

Mr. MILLS. The acquisition of this vessel was considered important enough to receive notice in the Speech from the Throne. One would have supposed the Canadian Government was receiving a very handsome present, but the vessel's boilers appear to be worn out and her timbers unsound. The Government have to wait till the weather is fine and the Atlantic less stormy, in order to bring her out. It was hardly worth while for the hon. gentleman to make such an ado about this old vessel that we have bought and have put such a eulogy into the mouth of His Excellency on the subject. The hon. gentleman gave us to understand we are to pay for her a great deal more than she is worth. The Finance Minister now announces they have been bickering with the English Government with regard to her value; that they have pointed out the Canadian Government have been imposed upon by the English Government with regard to an old craft of which they did not know the value; and now the First Minister tells us that the item will be cut down a half, and the ship brought out when the weather is fine. This is a very extraordinary conclusion a very high sounding announcement; and if the hon. gentlemen were to put in the Governor General's Speech everything else of no more consequence to the country, we should have hardly got through by this time with the reading of all the items and paragraphs the Speech would have contained. I do not know how the hon. gentleman should have so mistaken his political perspective as to have put alongside the subject of the Canadian Pacific Railway Syndicate such a matter as this old gun vessel the *Charybdis*.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Mills) does not evidently like ships of war; he is a man of peace. But here we are: the *Charybdis* is our ship, and between the cost of the *Charybdis* and the difficulty of *Sylla* on the other side—we do not spell it with y—we are well attacked. But, seriously, though this vessel is not a new one, I do not think Her Majesty's Government could afford to give us a new one—she has been a ship of war in the Chinese seas for some years and has stood monsoons and simooms and rounded the Cape, arriving in England safe. And if she has survived all those tests, she can surely cross the Atlantic. Though old the ship is valuable yet, and ought not to be broken up. She will serve as a training ship for our young men wishing to enter the merchant service, which we wanted very much. The surveyors in Her Majesty's navy are very rigid in condemning ships which might sail in the commercial fleet for 20 years. As a block ship the *Charybdis* might defend the port of St. John. We have reduced the item by deciding upon employing a less expensive crew to bring the vessel out. We will thus dispense with the engineers, stokers, etc., and we could put her into the harbor of St. John where our young men could be sent to form a portion of our commercial navy.

Mr. MILLS. How many guns?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I do not know that she has any.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. If she has no guns, how many of those youngsters are to be put on board this training ship, and what will they cost, as I take it for granted that an annual appropriation will be required for training and maintenance. I know that on the other side of the Atlantic there are a considerable number of these ships which have been turned to good account as a sort of nautical or rather reformatory school for the training of unfortunate lads picked up on the streets of great cities. I take it for granted that the hon. Minister does not intend to turn the *Charybdis* to that purpose. Are instructors to be kept on board, and are these lads intended for mates in the merchant service? If they are merely to be turned out as sailors they are likely, like other sailors, to go into

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every service under the sun, almost before they leave the training ship.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Of course, before we ask for a vote for the maintenance of this training school we are bound to be prepared with a plan for the ratification of Parliament, of the description of the work we expect to perform and the nature and extent of the tuition. I would be much opposed to commence by making the *Charybdis* a mere reformatory or prison for the training of young convicts.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. They are not convicts.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Well, of castaways, waifs or vagrants such as those the hon. gentleman has referred to. I think we should rather make it a school for the training of the upper class of sailors such as mates and so on. Those who are unable from idleness or want of ability to pass the requisite examinations will always be valuable on account of the instruction and experience they may acquire as common sailors.

Mr. MACKENZIE. I suppose the hon. gentleman took care to inform the Government of the United States and other Governments, that his intentions in this matter are strictly pacific.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. No; our intentions are solely confined to the Atlantic. We do not intend to go to the Pacific.

Mr. MILLS. No doubt we should be very thankful to the English Government for the great favor they have shown us in selling us this vessel; but after hearing the reference to it in the Speech from the Throne many were somewhat disappointed when they read in the newspapers the character of the vessel, and I do not think there is very much room, after all, for the glorifications which the hon. gentleman has taken to himself for this step in laying the foundations of a great naval power upon this continent.

Mr. ANGLIN. I think it would be well if we could get some idea of the cost of this vessel to the country hereafter, for we are now undertaking rather a serious obligation. The report we have received as to the condition of the *Charybdis* is based upon a survey of an officer of high standing on the other side of the Atlantic, and it appears that the boilers were considered to be in such a condition that it was deemed dangerous to take her across the Atlantic in winter, by the more favorable southern route, to say nothing of the more difficult northern route. It will take a great deal more than is now asked to put the vessel in proper condition. It will cost a great deal more than \$5,000. Perhaps the hon. gentleman may have occasion to send her across the Atlantic, but if she gets back safely she will remain the whole of the next year lying idle. During all that time it will cost a great deal to maintain her equipment. This vessel must be well manned with officers if these young gentlemen are to learn anything of their business. As far as defending St. John without guns or officers, it would be rendering us more defenceless than we are already. We ought to have some idea of what it will cost to put this vessel in an efficient condition and to render her serviceable for any purpose. My impression is that in the condition of our society it will be difficult to find young men to take service on a vessel of this kind. There are a large number of vessels leaving our harbors every day, and young men who desire to learn anything of marine service can always find room on board these vessels, and receive all the instruction there, and in the schools on shore, that they may find necessary. In the Lower Provinces we have never been at a loss for able and intelligent officers of marine. If this experiment is to be tried we ought to have a full statement of the probable cost.