

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT,

it is thickest, it is dissolved and dispersed in the ocean long before the return of the ships in September."

I sent through Mayor Logan to the Mayor of New Bedford, Mass., a list of questions I desired answers to, and he kindly responded and says that the following are given by reliable men, who have whaled in Hudson's Bay.

"Ice is generally met with before reaching Resolution Island at the eastern entrance to the Strait, and is seen at intervals from there to Mansfield Island, at the western end. Whalers are said to come from Fox Channel into the Bay, but no one knows how many whalers winter in the Bay. They never experience trouble from floating ice in the north of the Bay. The course in is on either side of Mansfield Island, after hugging the north side of the Strait. They do not know if the Strait ever freezes over, as they winter in latitude $65^{\circ} 30'$ N, in the Bay. The ice on an average freezes for three and sometimes four miles from the shore. A steamer would have the advantage of being able to pass through ice that will hold a sailing ship fast. Steamers could find open water on a passage through the Strait from July 15th to November 1st."

Lieut. Chappelle states as a reason for selecting the northern passage close to Resolution Islands:—"That entering Hudson's Strait, it is a necessary precaution to keep close in with the northern shore, as the currents out of the Hudson's and Davis' Straits meet on the south side of the entrance, and carry the ice with great velocity to the southward, along the coast of Labrador." (Dr. Bell.)

The following incident, related in Gunn's History of Manitoba, serves to illustrate how many of the fears of the navigation of the Bay were propagated:—In August, 1836, the annual ship from London to York Factory was driven from her mooring at the latter place by the storm, and the Captain instead of trying to re-enter the harbor, made sail with all the supplies of that year for the Red River Colony, back to England,"—the reason given is that their anchor was lost.

The Lower St. Lawrence (notwithstanding its comparative narrowness) is partly open even in the middle of winter. But the difficulty, as in the case of the Hudson's Bay, is the apparent impossibility of getting into harbors. Harbors such as Churchill or York on Hudson's Bay, would have the advantage over Quebec or Montreal of connecting directly with the open sea, and hence in autumn vessels would not be liable to be frozen in, as occasionally happens in the St. Lawrence, as for example, in the autumn of 1880, also in the autumn of 1870, when the outward bound shipping got frozen in below Quebec, occasioning a loss, it was said, of over a million of