

meeting, say at Winnipeg, as it may be convenient sometimes to do.

Amendment agreed to.

Bill reported.

Mr. BLAKE. I hope before the amendments are considered, the hon. gentleman will have the Bill reprinted, as they are somewhat numerous.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). Very well.

STEAMBOAT INSPECTION.

Mr. FOSTER moved the second reading of Bill (No. 103) further to amend the Steamboat Inspection Act of 1882. He said: This Bill has been partly explained when it was introduced to the House. The first two sections have reference to some legislation to provide for the issue of 1st and 2nd class certificates to engineers. This is consequent upon the action of the Board of Trade, the outcome of which is that our engineers of the 1st and 2nd grade shall have equal rights with those of the same grade as constituted by the English Board of Trade. Section 4 and the following sections amend the Steamboat Inspection Act of 1882. Section 5 gives a little more power to the chairman of the Board of Steamboat Inspection. The work of the inspector of hulls and the inspector of boilers and machinery is divided, and the certificate of each of the officers is made independent and complete in itself, whereas under the old law the boiler inspector had the power of revising the certificate and the work of the inspector of hulls. Sections 7 to 10 inclusive make verbal amendments. The most important section is section 14 which adds some securities against the dangers arising to vessels from the employment of coal oil lamps and of explosive oils on board of steamers. Section 15 changes the status of engineers, so far as the yearly renewal of their certificates is concerned. Under the law at present these certificates have to be renewed each year. It is proposed in this section to put the original certificates of engineers on the same footing as those of masters and mates. When once gained upon examination they remain good, unless forfeited for cause. Section 52 of the Act is amended so as to make it obligatory on the officer of Customs to demand the production of the certificate of inspection, instead of leaving it optional, as it is under the present law.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time, and the House resolved itself in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

On section 12,

Mr. WELDON. What provision does this repeal?

Mr. FOSTER. Section 32 of the present Act provides that every steamboat shall be provided with sufficient means for lowering safely and expeditiously each boat required to be attached to such steamboat; and sub-section 2 of that section provides that three davits shall be sufficient for lowering the boats. That sub-section it is proposed to repeal, as three davits are not considered sufficient.

Mr. WELDON. Does the hon. Minister propose to have an inspector appointed for New Brunswick? I believe the late inspector has resigned.

Mr. FOSTER. Application has been made looking to a division of the Maritime Provinces into two inspectorships. It is not proposed, however, at present to do that. Mr. Smith, who was formerly our inspector, has been superannuated, and a younger and more active man has been appointed. If he cannot overtake the work, help will have to be given to him.

Mr. WELDON. Where is it proposed that the new inspector shall reside?

Mr. FOSTER. The new inspector has been for the last month in St. John city.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell).

Mr. WELDON. It is important that, as navigation has opened early, the boats should be inspected speedily.

Mr. FOSTER. The law provides that each boat shall be inspected once a year, and the inspector is given two or three months to overtake his work.

Mr. McCALLUM. A great many complaints have been made by steamboat owners about the office of the chairman of steamboat inspection. They consider that his office ought to be here at headquarters. There is a great deal of red tape about it. If any complaint is made, it is sent here to the Minister; then it is sent to Toronto, and then it is sent back to Ottawa again before an answer is given. I insist that the Government shall make it their duty to see that the chairman's office is brought here. There are no less than three of these people living in Toronto, and I do not see why the chairman should be there also.

Mr. FOSTER. I think there is no doubt about that. A great many questions arise at the Department for the solution of which the chairman should be here, as vexatious delays often take place. However, it has been found somewhat difficult during the past years to make the change; but the Department has the change in view, and on the first feasible occasion it will be made.

Mr. McCALLUM. Will the hon. gentleman tell us what is in the way? There is a great deal of trouble caused in having the chairman in Toronto instead of in the capital. This place is as central as Toronto, and I do not see why he should not remain here.

Mr. BLAKE. I can tell the hon. gentleman why. It is the grand principle that the office is made for the officer and not the officer for the office.

Mr. McCALLUM. It is a very important office, but at the same time there are many men in this country qualified to fill it; and it is not treating the steamboat interest fairly, that, for the sake of aiding one individual—I do not care whether he be friend or foe—its interests are to be neglected.

Mr. FOSTER. No doubt Toronto for steamboat inspection purposes, especially in this section, is quite as central as Ottawa, probably it might be more so, but the difficulty arises in the Department itself, on account of delays in settling questions, which might be settled at once if the chairman of the board were here.

Mr. WELDON. Who has been appointed inspector for the Maritime Provinces?

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Douglas Stevens of Halifax.

Mr. WELDON. My hon. friend is aware that a large number of steamers are employed in bringing down rafts to St. John and in the harbor itself, and steamboat owners complain that they cannot have their boats inspected in time. I think the work of inspecting steamers is too much for one man, taking the number of boats in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Mr. FOSTER. One inspector has done it up to the present and he resided in St. John. The present inspector is also a resident of St. John, and although it will be a little more difficult for a new man to undertake the work, it is to be hoped the difficulty will only be temporary. The expense of the steamboat inspection has to be borne out of the fees, and of late years it has been more than the receipts from the fees. We have to take that into consideration, if we wish to make the expenditure balance the receipts.

On section 15,

Mr. FOSTER. I have been asked by steamboat owners to remedy what seems to be little injustice in section 43, sub-section 4 of the Act. That provides that persons who hold certificates as assistant first-class engineers under the old Act may, at any time, exchange them for certificates as third-