

an uncomfortable one—half buck-board—half caleche, with very little shelter from the rain, which came down in torrents. But our French Canadian pony was “a good un,” and covered the six miles of heavy muddy roads in thirty-five minutes.

We were just in time—to see the Vancouver slowing up and the pilot climbing up the side. Just in time to be too late to get on board after all my efforts, and my long journey from Quebec. I had letters for the commander, Captain Lindall, (since drowned off the bridge of the steamer, poor fellow, while on duty in a stiff gale), and for Mr. Cramp, of Montreal, one of the directors of the Dominion Company, who was on board. I had also encumbered myself with a bundle of the latest papers—well knowing from my own experience how the latest home news would be appreciated by those cooped up at sea for so many days. And I had indulged in pleasing anticipations of a welcome greeting and a good time generally on board. How very vexing was my disappointment may be imagined, indeed I will not say that I offered up prayers there and then for the Intercolonial, or for those who caused the train to be that half hour behind time, and with which to the good, I should have succeeded in reaching the Vancouver in time, as I had hoped and expected. But “Ill blows the wind that profits nobody.” If my feelings of disappointment were grievous, those of the agents and friends of the Dominion Company were exultant in the extreme at the splendid performance of their fine new vessel. And, if “friends in distress make sorrow the less,” I should have had another consolation. I found, upon returning from Father Point to Rimouski, which I did with-

out delay that same evening, to join the Allan steamship, Sardinian, then hourly expected, that I had a sharer in my disappointment—but from a far different cause,—Mons. Lafrance, chief of the Allan line pilots, was on the wharf, glass to eye, looking out for the Sardinian. He was terribly troubled. “Ah! Mon Dieu!” he was exclaiming—“Did you see her? that Vancouver, go by?—I’ve been for twenty years taking up the steamers for the Company (the Allan), and I cannot bear it! To see our mail boat beaten! That I should live to see this day!” His mortification and distress were extreme, and were expressed with all the vehement shrugs and emotion so characteristic of our French Canadian countrymen, at a discomfiture that was evidently regarded by him not only as a loss of prestige to his Company, but as an irreparable loss personal to himself.

Speaking of pilots, it may be mentioned that there are twenty-three regularly engaged in piloting the ocean steamships, viz:—Allan line, eight; four of whom are for the mail, and four for the freight boat service, Dominion line, four; Beaver line, three; and three pilots in all for the German, Donaldson, Thompson and other ocean-going boats. There are also two others who are (or were) captains of the steamers Pilino and Miramichi, plying between Quebec and the Gulf ports. The pilots on the lower St. Lawrence are an incorporated body. The fees are paid into a general fund and divided at the end of the season between the members, the season’s earnings average about \$600 to each man. The charges for pilotage are:—For vessels coming up the river, \$3.30, per foot draught of vessel; for vessels going down, \$3.15 per foot draught. Only two