

Mr. WALLACE. If I had the framing of that item I would not have made it.

The CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS. The hon. gentleman did make it.

Mr. WALLACE. Oh, no, it was the law before.

The CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Wallace) had the privilege of altering it.

Mr. WALLACE. That item was not the same as this. It could only be imported by the twine manufacturer.

The CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS. Oh, no, it could be imported by anybody.

Mr. WALLACE. It was a most unsatisfactory item and should not be perpetuated in this tariff. This twine was used for no other purpose practically, but this wire can be used for other things in addition to fencing.

Mr. MCGREGOR. That kind of wire is what is used for fencing.

The CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS. The old tariff would have limited the free entry to barbed wire. This new item is a further concession to the farmers, because in addition to barbed wire they will be now able to get free galvanized wire of the numbers mentioned, and which is largely used for fencing. There is a difficulty in this as my hon. friend has pointed out, but it is a difficulty which is connected with some few items in the tariff. You had it in the old tariff. Tubing was not free, but when it was imported for oil wells it was free, and wherever you have these exceptional items you are liable to have some abuses. Our desire was to give the farmer his wire for fencing free, but we do not want it free for every other purpose.

Mr. FOSTER. Tubing for oil wells was a localized industry, and it was imported practically only by the oil men.

Mr. MCGREGOR. It was imported and kept in stock by the trade.

Mr. FOSTER. My hon. friend (Mr. Pater son) knows that you have hundreds of thousands of farmers extending into every corner and part of this country. You have an item here providing that wire when imported for fencing will be free. How is it possible to have anything but free wire the whole country through, so far as these three numbers are concerned? You pretend to help the wire industry, and you take on the three staple numbers, and make them free ostensibly for farmers, but really for the whole consumption of the country. Let us face the fact that it is free wire on these three numbers, and you might as well make it all free.

Mr. MCGREGOR. The twine that was brought in for the fishermen was in the

same position, and oil piping was in the same position. By this change, instead of having the cruel barbed wire for fencing, the farmers will be able to have plain wire that does not cut the cattle.

Mr. TAYLOR. I would suggest to the Controller, if he is going to leave this item in the tariff, that he make it read, "barbed wire and galvanized wire, Nos. 9, 12 and 13 gauge, when used exclusively for fencing," and strike out the words, "wire for fencing," because, as it reads, any person could import the wire for fencing and use it for anything.

Mr. FOSTER. That will help it somewhat, but my hon. friend is striking the wire industry, as he knows.

The CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS. Is not the hon. gentleman's proposition striking it harder—to make wire free for all purposes?

Mr. FOSTER. I was simply pointing out to my hon. friend what his tariff did—that it was practically making all wire free.

Mr. CRAIG. I think there is a great deal in the point raised by the hon. member for York. If a merchant is importing a lot of this wire, how does he know whether it is going to be used for fencing or not? It is usually used for fencing, but he could not say that it is going to be used for that. The result, I hold, will be that the United States dealers will get the selling of this wire to parties who want to use it for fencing, while our wholesale men will be thrown out of it altogether. I would like to know what the hon. member for Hamilton (Mr. Wood) has to say about this.

Mr. WOOD (Hamilton). There is a great deal of difficulty in having these three items made free, because, as the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster) has stated, these numbers can be used for many other purposes. In the case of fishermen's twine, a declaration was made at the time of the entry that it was for fishing purposes, and then it came in free, and when that declaration could not be made, the duty had to be paid. It was the same with iron pipe for oil purposes, but in some cases the pipe was sold for other purposes. In many cases the honest importer was undersold by others who do not import honestly. If the Government can see their way to make some other disposition of this item, I think it would be in the interest of the revenue as well as in the interest of the honest importer. If they insisted on a declaration being made at the time of the entry that the wire was for fencing, I suppose the balance would be left to the honesty of the importer.

Mr. MCGREGOR. To the honesty of the importer and the judgment of the collector. We have got to the stage in this country when wire has become the fencing of the country, and it is a great relief to the far-