

REPLIES by the Council of the Montreal Board of Trade, to Questions submitted by Hon. P. Mitchell, Minister of Marine and Fisheries for the Dominion of Canada.

Reply to Question 1st—It is unnecessary for vessels trading to Europe, these being usually classed in Britain, and that more to the convenience and advantage of owners, shippers, underwriters, &c., than any Canadian classification would be. A uniform and general classification for all vessels trading within the Dominion might be advantageous; but, we fear, would be difficult to make really efficient without too great expense, and unless thorough, would be useless.

Reply to Questions 2nd, 5th and 6th—We consider that all charges for purposes named should be borne by the General Government, so that these very important things may be at all times kept on an efficient footing; whereas, if paid by charges on shipping, the revenue would fluctuate so greatly as to cause grave inconvenience. But we deem it quite just that all shipping should pay such dues as would, on an average of many years, repay to Government a considerable part of such disbursements.

Reply to Question 3rd.—All vessels not registered in the Province, on entering the Port, pay Hospital dues of 1d. per ton if the same has not been levied at Quebec. Provincial registered vessels under 200 tons are exempt from Hospital dues.

Wharfage :—Sailing vessels pay ½d. per ton per day.

Steamers ½d. “ “

Vessels clearing for sea, pay sea pilotage to and from Quebec and Bic.

Vessels clearing for sea, pay also dues under the Port Warden's Act.

In addition to the Tariff of Pilotage dues, from the 10th to 19th November \$1 additional is charged; after 19th November \$1 additional is again charged.

Reply to Question 4th.—The Imperial system prevails in the eastern part of the Province, and the Provincial in the western part. The former is the simpler and cheaper plan, and every way preferable. The transference of a vessel from one port of registry to another, under the Colonial system, is tedious and expensive. The Colonial system might be advantageously made to conform to the Imperial system. There would be no danger or inconvenience in a change of this nature, but it would be beneficial in every way.

Reply to Question 7th.—The Pilot service below Quebec is unsatisfactory and much complained of by ship-owners. Formerly pilots were paid according to their personal services, which were in proportion to their skill, industry and intelligence. This plan gave inducements to pilots to be on the look out in fog or stormy weather. At present these pilots are all placed upon the same level, careless and attentive men share alike in the common earnings of all, to the notorious injury of the service. Pilotage should be compulsory, but the authorities should take measures for its efficiency.

Reply to Question 8th.—System not very satisfactory, but seamen being almost exclusively shipped at Quebec, the Board of Trade, Customs Authorities, and Ship Agents there are better able than we, to indicate remedies.

Reply to Question 9th.—Water Police of Montreal are efficient. It is desirable, if possible, to arrange for the men being employed in some way during winter, and not disbanded, as has been formerly the case. During the season of Navigation they should be relieved from stated attendance on the Police Magistrates' Court.

Reply to Question 10th.—Marine and Quarantine Hospitals should be in different locations.

Reply to Question 11th.—Grave evil exists in Montreal from the separation of the Boards of Harbor Commissioners and Trinity Board. The former are charged with the maintenance of the Harbor, the latter with the Pilots frequenting the Harbor.

Since the transference of the works at Lake St. Peter to the Government, the survey and maintenance of the Channel to Quebec, and the improvements found necessary from time to time, appear to be unprovided for; neither Board has charge of these duties. They are in fact not performed at all. Pilots finding occasional obstruction do not report. It is difficult to exaggerate the evils of this state of things. The Harbor Commission could efficiently perform all the duties required, including supervision of the Pilots, and the work would be more economically and more efficiently done if under one Board. It might be necessary to enlarge the Harbor Board. Its composition is not satisfactory. It consists of three members appointed by Government, and in addition the President of