

2. By whom respectively were such dredges and dredging scows imported?

And nevertheless the hon. gentleman says that he did not ask for any names. The answer given to that part of the question was:

It is not usual to disclose the particulars of individual entries made at the custom-house.

Then the hon. gentleman asked:

By what names, numbers or other method were such dredging scows described in the entry?

4. What was the valuation placed on each dredge and dredging outfit?

5. What was the amount of duty paid on each dredge or dredging scow?

The answer was given to me by the deputy of the department, and that answer was as follows:

Dredges, dredging scows and dredging plants imported into Canada have not been classified in the trade and navigation tables under these headings. Dredges, dredging scows and dredging plant are not mentioned under these terms in the customs tariff, and when entered for duty are classified as 'manufactures of wood,' 'machinery,' &c., according to material. The extent of the importations in 1902, 1903 and 1904 could not be ascertained without a lengthy examination of entries at various ports covering these years. It is not usual to disclose the particulars of individual entries made at the custom-house.

The hon. gentleman did ask for particulars of individual entries. I think the answer was a courteous one; it was prepared by my deputy; I read it here, and I approved of it. It is not our custom to give individual names, and hon. gentlemen opposite will admit that it is a custom that should be observed. No gentleman opposite would claim that the individual business of an importer should be given to the public, and in that respect secrecy is enjoined upon all the customs officers. Information can be given upon the demand of a court of law, and it is given whenever it is possible it can be given without doing injustice or violating the wise protection which importers are entitled to. I think the good sense of members will endorse that course, indeed they have endorsed it time and again. When I said an answer to the question would require a lengthy examination at the ports, that was quite true, and I would have had that examination made had the hon. gentleman renewed his question or had I thought he wanted such an examination. The ports would have to go through the entries for the entire year and see what did come in, and though they are entered, not as dredges, but as so much value in machinery and woodwork, the particulars could be ascertained, and I did not say they would not be. Had the question been put earlier in the session, and there had been time to get the answer, I would have asked the hon. gentleman to move for a return; but owing

to the state of the business of the House there was no opportunity to have a motion on the order paper reached. That is all I want to say; it is not often I have to say so much in a matter of this kind. My hon. friend (Mr. Bennett) is not without ability, but I will say that it does not improve his standing in the House that every time he rises he seems to impute motives to individuals. There is no necessity for that.

Mr. BENNETT. You come to East Simcoe every election; come again; you always increase my majority.

Mr. PATERSON. Well, that is not the way to speak in this House. We are in a chamber composed of gentlemen, or supposed to be gentlemen, where we have to transact business, the one with the other, and I trust we will always be able to exercise a proper courtesy towards one another. I intended in my answer to treat the hon. gentleman courteously, and I think I did. To say that I tried to hide some wrong transaction is a statement that is utterly without foundation, and is utterly unworthy of any gentleman in this House.

Mr. BENNETT. By way of personal explanation; the Minister of Customs has been very unfair to me.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh.

Mr. BENNETT. Who is the next grinner? This question was framed by me about the 1st of May, and I did not refer to its exact terms until to-day. As soon as the minister rose I saw that the second clause did ask for the names, although the other clauses did not, and a fair answer would not have disclosed the names of any parties. I wished to retract that part of my statement, but how was I received by the Minister of Customs? I was told that no gentleman would have made such a statement in this House.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. BENNETT. I have this to say to those who are near hearing on the back benches, that I am going to let the people of East Simcoe decide as to whether I am a gentleman or not. So long as they are satisfied with my course, or a large majority of them, I will be in this House. It is not often that the Minister of Customs tries the role of brow-beater, or censor, or mentor; and if he is going to try it on me, I can tell him and the other members of the cabinet that it will be just as much lost on me when it comes from him as when it comes from any of the others. I am here representing the people of East Simcoe, and so long as my majority is increased, as it has been increasing in that riding, I can well believe that my constituents are in accord with me. Now that I have behind me in East Simcoe, not the strong arm of the Ontario government, but the paralyzed arm of two On-