

Fane, Cecil.

SHORT PAPER  
ON THE  
Productive Capabilities<sup>15</sup> of Newfoundland,<sup>3</sup>

Read at the United Empire Trade League  
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IT is with considerable diffidence that I venture to come before you to read this short paper upon the Productions of Newfoundland, and I must commence by expressing my great regret that no abler person, and one with a larger experience of the Colony, has been found to address you and do more justice to the subject than I am capable of doing; at the same time, if I can at all dispel any of the many misapprehensions that exist as to the productive capabilities of this oldest Colonial possession of the British Crown, I shall have the satisfaction of feeling that my efforts have not been in vain.

The exports from Newfoundland in the year 1890, as shewn by the statistical abstract compiled by the Board of Trade, amounted to a grand total of £1,270,768 in value, of which £537,591 (or nearly one half) is returned as having been exported to other portions of the Empire. Of these exports the principal is dried codfish, which attained a value of £809,770. This is at present the staple product of the Colony, and is chiefly consumed in those foreign countries whose population are mainly members of the Church of Rome; for instance, Portugal consumes Newfoundland codfish to the value of £201,608; Brazil, £205,156; Italy, £60,722; Spain, £92,581; while the British West Indian Islands take £90,667. A curious feature of this trade is the increased demand for dried codfish that has sprung up both in Canada and the United States of America.

There is no doubt but that were some better method devised for preserving or curing codfish, the demand for it would increase in England and other countries where the tenets of religious principles do not compel a fish diet one day in the week. At present, the fish, as soon as possible after it is caught, is split open and heavily salted, and then is placed on frames called "flakes," and dried in the sun until it is as hard as a board; it is then stacked in the merchant's stores, and shipped either in bulk or barrels. Fish preserved in this manner has