

dian ports, and if the American people, and if our own exporters of fish, can transmit in bond so large an amount of fish south to the West Indian market, I see no difficulty why the Customs regulations of Canada should not be so arranged as that the fish should be imported and handled only in bond, and only in the original packages, when it comes within our own territory. Now, Sir, my hon. friend the senior member for Halifax has pointed out that during the years 1884, 1885 and 1887, very low prices prevailed for codfish in Canadian markets. In 1884 he puts it at \$2.25 per quintal. Now, the French fish, as he no doubt correctly informs us, did not come into our market at that date. Just imagine what would have been the result if it had come into our market, receiving \$1.80 a quintal bounty, when our fishermen were only receiving \$2.25, or \$2.75, or even \$3.25. Now, this French fish comes early into our market, and regulates the price of fish for the whole season. After Halifax, the largest market for fish in Nova Scotia is the community represented by the hon. member for Lunenburg, and I am told that in the year 1888, one of the dates to which my hon. colleague has referred, when the market opened in Lunenburg in the spring of 1888, the price was fixed at \$4.50 a quintal, but subsequently there was an importation of French fish from St. Pierre, which cost only \$4 per quintal, and the price of fish consequently receded to \$3.50 per quintal; but the sellers of fish would not submit to it, and as the catch was short in 1888, the price which generally prevailed was \$4 per quintal, as stated by my hon. colleague. But even then, Sir, I contend that our fishermen lost 50 cents a quintal on all their catch of 1888, owing to the importation of this French fish. Now, Sir, we all know that on the Grand Banks where this fish is caught, our vessels have to compete with, and are alongside of the French vessels; that the outfit of our vessels, as a rule, is more expensive, and they are at a greater distance from their homes, and in the result on the whole catch they are handicapped by this excessive bounty of \$1.80 per quintal. Sir, when the price of fish is low, hon. gentlemen who are familiar with this trade will recognise at what a very great disadvantage the Canadian fisherman is placed, because hon. gentlemen who are familiar with that trade know that in the Island of St. Pierre we cannot land a fish; we would not be allowed under any circumstances to land a fish. We are also competing with the American fishermen, and the American fishermen are protected by their own Government against this French fish in the exact manner in which my hon. and gallant friend from Shelburne (Gen. Laurie) asked that the Canadian fishermen should be protected. We have to fish in common waters, we have to meet in a foreign market in competition, and we do ask as a simple matter of justice to our fishermen, that the same regulations should be enforced in Canada as prevail in the United States. My hon. friend from Richmond (Mr. Flynn) has very forcibly pointed out that we have adopted in this country, and it has been confirmed by the people at the polls, a policy of protection for our industries; and we simply ask that the same measure of protection should be applied to this industry, and the way we propose is one which involves no injustice to any portion of our people. I have pointed out the protection which is afforded to the French fishermen, I have pointed out the protection which is afforded to the American fishermen. I desire to point out that this fish is brought from St. Pierre in foreign vessels very frequently, giving employment to foreign coasting vessels, which are in active competition with our own. My hon. colleague has referred in very eloquent terms to the magnificent fleet of fishing vessels which we have on our Atlantic coast, and they are certainly a very great credit to our Province, and we take exceeding pride in them. In making this contention to-day our desire is simply that this fine fleet of vessels shall be increased and improved.

Mr. KENNY.

The large petition which my hon. friend from Shelburne (Gen. Laurie) presented, shows the active interest which the fishermen in the county he represents take in this question. The expressions of opinion which we have had from hon. members from Nova Scotia, from the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Flynn), and the hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Eisenhauer), show conclusively that that interest is not confined to the constituency represented by my hon. friend from Shelburne. I know that in the constituency which I have the honor to represent, in conjunction with the senior member for Halifax (Mr. Jones), the fishermen take, generally, the same view exactly as do the fishermen in other parts of the Province, and they consider that an injustice is done them by the present regulations. My hon. colleague has referred to the fact that, so far, no irregularities are reported as having occurred in the handling of this French fish; but he must admit, as an experienced business man, that the system is liable to be abused.

Mr. JONES (Halifax). No.

Mr. KENNY. My hon. colleague says no. I appeal to business men in this House whether a system which permits bonded goods to go into private stores, where there is no Customs officer to superintend them, as there are in bonding stores, is not likely to be abused, especially when there may be a lot of bonded goods on one side and a lot of free goods on the other. Whilst I cheerfully admit it has never come to my knowledge that the privilege has been abused, yet it is one very likely and liable and open to be abused, and I think that is one argument against the present system. My hon. colleague, in a matter which was under discussion, I think, within the latter days of the past week, I said, stood alone for his Province in a certain contention he made. I have to repeat that again to-day. My hon. colleague in the contention which he makes stands alone for his native Province; there is not another member from Nova Scotia to-day who takes the view of this question which my hon. colleague takes, and, therefore, although I am not so experienced as he is in fishing matters, I feel quite gratified in knowing that all the members from Nova Scotia except my hon. colleague entertain the same views on this question as I do. My hon. colleague contends that since 1850, since he has been in business, so far as he knows no disadvantages have accrued to our fishermen from the importing of this French fish. However that may be, the fishermen who are the most immediately concerned and interested in this matter, evidently are of the opinion that the present regulations are disadvantageous to them, and ask for a change. But why should we not also, in a matter of this kind, be guided by the legislation which has been enacted in the colony of Newfoundland, a colony where fishing is nearly the sole industry; and my hon. and gallant friend from Shelburne (Gen. Laurie) has read to the House very interesting and instructive notes giving us the exact manner in which the law is administered there, and showing how jealously the Government of that colony protects its fishermen. It is no unreasonable request we are making to-day off the Government of our own country, and I sincerely hope that the Minister of Customs—and if I were disposed to find fault with him I should have to say that, in my humble opinion, he ought to have moved sooner in this matter—will enact such regulations as will ensure to our fishermen in this matter that measure of protection to which they are entitled and which they have not received hitherto. The fact of so large a quantity of our fish having been transported and transhipped through ports in the United States shows conclusively that any of our merchants who desire to import this fish from St. Pierre in bond will be able to do so. If the Government accede to the request we make to-day in the name of the fishermen of Nova Scotia, no great injustice will be done