

THE
SHIPPING FEDERATION
OF CANADA



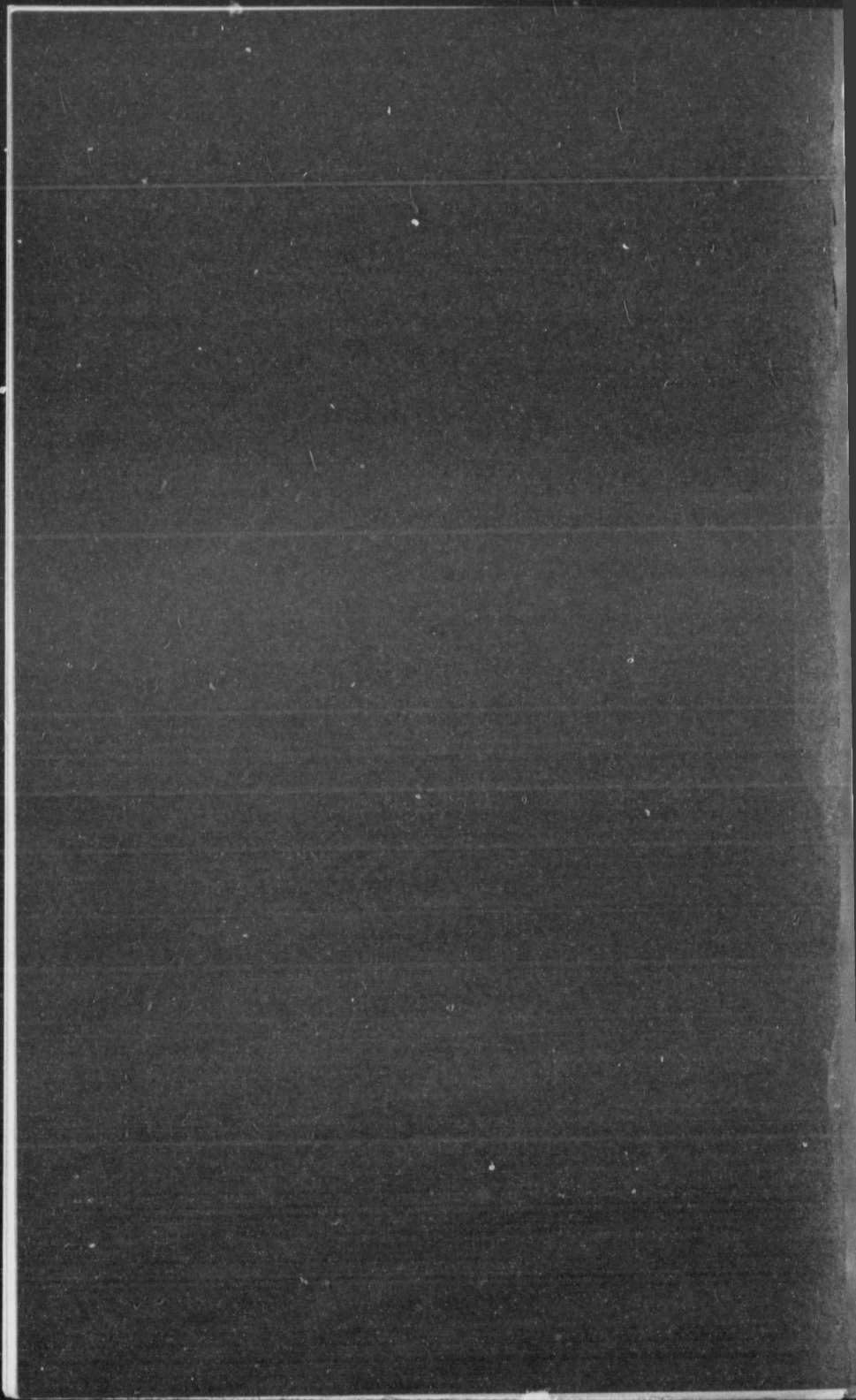
ADDRESS

of the President,

HUGH A. ALLAN, Esq.,

To the Members at the Fourth Annual Meeting, on
Wednesday, 13th February, 1907.

1907



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To the Members of the Shipping Federation of Canada:—

GENTLEMEN:—

It gives me pleasure to present to you the Fourth Annual Report of the Federation for the year ended December 31st, 1906, which embodies a retrospect of the various and important works that have engaged the attention of the Federation during the past year.

The season of navigation of the year 1906 was the longest season since that of 1900. The first ocean steamer arrived on April 29th, and the last left on December 2nd. The number of sea-going steamers visiting the Port was 783, of a combined tonnage of 1,957,615, compared with 786 vessels last year, of a tonnage of 1,918,002. The shipments of grain show an increase, but those of corn, and barley, show a decrease over the previous year; wheat and flax seed also show an increase. Cheese shows a very large increase, but butter fell off. There was a gain in the shipments of cattle also.

The passenger business of the Port showed a very large increase. The result of all this was a considerable advance in the revenue of the Harbour Commissioners.

The season has not on the whole been satisfactory to owners, though freight rates have been somewhat better.

Much detention and consequent expense has been caused to steamers visiting the Port on account of the congested state of the wharves, the alterations to sheds that have been dragging along for some years, and car shortages. The large increase in imports was very much handicapped by the condition of the wharves, which seriously interfered with the handling of cargo and the forwarding of through imports as well as the delivery of local goods. This, of course, added extra expenses to the steamers and will continue to do so as long as the present conditions exist. The progress that has been made towards the completion of the new sheds in our harbour has been very disappointing, and I may say that little or nothing has been done during the past year. Fortunately, pressure was brought to bear on the Harbour Board to prevent fifty per cent. of the berths in the inner harbour being taken for the construction of new sheds; otherwise these berths would not have been available and the business of the Port would have become paralyzed. It is hoped that with the advent of the new Harbour Board the construction of the sheds will be pressed forward with vigour and in a practical manner, so that the handling of cargo may be effected economically and with despatch, so that the Port of Montreal may once again be able to compete with the other ports to the south of us, and regain a portion of the traffic which has been lost to the Canadian route for many years past.

Berth Charges.

It is satisfactory to note that no further action has been taken by the Harbour Commissioners in connection with the berth charges referred to in my report of last year.

Free Port.

The question of making Montreal a free port is one that ought to receive the early and favorable consideration of the Government, and I now take the opportunity of mentioning that there has been introduced this month into the State Legislature at Albany, a Bill to abolish the present wharfages at the port of New York, by repealing the City charter relating thereto, a sacrifice, it is said, of \$13,000,000 per annum, as against wharfages at the port of Montreal of \$360,000. This action ought to be sufficient to impress upon our own Government the necessity of taking immediate action to meet the competition that may be expected.

Parliamentary Matters.

Amongst the important Parliamentary Bills which have come before Parliament during the year was the "Lord's Day Bill." This Bill was introduced at the instigation of the Lord's Day Alliance and was adopted as a government measure, and had it been allowed to pass as introduced it would have prevented vessels, after landing their steerage passengers at Quebec on a Sunday, from proceeding on their journey the same day. It would also have prevented the loading of cattle, and the handling of perishable cargo. Strenuous objections were taken by the Federation and other transportation interests to this Act, and I am pleased to say that it was considerably modified as set out in detail in this report, see page 19.

Ship Channel.

Good progress has been made in carrying out the work of deepening and widening the ship channel between Montreal and Quebec. The following extract from the report of the Superintending Engineer of the ship channel, Mr. F. W. Cowie, to the Deputy Minister of Marine and Fisheries, Lt.-Col. F. Gourdeau, explains satisfactorily the work that has been done and what is in contemplation:—

"The work in the ship channel through Montreal Harbour known as the Longueuil Shoal, which the Montreal Board of Trade and Shipping Federation of Canada urged the Government to undertake, was finally completed on August 9th, and has already proved of great benefit to navigation. This shoal, situated at the foot of current St. Mary, will no longer be a serious menace to navigation, as the improvements give a wide, easy channel, and the leading marks are to be of a permanent and distinctive character.

"The completion of the 30-foot channel through Lake St. Peter was promised for the end of October, 1906. It was actually completed to the old width of 300 feet on the 14th of November.

"Although the widening, in Lake St. Peter, has been completed at all the important curves, and over about one-third of the length requiring dredging, there remains yet about 12 miles of channel to be widened, and the dredge 'Tarte' will now be able to undertake the work of the widening of the straight portions without the constant delays, as was the case when she had to stop work for every passing ship.

"With regard to the promise made by the Hon. the Minister that the rest of the ship channel down to Batiscan would be completed during the month of October, I have to state that this estimate was substantially exceeded, and in addition most of the work of widening and deepening the Batiscan Traverse was completed before the end of the season.

"The important work at Cap à la Roche was commenced early in the season, and an amount of about 160,000 cubic yards of shale rock has been removed. The lines of the proposed improvements at Cap à la Roche and Cap Charles have been adopted with a view to easy navigability and a minimum of interruption during construction.

"The Shipping Federation of Canada will be consulted at an early date with a view to a decision as to the locality of the work which should be first undertaken.

"With the depth of 30 feet completed between Montreal and Batiscan, that depth is therefore available for the whole distance between Montreal and Quebec by waiting for high tide for the division between Batiscan and Quebec.

"The announcement of the completion of an available channel for navigation, between Quebec and Montreal, of 30 feet at extreme low water, cannot fail but be of very great importance to the trade of Canada.

"On the opening of the season of navigation of 1907 the gauge at Sorel will be changed and an additional draft of nearly four feet given. Compared with the lowest stage of water in 1906, the depth would be increased from 26 feet 10 inches to 30 feet 6 inches.

"The whole of the elevator dredge fleet will next year be concentrated between Grondines and Batiscan, if possible, four to work day and night at Cap à la Roche and Cap Charles." It will be noted from this report that it is the intention of the Government to centralize the work at Cap à la Roche and Cap Charles, the two points in the River demanding the most pressing attention.

Marine Insurance Rates.

I am pleased to direct your attention to the fact that the large expenditure by the Government in improvements in aids to navigation has been justified by resulting in the reduction of the insurance rates for the seven years from 1900, (the year the shipping enquiry was held), to 1906 inclusively, of 39c. on provisions and 54c. on grain, thus clearly show-

ing that the work undertaken by the Government has been beneficial to the country. See summary appended.

Although the insurance rates on cargo carried by vessels on the Canadian route is still largely in excess of what it should be, and, as compared with rates on cargo shipped from Ports in the United States, the average for the season being 31½c, as compared with 15c. from New York, this still leaves a very considerable advantage in favour of the United States Ports.

The trade of the St. Lawrence has grown enormously, and consequently the vessels on the route have improved in speed, size, economy and comfort. In other words the owners have done their part to meet the trade and it now rests with those in authority to provide the facilities necessary for the proper handling of freight seeking this route. The question of accommodation has become acute, and if the Port of Montreal with all its natural advantages is to be developed, it must be placed on a par with the United States ports.

The cordial relations which have existed between the Federation and the different Government Departments have continued during the year, and to this I attribute largely the success of our work; and it gives me pleasure to testify to the cordial assistance and co-operation of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, his Deputy and the Engineer of the Department. The latter's appointment as Engineer of the Harbor and Ship Channel is much appreciated by this Interest, and it is pleasing to note that he will still retain his authority of the Ship Channel, besides we will have the advantage of his experience in his new position in charge of the improvements in the harbor.

I take this opportunity of thanking the chairman, and the Executive Committee for the cordial support and assistance they have given me during the past year.

The whole respectfully submitted.

HUGH A. ALLAN,

President, Shipping Federation of Canada.