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At the House

Mr. Clift presented a petition from the inhabitants of Millertown and Badger Brook, asking that they be represented in the Assembly, and that both places be included in the Constituency of Twillingate. Petitions were also presented by Mr. Targett, asking for a road at Hant's Harbor; by Mr. Abbott, for a bridge at Bonavista, and by Mr. Devereaux for the dredge at Rushoon.

The third reading of the Bills respecting the Storage and Carrying of Gunpowder and other explosives; and for the Protection and Growth of Partridge Berries passed the Committee and was sent to the Legislative Council for concurrence.

The House went into Committee of the Whole on Supply, and the Finance Minister presented Supplemental Supply.

Mr. Lloyd.—He pointed out that there was no Supplementary Supply for Agriculture, and would like to know how the Government intended to carry on that work for the next six months. The $40,000 voted for Agriculture last session was exhausted at the end of six months, and there is nothing to go on with for the second six months, although salaries and other expenditures are being incurred.

Mr. Kent was also concerned about the Agricultural vote. He asked what the the general elections cost, which had not been accounted for in the estimates or in the supplemental supply. He was of the opinion that the Supplemental Supply was exceptionally large as it brought the total expenditure to nearly four millions of dollars, exclusive of the amount transferred to capital account. It was most undesirable to have such large supplementary votes and he emphasized that the over-expenditures needed by the different departments ought to be submitted in detail to the Committee and all details explained.

The Finance Minister said he would have particulars ready for the next day of sitting. For Agriculture they would use the drop balances of Department.

FISHERY RESOLUTIONS.

The House was then moved into Committee of the Whole to discuss Resolutions, which were introduced by the Prime Minister, and which related to:

(a) the cure and cull of fish;
(b) the standardization of fish when exported from this Colony;
(c) the protection and propagation of lobsters;
(d) the protection of the Seal-fishery
(e) the effect of the prosecution of our whale fishery on our bait supply;
(f) the supply of bait.

The Prime Minister gave a lengthy review of the questions. He said the law for the culling of fish was regulated by Chap. 103 of the Consolidated Statutes. It related to the persons who cull fish, the taking out of a license and the various places in Newfoundland to which it applied. This law is honored more in the breach than in the observance. Most of our fish is purchased talqual and if a strict cull was favored it would lead to a better cure and a better price. There were many divergent views on this. The great difference was to obtain an agreement as to whether a system of cull would be in the interests of fishermen, merchants and to the country. He believed it would be beneficial to all concerned as it was only reasonable to assume that well cured fish would fetch better prices than the inferior article. Regarding the standardizing of our fish, he said that this dealt with the article after it reached the merchants' store. It was not a matter to be governed by law but should be settled some afternoon by the exporters of fish, but the same applied to this question as to the cull and it was difficult to get two exporters to agree on the proper standardization of fish. We, as a country, are practically alone in this respect of not having our products standardized, as every other country have adopted the method, plan and system of standardizing. Ireland had standardized her butter, Canada her agricultural products, Germany, United States and every other country had their own methods. England had standardized her manufactures which were A1. all the world over. We should undertake to let the people know what they are buying, take extreme care with our fish from the time it comes out of the water until it reaches the consumer, then the dawn of a new era regarding our main products would take place. It must be realized that codfish is an article of food and that our codfish cannot be beaten. It is true that we have been able to hold our own, but this is because our fish is superior to bounty fed competitors in European countries. It was because of the great care they took that the French got ahead of us in the foreign markets. The question then arises, is it of value to our fishermen to produce a good article. Some people scorn at the idea of instructing our people to cure fish properly but we must remember that to add to their knowledge will be following the routine of other countries, and we needed lessons. A few years ago the mammoth meat industry of Chicago nearly met disaster by the indifferent handling. An American journalist visited this country a few years ago and wrote a sensational article on our fish. A little thing will do an immense amount of harm. Then again the complaints that came from the foreign markets show that we have been careless, therefore the need of a strict cull and proper standardization was of vital importance. Regarding the protection and propagation of our lobsters, every one knows how this fishery has fallen off in late years. In 1889 the catch was 80,000, last year it was 16,000, a loss to the country of about one and a quarter millions of dollars. Of course the lobster is a fish very largely affected by temperature, and last year the fishery was seriously interrupted by unpropitious weather and ice conditions. The question we have got to answer is can this decline be arrested, and can we do anything to save it and prevent the lobster fishery from being extinct? The loss sustained in the lobster fishery last year was equivalent to what the whole sealfishery was worth for the same year. In order to properly protect the industry, we should get scientific instuctors and also information from those more closely connected with the fishery. In referring to the sealfishery, he said there was very little difference as to the best way to protect it. He showed in figures the decline in the industry that had taken place in recent years, both in the loads of fat, the value and in the number of vessels and men who prosecuted the voyage. He dwelt on the report of Capt. Abram Kean, which sounded a warning note for a close season to protect the seals. The question of bait supply he said, was a matter of much importance to the fishermen all over the island and showed that very little had resulted from all previous atempts to improve conditions. He said that 25 per cent. of the fish caught was wasted, and that at the present time there was a fertilizing plant installed at considerable expense on the West Coast converting all this fish offal into fertilizer, and those interested were making the venture pay. He said that what he principally desired was the appointment of a joint select committee from both houses to deal with the resolutions and bring in such measures as will protect our fisheries and benefit the whole country.

Mr. Kent.—He pointed out that all the matters spoken of by the Prime Minister were exactly the same as referred to in Sir Robert Bond's Manifesto. He asked to have the resolutions deferred.

THE SEALING BILL.

The House then went into Committee on the Sealing Bill.

Mr. Winsor resumed his speech of Friday last and in a humorous way gave a practical review of how sealers had to exist at the icefields a few years ago. He did not agree with a close season. Other oils are substituted to-day, he said, for seal oil, and if the latter got exceptionally scarce the other oils could take the place of the seal oil and it would be difficult to get back the market.

Mr. Walsh suggested some amendments, particularly to the clause regarding cooks. He contended that cooks should do other work besides cook.

Mr. Coaker accepted the amendments of Messrs. Downey and Higgins alluded to a few days ago.

Mr. Kent suggested that a further amendment be made regarding the liability for the sending home of crews landed from wooden ships before the voyage was over.

The Committee then rose to sit again this afternoon.

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Healthy and Unhealthy Lighting.

Gas, it may be said, vitiates the atmosphere. True. But it also helps to purify it. Its purifying power is greater than its vitiating power. Electricity does not vitiate, nor does it purify. Hear what three eminent men have said:—

Much evidence has lately been adduced to show that gas is more useful than the electric light in promoting efficent ventilation of air. It is for this, amongst other reasons, that gas is being frequently substituted for the electric light. The latest example is, perhaps, the Society of Medical Officers of Health, which has recently installed gas on its premises, after experience with the electric light.—Dr. Jamieson B. Hurry.

He would merely add that no member who had experience of their meeting room under the old conditions could deny the improvement that had taken place since gas had been substituted for the electric light and the new system of heating and ventilation had been installed.—Dr. Reginald Dudfield, before the Society of Medical Officers of Health.

I have in my mind's eye, at the moment, a hall which, in the old days, was lighted by gas, and in which a large audience could, with comfort, sit through an hour's lecture, or with pleasure through a three hours' dinner, but which, with the march of civilization, had its illumination changed from gas to electricity, the latter being employed with all the latest refinements to effect the lighting under the best conditions, with the result that any large gathering within its walls leads to a state little short of asphyxiation.—Vivian B. Lewes, Professor of Chemistry at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich. —nov3,tf

C. E. T. S.

A public meeting of the Cathedral Branch, C. E. T. S., took place in the Synod Building last night, the Rev. Canon White presiding. Mr. R. G. MacDonald gave an interesting discourse on Robert and Elizabeth Browning, dealing with their works, and illustrated it with many choice extracts.

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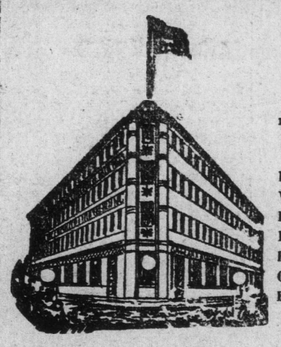

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