

and no one else should receive it. For cases have occurred here in which advancers have appropriated these remissions.

15. I unhesitatingly assert that if we were not forced to dispose of our ships on the English markets, we should obtain better prices. In France we generally obtain one pound sterling more per ton than in England. But those who advance the money send them to the English markets. If we could sell our ships free of duties on all markets, the price of our ships would be thereby increased.

18. The cost of vessels of 500 to 1,000 tons, regard being had to model and finish of workmanship, is from £9 to £11 currency, and they are classed at seven years. In France, England and the United States, the same vessels would cost from £12 to £15 currency.

19. There is abundant reason to complain of the manner in which we are treated in the English markets. Having no person to represent our interests, our ships are sacrificed at low prices, when better could be obtained. I regret being compelled to add that the very parties to whom our ships are consigned for sale, depreciate them. I am certain that if there were some person interested in the sale of our ships, empowered to select the best time for selling them, they would bring better prices. It would be advantageous for the ship-builders to form themselves into associations, but I apprehend it would not succeed for want of union amongst them; for whilst there are certainly good workmen amongst them, there are also others who are not so, and the latter are always the most pretentious.

20. The best means, in my opinion, of developing this branch of industry, would be to authorize the Banks to make advances, at moderate rates, to builders. To send, on their own account or that of the builders, some person to represent them in England and in France, in order to look after their interests. If they could not sell their vessels, they could freight them for any port which they might find most advantageous, and dispose of them afterwards on their return, if prices were better. In this way all parties would be benefited. It would, moreover, be necessary that the Government should make, in favor of the builders, a remission of duties on certain articles used in the construction of vessels, which was granted by the late Province of Canada. And by causing this branch of industry to flourish again, the Government would reap its own share of benefit and every other branch of industry be promoted.

(Translation.)

*Answers of Ph. Labbé, of St. Roch de Quebec, shipbuilder.*

To Q. 1.—I have been, since 1853, and am directly interested in shipbuilding, as a builder.

To Q. 2.—I have built ships of various dimensions, to the number of twenty-two, classed A 1, seven years, at Lloyd's. The average measurement has been 1,000 tons.

To Q. 3.—I am of opinion that that industry is not as active and prosperous now as formerly at Quebec; the principal cause of this is that the classification of our ships is unjust.

To Q. 4.—Of late years more considerable strikes than in former years have occurred among the workmen employed in shipbuilding, and this I attribute to the insufficiency of wages in relation to the high price of articles of subsistence. Shipcarpenters in the docks of Liverpool, London and the River Clyde, as well as at Bristol, are paid 7s. 6d. sterling; and at Lancaster, Fleetwood and other small ports they only receive 4s. sterling. In the English shipyards it is customary to employ some old workmen and a large number of apprentices, thus causing a variation in the rate of wages.

To Q. 6.—I am of opinion that the return in money of the duties on different articles employed in the building of ships, such as iron, cordage, &c., which was made to ship-builders by the Government, gave them protection.

To Q. 7.—I am of opinion that the tariff, by doing away with the import duties on such articles used in the building of ships, has rendered that protection illusory and insufficient, and that that industry suffers considerably from it. The protection is to the importing merchant and not to the builder.