

That it is expedient to amend the Act respecting the treatment and relief of sick and distressed mariners, so as to extend the benefit thereof to vessels employed in fishing on certain conditions.

He said: It has been found in practice that a great many fishing vessels, both Canadian and foreign vessels, visiting our coast do not pay any sick mariners' fees until they have a seaman or fisherman sick on board. Consequently, there was a charge upon the mariners' fund in this way without there being any corresponding income. I now propose to allow Canadian registered vessels to participate in the benefits of that fund, on condition that before starting on a voyage they pay the sick mariners' dues.

Resolution considered in Committee and reported.

Mr. McLELAN introduced Bill (No. 129) to amend the Act respecting the treatment and relief of sick and distressed mariners.

Bill read the first time.

RETURNS RESPECTING MILITIA MATTERS.

Mr. SOMERVILLE (Brant). Before the Orders of the Day are called, I desire to enquire when the return ordered in respect of the purchase of tents in connection with the Militia Department will be brought down. I fail to understand why the preparation of these returns should be delayed so long. Furthermore, in this connection, I am informed that the three tents which were stated to have been purchased by the Militia Department, in answer to a question which I put on the paper some time ago, were not such tents as were required for militia purposes, but were tents loaned out to friends of the Minister of Militia. If such is the fact, I should like to be informed in regard to the matter. I am also informed, on what I believe to be reliable authority, that it is the practice of the Militia Department, to loan not only tents but other property belonging to the Government. I have been informed that a gentleman who formerly held a seat in this House has now in his garden at Sherbrooke, an ornamental war gun which is the property of this Government, and which is used for the purpose of ornamenting his garden. I am further informed that supporters of the Government, have the privilege of borrowing from the Minister of Militia or from his Department, tents, when they wish to go out camping in the summer season, or on shooting expeditions. If that be so, the House should be informed with respect to these three particular tents, which I have been informed were purchased, not for the use of the Militia Department, but for the use of friends of the Minister of Militia.

Mr. CARON. The hon. gentleman has given us a wonderful amount of information, and as far as quantity goes it is certainly very considerable. The only trouble is, that the quality is not equal to the quantity. The hon. gentleman placed upon the paper a question asking me, as Minister of Militia, to furnish him information in regard to some tents. The question was answered, and I think the hon. gentleman must consider that, in the position which a public man occupies as the head of a Department, the answer which he gave was an answer given on his responsibility; and the hon. gentleman must be satisfied with that answer. The hon. gentleman says he has "been informed." The question would be an interesting one as to the person or persons from whom the hon. gentleman gets his information. If I wanted to do what the hon. gentleman has done to-day, I might say I had been informed that the hon. gentleman was getting information from a source from which he could not expect it to be reliable. However, I do not consider it necessary to enquire into the sources from which the hon. gentleman chooses to get his information; but I can tell the hon. gentleman that the three tents, which have been purchased by the Department of Militia and De-

fence, are not ornamental tents. They may be ornamental from the view which the hon. gentleman takes of what an ornamental tent is; but it is a matter of perfect indifference to me what the hon. gentleman considers to be an ornamental tent. The three tents, in respect of which the hon. gentleman placed the question on the paper, are tents which have been ordered upon the recommendation of the officers of the Department as sample tents. They are to be placed in the stores of the Militia Department, and whether the hon. gentleman considers them ornamental or not, they have been ordered for the purpose of getting exactly a sample of what was considered to be the best tents to be introduced into the service; and in consulting the officers of the Department, I thought I was doing what was right and proper to do, and I am sorry to see, from the course which the hon. gentleman has taken, that my ideas have not coincided with the views entertained by the hon. gentleman. The hon. gentleman has placed seven motions on the paper for the purpose of obtaining information from the Militia Department. The work of preparing the returns which the Government consented to bring down, was placed in hand as soon as possible, and I can tell the hon. gentleman that the return respecting the tents, about which he wanted information, was laid on the Table seven days ago, but so little importance did he attach to the information which he wanted, apparently, to get for a purpose, that the hon. gentleman has not taken the trouble to make himself aware that this information has been brought down. Other information is being sought for, and the returns will be brought down in due course. Hon. gentlemen will understand that when several returns are asked for at one and the same time, more especially with regard to the Militia Department, where the staff is limited, some time must elapse before they can be made ready; but two additional returns will be ready by to-morrow, I hope.

Mr. SOMERVILLE (Brant). The Minister of Militia is mistaken.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order, order.

Mr. SPEAKER. I perhaps acted irregularly in allowing the hon. gentleman to proceed beyond asking a question.

Mr. SOMERVILLE (Brant). I wish to make a personal explanation.

Mr. CARON. Mr. Speaker, you allowed the hon. gentleman to go outside—

Mr. SOMERVILLE (Brant). I am not going outside the question, but I wish to say that the Minister of Militia is mistaken in supposing that I did not see the return, because I have seen the return which was made to a motion put on the paper, and I say it is only a partial return. I am not so ignorant of the matter as the hon. gentleman imagines, as I have taken some time to look into it, and I know what I am speaking about.

Mr. CARON. I say the hon. gentleman is completely mistaken, and that he has no right to say that the return which was brought down is a partial return. The return is the only one which the Department of Militia could bring down; and I repeat that the hon. gentleman has no right to stand up and state that a return which has been brought down upon the responsibility of the head of the Department is a partial return. Does the hon. gentleman imagine for a moment that I could consent to bring down anything but what is a full report obtained from the information which we possess in the Department.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I do not think my hon. friend the Minister of Militia ought to complain—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order, order.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I am speaking to the point of order.