

for consumption in the United States. Beyond that we have nothing to do. Many entertain the idea that if they enter the goods at the cost to them at the manufactory, they are within the law. Cases of this kind constantly come under my observation. Men have come to the department, saying: We have entered the goods at the actual *bona fide* cost at the manufactory, and we have added ten per cent. for contingencies. I asked: At what price do you sell that plough, to the merchants and dealers of your own town? He replied: "At \$9.50." "Then," I replied, "Under the law, the value for duty is \$9.50." That is the principle upon which we have acted. We find also that there are men who sell their goods at what they term export prices, and they arrive at that price upon the principle I have mentioned. In the United States they have a regular system of drawbacks; that is to say, if a man manufactures for export he is allowed a certain amount upon each article which he exports, hence he can afford to sell them in Canada for the regular prices less the amount of the drawback. But we have nothing to do with the price at which the manufacturer sells to the merchant here, for the law which was passed by the late Administration, and which, I think, is right in that particular, provides that the value shall be, not what has been paid for the goods, but what they will sell for in their own market. There is one other point to which I desire to call attention. I have seen it stated in the newspapers that the department favors one importer at the expense of another. I have no hesitation in saying that the charge is false, and I challenge the hon. gentleman, or any merchant in this country, to prove the accusation. It may possibly be, when we have thousands of officers all over the Dominion connected with the Customs department, that some differ from others in their opinions as to the duties of certain articles, for it has occurred that we have had to educate our appraisers to enable them to judge of the value of articles which are imported; for the system of appointing appraisers in the past, and more particularly under the late Administration, has been such that it has been almost impossible to educate these men so as to give them any idea of what their duty is. Since I took charge of the department, I have felt bound to remove some of these appraisers on that account. We have been accused of doing so from political motives, but the real reason was their utter want of knowledge of the business for which they were appointed. Any person who gives the slightest attention to the matter, must know that when there are so many appraisers all over the country, it will occasionally happen that one merchant will get his goods passed without a proper check, while the invoice of another is subjected to a more rigid examination. There is another difficulty—one that has increased to a very large extent within the last few years. We all know the extraordinary character of the rise in iron, which recently took place in England. The result of this rise has been that those who sent orders for iron in the autumn, before the rise took place, and had it shipped afterwards, think they should pay duty only upon the price which ruled when they ordered. This is a mistake; for the law distinctly says, that the value for duty must be the price at the time of the exportation from the country whence it was purchased. I am not going to argue whether or not that is the correct principle, but it was the law which we found, on the Statute-book, and which we are bound to administer. It has been my invariable practice, since I was appointed Minister of Customs to see, that the provisions of the law were rigidly enforced when there was any attempt to evade it. The complaint has been in the past that frequently, when seizures were made and fines imposed, representations were made and the fines were remitted; and for that reason I think it would have been better if the hon. gentleman's motion had gone back for five years, so that we might get at the number of the seizures, and

Mr. BOWELL.

the number of cases on which these remissions and mitigations took place. If I or the Government have erred in this matter—if it can be called an error—it is because when we have imposed a fine we have seen that it was collected, no matter whether friend or foe might suffer. If that is not to be a practice, the sooner the law is repealed the better, for you might dismiss the appraisers and have just a clerk or two to accept the invoices without objection or comment. It would be a great deal better to accept that principle than to place a law on the Statute-book for the protection of the honest importer, dealer or manufacturer, and allow it to be disregarded without imposing punishment on the offenders. Any one who has been connected with the Customs department knows the difficulty there is in administering the law; but I have determined that so long as I shall have charge of the department, those who violate the Customs law shall be punished in the same manner as those who violate any other law; and unless the House and the country are prepared to sustain that mode of administration, the sooner we repeal all the penal clauses of the law, the better for those who have to administer it, and the better for the morality of the commercial community of the country. I thought it necessary to make these few remarks, particularly in defence of officers who I know are very arduous in the discharge of their duties, and in order to disabuse the mind of those who fancy that any attempt has been made to harass importers or dealers in any way. All we desire is, to have the law administered fairly, and those who commit breaches of the provisions of that law should not complain. Neither do I believe they would complain to the extent they do, if they were not backed up by the Opposition press of the country in their efforts to make capital, and by those members of the House who think they have a little grievance because their friends could not obtain concessions, and who attempt to make the law unpopular by encouraging a feeling which is certainly not based on justice.

Mr. CASEY. I am sorry the hon. gentleman closed, an otherwise admirable speech, by insinuating that members of Parliament and the press were encouraging law-breakers. I have, as indignantly as possible, to deny that charge as applying to myself, because he seems to apply it to me.

Mr. BOWELL. No; the hon. gentleman said he had no cause of complaint.

Mr. CASEY. I said, in my former remarks, that I think it is our duty to call attention to what seems to us to be an unfair exercise of the power given to the Custom house officers. I did not charge the department with favoring one trade more than another; I said it was reported in the papers, and to a large extent believed, that the Customs officials favored one party more than another; which might occur without the knowledge of the department, and which ought to be brought to the knowledge of the department by an enquiry of this nature. The hon. gentleman misunderstood me as referring to the Montreal case. I did not refer to that case, but to the safe and the crockery cases; but as he has referred to it, I will also. The facts are that this gentleman brought out a small quantity of goods as an experiment, which he entered at the actual price paid for them in Ireland, not being aware that, under the provisions of the Canadian law, he was obliged to enter them at the ordinary wholesale value; he entered them below that value, having bought them at a bargain, and, therefore, technically, in the eye of the law, made an under-valuation. As soon as his attention was called to this, he declared his willingness to submit the goods to a valuation, and have them so entered in the Montreal Custom house. The collector, however, seized the goods; but, on the case being represented to the Minister of Customs, he consented to