

I could act, and being a new-comer there, I simply continued his decision, I enforced his decision, and gave them the continuation. If that had not been done, there were many fishermen along the north shore of Nova Scotia and the south shore of Prince Edward Island who would not have caught any fish at all, their season's work would have been absolutely fruitless. There is no doubt that they caught an immense quantity of fish during the fifteen days that the open season was extended, but I am afraid they caught this number of fish to improve their personal position very largely at the expense of the lobster industry. We are now reaching this crucial point in the discussion and the decision of this question, whether we will conserve the industry as a whole at the expense of individual interests who desire the extension, or whether the continuance and maintenance of the industry is to be the paramount object we have in view, although the continuance of that industry and the refusal to extend the time may personally injure a number of those who at present have their money invested in it. The hon. gentleman is aware that last year we had a scientific gentleman, Dr. McPhail, of Montreal, who, I think, was appointed by my predecessor, but whom, at any rate, I was pleased to be able to confirm in the appointment, and to give him all the assistance I could after I came in, and he has made a very scientific and exhaustive examination of this question. I have not got his report in a condition to present it to Parliament yet, but as soon as I am in a position to do so, I will be very glad to bring down all the reports that I can. I may conclude with repeating the remark that I made at first, that while I have not decided against granting the petition, still my mind leans in that direction, because I feel that if I grant the extension in that place I will have to grant it all round the coast, excepting along the south-east coast of Nova Scotia, where they do not ask it, because they could not use it profitably. The matter is a very important one, and I can assure the hon. gentleman it is engaging my very best attention.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. The hon. gentleman refers to the scientific reports. I would be very much obliged if he could allow me to see any reports that he may have in regard to these past extensions: for instance, the character of the lobster taken in those last fifteen days, whether they were in a berried condition or not; and also as to whether the size of the lobster is running small or maintaining the average. Those were features that weighed with the department, and no doubt weigh with it now. Some of the best coast lobsters run very small-sized, indeed, showing depletion and exhaustion. In Cape Breton, the cases that used to come before me showed that the fish there, for obvious reasons, one being that they cannot fish with the

same advantages in all the months open to other districts, were maintaining their size fairly, and if he has any information of that kind, it would be very useful to the House.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. The evidence before the department on that point is most conflicting. We had the opinion of a great many gentlemen, but I have not found any preponderating weight of evidence in one direction or another. I have no objection whatever to furnish the information to the hon. gentleman. The subject is one of great importance, and I should be delighted if the hon. gentleman will give me the benefit of his great experience in the matter.

QUARANTINE MEASURES AT VICTORIA, B. C.

Mr. PRIOR. Before the Orders of the Day are called, I wish to call the attention of the Government, and especially of the Minister of Agriculture, to a paragraph which appeared in this morning's Ottawa "Citizen," and which I will read:

Vancouver, B.C., April 30th.—William's Head Quarantine, off Victoria, is to-day a village with a population of over one thousand persons, including two doctors, the Marquis of Breadalbane, and many hundred Chinese, all living in an atmosphere laden with sulphur. The place became populated very suddenly yesterday, on the arrival of the steamer "Empress of China" from the Orient, flying a yellow flag at the masthead, indicating there was small-pox on board. Every one who came in contact with the steamer, as well as passengers and crew, numbering over three hundred, and eight hundred Chinese, were at once transferred to quarantine by the health officer, Dr. Watt, who has telegraphed to Victoria that the whole outfit will be kept prisoners for fourteen days. The accommodations, in spite of the recent improvements, are ridiculously short for the enormous crowd. Large consignments of provisions were sent over at once, but there is much grumbling and growling.

Every precaution known to science is being taken to prevent the spread of the disease. The steamer will not be allowed to move, unless the company secures a new crew two hundred strong to man her. This is impossible on short notice, consequently, as the steamer is heavily freighted and the passenger list is unusually large, the expense will be enormous, and the shipping interests of every city on the coast, as well as many inland, will be affected.

Later.—Owing to the crowded state of quarantine, the authorities have allowed a steamer to be chartered to accommodate the first-class passengers, chiefly the ladies.

I am sorry to take up the time of the House, but this is a matter which I think of some moment to the country. I may say there is a feeling of insecurity on the coast at the present time in reference to quarantine matters, owing in large measure, I think, to the fact that the last ship that came into Victoria flying the yellow flag, showing that small-pox was on board, was quarantined, and a very short time afterwards a few