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Last Spring I purchased a 6 h.p. COAKER Engine which has given me every satisfaction.

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I would advise any fisherman who requires an Engine that can be operated easily and give good results to buy a 6 h.p. COAKER Engine.

Yours truly,

WALTER HILLIER.

Point-aux-Gaul, Lamaline, April 1915.

## REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON FISHERY MATTERS

Appointed by His Excellency the Governor.

To His Excellency Sir Walter Edward Davidson, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Island of Newfoundland and its Dependencies.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:—

In pursuance of the task entrusted to us, by the Commission which Your Excellency addressed to us on March 13th, 1914, directing us to inquire into and report to you as to the best means of:—

- (a) Encouraging the cure of fish, whether by establishing a cull or standard in the purchase of same or otherwise;
- (b) Standardizing or branding of all fish when exported from Newfoundland or Labrador;
- (c) Protection and propagation of lobsters;
- (d) Protection of the Seal Fishery by the establishment of a close season, if found necessary, or otherwise;
- (e) Conserving our Bait Fishes;
- (f) Ascertaining if the prosecution of the Whale Fishery tends to injure the fishery;
- (g) Preserving for our fishermen Bait Fishes.

We have given very full and careful consideration to these subjects.

At the session of the Legislature in the early weeks of 1914, Resolutions were adopted by both Houses in respect to the foregoing matters, and a Joint Committee was appointed to undertake their consideration. This Committee, though it made some progress, found itself unable to complete its inquiries before the Session closed, and accordingly reported to both Houses on March 9th to this effect, and recommended "that the Legislature adopt an Address to His Excellency the Governor-in-Council, praying him to appoint a Commission with power to take evidence, to sit during the year, and to prepare a full report for submission to the Legislature at the next Session." This Report being adopted, Your Excellency was pleased to reappoint the members of that Joint Committee as a Commission under the great Seal, to wit:—

Hon. John Harris, President Legislative Council.

Hon. John Harvey.

Hon. W. C. Job.

Hon. M. G. Winter.

Hon. A. F. Goodridge.

Hon. P. Templeman.

Hon. P. T. McGrath.

Hon. James Ryan.

Hon. J. R. Goodison, Speaker House of Assembly.

Rt. Hon. the Prime Minister.

Minister of Marine and Fisheries.

Minister of Finance and Customs.

J. M. Kent, Esq., K.C.

Robert Moulton, Esq.

A. E. Hickman, Esq.

The Commission at its first sitting chose Mr. Piccott, Minister of Marine and Fisheries, to be its Chairman, and Mr. McGrath its Secretary.

Consideration of the work entrusted to the Commission was taken in hand promptly, and the enquiry was pursued at convenient periods throughout the year 1914, and up to the present time; and after having given to the study of the above subjects very exhaustive attention, examining many witnesses and considering such other information as was procurable, the Commission finds itself in a position to deal with them as follows:—

- (a) Encouraging the cure of fish, whether by establishing a cull or standard in the purchase of same, or otherwise;
- (b) Standardizing or branding of all fish when exported from Newfoundland or Labrador.

These matters have proved, perhaps the most difficult of any that were submitted for the consideration of the Commission, owing to the divergent opinion which are held, by those interested, as to the possibilities of coping with the situation by legislative enactment.

The views of all interest concerned were ascertained, and as many of the members of the Commission are actively engaged in the conduct of the various fisheries of the Colony, it was possible for these at all times to bring to bear their practical experiences on the various suggestions that were presented. The discussion on this and the other questions will be found very fully reported in the summaries of the evidence of the witnesses attached to this Report.

In connection with this branch of the inquiry, the Commission issued circulars to exporters of fish from the Colony, some sixty-three altogether, inviting suggestions as to how these problems could be solved, but they regret to report that a decided lack of interest was exhibited by many, not more than ten replies being received.

With a view, moreover, to secure as early action as possible in the way of introducing remedial measures, the Commission, at its meeting on June 11th last, adopted the following Resolutions, which were transmitted to the Government in order that such steps might be taken with regard thereto as in the judgment of the Government were desirable:—

RESOLVED:— The deterioration in the cure of Newfoundland Codfish, so noticeable in recent years, is one of the most serious factors—if not the most serious factor—in the commercial life of this Colony to-day. The effect upon the production and value of the Labrador fishery is already lamentable in the extreme.

It is not too much to say that as a general tendency, this evil—the deterioration in the cure of fish—is threatening the very existence of the Colony. The problem of correction is a most difficult one and the Commission is not at the present moment prepared to make any definite recommendation for dealing comprehensively with it; but the Commission fully realizes that it is one of the most important, if not the most important, of all the questions which it has to consider.

In the meantime, as a purely tentative and preliminary measure, the Commission suggests the advisability of appointing two or three competent men, to move about in certain defined sections, giving their attention as Government officials to this subject, and endeavouring by such means as they may be able to devise, by pre-emptive, to improve the methods now in general use in treating codfish; and that they be instructed to send regular detailed reports of their work and to make such practical recommendations as may suggest themselves in the pursuance of their duties for more effectually dealing with the evil.

The Commission further suggests that the Government might advantageously circularize shippers, requesting them to co-operate in an effort to have more care exercised in connection with the shipping and selection of Newfoundland Codfish both Shore and Labrador.

RESOLVED:— This Commission desires to record its view that some attempt should long ago have been made to investigate in an intelligent, comprehensive, and scientific way, the waters and fishing grounds contiguous to the shores of the Colony and Labrador.

They respectively urge that as soon as the necessary financial and other arrangements can be made this work should be undertaken.

The Commission is of opinion that the services of a thoroughly competent man, combining scientific training and practical knowledge of the fishing industry should be engaged and that within certain broadly defined limits, he should be given the widest possible discretion in the pursuance of his work. He should not be hampered in the selection and remuneration of his assistants or in the expenditure of whatever sum it may be found possible to provide.

We have practically no detailed knowledge of the ocean bottom round our coast, nor has there ever been any intelligent attempt to locate new fishing areas which unquestionably exist.

The defined ocean layers, their depths and characteristics, the various currents, the occurrence of plankton and other marine organisms, marine plants and their bearing upon ocean life, the occurrence and migration of herring, the occurrence of halibut and other kinds of fish, the study of variations of temperatures, and salinity relative to annual catch, the testing and trying out of different methods of fishing and curing, experiments with bait, and a host of other matters are calling for examination.

A thoroughly modern steamer, equipped not only with the necessary scientific apparatus, but also fitted for practical fishing with modern appliances suited to various bottoms, depths and different species of fish should be provided.

It is almost an universal belief that not one-half of the fish producing capacity of the Colony has been reached, and the Commission fully concurs in this view.

It is, however, certain that further extended development cannot safely be left to private initiative alone. The fisheries of the Colony have for all intents and purposes been rather retrograding, or at best have been stationary, for some time past, and the time for their further development should be no longer postponed.

Investigations along these lines have been pursued with exceedingly valuable results in other countries, and it is not too much to say that the whole future of Newfoundland de-

pends to a very great extent upon the successful result of such work here.

The Commission, therefore, feels that its inauguration should be no longer delayed.

Since that date a further large amount of consideration has been given to the question of the best means of improving the cure of Codfish. This is perhaps the most important matter submitted to the Commission, and it has been difficult to work out any unanimous recommendation for coping with the trouble. This problem is unfortunately on exceedingly complicated one under the industrial and economic conditions as they exist in the Colony at present.

One main cause of deterioration in cure undoubtedly lies with the Talqual system which has become almost universal. The fish buyers and exporters are in the first place responsible for this. It has been adopted by them against the general judgment and as a result of extreme competition and absence of co-operation among them.

Most of the current suggestions for re-establishing more careful handling and cure are found upon detailed examination to present great practical difficulties, which in the opinion of the undersigned tend to make their employment of doubtful value.

The Commission has considered the following suggestions:—

- (a) A compulsory or a voluntary inspection and certifying of all exports, or of a large or small defined section of exports;
- (b) A compulsory abandonment of Talqual buying;
- (c) An enforcement of a strict culling system between buyers and sellers;
- (d) The suggested general dissolution of the curing establishments from the catching of the Fish;
- (e) A Government grant of a bonus to the curer for strictly prime merchantable fish.

We recommend that there be created a Board, similar to the Canadian Grain Inspection Board, to be known as the Fish Inspection Board. That this Board be composed of three members—one to be named the Governor-in-Council, another by the Board of Trade at St. John's, and the third by the members of the House of Assembly who sit for outport districts, excluding holders of Executive and Departmental seats, as these will already have their say in the choice of the Government's nominee. That this Board have power to make rules for inspecting and standardizing fish, and to appoint and license inspectors and Cullers, and to pass such rules and regulations as they may consider necessary to regulate the cull, and thus cause more attention to the cure and an improved value for our staple in foreign markets.

(c) Protection and Propagation of Lobsters.

The endeavour to deal with the problems of the lobster fishery elicited very voluminous information. The Commission, too, in order to secure the greatest possible light on this question, invited the members of the Council of the Board of Trade to participate in a discussion in this matter on November 28th when the subject was exhaustively discussed, in the light of the information that had been previously obtained, notably that supplied by the officials of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, engaged in the carrying out of Lobster protection and propagation work as at present practised under the authority of that Department.

Following upon this joint conference a meeting of the Board of Trade was held and the lobster question to that organization, with the result that Resolutions were adopted as follows:—

1. It is the opinion of the Board of Trade that it is desirable to close down the catching of Lobsters for the coming season.

2. The Board of Trade is also of opinion that further legislation is required for the preservation of the Lobster fishery to succeed closing.

After still further discussion, however, the following Recommendations were ultimately adopted in regard to this industry, which the Commission submits as its conclusions thereon:— The present system of Reserve Areas and the purchase of Seed Lobsters for deposition therein be fully developed and extended.

That the elimination of illegal Lobster pots be more effectively enforced.

That the Superintendent be instructed to proceed at the earliest possible date, before packing commences, to the various fishing sections for the purposes of inspecting all Lobster Pots before permitting them to be put in the water and also for the purpose of extending the reservation policy.

That the Minister of Marine and Fisheries be given authority to change the existing system of wardens by reducing their numbers, and that fewer men be appointed whose sole duty shall be the protection and overseeing of the Lobster fishery, also that he be authorized to pay them if and when he considers it expedient such wages as he may think fit not

(continued on page 3.)

## Wanted--To Buy

### Choice Tinned Lobsters

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