

Newfoundland Bait Act, and that at certain times of the year when fresh bait, so absolutely necessary now-a-days to the successful operation of the bank fishing, happens to fail on our coast, it usually is found on the Newfoundland coast, and *vice versa*. Hitherto our bank fishermen have been able to resort for bait to either coast, to enable them to engage in the fierce competition with our American neighbours, and with the French people operating these fisheries, and it was of great importance that we should have access to these bases of bait supply. This year, unfortunately, the Newfoundland Government have prevented our fishermen from the access hitherto enjoyed by them to Newfoundland ports for the purpose of obtaining bait, and Lieut. Gordon points out, in this connection, that the question now before the House becomes of the greatest importance to the coast fisheries in the Province of Nova Scotia. In the extract from his report, to which I have alluded, he argues that it is most desirable that our fishermen should have all these sources of bait supply fostered in the most careful possible manner, and that, had this river been in the condition it was by nature, and before these enormous deposits of sawdust were there, then the benefits would have been incalculable in securing to us a supply of bait. There were, as my hon. friend from Lunenburg (Mr. Kaulbach) is aware, at one time this season no less than ten, perhaps more, bank fishermen with their large crews, their costly outfit, and their splendid ships, lying idle at anchor, and unable to go on with the bank fishery because there was no run of fresh bait in our rivers; the bait being on the opposite coast. To prevent a repetition of this it becomes the duty of Parliament, in my humble opinion it becomes the duty of all representatives of these fishing counties, and all representatives of our coast fisheries, to sink individual interests for a time, so far as they clash with the general interest of the fishery. It is in my judgment necessary that we should sink for a time the interests of the lumbermen, who are endeavouring to save here and there a few dollars, and to conserve the greater, the larger, and in my opinion the more important industry, if it is properly looked after, namely, the fishery interests of the Maritime Provinces in general. Lieutenant Gordon very properly draws attention to the great importance of carrying out the Act which prohibits the deposit of sawdust and the consequent pollution of the rivers which are frequented by anadromous fish. He goes on to say:

"The intention of the Act was that its operation should be as general as the necessities of the case demand, and even more so in waters frequented by anadromous fishes than in inland waters. Witnesses in previous La Have investigation testified that gaspereaux were formerly plentiful there and that cargoes were shipped to West Indies, but the mills have stopped this by running sawdust into the river. Were the reverse the case it would be found to be of greater benefit to the people than the saw-mills and timber industry. (Value of bait supply.) Navigation is seriously impeded in the river by sawdust deposits."

Lieutenant Gordon contends also, and no one knows better than himself, that the navigation has been, and is, seriously impeded in the river by the sawdust deposits; and as one hon. gentleman has already drawn the attention of the House to the fact, the interests of navigation are specially concerned in this as well as the fishery interest, to which most attention has been given in this debate. He goes on to say:

"Mr. Kinney's contention that the question of damage caused fish by sawdust is still undecided, is offset by experience in the case of St. Mary's River, where the water has been made turbid and nauseous by rotting sawdust and which effectually prevents fish proceeding up the river. The mills on the La Have could be fitted up to comply with the law—two out of the three lower mills easily, and the other mills at some cost—but all could comply with the law, and it is not impossible for them to do so."

I have called the attention of the House to this river. I have also asked the attention of the House to the fact that the question is frequently agitated in this country. But it is by no means singular to Canada to have this question agitated as often as it can be agitated. The same thing occurs in other countries. The mill-owners, strong in their capital and strong in their position, endeavour, of course, to produce the product of their mills at an economical cost; and, consequently, so far as they can shape the laws, they will naturally do so, so that the obligations imposed upon them will be as light as possible, and their profits as great as possible; and we find that in England and the States, the same agitation occurs at exactly the same time. In one of those countries it is chiefly chemical pollution that is complained of; but the manufacturers, uniting their influence and their wealth, and retaining able counsel on their behalf, endeavour to drive their coaches and fours through many Acts of Parliament, and in many cases, I am sorry to say, they have succeeded to such an extent that the fisheries have received great and permanent injury. But so far as this country is concerned, let me ask the attention of the House to the careful consideration which has been given to this question by the Governments of both parties. This is not a political question, although some gentlemen have endeavoured to make it so. Some gentlemen have attacked me upon this question; but I care little for that so long as I can show that my skirts are clean from the charge of having used any Act of Parliament for mere political gain. But I wish to point out that this cannot be made a political question, that this law is not a law of the present day or of the present Government, and that the enforcement of this law is not peculiar to the present regime or to the present incumbency of the department upon which devolves the administration of the law. The hon. leader of the late Government was one of the loudest in bringing the attention of Parliament to this question; and as long ago as April, 1870, after there had been legislation on the Statute-book, previous to Confederation, in 1865 and 1868, to prevent the pollution of rivers by sawdust, he drew the attention of Parliament most vigorously, as he was well able to do at that time, to the question, and called for more legislation and a more effective enforcement of that legislation. He was supported in 1871 by the present hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) who at that time brought the subject formally before Parliament in the shape of a Bill. In February of that year, that hon. gentleman having asked Parliament to legislate in the very direction of the present law, supported by members of this House wholly regardless of their political proclivities. He was supported by eminent gentlemen, among whom was Mr. Mackenzie, in calling the attention of the House and the country to the necessity of legislation and the enforcement of that legislation in order to serve the interests of navigation and the fisheries. So that we have Parliament legislating on the subject