

and has been doing detective work for some time. Apart from this particular transaction to which attention has been called by the hon. member for Digby (Mr. Vail), I can say that he has been a very good officer in ferreting out and punishing smugglers. A number of cases have been laid before me, with which the member for Digby is well acquainted, he having visited me in order to get the parties relieved of the penalties which the law imposes, and I pointed out to him different cases where the invoices sent by Delong & Seaman, from Boston, did not agree with the correct invoices nor with the ships' manifests. I notice in most of the letters to which the hon. gentleman refers, a reference to false invoices made by Delong & Seaman and sent to the merchants in the Maritime Provinces, upon which entries were made; but upon investigation it was found that they had their invoices of the same date, covering the same goods, with a large quantity left off the invoice upon which the entry was made; and in order to test the correctness of the invoice in most of the cases, MacLaren was shrewd enough to obtain the ship's manifest, showing that the goods were actually brought from Boston to port in Nova Scotia, corresponding exactly with the invoices which the officers found in the possession of the importers, and which were not the invoices upon which entries were made.

Mr. VAIL. Will the hon. gentleman read that portion of the letter where MacLaren speaks of his exploits?

Mr. BOWELL. Yes; he says:

"I downed some of them with bills you thought straight, and made false ones."

It does not say that he made false entries; it is the parties who imported the goods who made false invoices upon blanks that were sent them. Now, I tell the hon. gentleman that MacLaren made a positive declaration that the charges which were brought against him by Delong & Seaman were not correct.

Mr. WELDON. Gordon says he gave him the bill-heads.

Mr. BOWELL. Mr. Gordon, whoever he may be, appears to have been a young man in the employ of Delong & Seaman. I believe, from the information I have obtained and from the invoices, that this establishment was established for the express purpose of doing business with the Maritime Provinces, by granting false invoices, to enable people to defraud the Customs. When I first saw these charges in the newspapers, I instructed the commissioner to write to Delong & Seaman, asking them for all the particulars. The information sent was not thought sufficient, and after receiving the letter which Delong & Seaman had sent to the son of Sir Leonard Tilley, in Toronto, asking him to call his father's attention to the conduct of MacLaren, I informed the firm that if they could establish the facts which had been published to the world, not only would MacLaren be dismissed but he would be severely punished for having committed the crimes of which he had been accused. Messrs. Delong & Seaman wrote, sending copies of these letters. I then referred them, through Mr. Wolfe, to MacLaren, he being the accused party. He made affidavit, that the charges therein were not correct; but he did say that he met this young man in Boston, and in conversation with him opened out his business—I am speaking from recollection upon this point—and was informed that the practice of the firm with which he was connected was the sending of false invoices to different parties, upon which to make Customs entries. MacLaren said: Well, if you will give me that information, you shall have a share of the spoils, of whatever I receive as my share of the seizure. They entered into a mutual arrangement, until this young

man was caught, when his employers obtained from him, as I believe, through fear of punishment, the affidavit that the hon. gentleman has read, and then dismissed him, having first promised him that if he would make a clean breast of the whole matter, they would keep him and he should not be punished. Since then I have received a letter from the boy's mother, asking that he should be paid his share of whatever fines were imposed and collected by MacLaren, and which, she alleges, MacLaren promised to give him. I then wrote to Delong & Seaman, telling them that if they would do what they threatened to do, that is, put a case in court—for the hon. gentleman knows that they recommended the merchants in Nova Scotia, the parties to whom he has referred, to resist the payment of any fines which were imposed, and that they would produce evidence to show what a scoundrel MacLaren was—I told them I would assist them in carrying into court any case they selected, and that if they established the charges they had made against MacLaren, he should be not only dismissed but punished. A letter was subsequently received from DeLong & Seaman, asking that all their letters written in regard to this matter should be returned to them, for what purpose I do not know. I did not return any as the matter might come up in the courts. Delong & Seaman never put a case in the courts. Bonus and MacLaren obtained written acknowledgements from the parties from whom they made seizures, admitting that they smuggled, and stating that they made payments in liquidation of fines and penalties. In some cases I declined to accept the settlement made by MacLaren. The evidence was so clear, the smuggling so flagrant, and the fact established that it had continued for years, that I refused to accept the sum mentioned in full liquidation of the smuggling crimes committed, but inflicted additional penalties upon the smugglers, confiscated the goods and intend to sell the vessels. If Delong & Seaman can establish the charges they have made in those letters, I will have the fullest possible investigation. If they establish the charges, and more particularly if that be proved which is stated in one of the letters, that MacLaren himself made false invoices—not only will MacLaren be dismissed from the service, but will be criminally punished. I contend, however, that the letter does not bear the construction put upon it by the member for Digby; on the contrary, it establishes the truth of what is being done from Victoria, British Columbia—I would not say to Cape Breton, because they do no smuggling there—but to the most eastern point of the Dominion, of having two invoices, which is not confined to America, but even prevails in Europe. Possibly MacLaren may have gone too far; he has gone too far if those declarations are correct; but there is nothing more than the statement of the young man who sold himself, and the statement of Delong & Seaman, who are the principal criminals in the whole transaction, to support the accusation. It is not my intention, until the charges, or similar ones, are proved against MacLaren to dismiss him from the service. He has done more to put a stop to the continued and extensive smuggling which has been going on in those Provinces, in the trade between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and Boston and other ports, than all the other officers we have had. I can sympathise with the hon. gentleman, because some of his constituents and others have got into difficulty. I know how members are pestered by persons who want to get relieved from penalties imposed for smuggling. If Mr. MacLaren and the other officers on the special service can, by any possibility, put a stop to the smuggling going on, they will deserve the thanks of the community, as they have received them. I have letters from all the principal merchants of Halifax and St. John—but will not refer to them, for it is not necessary—thanking me for having put these officers in the service, detailing the good that has resulted to honest traders. A large merchant in St. John told me lately that he had a customer who had been fined