

represent is interested very largely in this matter, and they are, as the Minister of Customs is aware, pressing for a change in the bonding system. As the Minister knows, we are not allowed to send our fish loose into the American market. We have to send them in packages when we send our fish in bond for exportation to the West Indies and other countries, and our fishermen claim that our Government should insist that foreign fish coming into the Dominion should come in in packages. My hon. friend from Halifax (Mr. Jones) has contended that we would lose the employment of the labor of our own men, by having those fish come in in packages instead of in bulk. I think in this respect we have a just claim, and I hope the Minister of Customs will consider this matter. I understand a very large petition has come in asking for this change, and it will be for the Government to make enquiry into the matter after the Session, and see whether it will not be beneficial to the fishermen generally to grant them their request.

Mr. FLYNN. There can be no doubt that the fishermen of the Maritime Provinces are under the impression that the importation of French bounty-fed fish into Halifax has the effect of lowering the price of Canadian fish. I do not know whether the hon. member for Shelburne (Gen. Laurie) asked to have a more rigid bounty system or not, but there is no doubt that if these fish were put into a damp warehouse they would be injured. There may be something in what the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Jones) has said, that if these fish were not purchased in Halifax in bond they would be sent direct from the French islands to the West Indies, and might, perhaps, thus lower the price of our fish; but, at all events, the fishermen of our Provinces say that the Government of this country, having adopted the National Policy in everything else, ought to extend it to the protection of the fishermen. For everything we consume we have to pay a great deal more than we did before the introduction of the National Policy, and yet the product of our industry, fish, is not protected in any way. Our fishermen know that their French competitors enjoy the advantage of a bounty of ten francs a quintal on fish, or \$1.20, by means of which the Frenchmen can undersell them. The fishermen of the Maritime Provinces feel very much aggrieved at the fact that, while they have to pay high duties on everything they consume, they have to compete with the bounty-fed French fishermen whose fish, coming into Halifax from St. Pierre and Miquelon, lowers the price of the Canadian article. If you are going to continue the bonding system, I cannot see how it can be remedied, or what remedy the Minister of Customs would suggest. Dry fish are not like any other property which you can put into a bonded warehouse and keep there until sent out of the country. They must be put in a dry place and carefully kept. I do not see what the hon. member for Shelburne (Gen. Laurie) asks for, or what he hopes to obtain, unless it be the prohibition of these fish altogether. However, I shall wait until the papers come down.

Mr. EISENHAEUER. If we had free access to the American market, there would be considerably less danger of the West Indian market being overstocked, and of the price of our fish being thereby reduced. The hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Kenny) said that we had the market of the whole world for our fish. If he had studied the question he would not have made that remark, for with our mode of curing bank fish we can only have two markets: the West Indies and the United States. We are met in the United States by a duty of 50 cents per quintal, so that very few of our fry fish, bank cured, have found their way there. The cure for all this depression in the West India markets would be reciprocity with the United States. Had we free trade with the United States, large quantities of our fish would be sold there, and we would not find the West Indies glutted as they often are at present. I hope before a year or two at

the most the Government will bring about reciprocity with the United States, and the hon. the Minister of Customs probably will not then be troubled by many requests on the part of our fishermen for a change in the bonding system.

Mr. KENNY. My hon. and gallant friend for Shelburne (Gen. Laurie) has very happily commemorated his return to the House, after his long enforced absence, by bringing to the notice of the House a matter which very much concerns the fishermen of Nova Scotia. I remember, in 1887, when I presumed to say something which affected the fishermen of Nova Scotia, my hon. colleague was pleased to say that I did not know what I was talking about. Last year my hon. friend from Lunenburg (Mr. Eisenhauer) was pleased to express himself in exactly the same language. I did not find fault with that hon. gentleman. The idea was not original, the language was not original, and it so happened that when he made use of that expression he was sitting alongside the now vacant seat of my hon. friend from Halifax. But there seems to be, to-day, a difference of opinion between these hon. gentlemen. The hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Eisenhauer), who is quite as practical in his knowledge of fishery matters as the hon. the senior member for Halifax (Mr. Jones), has expressed his opinion, though in a very guarded manner, that the importation of this bounty-fed French fish is injurious to the fishermen of Nova Scotia; and I was very much amused, the other evening, when the fishery estimates were under consideration in this House, to find that so earnest and so zealous was the hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Eisenhauer) to put himself on record in that expression of opinion before my hon. and gallant friend from Shelburne (Gen. Laurie), that he took advantage of the discussion on the fishery estimates to emphasise his opinion on that matter. I find no fault with him for doing so, because, if I am correctly informed, in 1887, when he was running his election in Lunenburg County, which is one of the most prosperous and enterprising counties in our Province, and where the fishing industry is one of the largest, my hon. friend stated to his constituents that when he came here and had a voice in the legislation of this country, he would raise his voice to prevent the importation of these bounty-fed French fish. If I am wrong, I am here to be corrected; I should be sorry, indeed, to make any such statement if I did not believe it to be true. The hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Jones) says, loud enough for everybody in this House to hear, that the member for Lunenburg (Mr. Eisenhauer) did not make that statement. Now, if the member for Lunenburg says that he did not, I shall immediately withdraw it, but I have been told that such was the case. I mention it here to-day to show the appeals that have been made by hon. gentlemen representing fishing constituencies in Nova Scotia when running their last election. The request of my hon. friend from Shelburne (Gen. Laurie) seems to me a very reasonable one. He simply asks that this French fish which comes into our jurisdiction shall be treated in exactly the same manner as it would be treated if it went into the United States—that it should be imported and exported in the original packages. I would remind my hon. friend the Minister of Customs that, if I am not mistaken, this matter has been very frequently brought to his attention, and I sincerely hope that this year it will receive some action at his hands. It is within the knowledge of gentlemen who take an interest in these fishery questions, that fish to the value of nearly half a million dollars, passes through the United States in bond from the Lower Provinces to the West India market. I think I am correct in the figures—it amounts to very nearly half a million dollars. Of course, hon. gentlemen who are familiar with that trade recognise that that freight takes that course from the fact that the United States have facilities for shipping that fish by steamer which, unfortunately, do not exist in the Cana-