

Newfoundland, and between the former and some fish merchants or others on the subject of the inspection in Canada of Newfoundland pickled herring, imported into Canada; statements showing the quantity of Newfoundland herring imported in different ports of Canada, in 1883, the number of barrels and half-barrels of the said fish that have been submitted to our official inspection, and the result of such inspection. He said: Before putting the motion, I would like to address a few remarks to the House. I put this motion on the paper a few days ago and as it happened to stand alone on the Order paper it was remarked outside the House that it was a very small affair. Well, from one point of view it is a very small affair. I dare say, if I had spoken of salmon, trout, or of fly fishing, or of something relating to sport, many people perhaps would have been pleased. But, Sir, the herring fishery, from a commercial point of view, and from an economical point of view, if not from a political point of view, is of very great importance. History is a great mentor and tutor, and I will recall some facts of history. Some centuries ago, the famous Dutch Admiral Van Tromp swept the British channel, and dictated peace to the English; and Ruyter and other Dutch Admirals, for a century, had command of the sea. And who had they on board their vessels as seamen? Herring fishermen, and no one else, and they were recognized to be the best seamen in the world. It is well known that the herring fisheries of Holland gave to that country the mastery of the sea for centuries—not because of that particular branch of trade, but because the famous Dutchman, Beukels, had discovered a means of preserving herring by pickling them. At first sight this would not seem to be of much account. But, Sir, let me remind you that it created a revolution in the herring trade; let me remind this House that the great Charles V, the great King of Spain, and great Emperor of Germany, when he visited Holland, expressed his opinion that Beukels, who discovered this process of pickling herring, was one of the greatest benefactors of humanity; and he did not consider it beneath him to go and pay his respects at his tomb. Now these poor, humble, herring fishermen on our coasts and bays are well worthy of our attention. When we look at the statistics we find that in Norway no less than 750,000 barrels of herring are taken annually. In Scotland there are about as much more, that is to say 1,500,000 barrels of herring for the two countries, being equal to 300,000,000 lbs. of food. If we look at Canadian statistics we find there were taken last year on our coasts, 193,361 barrels of herring, that were pickled; 159,505 boxes of smoked herring, and 2,800 boxes of frozen herring, worth altogether over \$800,000. These figures prove that herring is a very important factor in the fisheries of this country, and the Government, having introduced the National Policy, is bound to protect and develop that industry as much as possible—as much as any other industry or branch of manufacture. Well, I had the honour to speak in this House several times in regard to the inspection of herring. The inspection of herring not only enables the buyer to know what he is buying, but it obliges the fishermen to do their very best to have good fish, and, as a consequence, to get a better price for their fish. When I spoke in this House on a former occasion it was to ask the Government to repeal a law passed by the Free Trade Government, in 1874, which permitted Newfoundland herring to come into this country, not only free of duty, but free of inspection, whilst our herring was obliged to be inspected. We know that the inspection of herring in Canada costs from 20 to 40 cents a barrel. Now we know that inspected herring cannot be all classed as No. 1; sometimes it is classed as No. 2, or 3, or even less than that—and it is not always because the fishermen did not do their duty by the fish, but because the fish was small, not fat enough, or fresh enough. Sometimes the captain of the vessel which carried these bar-

Mr. FORTIN.

rels did not take proper care of them, and the pickle was lost, and the fish damaged. That law not only allowed these Newfoundland herring to come in free of the Canadian inspection, but it obliged our own inspectors to give it a certain character. They were obliged to stamp it Newfoundland, so that Newfoundland herring which came to this country to the extent of from 15,000 to 30,000 barrels every year, and bearing the mark of the Newfoundland inspection and all stamped No. 1, were sold as No. 1. The buyers in the western Provinces not only bought it as No. 1, but paid for it as such, while our own herring had to be inspected; and as a great many barrels could not rank higher than No. 2, our fishermen lost that way \$1 a barrel, the difference of price between No. 1 and No. 2 herring, while the Newfoundland herring all sold as No. 1. Well, this state of things constituted a grievance, and the matter was brought before the House. It was sometime before our fishermen got redress, but they did get it. A law was passed which went into effect last spring, by which Newfoundland herring were submitted to the same inspection as our own—there was not the slightest difference. The Newfoundland fishermen and merchants pretended that their herring was inspected in Newfoundland; but our fishermen said their inspection was a fraud, and we proved that it was a fraud. During five or six years the Newfoundland merchants and fishermen were able to take advantage of that fraud, and to do great injury to our herring trade; and I know for a fact that several vessels, and a great many fishermen, went out of the trade. Formerly the Montreal market was supplied by Labrador herring, and by herring taken by people on the Magdalen Islands, or on the north shore, which state of things continued until they were driven out of the market by the Newfoundland herring. I will now give the House figures to prove that the Canadian herring trade has been protected to our fishermen by the recent Act. As I stated before, Newfoundland fish was inspected by the official inspectors of that colony; but as I mentioned in the speech last year, and also two years ago, any man could get a commission as inspector in Newfoundland—the captain of a vessel, the fisherman himself, and, of course, when he inspected his own fish, he marked them all No. 1. The fish came into Canada and were passed by the law of 1874. The new law was proclaimed in the month of June, 1883, and about 35,000 barrels of herring from Newfoundland came into Quebec and Montreal last fall. Some were inspected, not all, and I will give the House a statement of the result. I will begin with Quebec, to which only one cargo came. Here is the statement given by the inspector himself:

“Statement relating to the inspection of Newfoundland herring imported at Quebec, in 1883, by H. Grenier, Inspector of Fish and Oil, at Quebec.”

Only one lot was imported in that port by Mr. G. Patterson. All the barrels and half barrels were officially inspected in Newfoundland and were all stamped as No. 1 herring. The lot was composed of 1,226 barrels and 75 half barrels, and the result of the inspection was the following:—

“No No. 1 herring were found.”

No. 2.		No. 3.		Rusty.		Sour.		Total.
Brls.	½ Brls.	Brls.	½ Brls.	Brls.	½ Brls.	Brls.	½ Brls.	
840	45	163	17	218	13	5	0	1,301

The inspector examined the barrels in the same way as he inspected Canadian herring, with the result I have described. A large lot came to Montreal. The following is the statement:—