

try. Great complaint is being made because in one particular town where ships are built, there were 157,000 hours of work performed and over 15,000 hours lost by the workmen. The article to which I particularly refer went on to point out what a tremendous loss that was to the nation, and where they were going to land if this war kept on. It is an unfortunate thing to have to say that during the last week practically five ships a day were sent to the bottom by German torpedoes and mines, 33 for the week. That is going pretty strong. I doubt if the British shipbuilders, in addition to keeping up and increasing the strength of the navy, are going to be able to keep up the tonnage of freight boats if the Germans can continue to sink them at that rate. These, of course, were not all British ships, but the destruction of neutral or Allied ships interferes just as much with the carrying of goods from Canada to Great Britain as if they were all British ships that were sunk. I see that they are building large ships in the United States. The other day a ship whose keel has not yet been laid was sold at auction on the Pacific coast. It is to be a ship of 7,500 tons. The report did not say whether that was registered tonnage or carrying capacity. The ship was sold for \$600,000, yet it will not be built until the coming summer. We in Canada ought to be able to build ships as well as they can in the United States and it would appear to me to be good policy on the part of the Government to take this matter up in earnest. I am sure that if the Minister of Trade and Commerce will do that he will do that he will find out that we on this side of the House, while we may criticise—and I am sure that a considerable amount of criticism is good for any Government—our criticism will not interfere with the Opposition assisting the Government to any extent that may be possible in securing a method or system by which we can go on and build some ships in Canada. My own feeling is that we should take off every vestige of duty on everything that goes into the construction of a ship, and then we would offer a permanent inducement to the shipbuilders of Canada to go into the business, a very great inducement over and above what they have now. If something along this line is done, we may be able to help make up the wastage. I was glad to hear that the Minister of Trade and Commerce was in hopes that the war would end at an early day, that the end was in sight. Listening to his colleague the Min-

[Mr. Turriff.]

ister of Militia, one would come to the opposite conclusion, because the Minister of Militia explained to the House what Germany had accomplished; and whatever we may do in the near future, it is unfortunate that we have to say so, but the fact remains that we have not yet started to drive the Germans back. They are gaining ground to-day in France; we have not driven them back. The Russians are driving the Turks back, but the German army has not, so far, been driven back. I do not think that means that we will not win in the end, but we have a long, hard task ahead of the Empire and of the Allies, and if we delay too long in starting to provide ships to keep up commerce between Canada and Great Britain, if vessels are to be destroyed at the rate of five per day, it may turn out that next fall, when we have our wheat and other farm products and other products that the British Empire needs, to send across, there will not be ships enough to carry our produce across at any price. I think that something ought to be done along the lines of securing trade that is offering to us near at home. I trust the minister will consider this matter, and I know that if he sets his mind to it, with the experience he has had and the ability he has, he will accomplish something; and I am also quite sure that we on this side of the House will be willing and ready to tender any assistance that it is possible for us to give.

Mr. J. W. EDWARDS (Frontenac): The hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Turriff) calls to my mind a couplet which runs:

The lightning bug is brilliant, but it has'n't
any mind—

It wanders through creation with its head-
lights on behind.

Mr. TURRIFF: That is very clever.

Mr. EDWARDS: I do not want to say, or to be understood as saying that the hon. member for Assiniboia is like the lightning bug in not having any mind. He has a mind, of a kind. But I think I might be excused for saying that the last line of that couplet does apply to the hon. gentleman very aptly—that his headlights are on behind. If the hon. gentleman from Assiniboia has forgotten some of his past history, there are members of this House who have not forgotten, and there are some of us who still remember that this same gentleman who gets up now and talks about making everything free as the air we breathe, taking the duty off agricultural implements,