

TRANSLATION.

Dear Sir,

s.s. "NAUSICAA".

Sir George Hunter has been good enough to communicate to us through Sir Fortescue Flannery a copy of your letter of the 21st instant, and it seems necessary for us to state in a precise manner our point of view as regards the classification of the s.s. "NAUSICAA".

The French Law obliges us, as it compels all French Navigation Companies, to have our vessels insured in France, but it leaves us free to choose amongst the various Classification Societies. Acting upon the advice of the Consulting Engineers of our Company we have decided to build a certain number of our vessels in Great Britain, and to have them classed with Lloyd's, being convinced that such a classification would give us every reasonable guarantee, and would assure us of ^a the quality of hull and machinery at least equal to the average. This hope has not been fulfilled in the case of the s.s. "NAUSICAA", the hull of which has manifestly been affected from the first months of her use by important corrosions, the causes of which seem to be due to the nature itself of the material used in the construction of the steamer.

We at once applied to your Society. We asked your Society to look into the matter and ascertain for what reasons such an unsatisfactory result had been obtained. You told us that you could only partly enquire into these reasons and not into them as a whole: your Committee were afraid that by

a complete examination of the question the result would be that they would be involved into a "responsibility concerning the composition of the steel submitted to the test of Lloyd's".

It is impossible for us to get a clear idea to what extent your Society could be involved in these researches, but it seems certain to us that no Underwriter or Shipowner could in future, if you maintain your point of view, have any trust in the Classification of your Register as regards one of the essential factors of the value of a vessel, viz: the quality of the steel used in her construction. We made it a point to set forth in a detailed manner our point of view. We hope that the Committee will reconsider the decision they have taken as regards the chemical examination of the plates of the s.s. "NAUSICAA". This examination does not involve in any way - it cannot involve in any way - a responsibility of a general order. It is a question of fact, the solution of which will enable us to fix our attitude towards our Underwriters and our Contractors.

In view of the importance of the question which has been raised we hope that you will excuse this long letter.

We rely on you to put before the Committee our way of looking upon the matter, and we feel sure that they will cause the quality of the steel of the "NAUSICAA" to be examined in a thorough manner.

We are,

etc. etc.