



PREFATORY NOTES.

I. — Authority.

This second number of the "Hydrographic Review" is published in conformity with Article 16 of the Statutes of the Bureau dated 17th July 1920, Article 20 (a) of the Draft of the Revised Statutes, dated January 1922, and Article 46 (a) of the Proposed Definite Statutes, dated 1st December 1923.

II. — Hydrographic Review, Vol. 1 No 2.

It was hoped that this second "Review" would have been produced during the latter part of the year 1923, but the amount of material received from the Hydrographic Offices at that time was considered insufficient for the purpose, as it appears desirable that the principal contents of the "Review" should emanate from outside sources rather than from the unaided internal resources of the Bureau ; meanwhile the present number is produced in the hope that a greater measure of success in this direction may attend publication on the next occasion.

It is most earnestly hoped that articles may be forwarded on subjects previously discussed in the "Review", or on entirely new subjects which are considered as being likely to prove of utility or interest to the Members and other recipients of this publication.

III. — Working of the Bureau.

The statement made in the last paragraph of Article III of the Prefatory Notes of the first "Review" requires repetition, *viz.* "that success cannot be attained in its entirety without complete and cordial co-operation on the part of all concerned, and such co-operation must include primarily reasonable rapidity and completeness in replying to the requests for information, etc."

The "reasonable rapidity" referred to in the above extract has recently been more fully complied with, but on the part of certain Members there is still room for considerable improvement in this respect ; for instance, in the absence of a complete set of replies to questions contained in Circular-Letters, it is obviously impossible for the subject to be considered in its entirety and for a decision to be arrived at and promulgated for general information ; it is very difficult, except in rare cases, to

determine that the non-receipt of a reply from any Member indicates that it can be ignored, as it is usually essential, in the endeavour to obtain complete agreement and uniformity in method, that all concerned should give their views on the subject under examination.

IV. — Membership of Peru.

The withdrawal of the Republic of PERU from participation as a Member of the Bureau, notified to the other Members in Circular-Letter N° 11-R of 1st October 1923, was much regretted, and more especially as this country was one of the original Members ; it was, therefore, a matter of great satisfaction to the Directing Committee to be able to announce, in Circular-Letter N° 14-R of the 8th November 1923, that the Government of PERU had decided to continue its Membership and was making the necessary contribution for the year 1923. The sea-coast of PERU is considerable, being over 1,000 miles in extent, with numerous harbours ; it is of distinctly increasing commercial importance, and, therefore, cannot be considered otherwise than as that of an important Maritime State.

V. — Adhesion of Uruguay.

The position in regard to URUGUAY is still indefinite, the necessary authorization by Congress not yet having been made ; the reason for this delay is not known, but it is still hoped that full adhesion to the Bureau will eventually be announced.

See Circular-Letter N° 11-R of 1st October 1923.

VI. — Adhesion of Poland.

The pending adhesion of the Republic of POLAND is of special interest as it is the first of the recently constituted States to propose to join this Bureau ; the Free City of Danzig is its seaport, and provision has already been made by the Government for a considerable amount of State-owned commercial tonnage ; so far as is known it has no Hydrographic establishment.

It is interesting to note that POLAND occupies the sixth place, both in area and population, among the European States.

A Statement on the subject of POLAND in connection with the Bureau was issued to the Members in Circular-Letter N° 10-R of 27th September 1923.

VII. — Finland.

The Bureau has been in constant communication with the Hydrographic Office of FINLAND which has kindly supplied it with various technical publications.

It was hoped that this State would shortly signify its adhesion to the Bureau but the Government has informed the Directing Committee that, for financial reasons, this cannot be considered at present.

This decision is much to be regretted for the hydrographic activities of FINLAND are considerable. However it is hoped that the stabilisation of international exchanges will not be long delayed and will bring with it the adhesion of this and other States similarly affected.

VIII. — Standardisation of Wreck Marks in the United Kingdom.

A Notice to Mariners announcing the adoption of an uniform system of marking Wrecks was issued by Trinity House, London, on the 10th July 1923 ; this was published in N° 1064 of the "British Admiralty Notices to Mariners" on the 23rd July. This system was agreed to by the Lighthouse Authorities for England, Scotland, Wales and the Irish Free State, and the provisions of the Notice were to be carried out as rapidly as possible after 1st September, 1923.

The Trinity House Notice provides the fullest information and is divided into two parts ; Part I. is cautionary, and also states that Green shall be the colour to be used for all purposes connected with Wreck-marking, and, with the exception of the starboard side-light, that colour should not be otherwise employed in any way in connection with lighting and buoyage. Part II. gives general provisions, shapes and characteristics of Wreck-marking buoys and vessels, and definitions of the words "starboard-hand" and "port hand" together with their practical application in certain localities.

This Notice is of special interest to the Bureau as it is an instance where standardisation has been arrived at, so far as GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND, with their varied Lighting Authorities, are concerned and it is hoped that eventually it will be found possible for all other countries to agree to adopt a single standard of procedure in this important matter.

IX. — Languages used by the Bureau.

An article on this subject was published on pages 57 and 58 of the "Hydrographic Review" of March 1923, and the question of the desirability of including Spanish in the languages of the Bureau was discussed, but in view of the action taken by the League of Nations at Geneva in November 1920 in deciding against the introduction of this language, the matter was dropped by the Bureau.

The Representatives of ARGENTINE and SPAIN having reopened the question of the claim of the Spanish language for inclusion among those used by the Bureau, Circular-Letter N° 48 of 1922 on the subject was sent to the Members for the purpose of obtaining a decision. Thirteen of the States Members definitely rejected the proposal while ARGENTINE, SIAM, SPAIN and the U. S. of AMERICA were in favour of its adoption ; ITALY considered that the matter should be left to the League of Nations, while no replies were received from BRAZIL or CHILE. Under the above conditions Spanish has not been included among the languages used by the Bureau.

X. — Hydrographic Department of the Chinese Navy.

In a letter received at the close of 1922 the Director of the Hydrographic Department of the Chinese Navy informed the Bureau of the establishment of this Office with Headquarters at Woosung.

The Directing Committee welcomes this new collaborator in the special work of the Bureau. The great length and commercial consequence of the coast of CHINA are measures of the coming importance of this Office.

Circular-Letter N° 3 - H of 15th February 1923.

XI. — Election of a new Director.

On 9th March 1923, Director MÜLLER announced by letter to the other Members of the Directing Committee that he desired to resign his post, as from 1st October 1923, on account of advancing age and impairment of his sight and hearing.

The Committee, having accepted Captain MÜLLER's resignation, took immediate steps to obtain the election of his successor.

The first ballot in this election took place on 3rd January 1924. No candidate having obtained the necessary majority, as laid down in the Statutes, a second ballot was held on 29th February 1924 which resulted in the election of Rear-Admiral NIBLACK of the U. S. Navy.

