

What goes on here at one extremity of these wonderfully varied and prolific Canadian fisheries, is going on at the other extreme,—at Gaspé and the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and at all other points varied by the circumstances of place.

I wish to call your attention to an error—shall I say a geographical error—of our learned friends. The learned agent for the United States says he can figure this question up pencil in hand. He admits with all the assistance of Mr. Babson and his figures (which are not evidence at all) he admits, one link in the chain of his argument is wanting—the Port Mulgrave returns of 1875. Does the learned agent know that the Port Mulgrave returns are entirely incomplete. Mr. Foster seems to be laboring under the delusion that every American fisherman reports himself as he passes through the Strait of Canso. This is not really the case. Look at the map and read the evidence and then see if it is possible to say, how many fishermen never sail in the direction of the Strait. All round the Eastern and Northern side of the Island of Cape Breton there are the finest mackerel grounds in the Gulf of St. Lawrence or the world. No United States witnesses could be produced to call this a dangerous coast. There are a number of fine harbors—the ancient port of Louisburg among the number—open all winter. This latter port is now connected by forty miles of railroad with the magnificent harbor of Sydney.

James McKay, of Port Mulgrave, Inspector of Fish, was called and examined as a witness before the Commission. He says, "No one man stationed in the Gut of Canso can get an accurate list of the vessels that go through there. To do so is a moral impossibility."

James Purcell, Revenue Officer at Port Mulgrave, says:—"The number of light dues collected would not be a fair return as showing the actual number of vessels that pass through the Gut of Canso."

B. M. Smalley, Fisherman, of Bedford, Maine, was called on behalf of the United States, and examined. I invite the Commissioners to read his evidence:—

"Q. Now don't you think the same fish go out and in? Is it your idea that certain schools keep in one place, and certain schools in another? A. Yes, it is my opinion the mackerel go out and in, and we know they do. But it is my positive idea that the best fish that go into the Bay Chaleurs go through the Strait and by Sydney.

"Q. Do you mean the Strait of Canso? A. No. The Strait of Bellisle, and come down to Sydney.

"Q. What time? A. Well, they are passing up and down there after the month of August, until they all go out.

"Q. You think these are not the same as you catch off the North of the Island? No, I don't.

"Q. Do you think your opinion is general? A. Yes, sir."

Here are a few extracts from the evidence on file:—

Archibald B. Skinner, inspector of fish at Port Hastings, Cape Breton, has been 32 years engaged in the fishing business, and has been a practical fisherman:—

"During the Reciprocity Treaty a large fleet of American fishing vessels came to this coast during the Summer season to carry on a fishing business. The number increased during the treaty, until at the termination a fleet numbering hundreds of vessels were engaged in fishing around the coast of Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, P. E. Island and the Magdalen Islands. These principally took mackerel and codfish, but they took other fish as well.

"A large portion of the American fishing fleet is now going every year up the eastern side of Cape Breton and fishing in the vicinity of Scaterie, Cape North, and the sections around there. I understand that these grounds are very rich in fish."

To reach these localities they are under no necessity whatever of passing through the Gut of Canso. They may, directly after they come from the Bay of Fundy, either pass along the coast of Nova Scotia and reach the Gulf by way of the northern part of Cape Breton, or pass north in the vicinity of Newfoundland.

George C. Lawrence, merchant, Port Hastings:—

"Not nearly all the American fishing vessels passing through the Straits of Canso are noted or reported. A great number pass through every year that have never been noted or reported at all.

"The Newfoundland herring fleet from American ports go thither along the eastern side of Cape Breton instead of passing through the Straits, and toward the latter part of the season large quantities of the most valuable mackerel are taken by Americans on the eastern shore of Cape Breton, between Cape North and Louisburg, and thereabouts."

Alex. McKay, merchant, North Sydney, C. B.:—

"None of the codfish vessels, to my knowledge, go through the Strait of Canso. They come around the southern and eastern coast of Cape Breton, and many mackerelmen do the same. Mackerelmen fish around by Scaterie, and it is therefore shorter for them to come round by the southern and eastern sides of the Island of Cape Breton."

James McLeod, master mariner, Cape Breton:—

"Last Summer I fished from Cape North to Scaterie, during the cod season, and saw at that season great numbers of American fishermen there, engaged in fishing. Within the last two years I have seen many American fishermen, from Cape North to Scaterie, engaged in mackerel fishing, and have seen at one time between twenty and thirty American fishermen so engaged, within sight, and think that there would be in that vicinity, at one time, about one hundred."

William Nearing, fisherman, Main-a-Dieu, Cape Breton:—

"All the codfish and halibut fishermen come around the southern and eastern coasts of Cape Breton, and do not run through the Strait of Canso. During the past five or six years I have seen, on an average, upwards of one hundred American fishing vessels each year around in this vicinity."

Wm. Edward Gardiner, merchant, Louisburg:—

"The American vessels which come here do not pass through the Strait of Canso."

Thomas Lahey, fisherman, Main-a-Dieu, C. B.:—

"I have seen in one day from fifty to sixty of these American vessels. These American vessels come round the southern coast of Cape Breton and did not run through the Strait of Canso. During the past five or six years I have seen on an aver-