

instructions went out, before I had the opportunity to correct them, extending the season not merely there, but in Prince Edward Island, and in one of the New Brunswick districts. There was considerable complaint from many persons interested in New Brunswick. All these facts went to show that the salvation of the lobster fishery had been brought about by the regulations prohibiting the fall fishing. I agree that it is most dangerous for the department to grant an extension of time, but the circumstances as regard the Cape Breton fisheries brought to my attention were exceedingly strong, the lobsters there being in an exceptional condition as to size and quantity, and the fishery having been interrupted many weeks of the season. In many of the districts, unlike other districts on the southern part of Nova Scotia, they cannot take the lobsters until the ice is gone, and the season on the Island is for that reason very much limited indeed. It is true that the packers protested, but, under all the circumstances, the inspector is of opinion that an extension for ten days might with safety be granted, that is, with safety to the interest of the fishery, and the extension was accordingly granted in these districts.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) Some of them fished up to the 12th August.

Mr. TUPPER. Of course, it is one of these many cases in which we have had tremendous difficulty, and one would require almost an army of men to stop that illegal packing; but the hon. gentleman will find on enquiry that it was not done by the regular packers. Hitherto the boiling of the lobsters had been left to the men who had possessed themselves of a certain amount of capital, and built factories, but the fishermen find that during this close season they can with very little expense boil the lobsters and pack them, and just as in the case of illicit stills against the Inland Revenue, all along the coast of Nova Scotia we have had a great deal of difficulty in breaking up that illegal business, which is a new difficulty in the experience of the department. I am not surprised that on the Island there has been that experience, although not on such a large scale. Between the last season and the one before there has been a great deal of difference in this, because during the last two seasons we have enforced the law so rigorously that the department has been sharply taken to task on many occasions for alleged hardship upon a class of very poor men, and the hon. gentleman knows that it is unfortunately true that those men who do enter that business are oftentimes strengthened by the excuse of the poverty of themselves and families. Now, with reference to the question of lobster hatcheries. I saw that in the sister colony of Newfoundland Mr. Neilson, whom the Government of that country very wisely employed a year or two ago, had met with great success in the hatching out of the lobster, and seeing the desperate condition that we were on the eve of in the Maritime Provinces in regard to that important business, we sent Mr. Wilnot there, and he came back and reported that there was no great difficulty in hatching out the eggs of the lobster; that it was very closely allied to the system of hatching out the ordinary fish eggs, and he selected a suitable spot in the County of Pictou, at Caribou, just across from the Island, in the Northumberland Straits.

Mr. TUPPER.

Mr. FORBES. Might I ask the hon. gentleman where else these hatcheries will be placed?

Mr. TUPPER. We have every reason to believe that this will be a success, for although this hatchery was only built in the middle of the season, we were able to deposit 6,000,000 of young lobsters in the Northumberland Straits, and nearly all of these eggs would in the ordinary course have gone with the other lobsters to the hatcheries and been destroyed. If this is a success, as we have every reason to believe it will be, the policy of the Government will be to extend the hatcheries at proper distances through the Maritime Provinces. The present hatchery is situated in one of the most important lobster districts in the province, as will be seen by a reference to the number of factories along that shore, and the site is one from which a large district can be served. The hon. gentleman knows that the lobster travels very quickly and moves over a very large territory, so that the hatchery there will extend over a large area. It is also proposed at small expense to adopt these floating incubators, and some of the factories have taken them up, and under the supervision of Commander Gordon they have commenced hatching out the eggs from them. One of the hon. gentlemen who spoke upon this subject, and who is most familiar with the whole question, says that he does not sympathize with the regulation about the size of the lobsters caught. I think that objection will soon be removed on the island. It was a most serious matter, because the lobsters had diminished so much in size that the enforcement of that regulation meant, as was alleged, the prohibition of the fishery, but the inspector on the Island maintained that the regulation was necessary, and it would be unwise to depart from the principles laid down in this matter in the regulations of other countries. In Newfoundland, where a great deal of attention is paid to this subject, Mr. Neilson considers that regulation as most essential, and the regulation as to the sizes is larger there, and the lobsters, perhaps, may be larger, too. Experts, outside of the business, and not concerned in the moneyed part of it, are practically unanimous that a regulation size should be laid down, so that we have not been able to depart from that; but, as the hon. gentleman knows, it is most extraordinary what some packers will do on occasions. We have found them taking lobsters under 4 inches in length, and every one can see what a fraud it is to put an article like that upon the market, and the bad name it gives to the Canadian lobster, as well as the injury done to the fishery by the destruction in these young lobsters of millions of lobsters, which, if it were allowed to reach a mature age, would have gone to increase the fishery.

Mr. PERRY. I am very glad that a discussion has taken place with respect to the lobster fisheries of the lower provinces. I am not opposed to honest, fair and square regulations for the protection of these fisheries. I believe they require to be protected. But I am opposed to a vacillating policy of having one set of regulations this year and another set next year; I am opposed to having one policy for a certain class of people and another policy for another class of people. We know that it is dangerous to place so much power in the hands of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. It makes