

it is necessary, at all events, to keep the law of set-off in the several provinces where the law has to be administered, and as there was some provision with reference to this in the Insolvency Act, and as this clause was copied from the Insolvency Act some deductions might be drawn from it by courts of law which might lead to litigation. Therefore I think it would be better to substitute the first part of the section at all events. Then the next amendment is to strike out the proceedings to be taken against the estate of a deceased contributor if he had not paid up his instalments.

The amendments were concurred in as amended.

PILOTAGE ACT OF 1873 AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

The House went into Committee of the Whole on Bill (119), "An Act further to amend the Pilotage Act, 1873, and the other Acts therein mentioned."

HON. MR. POWER, from the Committee, reported the Bill without amendment, and the Bill was then read the third time and passed.

PATENT ACT, 1872, AMENDMENT BILL.

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS.

The following Bill from the Commons—

Bill (55), "An Act further to amend the Patent Act of 1872," was introduced and read the first time.

HON. MR. AIKINS moved that the Bill be read the second time at length at the table.

The motion was agreed to.

HON. MR. AIKINS moved the third reading of the Bill.

HON. MR. SCOTT—I think this Bill is an extension of a principle that is a very unwise one, to allow persons to come into Canada, take out a patent and hold it for three years without doing anything

with it, for the purpose of speculation. I think we have carried this principle in relation to patents entirely too far. In my judgment, when a patent is granted unless something is done with it within twelve months, the exclusive right to it ought not to be continued. I know the facilities with which patents can be obtained from the United States. They generally pass into the hands of middlemen and speculators who are interested in obtaining this extension in order to speculate with them. We are peculiarly circumstanced here. Canada is a country with a population of only 4,000,000, alongside a country with 50,000,000 people, whose inventive activity is much greater than ours. The people of Canada cannot afford to pay enormous prices for the privilege of using American patents, and the consequence is a considerable advantage is lost to our people because they are not allowed to use patents that have been in operation in the United States, some of them for many years, without paying an exorbitant price for them. I understand that under the administration of the patent laws by the present commissioner it has been decided that even after a year a patent can be held some indefinite time without being infringed upon. In this way many a useful invention is kept beyond the reach of the Canadian people, because the patentee holds it for speculation and cannot get his price. I think the Bill is in the wrong direction; it is drawn in the furtherance of a principle that I know is favored by the Patent Office here as it is at Washington, whose legislation we are copying; but our circumstances are so different from those of our neighbors across the line that their patent laws are not suited to this country.

HON. MR. AIKINS—I know that under the general provisions of the act by applying to the department at any time an extension can be obtained on payment of a further sum and in this way the principle of this Bill is admitted.

HON. MR. SCOTT—That is in the case of where a patent has been taken out for five years and the patentee wants to extend it to ten years, but that clause does not apply to this Bill at all.