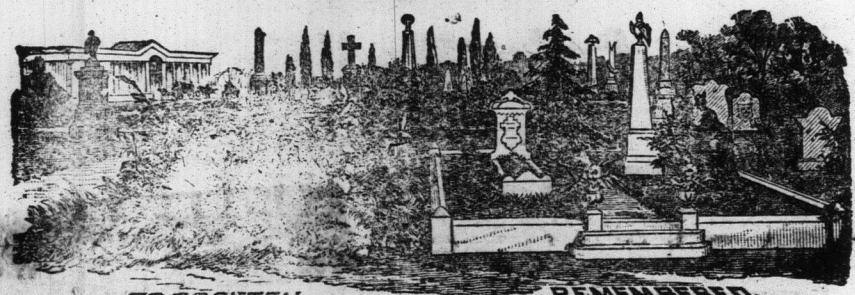


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HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

SYNOPSIS

TUESDAY, APRIL 15th.
The House met at 3 p.m., pursuant to adjournment.

Petitions were presented by Mr. Jennings and Mr. Stone.
Various questions were asked and answered.

A bill to amend the law in relation to local affairs was read a second time.
A bill in relation to the Sealfishery was read a second time.

The PREMIER said that this bill was the result of the recommendations of the Commission who investigated the recent sealing disaster, and would be open to the suggestions of every member of the House.

At last session, the Legislature gave authority to the Government to appoint a Commission; the Government appointed the Judges of the Supreme Court—gentlemen of long experience in the affairs of the country, and of unimpeachable integrity; and they had made a report after taking the opinions of the many expert witnesses who were examined before them.

He proceeded to explain the various sections. The principal sections provided for a penalty, if men were left upon the ice more than an hour after sunset, unless by their own misconduct; that a wooden ship must have sufficient sail power to work if the engines break down; that property in panned seals should be limited; and that compensation should be paid by the owners to injured men, under certain conditions.

The House went into a Committee of the Whole on the bill in relation to the Naturalization of Aliens.

The PREMIER explained the various sections. Some discussion took place between him, Mr. Merine, and Mr. Kent, in relation to legal points.

Mr. JENNINGS had some objections to the Syrians who came into this country. They were not producers, and they did not respect the Sabbath Day.

Mr. HIGGINS thought Mr. Jennings was confusing the Syrians with some Turkish and other pedlars of entirely different race and religion. The real Syrians were very religious and respectable.

The Committee reported progress and asked leave to sit again.

The House went into Committee of the Whole on the bill in relation to Patents and Trade Marks. The bill was passed. This was to enable the Government to avoid patents belonging to alien enemies.

The debate on the Address in Reply was resumed.

Mr. DUMEREAUX, continuing, said that there could be no doubt of the advantages of British citizenship, nor of the loyalty of our people. The work of our Boys' Brigades had been splendid, and had borne good fruit. He hoped that, during the war, this Parliament, like all others in the Empire, would keep always before it the fact that Imperial interests were more important than local. He congratulated Mr. Merine on his return to the House, and Mr. Coaker upon his election for Twillingate.

The Address in Reply was received and adopted.

Various members gave notice of questions, etc.

The House adjourned to to-morrow at 3 p.m.

Wednesday, April 14th, 1915.
The House met at 3 p.m., pursuant to adjournment. Petitions were presented by Mr. Emerson, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Currie and Mr. Stone.

Various questions were asked and answered.

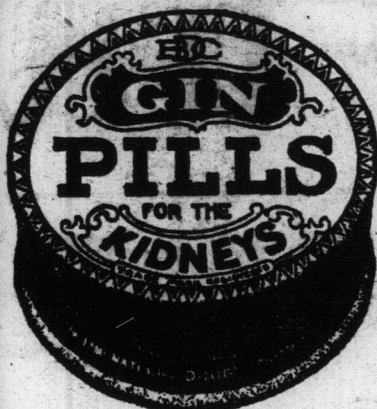
Mr. HICKMAN had leave to introduce resolutions for Friday, as to the desirability of prohibition of intoxicating liquors.

Mr. JENNINGS had leave to introduce a bill to amend the Saw Mill Act. The Patents and Trade Marks Bill was read a third time and sent to the Legislative Council.

The Bill to amend the Customs Act, 1895, was read a second time.

The House went into Committee of the Whole on the Bill in relation to Local Affairs.

The PREMIER said everybody was agreed on the desirability of local elective Boards. It had been suggested that the whole country should be at once divided into sections; but, besides being very expensive, that would be very difficult. In large and populous settlements there would be no difficulty at all; but where you had a large



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number of very small and scattered settlements, a long way apart and with very small grants, the difficulty was to create sections, within which all people could get to the meetings and get back again the same day, and where a proper person could be got to hold the meeting. He would be glad to have the matter discussed as fully as possible by the whole House.

Committee rose until Friday.

Mr. Coaker brought up, on the motion to adjourn, a matter in connection with alleged abuses at the Penitentiary. Mr. Merine also spoke on this. The PREMIER said this was the first he had heard of it, and it should be enquired into immediately.

Various members gave notice of question.

The House adjourned to to-morrow at 2.30 p.m.

Thursday, April 15th, 1915.
The House met at 2.30 p.m., and attended His Excellency the Governor to present the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Business was proceeded with at 2.15 p.m. Petitions were presented by Mr. Grimes, Mr. Merine, Mr. Clapp, Mr. F. Morris, Mr. Winsor and Mr. Coaker.

The PREMIER tabled copy of judgment of Mr. Justice Winter given in 1894, establishing the liability of the Government in relation to the payment of fees to judges of the Supreme Court for election petitions.

Mr. MORRIS introduced a bill providing for the appointment of a Board, representing both sides of the bargain, to fix the price of fish sold and shipped off the Labrador, commonly known as the "current price" on Labrador. Fish was bought by merchants at the "current price," and that price was not fixed until months later, when they had all the information they wanted, and then was fixed entirely by the buyers. This was not a fair or free contract; it was playing with loaded dice. As long as the buying merchants held together, they could enforce their own terms on the seller. The sellers had no means of getting their fish off the coast, and were compelled to sell to those who shipped down there. The idea was that the Board of Trade should appoint one arbitrator, the Fishermen's Union another, and these two a third. The three should form a Board, which should sit at and fix a price for Labrador fish before the 1st of August. The price so fixed was to apply and be enforceable at law, whenever the buyer and seller either could not or did not agree upon the price, or when they agreed for the "current price," or any such form of words. This did not prevent freedom of contract; but it did prevent the fishermen from being deceived, and it prevented a combination of merchants from enforcing on them the lowest price possible.

The PREMIER thought this bill would have the sympathy of everyone, and had been very fairly put by Mr. Merine. Any measure designed to alleviate the hard lives of the Labrador fishermen would be welcomed by both sides of the House. This was a bill which left it free to any one to stand outside if he did not wish to avail of it. If a fair tribunal could be found to fix the "current price," it would go far to create a feeling that justice existed between the shipper and the fishermen. The decline of our Labrador fishery was a tragedy; the risks the merchant had to face, and the tolls the fishermen had to undergo had tended to drive both merchant and fisherman out of it. If this experimental measure would encourage the fishery, everyone would be glad to give it a trial; all through the subject was surrounded with grave difficulties, which was the reason why it had not been dealt with before.

MINISTER OF MARINE & FISHERIES concurred in the views expressed. The buyer had all the advantages under the present system, and it was unfair from every point of view.

Mr. COAKER said the fishermen had always felt that they were unfairly treated, and that merchants who had superior knowledge were taking advantage of them. They were perfectly reasonable so long as they felt they were being fairly treated, and so long as things were explained to them. This year, for instance, they had been led to believe that they were going to get \$4.50 a quintal for fish; then, in the end, they only got \$3.00 as current price, although some had already got \$4.00. The Commission Bay people especially felt that if something were

not done to improve the conditions of this fishery, they would have to give it up. This was why the fishery had declined. There was a day when the firm of Munn alone shipped 120,000 quintals of Labrador fish. Besides giving the fishermen some voice in fixing the price, some effort should be made to help them to get a supply of motor boats, bait depots, gill-nets and trawls. It was no longer safe to depend on traps alone. He hoped the Government would try to devise means to encourage the Labrador fishery. It was steadily falling off. To create a Board which would create confidence, avoid strikes which were useless, and enable the men to sell their fish without hesitation.

Mr. KENT thought it extraordinary that so important an industry as the fishery should have been left so long comparatively unregulated. The present state of affairs in the Labrador fishery was very unfair to the seller. This measure would restore confidence in the mover of this bill, and quoted some facts in reference to early legislation of the same sort.

HON. MINISTER OF FINANCE thought this bill was a move in the right direction and none too soon. The decline of the Labrador fishery was a very serious matter, and unless the voyage was made more profitable to the fishermen, it might continue to decline. He pointed out that it would be a very difficult matter for the Board to fix a price that would not be upset by later developments. He reviewed the decline of the Bank fishery, which had fallen off in the same way. He objected, however, to the Opposition blaming the Government for not doing enough for the fisheries when they themselves did not know what to do.

MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS took pleasure in supporting the measure, which he hoped would be very useful.

Mr. YOUNG thought the matter should have very careful consideration before it was passed. He was afraid it might hinder getting supplies. What would happen if the merchants would not give supplies?

Mr. DOWNEY was disposed to support the bill. He hoped for high prices for fish, as prices for other foodstuffs are high and we should endeavor to develop our fisheries.

Mr. JENNINGS, in reply to Mr. YOUNG, pointed out that there was no compulsion to go under the bill. Anyone was free to remain outside it.

Mr. HICKMAN said he considered that the falling off of the Labrador fishery was owing to the disturbance of the breeding grounds of the fish, and the capture of breeding fish by ballows and trawls. He was told that great quantities of fish were taken full of spawn. This must reduce the supply. He would refer further to this when the bill went into Committee.

The bill was read a second time.

Mr. COAKER moved the second reading of the Logging Bill, explained briefly the several clauses, as before, with the changes made since he introduced an act last year. If the proposed new industry on the West Coast came to anything, it would employ a great many men in logging.

The bill was read a second time.

Mr. JENNINGS introduced a bill to prevent persons from evading the Saw Mills Act of 1914, by cutting timber and taking it to mills of others to be

Continued on third page.

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General Post Office

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H. J. B. WOODS,
Postmaster General

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Commencing on Tuesday, 29th Dec., mails for the Northern Districts, hitherto served by the Bay steamer service, will be closed and despatched from St. John's as follows:—

For North Side of Bonaville Bay, Greenspond, Pool's Island, Westville—Thursdays 4.30 p.m., Saturdays 9.30 p.m.

For North Side Notre Dame Bay and White Bay—Saturdays at 9.30 p.m.

For Bonne Bay and places on Nfld. side of Straits of Belle Isle, Cow Head, Flower's Cove, Englee, Conche, St. Anthony, Griguet—Tuesdays at 4.30 p.m.

For Fogo District, Gander Bay, Carmanville, Musgrave Hr.—Tuesdays at 4.30 p.m.

In addition to the above, mails will also continue to be despatched by coastal steamers until close of navigation.

H. J. B. WOODS,
Postmaster-General

General Post Office,
25th December, 1914. jan1, 61

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A ten word message to Canada, exclusive of signature and address, costs from 85 cents to \$1.00.

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H. J. B. WOODS,
Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
St. John's, 19th Nov., 1914.

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General Post Office,
St. John's, 19th June, 1914.

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