

on the Atlantic; but I speak particularly of the inland routes, where these parties do not require such qualifications.

Mr. DE ST. GEORGES (Translation). Mr. Speaker: I am not opposed to the principle of the Bill now before the House, because I believe we should give to insurers and forwarders a guarantee that the men who pilot their vessels on the rivers and lakes should be duly qualified for this business. But I deem it my duty to oppose this part of the Bill which refers to the examinations required from captains and mates, and as to the tonnage of the vessels. I hoped when the Bill was introduced that the hon. Minister would modify it, and that he would exempt vessels under 200 tons from the effects of this law. I mean then that the law should only apply to vessels of over 200 tons. It is a well-known fact to all engaged in navigation that the St. Lawrence route from Quebec to Montreal has been rendered easy by the large number of buoys placed on the river in dangerous parts and by the great number of lighthouses located on each side of the river. With a little experience under a captain or pilot, a person can easily, and without danger steer a vessel under 130 tons. It may be expected, that if the route is easy, the examinations will be so likewise, and, consequently, that there can be no objection to the law which exacts these examinations. To illustrate, it seems to me, for instance, an inconvenience which should not exist, and yet which must exist under the present law, viz.: when men duly qualified in every respect will be systematically rejected by the board of examiners for the slightest reason or most trivial pretext, to prevent competition and diminish the number of captains, as is the custom at nearly every board of examiners, whether for pilotage or for some other reason. Serious abuses will result from this law, which will compel its repeal hereafter if the hon. Minister does not withdraw it now. I observe also that the hon. Minister obliges such candidates to pay \$3 for captains' certificates and \$5 for mates'. This sum would be small for pilots, whose salaries are high; but it will be a heavy charge if we only consider the small revenues derived from ordinary navigation. For several years back one might suppose that the special object of legislation was not only to favor large ships, but also to make disappear the market navigation on which so many families in the Province of Quebec are dependent. It is a fact that at the port of Montreal the duties imposed on small vessels pays for the dredging of Lake St. Peter and other lakes which are of no use to them, and which are even a burden on them in reducing their revenues. By a clause of chap. 43, 45 Vic., they are deprived of the free passage of the St. Lawrence channel. But that is not all. The House, to-day, is asked to pass a law which will prove a considerable burden to ordinary navigation, and which will have a tendency to materially injure it. I see that the hon. member from Montmagny (Mr. Landry) approves of what I say. I am convinced he has sufficient influence in the House to assist me in the demand I am now preferring. I therefore, Mr. Speaker, deem it my duty to oppose the purport of this Bill which has relation to tonnage, and I ask the hon. Minister of Marine to substitute the words 260 tons for the words 100 tons.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. (Translation.) Mr. Speaker: I cannot allow the observations of the hon. member from Portneuf to pass unanswered, inasmuch as my hon. colleague the Minister of Marine understands English better than French. I will, therefore, make a few remarks on the observations which he has just made to the House and which have reference to vessels of over 200 tons, in reference to which the hon. member has just spoken. If I am correctly informed, the difference or the exception which is made by the Bill introduced by the Minister of Marine is for vessels of 100 tons, not for 200-ton vessels. But I am

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informed that those of 100 tons are equal in capacity to those of 175 tons, and that consequently it suffices to exempt the small vessels, which must necessarily be so by the law introduced by the hon. Minister. I am convinced that the hon. member from Portneuf, after having duly weighed the observations which I am making, will see that the exemption of 100-ton vessels will be sufficient to safeguard the craft navigation. Moreover, he is in error if he supposes that the sum of \$8, which is required of captains, and the sum of \$5 from mates, is to be an annual payment; it is a final one. When the captain or mate has obtained his certificate, it will serve him for life. Consequently, the objection raised by the hon. member has not much force; as after all this is but a small sum of money, and, moreover, it will enable a captain or mate of a vessel to obtain a certificate which will last him for life without obliging him to undergo any further examination. The other objection has reference to the channels. The Bill which was introduced, and which is now law, was modified in deference to the Harbor Commission in Montreal. I believe that the hon. member was not in the House at that epoch. By that law it is declared that certain parts of the channel between Montreal and Quebec would be exclusively reserved for large sailing vessels and steamships, and that in the five or six dangerous points the smaller vessels, as well as the rafts, would be obliged to take the side channel in order to leave the principal channel for the larger vessels, as the channel is narrow at these places. When a sea-going vessel or large steamboat, or a large sailing vessel, passes in this channel—and many pass every day—it would be dangerous for navigation to permit on such occasions rafts of timber or small vessels to place themselves in the same route with the large vessels. But the Legislature had the foresight to say, that if, by the force of the current or other circumstances independent of the will of the captain or mate, or by reason of a tempest, the small vessels or rafts were driven into the channel, they would not be visited with any punishment and the law would not affect them. These small vessels as well as the rafts can pass by the principal channel, as well as the large vessels, and I am convinced that in practice, when no large steamships or sailing vessels are in sight that the small vessels or those who are running rafts of timber will always find that the current is strong enough to force them to pass in the deep channel, so that in reality the hon. member will see that no inconveniences are to be apprehended. No petition has been presented to Parliament or to the Government on this question. I hope, therefore that after the explanations which I have just made, that the hon. member will not insist on the amendments which he suggests.

Mr. RINFRET (Translation). In view of the fact that I represent a county in which there are a large number of seamen, I made enquiries relative to the Bill now before the House. After having obtained the necessary information I must say I entirely concur in the views of the hon. member from Portneuf (Mr. De St. Georges), and I think that the Bill will meet with the approbation of mariners and of the members of this House if the hon. Minister of Marine will substitute the words 200 tons for the words 100 tons. The hon. Minister of Public Works said that vessels reported at 100 tons really represented 175 tons. Everyone knows that; but 175 tons is not sufficient, and the law must necessarily be changed on this point. As for the fee to be paid on passing the examinations, I think it would be very desirable to reduce it if possible. The hon. Minister of Public Works has misunderstood the hon. member for Portneuf, when he supposed he was speaking of an annual fee of \$8. The hon. member said it was a final payment, but that this fee was too high, especially if it applied to vessels of less than 100 tons. I think, however, that this fee of \$8 might be retained if it is not to apply to captains of vessels of 200 tons, and if, notwithstanding the law