

went down in Lake Michigan, after colliding with another vessel. Fortunately only one man was lost on this occasion. At the same time the *Northern Queen*, a very fine boat, running from Collingwood to Chicago, was stranded in Lake Michigan and became a total loss. In 1881, the same year, the *Winnipeg*, a very fine and large steamer, running from Collingwood to Duluth, was burnt at Duluth. Four lives were known to have been lost on this occasion, there may possibly have been more. There was no time for escape. It would be well to enquire into the causes of these accidents. In 1881, again, the *Columbia*, another vessel belonging to the Collingwood line, and plying between Chicago and Collingwood, foundered in Lake Michigan off a place called Frankfort. In this, as in the case of the *Simcoe*, the vessel was proved to have been overloaded. The cargo, composed of grain, shifted. A number of the passengers and crew escaped in a boat, which could not stand a very heavy sea. Still, they say the *Columbia* went down through stress of weather. Fifteen lives were lost on that occasion. All these losses form a terrible record, for one summer, of loss of property and life, and the question how those casualties arose should be enquired into. Where did the fault lie? Did the officers charged with inspecting steamers do their duty, or was the law defective? Coming to 1882, about the 16th May, last year, the *Manitoulin*, a very fine steamer, running between Collingwood and Sault Ste. Marie, was burnt in Manitowaning Bay. She took fire approaching Manitowaning; the captain headed her for the shore, but before she could reach it the passengers had to jump into the water and there was a great loss of life. But for the promptitude, decision and energy of the captain there would have been a much greater loss. Fortunately, many escaped, but still many perished. What remained of the hull was taken to Manitowaning, and it is reported that on being cleared a quantity of human bones was shoveled out, so that the actual loss was never ascertained. In September, 1882, the *Asia* foundered in Georgian Bay. Almost every one knows of that terrible disaster. The boat was crowded not only with people going up to Eastern Algoma but with many going to the lumber camps, and I have heard the loss estimated as high as 200, never less than 100, and probably it was 150. In June, 1882, in the north channel of Lake Huron, the *Vanderbilt* was burnt. In November of the same year, another steamer, the *Josephine Kidd*, was burned off Wiarton. Here is a terrible record of no less than twelve vessels in three years foundered or burned, and of a loss of life which was something dreadful. I believe there is a very perfect system of inspecting machinery. The inspector is, I understand, a competent man, and the machinery is always inspected; but it is also necessary to inspect the hull, for if the hull is bad the ship will go down in the first storm, though the machinery may be perfect. I am very glad to see, by the Speech from the Throne, that legislation will take place in respect to this. It is certainly very much needed, for the law, as it now stands, has not been enforced. There is a law now, but there are no inspectors, and no inspection of the hulls, that I am aware of, has taken place. The consequence is, a great loss of life and vessels. This question has been very much discussed in Algoma, and I have had a good many suggestions from captains of vessels and others, as to the best mode to be followed. It is evident that vessels navigating the lakes should have a line marked as in ocean vessels, beyond which line they should not be loaded. That depth line ought to be regulated by the inspector. There should be a line for the fall as well as for the summer season. I have some letters here from captains of vessels which, I think, it will be interesting to read. One of these is signed by two captains well known on the lakes, who navigated the *Quebec* and *Manitoba* of the Sarnia line for a long time, one of them being now in command of the fine

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steamer *Compana*, Capt. Anderson. They write me as follows:—

"SARNIA, January 31st, 1883.

"S. J. DAWSON, Esq, M.P., Ottawa.

"DEAR SIR,—According to your request, we hereby submit a few of the reasons why we think our Parliament should pass a law compelling all masters and mates of passenger steamers to undergo an examination before a competent Board of lake sailor men, and obtain a certificate of competency before being allowed to fill either of these positions.

"1st. Every master to retain his position should have successfully commanded a boat say three or five years, and those not having done so, should undergo an examination proving themselves worthy of a trial, such examinations to consist of such questions as follows:—

"2nd. What would you do in case of an accident to the engine during a storm?

"3rd. In case you thought your boat was going to founder, how would you proceed to care for your people, in regard to lowering your yawl boats or otherwise?

"4th. What would you do in case of fire?

"5th. In regard to foggy weather what would you do, and in case your boat goes ashore, what, in your opinion, is the first thing to be done?

"6th. Do you understand handling sails, anchors and charts?

"These questions, Mr. Dawson, are very important, as we know we have a good many masters to-day that do not know any of those things; also a good many men now in charge, that, supposing their rudder should break, would be completely at a loss what to do. We have had several instances of this, and also of those who, if their boat got into the trough of the sea in bad weather, would not know how to get her out of it, and the result might be disastrous.

"Now as regards mates, we think they should prove, to the satisfaction of the 'Board of Examiners,' that they have served a reasonable time in that or other positions on the lakes, and that their qualifications are such as to enable them to fill the position.

"As to who is to compose the Board of Examiners, we think there ought to be three men who have commanded steamers on our lakes for say ten or fifteen years, and would recommend one for Lakes Ontario and Erie and the other two to take the Detroit and St. Clair River, Lake Huron, Georgian Bay and Lake Superior.

"Also we wish you to impress upon the Government the necessity of all passenger steamers on our lakes being supplied with life rafts capable of carrying at least fifty people.

"We consider something should be done respecting the buoys and beacons in the Sault Ste. Marie River and North Channel, as there has been a great deal of dissatisfaction since Captain Joseph Wilson gave up the charge of them. As they have been placed lately it has been extremely dangerous for strangers.

"Now, Mr. Dawson, these are a few of our ideas in the rough, please put them in proper shape and present them, and if you require our services any further command us.

"Yours truly,

"JAS. B. SYMES,

"E. B. ANDERSON.

"P. S.—The Board of Examiners, in our opinion, should be the Hull and Equipment Inspectors."

Now, I have another letter from a steamboat captain who has sailed on the lakes half his life, and who has had a great deal of experience—I mean Captain Dick, of Toronto. He says:

"Several steamers have been lost from overloading. For instance, the *Waubuno* was overloaded, and no doubt her false sides were rotten. The *Columbia* on Lake Michigan overloaded, and for the cause of the disaster see particulars in Scrap Book. The *Jane Miller* overloaded and was unfitted for the service she was engaged in. In the *Asia* case it is not probable that the exact number lost will be ever known; her loss cannot be attributed to unseaworthiness nor overloading, the vessel was not properly ballasted or trimmed. Had the *Asia* been drawing eight feet forward and nine feet aft, I feel safe in saying there would have been no loss unless she had struck a rock, and there was no evidence to the effect that she did. More care than formerly should be used regarding the strengthening of bulwarks and the supports of the upper cabins and engine room. It is not the fault of our models or build of our vessels alone that has caused so many losses, but overloading, imperfect loading, old age, and little or no repairs. The inspection never called for the steamers to be laden to any safe line, nor do I believe the last Steamboat Act demands it. It is very necessary, and I would suggest a summer load line and a spring and fall line. The loss of the steamer *Manito lin* was supposed to be caused by the breaking of a lamp and spilling of the oil. All steamboat lamps should be made with brass bowls, such as Piper's Safety Marine Lamp, that cannot be broken or spill oil. No glass lamps should be used on a steamboat. Steamboat oil rooms and lamp rooms should be lined with zinc or tin, and also the floor. They should be kept scrupulously clean. This department should be strictly looked after. Passenger steamers ought not to carry any combustible material. Steamboats ought to be inspected early in order to give owners an opportunity to do the required repairs to make their vessels seaworthy and pass the required inspection. In many cases it might be found necessary to raise the boilers to ascertain the condition of