

that we should also educate those people shipping from the other side of the water, from whom we import our goods which carry the preferential rebate, that when they are looking out for ports to which to ship their goods, they will seek to ship them to a Canadian port.

With regard to the amount of goods which come into this country under the preferential tariff, I might say that we had from the Minister of Customs this year a statement as to their value. According to that statement, during the fiscal year 1902-3, there came direct to Canadian ports from the United Kingdom, \$46,271,934 worth of goods, and for the fiscal year of 1903-4, \$49,275,031 worth, showing a gratifying increase I am glad to say, and showing that the amount of these goods being imported into Canada through our own Canadian ports is increasing. From the United States ports, on the other hand, during 1902-3, we imported \$12,796,772 worth of goods, and during 1903-4, \$12,685,878 worth. It appears to me, therefore, that these amounts which we import through American ports are not so excessively large, and that, as far as the business is concerned, we should not be interfering very much with the present condition of things if we would apply the preferential rebate only on those goods which are imported through Canadian ports. I may say that if there was any disadvantage which importers in the province of Quebec or the province of Ontario or in the Northwest would suffer from the adoption of this policy—if they were put to any expense or indeed to any very great inconvenience by that policy, those of us who are interested more especially in Canadian ports might be a little backward in urging its adoption on the government. But so far as freight rates are concerned, what is the fact? Our importers can import their goods through Canadian ports, whether in winter or summer, at cheaper rates than they can through United States ports. As a matter of fact, the freight rates from St. John—and I presume the Halifax rates would be the same over the Intercolonial Railway or very close to them—the freight rates from St. John, Portland and Boston say to Toronto, are the same, while from New York—through which I am given to understand a good deal of our retail goods are imported—the rates are considerably higher than from any of our eastern maritime ports. I have the rates here for all the classes of goods which are imported. On class No. 1, the rates from our maritime ports are 36 cents per hundred pounds. From New York, on the same class of goods, the freight rates are 57 cents per hundred pounds. On class No. 2, the freight rates from our Canadian maritime ports are 32 cents per hundred pounds and from New York 49 cents. Class No. 3, the rates are 27 cents from Canadian maritime ports as opposed to 39 cents from New York. On

class No. 4, they are 23 cents as compared with 27 cents from New York. On class No. 5, they are 18½ cents as compared with 22 cents; and on class No. 6, they are 17½ cents as compared with 19 cents. So that in every one of these classes the advantage in freight rates is with our Canadian ports. Is there any other disadvantage under which importers would labour, by being compelled, if they wished to get the benefit of the preferential rebate, to use our own Canadian ports. I know of none at present. I believe that importers would be served just as thoroughly, quickly, easily and satisfactorily from our own Canadian ports as they are at present when importing through the port of New York. I am aware that business men, like others, get into a certain routine in doing their business; but if there were some inducement such as the one I suggest, and which both the Finance Minister and the First Minister spoke in favour of, then I would like to know if there can possibly be any reason whatever why such a scheme should not be adopted. With regard to the rapid supply of goods through Canadian ports as compared with, say, New York, I would like to refer to the letter which was read by the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Logan) when speaking on this point last year. This is a letter from the Allans, of the Allan Steamship Line of Montreal, and is to be found at page 5077 of 'Hansard' of 1904. It says in part:

I may mention, so far as our Liverpool steamers are concerned, that we are now in a position to deliver traffic to Canadian houses as rapidly by our route as can be done by any United States port.

If that is true, I would ask hon. members, and especially the members of the government, what objections there can be for adopting the idea upon which the motion of the hon. member for Cumberland was based and which was approved by this House? What objection can there be to embodying this in the legislation of this country? I do not wish to argue the matter at length. I do not think there is really any necessity for it. Given the fact that there is as good accommodation to be obtained in our own ports as in others; given the fact that the expense not only is no greater, but actually is less for these imports in the interior of our country by using our own ports than by using others. I ask what reason can be possibly given why such a change as I now bring to the notice of the Minister of Finance should not be embodied in the law of the land? I hope that the minister will take into consideration the suggestion I make. I can imagine that in the multiplicity of the things that have been brought to his attention, he may not have happened to give this due consideration. But, taking the statement he made in this House last June,