

THE MARINE AND FISHERIES COMMITTEE AND THE LOBSTER INDUSTRY

(By R. N. Venning, Superintendent of Fisheries.)

A very interesting and important factor in the working of the department, especially as affecting the Fisheries Branch thereof, consisted of the appointment during the year of a select standing parliamentary committee on Marine and Fisheries, thus providing a means hitherto inaccessible of investigating and discussing the various phases of the fisheries and the fishing industry as they might develop at different junctures in the general application of the fishery laws and regulations, and the exploitations of the fisheries.

It is felt that this move by parliament will have a very beneficial effect upon the welfare of the valuable fisheries assets of the Dominion in that it will bring them and their requirements as well as their possibilities, more prominently before the attention of the general public as well as of those who may desire to engage in their prosecution and development, and it cannot but have a tendency to greatly strengthen the hands of the department in its endeavour to enforce provident fishery laws and regulations, which, however beneficial and necessary, can never be considered as very popular, probably the least so of all restrictive measures having for their aim the conservation of great national assets.

Mr. John H. Sinclair, M.P., Guysborough, N.S., who had initiated the move during the session of parliament of 1908, moved in the House of Commons on the 3rd February, 1909 (*Hansard*, unrevised edition, p. 504), the following resolution:—

‘That, in the opinion of the House it is advisable to appoint a select standing committee of the House to deal with questions relating to Marine and Fisheries as they arise from time to time, and the rules of the House be amended accordingly.’

Touching the question of the fisheries, Mr. Sinclair explained that the enormous coast line of Canada, with its prolific fisheries, as well as the great number of persons now employed in an immense industry, although only in its infancy and capable of enormous possibilities for adding to the wealth and prosperity of the country, called for a special committee which could devote its labour and research to the development of the fishing industry of the Dominion.

The mover of the resolution was followed by many members of parliament, who were unanimous in its support, and the Minister of Marine and Fisheries congratulated the several speakers, and intimated that a rule would be drafted and brought down for the adoption of the House.

Consequently on the 19th February last, the Hon. L. P. Brodeur moved the House into committee to consider a proposed resolution as follows:—

‘That Rule No. 10, Chapter 2 of the Rules of the House of Commons, be amended by adding after the words “on Agriculture and Colonization” the words “on Marine and Fisheries,” such being designed to carry into effect the decision of the House, on Mr. Sinclair’s resolution as previously explained (*Hansard* unrevised edition, p. 1369), following which on February 26, the Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, from the special committee appointed to report the lists of members to compose the select standing committees reported the composition of that on Marine and Fisheries as follows:—

Robert Bickerdike, Geo. H. Bradbury, Hon. L. P. Brodeur, A. W. Chisholm (Inverness), A. H. Clarke, (Essex), A. B. Crosby, John A. Currie (Simcoe), John W. Daniel, A. L. Fraser, Honoré Gervais, C. F. Jameson, J. W. Kyte, A. K. Mac-
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