

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT.

ships of various classes and sizes navigating the Strait without loss, and it seems almost incredible that such a number of voyage could be made, extending over 274 years without the loss of over one, or as is claimed by some writers, two small sailing vessels.

It is said that the two vessels lost were chartered ships of the Hudson's Bay Company, and they met with mishaps in the ice. They were the bark "Grahame" in 1852, and the bark "Kitty," about 1850. The latter foundered in the middle of the Strait off Saddle Back Island.

It is but a comparatively short time since it was claimed that it would be impossible to navigate the St. Lawrence with steamships, and, indeed several steamers were lost in proving that it would be possible for an immense fleet to pass up to Montreal during each summer.

Many references might be made to the length of time vessels take in passing through the Strait in either direction, but sailing ships, and they for the most part from their build, very bad sailers, consume most of the time waiting for fair winds, which, in sailing west, are very few and far between. If they encounter ice, they would not be taken any notice of by steamers. Sailing ships must have fair winds, or they have to "ice anchor" in the lee of a large "floe" and bide their time. I have copies of several log books of American whalers which show that the out trip was made in the autumn, as follows :

Ship, Northern Light, 1862, 7 days.

" Andrews, 1863. 7 "

" Ansel Gibbs, 1864, 3 "

" " " 1868, 8 "

H. M. S. "Rosamond" returned through the Strait from the Bay in October, 1824, in three days, when they had been 25 days going in, and Chappelle shows the daily log, giving the cause of the delay to be the light or contrary winds and the other troubles which a sailing vessel experiences in these waters when there is any ice, even in such quantities as are unnoticed by steamers.

Umfreville, who, while in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company from 1771 to 1782, lived at the different forts about the Bay, wrote:—"If it be objected to this, that the vast quantities of ice in the Straits must impede a vessel, I answer that many years the ice is so insignificant in quantity as not to obstruct the passage of the ships in the least, and in those seasons when