

the part of the Indians towards the Government. The people of this country desire that the Indians shall be kindly treated, and they are opposed to the practice of the Government in throwing out imputations against the Indians that are calculated, perhaps, to do great injury to this country. Now, I am very glad to notice that the Minister of Justice almost took back all the epithets that he applied, in his campaign speeches, to the hon. member for West Huron. The member for West Huron, when he comes before this House to address it on any subject, always does so in a manner that does himself great credit, indeed. He is one of those members of the House who carefully prepares his speeches, he gives information to this House, and on this occasion he has given information to this House that apparently the heads of the department were not aware of. They have probably not given as close study to the reports of their own agents as has the member for West Huron, and it must be very gratifying to him to find that they now come here, after he has made his speech, complaining that they had not an opportunity of verifying the facts so that they might be able to reply to him.

#### ENFORCEMENT OF THE FISHERY LAWS.

Mr. LISTER. Before the House goes into Committee, I desire to bring before the attention of the House some matters to which I wish to address myself for a few moments. It is a matter of very great importance to a very large section of the community, so important, indeed, that I feel justified, under the circumstances, in calling your attention to it. I desire to say to the Minister of Marine and Fisheries that I fully approve of the Bill of which he has given notice to-day, namely, to divide the fines that may be inflicted for any infraction of the fishery laws of this country between the Government and the inspector, provided he is the prosecutor; and I, for one, hope that the effect of that legislation will be an incentive to these officials to act, and will induce them to be more vigilant and to enforce as far as possible the fishery laws of this Dominion. I speak with a knowledge of the facts when I say that in very many instances these particular officers discharge their duties in a perfunctory manner. It is well known that the salaries which they receive are such as will not justify them in giving that time and attention to the discharge of those duties which the law expects from them; the consequence is that the law is disregarded, that every day in the year it is broken, and the result is loss to that section of the community; and as I stated before, I believe the hon. gentleman's Bill will be a remedy to this evil. Now, I do not propose to speak in any way as censuring the Government or the administration of my hon. friend the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, because, after reading the reports of that department, and being somewhat familiar with what is going on, through the reports of the deputies and otherwise, I honestly think that the department and its officials are fairly trying to carry out the provisions of the law. But a large portion of the fishermen of this country have what they consider grievances, and it is their privilege and my duty, if asked to do so, to endeavour to bring these grievances before the Government, with a view to having them remedied. I need hardly

say to the House that the fishery industries of this country, and particularly the fresh-water industries, because it is to those fisheries I propose to exclusively allude, are of very great importance indeed, in a material sense, and it behoves the Government of the country to do all it can to prevent the destruction of our fishing interests, to satisfy themselves that the manner of fishing is not more destructive than can be compensated by the enormous reproductive power of the fish. I say, unhesitatingly, that it is the duty of the Government, with a view to the proper protection and preservation of the fisheries, to enact such laws and take such legislative steps as may be necessary in that interest. The House is, of course, aware that the great inland fisheries of the Dominion are to be found in the Province of Ontario, namely, in Lakes Ontario, Erie, Huron, Superior, and the Georgian Bay. In those great inland waters are to be found whitefish, trout, pickerel and herring, all having great commercial value, and it is but proper and right that every step that can possibly be taken, everything that can be done for the protection and preservation of that great natural wealth, should be done by the Government and this House. In order to form some opinion of the great wealth that is contained in those waters, I would refer hon. gentlemen to the statistics which have been furnished by the officers of the department. My remarks will refer entirely to Ontario, and hon. gentlemen will remember there are the Provinces of Manitoba, British Columbia and Quebec in which this industry also prevails. In Ontario the boats and vessels engaged in this industry number 1,650, the value of these vessels \$236,568, the number of men employed is 3,528, the value of the nets is \$218,191, and the value of the product last year was \$1,963,123. In 1869 the total value of the product was only \$190,203, or an increase in twenty years of \$1,772,920. Looking for a moment at the revenue from the fisheries of Ontario, I find that the amount received in rents, licenses and fees last year was \$23,666.96, or more than double the revenue derived from any other province in the Dominion including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick or British Columbia. The next largest revenue yielding province was British Columbia, and it yielded a revenue of \$11,367.50. Looking for a moment at the expenditure I desire to point out that the expenditure for all purposes connected with the fisheries in Ontario last year was \$14,539.87, leaving a net revenue to the Government of \$9,127.09. This is the only province, with the exception of British Columbia, that pays a revenue to the Government more than sufficient to meet the expenses of management. What I have stated is sufficient, I think, to satisfy hon. members that the industry is a very large and growing one, and if the Government, or the Minister at the head of the Department of Fisheries is able to do anything to increase the productiveness of the fisheries, to protect them and to make them more lasting, it is his bounden duty, in the interest of the people, to do so. But the complaint of a large section of the fishermen is, that the fishing is carried on by gill-nets and pound-nets. The fishermen complain that fishing with gill-nets and pound-nets is destructive, particularly that with gill-nets, that if that system is continued it will inevitably lead to the extermination and absolute destruction of the fisheries of this country, and it is with a view to calling the