

Wreck Commissioners' Enquiries and Judgments.

Enquiries have been held and judgments delivered in connection with the following casualties:—

Collision of s.s. Picton with Laurier Pier, Montreal.

Held at Montreal, June 12, by Capt. L. A. Demers, Dominion Wreck Commissioner, assisted by Capt. C. J. Stuart and J. C. Caine, as nautical assessors, into the collision of the s.s. Picton with the Laurier pier, Montreal, June 8. The evidence showed that while, in some cases, the casting off of the stern tow line may be trivial, in this case it proved to be a factor in the damage caused by the s.s. Picton. Owing to an eddy, at the end of the Tarte pier, causing an inward flow, the moment the line was cast off the stern of the ship, she gradually left the wharf until she was within 150 ft. of the Laurier Pier. In the meantime, those on the bridge of the Picton had been warned that her engines were not ready to respond to orders, and no attempt was made by the master or pilot to secure the ship to the wharf, both of them relying on the two tugs in attendance. The evidence with respect to orders to the tugs was conflicting, but the court accepted the version of the masters of the tugs, who stated that they had no orders, and found that the responsibility for the damage caused to the pier, rested with the pilot, A. Perreault, who allowed the Picton to approach too close to the pier, this being brought about by the stern line having been cast off before her engines were ready, and without orders from either the pilot or master, in consequence of which, the stern of the ship drifted 150 ft., before any action was taken. The pilot erred in judgment and was therefore reprimanded and cautioned to be more careful in future. The master of the Picton, M. Mathias, was also cautioned, for the reason that his engines were not ready, it being his duty to see that his ship did not leave her berth before everything was in order. The opinion was expressed that an order to pass a breast line ashore should have been given, when it was found that the stern line had been cast off. The tugs were held not to be in any way to blame for the accident.

Capt. C. J. Stuart, one of the assessors, reported that he could not agree to exonerating the masters of the tugs. He stated that while of the opinion that it was the duty of the tugs to obey orders from the ship in tow, he did not consider that their duties ended there, but that they should be able, owing to experience, to anticipate the pilot's orders and have such control as to avoid such an accident, and for this reason he considered that the masters of the Sincennes-McNaughton Line's tugs Mathilda and Macsinco were jointly responsible for the casualty.

Stranding of the s.s. Quebec.

Held at Montreal, June 21, by Capt. L. A. Demers, Dominion Wreck Commissioner, assisted by Capt. C. Lapierre and C. J. Stuart, as nautical assessors, into stranding of Canada Steamship Lines' s.s. Quebec near Three Rivers, Que., June 3. The court decided that the pilot, E. Gauvreau, erred through over confidence in his courses, and that he was in default for not taking a cast of the lead occasionally, to ascertain if his vessel was keeping in navigable waters. Being an unlicensed pilot, the court had no method of dealing with him, but to find him at fault. The court held that the first offi-

cer showed a lack of knowledge as to his duties while in charge, and it took into consideration that he was a stranger in that service and had not received specific instructions as to the role he had to play in connection with the pilot and wheelsman. He was therefore only reprimanded severely, and cautioned to use better judgment in future, and acquire a better conception of his duties and responsibilities as a first officer. The court expressed the opinion that in view of the evidence adduced, the chemical fumes from the Wayagamack mills played an important part in the casualty, as they cast a mist over the surroundings, obliterating all lights at intervals. It therefore strongly recommended that some action be taken in order to cause the elimination once and for all of these fumes, which to its knowledge have been a nuisance and a danger to navigation in the vicinity of Three Rivers for some time past.

Stranding of s.s. Manchester Division.

Held at Montreal, June 24, by Capt. J. B. Henry, Wreck Commissioner, assisted by Capt. J. C. Caine and C. J. Stuart, as nautical assessors, into the stranding of Manchester Liners' s.s. Manchester Division in Quebec harbor, June 7. The court expressed the opinion that the casualty was due to the parting of a new 9 in. hawser leading from the starboard bow to the tug Belle. There was nothing to indicate undue chafing of the rope, which was protected on the stem by a paunch mat, and the evidence of the master of the Belle showed that the rope parted well clear of the stem. After the parting of the rope, the only practical manoeuvre was thought of, and acted upon, by the master and pilot, going full speed ahead, with the helm hard a starboard, in an endeavor to bring the ship's head round to port, but owing to the squally condition of the wind, this could not be executed before she took the bark and stranded beam on, the striking being so light, as not to be perceptible to those on board. No reason for the parting of the rope could be given, except that there was an unknown defect. No negligence was attributed to those handling her, and both master and pilot were exonerated, the court recommending that in going into this berth, vessels should use a line from each bow.

Stranding of s.s. Hamonic.

Held at Sarnia, Ont., July 21, before Capt. L. A. Demers, Dominion Wreck Commissioner, assisted by Capt. C. E. Millard and W. A. Glass as nautical assessors, into the cause of the grounding of the Northern Navigation Co.'s s.s. Hamonic off Hardwood Point, Lake Huron, July 7. The master, Capt. O. M. Wing, stated that he had been in command since 1913, without accident. On July 6 he had occasion to alter his course, to counteract leeway caused by a strong breeze off the port side. His compasses was but imperfectly adjusted in the spring and as a result he had found an error by observing ranges. He also stated that the towing log had a new propeller and he had not had the opportunity of verifying its running. The soundness of the machine was in order but not used, one reason being that one of the crew would have had to be called from his sleep if it had been used. He was advised by the second officer that he had passed the s.s. Huronic inside and assumed from that that he was steering a correct course and was in a proper posi-

tion as to location. The second officer called him when fog came on, with the information that he had seen a light once, but had not had time to take a bearing. He had not heard the fog horn at Port aux Barques, but kept up his speed until the ship struck. Soundings showed that there was 18 ft. forward and 16 ft. aft, and interior soundings revealed a leak in no. 1 hold. The ship was released by the use of tugs. The second officer, Andrew Allan, stated that the ship was steered correctly and that he had not offered any suggestion as to reduction of speed or soundings, assuming that the captain was master of the situation. The master was recalled and notified that on his own evidence the court would likely find him in default and deal with his certificate, and that if he wished to make a defence and secure counsel, the court would adjourn, but he elected to leave the case in its hands.

The court found that the master was in default and stated that he gave his evidence in a straightforward and honest manner. It did not consider the accident due to an error in judgment or careless behavior, but to an omission to exercise the necessary caution. Owing to his youth, clean record and straightforward evidence, the court exercised leniency and suspended his certificate, 6939, for two months from July 21 to Sept. 20. The second officer, Andrew Allan, was exonerated, but cautioned that his responsibility and duties demand more than to call the master and pace the bridge.

Welland Canal Lock Gate Accident.

Canada Steamship Lines' s.s. Maple-grove, downbound, with a cargo of wheat, July 11, struck the lower gates of lock 2 in the Welland canal, ploughing through them in an 18 ft. descent to the level below. The rush of water released from the level above also carried out the heel of both upper gates in lock 1 level. Three spare gates were placed in position, and navigation resumed July 12, after a suspension of 33 hours. Considerable trouble was experienced in getting the two lower gates out of the lock, they being jammed together between the lock walls. The floor of the lock on the outer recess was covered with several feet of material washed into it from the level above, and the removal of this by divers required considerable time. The ship is believed to have suffered heavy damage, and after the removal of her cargo, she is to be placed in dry dock for examination and repairs. The damage to the canal lock is estimated at \$7,500. It is said that the accident was caused by the engines going ahead instead of reversing while entering the lock.

Welland Ship Canal.—It is reported that there is to be a resumption of work on the various uncompleted contracts on the Welland ship canal. Some work was done on these contracts last year, especially to relieve the unemployment situation, due to demobilization, the plants being closed down again in December.

Glen Transportation Co. Ltd. has been incorporated under the Dominion Companies Act, with \$500,000 authorized capital and office at Midland, Ont., to carry on a general transportation, towing, wrecking and salvage business, and in connection therewith to own and operate steam and other ships.