

learn from him that the fishery is maintained as well as he says it is in his Province. I wish I could say the same for my Province. The lobster fishery in my Province, which is very valuable, is gradually becoming poorer, the lobsters are getting smaller, and some of the manufacturers do not think it worth while to keep open at all. I wish to call the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that the regulations which have been enforced, fixing the close season in Prince Edward Island, and, I presume, in Nova Scotia also, are very unsatisfactory indeed. I am aware petitions have been forwarded to the Department, praying for a change in the regulations, and I wish to state I have made it my business to enquire from a large number of those engaged in the trade, what regulations would suit them best. I have ascertained that hard and fast regulations applied to the whole Province would not do, that while between certain specific dates it may suit very well for the southern parts of the island, where, owing to calm weather, they can fish almost every day, on the northern part where they are exposed to rough weather the same dates will not suit. This is a matter which calls for immediate action. I know that those engaged in the trade look for the decision of the Minister with great interest, and I hope before the season progresses further the hon. gentleman will have made up his mind to some change in the existing regulations, and that that change, whatever it may be, will not be an arbitrary one for the whole Province but one that will deal with the different conditions of affairs in the northern as distinguished from the southern part of the island. I believe that those in the southern part would like a close season in midsummer. I know the hon. gentleman has a large mass of information in his Department on the subject, and all I press for is that a conclusion may be come to as speedily as possible. If the regulations are enforced in Cape Breton, all I can say is that there is laxity, and consequently a different state of facts prevailing elsewhere.

Mr. KIRK. The lobster fishing business is one of very great importance to the Maritime Provinces. It is a very large and growing industry. Last year there was about \$1,750,000 in value of lobsters exported from the Dominion, and this business is of such importance that it demands the particular attention of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. The close season, as it now exists, does not give satisfaction to the fishermen of Nova Scotia, or at any rate to those of the county of Guysboro'. We have a good many lobster establishments there. We have twelve in the county of Guysboro', employing hundreds of men and thousands of fishermen. I find the consensus of opinion among the fishermen is that the close season does not begin at the right time. The fishermen of the county of Guysboro', as was stated by my hon. friend from Richmond, have not an opportunity in the spring of commencing fishing early, in consequence of the ice and bad weather. However, I find that they generally agreed the fishing season should be extended. They all agree that there is a necessity for a close season, but that close season, according to the present regulations, does not begin at the right time. They claim that lobsters, after the middle of July, are not fit to be eat, and that the close season should commence about the middle of July and last to the end of August. They think that a season of six weeks in the year is quite sufficient, and that after the end of August they ought to be allowed to fish to the end of the year. The fishermen say that there are more lobsters destroyed during the two weeks after the middle of July than during the rest of the year, from the fact that the lobsters are then spawning. They claim it is in the interest of lobsters that they should be protected when in a spawning condition, and the lobster itself then is not suitable for food. The Government has been in the habit of extending the close season from the first to the middle of August, I believe, in the eastern part

of Nova Scotia and in Prince Edward Island. There they do a very wrong thing, for that is the very season they should not allow fishing at all, namely, from the middle of July to the end of August; but after the end of August, fishermen tell us, you may fish as much as you like and you cannot destroy the fish. It is only necessary to protect the fish during the spawning season from the middle of July to the end of August. So far as the size of the lobster is concerned, I do not think I can say anything, but I do know that the fishermen of my county are very anxious that the Government should allow fishing in the fall of the year, and they maintain unanimously it is quite sufficient to have the close season from the middle of July to the end of August.

Mr. FOSTER. There is no objection at all to the papers being brought down. I am afraid, however, the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Flynn) will not find them very voluminous. There will be an opportunity later to discuss this question of lobsters, when we shall be very glad indeed to have the opinions of hon. gentlemen present on both sides of the House who are building up this industry. As many different men write about it so there are as many different ideas with reference to these lobster fisheries as to the close season, as to when it should commence, and the time when the spawning season is on. It is a difficult subject, and a little later I shall be glad to have the co-operation of all who understand anything about this question.

Mr. LANDRY. No doubt the opinions offered by hon. gentlemen to the Minister of Fisheries will be of great value to him, but I suggest to the hon. Minister that he himself should make a visit to the portion of the Province where these lobsters are, and study the situation for himself. I think he will then find as many different opinions as there are letters written to him on the subject, and I think it would be a very wise thing indeed for the hon. gentleman to visit the localities himself during the next season and try to ascertain the facts for himself, from information obtained on the spot and from personal observation. I think that is the best way for him to obtain the information, because there is a considerable difference of opinion, and very often information is given by persons who are interested in the lobster fishery, not perhaps for the benefit of the fishery interest itself so much as for the benefits which they themselves hope to derive from the carrying out of the views they express. I do not accuse all the fishermen of being prompted by that interest, but naturally they must be prompted by it more or less. They look to the fisheries for the profits which they yield to them, more than to the actual protection of the fish itself. In view of all this, and believing that the Minister takes a deep interest in the matter, and desires to do the best which is possible for the fish, I advise him to visit the localities himself.

Mr. DAVIES. I would suggest that the motion be amended, so as to embrace the papers and correspondence in regard to Prince Edward Island as well as Nova Scotia, and then we will have the whole question before us.

Mr. FOSTER. I have no objection to the motion being so amended. I thank my hon. friend from Kent (Mr. Landry) for his suggestion, and I hope that, when I go around that coast to visit these fishery grounds, he will defend me afterwards from any charges of junketting.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY—LANDS SOLD.

Mr. PERLEY (Assiniboia) moved for :

Return of lands sold by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company up to 1st April, 1887, in the North-West Territories; when sold, and to whom.

He said: I make this motion with the assurance that I will have the sympathy and support of every hon. member in this House. We are all quite aware of the fact that, in the