

# Toilers Final Fight For Liberty

**F.P.U. Fight Now Against Bowings, Whose Word Is No Longer Their Bond, History of Trickery and Dishonor Exposed. Munn and Eric Bowring Responsible**

## "Eternal Vigilance Is the Price of Freedom"

**Our Freedom is Now at Stake—A Few Upstarts on Water Street Still Possess the Instincts of Slave Drivers**

**THIS IS CRUCIAL PERIOD IN OUR HISTORY**

**The Freedom For Which We Have Fought is Threatened and We Must Be Prepared to Resist**

The Rev. Philip Tocque must have known the fishermen very intimately, judging from the remarks of his we published yesterday. He heard their grievances. He knew they were treated badly. He knew the supplier tried to compel the toiler to vote as he desired or support some local dodge to upset some opponents plans and he knew that when the toiler refused, sure punishment in some shape was meted out.

Speaking of the supplier he used those scathing words of truth respecting the treatment accorded the poor illiterate fisherman. "There is not and cannot be a more baneful-soul-enslaving despotic influence exerted in any country." Again he says, "Not one of the dealers will dare to exercise his own judgment upon matters that deeply concern his own welfare."

Those are not the words of Coaker, but of a meek and holy missionary of the Cross who laboured abundantly in this Country for many years and who was revered as one of the most gifted and godly men that ever served the Church in Newfoundland. This observant clergyman could not cover up all his feelings. He saw and heard of the conduct of those who held the fishermen in chains even worse than slavery.

Yes, he states that he has seen men watching the motions and features of the supplier in order to decide by that intuition so inherited in many of our fishermen—who wanted food or a rag for their children and dare not ask those lordly upstarts unless first convinced that the big man was in a good mood and there would be some chance of obtaining a little. It was turn in, take out, but no accounting—except Skipper Bill, you have just paid your account, or you are only ten pounds behind.

It was all the same to those breadwinners whether the voyage was good or bad, prices high or low—they never had anything coming to them—and if they did it would be almost a thing unheard of. And some of those upstarts now imagine the toilers must go with their hat in their hand and finger in their mouth and make a prayer that the supplier always loved to hear—"Please, sir, will you be as good as to let me have a half barrel of Indian meal, one gallon of molasses and a pound of tea and charge it to my account."

Is it any wonder the fishermen who have been liberated from those enslaving chains by the establishment of the F.P.U. in the North, in 1913, alarmed and amazed the lords of creation by throwing off once and for always the yoke that had bent their fathers and sent them into paupers graves. Is it any wonder the fishermen when they had been permitted to breathe the invigorating air of the F.P.U. took on a new lease of life and sprang up like young lions and struck the blow that was the death-knell of Graballism in the North.

Is it any wonder that at Spaniard's Bay on Wednesday the intelligent and independent planters assembled as representatives of their fellow fishermen resolved to be no longer bound by any ties of gratitude or thanks to a class of men who had resolved to bring on trouble because they deemed this a suitable time to nip the independent spirit that had been easily apparent for the last five years.

This is our chance said they. We have now on our hands the greatest war that man ever had, knowledge of which will make the poor poorer and the rich richer. Let us avail of the miseries of the people to cut seals one dollar per cwt. in value, and place an extra profit of \$2.50 on a barrel of flour. We own the ships, we own the flour—they must bend to our terms or go hungry. Now we will teach them what they are—now we will pay them back in compound interest for their big talk and actions of the last few years.

Then they take two of the most innocent and harmless of the clique and gives them their marching orders: Your duty is to defy—your duty is to play a trick or two. Those innocents drank the sparkling wine so nicely prepared and took the splurge and the result is the grand old house of Bowings in England, which never knew dishonour, was driven to state the truth one day and a day or two after to kill the truth with a lie.

To-day the whole Country stand aghast and are asking how such deception was possible and who must be held responsible.

It is small wonder that the impartial men of Conception Bay were unable to find language on Wednesday sufficiently strong to express their indignation. Is it any wonder that every man assembled stood to his feet and proclaimed his determination to see this thing through to the end and in order to do so were ready to do or die, in defence of the God given Liberties and Rights every Briton should possess at his birth.

Is it any wonder the late Mr. Tocque asserted in a book he wrote,—wrote openly that all the world may learn of it,—that Newfoundland fishermen as he knew them were treated worse than the former serfs and slaves of Russia. He used the words—down trodden fishermen—who were, he said, worse clothed and fed, and owned less than the ancient serfs and slaves of Russia.

Mr. Tocque did not say those Newfoundland toilers were lazy. He plainly states that after toiling and sweating and enduring the hardest bitings of wind, and weather, finds that all his hard toil, that all the loss of sweat, that all the severe endurance on sea and land, on ice and in schooner and punt, by day and by night, in every condition of weather, could not pay his account, or lay in his winter's stock of provisions.

Those same conditions are what the taskmasters of Water Street are endeavouring to press once more upon the shoulders of the toilers of Newfoundland. Up goes flour and butter and biscuit and down goes the price of seals, cod oil, fish, and already the hungry wolf is at the door and the poor are compelled to take their bags and tramp to a Graballs store to receive an allowance for a few days.

Yes, already the able bodied pauper has been brought into being by this Nunnybag Government. Already Ned Morris is showing that he is finishing his work. Already that bold defiant grin that the toilers in days of yore saw in the faces of their taskmasters is to be seen on the face of the man whose action sent 78 men into eternity, and in the faces of the haters of the people who make their piles in business along Water Street.

The names of Munn, Bowring and Kean will for ever be remembered by Newfoundland toilers with contempt and scorn. Their names will be mingled with curses while fishermen toss about over the waves that dash against Terra Nova's rugged coasts. This madness on the part of Bowring will mean the sowing of seed that will not all be harvested for a score of years.

At Spaniard's Bay the representatives of 5000 fishermen uttered Kean's name with a hiss that expressed feelings that must have been mouldering in the heart for many months. They now hate bitterly the man that all consider a traitor to his class and the insulter of his countrymen.

A great feeling of intense bitterness is swaying outport people, of which very few at St. John's have any idea. If any men in Newfoundland could be expected to judge Kean impartially in this sealing disaster matter they should be from Conception Bay. Bonavista Bay men lost their loved ones, so did Trinity, and in Notre Dame he have always been disliked because of his brazen and conceited manner—but in Conception Bay few families mourned because of Kean's conduct, and they were the proper men to judge his action in their true light—but after giving several hours consideration to his case in all its bearings, not one man could be found in that assembly that could say a word in Kean's favor.

The unanimous verdict was—GUILTY, yes GUILTY.

The excitement that prevailed during those trying hours of debate when all realized that the whole Colony was keenly interested in their decision, was of a nature that words cannot portray. Every man wanted to express the wishes of the Council that he represented and had Munn—

poor, misguided youth—been able to observe unseen the scene in that Hall, we feel sure he would very soon wash his hands clear of further responsibility in using Kean to defy the peoples demands.

We ask the fishermen to put away carefully those articles on the "Final Struggle for Liberty," and cherish those utterances of the leading clergymen in this Colony in their day, regarding the treatment meted out to their fathers and grandfathers and to mark well the present attempt of Water Street to bring the present generation once more under their benignant sway. The toilers will exclaim as the planters at the recent Convention did—God Bless our Union Paper—and drive home the truth stronger and stronger day by day, for its words are dear to our hearts.

Judge Prowse, although he loved to get about amongst the Water Street big bugs, have left us some instructive information which is to be gleaned from the pages of his history. We now invite our readers to peruse a few sentences recorded by Judge Prowse, of whom it can't be said that he was partial to the fishermen's interest, but having a duty to perform as an historian he was compelled to tell the truth about the fishermen's taskmasters, and we have no doubt about the effect the perusal of his statements will have. We quote a few to-day, more will follow.

### WHAT JUDGE PROWSE WROTE

"We find in the annals of this time (1804) and all through the history of the Colony, bitter complaints of the tyranny of the merchants towards their dealers. They never gave out the price of the articles sold, on credit to the fishermen, and they 'broke the price of fish in August,' just at the amount they liked, an old fisherman informs me, that in the 'spring of the Wadhams,' he was wrecked at Greenspond and lived part of the winter there, some of the people, he says, had never seen money from their birth, to their grave, they were in debt to the merchant all their lives long. There were numerous complaints from outport merchants about prices, and their dealings with the fishermen. The complaint from Fogo says:

"For a number of years back we have been struggling with the world, as we suppose, the impositions of the merchants, and their agents by their exorbitant prices on shop goods, and provisions, by which means we are from year to year held in debt so as not daring to find fault, fearing we may starve at the approach of every winter, we being at the distance of seventy leagues from the Capital where we suppose they arrogate to themselves a power not warranted by any law, in selling to us every article of theirs at any price they think fit, and taking from us the produce of a whole year, at whatever price they think fit to give. They take it on themselves to price their own goods and ours also as they think most convenient to them. The petition is signed by many Irishmen—Patrick Murray, Peter Fowler, Toby McGrath, Michael Burke, James Meehan, John Geary William Broders and William Keefe."

Judge Prowse also quotes a proclamation issued in 1805 by Governor Gower which will be very interesting to every fisherman, as it fixes the current price of goods and fish at the highest paid for fish by any buyer and goods at the lowest price of any seller.

"Whereas I am informed that a practice has prevailed in some of the outports of this island among the merchants of not informing their dealers of the price of the supplies, advanced for the season, or the prices they will allow for the produce, until they are in possession of the planters voyage, whereby the latter are exposed to great impositions, the merchants are hereby required to make known to their dealers before the 15th day of August in every year, or at the time of delivery, the prices of provisions, and other commodities sold by them, and the prices they will give for fish, and oil, and to fix a schedule thereof in some conspicuous part of their respective stores, and in case any merchant shall neglect to comply with this useful injunction, and a dispute shall arise between him and any dealer respecting the prices charged on such merchants account and such dispute, shall be brought into a court of justice, the same shall be determined according to the LOWEST price charged for such goods and the HIGHEST price given for fish and oil by any other merchant in that district. And the Judge of the Supreme Court, the surrogates and the magistrates are hereby strictly enjoined in all such cases to govern themselves accordingly. Given under my hand, Sept. 12, 1805. E. Gower."

(To be continued from day to day)

## "Where Is Morris In Our Darkest Hour?"

**A Plea For the Destitute—the Hungry and the Cold—the Agonized Parent and the Hungry Child**

Where is Morris in our Darkest Hour? The above quotation are words used by Mr. Thomas Murphy on the floors of the Assembly, at the time that Kaiser Morris, "sold the pass," sold his party, sold his country and its assets to Reid in 1898.

Where is Morris in our darkest hour? The same words may be most aptly applied to day when the hundreds, aye thousands, of our working people are on the verge of starvation through no fault of their own. Where is Morris in our darkest hour? Yes, where is this huge "Cold," this political scoundrel, that has been humbugging the people year in year out, and that we have been foolish enough to give ear to, all those years.

Where is he now, whilst we working men are walking the streets, with empty stomachs, and aching hearts; aye aching with that greatest of all tortures, the torture of beholding our mothers, wives and children, at home, watching a fireless grate, and an empty cupboard, hearing the clamor of our dear children for bread—hearing the heart rending little cries; oh "Oh mother, oh dad, I am hungry; oh so hungry."

Oh God! to think what that means to a loving father and mother, to hear their dear little lips utter those pleadings for something to eat, and to be unable to satisfy their requirements. Oh think of it! oh think of it, you who can sit in your luxurious rooms by a cheerful fireside with the wherewithal to supply the wants of yourselves and families.

Oh think of it, you unfeeling politicians, who sit idly by and make no effort to relieve such misery. Oh think of it, you hard hearted, unfeeling schemers who traded on the feelings of those same people, to obtain place and emolument for yourselves. Nothing was too low for you to descend to. There was nothing too vile for you to instill into their ears during the last election to obtain their votes to place you in power, and having accomplished your ends, you now desert them in their hour of need. You have used them, you have the machinery in your hands to create employment for the people; why in the name of God do you not use it to assist the people through this trying times.

Surely you are not dead to all feeling of humanity, if so then be sure God's curse will fall on you, on you who can, and will not, extend a helping hand to a suffering people in their dire distress.

For Heaven's sake be ye men, stop the pic-nic-ing and junking trips which are making the peoples blood boil, and get the Assembly open and make some provision for giving employment to those who need it. Force the hand of Kaiser Morris and make him do so. Surely there are some half a dozen of you who are of his party, with manhood enough to tell him, that if he don't act, and at once, that you will pitch him to— Then do so, be men, ye will be the admired of your countrymen.

From one end of the Island to the other, you will have the prayers of the suffering mother and her hungry children. As they kneel in prayer they will bless your noble action in forcing this unfeeling Monster to come to their assistance, and when the question will be asked "Where were you in our darkest hour?" the voices of the unemployed of so day, the voices of their old fathers and mothers, the voices of their wives and children will shout with out accord, "He was with the people, he was with us, and stood up manfully for us, in our darkest hour."

### WE SHOULD WORRY!

Hardly, but advertisers should worry, and that's a sure thing. Almost every newsboy in town sells *The Mail and Advocate*, as well as a large number of shop agents, in different sections of the city and outports.