

Mr. DAVIES. What class of men does the hon. gentleman intend to appoint, if he excludes fishermen from being inspectors? It is absolutely essential that the inspector should have some practical knowledge of the business. If you appoint a trader, or a shop-keeper, or a farmer, to inspect fish; unless he has a practical knowledge of fishing and fish-curing, the whole thing will be a farce.

Mr. COSTIGAN. The hon. gentleman is labouring under a mistake as to the effect of striking out this clause. We have a board of examiners to examine candidates for these officers, and we must suppose that they will appoint competent men. I do not think that the fact of a man being a fisherman excludes him from being appointed an inspector though there is a clause in the present Act which forbids him examining his own fish, or any that he is interested in.

Mr. BLAKE. Presumably when the hon. gentleman first introduced this clause, finding it necessary to appoint fishermen as inspectors, it would indicate that that was not the law at the present time, or else the clause would not be necessary.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. My hon. friend says he finds it unnecessary.

Mr. BLAKE. No, but having regard to the objection made as to the results of fishermen being inspectors in Newfoundland, he has thought it bad policy to allow them to be inspectors here, and therefore he asks the House not to assent to the law to that effect. Now that may be a good reason, but certainly when the hon. gentleman deliberately proposed that fishermen might be appointed he must have thought it required a law that they might be appointed, or that it was expedient to appoint them; and hon. gentlemen around me say, when he proposes to strike out this clause, that they are a class of persons who should be appointed.

Mr. FORTIN. The proper persons to inspect fish and oil are fishermen—that is, men who pack, split, and salt fish and know better than any others how to cure fish well. But the understanding is that a fisherman who is actually fishing and engaged in the trade should not be an inspector because he should be perfectly independent. We objected to the inspection system as carried on in Newfoundland, because the Government of that Island allowed the fishermen themselves to inspect their own fish, or the fish of their neighbours, or fish in which they were interested, and thus to commit a fraud by marking number two, or three, or four, not fit to be eaten, number one, in order to deceive the merchants of this country. The law should say that none but fishermen or other competent people should be appointed inspectors, or deputy inspectors, but that they should not be appointed unless they were out of the trade and perfectly independent of the fishermen whose fish came under their inspection.

Mr. WELDON. It seems to me that the effect of striking this out, will be that fishermen, the only really competent men, will be excluded.

Mr. KIRK. I think the practice has been to appoint fishermen inspectors, but they are not allowed to inspect their own fish, and I do not see why that law should not continue with the exception.

Mr. FORTIN. They certainly should not be allowed to inspect their own fish, or the fish of their neighbours, or of traders with whom they do business. They should be perfectly independent or else they will not do their duty. Unless they are independent how can you believe the inspector will grade the fish in the proper manner?

Mr. KIRK. To carry out the views of the hon. gentleman would simply have the effect of requiring fishermen in the

outlying districts to send their fish to the cities to be inspected, which would cost much more than if they were inspected at home. If you prevent those who are engaged in fishing from being inspectors in the small districts, you will have no inspector at all, because there would not be a sufficient amount of work for an inspector to make it pay without some other business, and fishing is the only business to be done in such case.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I understand that the General Inspection Act of 1874 does not exclude fishermen at all from being inspectors or deputy inspectors. This clause, then, is not required for the purpose of founding a Bill, and my hon. friend desires that it be struck out. When his Bill comes up, unless it alters the law of 1874, the fishermen would still have the right to inspect; and if there be such an exclusion in the Bill, then would be the time to discuss the point. I quite agree with what has been said, generally, at all events, that men accustomed to the curing of fish—perhaps not to the manual labour—but men engaged in fishing, would be the best class of men to appoint as inspectors.

Mr. KIRK. I do not pretend to be familiar with the law, I was only speaking of the practice.

Mr. GILLMOR. I do not think there would be any difficulty in finding plenty of men who are fishermen and yet who are not engaged in the business—men who from their age or circumstances do not fish themselves, but who are practically acquainted with the work. There will be no difficulty in getting competent men.

Mr. FORTIN. The hon. gentleman is perfectly right, and I will give an instance. I refer to a case in Montreal, where a man, who has been a fisherman for thirty years, and is the son of a fisherman, retired from the business and has been appointed Deputy Inspector for Montreal. Every one who has fish inspected by him must be satisfied by his inspection, because he has no interest to do anything wrong.

Mr. DAVIES. Does the hon. Minister believe he has power to appoint fishermen inspectors without the permissive clause?

Mr. COSTIGAN. I think so. In that respect I do not propose to interfere with the law of 1874 which simply provides that no inspector shall have any interest by himself, or by any one else in the matter inspected by him.

Clauses 3, 4, 6 and 7 struck out.

Resolution reported, read the first and second times, and concurred in.

Mr. COSTIGAN introduced Bill (No. 128) further to amend the General Inspection Act, 1874.

Bill read the first time.

INSPECTION OF GAS ACTS AMENDMENT.

Mr. COSTIGAN moved the second reading of Bill (No. 108) to amend the Acts respecting the inspection of Gas and Gas Meters.

Mr. BLAKE. Perhaps the hon. gentleman will give some brief explanations, as nothing has yet been said about this Bill.

Mr. COSTIGAN. The changes in the Bill are principally with the view, in the first place, of providing greater security than the law at present provides for the purity of gas, and in the next place, to establish a standard for gas. It is proposed to make the standard of gas sixteen candle light. In Nova Scotia the standard of gas goes as high as 22. In the United States and in England, the standard is higher than it is in this country.

Mr. GILLMOR.