

shores of Lake Superior. In the lower lakes, which are more shallow, fishermen can use pound-nets where they can drive stakes into the mud bottom, but in Lake Superior, where the water is deep and the bottom is rocky, it is impossible to fish with pound-nets. So, I hope the Minister will take the matter into consideration and will consider the position in which we in the western part of Ontario are placed, and consider well before adopting the suggestion of the hon. member for Lambton. I trust the Minister will find it in his heart, and the revenue of the country will permit him, to give us a fish hatchery on Lake Superior, because that is the largest fishing industry in the province.

Mr. McNEILL. I desire to say a word or two in regard to a branch of the important subject brought up by the hon. member for Lambton (Mr. Lister), and that is the condition of the fish when they are put on the market. I have no doubt whatever, from the statements made in the report read from Mr. Wilmot, and also from what has been said by the hon. member for West Ontario (Mr. Edgar), that these representations are perfectly correct. The fish when brought to land to be shipped by railway, by the large fish companies that purchase the fish, are often as regards many of them, I venture to say the bulk of them, hardly fit for human food. I do not speak of anything of which I do not know, because I see these fish brought down three or four times a week close to where I am living, and I often go with my boat alongside the tug when she is landing the fish, and ask for fresh fish. They are however so inferior in quality when brought down that I have given up purchasing them altogether in the warm weather. The fact is, the fish lie so long in the water in these gill-nets before they are taken out that they are often putrid, and a rough test is, I am told, employed in many cases as to whether the fish is a marketable one or not, and it is simply whether the man handling the fish can push his thumb through it. If the fish will stand that rough test, and if it is not such a fish that you can put your thumb through, it is considered reasonably good and it goes to the ice along with the others. A great many of these very inferior fish are salted, but, as the member for West Ontario (Mr. Edgar) has said, I believe it is almost impossible to get a really fresh fish in any city of this Dominion during the warm weather. It is exceedingly difficult to know what measures should be adopted to ameliorate this condition of things, but to talk about doing away with gill-nets altogether seems to me to be an impossible proposition. As my hon. friend beside me (Mr. O'Brien), and as my hon. friend from Algoma (Mr. Macdonell), have said, you can fish in deep waters, so far as I know, in no other way than with the gill-nets. You cannot fish with the seines and you cannot use pound-nets in deep water; and, therefore, it seems to me that we are obliged to allow the fishermen to use gill-nets; but I would very earnestly urge upon the Minister to turn his attention to that question, and to see what can be done in the way of improving this condition of things, for, as I have said, the fish put upon the market are often scarcely fit for human food. It is due to the Department of Marine and Fisheries that I should say that the department deserves very great credit for the efforts it has made to protect

Mr. MACDONELL (Algoma).

the fishing interests in the Georgian Bay. The work they have got to do is a very invidious work, it is a work in which they are very much opposed by the fishermen, and it is a work that I must, in all fairness, say the department has set itself to do well and thoroughly. I very much appreciate the fact that the department is this year supplying a much better vessel than the *Cruiser* to enforce the close season, and for the fisheries protection service in the Georgian Bay. The *Cruiser* was not such a vessel as she ought to have been; but, nevertheless, the department deserves credit for sending her there in the first place. And I am glad to find that as soon as it was found that the *Cruiser* did not do all that was expected of her, the department substituted for her a vessel which I believe will be thoroughly efficient for the service.

Mr. TUPPER. It is perhaps well that I should say a few words on this very interesting discussion which has taken place to-day in reference to important matters connected with the fisheries. I hope the discussion will result in some good to the fishermen. The subject is by no means a new one; the question in relation to these gill-nets and pound-nets, and the matter afterwards referred to in reference to the protection of the fisheries, are subjects which have been grappled with by the Department of Fisheries for a very long time. They have been considered at great length, and very full enquiries have been made into them year after year by the department. In the United States and in other countries we find that they are equally interested in the problems which have been put before the House to-day, and indeed in all countries the ingenuity of the fishermen has been extraordinary in devising better and more efficient means, not only for catching fish, but for evading the fishery laws also. Every hon. member in this House, particularly if he comes from a fishing district, knows well that if all our fishery officers were exemplary men, anxious to do their duty, and to do it without fear or favour, we would still by no means have a perfect record to show in regard to the protection of the fisheries. It is almost impossible, even in a much smaller country than this, and with much smaller waters to guard, to prevent poaching and evasion of the laws. That is particularly seen in the British Isles, where they have by no means the enormous difficulties to contend against that we have here. In Great Britain, with their coast guard service, and their very heavily-paid fishery staff, with officers at almost every point around these isles, if you take up the annual report of the fishery inspectors for England or Scotland or Ireland, you will find that notwithstanding that fine after fine has been imposed, and that boats and gear are destroyed almost without number, yet they annually deplore the great increase in the difficulty of enforcing the fishery laws. The truth is—and this is the greatest difficulty to contend against—that no matter how hon. gentlemen may speak in this Chamber in regard to the manner in which the law should be carried out, yet the sympathy of the community as a rule is all with the fishermen. They know that the fishermen have a hard life at the best—certainly on the coast this is true, and to a large extent also on the great lakes, as I am informed—and so much is that sympathy with the fishermen that in the event of a detection of the violation of the