

*Mr. Thompson.*—Well, even so; the mackerel have not changed their habits.

*Mr. Foster.*—I thought that they had.

*Mr. Thomson.*—

*Mr. McLeod* says :—

“During the season of 1852, there were from 460 to 470 American vessels in the Gulf—mackerelers. In 1854, from 200 to 300 American vessels were fishing in the Bay of Chaleurs. In 1855, from 200 to 300 in that quarter; probably 600 in the Gulf. They told me that there were about 600 inside of Canso, In 1856, about the usual number. In 1857 the same, and up to 1862, about the same thing; also in 1864, 1865, and 1866 the same. In 1867, there were from 300 to 400 inside the Bay Chaleurs. I have seen in 1867, 250 lying at anchor in Port Daniel Bay, and as many more at Paspebiac on the same day, three fourth Americans.”

*Mr. Philip Vibert, of P'erce, Gaspé* :—

“Of late years few United States vessels have visited our district for mackerel, but I have seen 200 or 300 in sight at one time. Not more than four or five years ago I counted 167 from my house. I have seen 300 in Bay Chaleurs and steaming up to Quebec; have seen as many more on the way up. The average number from the Gut of Canso upwards, I should put at not less than from 350 to 400, averaging seventy to seventy-five tons. Skippers come ashore and are communicative; in fact, in many instances they are interested in other vessels, and they look after the catch, and can tell pretty well what it is. There is no difficulty in arriving at a general estimate of the take of boats.”

“A vessel may come into Georgetown with a broken spar, and the captain state that there are seventy-five vessels at the Magdalen Islands, another vessel would report 100 vessels in Bay Chaleurs—that is the only way in which you can get at the number of vessels in the bay.”

*Mr. George Harbour, of Sandy Beach, Gaspé* :—

“Three hundred is about the average. Have seen as many as fifty at one time in the harbour. In 1872 there were at least 300 sail.”

*Mr. Wm. A. Sinnet, of Griffin's Cove, Gaspé* :—

“Has been told by American captains that there were 300 sometimes, as high as 500. Did not see all that number at one time, but has counted as many as sixty odd sail at one time at Madeleine River.”

The testimony of Angus Grant, Port Hawkesbury, will be found on page 180. He says :—

“From 1854 to 1856 average between 500 and 600 within the bay. Has seen 400 sail in Port Hood at a time. The number increased from 1856 to 1869, and of larger tonnage. Since 1869 down, 600 to 700 sail. Quite a large fleet in 1873; about 500 in 1874; not so many in 1875; and 1876, perhaps not quite half of that. This year there is quite a large fleet coming. Has seen them coming every day. Lives on Strait of Canso, and can see them cross. Average number of United States' codfishing fleet, from 200 to 300 sail.”

I want to see whether he gives the proportion of the catches made inshore.

*Mr. Foster.*—The bulk of your witnesses did so.

*Mr. Thomson.*—Yes, they did do so. Now, let me see what the Americans state in their own affidavits. My learned friend, Mr. Foster, assumes the catch taken inshore, for the purpose of argument, to be one-third; but I am going to show you that a number of his own affidavits (affidavits which were made by a number of his own men), give this catch as about one-half, interested as they were; some of our witnesses placed it at nine-tenths, and consequently I think that this Commission may fairly assume, that at least three-fourths of these catches are taken inshore.

I will take affidavit No. 201, contained in Appendix M.

*Mr. Foster.*—Read the whole of it.

*Mr. Thomson.*—It runs as follows :—

“I, Roderick McDonald, of Low Point, N. S. do declare and say on oath as follows :—I am living at Low Point, Inverness, county Nova Scotia, am over thirty years old, have been fishing for about twelve years until three years ago, when I knocked off, because mackerel was scarce in the bay, and it did not pay—The mackerel fishing has much fallen off during the last six or seven years—during these six or seven years the average yearly catch has not been over half of what it was eight or ten years ago—during some seasons they will be much more off the shore, at other seasons more inshore—during hot weather they will work more off shore—the best place for mackerel I have ever seen is on Bradley Bank about twenty miles from North Cape, Prince Edward Island—sometimes the Americans, when mackerel is plenty, will catch about two-thirds of their entire catch outside a line three miles from shore; but striking an average I think that during a season when mackerel is plenty, Americans will catch about one-half outside and the other half inside a line three miles from shore.”