

Columbians brought about a change, and all the commissioners are now on an equal footing, and all to be appointed after the treaty comes into effect.

That is all I think I should say at this time about the matter—making it clear that the postponement of last year was due not to politics, but to the inherent defects of the treaty, as confessed in the changes voluntarily made this year by both Governments. All parties in British Columbia are sincerely desirous of the restoration of this fishery, and we hope that there will be some new faces on the Commission. We want to be delivered from the officialdom that has been in charge of these fisheries for the past fifty years.

Many of us realize that these long experienced officials have very incomplete knowledge of the fishery problems. They give as the reason for the present depletion of the fishery, an unfortunate occurrence at Hell's Gate fifteen years ago, when the contractors of the Canadian Northern Railway dumped a lot of rock into the Fraser River. This has been put forward from that time to the present as the reason for the failure of the fishery. And while those gentlemen have been searching for some remedy that they might apply, Providence has furnished the finest run of sockeye that we have had on the Fraser River in fifteen years. We do not know why the salmon stopped coming after 1913, and we do not know why they have now commenced to come in greater numbers. The officials do not know why that is. They are not the persons to find out, because they are wedded to the idea that the mishap at Hell's Gate was responsible for all the difficulty. That belief is not held by everyone in British Columbia, and it is shattered by the experience of last year, when, as I say, we had the biggest run that we have had in fifteen years.

If we get a new deal—new commissioners with new ideas, with no fixed convictions, and prepared to investigate—we are much more likely to be successful than if we have some of the persons who have been administering the fisheries—no matter how faithfully—for some years past, and who would carry on with the ideas of those years and trust to Providence that they might have more success in the future than they have had in the past. We hope that will not be the spirit in which the Commission will be constituted. We know what the American commissioners are likely to do. We have seen what the Americans have done in Alaska, where they have really restored the fisheries, which were depleted to a much greater extent than the sockeye fisheries of British Columbia. The Alaska

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fisheries have been restored chiefly through the firm handling of the situation by Commissioner O'Malley of the United States. If we have commissioners of the same standing, and if they are given some freedom by the Government and receive the same support that Commissioner O'Malley has always received from the United States Government, we may confidently look for just as conspicuous success in the Fraser River as has been achieved in Alaska.

Hon. R. F. GREEN: Honourable members, it is not my purpose to take more than a few minutes of your time. I do not intend to enter into a discussion of the demerits of last year's convention or the merits of the present one. I just wish to say that the fact is that the run of the sockeye salmon in the Fraser River has been depleted to such an extent that it has become almost non-existent. The causes, as has been said by my honourable colleague (Hon. Mr. Taylor), are not quite agreed upon. The probability is that they have been various, and that among others is that of over-fishing.

The sockeye salmon, as a youngster, goes out to sea, and four years later it returns, presumably by the same route. In so doing it comes through the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and first strikes American waters. The Americans, with their traps, have the first chance at the fish; and, as we do not permit traps, our fishermen cannot gather fish at the mouth of the Fraser River in as great numbers as if there were traps there. Under existing circumstances the salmon did not get into the spawning beds in the head waters of the Fraser River, and the benefit of anything that we did to raise more fish and bring back the catch went to our neighbours to the south. Therefore, for years past, the Government of British Columbia, being unable to deal with the matter, have been striving to impress upon the Federal Government the importance of making some convention with the American people, so that this valuable industry might return to something like its past condition.

If we get the right commissioners under this convention, it will be possible for them to see that its terms are carried out and that the Canadian people secure their share of the fish; but unless the matter is strictly regulated the Americans, because the fish strike their waters first, will secure the bulk of the fish. I believe that this convention is a step in the right direction; I believe that we are going to have commissioners who will look after the interests of Canada, and I believe it will not be long before we begin to enjoy