

scheme, and it is quite likely that, from their point of view, they may be right; and then there is another class who are always talking a great deal about it, and those are the colonial Englishmen who are residing in London. This latter class is largely responsible for convincing English statesmen that the Colonies are ready for the Imperial Confederation scheme, yet I think it is undeniable that they are the very worst possible guides as to the state of colonial feeling. It is impossible for a Canadian to reside permanently in London without losing his distinctive Canadian sympathies. We all know that. He soon becomes out of touch with Canada, and he looks at Canadian affairs through Imperial spectacles. It is to this unreliable class that British statesmen have been looking, for want of better information, to gather the state of feeling on this subject. I have no fault whatever to find with the selection made of the two gentlemen who represent Canada at that Conference, the Governor of Ontario and Mr. Sandford Fleming; but I cannot help thinking that, at the same time, there was a most extraordinary omission made by the Government, when the very purest type of Canadians, the Canadians in the Province of Quebec, were not represented on this Commission. I can only account for it on the hypothesis that no French Canadian gentleman was willing to go on that mission, because none of them had confidence in a scheme, which they could not help feeling and knowing would be sure to end, if carried out, in depriving them of some of the rights of self-government which they value so highly. We may not be able to take very correct views of Imperial affairs, so very far away from London as we are; but it does look odd to me to see distinguished British statesmen upholding the scheme to extend a federal system to all parts of the Empire, when they are so resolutely bent upon maintaining a legislative union between England and Ireland, although the mass of the Irish people are anxious to try something else, and when they are asking for nothing more startling than the application of the federal principle to the Union between England and Ireland. I wonder would it be a piece of presumption to suggest that the large scheme of Imperial Federation might be very properly postponed until the operation of a similar system shall have been tried in the British Isles themselves? We have had our own experience, too, of our own Canadian Federation for about 20 years, and I think he would be a bold man who would rise up in his place in this House to night and say that in his heart he had no misgiving as to the result. I have confidence that the scheme can be worked out to success, and am rather inclined to think that its partial failure is more due to the mistakes of the operators than to any inherent defects in the machine itself. After all, is it not the mission of Canadian statesmanship to plant the foundations of our own Confederation broad and deep, rather than to pursue the Will o' the Wisp of an impracticable Imperial scheme. Surely, the governing or the assisting in the governing of half a continent as we are all doing here, is enough for any man's ambition, and, as we find from experience every day, it is enough to task the powers and absorb the energies of such public men as a busy people can give to public life. We have no spare men to send away to assist in governing remote dependencies of the Empire, and what is more, I hope that we shall always try to exercise such powers of self-government as we possess and extend them as far as we can, without calling in the assistance of the inhabitants of remote dependencies of the British Crown.

Motion agreed to.

THE FISHERY QUESTION.

Mr. ELLIS moved for:

Return of the number of foreign vessels, fishing or other, boarded, ordered off, warned or interdicted in any way during the calendar year 1886 by the vessels employed in the fisheries protection service or by any Customs' official, specifying the name of the vessel, of her owner, and of her master, her nationality, port of registry, if any, tonnage, and the number of men employed on her; where and when boarded, by whom, and from what vessel or port, with the special report of the official in each case.

He said: I desire to bring before the House and the public some idea of the action of the fishery fleet during the last year. I think the extent to which operations have been carried on is not fully known to the country at large. It appears from some published reports that up to July 130 vessels had been boarded by the fishery fleet, and during the calendar year 120 cases of complaint had been filed at Washington against the Canadian Government for unnecessary and improper interference with the vessels of the United States. It would seem as if the laws or regulations of the fishery service had been carried out with a rigor and severity that, at any rate, has seriously imperiled our relations with the United States. I would like to call attention to one or two complaints, because they seem to be of a very extreme kind. Some of these complaints refer, for instance, to the entry of vessels into harbors in which they remained for only a few hours and were then ordered out. In some cases they were compelled to pay harbor dues without being allowed to take the ordinary privilege of making a port entry. The master of one vessel complains to his Government that he was not only refused permission to buy bait, but also to take a pilot at Port Amherst. The master of the *Sarah E. Lee* went into Liverpool Harbor, Nova Scotia, and was immediately ordered to sea, although his son was seriously ill with diphtheria. His complaint is that he was not allowed the ordinary courtesies of civilised nations. The *Sarah H. Prior*, while running from Malpeque, lost her large seine at sea, a fishing net said to be worth \$1,000. The net was afterwards picked up by the master of a Halifax vessel, who offered to return it on payment of the ordinary salvage of \$25, which was accepted by the owner, but the collector of the port would not allow the net to be returned, and the voyage was broken up. The captain of the schooner *R. N. Crittenden*, while on the homeward voyage, stopped at Steep Creek, in the Strait of Canso, for water. The Customs officer at that place notified him that if he took water his vessel would be seized. He was compelled to sail without it and to put his men on short allowance for the remainder of the voyage. The worst case appears to be that of the master of the *Mollie Adams*. He says that about the 26th September, he fell in with the Nova Scotia schooner *Neskilita* in a wrecked condition, and took off her crew of seventeen men and fed them for three days, saving, as well, a part of the wrecked vessel's material. He entered his own vessel at Malpeque, and was boarded by the captain of the Dominion cruiser *Critic*, who neither offered to care for the wrecked crew, to feed them, nor to assist them or take them off. The captain of the *Mollie Adams* asked his permission to land the wrecked material. The captain referred him to the collector, the collector referred him back to the captain of the Dominion vessel, and when he went back after him he found the vessel had put to sea. He says:

"The captain of the cutter told me that I could put the saved material on board a Nova Scotia vessel if I went outside the three-mile limit to do it. I endeavored to get some of the people on shore to take the wrecked crew, but no one would do it unless I would be responsible for their board. Finally I gave the crew \$80, enough to pay their passage home on the cars, and also gave them provisions to last them during the journey."

The difficulty in disposing of this crew and getting out of Malpeque Harbor lost him, he says, ten days, his voyage was broken up, and he had to return home. Feeding the wrecked crew left his own provisions short. He called at Port Medway, stated the circumstances, and asked permission to buy half a barrel of flour or biscuit, and this was absolutely refused him. The collector threatened to seize

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