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(No. 6738.)

"TURRET CAPE" (S.S.).

IN the matter of a formal investigation held at the Harbour Commissioners' Offices, Montreal, P.Q., on Saturday, the 24th September, 1904, before Captain R. SALMON, Wreck Commissioner, assisted by Captain ARCHIBALD REID and Mr. L. E. MORIN, Assessors, to inquire into the causes which led to the grounding of the British s.s. "TURRET CAPE," official number 104283, on Goose Island Shoal, River St. Lawrence, at about 2.30 a.m. on Sunday, the 18th September, 1904, whereby some damage to the vessel resulted.

Report of the Court.

The Court, having carefully inquired into the circumstances attending the above-mentioned shipping casualty, finds as follows:—

The "Turret Cape," coal laden, left Port Hastings, N.S., on September 14th, bound for the great lakes, to call at Montreal on the way to discharge part cargo. The master, E. L. Stephen, and the mate, A. McIntyre, hold master's certificates of competency for the inland waters only. A Quebec branch pilot, Joseph Delisle, who holds a sea-going master's certificate of competency, was engaged to navigate the vessel. All went well until the early morning of September 18th, when the vessel was proceeding up the Beaujeu Channel, and Delisle, endeavouring to place her in the proper position with the Stone Pillars Light bearing N.E. by E., over-ran his distance, and, accelerated by the set of the ebb tide on his port bow, the vessel grounded on Goose Island Shoal about 2.30 a.m., the weather being fine and the atmosphere clear at the time. The ship remained fast until 11.15 a.m. on the same day, when she came off without assistance and proceeded on her voyage under her own steam. The extent of the damage sustained is not yet ascertained, but from the fact that the sounding pipe in No. 2 hold was set up through the deck and there is constant leakage into the forward

ballast tanks, would indicate that it may be serious.

The Court finds that Pilot Joseph Delisle is solely to blame for the accident in neglecting to take cognisance of the bearing of the West Narrows gas buoy ahead of his vessel as well as that of Stone Pillars Light astern, instead of devoting his whole attention to the latter, for then he would easily have seen that he had over-run his distance. In consideration of this young pilot's record, which shows that in addition to the long term of seven years' apprenticeship required to qualify him for his branch he has been ambitious enough to take up deep-water work and obtain the highest certificate procurable in Canada, the Court is inclined to deal leniently with him for this his first mistake; he is required to pay a fine of one hundred dollars, payable in two months instalments of fifty dollars each.

Neither the master nor mate of the "Turret Cape" have the requisite qualifications to embark upon coasting voyages, and the fact that a pilot with a sea-going master's certificate was employed to navigate on the coast will not exonerate them or their owners from the consequences of their acts.

From the evidence of Joseph Anderson, it appears that it is customary for the man on the look-out to leave his station about every hour for the purpose of sounding the bells, being away from ten to fifteen minutes at a time on this duty; this is a most reprehensible practice, and cannot be too strongly condemned.

(Signed) R. SALMON,
Wreck Commissioner.

We concur,

(Signed) ARCHIBALD REID,
Port Warden and Surveyor to Lloyd's Register.

(Signed) L. E. MORIN,
President, Corporation of Quebec Pilots.

Montreal, 26th September, 1904.

(Issued in London by the Board of Trade on the 11th day of November, 1904.)