

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. There was a good deal of discussion when this amendment in the law which you are now retaining was passed about two years ago. Does the minister know how it has worked out in practice?

Mr. BRODEUR. It has worked out satisfactorily. We had a complaint about one shipping master which was investigated and held not to be well founded.

Mr. CONMEE. Would the provisions in clause 5 exempt vessels propelled by electricity or gasoline from carrying a certified officer?

Mr. BRODEUR. Yes. This provision was inserted to meet the representations from the St. Lawrence and the Lake of the Woods districts, that these vessels should not be obliged to carry a certified engineer or master. It is proposed that all vessels less than five tons shall not be obliged to have a certified officer.

Mr. CONMEE. It would seem to me that the language of subsection (c) of section 13 might conflict with section 5 in this respect, but if the minister is satisfied I suppose it will be all right.

On section 9—tonnage duty.

Mr. BRODEUR. The object of this provision is to reduce the dues which are levied upon vessels for the Sick Mariners' fund from 2 cents per ton to 1½ cents per ton. It has been found that we have been collecting more than has been expended, and we hope that this reduction will make the receipts and expenditures about equal.

Mr. DANIEL. I am glad that the minister is making that change. At present there is a large surplus in this fund, because the tax is bringing much more than is required for the benefit of sick seamen.

Mr. BRODEUR. There is a surplus, but not a large surplus, and it has been considered advisable not to impose on the vessels a larger tax than is required for the maintenance of the sick seamen. With this reduction there may not be sufficient to cover the expenditure; but we hope to make it sufficient by a wise administration of the money entrusted to us.

Mr. DANIEL. I may say that the late Minister of Marine and Fisheries, Mr. Prefontaine, expressed himself in this House as being of the opinion that the whole tax ought to be abandoned, and expressed his intention of making that change.

Mr. BRODEUR. We must of course provide for the sick seamen. If the vessel owners were willing to undertake the matter themselves, that would perhaps be sufficient; but it is feared that in some cases the vessel owners would not look properly after their sick seamen, and therefore it is

Mr. J. D. REID.

perhaps better to maintain the situation as it is.

Mr. DANIEL. I quite agree that the government would have to look after the sick seamen, but I thought there might be some other method of doing it.

On section 10—pilotage dues.

Mr. BRODEUR. This section is proposed for the purpose of repealing the legislation passed some years ago providing that vessels plying between the Great Lakes and Montreal and Quebec should not be required to take on any pilots. Some accidents have occurred as a result of this, because I was surprised to hear some time ago, some pilots whom we had dismissed had been taken on by some of these vessel owners. The Shipping Federation is urging strongly this legislation, because, as everybody is aware, the channel between Montreal and Quebec is not a very wide one, and the vessels plying there have to be put into the hands of persons of experience; but it is feared that they are sometimes put into the hands of persons who are not experienced, and that accidents have occurred in consequence. I may quote the cases of the 'Cassandra,' the 'Turret Bell,' and the 'John Lambert.' When we learned that the vessels were taking on apprentice pilots whom we had dismissed for misconduct, we thought the time had arrived when we should impose this restriction.

Mr. DANIEL. The section referred to in this clause refers to ships that are exempted from compulsory pilotage. I would like to call the minister's attention to the next succeeding section in the Act, namely, section 478, where he will see that the pilotage authorities of certain pilotage districts are, notwithstanding anything contained in this last section, authorized to make regulations as to what ships shall be exempted from compulsory pilotage. The ports mentioned are Halifax, Sydney, Miramichi, and Pictou. I wish to call the ministers attention to the fact that the pilotage authorities in the port of St. John are the pilot commissioners, who have as full control over pilotage matters in that port as any pilot commissioners have in any of the ports of Canada. I inquired at the department to ascertain why it was that the pilotage authorities of the port of St. John were not given the same power and authority as the pilot commissioners in those ports that I have named, and the department was unable to furnish any reason. I do not know whether the minister has since acquired the information, but when I spoke to him he could not give any reason why the pilot commissioners at St. John were not included in section 478.

Mr. BRODEUR. My hon. friend drew my attention some time ago privately to this matter and I asked the officers of my