

Mr. BRODEUR. We impose a tax upon shipping to recoup us for this expenditure. We generally collect sufficient for that purpose.

Mr. CROSBY. Generally more.

Mr. BRODEUR. It is about even. We have reduced the rate.

Mr. JAMESON. Will any new hospitals be established this year?

Mr. BRODEUR. I am opposed to establishing any more of these hospitals. My experience is that the seamen can be better cared for in regularly established hospitals.

Mr. JAMESON. How many marine hospitals are there in existence?

Mr. BRODEUR. Victoria, Yarmouth, Pictou, Chatham, Lunenburg, Louisburg.

Mr. JAMESON. The minister is not going to extend the system?

Mr. BRODEUR. I am not favourable to it. We have made arrangements in Montreal, Quebec, St. John and Halifax with the regular hospitals to care for the sick seamen. When British Columbia entered the union one of the conditions was that we should maintain the marine hospital at Victoria, but recently the legislature passed a resolution stating that they would consider it a compliance with that condition if the marine hospital were discontinued and the care of sick seamen given to the general hospital.

Mr. JAMESON. There is also an arrangement in force by which sick seamen are taken care of, not in hospitals, but by persons appointed for that purpose. In what places is there an arrangement of that sort?

Mr. BRODEUR. The number is large and it would not be possible off-hand to give that information in detail.

Mr. JAMESON. That information does not appear in any departmental report.

Mr. SINCLAIR. I would not like the minister to say positively that no new marine hospitals would be established. I agree that wherever there is a suitable general hospital it would be better to send the sick sailors there, but there are places on the coast where there are no hospitals of any kind and where great hardships are endured by sick sailors. In the town of Canso, one of the most important fishing ports in Canada, and where hundreds of vessels come week after week, there are generally a number of sick seamen. Canso has no railway communication with the outside world and no hospital of any kind, and the sick sailors have to be kept in boarding houses, where the accommoda-

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds).

tion sometimes is very bad. There is not much chance for a man suffering from severe illness to recover, if he is living in a small house of one or two rooms where there is no possibility of proper attendance. I think the minister ought to consider the advisability of establishing small marine hospitals at such places. Some time ago an application came from Canso for something of that kind. I have known men to be brought in sick in fishing vessels for whom it would be almost impossible to find accommodation; nobody wanted them. Men have died because they could not get to the hospital at Halifax. If there had been a proper place where they could have been attended to when coming in sick from the sea, lives could have been saved. If we maintain this service at all, we should provide accommodation at points where no hospitals are available.

Mr. JAMESON. That seems a very reasonable presentation of the case, and I think the committee would be interested in hearing the minister's reply to it. If his policy is not to construct any more hospitals, I think it would be well for the public to understand that. On the other hand, if he can make his policy a little more elastic, I would like to lay before him some facts in regard to other parts of the province.

Mr. BRODEUR. I have given the committee my view of these hospitals. At the places where we have them, they cost us a good deal more money than we get in revenue. We must remember that this money which we collect from the shipping interest is trust money, and they have something to say about the way in which it is administered. The law itself fixes the conditions under which this money is to be expended. Recently some doubt was raised as to whether we had the right under the law to use some of that money for the purpose of paying the funeral expenses of a deceased seaman, and I am asking the House, in the Bill which I introduced a few days ago, to give authority for such an expenditure. I do not think it would be possible for us to establish a hospital at places where the revenue was not sufficient to maintain it, because the shipping interest would object. It is not a matter on which we are absolutely free, because this is trust money, and has to be administered in the best interests of those who have contributed the money.

Mr. JAMESON. I quite appreciate the fact that this is trust money; but the lives of the fishermen and the seamen of this country should be of as much importance to the government as the expenditure of trust funds. The minister has taken the position that because these are trust funds,