

What is styled English cure there, is really Newfoundland or British American cure.

"—is quite neglected, and, what is still worse, perishing. You seem to be surprised that this French fish should be new and properly cured, but you forget that it is cured and salted on board the vessels which come across to Bordeaux, Marseilles and Cette, and there dried under sheds, a few days being sufficient for this operation. The French Government gives a bounty of 16 francs (shillings) per quintal on all the fish exported to Leghorn, 14 to Genoa, and 12 to Naples. The French fishermen are masters of the situation, and will very soon ruin the English colonists unless something is done. Larger vessels are now building in several French ports which are intended for this industry, and, from what we hear, a fresh impetus is to be given to the fishery."

The Newfoundland newspaper editor goes on to say, speaking of the feelings of the people of Newfoundland :

"Yes, a fresh impetus has indeed been given to this French industry, and the fact for us has a very peculiar significance. The French fishing fleet in Newfoundland waters this year numbered no fewer than 350 vessels, aggregating 35,000 tons. Their catch is estimated at one-and-a-half millions quintals. The Cape Ann *Advertiser* says that 'after supplying their home market they will have from a half to three-quarters of a million quintals to export, which, aided by the Government bounty of \$2 a quintal, makes competition from either Newfoundland or Norway almost impossible.' It is with regret that we have to admit the partial truthfulness of this assertion. This bounty-fed fish of our Gallican rivals has done and is now doing much injury to our interests in the leading fishmarkets of the world. As we have before pointed out, it is only of late years that the French have entered into large competition with us in the Mediterranean. In 1884 20,000 quintals of codfish, of French cure, were imported into Northern Italy. This quantity was increased in 1885 to 100,000 quintals, while a similar rate of increase was seen in the French imports into Spain—the aggregate in the latter year amounting to the immense total of 250,000 quintals, and during the present season no fewer than 500,000 quintals of French codfish were in competition with us in these markets. Can these striking, very alarming facts, we ask, be contemplated with equanimity or composure by our people? All the more need therefore for every effort being made to lessen the French catch of codfish in the waters surrounding this coast and on the banks. And with the help of the Bait Bill, after it has received the Queen's assent, we believe that this can be accomplished to a large and gratifying extent."

Now, that shows the injury to Newfoundland that accrues from the large bounty given by the French Government, and the adoption of the system of paying this bounty in the case of fish sent into foreign markets. The Newfoundland people so thoroughly recognise this that they have decided to legislate in the most stringent way to meet the competition that their own fishermen are subjected to by the action of the French Government. I hold in my hand the statutes of Newfoundland showing how they have met this action of the French Government :

"Whereas in the interests of the fisheries of this colony, and for the preservation of the bait necessary for the pursuit of these fisheries, it is essential to regulate the exportation and sale of such bait. Be it therefore enacted by the Governor, the Legislative Council and Assembly, in Legislative Session convened, as follows:—(1) No person shall export, or cause or procure to be exported, or assist in the exportation of, or (2) Haul, catch, purchase or sell for the purpose of exportation, or (3) Sell or purchase for the purpose of sale, any herring, caplin, squid, or other bait fishes, from on or near any parts of this colony or of its dependencies, or from or in any of the bays, harbours, or other places therein, for bait purposes, without a special license, in writing, obtained from the Receiver General of this colony, which license may be in the form set forth in the schedule hereto annexed, and shall be of no avail beyond the fishing season for which it is granted.

"Every person guilty of a violation of any of the provisions of this Act, shall, for the first offence, be liable to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, and in default of payment of any such penalty, to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, and for the second or any subsequent offence, to imprisonment for a period not exceeding twelve months."

But they do not stop there, they go on further to say :

"Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this Act, in addition to the penalties provided in the fifth section hereof, shall be liable to have his vessel, or the vessel used by him, seized in manner aforesaid, her tackle, apparel, furniture and outfit, forfeited and sold by public auction."

That is pretty stringent legislation, as you will observe, but they go on still further. They find that even that will not keep the French fish out, even when they have provided against the purchase of bait in order to deprive the French fishermen of the means of catching fish. They also go further, and provide against buying fish to go into their

markets to be there bonded and again sent out to those markets which they hope to secure for themselves. The same year, 1887, the colony of Newfoundland enacted:—

"It shall not be lawful for any importer of dried fish to warehouse the same in any of the ports of this colony and its dependencies without the payment of the duty herein before provided of \$1.50 on every quintal so warehoused, and the provisions of any Act of this colony with regard to the warehousing of goods, on the first entry hereof, or to the allowance of the drawbacks upon exportation, shall not in either case apply or be construed to apply to such fish."

So, you see, Newfoundland will not admit them to bond at all. If they come in they shall pay the duty, they shall not be admitted to compete without paying duty. To go further, I find that the Chamber of Commerce, which is naturally composed of exporters as well as producers, men who make their living by buying and selling fish as well as those who make their living by catching fish, at their annual meeting, expressed themselves as follows:—

"The following is the opinion of the chamber in regard to the operation of our Bait Act: The wisdom of vigorously enforcing the Bait Act is already manifest, as the French fishermen's catch on the Banks is unusually short, and this fact has given an impetus to prices in this market, which have opened at 20 per cent. over last year's rates. The short catch above referred to will lessen the competition our Labrador cure has been subjected to in Italian and other markets during past years, and with the prospect of the increased demand and consumption, paying rates are likely to rule here for our staple."

Then, the Italian Government, finding that these fish were coming in to their market and competing in an unsatisfactory way, in an unnatural way, as they conceived, by reason of the bounty given by the French Government, caused the following notice to be published in the Canadian papers:

"The Royal Italian Consul in the Dominion of Canada hereby gives notice to Merchant Shippers of Codfish to Italian ports, that it having come to his knowledge that French caught and cured codfish have been and are shipped from Canada to the Mediterranean, begs to remind merchants that all shipments made to Italy must be provided with a Consular Certificate of Origin to be appended to the respective invoices and bills of lading, in the absence of which the special Import Tariff may be applied and levied on all other cured codfish, to the prejudice of the Maritime Provinces trade.
"Halifax, October 1."

Here we have them demanding that the fish sent out by us must be capable of identification. When we come to the practice of the United States, we find that they permit fish to be imported and retained in bond to be exported. I am informed that their regulations require that when imported, the packages cannot be broken open, the fish must be exported in the same packages in which they are imported, or otherwise duty will be charged; thus they will not be permitted to be unpacked in bond at all. Now, Sir, this being so, we now stand alone. We find that all other markets consider that these fish are treated by a bounty to the prejudice of the products of the countries to which I have referred. But we, so far as I am informed, and as my constituents believe, permit this fish to come in and be bonded and afterwards exported. I am not prepared to say under what conditions these fish are kept in bond, but I am informed they are kept in bond not under the supervision of the Customs authorities, but are simply placed in a merchant's warehouse, under an arrangement that a certain quantity has been received and that that quantity must be exported. Although the question may have been for some time one of public importance, it is evident from the statements made on the subject that of late it has become a rather serious question, and it appears from a statement prepared from the returns that only since 1887 has it assumed importance. 20,000 quintals of codfish came in from St. Pierre in 1887, 14,000 in 1888. Our fish were thus brought into competition with fish from St. Pierre, and our fish had to be placed on the market against fish subsidised by the French Government. The returns show, moreover, that before 1884 there was no fish imported from St. Pierre, and therefore this is practically a new question. To show the feeling of the fishermen, I may say that I hold in my hand