

opposite contended, the supply of bait to the French seriously interferes with the trade of the colony, how is it that such men as these, so deeply interested in that trade, can petition for the amendment of the Bait Act? Either the supply of bait to foreigners is not such a crying grievance as is alleged, or else the destitution into which the enforcement of this Act is likely to plunge the inhabitants of that coast has so moved their hearts that they have taken this course through sentiments of grave compassion for distress. In any case, these petitions and the contention which I base upon them should, I submit, have great weight with this House. This is a matter, sir, which should not be regarded from any mere party standpoint; it affects this country as a whole, and I am sure that if party feeling were laid aside for a moment, and a free, open and liberal consideration given this question, there would not be one member of this House who would not support the amendment now before the chair. The hon. Attorney General informed us, a night or two ago, that the Government intended to pursue a policy which will inflict another great injustice upon those people who are dependent upon the bait traffic for their maintenance. He said that it was the intention of the Government to issue licenses for the sale of bait to the inhabitants of the west coast should they apply for it now. I was astonished when I heard that statement. I had seen it previously made in the public newspapers, but I could not believe that the Government intended to inflict upon the people Fortune Bay so monstrous an injustice. The people of the west coast have never depended upon the bait traffic for their living; they had never caught herrings for the purpose of selling them as bait. The Government, then, intends to allow those men to supply bait to the French, and to close down upon the 3,500 individuals who depend solely upon that industry for their livelihood. I ask, sir, is this justice? Is such a course worthy of this Legislature? Is such a thing to be tolerated? What claim has St. George's Bay to superior consideration over Fortune Bay? Why should the means of livelihood be ruthlessly snatched from my people and handed over to the people of St. George's Bay? Injustice is no name for such a proceeding. People who are crushed to the earth under the heel of oppression will retaliate when the occasion comes to them, and I dread the results which the enforcement of such unjust and partial legislation will certainly bring about. But, for the sake of argument, let us for a moment admit that this Bait Act is in itself an excellent measure, can you enforce it? I think I have proved to this House that it cannot be enforced, for I have pointed out that various avenues can be opened up for the supply of bait to the French. I am strongly in favor of restrictive legislation upon the capture and sale of bait fishes, but this Act I cannot and will not support; but I shall use every effort of which I am capable to secure its repeal. Seeing that we cannot carry the Act into effective operation, does not wisdom and common sense suggest that some other course should be pursued? In the amendment which I have just proposed I suggest the repeal of the present Act and the introduction of a measure compelling the French to enter our ports to obtain a supply of bait. I would suggest that a fee similar to that imposed upon American fishing vessels, say \$1.50 per ton, be charged for a license to obtain bait. This year there will be engaged in the bank fishery 420 vessels with a gross tonnage of 43,204 tons. At the rate of \$1.50 per ton the revenue accruing from this source will amount to \$64,806. Add to this an amount of \$10,392.96 which will be collected as light dues if these vessels are permitted to enter Fortune Bay, and you arrive at an increase of revenue of \$75,198.96. Supposing these vessels pay the average price for the herring bait they receive, the French will spend amongst us in this article alone \$140,000 during the ensuing spring. Add these several amounts together and you will arrive at the handsome total of \$215,348.96. We should require to sell a quantity of 200,000 quintals over and above our present production, at a profit of a dollar a quintal to secure an increased profit to the country equal to that derived from the adoption of such a measure as this. The extra profit upon codfish would go, it must be remembered, to the shippers, and the general public would be the gainers to a very small degree. But under the amended Bait Bill which I suggest, the general public would derive the benefit which I have pointed out. Looking at this matter from a purely commercial standpoint, would it not be wise to amend your present bill in the manner I have indicated? Why throw away the large sum which will be spent all over the country in the purchase of bait, or the \$60,000 payable for licenses or the \$10,000 for light dues? In this view alone my amendment is, as I conceive, deserving the support of the House. But I take a higher view of this matter. I regard it from the standpoint of justice to a large number of individuals who have for years depended upon this industry for their livelihood. I cannot press this matter too strongly upon the attention of hon. members. I appeal to them in the name of that justice which is implanted in the breast of every man, given to him as his guide not only with regard to himself but with regard to other men, to give this matter their earnest and impartial consideration. If you insist upon enforcing this Bait Act you are in duty bound to provide free ships and free outfits to enable those now depending upon the bait traffic to engage in other employment. You must compensate them for the

injury they will sustain. There are now 1,493 boats of from four to thirty qtls. capacity which have been engaged in the bait trade, and will be utterly useless for any other purpose. Many of them were built expressly for that trade. There are 2,000 nets and seines which will be rendered useless if you prohibit the traffic in bait. If you do not act with common justice to these people, serious trouble is almost certain to arise in this country, for men cannot be expected to tamely submit whilst the bread is snatched from the grasp of their helpless wives and families. It is urged by supporters of the act that much smuggling has resulted from the trade in bait. I agree with them, there has been smuggling, but if you compel the French ships to enter our ports you will prevent all opportunity of thus breaking the law. It has been urged with much force that great waste of bait has resulted from the traffic. I admit it, there has been waste, but by the means I suggest it will be prevented in future. What objection can you raise to such legislation as I propose? If you want restrictive legislation, I go with you, but I will never cease to oppose your present act. I object to it because it will create grievous monopolies; because it will not carry out your ideas concerning it, and because its 2nd section is an arbitrary departure from common law which will work grave harm in the community. Common sense dictates some alteration of the law. I have not brought this matter forward in any mere party spirit. When first the measure was proposed I opposed it alone and single-handed. It was not understood, sir, either by the members of the House or by the public. It was hurried through this House before a copy of it was printed and before half a dozen members knew what were its provisions. The public knew nothing about it, for it was discussed with closed doors and the publication of the debate was prohibited. It was hurried into the Legislative Council where it was debated with closed doors and where it was quietly passed and sent out for the Royal assent. Under such circumstances how could the matter receive the consideration its grave import deserved? I believe, sir, that if the feelings of the people could be ascertained not twenty men in the whole island would declare in its favor. I believe, too, that if hon. members would exercise a free and unbiased judgment, not one member of this House but would be found ready to support it. There is not a district in the island from which I have not received communications condemnatory of the Bait Act, and I believe that if hon. members would speak out they would all confess that they have received from their constituents repeated expressions of dissatisfaction concerning it. I have received from Mr. J. R. Knight, a gentleman whose statements will be received without question, the following figures bearing upon this question that astonished me. In 1879 some thirty-five French vessels entered this port for squid bait. The light dues paid by these vessels amounted to \$1800, and their disbursements for ten days \$21,000. Every provision dealer in this city has a direct interest in this question, for the operation of this Bait Act means so much lost to him. I feel that it is unnecessary to multiply arguments against this ill-advised measure. I have no desire to unduly delay this House. In conclusion, I beg hon. gentlemen to divest themselves of prejudice, to regard the serious evils which must accrue from the enforcement of this Bait Bill, to consider the enormous cost of the machinery necessary for effectively carrying out the Act; and, finally, to refuse to perpetuate such a monstrous injustice upon thousands of fishermen.

**"PROTECTING" THE LOBSTER.**

DEAR SIR,—I am much amused at some men's ideas of protecting the lobster fisheries of this country. It is apparent that their whole desire is to create monopolies. I read an extract of a letter in the Mercury of the 5th inst., from a Newfoundlander in P. E. Island. If a resident of that country, why take such an interest in the lobster fishery of Newfoundland. The truth is, one of our packers is now in P. E. Island seeking for mechanics for his and other factories (if at all possible) at a less rate of wages than is paid in this country? His course should have been to teach the young men of the country, who learn quickly and, in my experience, make excellent sealers and case makers. No doubt this "Newfoundlander" considers it opportune to send letters here to affect legislation, hoping a monopoly may be created by granting packers territory. The result would be: 1st—When more lobsters were caught than the packer was prepared or cared to pack, he could compel the fisherman to either lose his lobsters or take whatever the packer chose to pay for them. When lobsters are left in the boats, awaiting the pleasure of the packer, the greater part die. They are then useless for canning, but make a very excellent manure to raise turnips. 2nd—What a chance the unscrupulous monopolist has to overcharge for provisions and goods, (which is the general mode of payment in this country) as the poor fisherman cannot carry his catch of lobsters any great distance to another factory. If the Government should allow a monopolizing law to be enacted, they had better make up their mind. They will have to support in the winter months the poor lobster catchers. But with an honest rivalry, the fisherman can easily lay in his winter's diet out of his summer's savings. I strongly advise the passing of an act to shorten the lobster-canning season, and also prevent the taking of small lobsters at all. Yours, &c., AN OLD PACKER.

St. John's, March 7, 1888.

**The Evening Telegram**

ST. JOHN'S, MARCH 8, 1888.

**AN ABLE SPEECH.**

**Mr. Bond on the Bait Act.**

WE have much pleasure in placing before our readers to-day a carefully-revised report of the able and eloquent speech on the Bait Act delivered in the Lower House on Monday evening by the talented member for Fortune Bay. Mr. Bond is a logical and polished speaker, and his efforts in the Assembly are always characterized by lucidity and power; but all who had the pleasure of hearing him on the occasion to which we now refer, unite in saying that no finer address than his speech against the ill-advised measure in question has ever been delivered in either branch of our local Legislature.

From exordium to peroration he was positively invincible, and when he resumed his seat, and the enthusiasm with which he was greeted by the large audience throughout had subsided, it was very evident that the Government keenly felt the awkwardness of their position.

The antics of those who essayed to reply were pitiable in the extreme, and even "the gods in the gallery" who gazed upon the scene could not help audibly expressing their contempt for the nonplussed Attorney General and his perplexed and stupid supporters. Had members of the Government not made up their minds beforehand to resist conviction, they would have readily seen and admitted the force of Mr. Bond's arguments. But their party servility, mercenary disposition and dense ignorance of the duties which belong to the legislator's office, rendered them impervious to an appeal that would have proved irresistible in any intelligent and patriotic elective Assembly in the world.

When the vote on the amendment moved by Mr. Bond was taken, there stood—for the motion: Messrs. Morine, Murphy, Parsons, McGrath and Bond; against the motion: Messrs. Winter, Donnelly, Penney, Goodridge, Scott, Callanan, Morris, Greene, Carty, Bradshaw, Watson, Smith McKay, Rolls, Kean, March, Peters and LeMessurier. All things considered, we were not surprised to see so many Government supporters vote against Mr. Bond's amendment. They, no doubt, had special inducements held out to them to do so. In other words, they were paid by the combination of monopolists who now practically control the Government, to act as they did, and they merely performed their part of the contract.

But what shall we say of Messrs. Peters and LeMessurier? Surely they must have been offered an extraordinary high price for their votes, or they never would have assumed a position so inimical to the dearest interests of their constituents. Burin and Placentia Bays are largely interested in the bait traffic. In fact, thousands of the people of these districts depend almost entirely upon this business for their very existence. Nevertheless, for some paltry consideration, not yet publicly named, both those gentlemen closed their ears to the call of duty, steeled their breasts against the sense of suffering their conduct was certain to involve, and pursued a course in direct opposition to that marked out for them by the people whose wishes they were elected to represent.

We cannot say how the inhabitants of Burin regard the anomalous conduct of their two representatives in this connection, as no letters have been received by us from that direction since the vote was taken. But we can say that public sentiment here strongly condemns the action of Messrs. Peters and LeMessurier, and just as strongly commends that of Mr. McGrath, who very properly consulted the wishes of his people and governed himself accordingly.

**A BETTER SELECTION.**

It has been suggested to us that a much more judicious selection to carry out the provisions of the Bait Act in Fortune Bay would have been Judge Bennett, of Harbor Grace, for years a resident of that district, at one time its Assembly representative, and one thoroughly informed on the matters at issue and as they affect that section. Ex-Inspector Carty would also have made an equitable and level-headed administrator of the provisions of that law. The important consideration of extra pay, which, for the chief of the force, amounts to a thousand dollars, settled the appointment in favor of Judge Prowse, Q.C.

An uncommon and serious accident happened a few days since to a child which was being carried in its nurse's arms. On approaching their house, a large Newfoundland dog which belonged to them, overjoyed at their return, skipped about their feet and, while springing upward about them, dragged the child to the ground, breaking one of its limbs and producing other bodily injuries.

**TERRA NOVA'S NAVY.**  
**Our West Coast Squadron.**

The heavily-armed cruisers *Hercules* and *Lady Glover*, which have been commissioned by the Government to enforce the provisions of the Bait Act in Fortune Bay and neighborhood, will start on their mission this evening or to-morrow, weather permitting. The staff of officers will see that no fresh herrings are sold to the French bankers for bait, if any French bankers should enter the ports of that part of the coast, and also see that no Fortune Bay or Placentia fishing boats laden with fresh herrings depart for St. Peter's to dispose of their cargoes. The bearing of the Bait Act upon the interests of the fishermen of those Bays who heretofore supplied bait to the French, is so adverse that one requires the fullest proof of the advantageous effects upon the rest of the population, flowing from the Bait Act, before assenting to the proposition that the Bait Act will confer general benefit. The proof has not been forthcoming yet, and unless it can be afforded in a year or two, by a substantial improvement in foreign quotations for our staple, as a result of the restriction of French competition, all the praises raised about the merits of the Bait Act will be resolved into so much hue-and-cry. As a measure of general benefit, it is as yet on its trial, and as an experiment it makes vicarious sacrifices of the people of the two bays particularly affected by its operation, for the good of the whole. Judge Prowse, assisted by a police force, will have absolute power and charge in enforcing the provisions of the law, and already grave dissatisfaction is expressed at the Government's selection of such an official for so delicate a mission. Here is an avocation giving employment to a large population, suppressed at one fell swoop. What wonder if, under such circumstances, there should be evasions and entanglements at first; and to deal with such amicably, the choice of the Government should have fallen upon one of calm, equitable temperament, one having qualities to reason with the people in moments of excitement, dissuade them, respectfully but firmly, from the perpetration of illegal acts, and win their respect and conciliation. It looks now as if the Government were bent upon a crusade of overbearing intolerance and injustice toward the people of those bays, and had chosen an agent wanting in common discretion and wisdom, for their purposes, knowing that the affected quarters were strongholds of opposition. The expense of the service, which will last into the middle of May, will be very heavy, one that the country can ill afford to bear at such a time as this.

**THE FRENCH SHORE DIFFICULTY.**

The *Mercury* indulges in a great deal of palaver, much of which seems unnecessary, unless it be designed to cloak a purpose, touching the issue of land grants on the French Shore. It would have us believe that, because the benefits of representation, revenue and loyal institutions have been extended to that part of the country, all difficulties touching grants of land there, within half a mile of the sea, have vanished into thin air. But that it is not so is evidenced by the repeated attempts of the British and French Governments to get rid of the vexed question, so far, in vain; the most recent being that in which Mr. Ford was engaged. The terms of that, the latest, commission—which handed over to the use of the French fishermen certain harbors and stretches of territory on the West Coast, where they might be free to pursue their avocations without molestation—were so disadvantageous to the colony, that the Legislature at once rejected them. The inhabitants of the West Coast may erect habitations and flakes on those portions of the Shore where the French still resort to fish; but, if so, they erect them upon sufferance and subject to the risk of having them removed. Although this is done without impairing Britain's sovereign right over every inch of soil there; yet, of what value can Government grants be to settlers under such circumstances, even if there was no restriction upon free grants—which is the moot point.

**AN IMPORTANT JUDGMENT.**

**End of the Botanic Beer Case.**

The decision of their lordships of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice Carter and Mr. Assistant Justice Little (Mr. Assistant Justice Pinsent, D.C.L., not being present) was formally announced to-day in re the appeal of McRae against the judgment of the magistrates, which held him guilty of a breach of the License Act by the sale of Botanic beer. Said decision reverses the judgment of the Police Court, of which the presiding magistrates were Judges Prowse, Q.C., and Conroy, Q.C., and holds that there was no violation of the License Act by the sale of the beer in question. By the judgment of the lower court defendant (McRae) had been fined \$10 and confiscation of all the stock of said beer on his premises, valued at over thirty dollars; and other vendees of the same beverage were also visited with prosecution. Mr. George H. Emerson was Crown prosecutor; Mr. Carty was counsel for appellant, McRae; and Mr. J. R. McNelly for the manufacturer of the beer, Mr. J. R. Lindberg.

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY NOTES.**

**Winter's Answers to Morine and Murphy.**

**ENQUIRIES INTO PUBLIC SERVICE BILL.**

WHEN the presentation of petitions was over in the Assembly on Tuesday, "His Honor the Speaker" called the order of the day.

In answer to a notice of motion of Mr. Morine to ask Attorney General whether any bonds or securities belonging to Savings' Bank had been deposited outside of this colony, &c., the Attorney General replied that there had been in 1886, owing to severe strain on local Banks and in view of a sense of uneasiness about Savings' Bank. The sum was \$500,000, and was deposited in the London and Westminster Bank as security for a loan of £100,000, stg. This money had been since refunded, and was now in its proper place.

It will be remembered that the Government denied this last year.

A. M. Mackay's bill on lobster fishing, Attorney General's bills, (1) relating to Penitentiary, (2) to registration of deeds, (3) for enquiries into public service, were read a first time; ordered to be read a second time on Wednesday.

The Hon. Receiver General then moved for a supply to Her Majesty.

When the order was gone through, several petitions were presented, notably some containing 1200 signatures from Fortune Bay, on the Bait Bill, the reception of which was moved in a brief speech by Mr. Bond.

Mr. Murphy then rose with a petition signed by 230 householders of Portugal Cove, on the subject of the Bait Bill. In reply to questions asked the Government by him, he was informed that the Bait Bill would not be enforced as against Americans, but certainly against the French. In this questioning the Attorney General showed his ignorance of the protocol of treaty of Washington, and would not inform Mr. Murphy whether it would be necessary for our people to procure selling licenses for bait, as well as Americans, who are compelled to secure purchase licenses.

The House met at four p.m., and was receiving petitions until five p.m. The ticket color for Wednesday was red.

The second reading of Registration Deeds Bill was gone through. One or two features in this bill are worthy of note. Deeds registered before '46 fire, of which records are lost, can be registered free of charge. The registration fees are slightly increased. The second reading of several other bills were deferred on the ground that they had not come from the printer. Whether the *Mercury* office purposely delays these matters or not we cannot say, but this much is certain, that members introducing private bills should have the privilege of taking them wherever they may choose to have them printed. This rule would save a lot of trouble.

The bill providing for enquiries into public service. This bill simply enables the Governor and Council, when complaints are made against officials, to have sworn evidence taken at the enquiry. The Attorney General introduced it; Messrs. Scott and Emerson spoke against. Mr. Morine in favor of principle of bill. This bill requires to be considerably modified in committee. Provisions should be made to have official charged represented by Council, and also a privilege should be extended him to summon witnesses in his own defence; and, further, it should be provided that no official should be dismissed without a fair trial at such a tribunal.

The Financial Secretary laid the accounts of his department on the table.

Mr. Parsons tabled several notices of motion.

**LOCAL VARIETIES.**

Our readers are reminded of Rev. George J. Bond's lecture, in the College Hall, this evening.

"KENELM'S" third letter on "Rev. Dr. Howley and the Native Priests," is unavoidably held over till to-morrow.

The lady teachers of the Christian Doctrine Classes are requested to meet this evening, in the Cathedral Sacristy, at 8 o'clock.

The Novena in honor of St. Patrick commences this evening in St. Patrick's Church. A sermon will also be preached each evening.

We have to acknowledge the receipt of a lengthy and powerful letter on "The Two Aspects of Nativism." This document shall receive our best attention.

**BIRTH.**  
At Great Placentia, on Saturday, 3rd inst., the wife of W. G. Bradshaw, Esq., of a son.

**DIED.**  
At Fair Island, Bonavista Bay, Feb. 19th, Elizabeth, relict of John Whey, aged 47 years; leaving a helpless family to mourn their loss.  
Yesterday, after a long and painful illness, Augustine King, aged 21 years. Funeral on to-morrow (Friday) at 2.30 p.m., from his late residence, No. 6 Damerill's lane; friends and acquaintances are requested to attend without further notice.  
At Portugal Cove, after a long and painful illness, Mary, the beloved wife of Mr. Stephen Churohill, aged 58 years.

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Feb 28, 1888