

proof positive of that contention. If the principle is to protect the fishermen against foreign competition, the lobster and salmon fisheries have the same claim, more particularly when the hon. Minister of Finance placed an increased duty on cordage and nets.

Mr. BAKER (Victoria, B.C.) As this debate seems to have taken a wide range, perhaps I might be permitted to ask whether, in view of the fact that the Province of British Columbia is also a Maritime Province, any provision is to be made for her fishermen. We have there no lobster fisheries, but we have there salmon fisheries and crabs. I know we have been in some way overlooked in the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States, as regards the free entry of fish and fish oil; but in this matter of the fishery bounty, I think it is pertinent for me to ask why British Columbia should not be included in the disposition of that \$150,000?

Mr. BOWELL. I think I cannot do better than read a short extract from the speech of the hon. Finance Minister when the same question was put by the late member for Victoria, Mr. DeCosmos: "British Columbia does not come within the terms of the Treaty, and American fishermen are not competing with them." As the object of this appropriation was to pay those who were affected by that Treaty, British Columbia not being affected by it, it was not considered correct to pay them the bounty in the same manner as it was paid to the others.

Mr. BAKER. The hon. gentleman is mistaken in saying we are not affected. For the past six or seven years large American schooners have come up to our coast and taken part in our deep sea fisheries, and we have no safeguards against that.

Mr. BOWELL. I am aware of that fact, because during the short time I have been acting for my hon. colleague that question has been brought under my notice. American fishermen, I am informed, come into our waters almost unimpeded, but they are acting in direct contravention of the law, and I instructed the officer to warn them off, and if they do not obey that warning some other steps will have to be taken in order to prevent them poaching upon the fisheries of British Columbia, where they have no rights.

Mr. KIRK. I do not intend to take up the time of the House at this late hour of the night in discussing the points which have been so ably discussed by my hon. friend from Antigonish and others on this side of the House, further than to say that I entirely agree with them that lobster and salmon fishermen are as justly entitled to share in the bounty as other fishermen, and that the bounty, instead of being only the interest on \$3,000,000, it should be the interest on \$4,500,000 annually. There is another question which I wish to bring to the notice of the acting Minister of Marine and Fisheries in connection with this matter, and that is in connection with the close season for lobster fishing. I would like to enquire whether it is the intention of the Government this year to allow lobster fishing in the fall of the year. As it is now the fishermen are only allowed to fish for lobsters practically for three months in the year, because they cannot fish during the month of April, and it is the first of May before they are able to fish for lobsters; consequently, the above season confines them practically to three months in the year. This appears to me too short a time to allow fishermen to engage in lobster fishing. It is impossible for them, unless the business is more than usually profitable, to earn enough during those three months to support their families during the remainder of the year. You are expecting a little too much from their business. Therefore, I am of opinion that this close season is an imposition on the lobster fishermen of the Dominion. The lobster fishing industry is a very large one and employs a great many men. I think in the county I have the honor to represent, there are eleven or twelve lobster canning establish-

Mr. WELDON:

ments that employ a great many men, and I would like to see the Government allow them to fish in the fall of the year, and I can see no good reason why they should not. I can see a reason why there should be a close season for lobster fishing, because there is a certain season of the year in which that fish is not in fit condition for human food, and during that season they should not be allowed to be taken. But from information I have received from those engaged in the business that season extends for only about four or five, or at most six weeks, and that is the only time during which the season should be closed—that is, at least, the opinion of the fishermen themselves. Some two months ago I obtained an Order of this House for petitions and correspondence on the subject, which, I am informed, are in the hands of the Department, but which have not yet been brought down. I, therefore, take this opportunity of urging the Government to bring down that information and to take this matter into their early consideration, and, if possible, permit fall fishing for lobsters.

288. Scientific Institutions..... \$1,750.00

Mr. BOWELL. This sum is to cover the deficiency in the sum voted last year on account of extension of the service. Full details of the expenditure will be found on page 162 of the report. I think the increase may be considered a permanent one.

Mr. BLAKE. What is the condition of the Toronto Observatory?

Mr. BOWELL. The cottage formerly occupied by the observers having been claimed by the University as their property, it was ceded to them, and it was necessary to provide another residence. The item of \$250 is to pay rent.

289. Steamboat Inspection..... \$2,000.00.

Mr. BAKER. I desire to impress on the acting Minister the necessity of appointing a steamboat inspector in British Columbia, with as little delay as possible. It is utterly impossible to expect to obtain a man capable, scientifically and practically, to perform the duties incident to that position unless he is paid a respectable sum. For \$750 a year, the Government will never be able to secure a man who can satisfactorily perform the duties expected from such an officer, and the Government have been without an officer for one year now.

Mr. ROBERTSON (Shelburne). I desire to draw the attention of the Department to a matter of considerable importance. We have, of course, a Steamboat Inspector for Canadian vessels plying between the Dominion and the United States. I do not know whether the acting Minister is aware of the fact, that the United States Government have passed a most stringent measure, providing for the inspection of foreign steamboats. Steamboats owned here, and plying between Canadian and American ports, no matter if they have been inspected by our inspectors, are compelled to undergo a rigid inspection in the United States. I trust the Dominion Government will look into the matter, and pass a law the same as that of the United States. There are steamers plying between the United States and Canadian ports, and I am informed, by men familiar with steamboats, that these boats, in some cases, and at certain seasons, are unsafe, but they are passed by the American Steamboat Inspectors. The subject is one to which the Government should give their immediate attention.

Mr. BOWELL. The vote was taken for the purpose of providing for additional expenses connected with the Inspection Act. Three inspectors were appointed, one for Quebec, one for the Maritime Provinces, and one for Ontario, and the expenses attending their work have been greater than are anticipated. We have also found it necessary, particularly at the present season, to give assistance to the Inspectors, the additional officers being selected from among