

Now the minister has four steamers and a floating blacksmith shop, which is in charge of another tug, besides two or three big scows. About once a week they stop at Gananogue from Saturday till Monday with a big gang of men. It is costing to-day \$5 where it used to cost \$1 to look after the lighthouses between Montreal and the lakes. The expense at present is something awful.

Mr. BRODEUR. I cannot agree with the criticism of my hon. friend. It is true, some years ago the number of boats was less than it is to-day. There were then no gas buoys. We have installed them in the St. Lawrence, and with very good results in the interest of navigation. In 1895-96 there were no gas buoys; now we have 79, and since we have established that system the traffic has greatly increased. Instead of vessels being obliged to lie up at nights, they can continue on their route, and in that way we have almost doubled the transportation facilities of the country. We require some boats to look after this system, both on the St. Lawrence and on the Great Lakes. Formerly we chartered a boat for the purpose of provisioning our lighthouses on the lakes; but this was a very expensive and unsatisfactory method, which could be carried out only at certain times of the year. Now we have a vessel which is engaged all the time in inspecting and looking after our lights, so that if an accident occurs it can be attended to at once. We had to put another boat there, and since then everything has been going on very nicely, and the aids to navigation are kept in proper shape.

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds). I asked for a return of the cost since 1896 and previous to 1896 of the lights west of Montreal, but have not been able to get it. When I do get it I am satisfied it will show that the cost is \$5 to \$1 what it was before.

Mr. BRODEUR. That return was brought down.

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds). Between Montreal and Kingston, the cost is \$5 to \$1 compared with what it used to be. The minister promised, when establishing the acetylene gas business, to reduce the cost, but it is five times what it formerly was. He has not dispensed with the lightkeepers in many cases, and the 'Reserve' and the 'Scout' with a blacksmith shop and a big barge with a derrick on it, are moving up and down the river and through the islands between Kingston and Montreal all the time, and what they are doing no one can tell.

Mr. BRODEUR. The report was brought down some time in December or January. In 1895 we had only 238 lights; now we have 366. At present the aids to navigation are 520, and they were only 270 in 1895.

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds).

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds). What do you call aids to navigation? Do you mean the steel buoys which the department bought at a tremendous price and which are no better than the painted ones?

Mr. BRODEUR. They are much better.

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds). At night time we cannot see them, and the painted buoys were just as good.

Mr. BRODEUR. Let my hon. friend compare our harbour with places where the Americans have a lighting system, and he will find that ours is much superior. Let him go to the Detroit river.

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds). You have built a system to make somebody rich, buying these buoys at extravagant prices instead of using what we had before and which answered the purpose just as well.

Mr. BRODEUR. Well, we are getting the business for it. Just look at the freight tonnage.

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds). That has not been increased by putting on these gas buoys.

Mr. BRODEUR. To a certain extent it has, because we are giving better facilities.

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds). You had the facilities before and just as few accidents, and the river was just as well lighted throughout the Thousand islands.

Mr. CROSBY. What is the size of the boat?

Mr. BRODEUR. 170 feet long, 32 feet beam, draught 10 feet, and speed 12 knots.

Mr. CROSBY. Is there any chance of building her down in your department at Halifax?

Mr. BRODEUR. Not at our department, but we are calling for tenders, and I hope that the contract will go to a Canadian firm. I am extremely sorry to find that we have no tender from Halifax, but that is not our fault.

Mr. CROSBY. Would it not be a good plan for the government to build that ship themselves in their own dockyard. They have a splendid place, abundant facilities, and the latest kind of machinery for doing all kinds of work. I would like to see the department making some good use of the dockyard there, and I think it would be only fair for the minister to try and build one ship in it. Then you have men in Halifax, Pictou and Yarmouth, good marine engineers who are constructing marine engines all the time. Now that the minister is building some ships on the upper lakes, he ought to build a ship in the dockyard of Halifax.