

an inspection or to have had so many years experience, although they have a great many more lives in their charge. Most of our best engineers pass their apprenticeship in machine shops, factories, etc., on the land; and as our boats run so short a season, it is difficult to qualify our engineers in that way, and the result is that a great many of our engineers are little better than firemen, who have been used to shovelling coal and so on. They manage to undergo examination, answer a few questions, and receive a certificate. Many of them are utterly useless when a boat is at sea or at all in danger, and we have frequently to take a practical engineer from land, keep him on deck so as to be ready to act in an emergency. I think some change should be made in the Act in this respect, for although it is intended for the protection of life, in its practical operation, it very often works the other way. Attention has been directed on the opposite side of the House to another matter of importance. Small steamers are required to carry boats, when it is almost an impossibility that they can do so. For example, I have a steamer, one and one-half tons burthen, and yet she is required to carry a boat altogether disproportionate to her size, and I have either to decline making the required declaration or allow the boat to be carried contrary to my judgment. I cannot see why a yacht carrying a pleasure party should be exempt from the operation of this Act just because it is private property, for the lives of those on board are just as valuable as those on any other vessel. The absurdity of the law may be judged by the fact, that if such a boat with two men aboard, tows a canal vessel, she is liable to the operation of the Act, which, if she carries a pleasure party of many times that number, she is not within the Act.

Mr. JONES. The subject before the House appears to be one of considerable importance, judging by the different opinions which have been expressed on both sides of the House. I hope the matter will not be pressed this Session, and that during recess the subject may receive full discussion. I think the public will agree that inspectors should be allowed some discretion in the matter; for instance, with regard to fines, which are now \$400. In another year the country will be prepared for another Act.

Mr. POPE (Queen's). There is no desire on the part of the Government to press this Bill, or to impose any further unnecessary restrictions on steamboat owners. There is but little difference between this Bill and the present Act. It is little more than a re-enactment of the Bill now in force. There are no restrictions imposed by this Act which are not imposed by the old Act. The Government propose this Bill because it is reported by the inspectors that steel plates are in use in the United States for boilers, and, as they have been introduced into this country, it is necessary there should be some additional test. If boat owners go the additional cost of getting steel plates they should be allowed some additional favor in the minimum test of their boilers. This measure has been recommended by the Government inspectors of boats who can have no interest in this matter, and as they are skilled in the business their opinions are entitled to consideration. An accident occurred in Montreal through a tap being blown out of the boiler, resulting in the death of one man, and the Grand Jury censured the Government Steamboat Inspector for allowing taps to be used in this way. This was represented to the Government, and an Order in Council was passed, and I think it is the duty of the Government, wherever they have power, to pass Orders in Council necessary for the safety of life and property. I will point out the difference between this Bill and the existing Act. The Bill says: "the limits of such pressure shall not exceed 150 pounds to the square inch in the case of a boiler made of iron plate, or 190 pounds to the square inch in the case of a boiler made of steel plate." Heretofore the highest pressure

Mr. SNOWBALL,

allowed was 150 pounds, but now a greater pressure is to be allowed on steel boilers than on iron boilers. Again, as the law now stands, it is necessary that there shall be an examination at least every year, and when certificates are now given they hold good for the season during which boats are running. The Bill gives power to the inspector to fix the time for a less period than a year during which the inspection shall hold good, and in the case of an old boat or a weak one, the Government inspector has power to shorten the time during which the inspection holds good. Many complaints have been made to the department during the last year or two against the present regulation for the carrying of boats. Small steamers running on rivers are obliged to carry a boat seventeen feet long; in some cases the boat is nearly as large as the steamer. This provision will be modified so as to give discretionary power to the hon. Minister, on the recommendation of the Government inspector, to allow steamers to carry smaller boats than at present are required by law. It is considered inconsistent and unnecessary, and does not add to safety. My hon. friend from Leeds (Mr. Jones) has asked that this Bill should remain over till the next Session. I introduced it last Session in obedience to a general expression of opinion of members on both sides of the House that it was necessary. However, if there is now a feeling in the House that it had better go over for another year, the Government do not desire to press it.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. After the expression of opinion we have heard on this Bill I move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion agreed to.

CONSOLIDATED INSURANCE ACT, 1877.

The following Bill was introduced and read the first time:—

Bill (No. 102) to amend the Consolidated Insurance Act, 1877 (from the Senate).—(Mr. Ouimet.)

Mr. OUIMET. I desire to call the attention of the Government to this Bill. It appears that insurance companies may withdraw from doing business in this country, and when they do their assets are disposed of in the manner provided by sections 17 and 18. It is provided also by section 13 that all these insurance companies, when they take out a permit, must give a power of attorney to one person in Canada; but there is no provision for any power of attorney being given when these companies withdraw from Canada, and not having any agent to represent them here, they cannot be prosecuted or sued by persons holding their policies. This Bill heretofore proposes to amend section 13 of the Act, and to provide that foreign companies, even after their withdrawal, shall give powers of attorney and that writs or protests may be served on them by mail, in an envelope, duly registered and stamped. I think this is very important, as cases of great hardships have arisen in Montreal in connection with persons holding policies of foreign companies.

Mr. GAULT. I think people who insure in foreign companies ought to understand that they can only make their claim at the head offices of those companies. The Government ought to bring in a Bill to protect the policy holders, as there is nothing to prevent these companies coming here and taking the money of our people, without giving adequate protection to policy holders.

Mr. DOMVILLE. I would also call attention to the fact that there was a deposit of \$100,000 in the hands of the Government, on account of the Globe Mutual Insurance Company of New York. That was paid over by the Government to some persons for distribution among the insurers, after the company had gone into litigation, yet the insurers