

Supply—Marine and Fisheries

W. H. Prowse, inspector of lighthouses, Charlottetown, crossed this week by the car ferry steamer en route to Buctouche and Richibucto.

That is in my county.

At the former place he held an examination of applicants for the position of lightkeeper, the former keeper having died some time ago.

The holding of an examination for the position of lightkeeper is not a very difficult thing to do; it should not be necessary to have an inspector of lighthouses make a trip of that kind to carry out so trifling a duty. Besides, the cost is considerable. The clipping goes on:

At Richibucto he will look into the matter of changing the Richibucto bar light, which change is necessary on account of the shifting of the channel.

This also, I am informed, is a trifling bit of work which almost any man around the district could do with satisfaction to the public. To my mind, the present system is an extravagance, and I would therefore ask the minister to look into this question with a view to providing each province with its own marine agency. It would give us a much better service. I hope the minister will bring back the old system that we had from Confederation down to a few years ago.

Mr. LAPOINTE: I understand that my hon. friend is advocating the autonomy of New Brunswick and her exemption from any control by Prince Edward Island. I sympathize with his position, but on the other hand the department came to its conclusion to change the system a few years ago on account of geographical rather than provincial considerations. However, I shall be pleased to look into the matter, and my hon. friend may rest assured that his representations will be carefully considered.

Mr. MICHAUD: I endorse what my hon. friend from Kent county has said in connection with this matter, and I hope the minister will look at the question not only from the point of view of geographical considerations, but will consider the needs of the province itself. We seem to have been neglected in the past few years so far as dredging and other maritime works are concerned, and I think it is high time that we should address ourselves to somebody who would take an interest in these matters.

Mr. MARTELL: I am sorry I cannot agree with the hon. member for Madawaska and the hon. member for Kent. My constituency, I believe, happens to be under

[Mr. Leger.]

the control of the agency in St. John, N.B. I think the department did the right thing when they placed these agencies where the agents could be got at most easily and from where the service could be best carried on. The counties all along the Bay of Fundy coast can be most economically and efficiently managed from the agency at St. John, and the western counties can be reached from Halifax. With all deference to my hon. friends, I submit that it is very much more easy for the agent at Charlottetown to have jurisdiction over the northern portions of New Brunswick than to put that territory under the jurisdiction of the agent at St. John, which would necessitate the inspection and supply boats all taking a roundabout way to get to the counties of my hon. friends. I think this change is one thing the department should be commended for. However, that was not my purpose in rising. I want to ask the minister how many subagencies there are in the province of Nova Scotia, and where they are located. I understand there is one at Sydney, and one at Pictou. Who is the agent at Sydney, and in what building is his office located?

Mr. LAPOINTE: The agent at Sydney is Mr. V. Mullins. His salary last year was \$2,040. This year he gets an increase of \$120, making his salary \$2,160. The agent at Pictou is Mr. J. R. Davis. He is getting only \$400.

Mr. MARTELL: Where is the office in Sydney, and what rent is paid for it?

Mr. LAPOINTE: The office at Sydney is provided by the Public Works Department. I am not aware just where it is.

Mr. MARTELL: I think it is in the Sydney Post building.

Mr. STEVENS: What amount was spent last year out of this \$216,500?

Mr. LAPOINTE: The amount spent last year was \$190,927.45.

Mr. BANCROFT: Is there any provision made for pensions for lighthouse keepers when they become too old to remain in the service? I understand their salaries are very small, not sufficient to allow them to put anything by for their old age.

Mr. LAPOINTE: The Calder Act applies to the lighthouse keepers. Under that act the pension is based on the number of years' service and the average yearly salary.

Item agreed to.