

MR. DAVIES said that in order to carry the system out properly, Wreck Commissioners should be appointed. This would cause some expense, but it was a necessity. This officer should have one deputy on the Pacific Coast, and two or three on the Atlantic Coast. This would not require a very great expenditure. At present he contended that there was no check. The law was permissive, and as no fees were attached, the general result was that no enquiry took place. This was the case in his own Province, and the effect was very prejudicial there and in the Maritime Provinces. Canada was now the fifth largest ship-owning country in the world; her merchantmen were on every sea, and it was a matter of great importance to have this law operative and complete.

MR. PALMER said he was surprised to hear his hon. friend (Mr. Davies) make this statement, which, if true, ought to be investigated. It was a grave charge to make on the floor of Parliament against a class of men whose equals for integrity and usefulness did not exist in Canada, or in any country. He was not prepared, however, to say that his hon. friend's statement was not true; but this country could not afford to have it go forth to the world without contradiction or investigation.

MR. DAVIES: You cannot contradict it.

MR. PALMER said he entirely agreed with the hon. the Minister of Marine and Fisheries that, in the present state of the country, it was asking too much to request the appointment of a Wreck Commissioner. This would involve an enormous expenditure, which this country could not afford. He hoped that the hon. gentleman was mistaken. These statements would be very injurious to the character of the country, and he, therefore, protested against their being made at all. If they were true, as regarded the Island, they were not true with respect to this class of men in general.

MR. DAVIES said that what he had stated with regard to fraudulent wrecks was not only true with respect to his own Province, but also with regard to

the Province of New Brunswick. If a ship went ashore, say at Shediac, N.B., or on the coast of Prince Edward Island, there was not much danger of loss of life. The captain knew that no investigation would be made into his conduct as master-mariner; a survey was made; the vessel was sold, and the whole property, perhaps, was sacrificed. If there were a Wreck Commissioner, this would not occur. Captains would then be very careful lest they should get into trouble. At present no enquiry was made and the Act was practically a dead letter, because it was not compulsory on Collectors of Customs to hold these surveys. More than once cases of the kind to which he referred had taken place; but it was not his place to become a common informer, and thus make enemies. It was the duty of the Government to protect insurance companies and their agents.

MR. McCALLUM said he regretted the fact that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Davies) had thought proper to reflect on a class of men which was as honest and as well behaved as any class in the Dominion. The hon. gentleman would have the Government spend money in order to protect the underwriters. If officers of vessels ran them ashore, they were exposed to the loss of their certificates and to punishment as felons; but certainly this country had no money to expend for the protection of underwriters.

MR. DAVIES said he only wished the Imperial Act to be applied to the Dominion. The few dollars which would have to be expended would not be any great loss. If the country could afford to spend large sums on the Pacific Railway and other schemes, an expenditure of \$2,000 or \$3,000 in a matter of this kind would not be felt to any appreciable extent.

MR. GOUDGE thought this was a matter of very great importance now that the shipping of the country represented between \$40,000,000 and \$50,000,000. The suggestion made by the hon. member for Kings was, he thought, an excellent one, though it might not, of course, be convenient for the Minister of Marine, at the moment, to