
a wish to the Canadian Government, that any legislation on this subject, in Canada, should be deferred until their Bill had become law, as it was most important in a matter like this, in which both countries were interested, that the legislation in both places should be in harmony. Up to the present time therefore, I have abstained from advising legislation here, on this important branch of the public service, in the hope, from year to year, that the Merchant Shipping Code, which has been before the Imperial Parliament for the last three years, would become law, and that our Shipping Laws could then be assimilated throughout the Dominion, and made in harmony with the Imperial Act; but as yet, it has not passed the British Parliament, and it now appears doubtful whether it will even be discussed during the present Session.

In the event of its not passing this Session, I think it would not be advisable to delay our legislation on the subject any longer than this year, and at the close of the present Session of Parliament in England, I will be prepared to recommend action on our part accordingly.

CERTIFICATES TO MASTERS AND MATES.

Since the last annual report of this Department was made, the Act 33 Vic., cap. 17, passed by the Canadian Parliament respecting certificates to masters and mates of sea-going ships registered in Canada has gone into full operation, and so far has proved most successful. The Act was specially confirmed by Her Majesty in Council on 14th January, 1871, and the rules and regulations under which the examinations were to be made in Canada, and certificates of competency granted to masters and mates having been reported to Her Majesty as satisfactory by the Board of Trade, and that the examinations to be held in Canada would be so conducted as to be equally efficient with the examinations held in the United Kingdom, and to show like qualifications and competency on the part of persons possessing them, Her Majesty, by Order in Council, dated 19th August, 1871, proclaimed that the certificates of competency granted by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries of Canada would be recognized by the British Government and its officers in the United Kingdom and elsewhere as of equal value with those granted by the Board of Trade in Great Britain. A copy of this important Order in Council will be found in the Appendix, also a copy of the rules and regulations which have been approved by the British Government, and forms of certificates of competency and service. As soon as this information was received last year by the Canadian Government, I immediately proceeded to make the necessary arrangements for organizing the requisite Boards of Examination at the principal seaports where they would be required, and in the meantime it was considered advisable to establish such Boards at three of the ports where they would be most required, viz., at Quebec, St. John, New Brunswick and Halifax.

It was also considered desirable that the Chairman of each of these Boards should be one and the same person, who should move about from place to place, and preside over their meetings when candidates were ready for examination. Under this system the examinations before each of the Boards are conducted on an uniform plan, and the