

have inside information as to what may be the intention of the Government, and even if I had I would not be fool enough to hand it around promiscuously.

Might it not occur to you in all fairness that your correspondent was trying to get some cheap advertising for his fence, at the expense of your paper, other people and the truth?

Now, Sir, I have no desire to continue at any further length upon this matter, except to say a few words in connection with this company of Mr. McCrae's, to show the injustice of his attack upon me. Mr. McCrae, who claims to be the great benefactor of the farmer, started the business first in Port Huron, and did not prosper very well there; so he opened a branch at Sarnia, moving some of his hands and machinery over to Canada. That was a very laudable thing. If a man wants to fabricate wire fencing for Canada the place to do it is in Canada. Now, I do not notice that he asks the Government to take the duty off this woven fencing which he makes.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is entirely exceeding his privilege under the rules by which we are governed, and I hope he will confine himself to the question under discussion.

Mr. CURRIE: I quite realize your desire, Mr. Speaker, to see that everybody is justly dealt with in this House. I also notice that hon. members opposite are endeavouring in every possible way to stifle my explanation.

Some hon. MEMBERS: No, no.

Mr. CURRIE: I have never yet heard any hon. member speaking on a matter of privilege interrupted in such a manner in this House before. I am endeavouring to show how impossible it was for me to do everything that Mr. McCrae said I was going to do. One would think from his letters, and the article in the Guide, that I was engaged in trying to put a duty on the fence which he sells to the Canadian farmers, and that, if there is a duty put on the wire, the price of fencing will go up. As a matter of fact, Mr. McCrae buys his wire in the States and brings it into Canada free of duty. Just the minute, however, he weaves it, by a very simple process, into fencing, he receives a protection of 15 per cent against American fencing. If a duty of say 10 per cent were put on his wire and the duty on woven fence remained at 15 per cent how would that affect the price of woven wire fences? If the price was raised

Mr. CURRIE.

more than 15 per cent could not wire fence be imported? There is no barbed wire now made in Canada, but the price is higher than it was when there was a duty. The same is true of coal oil and binder twine. In none of his letters does Mr. McCrae mention that he is getting 15 per cent protection, and I do not notice that he accuses me of wanting to have that 15 per cent protection which he now enjoys removed. The only trouble with him is that he is like most other Grit manufacturers: they want all the duty themselves; they do not want to divide it with the Canadian workmen. Now, Sir, I did not use my position as a member in speaking to Mr. McCrae, nor did I, as a member of Parliament, seek to terrorize him to go into anything or to go into any combine. No combine has been formed, no inducement was offered me by him to go into any combine, and I did not, by word of mouth or inference, lead him to believe that the Minister of Finance or any member of the Government had given me any information as to whether or not a duty was to be placed on wire. I did not ask any member of this Government to place a duty on wire fencing, and I have had no communication with them whatever on the subject—and, what is more, it will be time enough for the Toronto Globe to commence reading a moral lecture to me when it pays up the \$25,000 which it has owed this Government for postage since the last election.

PETERBOROUGH LIFT-LOCK—CLAIM FOR EXTRAS.

Hon. RODOLPHE LEMIEUX: Mr. Speaker, with the indulgence of the House I would ask the Minister of Railways (Mr. Cochrane) whether it is true, as I am credibly informed, that the large claim for extras arising out of the contract at the lift-lock at Peterborough is about to be paid to Messrs. Corry & Laverdure, contractors of Ottawa. This claim had been referred under the late Government to Mr. Collingwood Schreiber, who had refused to acknowledge the validity of the claim, and I am now informed that this claim is to be paid. If the claim is to be paid, will it be placed in the estimates in the regular way or will it be paid out of a general fund in the Department of Railways and Canals?

Hon. F. COCHRANE: No decision has been arrived at as to whether it will be paid or not. The matter has had a little attention from me, but I have not come to any conclusion on it. If it was to be paid of course the amount would have to be voted in the House.