

from which point the wind was blowing at the time, and they think it strange that this point should have been passed, occasioning so much loss of time in returning from Brandy Pots, about fifty miles further up the river. It further appears from the evidence of the pilots themselves that during thick weather the pilot vessels cruise only on the south shore, not going further northward than mid-channel of the river, while all the wrecks now enquired into occurred on the north shore. Your Committee are of opinion that the incorporation of the Pilots into a body, and the division of their earnings among incompetent as well as competent men, tends to destroy the competition which formerly existed and to create carelessness, as shewn in the course of this investigation. During the enquiry an opportunity was afforded of examining into the working of the Incorporation of Pilots, and your Committee found that the system was defective and that the by-laws of the association itself were not enforced—as, for instance, it is enacted that a log or journal shall be regularly kept by each master of a pilot vessel and a copy thereof deposited in the office in Quebec each time that the vessel arrives in port. In no instance has this been done, which can in some measure be explained by the fact that some of the masters can neither read nor write. Taking all the circumstances into consideration it will be for the Council to decide whether it will not be advisable to apply for a Commission to enquire into the present working of the Pilot system and to ascertain if the trade has been benefitted or otherwise by the incorporation of the pilots. As the enquiry was one of the greatest importance to the trade generally, your Committee secured the services of John B. Parkin, Esq., advocate, to watch the investigation on the part of the Board of Trade, and they have much pleasure in bearing testimony to his care and attention throughout. Your Committee have also to thank the gentlemen composing the Commission for their courtesy and for the impartial manner in which they conducted the investigation.”

(Signed),

JAMES DEAN,
THOS. H. GRANT,
THOS. C. LEE.

“ The Council consider this one of the most important subjects upon which they have been called to deliberate this year, and it has therefore received special attention. The reputation of the River St. Lawrence as a safe and convenient channel for the transport of passengers and goods from one continent to the other, and the prosecution of our coasting trade is a matter of paramount interest. The safety of life and the security of property passing over our waters are questions of importance so serious as to demand from the Board of Trade careful watchfulness. The establishment of duly licensed branch-pilots, the construction of light-houses, the laying of buoys and the stationing of light-ships, have been provided for by the Government, and with the number of these aids to safe navigation that exist from Cap Rosier to Quebec, such destructive wrecks as those of last autumn should not occur.

“ The destruction of the new Custom House building by fire caused considerable anxiety for the safety of registers and documents of value of record there, A suggestion was in consequence offered to the Commissioner of Public Works in favor of making the interior thoroughly fire-proof; and, on the 5th October, a deputation was named to urge the views of the Council. On the 10th October, information was received that, owing to the multiplicity of the Hon. Mr. Chapais' occupations, he could not then meet the Committee, but that he would endeavor to do so during the following week, since which time, the Council regret to say, no communication has been received from the Department.