

the other portions of the trade. As several hon. gentlemen appear inclined to remove a portion of the clause for the sake of a particular class of trade, I would suggest that the whole clause be struck out.

Mr. LOVITT. We have all been arguing about the deck load system. Hon. gentlemen say that the deck load does not amount to anything, but it does for the underwriter. I do not think the underwriters have improved the English law; whether it is for us to frame a law like that, it is for us to decide.

On section 6,

Mr. JONES (Halifax). This section gives Customs house officers, who, under ordinary circumstances, can have very imperfect knowledge of the condition of a ship, too much power and authority. I would suggest that the hon. gentleman should insert a clause to enable the ship owner, in the event of his being dissatisfied with the decision of the Customs house officer, to have the right of appeal to the port warden or some other authority.

Mr. TUPPER. The Customs house officer has no authority at all except to go on board, inspect the ship, and make his report. The Minister has no power to take action except in the ordinary way, so that no injustice can be done to anyone. The evidence of the Customs house officer will be given in court and the owner of the ship will have every opportunity to bring up other evidence in rebuttal, when the court will be called on to decide between the two.

Mr. EDGAR. Before the Committee rises, I would like to hear from the hon. Minister of Marine whether he is not going to insert a provision analogous to the English provision with regard to load lines. In England these provisions have been retained after a severe struggle, and are found very useful. All British ships require them, and I would like to know what good reason the Minister can give why in our inland waters vessels should not be required to have load lines.

Mr. TUPPER. I am very glad the hon. gentleman has brought up this point. I am glad indeed to have been able to go as far as this Bill provides in the right direction, in the interest of a large number of mariners. But the question the hon. gentleman raises is one that has been carefully considered by my predecessor and myself. Last year provisions similar to this which he has suggested were inserted.

Mr. EDGAR. The Minister is wrong in that.

Mr. TUPPER. I am speaking of the load line. We may differ as to the way that is treated, but the provisions of the old Bill were framed with a view to establish a load line. The difficulty is this: It is not, possibly, an insurmountable difficulty, but it is a very great difficulty, as we have not the same protection in Canada for the capital invested as they have in England. In England they have experienced and trained officers at every port, and they go to each ship, and settle the load line, and say where it is to be, and their word is law for the time being. They can stop or detain a ship, no matter how valuable the cargo may be, if the rule in regard to the load line is not complied with. If they do that improperly, there is a redress in England, and the Board of Trade is responsible and indemnifies the owners, and very properly so. There is a very extensive and a very expensive machinery in connection with that. A judge sits with assessors, and a careful and minute investigation is made in regard to the facts, and, in the end, should the owner be able to show that his ship was improperly detained, he is indemnified. In one year £30,000 and costs were paid over to owners for the improper detention of ships by even these highly trained officers;

Mr. RIOPEL.

but it is in consequence of that difficulty that this Government has not felt justified in asking Parliament to pass similar legislation here. We have an immense number of ports, and at present we do not feel that we could ask for the establishment of a fund by which owners could be indemnified for the improper detention of ships by officers of the Government.

Bill reported and read the third time and passed.

#### BELLEVILLE HARBOR.

Mr. TUPPER moved second reading of Bill (No. 116) respecting the Harbor of Belleville, in the Province of Ontario.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time, and House resolved itself into Committee.

(In the Committee.)

On section 8,

Mr. JONES (Halifax). What expenditure is contemplated under this Bill?

Mr. TUPPER. The hon. gentleman will see that there is no change made in the present rates of dues. It is simply a transfer of these dues from the town to the commissioners.

Mr. BURDETT. I would like to have it understood that the Government is to take charge of the harbor and put it in proper repair and take the dues.

Mr. TUPPER. This Bill is simply putting the harbor of Belleville in commission in the same way as other harbors are.

Mr. BURDETT. Supposing the dues are not sufficient to do this work, should the Government borrow the money or the city?

Mr. TUPPER. I think the receipts are sufficient for the work.

Mr. BURDETT. In some instances, I think the tolls are too high, when there is so much competition between the railways and the vessels. I understand the commissioners will have power to regulate the tolls, but that they are not to be less than they are under the old Act.

Mr. TUPPER. They can reduce them.

Mr. BURDETT. There is an island in the mouth of the harbor, Mill Island, which is disappearing to some extent. It was formerly used by a lumbering company as a mill site, and, since the mill has been removed, the island is breaking away. I should like to know if the Government intend to look after that island to prevent its disappearance. I understand that a dam is to be built out to the island.

Mr. BOWELL. The hon. gentleman ought to remember, as he lives in the city, that the appropriation made by Parliament last year was on condition that the city should expend a certain amount of money to protect the island to which he has referred. When the Government proceeded to dredge the harbor out of the appropriation which was made, the city not being in a position just then to advance the money, the Minister of Public Works stopped operations, as he had no power to go on. The present Bill, as my hon. friend knows, is introduced by the Government. Our friend from West Hastings (Mr. Corby) has not charge of the Bill. It is a Government Bill, to place the harbor of Belleville in precisely the same position as that of Three Rivers, and that of other harbors which are placed under the control of commissioners, with power to borrow money upon the income by fees of the harbor, to enable them to build the work which has been going on for some two or three years. I am well aware of the interest my hon.