

in possession of all the facts. For instance, the statement made in answer to the hon. member for York (Mr. Foster) to-day, was a statement that removed a great many rumours that have been going about in connection with this question of the transport of troops. It is well in those matters, I think, to have official facts before coming to a definite opinion, and in that I agree with the hon. member for York, whatever one's impressions on the prima facie statement of the facts may amount to. But I would refer rather to some questions in connection with the laws of this country as they stand, laws over which we have complete control. I see the Minister of Customs is not enjoying altogether my observations, but still if I could obtain his attention for a moment, I would remind him that there is no difference of opinion, as I understand it, in this Parliament as regards our coasting laws being in their nature reciprocal. It has been the policy of Canada to concede privileges where privileges could be obtained from the United States in that matter, and where our marine was not allowed coasting privileges in the United States, it was the policy of all Parliament's and of all Government's to see that their privileges were similarly curtailed. Yet it is a fact that at present these laws are not equally administered, and in the great clutch that is being made for trade in Alaska and in the North-west Territories, by cities on the Pacific Coast from San Francisco upwards, the United States shipping is enjoying at present a most unfair advantage, because the laws of the United States are being administered sharply so as to prevent any Canadian bottom taking Canadian goods coming from an American railway to an American port, on to a Canadian port. They prohibit a Canadian vessel carrying United States freight from any eastern United States city from a Canadian port to either San Francisco or to the northern ports of the United States, while our officers allow United States vessels to carry Canadian freight from Canadian ports to Canadian ports. The subject has been brought to the Minister of Customs, formally, as I have been advised, and I draw again formally his attention to it, because the people on the coast have a right to complain particularly when the rivalry is now so keen. Their desire is this that if the law advisers advise the hon. gentleman that the present legislation of Canada is not as restrictive upon her rivals in shipping as American legislation is upon us, then the hon. gentleman should hasten to this House and have our laws put in a condition which generally they were supposed to hold.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES** (Sir Louis Davies). Will the hon. gentleman state wherein he thinks that our laws are more liberal to United

States coasting vessels than their laws are to us?

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. In the case I put, that we now permit United States vessels to carry Canadian freight to Canadian ports, directly or indirectly. For instance, we allow a vessel to bring Canadian freight from a Canadian port and by transshipment to a Canadian port, but the United States laws do not allow that, for though a vessel is going between a foreign port and their own port, their idea is that you should not carry the freight of United States, directly or indirectly, between two United States ports. It may be as I say, and I guard myself, that under the state of our coasting laws that point has been overlooked, and that it is the rivalry and competition that have brought this out. But the subject has been brought up, and a suggestion has been made which I think a reasonable one, as Congress is even now, I am told, engaged in considering how far they can further restrict our coasting trade, that we should watch that legislation, and that we should be consistent with our past attitude and—we can do nothing else—restrict their privileges in our ports to the extent that they restrict our privileges in theirs. No matter what one's economic principles have been in the past on tariff matters, I understand that in coasting matters the two parties are at one.

Now, there is another important question that should not be overlooked in connection with this question of railway construction into the Yukon and in connection with the Stikine River. I am told that it is of urgent importance that some proper means should be taken for the safety of vessels passing through the canon. I am told, for instance, that it is absolutely unsafe for a vessel to attempt to go up when one is coming down, and that the situation in the river is such that there is grave danger of vessels meeting at that point. I am told a suggestion has been made that a telephone should be operated there so as to signal when a vessel is coming down and when another is going up. The reason that I drag these questions into the debate upon the Address, Mr. Speaker, is their extreme urgency, and any one who has followed the thought, so to speak, among the miners, commercial men and transportation companies, will fully appreciate that no time should be lost in considering such matters as this when they are brought to the attention of the Government, and I understand that most of these subjects have been before the Government since November last. Now, there has been in that connection a question of great moment on the Pacific Coast. In speaking of this matter I do not for a moment pretend to pose as the mouth-piece of the people on that coast, who are so well represented in Parliament, but it happens that the point to which I wish to

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER.