

some attention and although engaged in the business myself, I am not one of those who would wish to see the lobster business receive a permanent injury for the sake of making it profitable for a few years. But I feel assured that the close season, while it considerably hampers the operations of lobster packers, does not accomplish the object it was intended to effect by its promoters. I presume the object of the close season is, first, to protect the lobsters while depositing their eggs, and, secondly, by limiting the time for fishing to provide against the lobsters being fished out. I feel certain that the close season has not and cannot accomplish anything towards attaining the first object, as it is now admitted by every one, who has had any experience in packing, that lobsters in spawn are caught at all seasons of the year, and that they have no particular season for spawning. With regard to the second object, I do not see any reason to fear that lobsters would be fished out in the Straits and the Gulf of St. Lawrence any sooner than other fish such as herring, mackerel, codfish, &c. Men who have been engaged in the business on the south side of the island for a number of years say that they see no difference or falling off in the supply, though the traps and appliances for catching them have been increased a thousand fold. Although I am satisfied with the present arrangement, as far as my business on the north side is concerned, still I look upon a close season as a mistake, and in view of the large amount of capital invested in the business at present is almost a misfortune. My principal objection to the close season is, that it cannot be made to suit all parts of the island at the same time. Lobsters with soft shells are seldom seen on the north side of the island, whilst on the south side almost all that are caught in the month of July are soft and unfit for canning. I do think the sooner the close season is done away with and men are allowed to use their own judgment the better it will be for those engaged in the business, and it would not tend to exhaust the supply any more than under the present arrangement."

Hon. Mr. Prowse, likewise a member of the Local Government, and extensively engaged in fishing on the east coast, further adds:—

"As we hold half the interest in two factories, our observation has necessarily been pretty close, and we are more than ever convinced that the lobsters are in better condition every way after the 1st of September than they are at any time previous to that date, and we are also convinced that, as a rule, they are fit for use during the whole year like any other fish. Of course, no sane man would think of canning a soft shell lobster which occasionally enter the traps throughout the whole summer, but the number is very limited, owing, we think, to their inability or unwillingness to move around while in that state. Several of our neighbors have lost more or less cans this season, and opinion is divided as to the cause. Of course, the mechanics in charge maintain it is through no fault of theirs, and attribute it to a disease in the lobster; others that it is in the air, &c., &c., but I am most firmly convinced that it is altogether owing to the want of sufficient care and cleanliness in and around the factories. When the lobsters were most plentiful they could not be canned up as quickly as it was necessary to do, and in consequence the tables, &c., too long saturated with the fluid matter from the fish without being cleaned and washed off, and, this happening in the very hot weather, the meat very soon became tainted and the result was 'blown cans.' We are still strongly of opinion that there should be no close season, but all parties should be allowed to preserve the lobster as they are any other fish, then there will not be such anxiety to put up so many in so short a time. We are convinced that to do a successful business extensive premises must be erected and kept perfectly clean and airy. To this end we are adding to our factory at Guernsey Cove, which, when completed, will be nearly 200 feet long, while our factory on the north side of Murray Harbor is said to be the best and largest on the island, and in consequence has been most successful in preserving. Hoping you will be able to advise the abolition of any close season in future, &c."

The proposal to close the factories wholly for one or more years when the supply fails is too crude to be entertained. If it takes lobsters five years to grow adult from the egg, a single year's rest could have no other effect as to succeeding years' catch than to advance surviving fish one year forward in the scale of age. A rest of