

Mr. BAKER (Victoria). And British Columbia?

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. And in British Columbia? There is a very large area there which, to a very considerable extent, as the hon. gentleman probably knows, has been to the present time a blank, and I believe the American staff have been communicating with the Department here as to the desirability of extending their stations. What has been done in that direction, if anything?

Mr. McLELAN. Mr. Gordon visited the North-West during last season and made arrangements for the opening of a large number of stations at various points along the Canadian Pacific Railway, and at other points with which there is telegraphic communication, and he has also made a recommendation that there should be storm-signal stations provided for Lake Superior in connection with the stations he proposes to open—some are already opened—in the North-West, at Rat Portage, Calgary, Prince Albert, Battleford, Touchwood, Regina, and some other points. He proposes to open sufficient stations, and these will be in communication so as to serve storm-signal stations for Lake Superior during the coming year, and they will be in operation in time for the opening of navigation.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. Has the hon. gentleman—I suppose he has not—any means of communication with any station on Hudson Bay, as yet?

Mr. McLELAN. No; not yet.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. How far north is the furthest meteorological station we possess?

Mr. McLELAN. I am not prepared to give the furthest one north.

Mr. BAKER (Victoria). I should like to ask the hon. the Minister of Marine and Fisheries if he would not take into serious consideration the establishment of some meteorological station in British Columbia. It is very far west, and I see here there are observatories at Toronto, Kingston and Montreal, all of them comparatively close together. Surely the results obtained must be very, very similar. Now, west of the Rocky Mountains, I think it would be very interesting to scientists generally, and certainly to the Department of Marine and Fisheries, if some meteorological observations were taken in British Columbia. A small vote, say of \$500, I think, would accomplish a good deal, and if the hon. the Minister of Marine and Fisheries feels inclined to go \$500 better, it will not be despised, but I think a small sum would be well spent in the prosecution of those observations.

Mr. McLELAN. The subject will be considered.

Mr. BLAKE. They do not blow at all out there.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. They can raise the wind there without it.

STEAMBOAT INSPECTION.

162. To provide for expenses of Steamboat Inspection \$25,000 00

Mr. DAVIES. I want again to call the Minister's attention to the necessity of appointing an inspector in Prince Edward Island. The hon. gentleman knows that this very winter there are at least three steamboats now needing large and heavy repairs, and I see by the return he has brought down that Mr. Coker practically acknowledges that his state of health was not such as would enable him to go to the Island, and he produces a certificate from his doctor, saying it was more than his life was worth. I do not blame him at all. I know the passage across to that Island is a very arduous and dangerous passage in winter. But the hon. Minister knows that the steamboats must be repaired during the winter. There can be no satisfactory repairs done in the summer at all. The boats are now being

repaired, and how is it being done? The Steamboat Inspector simply has to relegate his duties to someone else whom he has selected. I have no doubt, from the names of those whom he has selected, that they are very good men, in whom I, at least, have confidence; but still the public at large have not got that security which they ought to have in this respect. The boats are not being inspected by a man who is amenable to the Department and responsible for his inspection; they are being inspected by men who are good enough in themselves, but who are not responsible in the sense of having a position to maintain, and in the sense of being directly responsible to the Minister for their work. Now, that state of things will recur more or less every winter, and it cannot be a matter of much moment to the Department for Mr. Coker to possess this as part of his field. The interests of the public will be better subserved if one inspector is appointed for the Island. The reason is that the Island is separate from the mainland, and the inspector acknowledges that he cannot get there, and he has not been able to get there this winter. The boats are now being repaired, not by a Government inspector, but by some gentleman to whom he has relegated his duty.

Mr. McLELAN. The appointment of an inspector for the Island will depend very much on the amount of work that is to be done on the Island. Under the present arrangement, the Lloyds have their official inspector there and the owners have him in charge of their boats. Mr. Coker is perfectly satisfied with the inspection that is being done by the official inspector of Lloyds.

Mr. DAVIES. The hon. gentleman knows the number of boats on the Island. There are three boats carrying passengers and freight from the mainland to the Island, and he knows these boats must be inspected every winter; he knows the gentleman to whom he has referred is as competent a man as is to be found in the Dominion.

Mr. McLELAN. These two boats are undergoing repairs, and the repairs made this winter will serve for a number of years.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I observe the total amount of fees received last year was about \$12,000, and that the total expenditure was \$16,000. Now, under these circumstances, the hon. Minister ought to give some explanation of the necessity, which does not appear at first sight, for the increase of \$3,000 in expenditure. So far as the Public Accounts show there seems to be no necessity whatever for this increase of \$3,000, nor did the Minister, in bringing down the vote, state any facts warranting him in demanding \$3,000 more.

Mr. McLELAN. The vote last year did not meet the whole expenditure. If the hon. gentleman will look at the returns, for a few years he will find there is still to the credit of this fund a very considerable sum, and that during the period—I forget how many years—the fees for inspection were reduced because the receipts were larger than the expenditure. But, during the past year additional inspectors were appointed, and the number this year is still larger than it was last year. Additional inspectors had to be appointed very lately, in order to overtake all the work, owing to the increased number of boats and the increase in the work of inspecting hulls, machinery and boilers. Should the sum at the credit of this fund be exhausted, it will be necessary to increase the fees for inspection, and to make the receipts equal the expenditure.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. Where are these additional inspectors to be placed? And are they already appointed?

Mr. McLELAN. We have inspectors at St. John, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Manitoba and British Columbia.