

port at a lower rate. Either the appraiser in St. John did not do his duty, or the officer at the other port did not do his duty. My investigation showed that it was the officer who did not allow the invoice to pass in St. John, that did his duty. That is one of those cases that will arise in any port, particularly in one that collects five or six million dollars in one season. These errors will occur. I do not believe that in this particular case the error was intentional. The whole desire of the department and their officers is to place every importer upon precisely the same footing.

Mr. BURPEE. I admitted, in my remarks, that we did ascertain in every possible way the market value of the goods which were imported, and we very often had to add to the invoices to bring them up to the market value. I would put before the hon. gentleman a case like the following: here is a Liverpool invoice that had been laying in port for three months, during which time the goods have gone up 25 per cent. When the goods arrive here, is the importer to pay duty on the additional price? We will suppose a contrary case, where the goods have gone down 25 per cent. in value; would the hon. gentleman give the importer the benefit of the reduction?

Mr. BOWELL. I could not do that, because the hon. gentleman has placed in the law a clause to the effect that an invoice shall not be lowered for duty.

Motion agreed to.

DOMINION APPRAISERS.

Mr. CASEY, in moving for copy of proceedings of Dominion Board of Appraisers since their appointment, and of all instructions as to the appraisement of goods sent to officers of the Customs since the introduction of the present Tariff, said: Perhaps I should have expressed myself better if I had said, all regulations made as to the appraisement of goods, for I find that is the term used in the Statute, as any regulations formerly made by the Governor in Council, I suppose are now made by the Board of Appraisers. I wish to add to the motion "all regulations made under section 10 of the Customs' Act in regard to appraisers." I wish to get at the true inwardness of this Board of Appraisers, to know exactly what they do in their secret councils, what regulations they have advised to be made, what instructions they have given, and on what evidence they base their advice and opinion as to the value of goods. It is evident that there is room for a difference of judgment in all these cases. No man can say absolutely what is a fair market value for goods in any market; that is a matter of individual judgment. The appraisers should have, then, a mass of evidence before them before they tender any advice on such a question. They must have price lists of all sorts of manufactures, and must exercise great care in striking a sort of general average between these price lists. I think it is of great importance that the proceedings of this Board, which is practically a small legislative chamber in itself, should be made regularly public along with other returns. In order to make a start in that direction, I move for these returns.

Mr. BOWELL. I scarcely think the hon. member for West Elgin (Mr. Casey), comprehends the extensiveness of his motion. If he means all the proceedings of the Board of Arbitrators, it would necessitate the bringing down of the result of their investigations in some thousands of invoices in all parts of the Dominion. Their duty is this: that all invoices are sent to the department where they are checked by a class of officers appointed for that purpose. If any doubtful case arises, as to the value of the invoice, the Board investigates it, correspondence takes place, investigation is made in the different markets of the world in which these articles are purchased, and a decision is thus arrived at as to the correctness of

the invoice. If the hon. gentleman had added to his motion "all the samples the appraiser had received," it would have made an interesting show for this House, in addition to the invoices, which, perhaps, would make two or three cart loads; he might have added, also, the different samples they had received, from a needle to a small anchor. I have no doubt it would be very interesting; but if the hon. gentleman will go over to the department with me, I will have much pleasure in introducing him to that secret conclave, and he will have full liberty to investigate all the books and papers, providing he will give his word, as a gentleman, that he will not go and expose the private business of every merchant in this country. To bring down all these proceedings would be to lay before the world the invoices of some thousands of importers, and expose prices at which they purchased their goods. I think, probably, all the hon. gentleman requires is the instructions given to the appraisers at the different ports. These appraisers, I may say, issue no orders; they simply report to the department their investigations, and the conclusions to which they come, and the department either approves or disapproves of the action. While I have no desire to withhold proper information, I do not think it would be desirable that all the proceedings of the Board of Appraisers should be brought before this House. I should also prefer that the motion should be so amended as to go back, say to 1874, as I find that the instructions issued to appraisers are very much the same now as they were under the late Administration. For example, I find that one appraiser is instructed as to the prices of wash tubs and pails, another as to the value placed on pianos, while another is given instructions to raise the price of certain articles arbitrarily 50 per cent. In bringing down these instructions it would be desirable, also, that the names of the persons mentioned in them should be omitted.

Mr. CASEY. Certainly. As I said before, I have no desire to expose anybody's business. I am aware that my motion is rather vaguely framed, and the reason is, that the proceedings of these appraisers have so far been kept such a mystery that one finds a difficulty in knowing exactly how to shape a motion to get information regarding them. I should have thought, however, that the Board would have kept minutes of their meetings, and I should like to know if they get evidence and information from their agents, say at Manchester, Philadelphia, and other places, as to the prices at which goods are sold.

Mr. BOWELL. I will supply all that.

Mr. CASEY. I should like to know, also, what means are adopted to work up that information, and the instructions which have gone out at their instigation as to the valuation of different kinds of goods.

The motion, as amended, agreed to, as follows:—

"That an Order of the House do issue to the proper officer for a copy of all instructions as to the appraisement of goods, sent to officers of the Customs, from January, 1874, and all regulations made under section 10, chap. 15 and 42 Victoria, in regard to appraisers."

SURVEY OF INDIAN RESERVES.

Mr. CASEY, in moving for a statement showing what progress has been made in surveying Indian Reserves under the Indian Act of 1880, said: I have been told by some of the Indians, upon a reservation on the borders of my county, that great inequality exists in the distribution of the land; that some rich Indians have more than their share, and that the poorer ones suffer accordingly, as the rich Indians make their influence so felt that the others cannot get surveys made. It has been suggested to me that it would be well to find out what progress has been made in the surveys, and to call the attention of the department to the matter.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I am not aware whether the rumors which the hon. gentleman mentions are well