

it in any particular, notwithstanding the attempt of the hon. gentleman to misrepresent what I have said to-day. I feel in this matter that it is due to the people of my constituency that I should say a word or two in reply to the hon. member for Gloucester (Mr. Burns). The hon. gentleman says he is in favor of the terms of the Bill. I am not surprised at the hon. gentleman being in favor of the conditions of the Bill, because there are very few riparian-right fishermen on his river, as the tidal flow of the River Nipisiguit is very short, while on my river there is a tidal flow from its mouth of 40 to 50 miles and above that there is 100 miles of river, probably 70 of which is settled more or less, where the people own the land on its banks and have from time immemorial set nets. What was contended during the administration from 1867 to 1873, and what was carried out by everyone of the Ministers from that day to this, was this: That those people should fish under restrictions and regulations laid down by the department, under authority given by Parliament, and that they should only set nets out of tidal waters, one-third the distance across the river. That has been the law from time immemorial, it is a law which has been carried out to the satisfaction of the people. The hon. gentleman has spoken about spawning beds. Much he knows about spawning beds in rivers! The fish do not spawn in the main branch of the Miramichi within many miles of the head of the tide; and are the people for 50 miles to be deprived of fishing in the river, because the fish go past their lands to spawn? The hon. gentleman was speaking on a subject of which he knows very little, and he should study up the details of his department before he endeavors to make statements against and criticise speeches of hon. gentlemen who know much more than he does. The Bill should not pass into law. A still further reason why it should not pass is contained in the fifth section, which reads:

"5. The use of nets or other apparatus for the capture of salmon shall be confined to tidal waters, and any fishery officer may determine the length and place of each net or other apparatus used in any of the waters of Canada; provided that no one shall fish for or catch salmon with swing nets in any of the waters of Canada."

I object to that clause of the Bill. The law from time immemorial has provided that from the mouth of the Miramichi up to the head of tidal water the people shall have the liberty to set nets; and the several distances were fixed by metes and bounds. That right was established 100 years ago and has been exercised ever since with entire satisfaction; and yet it is now proposed to take these privileges out of the hands of the people, supersede the law, and place them in the hands of a fishery officer. This Act will undoubtedly lead to enormous difficulty with the fishermen. It will be an act of injustice and of unfairness to place such power in the hands of men who are not always too fit to exercise it, and in the hands of men who may be animated by spleen, or animosity, or political antagonism, because that comes in as a strong element in the matter in a way that should not be allowed. If this Bill passes into law the hon. gentleman is throwing into the fishing districts of the country an amount of trouble which will not be easily allayed.

Mr. TUPPER. I do not think by loud talking and using language, which I am very glad to say is used by hardly any other hon. gentleman in the House across the floor, that the hon. gentleman will be able to escape from the very pitiable position in which I have been able to place him to-day. I am glad to see the hon. gentleman endeavoring to crawl out of the position in which he found himself, and where he was pinned by that very speech from which I quoted, and from which the hon. gentleman dare not quote at as great length as I have done.

Mr. MITCHELL. Read any part of it.

Mr. MITCHELL.

Mr. TUPPER. I quoted much of the hon. gentleman's statement in 1883, more than the hon. gentleman dare quote. Before the hon. gentleman undertakes to charge any hon. gentleman with misleading the House by references from *Hansard*, he should be able to get a better case under his hand than this, and he ought to be able to show the House from that speech wherein I misrepresent him.

Mr. MITCHELL. I say you did not prove anything from my speech.

Mr. TUPPER. If I wish to convict the hon. gentleman of trifling, or attempting to trifle with the intelligence of this House, I would occupy more time in reading from that speech.

Mr. MITCHELL. I defy you; you dare not.

Mr. TUPPER. If the hon. gentleman is not attempting to bully some one in this House he is endeavoring to trifle with their patience every day in the Session, but I am not now going to trifle with the patience of the House by reading any more of his speech from *Hansard*.

Mr. MITCHELL. Go on; read the speech.

Mr. TUPPER. We have enough of the hon. gentleman's speeches in the *Hansard* and in this House. We have had them *ad nauseam*, but I have the satisfaction of knowing that he cannot refer to one sentence of this speech of his to sustain the position which he has taken to-day and which is absolutely inconsistent with the position he took before. I defy the hon. gentleman to contradict me in saying that he supported a Bill containing provisions of this character and that he supported, in that speech of 1883 which is there for any one that cares to read it, the arguments which I have made to-day in favor of this Bill.

Mr. MITCHELL. I did not support what you say; I dare you to read the speech.

Mr. TUPPER. I am very glad to say, that any hon. gentleman who cares to follow up this very interesting enquiry, has the proof at hand. I wanted to show to the House, the lamentable ignorance of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Mitchell) who is attempting to instruct us on the fishery question. He thinks, because that he was a party to the establishment of the navy, during his occupancy of the office of Minister of Marine, that he alone ought to be an authority upon fishery questions. If the hon. gentleman seeks to keep the reputation he made years ago, when, as he says, he found it his duty to support the Government of the day, he had better say very little on fishery questions, if he has nothing further to instruct the House on than the points he endeavored to make in this debate. Take the lease of Robinson, signed and sealed by the hon. gentleman, and it shows how inconsistent his position is to-day. He is the great defender—is he?—of those enjoying riparian rights. But did he, in that lease, protect them in what he calls the enjoyment of their rights, and insert a provision, allowing them to fish for salmon in the non-tidal portions of the river? No. The hon. gentleman took the position then, that we take to-day, in this Bill.

Mr. MITCHELL. Will the hon. gentleman allow me one word?

Several hon. MEMBERS. Order.

Mr. TUPPER. I will quote the provisions in the hon. gentleman's lease. I know the hon. gentleman feels uneasy, for I have the record here, and it is not a question of my word or his, but it is a question of record. It is a question of *Hansard* in one case, and of the lease in the other, signed by that hon. gentleman himself when he was Minister of Fisheries. That provision of the lease says: