

to that, rather than to Mr. Whitcher's erroneous comments upon it. The letter of 29th September, however, formulated certain charges against this gentleman which remains unanswered to this hour. His long arguments about the propriety of game protection and the desire which he states is entertained (notwithstanding the British North America Act to the contrary) by some persons—names unknown—that the Dominion Government should assume this charge in connection with fish-breeding, are all quite beside the questions raised in that letter.

" 'Game Protection' is properly limited to the close or breeding season, but all this correspondence points to something very different—to the preservation of game, for private use, during the open season, by the employment of Dominion Police officers, and that for the benefit of a certain person who claims that he has a perfect right to do this, either at his own expense, or at the expense of the public, or at the joint expense of himself and the Department (the question of cost being of course unimportant in his view), and all this is to be done under the false pretence of fish-breeding.

" Every word of my letter of the 29th September I maintain; and every charge therein contained will be amply supported.

" But Mr. Whitcher to whom, I am now informed, my letter was referred for report, instead of confining himself to the charges preferred against himself, and answering them if it was in his power to do so, has attempted to avoid the issues by invoking other, and totally foreign subjects for consideration. I will quote his own words: 'Knowing of the threatened law-suit by Mr. Cockburn's clients, I was the more cautious in answering his enquiries; and it now seems to me that it is not because, as he pretends, the proper information was withheld, but because he did not elicit such replies as would commit either the Department, a policeman, or myself, and afford some foundation for the intended suit. The spiteful attack on myself, made in his present letter (No. 5) is probably as much in revenge for failing to commit me in the interest of his client as for a previous act connected with the dismissal of his brother-in-law by your predecessor, for which Mr. Cockburn has unjustly blamed me and openly avowed his intention to annoy or injure me. I am justified in supposing this, as Mr. Cockburn mixes the trivial subject of his former letters, which he says consisted of a simple question with new matter of a malicious kind, and thereby discloses his motive and the plausible tenor of his correspondence.'

" Let me say, Sir, that there is not one word of truth in these idle and absurd imaginings. I wrote your Department in my public capacity as a member of Parliament, in the public interest, and to protect the sportsmen of this city and neighbourhood against the continuation of an abuse. I was never asked professionally or otherwise to prosecute Mr. Whitcher nor any one else, nor had I any such intention; and I have further to say that I never had the distinguished honour of having a brother-in-law in Mr. Whitcher's Department, nor indeed any other relation by blood or kindred in any of the

Departments of the Civil Service. The whole story is either a wicked invention or a singular hallucination.

" I observe, with satisfaction, by the concluding words of your letter to me, that the practice of employing Dominion officers, in connection with game protection, is hereafter to be discontinued; so far good, it would have been better, however, had this been conceded at first, as it might possibly have saved the reputation of an official whose pen has been proved to be prolific of blunders and absurdities.

* * *

" I am, Sir,

" Your obedient servant,

(Signed,) "JAMES COCKBURN.

" The Hon. J. C. Pope,

" Minister of Marine and Fisheries,

" Ottawa."

I have again to say that, when a public officer, in any Department, ventures to go outside of his duty, and to enquire into and criticise the motives of a member of Parliament in bringing a charge against his Department, he is doing that which, I trust, this House will never sanction. The mischief of such a pretension must be evident. Perhaps there is a moral lesson in it, for it comes home to all in this Chamber. The gentleman says he has a perfect right to employ these policemen in any one part of his domain, because, he says, he has private interests, and he has a right to supplement the services of the policemen by giving them some pay for the performance of those services, although they are connected with the protection of fish. In one paper (the circular) he ignores that view of the case, and says these officers have the duty to perform, and no remuneration at all. Poor fellows! They have been working for the public, in the interest of game protection, and they have the reward of knowing that they have been doing their duty free of any kind of remuneration. But now he says, in this report of the 1st of October:

" If I choose, or any other person chooses, to employ a policeman, or fishery officer, to work for me, at my own expense, there is nothing objectionable about it. * * * * There is certainly no novelty about the practice. Even clerks in the House of Commons, the Senate, and other public officers sometimes assist members and Ministers, who have professional or domestic affairs to conduct. Nobody thinks of seriously questioning the use of time, fuel, light, office accommodation, stationery, etc., etc.—incidents to this custom. There is an honourable understanding of the distinction between using and abusing such common privileges."