

21

FIFTY YEARS OF FISHERY ADMINISTRATION IN CANADA

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The Dominion fisheries have been for over fifty years administered by a department, or bureau, of the federal service under a minister, who is an elected Member of Parliament, a member of the cabinet, and holds the portfolio of marine and fisheries.

Federal administration was established by virtue of an act passed by the Imperial Parliament in London, and dated March 29, 1867, and naming "Sea-Coast and Inland Fisheries," as among the subjects within the exclusive legislative authority of the Parliament of Canada, along with twenty-eight other matters coming under that authority. The four Provinces, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario and Quebec, had been separate colonies before coming into confederation, and had their separate jurisdictions. As other Provinces, like Prince Edward Island, and British Columbia, came in (until there were at least eleven divisions, nine Provinces and two Territories included in the Dominion) it is easy to understand that rights of property, and of jurisdiction, which had not been fully defined, readily became subjects of legal dispute. From time to time test cases have been tried, and the highest Imperial Court, the Privy Council Judicial Committee in London, has been appealed to and has given many important decisions.

FISHERIES DEPARTMENT CREATED.—The first Minister of Marine and Fisheries was the Hon. Peter Mitchell, a native of New Brunswick, and long a prominent figure in Canadian politics. In his first report^x addressed to His Excellency the Right Hon. Sir John Young, Baronet, Governor General of Canada,

x) For 1868 (publ. 1869; Sessional Papers v^{No. 12.})