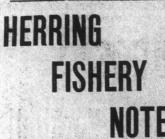
The Evening Telegram, St. John's, Newfoundland, June 17, 1910 .--- 7



Editor Evening Telegram.

Dear Editor,-The presence of Mr. Fitzgerald at the port of St. George's, at the instance of the Government, to study and report on the condition c. the herring industry in that important district, a very laudable and praiseworthy act on the part of said Gov erument, induced me to make the fol lowing few remarks anent the ques tion:

It is very easy for a Government to be misled by reports, however honestly made up by the inspector, who has had but a short period of time an his disposal for the purpose intended and in consequence the blame for the continuance of this industry's languid and unremunerative condition may be falsely charged to either the ignorance, carelessness or want of skill in the preparation of barrels, pack or cure of these valuable fish on the part of the inhabitants of this district.

There are, however, a few persons who have devoted half a life time to the close study of this very question and most certainly do not lay the blame against the people engaged in this industry.

For a century the herrings caugh at St. George's Harbor have, with fev exceptions, been marketed in Halifa: or other Canadian ports, and many merchant there has grown rich and opuclent therefrom.

Their system is very simple. The are a combination, they easily man age to keep the fishermen supplied a little in advance of the probable value of the catch, thus ensuring themselves their shipments to Halifa> -and they fix prices to suit, regardless of pack or anything else. Only very recently have they insisted in charging for short weight, but not yet paying for overweight. A very nice arrangement. There is no necessity to describe here the modus operandi of our people in regard to barrel making; sufficient to state that they re sort to the inferior, cut their stave junks, split and prepare the staves and set up their barrels in the same manner as that pursued by their fore fathers; but it must not for a momen be imagined that none of them hav endeavored to improve on this sys tem. I know certain parties who have lost quite heavily by their at tempts to introduce a better qualit of barrel. I know of one who put up a consignment of barrels, made birch staves and strong heads, hoop ed with six iron hoops, the herring, most carefully packed, that received no more for them than if packed in old apple barrels. The same party bought a lot of regulation barrel from St. John's at, I think, 80 cent freight, packed them according t Scotch method, had them inspected t Mr. Mair and condemned as unfit b. nature, not pack or cure, to compet with the Scotch herring, and shipping them to Halifax had to go to the ex pense of getting them split and re nacked before he could sell them a all. Of course in such a large com munity there are scampish packers who yearly do infinite damage to thei fellows by their carelessness with dis regard to what is right in this matter This fact brings out the great neces sity for a rigid inspection being held here by a competent and well pai inspector-paid by the Government who would act without fear or favor and whose brand would be by Govern mental arrangement in foreign mark ets accepted as guarantee of quantity and quality. Without this latter, inspection is only a farce. The idea o employing a lot of resident inspec tors chiefly on account of politica pull, and charging the cost of inspec tion to the proprietor of barrels in spected is also farcical and of no practical benefit Another very important factor in causing our catch to be so unremu -nerative is the unfortunate fact that our local merchants do not interes themselves in this matter. From cor respondence had with many of these gentlemen, it appears that even when they pay a fair, nay a good, price for a superior pack, they themselves invariably lose money thereby. Some will not handle them unassorted. For various reasons, therefore, they dc not interest themselves much in the matter, and without their most valuable co-operation very little can be done to improve their present status. Repeated applications have been made to the Banks for advances to enable a company resident here to purchase at least two thirds of the annual extch and thus dominate the market for same and retain the capital in the island that now and for a century past has gone out of it. Various methods for securing the Banks' interests have been offered, such as guaranteeing to accept no non-inspected herrings, shipping in name of Bank, insuring in Bank's name, giving Bank drawing order on consignees until advance is repaid, purchasing only at absolute

Unless able to deposit on the Bank counter the whole concern as collateral, with interest added thereto, nothing could be done with them. Is it any wonder, that we in the outports can not advance? Any old two-penny concern in St. John's with a few packages of goods on the outside of his shelves, to catch the eye of the clerk of the Bank when sent to look over the stock, can get an advance without difficulty, at times to the net loss of same Bank. But a great business enterprise of national importance and assured value, that only needs financial assistance to increase a hundredold in value to the country, cannot obtain the very slightest assistance It is not according to Banking methods to advance money on the charge of a rising market, on any commodity even if the rise is fully assured; but alas! they often do on the chance of

safe rates, etc.; but all to no avail.

them, the managers, find it unavoidable to visit Sing Sing. In conclusion of this rambling note wish to convey to the Government vho seem desirous of bettering maters in this connection, this very perinent fact: It is absolutely necessary before formulating and carrying into effect any legislation for enforcing the nanufacture of a standard barrel, to secure a remunerative market for the ame and a sure one, otherwise reater loss will ensue to our fisher-

a falling market; else why do some of

nen. Secure a market first for a tandard pack, consistent with the quality of herrings obtainable in this locality, and you will speedily find hat no coercion will be at all necessary to compel our folks to make standard barrels or put up No. 1 hering. The quality of the herrings nust be taken into account and mark ets sought that require such. This nust be the first move on the part o he Government, otherwise worse re sults than obtain now will eventu Yours truly, ite.

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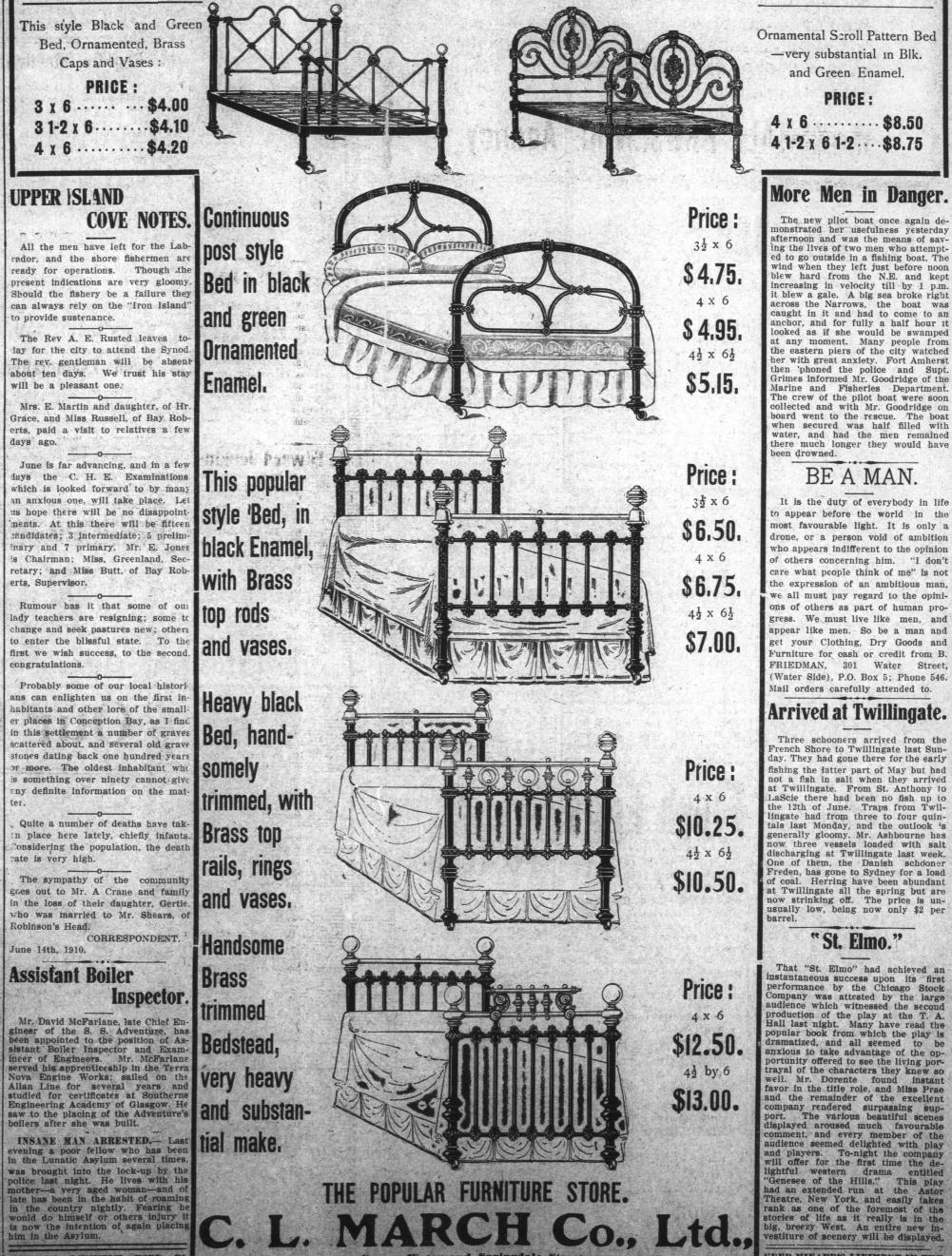
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