

Hospital Bill.

Dr. JENKINS moved that the third order of the day be gone into, viz., the second reading of the Bill to institute an Hospital in Charlottetown.

Mr. HOWAT had found from reliable authority, that there was a Hospital already, sufficient for all that was at present required.

Dr. JENKINS.—It was in an unsuitable situation, and a person might die there before attention could be procured for him. It was no place for a sick patient.

Mr. HOWAT had learned that when seamen took sick they were sent to a private house, and attention given to them at the expense of the vessel. He had also been told that there would not be six cases in this place in a year, and he would like to know if the country ought to be put to the expense of providing a Hospital, when such were the facts. He was not in favor of the Bill, as it placed new burdens on vessels coming into this port.

Dr. JENKINS.—The tax would be levied only once a year.

Mr. HOWAT.—When it was established, that once would be for a large sum. There was no particular amount named in the Bill. It might be said that it would apply to foreign vessels only, but he doubted the propriety of taxing those American vessels. He heard that the owners of those American steamers were about applying for a grant from this House, and he would rather encourage them than throw restrictions in their way, which might cause them to withdraw their vessels from this route. He had no wish to offer any factious opposition to the Bill, but so far as he could learn there was no necessity for it.

Dr. JENKINS, when he brought this matter forward, thought that it was pretty generally conceded that such an institution was required. Many persons took sick here, and for want of a proper hospital much misery and suffering was the result. He recollected the case of a sailor whom people were afraid to take in. He was carried from house to house, and died for want of proper accommodation. The hon. member for Tryon lived in the country, and did not care what became of the poor sick persons who might come into this city. The tax would be light, say one penny a ton, and in addition to that seamen should be required to pay one shilling a month, and a certain tax should be laid upon those who engaged for the run. These men took a good deal of money out of the country, and it was but fair to ask them to contribute to this object. With regard to shipowners, they were an enterprising class of men who ought to be encouraged, but they brought a good many passengers to the Colony, and sometimes brought disease along with them.

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION said as the principle had been admitted when the matter was first introduced, and a committee appointed to bring in a Bill, the objections of the hon. member for Tryon were out of place. If the Bill was not framed right, then there would be ground for proper objections. Let it go into committee, and then if the Bill was found to be one that would not work well, or that it would

operate unjustly against any class or interest, it could then be buried. If there was an asylum where those who were politically mad could be placed, he thought it would not be without patients.

Hon. Mr. HENDERSON remarked that he thought country members were entitled to the privilege of making some explanations. It might have occurred to the hon. member for Tryon, when the hon. member for Charlottetown referred to a certain case of sickness, that others than the infected had to be cared for, and for the information of that hon. member (Mr. Howat) he would say that it might be necessary for the first medical gentleman in the city to see that the safety of others was attended to. It might not be the life of an individual, but that of many others which such a case involved. He contended that the health of the whole city was as much concerned in having a place of safety for such cases as the health of the individual, and if in committee it should be found that there was no valid objections to the Bill, he would support it.

Mr. McNEILL considered that the time had arrived for the establishment of such an institution, and thought the hon. member for Charlottetown deserved credit for endeavoring to bring this matter under the notice of the House. But he held that our coasting trade should be exempt from this tax. There should be some provision made for those men who happened to come to the city and were laid down by sickness. He could not agree with the hon. member for Tryon that men who were so unfortunate should be sent to a poor house.

Mr. HOWAT spoke about disabled seamen. The Hon. Mr. Lord and the Hon. James Pope were both of the opinion that such an institution as the Bill proposed was not required.

Mr. McNEILL said it was not unreasonable to suppose that ship owners would like to get clear of those charges, for their vessels would have to pay Hospital dues. He was in favor of the principles of the Bill.

Mr. BRECKEN said that his hon. colleague had inserted provisions in the Bill which would meet the views of some hon. members. He believed that the time had arrived for the establishment of an Hospital in this city.

The motion was then agreed to, and the Bill read and committed to committee—Hon. Mr. Laird in the chair.

Hon. Mr. HOWLAN thought that the Bill was premature, and that unless the Act of 28 Vic., cap. 18, or some portions of it, was first repealed, that it would not do to pass this Bill. The Act provided that "every ship belonging to, or sailing from this Island, shall have and keep constantly on board the same a sufficient supply of medicines suitable to accidents and diseases arising on sea voyages, which shall be renewed from time to time, as shall be requisite." And the same section further provided that "in case any of the seamen shall receive any hurt or injury in the service of the ship, the expenses of providing the necessary surgical and medical advice and attendance and medicines which the seaman shall stand in need of, until he shall have been brought back to some port