

incapable of assisting the Superintendent of the works than this Mr. McKenzie could not have been chosen, and this appointment is evidently due to family favoritism and the influence of those who control the affairs of the Commission at Sorel unjustly. This appointment belonged, of right, to one of the pilots employed under the Commission, who are all men possessing the requirements that are necessary for the discharge of the duties of the office, who know the bed of the river well and the places where it must be deepened; one of those men could be of service to the Commissioners while fulfilling his duties as Assistant Superintendent, but not a man like Mr. McKenzie, who knows nothing at all in that respect, and cannot have been of any use to the Superintendent, because the latter could not rely on Mr. McKenzie's having knowledge enough for the taking of his place in case of need.

In the course of the summer of 1876 an accident happened to a scow, owing, it appears, to the fault of one of the captains of the Commissioners' steamers; and as the real author of the damage could not be discovered, all the captains of the steamers were condemned to pay the costs between them, so that the innocent paid for the guilty.

In the autumn of 1875 the Commissioners sent two cargoes of coal from Montreal to Sorel. When the coal had been delivered the captains of the vessels which carried it demanded payment of the freight, which was at the rate of sixty cents a chaldron, by agreement made in Montreal. John McCarthy and Thomas McKenzie then pretended that the coal was deliverable by English measure and not in chaldrons of thirty-six bushels, Canadian measure, which made a great difference. One of the captains refused to agree to that, and brought an action against the Commissioners for the payment of his freight. The Court decided in his favour and condemned the Commissioners to pay the costs. The other captain, who was poor and had a pressing need of his earnings for the support of his family, was obliged to submit to Messrs. McCarthy and McKenzie's pretensions in order to get his money at once; so that about fifteen dollars were extorted from him.

Again, quite lately, a captain of a vessel undertook to carry a load of coals from Quebec to Sorel for the Commissioners, the freight being payable by the vendor of the coals in Quebec. The captain took his load out of the cargo of the vessel in the stream and did not keep account of the quantity taken; as is always done in such cases, he signed bills of lading for two hundred and fifty chaldrons "more or less." On arrival at Sorel the coals were measured by his men and by the Commissioners' employees, and he was found it have more than thirty chaldrons in excess of the quantity specified in the bills of lading. Then the captain demanded a receipt to the effect that he had delivered so many chaldrons of coals in order that he might get paid his freight by the owner in Quebec; but those gentlemen would not give him a receipt for more than the two hundred and fifty chaldrons specified in the bills of lading, not choosing to take any notice of the words "more or less" therein contained. The matter is still in suspense, and will probably give rise to another action against the Commissioners.

In the course of last winter, Messrs. John McCarthy and Thomas McKenzie got a large amount of work done in workshops in Montreal, to the great detriment of the owners of workshops in Sorel, who could have done all that work more cheaply than it was done in Montreal. Since then it has been a rule in the office at Sorel to give out all the profitable contracts in Montreal, and no longer to have any but trifling things done here, and then at lower prices than elsewhere. And yet there are first class workshops in Sorel which could do all the work of the Commission, to the satisfaction of the most exacting. It is the same with timber, which the Commissioners always buy from merchants on the Ottawa and elsewhere, and that timber costs them more when it is ready for use than that which the lumber merchants and owners of saw mills in Sorel could sell them, because the handling of it in sending it to the mills to be sawed and then bringing it back to the shipyard costs the Commissioners so much that its cost is greatly enhanced by the time it is ready for use; and there would be great profit to be made by buying from the merchants in Sorel.

It is the same with the patronage of the commission among the merchants in