

might be useful as a sort of summary, other portions called for cannot be given at all. I am not disposed to object to my hon. friend's motion passing, but I should like it to be understood that these details cannot be furnished and that the Government will make the best return in their power. A summary of exports may be given, but the details that the hon. gentleman asks for are altogether too comprehensive, and it would be quite impossible to give them this session.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—The hon. gentleman has mistaken the object of the return that I have asked for. All that the motion calls for can be furnished by any member of the statistical staff in one day. Perhaps I might have been a little more explicit, and stated that what I want is a return, taken from the statistical year book, to be found under different heads and which only require to be added together for the different periods. The return relating to manufacturing is not in the statistical year book, but the hon. gentleman has informed the House that it is in course of preparation and will be forthcoming. With regard to the British Board of Trade returns, the information for 1889 and 1890 can be furnished: the returns for 1891 are not so important, with regard to the question that I propose to ask. I do not wish the hon. leader of the House to suppose that I am calling for anything that would take months to prepare. I ask for nothing that I could not furnish myself in half a day, and I merely call for these returns in order that they may have the official stamp.

Hon. Mr. ABBOTT—I sent the hon. gentleman's motion to the department, and have given the reply on the report as it reads. It did appear to me that an enormous mass of details is called for under the head of the first paragraph. I would suggest to the hon. gentleman that if he would send a note to the department, or, better still, call at the department and point out what would be satisfactory to him, we will have great pleasure in furnishing the information if it can be done within a reasonable time.

Hon. Mr. DICKEY—I think the House ought to consider what is due to itself before passing such a motion as this, after the explanation that has been given by the Prime Minister. It appears by his statement, and

is acknowledged by the hon. gentleman who makes the motion, that all this information can be procured by any one who chooses to take the trouble to collect it. Should we impose on the officers the duty of collecting all these details at an enormous expense, according to the terms of the motion? If we put on record such a motion as this we should consider the effect of it on ourselves as well as on the finances of the country. We are occasionally exposed to attack, and we ought to feel, at all events, when we are assailed that we are in the right; but could we justify having solemnly passed a resolution like this, imposing such a duty on the Government, when it is perfectly evident from the hon. gentleman's explanation that he can get all the facts from the blue-books with very little difficulty. Why should we be asked, for instance, to pass a motion calling upon the Government to furnish details from the British Board of Trade returns? Surely these returns are accessible to the hon. gentleman; he has only to walk to the library to get them. We will be stultifying ourselves and establishing a bad precedent, which may be acted upon hereafter, if we adopt this motion. In saying this, I have no desire that the information should be withheld, but simply to keep ourselves right in the matter of expense. I would not be discharging my duty if I did not call the attention of the House to the injury which the adoption of this motion might cause us in the future.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—It is quite a usual thing for the Government, in accepting a motion of this character, to define the limits within which they will consider themselves bound by it. It would be as well, perhaps, to have requested the hon. gentleman to amend his motion in accordance with the explanation of the Prime Minister; but as the leader of the House has agreed to give the information, subject to the conditions mentioned, I do not suppose there is any objection to the address being adopted.

The motion was agreed to.

THE BEHRING SEA SEIZURES.

ENQUIRY.

Hon. Mr. READ (Quinte) enquired

If the British or Canadian Government is to bear the expense of indemnifying the