

Mr. McLELAN. I propose to leave it in the Bill. I stated to the hon. gentleman before recess that I would get the opinion of the Minister of Justice on certain points raised by gentlemen opposite in connection with this subsection, and some other clauses.

On section 25,

Mr. FISHER. I think when it is specified that a person knowingly attaches the label, \$5 is a very small bottom limit for the penalty.

Mr. McLELAN. It may be \$50.

Mr. FISHER. Yes, but it may be only \$5. It seems to me \$50 would not be too much.

Mr. McLELAN. Make it not less than \$50 nor more than \$200.

Mr. FISHER. I think that would be going a little too far in the other direction.

Mr. McLELAN. I propose that it should be "not exceeding \$100 and not less than \$20."

Mr. WILSON. I think that is a very large penalty. I think the clause as it stood answered all the purposes of the Act.

Amendment agreed to; and committee arose and reported progress.

CULLING AND MEASURING TIMBER.

Mr. McLELAN moved that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider a certain proposed resolution (page 2419) to amend the Acts relating to the culling and measuring of timber in Ontario and Quebec.

Motion agreed to; and the House resolved itself into Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Mr. McLELAN. In 1877 there was an amendment to the Act regulating the cullers, and provision was made for reducing the number, as it was found that the number was greater than the wants of the trade called for. At that time there were about sixty cullers on the list; that number was reduced, some of them were retired on annuities, and the number was fixed for square timber. It is still found that the number of licensed cullers is greater than the wants of the trade require. There are now 47 cullers, and it is proposed to reduce the number to 33 to be in active service, limiting the number of deal cullers to 12; and also it is proposed to retire certain of them on annuities. It has been found in practice that while some of them earn large amounts, others receive a very small income, owing to the mode in which dealers select their cullers. It is true that every culler who is licensed is compelled to take his turn in the office and to wait till his turn arrives. But merchants sometimes arrange so as to get the man they prefer by giving a small order to the man, for instance, who goes on to-day, and another small order to the man who is on to-morrow, and the day after their man would come on and they would give him a large order. And so it went on, and a few cullers earned a great deal while others earned a comparatively small amount. The average pay to cullers last year was over \$800, and it is proposed to regulate their employment and to make a uniform salary of \$700. The expenses connected with the office are proposed to be raised from the services performed and from timber fees to be regulated according to Order in Council, based upon the expenses which it is desired to cover. There has been in past years a considerable surplus, in consequence of which the fees were lowered, and it is proposed to give the Governor

in Council power to change the fees from time to time in order to meet the expenditure that may be incurred, either in the payment of annuities, or of the salaries of the cullers, and the expenses of the office.

Mr. BLAKE. Have any communications been received from the trade in respect to this proposed change?

Mr. McLELAN. The lumber trade is not so much interested, perhaps, in this proposition as the cullers themselves. It is proposed to put them upon a more uniform basis whilst securing equal results.

Mr. BLAKE. No doubt the cullers are interested, but the trade is also, because I well remember when this subject was a burning subject, and when the present Auditor General, who represented a lumber constituency, and my hon. friend from the other riding of Renfrew (Mr. White), and several other hon. members, used to engage in considerable discussion, which culminated in the passing of the Act to which the hon. gentleman has alluded. It certainly was at that time considered an object of some consequence to the trade. The hon. gentleman has stated a plan by which the trade could obtain its favorite cullers from time to time, and he seems to point out some mischiefs which have resulted—that some of the cullers got too much and others too little; and he says it is proposed to regulate their employment by authorising the Governor in Council to provide for a mode in which the work shall be done. Of course, that may be a very important matter, a very serious matter, for the trade. The hon. gentleman proposes to retire a certain number of men who are at present on active service. How is it proposed that the requirements shall be effected? Does he propose to leave it to the Governor in Council to choose the persons who shall be retired? The result will be the addition of a very large sum to the annual charges in regard to which no services are to be rendered by the annuitants, and the charges will have to be increased. This reduction of staff is in consequence of the trade having decayed, and we must take care not to increase too largely the charges on a decaying trade. In that view the trade has a considerable interest in the proposal of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. McLELAN. Not quite so many as I have named will be retired. It is proposed to pay the cullers \$700 per annum, whereas last year they received \$800. The expenditure last year was not so large.

Mr. BLAKE. I am afraid the hon. gentleman's calculations will not work out. Some of the cullers receive barely anything in fees, and these, I suppose, will be retired at \$300 a year. Is it intended to pay each culler retained \$700 whether he does much work or not?

Mr. McLELAN. Yes.

Mr. MILLS. It is important that the House should know the amount of work performed by these men now, as compared with some years ago, and the number of them employed now, compared with formerly.

Mr. McLELAN. There was very much more work to do a number of years ago than there is now. At that time there were sixty cullers employed. In 1877 the number of square timber cullers was reduced to eighteen, but the number of the whole still remained over forty. It is now proposed to reduce the number to thirty-three, which is due to the reduction of the work required to be done and the circumstance that the trade has changed largely.

Mr. BLAKE. Has the surplus been pretty nearly exhausted?

Mr. McLELAN. Yes, and it is under consideration whether the fees should not now be increased.

Mr. BLAKE. Well, if the surplus has been exhausted, the hon. gentleman ought to be prepared to give us figures