

Report of the Commission on the St. Lawrence Pilotage.

The report of the commission appointed by the Dominion Government to enquire into the St. Lawrence pilotage system was presented to the Minister of Marine, April 10. The commissioners, Commander Lindsay, Dominion Wreck Commissioner; T. Robb, Manager Shipping Federation of Canada, and A. Lachance, Chairman of Pilots, Quebec, agreed on the report, with the exception of the recommendation for the abolition of the Quebec Corporation of Pilots, to which Mr. Lachance did not agree, and in a minority report gave his reasons for his dissent. Following are the recommendations made:—

That the Corporation of Pilots for and below the harbor of Quebec be abolished and the charter cancelled.

That the pension fund should be taken over and managed by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries.

That the Government should appoint a superintendent of seagoing experience in full charge of the district to organize and administer its affairs and be directly responsible to the Minister. That he should not have been a pilot of the district at any time, and qualified assistants should be appointed as may be found necessary.

That a change should be made in the present apprenticeship system. That the indentures should be made to the Minister. That public notice should be given when there are vacancies for apprenticeship. That examinations of candidates should be carefully conducted under proper supervision, either in English or in French, each candidate having previously passed the physical and eyesight tests.

That branch pilots should not be allowed to take work outside of their pilotage district, or be employed in any other occupation than pilots within that district.

That the eyesight test should be on a standard basis and should not be left altogether to the theories of the examining oculist, and that one standard should apply to all.

That the number of branch pilots be reduced, the maximum to be 70 and the minimum 60.

That the age of retirement for branch pilots should be 65 years, with a limited yearly extension to men who can pass the semi-annual examinations and that retirement be compulsory at the age of 70.

That an improved pilot tender be provided at Father Point. That a pilot launch be provided at Quebec.

That a chart of the Saguenay River be immediately prepared and made available to navigators, showing lights, buoys and dredged channel near Chicoutimi and that additional aids to navigation as recommended in the evidence be installed in the river.

The report states that the evidence in regard to the Montreal pilotage district is mainly of a favorable nature, the shipping companies being unanimous in favor of being allowed to select their men. The administration of the district was found to be in good condition, the discipline well maintained and the change to the authority of the Minister of Marine had been a complete success.

The official in charge of the Quebec office appears to the commission to be thoroughly incompetent to fill this responsible position, and an immediate remedy is suggested if the working of the system is not to be disorganized. It is suggested, first, that the number of selected apprentices be restricted to four and that the number of entrants for apprentices be limited to meet probable requirements; that the vacancies

for apprentices should be notified by public advertisement; that the length of service of an apprentice should be reduced to six years in place of seven, two years of which should be at sea on a vessel employed in the Canadian trade to the St. Lawrence; that either English or French be used for examination purposes; that permission should be given to liner pilots to work for more than one firm; that the tariff be increased; and that certain exemptions for the Montreal district be allowed.

The commission recommends that the superintendent at Quebec have control of both Montreal and Quebec pilotage. The opinion is expressed that the pilotage tariff at Quebec is too high, having been fixed in the days of the sailing ships, when trips to Quebec sometimes occupied several days. The lowest rate prevailing is in advance of the Montreal rate, although the responsibilities of the latter are much more severe.

In regard to Quebec pilotage the report says that the whole system is loose and unsatisfactory. The superintendent appointed by the Government has generally superintended nothing, but got all the information from the secretaries of the corporations who submitted it to the department as coming from themselves. The commission recommends the appointment of a pilotage commission, with functions partly executive and partly administrative. The executive functions would deal with the making of orders, the constitution, the regulation of pilotage at ports and the passing of bylaws, all subject to the approval of the Minister.

Mr. Lachance, in his minority report, differs from the other commissioners mainly in reference to the suggested abolition of the Corporation of Pilots at Quebec. He suggests that some restrictions be made to oblige small craft to keep out of the narrow channel when there is sufficient water elsewhere; that their lights should not be all around the horizon, and that vessels from the lakes should be forced to submit to the rule of the road when navigating the St. Lawrence River. He also suggests an increased tariff on ocean steamers, believing that the Montreal tariff is very low. He believes, in conclusion, that the Corporation of Pilots for and below the harbor of Quebec should be maintained with all its rights, especially in relation with the sharing of the earnings.

The pilotage earnings of the Montreal district in 1911 were \$87,928 55, and of the Quebec district \$143,741.87.

Montreal Harbor Improvements for 1913.

The improvement programme which the Montreal Harbor Commissioners have outlined for the current season involves the expenditure of approximately \$2,000,000, and marks the commencement of the second stage of the plan adopted three years ago, and which will be spread over 12 years. The chief work for the season covers the decreasing of the velocity of the St. Marys channel current to within the safety margin for vessels navigating the harbor, and which will probably reduce the necessity for the semaphore signalling system which has been under consideration. In dealing with the current, dredging will be undertaken at the guard pier to the south of St. Helens Island, and the artificial works at Moffat Island. The east quay wall embankment on the south of the guard pier will also be extended, thus backing the volume of water below the Victoria

pier across the channel towards Moffat Island. The construction of the artificial embankment will also be continued, and tracks laid thereon, and on completion the whole will form a part of the harbor railway terminal system. Extensions to the Alexandra, King Edward and Jacques Cartier piers are also contemplated, but it is said that such work cannot well be undertaken until the completion of the dredging operations at the guard pier, and the alteration of the entrance to the Lachine Canal. A 15 ton electric hoist, capable of taking full teams to the second floor of the Allan and White Star Lines' sheds, is to be erected at once. The addition of 1,500,000 bush. capacity to elevator no. 1 has already been announced; elevator no. 2 is to have its conveyor galleries completed, leading from the elevator to shed 1, on the Victoria pier. The high level tracks between Victoria and Racine piers are to be ballasted, trimmed and made permanent, and a 500 ft. wharf is to be built at Point aux Trembles. Other work will comprise the levelling up of the dry dock site, so that the erection of the machine shops, etc., in connection with the dry dock and ship-building plant can be proceeded with.

Dominion Government Fisheries Patrol Steamboat for Lake Winnipeg.

The Dominion Government is considering tenders for the construction, equipment, dismantling, re-erection and delivery of a first class twin screw, steel, wood sheathed fisheries patrol steamboat, for Lake Winnipeg, to be delivered at Selkirk, Man. Following are the principal dimensions:— Length between perpendiculars, 140 ft.; breadth, moulded, 26½ ft.; breadth, extreme, 27 ft. 9¼ ins.; depth moulded, 13½ ft.; load draught level keel to bottom sheathing, in fresh water, 7½ ft.; deadweight on above draught, 60 tons; indicated horse power, 900; complement, officers and men, 15.

The vessel is to be of steel throughout, except where otherwise specified, and to be built and engined in accordance with the specifications, under Government survey, and to be classed 100 A1 at Lloyd's for lake service, under their special surveys. She is to be fitted with water ballast, and full equipment to the Board of Trade or Canadian Steamboat Regulations, with five main transverse water tight bulkheads. A water tight flat at bow and stern, with the bulkheads adjoining, will form the trimming tanks. The general construction outline will be with straight stem, cruiser stern and two decks, the main deck being continuous, and the lower deck extending from the stem to the forward boiler room bulkhead. It is specified that the steel and all material, equipment, auxiliaries, stores, etc., shall be of Canadian or British manufacture throughout. The engines are to be of the twin screw, triple expansion, jet condensing type supplied with steam by two Scotch boilers working under forced draught, and for a working pressure of 180 lbs. a square inch. Complete electric light installation, with steam driven turbo generator is to be supplied, and all auxiliary pumps, steam windlass, steam capstan, steam steering gear, etc.

The vessel is to be erected, dismantled and the various parts painted and numbered, and together with the engines, boilers, auxiliaries, equipment, etc., packed ready for shipment to Selkirk, Man., eight months after the awarding of the contract, and then forwarded to Selkirk, where the final assembling, erection, launching, completion and trials will be made.