

very slowly down the Gulf of St. Lawrence, unless the weather was very clear, and call at Halifax for the mails." Mr. Fry here, not only points out the difficulties of the St. Lawrence, but makes an Atlantic port of call a condition of his tender for a guaranteed speed. It would be a waste of public funds to pay a large subsidy for a line of fast boats on a route that will only permit of an average speed of freight boats on New York tracks.

The favourite form of opposition to the route south of the ice, is that between Quebec and Liverpool, the Belle Isle route is geographically shorter. (See Admiral Hopkins on this point.) The northern route is about 150 miles shorter than the southern; but the time spent in the water carriage of the mails, via Belle Isle is several hundred miles in favor of the southern route. The long run of one thousand miles through ice and coasting waters would be avoided, and the extra distance between Quebec and Liverpool by the southern route is more than compensated by the quick and regular passages by the free ice route. The average passage from Moville, or Tory Island, Ireland, to the Arctic ice is good; but on the thousand miles from the Arctic current to Quebec is where the detention occurs. If there is any doubt in the public mind with regard to these delays, the actual detention can be obtained from the captains' sworn statements of each voyage at the Post Office Department, Ottawa, as required by the mail contracts. It was suggested that fast tenders might be used to pilot the mail boats in fogs to facilitate despatch. On interviewing captains of the St. Lawrence mail boats at Halifax this winter, as to the prospect of despatch by the use of such boats, one replied, "Pilot boat nonsense;—what good would they be in fogs, or in the ice area, when at times it is impossible to see the length of the ship ahead?"

An ex-St. Lawrence mail boat captain speaking on the fast pilot boat question said, "I've seen icebergs only about a third of a mile apart, apparently in every direction. At times I have had to go dead slow in clear weather; at other times, stop my ship, and again, when winding through them and approaching bergs with considerable under water surface, I have had to back my ship and seek another opening. Under such circumstances pilot boat would be useless." Continuing, he said, that at times, in