India Islands, the cotton ports of Galveston and New Orleans, having also a connexion to Colon for places on the western coast of America. This company at the date of its absorption had a fleet of twenty-two steamships totalling over 111,000 tons gross register. This amalgamation was the first step towards the great American combine. Mr Ellerman, however, who was chairman of the old Leyland Company, separated himself from it at this juncture, and founded his own line. The Leyland Company had a number of transatlantic services.

*General Steam Navigation Company.—*This is the oldest existing line. Its first prospectus was issued in 1824, and in 1831 it re­ceived its charter of incorporation. It commenced with the passenger trade from London to Margate, and its operations gradually extended to the British coastwise ports and the home trade ports on the Conti­nent. In time the company introduced a regular steam service between Edinburgh and other east coast ports and London, Ham­burg, Rotterdam, Antwerp and Havre in the north of Europe. It gradually obtained a strong hold upon the passenger and fine goods trade to the Continent, holding the mail contracts between London and Hamburg, and London and Rotterdam. In the early ’seventies the pressure of foreign competition made itself severely felt, and in 1876 the increase of the American cattle trade told on the profits of the company; but the difficulty was met by obtaining parliamen­tary leave for an increase of capital, and the company had displayed new enterprise, especially in regard to its passenger facilities. It may claim to have been the pioneer in the promotion of steamship traffic between British home ports and the nearer ones of the Continent. The steamship "Giraffe,” built in 1836, brought over the first cargo of live cattle from Rotterdam to Blackwall in 1846. The company runs steamers from London to Edinburgh, Hull and Yarmouth, and from London to Antwerp, Amsterdam, Bordeaux, Havre, Hamburg, Oporto, Ostend, Rotterdam, Charente and the Mediterranean ports. Vessels are also run to some of the ports above-named from Hull and Southampton. There is also a pas­senger service between Harwich and Hamburg, and excursion services in summer to the watering-places at the mouth of the Thames and on the Kentish coast.

*Hamburg-American Line.*—The extraordinary progress of Ham­burg as a seaport during the last thirty years of the 19th century may be held due in no small measure to the enterprise of this line, which now carries passengers not only to the two American con­tinents, but also to the east of Asia and Africa. It was founded in May 1847. At that time, owing to the political disturbances throughout Germany, there was an enormous exodus of emigrants to the new world; of this the founders took advantage, and they started a regular service of sailing ships between Hamburg and New York. The first ship they owned was the "Deutschland,” of 700 tons, built on the Elbe. It is interesting to note that the present “ Deutschland ” is of 16,502 tons gross register, and is of twenty-three times the capacity of her predecessor. The first sailing took place in October 1848. In 1851 the company’s fleet consisted of six vessels, with an aggregate of 4000 tons. In 1856 the first screw steamer in the company’s service left Hamburg; this was the “ Borussia,” a vessel constructed, as were her sisters for many years, on the Clyde. From this time, when the company abandoned sailing ships and took to steam, its prosperity may be said to have dated. It is strange to note that the two first steamships owned by it were chartered by the British and French governments to convey troops to the Crimea. By 1867 the company had ceased to own any sailing ships. The enormous increase of the traffic is indicated by the fact that whilst in 1856 the sailings to New York took place every fortnight, in 1881 there were two a week, and later on three. The company had also by this time considerably extended its operations from the original passage between Hamburg and New York. After the war between France and Germany it started a line to the West Indies, and later to Baltimore, Boston, Montreal and other ports in North America. In 1875 it absorbed the old Eagle Company of Hamburg, which had previously been its rival, and then began to run steamers to Central and South America, and later to China, Japan and the Straits Settlements. To-day the Hamburg-American Line may claim to be the largest steamship company in the world. For its services to New York run by twin- screw steamers it has the "Deutschland,” built at Stettin by the Vulcan Company. Her engines develop about 33,000 horse-power, and she was the first Atlantic liner to exceed a speed of 23 knots at sea. Other large steamers built for its Hamburg-Southampton- New York service are the "Kaiserin Augusta Victoria ” and the \*, Amerika,” which, though larger, has not the “ Deutschland’s” speed. A service from Hamburg to New York direct for third- class passengers only is also maintained. The Hamburg Company has extended its influence and enlarged its fleet by purchases from and absorptions of other fleets. Thus it has acquired vessels from the Carr Line and the Hansa Line of Hamburg, the Rickmers Line of Bremen, as well as from the Hamburg South America and the Hamburg-Calcutta companies. In conjunction with the Lloyd Line it took over the fleet of the Kinsing Line. In 1901, with a view to the feeding of its main lines, it acquired the Atlas Line of Liverpool—a company which had developed the trade between New York and the West Indies. Starting from Hamburg, its vessels run to New York, Portland, Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia, Galveston and New Orleans, and to Canadian ports. In Central and Southern America, there are lines to Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina. Amongst the West Indian Islands Cuba receives special attention from this line. There is a service to Eastern Asia, China and Japan. From Stettin its steamers run to New York, and from New York to the Mediterranean, Brazil and Eastern Asia. From Genoa they run to La Plata direct.

*Japan Mail Steamship Company, Limited (Nippon Yusen Kaisha).* —From an early period their insular frontiers made the Japanese a seafaring folk, but imperial policy for a long period shut them away from all intercourse with the rest of the world. It was not until about the year 1860 that the life of the West really touched Japan. In. 1868 steamship communication was opened between Tokyo and Osaka; in 1871 the Yubin Kisen Kaisha Steamship Company came into existence under the control of the Imperial Bureau of Com­munication; and in the same year a private company, called the Mitsubishi Kaisha, was founded. This may be said to have been the beginning of all modern maritime enterprises in Japan. In 1876 the government company gave up the contest, and its fleet passed into the hands of the private company. In 1873 the capacities of this company had been tested in the military expedition to Formosa, when its organization had been found excellent, but its fleet insufficient. The treasury now invited the company to buy up the Yokohama-Shanghai service of the Pacific Mail Steam­ship Company. In 1876 the company had a fleet of forty-two vessels, including sailing ships. In 1882 the government set on foot another rival line, the Kyodo Unyu Kaisha, but it did not answer, and in 1885 the two were amalgamated into the present “ Nippon Yusen Kaisha,” or "Japan Mail Steamship Company.” In the nine years which passed between this union and the outbreak of the war with China in 1894, the services between Japan and neighbouring countries were extended, and the development of the cotton trade induced the government to inaugurate a service between Japan and Bombay. During the war the vessels of the line were used for the transport of troops, and many additional ships had to be acquired. The result of the war gave an enormous impulse to trade and navigation. The company determined to run vessels to America, Europe and Australia. The capital was greatly increased, and orders were given for the construction of twelve twin-screw steamers of over 6000 tons each for the European line, and three of 3800 tons each for the Australian line. In 1899 the Japanese Diet resolved to grant subsidies to the company’s European and American lines. All its lines therefore now, with few exceptions, run under the mail contract of the Japanese government. There is a regular fortnightly service of twin-screw vessels between Yokohama, London and Antwerp; a monthly service between Yokohama and Melbourne; also between Yokohama and Victoria (British Columbia). There are lines to Bombay, Shanghai, Vladi­vostok, Newchang, Tientsin, and many local lines, touching at all the ports of the islands of Japan.

*Royal Mail Steam Packet Company.—*Soon after British-owned steamships began to run to America a company was formed by leading business men interested in the West Indies, to carry the mails from England to that part of the world. The charter of this company, to be known as the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, was granted in 1839. The government believed that the institution of a line carrying the mails regularly to British possessions in the West Indies was likely to prove of benefit to the empire, and granted it a large subsidy. The first contract with the government was entered into in March 1841. No less than fourteen large paddle-steamers capable of carrying the largest guns then used by the Royal Navy were at once ordered, and the service was opened with the “ Thames ” on the 3rd of January 1842, follow ed by other vessels in fortnightly succession. These steamers started from Falmouth and returned to Southampton, which was the company’s headquarters, though it had no dock accommodation in those days. In 1846 the company began to carry the mails for places on the western coast of South America, the Pacific Steam Navigation Company receiving them at Panama. In January 1851, the com­pany by contract with the government inaugurated a monthly service to Brazil and the river Plate, and new steamers were built which greatly increased the rapidity of transit. This company was therefore the first to institute direct mail communication by steamer between Europe and the countries of South America, as it had also been with the West Indies. The company’s vessels were employed continuously during the Crimean War in the transport of troops. It is interesting to note that it was from one of the com­pany’s ships, the “ Trent,” that Slidell and Mason, the commissioners of the Confederate states, were taken on their way to Europe by a United States man-of-war. In 1872 the service to Brazil and the River Plate was doubled. At the beginning of the 20th century the company seemed to be on the downward grade. But a change came over its fortunes. A new chairman, Sir Owen, Philipps, took over the reins and new enterprises were started in several directions. The interest of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company in the Orient-Pacific Line to Australia was purchased in January 1906, and steamers despatched once a month from London to Australia through the Suez Canal. This enterprise, however, was discontinued when the new mail contract came into force in May