

ago under legislation very extensive powers which permitted them to control almost everything in connection with pilotage. Complaints were made by the shipping interests on the St. Lawrence as to the manner in which these pilots were discharging their duties but we could not deprive them of their charter and so we had to negotiate with them. The St. Lawrence shipping interests wanted to extend the pilotage district and to provide for an annual inspection or examination and the pilots were willing provided compensation was given them, and one of the terms was that we should give them a pension on retirement. The pilotage association had the right to pension the old members but they were not doing so, and because of the charter they had we had no right to say who should be or who should not be a pilot. The situation was serious as the whole trade of the country was affected, and we thought it advisable that the government should provide pensions. My hon. friend (Mr. Barnard), has several times brought to my notice the case of Mr. Beddington, and although the case seems to be a hard one the matter is absolutely in the hands of the district pilotage authority and we have no jurisdiction. I do not consider Mr. Beddington's case similar to the present one.

Mr. BARNARD. There is a similarity which the minister has overlooked in that from time to time there has been a strong agitation on the part of the Victoria Board of Trade to do away with compulsory pilotage dues altogether and representations have frequently been made to the government to that effect. The minister in the course of correspondence, I think suggested, that by getting rid of Beddington they might reduce the number of pilots and in that way to a certain extent allay the outcry for doing away with the pilotage system altogether. I think Beddington is entitled to consideration at the hands of the government. Are the St. Lawrence river pilots the only pilots in Canada pensioned by the government?

Mr. BRODEUR. The only pilots pensioned are those of the Quebec pilotage district but not the Montreal district.

Mr. BARNARD. I would again ask the minister to make some provision for Beddington. The medical certificates were favourable to him, but nevertheless he was dismissed and deprived of his sole means of livelihood. It is an extremely hard case and one in which the department should render natural justice by making the provision for him, particularly as they are making this provision for men in a similar class of life in other parts of the country. The fact that the government

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find it expedient to pay the Quebec pilots a pension because they originally had given them too much power, fits the situation so far as Beddington is concerned. I think that some consideration should be given to this case.

Mr. BRODEUR. I think my hon. friend is mistaken in stating that there was a letter from me or the department suggesting that this man should be pensioned or dismissed. I do not remember any such letter. However, I will look into the matter, and if the department is in any way responsible, I shall be glad to take into consideration the remarks of my hon. friend.

Mr. BARNARD. What has been done with the application of the Board of Trade for the abolition of the pilotage system in that district, and what is the minister's intention with regard to it? This matter has been agitated for two or three years, and I would think that by this time he had come to some conclusion.

Mr. BRODEUR. As my hon. friend is aware, pilotage dues are compulsory in all parts of Canada where there are pilotage districts. If we had not pilotage dues, the pilots might not keep themselves familiar with the parts of the rivers which they have to navigate. That is why we have had laws compelling shipping companies to pay pilotage dues whether they used pilots or not. The same system is in force in the old country. To cease collecting the pilotage dues would be a very serious departure, and before taking that step I would desire to have further reasons to convince me that it would be in the interest of shipping.

Mr. BARNARD. I take it, then, from the minister's reply that there is no intention at present of making any change?

Mr. BRODEUR. The policy of the government is embodied in the Bill that I introduced the other day. I know there is a good deal of divergence of opinion on the subject in Victoria; some people want the system changed and some are opposed to any change. In some districts, in St. John, for instance, a change in the system would cause a very serious disturbance of conditions. If, however, it is found that Victoria really wishes to do away with the system of compulsory pilotage, I am willing to consider that; but in view of the fact that the system has been in force generally throughout this country for many years, and that the same system exists in other countries, I do not think that it would be advisable to make any change just now.

Mr. BARNARD. How does the minister expect to find out whether the people of Victoria want the system or not?