

PILOT COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF N. JERSEY PILOT COMMISSIONERS, }
Jersey City, January 6th, 1858. }

To His Excellency WILLIAM A. NEWELL, Governor of New Jersey:

SIR:—The Board of Commissioners of Pilotage for New Jersey, in compliance with the statute, respectfully submit this their annual report.

This being their *twenty-first report*, a brief review of the *past* may not be inappropriate. Since the organization of the Board, in 1837, five Commissioners have departed this life, and one has removed from the State, the most of them having for a series of years ably and faithfully devoted themselves to the duties of the Commission. During the period of our service, five pilot boats have been lost at sea, whilst combatting with the boisterous weather, which so often appals the anxious mariner, and tries the faithful pilot. Twelve pilots, five apprentices, and nine of the crews of boats have perished at sea, while on duty, and the vacancies filled up from the list of apprentices, as required, on their being found competent. Twenty-two thousand eight hundred and forty-nine (22,849)

vessels have been in charge up to the present date, and the record of losses on our coast, and accidents to vessels, has been, providentially, of small amount. Contending, as our pilots had to do in the infancy of our establishment, with the most strenuous and influential opposition, which already had apparent possession of the field of operations, the present position of our affairs, proves the headway our pilots have made. The opposition now is nominal, the interchange of civilities between the New York and New Jersey Pilots is unremitting and of the kindest character. The commercial community evinces a constant confidence in our men, while masters of vessels and passengers gladly hail the advent of the New Jersey Pilots. This state of our position is a subject of much gratulation to the commissioners, after all the years of solicitude they have devoted to their duties.

During the year now just past, our pilots have brought into port four hundred and twenty-nine (429) vessels, of which were boarded "off shore," and taken out of port six hundred and sixty-six (666) vessels, making a total in charge this year, of thirteen hundred and eighty-four (1384) vessels, without any material loss or damage. We regret the necessity of reporting the loss of the pilot boat *Sylph*, which occurred on or about the second of March last, and by which melancholy event four pilots, one apprentice, and five of the crew, found the sailor's grave! On the twenty-seventh of August, the pilot boat "*Thos. H. Smith*" was wrecked near Barnegat, in a terrible gale, but, providentially, without loss of life. Two Pilots have deceased during the year, on shore, of disease contracted in the performance of their arduous duties. Our surviving pilots of the lost boats, undaunted by their losses, have procured another boat, and are again proffering their services to vessels approaching the coast, with the same zeal and efficiency which has hitherto characterized their efforts. The unfortunate depreciation of mercantile business, which has, within the last few months, so seriously affected all interests, has had its depreciating influence on our Pilot establishment; nevertheless,

our pilots have manfully borne up under the pressure—kept their boats in active service—have never remitted their exertions, but demeaned themselves with their accustomed vigilance. The apprentices continue to receive the fostering care of the pilots and the commissioners.

Twenty-eight pilots are now on active duty, and with their sea-going boats, obtain a fair share of the reward of their energies, in behalf of the commerce of our waters.

All which is respectfully submitted, by order of the board.

WM. T. RODGERS, President.

ATTEST,

J. M. CORNELISON, Secretary.