

to demonstrate its merits. I know that several American roads have adopted this system, and I understand have spoken very favourably of it. As to the surplus, I think when the supplementary estimates come down—

Mr. CARVELL. The surplus will be all gone.

Mr. COCHRANE. There will be a vote in regard to rolling stock. In respect to the condition of the rolling stock I have heard a great deal which corroborates some of the hon. gentleman's statements, but I am not able to speak definitely as to that. However I am having a report made in regard to the rolling stock. A shortage of cars, I am sorry to say, has been experienced on all railways. That matter was brought to the attention of the House about a month ago, the complaint being made at that time of the Canadian Pacific railway. It was said that people living between here and Pembroke could not get cars to ship their hay, I took the matter up with the Canadian Pacific railway at the time and they informed me that they had over 15,000 cars in the United States and it was impossible to get them back. I am informed that the railways there are suffering from greater congestion than the railways in Canada and they are really having a desperate time. There is, I know, a great deal in what was said in reference to not getting the return freights down to the lower provinces over the Intercolonial. A good many shipments have been made from that part of the country to the United States, and the return freights, have been very unsatisfactory. I have insisted on the regular charge for delays in every instance, and I think the result will work out fairly well. I do not think I have anything further to say in reply to the hon. gentleman, other than that it is unfair to ask me to declare a policy when I have only been in office a few months, and have not had the opportunity of going over the whole Intercolonial system and investigating things for myself, as, I propose to do.

DUTY ON FISHING TWINE.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR (Guysborough). I wish for a few moments to get the attention of the Minister of Customs upon a question that is of considerable interest to the fishermen of eastern Nova Scotia, I refer to the duty that is at present charged on certain kinds of twine used in the lobster fishery. There has been a general impression throughout the country that twine used in the fisheries is free. It is quite true that there are certain kinds of twine so used that are imported free of duty. There is, however, a kind of twine very suitable for the lobster fishery that is

Mr. COCHRANE.

taxed at the rate of 25 per cent, and it is in regard to that twine that I wish now to make a few remarks. The twine referred to is known as plain or unbarked marline. In order that I may be understood by the minister, permit me to read the tariff item which permits the free importation of certain kinds of fishing twine. The item in question is 682, which reads as follows:

Fish hooks for deep-sea, or lake fishing, not smaller in size than number 2-0; bank, cod, pollack and mackerel fish lines; and mackerel, herring, salmon, seal, seine, mullet, net and trawl twine in hanks, or coils, barked or not,—in variety of sizes and threads,—including gilling thread in balls, and head ropes for fishing nets; manilla rope, not exceeding one and one-half inches in circumference, for holding traps in the lobster fishery; barked marline, and net norsels of cotton, hemp or flax; and fishing nets or seines, when used exclusively for the fisheries not to include hooks, lines or nets, commonly used for sportsmen's purposes—Free.

On the eastern coast of Canada many of the lobster heads or nets forming part of the lobster traps are made from cotton twine. That twine, I understand, is imported free for nets, and it is used by the fishermen for use in constructing lobster traps. But that is not the case with the plain or unbarked marline which is taxed at the rate of 25 per cent. The matter was referred to early in the session and the Minister of Customs then gave an explanation which I have now before me. His statement is as follows:

Hon. J. D. REID (Minister of Customs). The first I heard of this circular being issued was some time in the latter part of December, when I received a telegram from an hon. member in the lower provinces asking me whether this circular was issued and if any change had been made. I find on inquiry that it was simply a departmental matter, and came about in this way: Information was given to the department that some people were importing manilla twine and entering it under item 682 under which classification 'barked marline and net norsels of cotton, hemp or flax' are admitted free for the fisheries. Under item 548, twine and cordage of all kinds n.o.p. is dutiable at 25 per cent. When the information was brought to the department, the chief of the statistical branch issued the following circular which is on the lines of that which the hon. member (Mr. Maclean, Halifax) has just read:

Department of Customs,
Ottawa, 14th December, 1911.
Collector of Customs,
Port of

You are advised that lobster twine used in making the heads of lobster pots is dutiable under the tariff item 548. This notice is sent you so as to ensure payment of duty in accordance with the law, efforts having been made at some ports to obtain free entry under item 682.