

are not in the interest of the fishing industry, and that they are destructive to the fish, then a bold stand should be taken by the Minister, and a policy decided upon which will preserve our fishing industry to us. I desire to call the attention of the Minister to the fact that pound-net licenses have been granted for Lake St. Clair. I think that is a most unfortunate thing. If there is one fish more choice than another, found in the fresh water lakes and rivers of the country, it is the black bass. Lake St. Clair is the home and the breeding ground of the black bass, and if the system of pound-net fishing is continued on Lake St. Clair, it is safe to predict that the time is not far distant when no black bass will be found in that lake. Black bass is the fish of the sportsman in this country, and it is a notorious fact that they have, within the last few years, become exceedingly scarce. There can be no possible reason why that fine fish should be allowed to be caught by the ton in pound-nets, instead of being caught by the fishermen with the ordinary seine-net or by the hook and line of the sportsman. The Province of Ontario, or the Dominion of Canada, does not get one copper's worth of advantage for all this black bass caught in Lake St. Clair, because, without any exception whatever, it finds its way to the Detroit and Buffalo markets.

It being Six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

### After Recess.

Mr. LISTER. When the House rose at six o'clock, I was attempting to point out to the Minister of Fisheries the objections to granting licenses for pound-net fishing in Lake St. Clair, and I desire as strongly as possible to emphasize those objections. I stated, and I now repeat, that that lake is the home of the black bass—that the spawning grounds of the black bass are there; and I would add that it is the resort of thousands of sportsmen from all parts of this continent during the fishing season. On the Plats Canal entering into Lake St. Clair there are club houses, hotels and residences, where through the heated season there is a population, floating and stationary, of many hundreds of people, if not thousands. The experience of the past few years, since these pound-nets have been allowed to be used in fishing in Lake St. Clair, is that the black bass have been gradually becoming fewer each year, until to-day it is with difficulty that a person fishing with a rod can get a supply of fish there at all. In addition to all this, all the fish caught in Lake St. Clair are at once sent to the markets of Detroit and Buffalo. I venture the assertion that in the cities of Toronto, London, Kingston or Montreal, or any other city in this Dominion a person would find great difficulty to-day in purchasing a black bass. The business of fishing with pound-nets has fallen altogether into the hands of American companies. There is a great fishing combination in the United States. There is the Manitoba Fishing Company, incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan, in which J. W. Gauthier is one of the principal stockholders, as well as the Buffalo Fish Company and the Detroit Fish Company. These large and powerful companies have succeeded in getting control of the principal fisheries on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. In proof of this statement I would refer the

Mr. LISTER.

House to pages 97 and 98 of the report of Mr. Wilmot, a gentleman well capable of giving an opinion upon the question under discussion, where he uses these words:

"Before closing this report I beg to call your attention to the fact that in former years wholesale fish dealers, with moderate capital, were stationed at different points, such as Collingwood, Meaford, Owen Sound and other places, and purchased from time to time the fish brought to market by the fishermen of Georgian Bay; but I regret to say that an extensive fish company, composed of American capitalists, have bought or squeezed out all the local dealers, and now have a complete monopoly of the fish caught in these waters. \* \* \* As the Georgian Bay is the main source of fish food for the Province of Ontario, and the Buffalo fish monopoly now have complete control of it, it is only reasonable to assume—in fact the present aspect indicates that Canadians will only be enabled to secure supplies of salmon trout and whitefish at a very high market price, and only then when there is an over-supply for the American trade.

"In conversation with interested fishermen at various points, and in the vicinity of Warton (the main export depot of the American fish company), I find that considerable dissatisfaction exists among Canadian fishermen on account of the privileges which American capitalists have usurped, and which they claim must soon drive the Canadians out of the trade of exporting fish altogether."

There is no question that this portion of Mr. Wilmot's report is fully warranted by all the facts of the case. Gentlemen living in any of the cities of this Dominion will bear me out in the statement that in those cities it is almost impossible to obtain fresh fish that are fit for food. I understand that Americans are not allowed to take out licenses in their own names; but they evade the law by getting some poor fellow to take out a license in his own name, though having neither the capital nor the appliances for fishing and not intending to fish, and perhaps only employed in the establishment of one of these companies as an ordinary workman. Such a license enables one of these American companies to catch fish in Canadian waters and take them into the United States free of duty, because they make a declaration at the port to which the fish are shipped that all their fishing appliances belong to American citizens. The consequence is that while we grant a license to the Canadian, he is not its owner, but only the trustee for the American citizen. American fishermen can thus take their fish into the United States free of duty, while Canadian fishermen are met at the border by a duty which makes it exceedingly unprofitable, particularly to a small fisherman, to engage in the business. There is a case within my own knowledge of a fisherman taking \$30 of fish to Port Huron, where, before he got through he had to pay \$2.90 in the shape of duties, entry charges and other expenses, the payments thus amounting nearly to the value of the fish in our market. Now, I maintain that a license ought not to be granted to any person unless he can show to the satisfaction of the department that he is able and intends to go on and fish on his own account. It is not right that the law should be evaded as it is and honest fishermen driven out, because under existing circumstances it is impossible for local fishermen to compete with those great companies who throw every obstacle in their way. Speaking for Lake Huron, I can say that these Americans do not give any employment whatever to Canadian fishermen. They take out a tugboat from Port Huron, the property of a large fishing firm there, run it alongside their net, and load the fish into the tug. The men on the boat do all the work, there is not the expense of a single dollar among Canadians; the Americans