

bait supply of any British subjects, were deemed by Her Majesty's Government to offer, in the language of Sir Henry Holland, Secretary of State for the Colonies, "sufficient safeguards for Canadian interests," and consequently, Sir Henry Holland went on to say in his despatch to Lord Lansdowne, "Her Majesty's Government did not, therefore, hesitate to advise Her Majesty's assent to it."

Accordingly, the following Minute of Council was, on the 11th October, 1887, approved by his Excellency Lord Lansdowne:—

"The Committee of the Privy Council have had under consideration a despatch, dated the 20th May, 1887, from Sir Henry Holland, inclosing copies of correspondence which had passed between the Colonial Office and Representatives of the Government of Newfoundland, then in London, regarding the Newfoundland Bait Bill.

"The Minister of Marine and Fisheries, to whom the papers were referred, reports as follows: 'It appears from the correspondence that a copy of the Minute of Council, dated the 11th April, 1887, urging the objection taken by the Canadian Government to the Bait Bill becoming law, was submitted to Sir R. Thorburn and Sir Ambrose Shea for their consideration. The replies made thereto by these gentlemen conveyed ample assurances that the Government of Newfoundland in the passage of this Bill were not actuated by any desire to curtail the privileges of British fishermen, and had no intention of allowing the law to be operated to their prejudice; that no Regulations were proposed which would unnecessarily hamper the operations of their own British fishermen, and that every facility would be afforded for procuring the licences under the Act.'

"Sir R. Thorburn also authorized the dispatch of a telegram by the Attorney-General of Newfoundland to the Canadian Government, conveying the assurance that Canadian fishermen would enjoy equal privileges with those of Newfoundland, and that there would be practically no restriction on the bait supply of any British subjects.

"These assurances appear to Her Majesty's Government to offer such sufficient safeguards for Canadian interests that Her Majesty was at once advised to assent to the Bill.

"The Committee concurring in the Report of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, respectfully recommend that your Excellency be moved to transmit a copy of the despatch above mentioned and inclosures (permission having been obtained from the Colonial Secretary) to his Excellency the Governor of Newfoundland, for the consideration of his Ministers, and with a request that they will indicate at the earliest convenient period the nature of the Regulations under which it is proposed that Canadian subjects shall enjoy the rights of fishing and procuring bait in the territorial waters of Newfoundland.

"The Committee further recommend that your Excellency be also moved to transmit a copy of this Minute to his Excellency the Governor of Newfoundland."

It is to be further observed that Sir G. William Des Vœux, Governor of Newfoundland, in his despatch of the 14th January, 1887,* addressed to the Right Honourable Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, when urging the allowance of this Bill, argued entirely upon the grounds that it was aimed solely against foreign fishermen, and Sir G. William Des Vœux, in this despatch, stated:—

"I may mention that every day's delay is causing loss to this Colony, in restricting preparations for next season's fishing; for the allowance of this Bill would be at once followed by a large increase in the number of British vessels employed in the Bank fishing: and even now it is too late, in some cases, for arrangements that would enable advantage to be taken of the earliest portion of the season.

"Moreover, it is only fair to the French that if they are to be prohibited from procuring bait here during the coming season, they should be made aware of the fact at once, in order that they may restrict their operations accordingly, it being probable, as regards the large number of vessels which annually leave France for these fishing grounds, that preparations are being made already for their dispatch in order to enable them to obtain bait and commence fishing at the beginning of April; and thus, not merely in the interest of this Colony and Canada, but for the sake of international comity, I would respectfully urge that, in the absence of a fixed decision against this measure, the delay which has already taken place in respect of its allowance should not be further prolonged."

Upon the 20th April, 1887, the Minister of Marine and Fisheries received, at Ottawa, the following telegram from the Government of Newfoundland:—

"We learn with surprise and regret that your Government apprehend our Bait Act will interfere with Canadian fishermen. I am authorized to give you fullest assurance

* No. 41.