

with ships both arriving and departing. The other provisions regarding the Port Wardens Act are applicable only to other Provinces than Ontario, and many of these provisions are optional; that is, it is only at the suggestion of underwriters or other persons interested in the cargo that the officers take action. Where no port warden exists, we have no remedy where a ship arrives underloaded or with her cargo improperly stowed. That explains also why we give Customs officers the same powers as port wardens, without going further and constituting port wardens at the different inland ports. Then the hon. gentleman states that there will be quite a tax. There is no doubt that, with regard to the expense of making provisions in regard to the safety of the lives of crews and passengers, all our legislation is unhappily framed if expense be objectionable. In regard to the inspection of boilers and hulls, and in all those cases in which our Parliament, as well as the legislatures of other countries, have stepped in between the owner and his property for the protection of life, some expense has undoubtedly been involved; but even on that ground I would meet the hon. gentleman. I submit that this is not a real tax or burden. All careful owners of ships, all men who are not merely stirred by the gambler's impulse in connection with this trade, now certainly do take great care to see to the safety of their ships and the lives of their crews. It is better for all concerned and it pays in the end. These precautions have not injured the shipping that deals in British ports; and no ship can go to the ports of Great Britain to-day without complying with legislation such as I am submitting to Parliament; and when we see the commerce of the mother country growing as it does every day, I think the argument that this would impose a tax is not well founded. As to small vessels, there is no distinction in the English legislation, and there should be no distinction. If it is wrong that the owners should risk the lives of their crews in large ships, surely the wrong is just as great in the case of small ships, and I am informed by practical men that the expense will be trifling, involving in the case of small schooners, something like \$20 to alter them so as to prevent the shifting of the cargo. If there is less danger on a short voyage, the precautions need not be so great, and there is a latitude allowed in the case of grain cargoes in that regard. But if the hon. gentleman will look at the list of casualties to shipping, reported not only by the underwriters, but in our marine reports year after year, the distressing accidents occurring on the lakes will, I am sure, induce him to make it more necessary to all interested in shipping to take some precautions for the protection of life. I might mention the cases of some accidents which were due to the absence of the shifting board. In 1887 there were the cases of disasters to the *Oriental*, the *California*, the *Asia*, the *Simcoe*, the *Zealand*, the *Columbia*, the *J. Miller* and others, in which, not only large crews, but a great many passengers were lost. In view of the same circumstances facing us as faced the mother country previous to the adoption of this legislation, I think the hon. gentleman's objection that there will be a tax upon vessels engaged in carrying cargoes of oats from Prince Edward Island is not sufficient to induce the House either to make an exception in their case, or to take what would, to my mind, be the more logical course of rejecting the clause altogether.

Mr. MITCHELL. I have had a good deal of experience myself in the business to which my hon. friend from Prince Edward Island (Mr. Davies) refers. Forty years ago I was in the habit of importing oats from Prince Edward Island, and from that up to twenty years ago, I have had a great deal of experience in this line. If the hon. Minister understood the business and knew what he was talking about—I don't say that with any disrespect to him—if he knew the

character of the vessels, their size and style, and the working of them, he never would have introduced such a clause as this compelling these people to put in centre-boards. In all the experience I have had, and I have had a great deal, of this particular trade, I never knew a single accident occurring to a vessel on these short coasting voyages from the causes for which the hon. gentleman's preventive measures is supposed to remedy. On the other hand, the hon. gentleman speaks of the centre-board being put in for \$20.

Mr. TUPPER. I said shifting board.

Mr. MITCHELL. What do you mean by shifting boards?

Mr. TUPPER. Does the hon. gentleman not know?

Mr. MITCHELL. I do, but I do not think you know, or you would not say it. I presume by shifting boards the hon. gentleman means the stanchions which are put in with plank or boards attached to prevent the cargo from shifting from one side to the other. Lots of these little vessels have not more than 14 or 15 feet of beam, and have no necessity for any centre boards or shifting boards, as the hon. gentleman calls them. I never heard them called shifting boards before. There is no necessity for any such protection for the class of little vessels employed in the trade between Prince Edward Island and the mainland. The hon. gentleman talks of \$20 as being a trifling sum. Why, to one of these traders, that would represent a large proportion of their profits. The hon. gentleman proposes to tax shipping industry between Prince Edward Island and the mainland without any reason. The great curse of this country is the useless legislation that is forced upon it. Every new Minister thinks that he must improve on his predecessor.

Mr. TUPPER. This is a Bill of my predecessor.

Mr. MITCHELL. I do not care whose it is. Every new Minister thinks he has to improve on the legislation of his predecessor, and we happen sometimes to have deputy ministers who are never satisfied unless they are disturbing the legislation or trade of the country. That Bill is just as necessary as the fifth wheel to a coach. If my hon. friend knows of defective regulations with regard to shipping cargoes of grain to Europe, let him improve them.

Mr. TUPPER. We are doing that.

Mr. MITCHELL. No one will find fault with his attempts to secure greater safety to life on an ocean voyage, but to compel these people, on a voyage of from three to five hours, to pay this tax, is an unnecessary interference with the operations of commercial men which ought not to be countenanced by this House. I am speaking of a subject I know something about. I know the trade and the manner of conducting it. As a shipowner in former years myself, having bought hundreds of these cargoes, having personally inspected them, knowing personally the manner of conducting that business, I know that this Bill, as applied to that trade, is utterly unnecessary. My hon. friend makes a mistake when he applies these general laws relating to Atlantic voyages to voyages of four or five hours duration, and he would do well to inform himself before attempting to pass legislation of that kind and disturbing the existing trade of the country.

Mr. BAIRD. From my experience as a shipper, I am disposed to believe that these provisions which would apply to deep sea or foreign going vessels do not apply with the same aptness to coasting vessels, owing to the fact that the two vessels are entirely different in shape. The coasting vessel as now built, is generally of such a character that she can carry her entire cargo on her deck and sail safely, while the shape of the sea going vessel is narrow and deep, and she is inclined to bear over on her beam ends. I understand, in the case of the latter, that the danger largely arises from careless loading. But take the ordinary