gard to any specific point on which he desired to be enlightened.

Mr. COSTIGAN asked that the motion be allowed to stand.

Motion allowed to stand.

## CLASSIFICATION OF IMPORTS.

Mr. BURPEE moved for a return of all circulars, memoranda and instructions issued by the Customs throughout the Dominion, relating to the interpretation of the several classes of goods imported and the duties to be levied thereon under the Tariff since March 14th, 1879, to 1st February, 1882.

Mr. BOWELL. I am quite sure my hon. friend desires a volume of very interesting reading, therefore I suggest that the time for which we should have the returns and memoranda should cover from the 1st of January, 1874. I think the House will see, and those members who take the trouble to read those papers, that the course pursued in the endeavor to equalize the values at which goods should be imported, under the present Government, is much the same as that pursued by the late Government. There may be a slight difference, though I do not say it as a fact, the general impression being in favor of the present Government, as having taken measures to carry out its orders, which the late Government did not do.

Mr. MILLS. I believe that the regulations or policy of the present Government, in this matter, has proved extremely unsatisfactory. I know many cases in which gentlemen have crossed from this side of the line to the other, to purchase what they could not obtain in this country, and of their having entered those goods at the prices at which they were bought in the States. The Custom House officers detained them as under-valued. Affidavits have been produced to the effect that the parties from whom, and the parties by whom those goods were purchased, setting forth the price actually paid. But, notwithstanding the testimony of both parties, Ministers have sent an appraiser to fix a higher valuation and tax the importers for larger sums than the goods were actually worth, sometimes compelling them to pay a fine besides. I can give some cases in point: the owner of a nursery at Windsor, Mr. Dougall, was suffering from some blight or disease that had attacked his pear trees, and he purchased in the States the trees necessary to complete his assortment. He purchased them at the prices at which they are universally sold at such nurseries, but they were retained at the border until many were worthless, on the plea that many were entered at a lower price than their actual valuation. Another value was fixed on them, and when Mr. Dougall wrote to the Department of Customs, to inform them that the prices fixed on this side were not those at which they were sold in the United States, no regard was paid to him. He assured them that the new values attached were higher than those fixed by the nursery to purchasers on both sides of the lines; but no redress was obtained. Again, many of the farmers in the south-western peninsula have been making experiments in the production of sorghum and other varieties of sugar cane, and have imported pans and other utensils from the United States for the manufacture of sugar. But when these articles and machinery purchased were landed at the Custom House at Amherstberg, they also were detained, on the charge that the farmers had entered them at less than their actual value. I know several instances where the buyers have shown to the Department that the prices at which the articles were entered were those actually paid for them, and affidavits have been produced from the sellers in support of this statement. Yet the Minister of Customs sent an appraiser who fixed another value than that of the manufacturers, and not only charged the Customs tax on these imports but fined the parties because they did not enter the machinery at other prices than those at which they were really purchased. I would like to know when a farmer goes from Canada to the United States to purchase machinery for the manufacture of sorghum, what other valuation can he attach than that which he has been called on to pay? How is he to know whether the prices given are too much or too little—how is he to fix a valuation except by the price which he actually paid. He comes forward and produces his invoice. He says: "This is the price I paid for this article." The hon. gentleman says you must pay more, and if he objects to that and the price is insisted upon he is subjected to a fine. This is the way the hon. gentleman seeks to encourage skilled agriculture in the western portion of the peninsula. I can tell him there is a great amount of dissatisfaction at the manner in which the law is being administered. I think I have with me the correspondence in some of these cases, and it is perfectly obvious that the spirit of the law, at all events, has been violated in the manner in which it is being administered, and serious vexations have been caused to a very considerable number of the agricultural population.

It being six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

## After Recess.

Mr. BOWELL. The hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) prior to the House rising, made some complaints against the administration of the Customs Department, which are not justified, either in the law or in the practice of the administration of the affairs of that Department. The hon. gentleman said there was great dissatisfaction in the western section of the country as to the administration of the Customs Department with respect to the ruling of the value of articles for duty. He also informed the House that certain fruit trees, purchased at a nursery in the United States by a Mr. Dougall, in the county of Essex, had been refused entry at the prices he paid. I am not prepared to say that such is not the fact. On the contrary, I am aware that much difficulty has arisen in arriving at a fair and equitable valuation of that class of articles entered for duty. It arises from the fact that many of the nurseries in the United States sell to the Canadian purchasers at a much lower price than they sell to the purchasers in the United States. It may also be true that they produced affidavits to that effect, and these affidavits may have been quite correct as to the prices paid for the article. But the House will remember that the hon. member for Bothwell stated—and he was very particular in the manner in which he put the point before the House—that the trees were entered at the price at which the nurseries in the United States sell to all Canadian purchasers. That is a point we do not dispute. He also stated that, in the case of machinery, affidavits from the persons who purchased and who sold the machinery in the United States, were presented to the Customs Department, stating that the price at which the machinery was entered for duty was the price which they had paid for it in the United States. That I am not prepared to dispute either. In the administration of that part of the Department, and particularly in ruling the value of articles for duty, we find that these articles are sold in the United States to the Canadian purchaser, at a much lower rate than they are sold to the American purchaser; in other words, articles which are sold in the United States, and go into consumption in the United States, are sold at a higher rate than the same articles are sold to the Canadian purchaser when to be brought into this country. There are many reasons why that is done—particularly in the case of machinery and all the manufactures from iron and like material—in the United States. When they are sold by the