

Shipping Act of 1875 to Canada, the undersigned remarks that there has been much excitement and uneasiness among Canadian ships owners relative to this Act, and to the prospect of further Imperial legislation next Session in respect to their sea-going vessels, a large portion of which are engaged in the carrying trade of the United Kingdom and foreign countries.

In the 2nd section of the Act power is given to one-fourth of the seamen belonging to any British ship to have such ship detained by the Surveyors of the Board of Trade, and the undersigned is of opinion that this power is too great to be exercised by so small a proportion of the crew, and that it should not be entrusted to a smaller number than one-third or one-half of the crew, especially as sailors, when they first join a ship, are, frequently, not in a fit state to form an opinion on such a subject.

With reference to the power of a Board of Trade Surveyor to direct the unloading of a ship on account of alleged unseaworthiness of the hull, the undersigned is of opinion that such power should be modified, and that a certificate of classification by British Lloyds, Liverpool Underwriters Registry for Iron Vessels, *Bureau Veritas*, or by the Canadian Government, whenever a system of classification shall be established, shall be receive as *prima facie* evidence of the seaworthiness of the hull.

With reference to the 3rd section of the Act, which applies to Canadian vessels in Canada, prohibiting the loading of grain, if exceeding one-third of the cargo, unless it is contained in bags, sacks or barrels, or is secured from shifting by boards, bulkheads or otherwise, the undersigned recommends that Canada shall be exempted from the operation of this section, as he has shown that the Canadian Legislature has already made much better provision for the loading of grain in sea-going vessels than is contained in this Act, and has provided the proper officers to superintend the loading of such vessels, and to certify them as seaworthy before they are allowed to proceed to sea. There are many Canadian and United States vessels engaged in carrying grain on the great inland lakes between the United States and Canada, and the effect of this section, if carried out, would be to render Canadian vessels liable to penalties from which United States vessels would be exempt; and as there is keen competition between Canadian and American vessels on the great lakes, this restriction on Canadian vessels would certainly turn the scale and throw the carrying trade into the hands of the owners of United States vessels, a state of affairs which would not likely be submitted to by Canadian ship-owners without complaint.

The undersigned is of opinion that no Imperial legislation should take place affecting the question of seaworthiness, or loading of Canadian vessels in Canadian waters—the Canadian Legislature is the proper authority to deal with such questions, and when it becomes necessary to legislate for the safety of Canadian vessels in Canadian waters, he has no doubt the Canadian Parliament will be quite ready to do so, as it has already done in the past.

With reference to the 5th section, which applies to Canadian ships in Canadian waters and provides for the marking of the deck-lines, the undersigned remarks that he sees nothing objectionable in it.

With reference to the 6th section of the Act providing for an *owner's* load-line on all British vessels clearing from the United Kingdom, the undersigned also sees nothing objectionable in it, as it does not apply to Canadian ships until they reach the United Kingdom; and as it is not an *official* load-line, (indicating the depth to which it would be safe to load the ship) but merely indicating the maximum load line, in salt water, to which the owner intends to load his ship for that voyage.

With reference to the general policy of recent Imperial legislation relative to British Merchant ships, which include Canadian ships, the undersigned remarks that a number of communications, in the shape of petitions, memorials and verbal statements, from owners of Canadian sea-going ships and Boards of Trade, have reached his Department, urging the Canadian Government to take some steps to protect Canadian shipping from the effect of Imperial legislation, so as to place Canadian ships, while competing in the carrying trade, on as favourable a footing in British and foreign ports as foreign ships.