

Mr. VENIOT: That does not agree with the information upon which these scientific men have based their report.

Mr. RHODES: I will come back to that scientific report in a moment. I have quoted the figures for 1925 to 1929 inclusive, but the report which my hon. friend has before him is for the year 1930.

Mr. VENIOT: The other years are shown as well.

Mr. RHODES: My hon. friend mentioned the diminution in the fisheries. The records show that there has been a very marked diminution in the Restigouche area. I was amazed to find that the fisheries in the Restigouche area had diminished by almost 70 per cent up to the year 1925, and I felt that this called for very careful investigation. I have fished this river myself on different occasions, and I hope to be spared to fish it again in the future.

Mr. HANSON (Skeena): What part of this item is to be spent in British Columbia?

Mr. RHODES: Does the hon. member mean the item in question?

Mr. HANSON (Skeena): Yes.

Mr. RHODES: Part of the item would apply to British Columbia, but not the regulation under discussion.

Mr. HANSON (Skeena): What portion of the item is to be expended in British Columbia?

Mr. RHODES: Would my hon. friend defer his question until I have concluded my reply to the hon. member for Gloucester?

Mr. VENIOT: Will the hon. minister please give me those figures again?

Mr. RHODES: They will be found on page 31 of the fisheries statistics. My hon. friend can obtain that publication from the distribution office.

Mr. VENIOT: Was it the number of salmon caught each year?

Mr. RHODES: No, the figures are given in hundredweights; they have no reference to the number of fish.

With regard to the regulations regarding drifters, these were not imposed as a result of the Calderwood or the Belding and Phelps investigation; they were designed solely with a view to providing proper methods of conservation. Anyone who has the welfare of the salmon industry at heart must pause and think when he considers the rapid increase in the number of drifters in that area during the

last few years. In 1925 we had only 52 drifters in that area, but the number increased year by year until 1930, when it reached 170, an increase of over 200 per cent. I have not questioned the estimate contained in the report of Messrs. Belding and Phelps that 142,000 salmon were caught in that area last year; as a matter of fact that estimate was referred to in the conference. Among those who were present at the conference was Mr. Loggie, a son of a gentleman who for a number of years occupied a seat in this house. He is a commercial fisherman and he never questioned the figures. The total may not mean much to our hon. friends from British Columbia who are accustomed to number salmon in the millions, but when one realizes that 142,000 sport fish were caught it causes one to ponder, having regard to the fact that the total catch in the Restigouche river in the best year amounted to something less than 2,000, and in some years has dropped to below 1,000. I am speaking from memory, but I believe I am correct when I say this: The scientific investigation of several hundreds of these fish showed that they were in precisely the same condition as were the fish taken in the river. They were all spawning fish and were heading far up the rivers to spawn.

Mr. VENIOT: The figures that the minister has given cannot include the amount of salmon caught by the net fishermen and the drift net fishermen, because they certainly do not agree with the report.

Mr. RHODES: I shall be glad to examine that report afterwards in the light of these figures. I do not know that that is so material especially in view of what I am saying in respect to the alarming increase in the salmon drift netting. I say this on my own responsibility as head of the Department of Fisheries, that instructions were issued that no more drift net licences were to be granted in that area until we were able to demonstrate that the fisheries there could stand the toll that is being taken at the present time. It is true that has been varied only in one respect. It was pointed out subsequently that some seventeen men, not knowing this regulation was put into force, in good faith and anticipating that as a matter of ordinary routine they could secure drifters' licences, had proceeded in the course of the winter to build boats, to equip them, to purchase nets and to go to considerable expense. In the light of those facts, as a matter of grace, it was decided to enlarge the number of drift netters by adding 17 to the 170, but with the understanding that as and when those drift licences fell in, they