water and good bottom, facility of ingress and egress, and secure shelter. But notwithstanding this unsurpassed combination of advantages, it has been comparatively valueless heretofore, to the commercial world, on account of being shut out from internal communication with the metropolis and the manufacturing districts of the British realm.

Like Milford Haven, the worth of the Chesapeake Bay has never been properly appreciated, except for national purposes. Commercially, no peculiar benefits have been derived from its excellent qualities as a haven, and its easy approach from the ocean. But, happily, for several years, railways proceeding from the confines of the south, southwest, west, and north-west, connecting one with another, and encircling and embracing all the cities and principal towns, have been steadily and resolutely forcing their passages over and through the

impediments which obstructed their progress, and are now in so advanced a state as to give a reasonable assurance that in a year or two they will converge, completed, upon its Virginia shore. By such communication, assisted by canals and rivers, will be conveyed for transportation to foreign countries, as soon as the proposed Atlantic Steam Ferry Line is established, a part of the cotton of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Florida, and Texas; the tobacco, wheat, and corn of Virginia, Tennessee, Maryland, and Delaware; the pork, bacon, lard, and tobacco of Kentucky and Missouri; the rice of South Carolina; and the rosin and turpentine of North Carolina. Nor is it improbable that Pennsylvania, to say nothing of other non-slaveholding States, will avail herself of it for conducting a lucrative traffic at home and abroad. The waters of her great central artery meet and commingle with those of the South in the Chesapeake Bay, and her varied interests, strengthened by her inflexible devotion to the Constitution, unite her in bonds of indissolubility with her southern sisters.

A glance at a railway map of the Slaveholding States will satisfy any one capable of comprehending the subject, that the iron-road system in that portion of the Union, including the lines projected, will be, when finished, as perfect as any system of the kind in operation in any country. Such resources cannot fail to be unfolded,—so varied, rich, and extended as

have never been submitted to human vision. It is estimated by competent judges that there is a sufficiency of iron and coal in Maryland, Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky, to supply the wants of the Union for a hundred centuries; while copper, lead, gypsum, and salt exist in one or more of those States in immense quantities.

That commerce will avail of the avenues created for its facilitation, is much more rational than that it will continue to travel circuitous routes, however long established. Capital seeks trade. Where trade is developed, or promises to be developed, there will capital go diligently in search of it; and nothing since the earth has been inhabited has done so much to engender trade, where there was none before, as the railway and locomotive.

A most forcible exemplification of this fact is to be found in the instance of Cardiff, in South Wales. This port in 1840 was of utter insignificance, the amount of shipping which entered it never exceeding in any one year 150,000 tons. In 1841, an iron-way was opened from it to Merthyr Tydvil, by which valleys and mountains teeming with mineral wealth have been unlocked, and which are now supplying most of the bars for our roads (a single establishment turning out fifteen hundred tons per week), as well as coal for exportation to every part of the globe. The result is, that Cardiff now clears annually more than 1,000,000 tons of shipping, and wears the business aspect of a prosperous sea-board

city. This distinctly foreshadows what the Chesapeake Bay and Milford Haven are to become, as soon as the artificial links are perfected which will bring the one and the other in close connexion with the country behind, and when they are made the terminal points of an Atlantic Steam Ferry Line.

The indications are too distinct to be misconceived, that a new era in ocean navigation is rapidly approaching. The proofs have become convincing, to investigating minds, that iron and steam are to supersede wood and canvas, in the movement of the products and passengers between the two hemispheres. The greater size, strength, and security in every respect—to say nothing of durability of wear—which may be imparted to iron steamships, combine to render such a result positively certain. Before the end of this century there will not, probably, be a wooden hull navigating the Atlantic under canvas.

The employment of steam as a motive power has already accomplished more than Oliver Evans, or Solomon Cos, or Francis Fortune, the so-considered *wild enthusiasts* of their times, in relation to its propelling properties, likely ever imagined in their most enlarged anticipations of its success. But, notwithstanding all that has been so wonderfully consummated through its agency, it is not presumable that anything like perfection has been attained in the salutary influence it is to exercise on the destinies of mankind. Science never slumbers. Its

energy is untiring. Properly impressed with the importance of its benign mission, it is ceaseless in its solicitude to discover unexplored fields. It seems to be an agent of the Almighty for bettering the condition of his creatures, and He doubtless will inspire and sustain it, despite the obstacles which a "let-us-alone" selfishness may contrive for the defeat of its purposes. "To talk about lighting London with gas," exclaimed one of the renowned philosophers of the last century, "is as idle as to talk about clipping a slice from the moon and using it for that purpose!" Now what do we behold? Not a third-rate city of either hemisphere, of respectability, that is not nearly as bright at night by gas-illumination as by the rays of the sun. "To talk about conveying the mails across the Atlantic by steamships," remarked another *savant*, when the *Great Western* was projected, "is too much of an absurdity to be entertained by a sound mind!" Now the mails arrive almost as regularly in America, Great Britain, and continental Europe, in steamships, as they did at the beginning of this century in London from Edinburgh by stage-coaches, or five-and-twenty years ago in Washington from St. Louis. And Science, faithful to its trust, has made such discoveries from time to time as to diminish the length of the passage between Liverpool and New York, when computed by days, one-half, as compared with the first voyages.

In the vicinity of this metropolis, opposite Green-

wich, an iron steamship is in the course of construction, which will eventuate in effecting as complete an amelioration on the ocean as the locomotive has effected on land. I have been not only an attentive, but an inordinately anxious observer, for twelve months, of her progress towards completion. She is, on account of her tremendous proportions, the marvel of navigators and mariners; and predictions are more abundant, in all circles, that she is to result in an entire failure, than they were with respect to the *Great Western*. But the projector, Mr. Brunel, the same favoured child of science who projected the *Great Western*, is quite as confident that he will attain his noble aims in the present instance, as he was that the performances of his former endeared bantling would confound and overwhelm even philosophers and *savants*. In this confidence I fully share, and upon the strength of it I predicate my enterprise,—perceiving in that enterprise, if carried out, the redemption of the Slaveholding States from the tribute which an unnatural commerce remorselessly exacts from them. As it is in contemplation to construct four vessels similar to the mammoth one referred to, for the Atlantic Steam Ferry Line, it may not be out of place here to give a short description of her.

The *Great Eastern* (for, although she is not formally named, it is understood that the “big ship” is to be so called) will have employed in her construction, when completed — including engines,



anchors, and cables—no less than twelve thousand tons of iron. Her deck over all is six hundred and ninety-two feet long; its breadth eighty-five feet, and across the paddle-boxes one hundred and fourteen. Her depth is fifty-eight feet. Her measurement is twenty-seven thousand five hundred tons. She will carry eight hundred first-class passengers, two thousand second-class, and twelve hundred third-class, besides her officers and crew, amounting to four hundred. She will also carry seventeen thousand five hundred tons cargo, and so freighted, it is believed that she may be propelled across the Atlantic at the rate of from seventeen to twenty miles an hour. Thus, even the *minimum* rate of speed would take her from the Chesapeake Bay to Milford Haven in less than eight days; and the *maximum* rate in less than six and a half.

The *Great Eastern* is so built that, by a singular combination of ribs and webs, she is nearly as strong as though she were a solid block of forged iron. She is double-planked throughout—the inner skin three quarters of an inch thick, and the outer one an inch. The planks, of iron, employ no less than three millions of rivets, of an inch diameter, to confine them to their places. She is divided into ten large perfectly water-tight compartments of sixty feet in length, either of which would float her in case of serious accident to the others.

What would such a structure have to apprehend from the dangers of the sea between the Chesapeake

Bay and Milford Haven? Of coast there would be none whatever to encounter. Running south of 42°, with icebergs she could scarcely come in contact; and if she chanced to strike one, the blow she would receive, however severe, could not send her down. With thirty feet of her height always above the ocean level, waves could not harm her. To break her in two would be almost as difficult as to break in two the back-bone of the Alleghany. Old Neptune would behold in her the triumph of science over his hitherto world-wide recognised majesty in his own briny domain. In this connexion it may be remarked that the length of the longest waves is computed at six hundred feet, their extreme altitude twenty-eight feet, and their average only seventeen.

When the *Great Western* started on her first voyage, fears were entertained that, if she encountered no other obstacle, she would almost certainly be severed, on account of her extraordinary length, upon the first formidable wave which she attempted to cross. She was two hundred and thirty-six feet long! In July, 1845, being about to return to the United States from the Continent, I wrote to a friend in London to procure me a berth in the *Great Britain*, which was soon to proceed on her first trip to New York. By return post he urged me to abandon the notion of embarking in her, as an opinion generally prevailed that "she was too long to ever get across the Atlantic!" She was three

hundred and twenty-two feet long! Doubts and prejudices have been gradually disappearing in the presence of successful performance, until such is the confidence felt in the safety of long ships, that the *Persia*, of three hundred and ninety feet length, would monopolize the passengers of the Cunard Line if she were capacious enough to accommodate them.

The *Great Eastern* will have the capacity to carry, with four thousand persons, twenty-five thousand bales of cotton, or fifty thousand barrels of flour, or ten thousand hogsheads of tobacco. The power of her engines combined is three thousand horse, British estimate. She will have at her command paddle-wheel, stern-wheel, and sails; so that if one propelling agent should chance to be disabled, she would have two others upon which to rely to move her to her destination. Her architect expects to succeed in making her thoroughly fireproof. Hence, comparatively, she will be submitted to no sea risks. Life and property aboard of her will be almost as secure as in a strongly-built dwelling. A passage from the Chesapeake Bay to Milford Haven will be but little more perilous in such a vessel than a passage across the ferry from New York to Hoboken. Nor would persons subject to sea-sickness voyaging in her probably be submitted to that aggravating malady, except in its mildest form. It is calculated that she will neither pitch nor roll, as she will be enabled to take such immense strides as to cross with ease three of the three hundred feet

waves at a single leap, and to glide over those of six hundred feet almost imperceptibly as respects vibration.

There is no principle more sound than that in political economy, which says to industrial pursuits, "Sell your products where you can sell them at the highest price, and buy your supplies where you can buy them at the lowest." To render this practicable in the Slaveholding States, the proposed Atlantic Steam Ferry Line is indispensable. Through the instrumentality of this line direct trade and personal intercourse with Western Europe, from those States, will speedily become as enlarged as that which they at present carry on with the Northern States of the Union. Instead of intermediate agencies, operating adversely to their interests,—prospering upon their toils,—their commerce will assume a natural, healthful, and expeditious character. Grievous commission and insurance charges, occasioned by indirect exportation, will in a great measure be abolished, and interest accounts vastly diminished by rapidity of transportation. On importations the northern merchant will be deprived of his enormous profits, and the southern consumer relieved from a taxation which contributes weightily to his pecuniary oppression.

I have seen it somewhere estimated that, on an estate in Cuba, which produces \$30,000 worth of sugar annually, the various taxes exacted by the Government of Spain amount to one-third of the

receipts from the yield. Even under the existing liberal tariff of the United States—liberal only as contrasted with that which its enactment repealed—and the method in which trade is conducted between the Slaveholding States and the European consumers of their staples, it is questionable whether, if a nice calculation were made, the Southerners would not find themselves almost as severely taxed as the Cubans.

The question has probably been millions of times asked, or turned over in reflecting minds, Why—with respect to the one and the other—was Providence so prodigal of its favours to the Chesapeake Bay and Milford Haven? The answer seems at last to be satisfactorily furnished. As if by some mysterious arrangement of preconcerted scientific thought, the locomotive is about to visit each, taking with it the valuable products of the populous and rich interior, simultaneously with the discovery of a quick and cheap plan of ocean conveyance for those products to their consumers; *for it must be distinctly observed that in no other water in Europe or America can a vessel of the magnitude of the Great Eastern, and of her immense capacity for carrying, enter and depart where there is a reasonable assurance that freights can be procured in sufficient abundance to fill her, but that of the Chesapeake Bay or Milford Haven.* It is almost needless to remark that with all that steam has so beneficially accomplished on the ocean, it has done but little in transporting any

of the chief heavy articles of Southern or British export.

What point on the Chesapeake Bay will be selected for the Atlantic Steam Ferry Line landing, cannot yet be determined. It will, however, assuredly be that which in all respects is the most suitable; and there, without necessarily building up a populous city, a store-house of such importance will establish itself as never was created before, from which the Slaveholding States, if not also a number of the non-slaveholding ones, will draw their supplies at moderate prices. In like manner Milford Haven will become the storehouse of American products, which products will be conveyed at low rates, and expeditiously, to every part of Europe. As if in anticipation of this, an Anglo-French Company is in the course of successful formation for constructing a large number of steamers to engage in the European coasting trade.

No principle in steamship architecture is better established than that length and size are essential to the attainment of speed. Therefore, such vessels as the *Great Eastern*, engaged in the contemplated service, will command most of the travel between Europe and North America, as well as the mail carrying; and with the greater certainty, because of their security from casualties.

The more opulent families of the Slaveholding States, or rather many of them, usually leave their homes during the summer and early autumnal

months. A few, compared to the vast number, repair to the delightful springs of Virginia, and to other southern retreats; but they go in the main to the watering places and more populous cities of the North. Such, instead of loitering on shore—confining themselves in close rooms during the hot hours of the day, where they languish for want of pure air, or fatigue with tedious *ennui*,—would repair to the Atlantic Ferry, and crossing it, as if on the wings of the wind, in a well-appointed hotel, enjoy the invigorating effects of a sea-passage. Touching Europe at one of its most interesting points, they would travel up to London by trains which have no equals, and on a route which is not surpassed for adjacent wild scenery and gay rural beauties. Nor would the wealthy and the mere pleasure-seeker alone have an incentive to proceed on the voyage. The man of smaller means—the frugal agriculturist—would want to see, when he was brought within eight days' distance of him, what sort of person consumed his surplus produce, and made the articles which he required for consumption. He would take his wheat, cotton, and tobacco to market, and buy his supplies as the industrious husbandman of Accomack takes his vegetables across to Norfolk, and returns with his coffee, tea, and sugar.

The Atlantic Ferry steam-ships, when filled with outward passengers, would personify a southern town of four thousand inhabitants, each family

occupying the dwelling best suited to its condition in life. While the decks, an eighth of a mile in length, would emphatically be a village "commons," the compartments would be as distinct from each other as different houses of abode.

The *Great Eastern* is intended for the Australian trade. It is expected that she will make the passage from Milford Haven to Port Philip, by the Cape of Good Hope, in thirty-five days. The distance is 11,828 miles, shorter by about 1000 miles than any route yet traversed. The most direct line would be overland, and *viá* Diego Garcia—a low flat island among the coral reefs of the Chagos Archipelago; but the navigation in that region is extremely perilous, the channels so narrow and difficult of entrance as not to be attempted except in broad daylight. This precludes the adoption of it as the highway from here to the British possessions in the East. The chances are, that even the *Great Eastern* will be unable to steam from Milford Haven to Melbourne in thirty-five days. The distance is so long, that on a consecutive run she must probably tire before she reaches her terminal point.

It may not be out of place here to remark that the British Government has just closed a contract with a Steam Company to carry the mails from Southampton to Melbourne, *viá* the Isthmus of Suez, in fifty days.

The distance, as has been stated, between Milford Haven and the Chesapeake Bay, is 3150 miles.



The passage across it would be as frequently under seven days as over seven, by the Ferry Line. From the Chesapeake to the Pacific the travel, as soon as the connecting railways shall have been completed, will be easily performed in five days; and from thence to Melbourne in sixteen days. Thus there would be a diminution of six days upon the contemplated time of the *Great Eastern*. Travellers engaged in commercial or industrial pursuits would, consequently, choose the American route for its expedition, as would also the mere pleasure-seeker, for the interesting and diversified scenes which it would present to his view. And still greater than to Australia would be the diminution in time from Europe, by the American Line, to Southern China, Japan, &c. The Isthmus of Suez and the Red Sea would be measurably abandoned, and San Francisco would become the great central rendezvous for Europeans and others voyaging to and from the East. It would be brought within eighteen days of London and within twelve of the Chesapeake Bay, which time would be again shortened five days, if ever the Pacific railroad should be made.

By means of such an undertaking as that of the Atlantic Steam Ferry Line, no stretch of the imagination is required to foretell that the Chesapeake Bay would be the mart of the largest travel and transportation of industrial products ever known. From thence they would radiate in every direction, to the benefit of all who came within the sphere of

their movement. The gold of California and Australia, the silver of Mexico, the mails from every civilized part of the globe, would also concentrate there for distribution and expedition to their respective destinations. Neither ice nor snow would ever suspend communication for a day, on the direct line.

It is obviously the policy of the Slaveholding States to leave no efforts untried to make their railroads and canals produce the largest possible income. Each has expended its millions of dollars, or is expending them, in internal improvements, and never was money better appropriated, if these improvements shall find profitable employment. They will, if judiciously encouraged, be a source of perpetually growing revenue. Traffic is all in all to them, and should be secured at any reasonable cost.

The history of the railroads of Great Britain abounds with interest. Those roads have achieved results which would have been regarded as marvellous in other ages. The first line, that between Stockton and Darlington, was opened to public use in the year 1825. It was not, however, until the year 1830 that the majestic locomotive commenced treading the earth like a mighty "thing of life." Now there are 8300 miles completed in this realm (of which fifty are tunnel), constructed at a cost of \$1,500,000,000, and employing 5000 locomotives, 150,000 carriages, and 90,000 officers and servants. The engines consume annually 2,000,000 tons of

coal, and convey during that period 120,000,000 passengers, each averaging twelve miles. The accidents are in the proportion of one to every 7,195,843 travellers. The entire receipts from traffic, per annum, are something like \$120,000,000. According to reliable estimates, if railroad communication were suspended, the same amount of traffic could not be carried on at a less expense than \$300,000,000 annually. It is worthy of remark that, such is the peculiarity of legislation at London, the Acts of Parliament which authorized the construction of the different existing lines were obtained at the enormous cost of \$70,000,000. In addition to this amount, \$150,000,000 were allowed to proprietors for the right of way and the buildings thereon. The aggregate value of the landed property in the United Kingdom is believed to have more than doubled since the locomotive commenced its operations.

Like results, if not vastly more favourable ones, will, under the same influences, display themselves in the Slaveholding States, and perhaps in a quarter of the time. The railroads in those States, including such as are under contract, measure full as much as the railroads of Great Britain. There is no agent that can be employed in facilitating or augmenting intercourse between the citizens of a state that is not moralizing in its character. The love of home is one of the most ennobling attachments, and that love mostly proceeds from the enjoyments which

home affords to its possessor. Science has invented the means of carrying with almost Ariel-like velocity, to every husbandman's threshold, not only the supplies demanded by him for necessary use, but also those of elegant luxury, from every clime—carrying off to market in return his surplus products. What formerly were considered secluded country abodes are becoming as highly favoured as though they were sea-board cities. The tiller of the earth more than ever is justly proud of his avocation, and by his example excites industry and an upward-aiming spirit in those with whom he has intercourse in indigent circumstances: consequently the value of land is steadily equalizing itself, and the danger to a redundant unemployed city population in the South diminishing. Rural employment is the natural one to the citizens of the Slaveholding States, and the facilities multiply day by day for rendering it more and more desirable.

Four such vessels as the *Great Eastern*, departing weekly from the Chesapeake Bay, would convey to Milford Haven in a year, 1,250,000 bales of cotton, or more than their equivalent in weight in a less bulky article. An opinion cannot be formed at this time with any degree of accuracy, as to what length of distance ponderous articles would bear transportation on railroad to the Chesapeake Bay, *with the certainty of conveyance across the Atlantic in seven or eight days, at unprecedented low rates.* It was estimated that, on account of the suspension of naviga-

tion by unusual low water in the rivers of the Slaveholding States during the latter part of 1854 and the early part of 1855, the producers of cotton and other staples of exportation experienced a clear loss of at least \$20,000,000. Cotton might possibly travel to the Chesapeake Bay, to avail of the advantages there offered for its speedy transit to Europe, from as remote a region as the interior of Texas. So with other articles. Should this transpire, there are doubtless those who have advanced to the meridian of life who will not have passed away from earth without seeing a daily, instead of the proposed weekly, Ocean Ferry Line in successful operation.

There is not a year perhaps elapses, even the most favourable one, that \$10,000,000 are not lost to the Slaveholding States from unavoidable detentions in the shipments of their surplus products; nor is the mere delay in the receipt of their value the heaviest of the losses consequent thereon. Those products arrive at their respective markets in such quantities at the same time, as to occasion what is termed a "glut," and its ever-attendant depression and depreciation in prices. This would be obviated by the regularity with which supplies would be moved by the Steam Ferry Line.

While at least three-fourths of the value of the products shipped from the Union to foreign markets are of Slaveholding States' origin, scarcely a fiftieth part of this amount, if I am not misled by statements before me, is carried in bottoms owned

by citizens of those States. The non-slaveholding States of the North, chiefly the more rabid national demoralizers of them, not only monopolize to a great extent the coastwise carrying of the Slaveholding States, but they are protected against the participation of foreign ships in that carrying. It is not enough for the North that foreign vessels may not carry between New Orleans and Baltimore, but Massachusetts, Maine, &c., are so exacting as to require, that no foreign vessel shall be allowed to be *purchased* and *naturalized* so as to carry from a Southern port to a foreign one. Under such laws were it desirable to buy the *Great Eastern* for the proposed Atlantic Steam. Ferry Line, a special Act of Congress would have to be passed before she could receive an American register. This species of *protection* has profited immensely the ship-building and navigation interest of New York and New England. Heretofore it has been tacitly submitted to by the Slaveholding States, but, as is now evident, in *too broad a spirit* of national generosity, since for the "bread" given a "stone" is returned. By this spirit, proud of our growing navigation, I have been actuated until recently myself. But if Northern navigation and Northern shipbuilding are to affiliate with Northern free-soilism and Northern abolitionism in their unwarrantable crusade against the Constitution and the Slaveholding States, they become so anti-national, that I can feel no deeper interest in the one or the other than I entertain for

the navigation and ship-building of any foreign Power or State.

It is not presumable that the Slaveholding States would ever have become considerable carriers in canvas navigation. The more lucrative employment of their labouring inhabitants occasions a scarcity of sailors. But the substitution of steam for wind as a propelling agent, measurably dispenses with mariners, and will enable them consequently to build up a mercantile marine adequate to their wants, as those wants may manifest themselves. There is no valid reason why, when the citizens of the South go resolutely to work, under the new order of things, for bettering their condition, that they should not at least do their *own* carrying.

The terminal waters of the Atlantic Steam Ferry enterprise were selected solely with an eye to their peculiar suitableness in every respect. It is confidently expected that this enterprise will not conflict with the prosperity of a city, town, or hamlet in the Slaveholding States; but, on the contrary, advance the interests of all. And it ought to be regarded as a Union-preserving, instead of a Union-dividing one. It contemplates nothing more traitorous than a commercial fortification of the South against the political encroachments of the North. When the Slaveholding States rise in their commercial majesty, and manifest unmistakeably that they can act as well as talk,—that they can execute as well as resolve,—that they know how to appreciate natural

commercial allies abroad, and are prepared to dispense with intermediate agencies at home, which "eat out their substance,"—then will venomous free-soilism be subdued, and abolition fanaticism itself brought to a sense of right. Thus, honourable union to the South may be secured.

In a military point of view, four such steam-ships as the *Great Eastern* would be of inestimable advantage to the United States, if they should ever be needed for active service. The last speck of war, as concerns our own country, is about to disappear from the political horizon. As far as the eye can penetrate the future from this metropolis, there is everything to encourage the hope that we have nothing whatever to apprehend from an external enemy. If I read aright British sentiment upon the subject, which I have diligently studied for nearly a twelvemonth, it is at the present time as decided as it is united for the establishment of harmonious and indeed cordial relations with us. It will never permit the Government to declare hostilities against the Union, except in *unavoidable defence of the national honour*. To such an alternative we cannot, without downright meanness, ever attempt to force it. Justice and wisdom alike demand that neither states nor individuals should make exactions which have no foundation in right. Nor have we anything to apprehend from any other power. None dares to undertake to make us afraid, and none will have the temerity to assail us as long



as we act from honest conviction in support of our interests. But still it is the part of prudence for great nations, in order to perpetuate honourable peace, not to be wholly unprepared for war. We shall perhaps never lay the keel of another man-of-war for canvas navigation. The money appropriated for such purpose would be almost as good as thrown away. Steam, or some motive power not yet discovered, will be employed henceforth for propelling vessels in commission for belligerent purposes. Will our Government, or our citizens who control its action, at any time be disposed to build a large steam war marine, merely as such? Assuredly not. They have too much common sense to regard even the notion of it otherwise than preposterous. The expense of building, equipping, and maintaining even a moderately-sized one, would require a larger sum than is required at present for the support of the general government. Great Britain is groaning, and will groan on for ages, in all likelihood, under the weight of a debt of one thousand millions of dollars (one-fourth of her entire public indebtedness), created in the construction and sustenance of her "iron" and "wooden walls" *since the year 1821!* And yet this immense navy has accomplished since that time, including the late war, little more than nothing for the substantial good of the realm. Were it put up at auction, it would not probably sell for as much as the amount that is required to pay the interest for five years on its cost. It consists of

271 steamers, capable of carrying 3986 guns, and 96 sailing vessels, capable of carrying 3478 guns. A large steam navy would be to the Union a canker-worm, that would gnaw out, day by day, its very existence. To obviate this, and to render, at the same time, our position secure, we must construct vessels, both for the Atlantic and Pacific, which, while they will carry the OLIVE BRANCH of Commerce in the one hand, will carry in the other the SHEATHED SWORD. There is not a war steamer that floats that could resist such a vessel as the *Great Eastern*. She would proceed onward with her cargo "in the even tenor of her way," and so rapid would be her movement, and invincible her strength, as to enable her to run the most formidable of them down as easily as a Mississippi steam-boat would a canoe that attempted to interrupt its progress. Well does the *Quarterly Review*, in this respect, remark of her:—"Can we, without a shudder, contemplate the possibility of a collision with such a resistless force?—a line-of-battle ship, with a thousand hands on board, cleft in two as swiftly as the apple by the shaft of Tell!" The number of such vessels required for the weekly ferry service would inspire the utmost respect for the American flag in the Atlantic. Either could carry half our army, with the necessary artillery and horses, from any one point to another. Practical naval schools might be established in each of them, as relates to the attainment of knowledge of steam navigation. The young

officers, in prosecuting their studies, could be as retired and as much to themselves, together with their instructors, as they are at Annapolis.

The idea of connecting the Chesapeake Bay, by speedy steam communication, with a port facing it in Europe, has been cherished by me for the last thirteen years. But I had fears that such an enterprise would not be remunerating, inasmuch as the fuel consumed by steam-ships which made quick passages, weighed them down to such a depth as to prevent them from carrying cargo to a greater than a mere nominal extent. This is the case with all that have been running to the present time. When I heard that the father of Atlantic steam navigation had arranged his plan of the "big ship," I fancied that I beheld the proximate realization of my hopes for the glorious future of the Slaveholding States—in one of which I drew my first breath, and in which, I trust, I may be permitted to draw my last,—and I was seized with an unrelaxing solicitude to examine her gigantic proportions. The petty employments of petty office became as tedious to me "as a twice-told tale;" and after a number of vexatious efforts to be relieved of them, I finally succeeded in getting the President to accept of my resignation on the 8th of May, 1855. Quitting Washington soon afterwards, and tarrying nearly a month at Richmond, Norfolk, Old Point Comfort, and other places on the James River and Chesapeake Bay, and a few weeks in New York, I embarked for

Liverpool late in July, and in August found myself, with a friend, at Millwall, in the presence of the most interesting object, as far as completed, ever conceived by science,—an object that was essential to inaugurate a revolution in the material and political well-being of the Slaveholding States.

The mind of Washington was anxiously exercised to devise a plan for the development of the advantages which the Chesapeake Bay contained as an unequalled haven in the United States for commerce. “The Father of his Country” supposed that the Dismal Swamp and James River canals would render that water of infinite value to the South. He lived not, alas! to behold the steamer ploughing the main, or the locomotive walking over the earth. But may not his immortal spirit be looking with affectionate interest to the early realization of the bright prospects which are now revealed to that region which he so much nourished and cherished in his retirement?—a region, to its glory be it ever said, in which the Anglo-Saxon banner was first planted on the American Continent, and in which the final blow was struck that won the independence of the Thirteen Colonies.

In the preceding address it has merely been my object to explain the nature of the proposed enterprise, and its paramount importance to the Slaveholding States. In another communication I shall enter into minute details relative to the manner of carrying it into successful operation. I will now

state, however, that every Southern citizen who chooses may become a co-partner in it; that the shares will be issued for \$100 each; that no person shall be permitted to subscribe for two or more until all shall have had ample time to subscribe for one; and that each Slaveholding State and the district of Columbia shall be entitled to one manager in the concern.

Your friend and countryman,

A. DUDLEY MANN.

THE END.