

raft would have been glad to sell the whole of these logs in Canada, if he could have done so on satisfactory terms. He had hopes that he might do so, and he cleared for Fort Erie, in order that he might find out first, whether he could sell a portion in Canada or not, fully intending to pay the export duties on the logs that he might have to take to the United States. I hope that in future the Minister of Customs will allow coasting from one Canadian port to another without taking such an arbitrary course as this, and will afterwards punish those who may be guilty of an infraction of the law.

Mr. BOWELL. If the case were as has been stated by the hon. member for North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton), I should say he was strictly correct, and the Customs Department should be condemned for acting as he says it did; but I say there is no evidence in the Department to show that the raft was intended to be sold in Canada.

Mr. CHARLTON. There is the evidence of the clearance.

Mr. BOWELL. No; the object was to evade the payment of the export duty when the raft left French River.

Mr. CHARLTON. You had no right to assume that.

Mr. BOWELL. I had. There was no evidence to show that the owner, Mr. Jackson, who was formerly a member of this House, and whom I do not desire to blame in the matter, intended to sell any part of it in this country. He intended to take it to Tonawanda, and to sell it in the United States. It was intended to save the payment of duty, so that, if anything should occur in the meantime—the breaking up of the raft or anything of that kind—the duty might not be paid. There is no evidence that it was intended to sell one stick of that timber in Canada. The documents show that the raft, the timber, and everything connected with it belonged to the bank at Tonawanda, and that Mr. Jackson had no interest in it except what might be obtained after the payment of the advances which the bank had made. It is the bank that has claimed the refund, and has contested our right to stop the raft *en route*. The raft should have been seized long before, if the officers had been able to ascertain its whereabouts. All the officers did was strictly in accordance with the regulations and with the law. If that raft had been entered outwards for a Canadian port, without any intention of taking it to a foreign port, the owners had a right to do so, and would never have been interfered with. But the raft was intended for Tonawanda *via* Fort Erie, and for that reason we acted at once, and the officers acted quite within the law and correctly in the interest of the revenue.

Mr. CHARLTON. If the fact is as the Minister of Customs asserts, that this raft was held by an American bank at Tonawanda, I do not know that it follows even then that that bank as the owner of a Canadian raft had not a right to, and could not in good faith attempt, to tow that raft from one Canadian port to another. I do not know but the American bank had the same rights as the Canadian citizen to go from one port to another, and sell Canadian property taken from one Canadian port to another. I do not think the Minister of Customs has

made it at all clear that his Department is free from the charge of having been guilty of a high-handed proceeding in this matter. I say they have no right to go behind the clearance. If the owners of that raft, or the men who held that raft in security, cleared that raft from a Canadian port to Fort Erie, they had a right to do so, and the Minister of Customs had no right to accuse those men, in advance, of fraudulent intent. If they had been guilty of fraud then it was time to seize the raft and inflict the penalties of the law; but to assume beforehand that these men were going to commit a fraud and a crime, and to seize their raft because, forsooth, the Minister of Customs thought they intended to defraud the revenue, is a very high-handed proceeding. I think, on the next occasion, the Minister had better allow the bank at Tonawanda, or Mr. Joseph Jackson, or any other individual who is interested in a Canadian raft, to clear that raft from one Canadian port to another if they want to do so, and if they attempt to evade the law, if they take that raft to some other point to evade the payment of export duties, then let him proceed against them; but wait till they have done that, and do not assume that they are going to do it.

Mr. BOWELL. It will not occur again, for I will not allow it to leave the port.

Motion agreed to.

LIGHT OPPOSITE YAMACHICHE.

Mr. RINFRET (Translation) moved for :

Copies of all petitions and correspondence respecting the placing of a floating light opposite Yamachiche, in Lake St. Peter, River St. Lawrence.

He said : Mr. Speaker, in making this motion, I wish to call the attention of the Government on the great importance which attaches, with respect to the sailing of schooners and light vessels, to the replacing of a buoy called "La Caille," by a floating light. This buoy is situated opposite Yamachiche, at about four miles from the upper light and seven miles from the lower light on the river. It is a very considerable distance between these two lights. The river makes a curve at this point and it frequently happens that ships, after passing the upper light, cannot well see the lower light, especially when winds are somewhat foul. During very dark nights it happens that ships are compelled to anchor at this very place, one of the most dangerous on the River St. Lawrence in times of violent gales. I am told by seamen who have spoken to me about this matter, that several shipwrecks have occurred there, so that I think it my duty to call the attention of the Government on this matter. During last Session, I have spoken about it to the hon. the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, who said to me he had received no petitions asking for the placing of a floating light there. I am aware that petitions were forwarded since then, since I laid some myself on the Table of this House. I think the Government would do well not to disregard the information I give them, for the change asked for is of the utmost importance for the safety of seamen who are compelled to sail at night time in Lake St. Peter.

Mr. COLBY. I am informed that the Government have no petition nor correspondence on this subject.