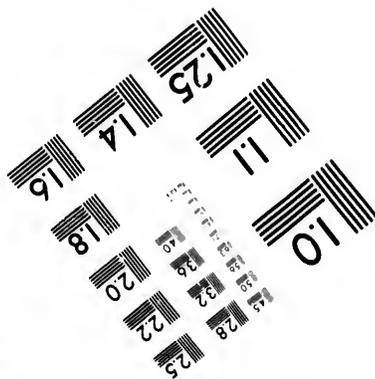
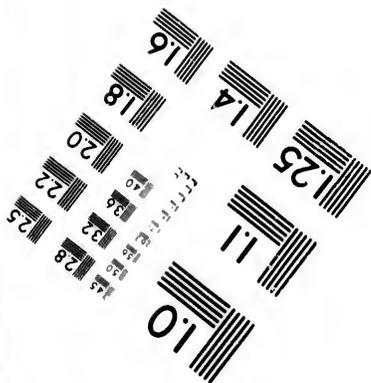
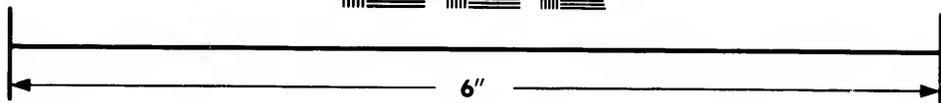
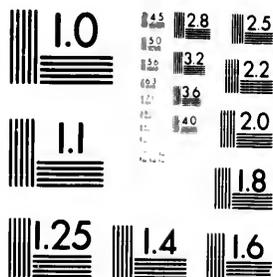
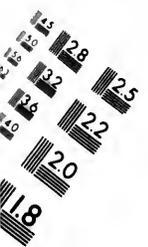


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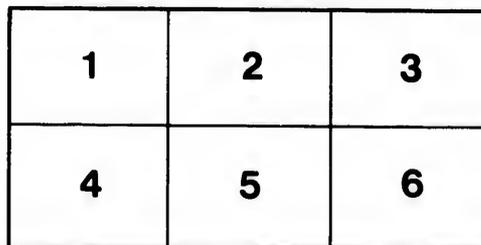
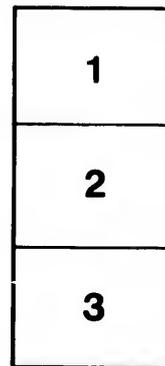
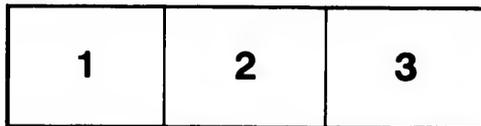
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# THE LOBSTER INDUSTRY

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Hon. L. H. Davies, Minister of Marine and Fisheries, Consults with  
the Lobster Men of P. E. Island

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Gathering from the Packing Parts of the Province  
November 4, 1896

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INFORMATION GLEANED DURING THE DISCUSSION

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THE MINISTER SPEAKS ON THE SUBJECT



CHARLOTTETOWN  
PRINTED AT THE PATRIOT OFFICE, QUEEN SQUARE

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THE MINISTER SPEAKS ON THE SUBJECT

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In response to the courteous invitation of the Hon L. H. Davies, Minister of Marine and Fisheries, the lobster packers of this Island assembled in the comfortable hall of the Young Liberals, in the Market building, on Nov. 4, 1896, to discuss matters pertaining to this most important industry. As the Minister well said the intelligence and the wealth of the Lobster business of the Island was splendidly represented, as every man of prominence in the business appeared to be present. The hall was filled to its capacity, and the very many gentlemen who addressed the meeting, were listened to most attentively, the Minister evincing his keen interest, by the leading questions he put to the speakers. From the discussion it was evident that the packers on

the north side are satisfied with the present close season, while those on the south desire a change.

John A. Matheson, Esq., Campbellton, was called to the chair, the duties of which he performed in a most satisfactory manner.

Among those present we noticed Hon John Yeo, Port Hill; Hon S F Perry, Tignish; Hon D Farquharson, Hon Daniel Davies, Senator Arsenault, Wellington; Senator McDonald, Edward Hackett, M P., John McLean, G B McEachern, Souris; Messrs. Peter McNutt, Malpeque; Thos Kickham, Souris; James Clow, Murray Harbor North; R N Cox, Morell; Jas Myriok, Tignish; W F Tidmarsh, G D Longworth, Walter Matheson, Chas Lyons, Horace Hazzard, F B McRae, Wm Harris, S E Gallant, M. P. P.

LE Prowse, M. P. P., H W Longworth, Joseph Wise, M P P., and scores of other well known and prominent men engaged in the lobster packing business.

Minister Davies, with his Private Secretary Mr. Williams, sat on the platform and almost promptly on time the meeting was opened.

#### THE LOBSTERS PACKERS SPEAK.

Hon. Daniel Davies complimented the Minister on calling this convention to ascertain the views of the Island packers. There was much reason, he thought, for complaint. The mackerel fishing is dwindling away and the lobster industry is most important and well deserving of important consideration. He specified existing grievances as follows:—

- (1) Not allowed to pack lobsters under 9 inches.
- (2) Regulations respecting close season and the putting of labels on the boxes. The latter did not prevent packing out of season.
- (3) The manner in which packers are taxed.

He was also opposed to all extensions of the close season and different parts of the Island he believed required different close seasons. The season now lasts to the 15th July. On the south side the ice prevents as early a beginning as on the west and after the 15th June, the fishing is not of much use as the lobsters then retire to deep water. He thought the season should terminate then. That, however, would be too short; but after a close season of one month, the fishermen on the south side should be given an additional month or six weeks, say from 15th Sept. to 15th Oct., as between the first and second of the close seasons, he remarked, the lobsters were not fit to catch. Adopting this plan, spring and fall fishing

would be of great benefit to the packers and at the same time conserve the lobster interests.

The Minister was of a tolerably strong opinion that the fishermen were opposed to having two seasons. However, he was willing to abide by the decision of the lobster men here and in the adjoining provinces. He suggested, so as to expedite and make clear the matters discussed, that the three counties, King's, Queen's and Prince, be heard in order and this suggestion was wisely acted upon.

Mr. James Clow, of Murray Harbor North, thought the time in regard to the close season could not be improved upon. He was opposed to a second season. Such would be a further extension, and besides what would become of the fishing gear. On the coast in his section from Cape Bear to Panmure Island, he was in favor of from the first of the spring season to the 1st July. Two months were long enough for fishing; any longer would not protect the lobster. He believed in a universal close season for the whole Island ending on July 1st.

Mr. A. J. McDonald, M. P. P., Georgetown, always advocated a short close season and considered the present might be shortened with advantage. Since the present season was fixed by law more factories had sprung up and the industry could not stand such extensive fishing. Certainly the season now is too short, but a further decrease in time would lessen the number of factories and this would be a benefit. He was also opposed to September fishing and thought up to the 1st July sufficient. The lobster industry is well worth weighty consideration and is safe in Mr. Davies' hands.

Mr. Clow said speaking from experience he found lobsters caught in Sept. were no better than those taken after

the close season. In short they were unfit to pack.

Hon. D. Davies said his idea in suggesting a second season was to prevent illegal fishing, and to preserve the industry.

Mr. A. F. Larkin, Tignish, through some better system necessary with respect to the labelling of the boxes. He also advocated not only the seizure of boats and traps, but also of gear and plant where fishing after the close season was indulged in.

Mr. John McLean ex-M. P., of Souris, stated that a meeting of the lobster men was held in Souris last night and a resolution was passed that the present regulations were satisfactory, and that they were satisfied to have them carried out. To meet the views of other packers that meeting was willing the close season should be curtailed to July 1st. He was speaking the views of the packers from Grand River East and down to St. Peter's Bay. That meeting was also opposed to a double season. He considered the label a check on illegal fishing, and was in favor of imposing a fine on persons buying lobsters packed out of season. If the wardens do their duty this could not be done.

Mr. Thomas Kiockham, Souris, endorsed the sentiments already expressed by the King's County men and said a second season would not be fair to the fishermen on the north side. If all were willing to forego spring fishing then a fall season might be considered.

Mr. R. N. Cox, Morell, spoke in a similar strain and thought perhaps up to 25th June was long enough to fish. He noticed that after the 15th of that month the business practically ceased. The less restrictions on the business the better.

Mr. W. H. Prowse, of Murray Harbor South, agreed with last speakers, but con-

sidered July 1st short enough for closing. Sometimes the traps are not out till 4th June owing to the ice. If the spring season were closed and a fall season adopted, it would be ruinous to the fishermen of the east.

Mr. Daniel Keenan, Murray Harbor North, thought the season now established about right, but was in favor of closing on 15th and not 1st July.

Mr. W. F. Tidmarsh then read the following excellent paper:—

#### MR. TIDMARSH'S PAPER.

Before making any radical changes in the lobster fishing season I think we should consider the matter, and consider it very carefully. We should know and know beyond all doubt that the proposed change is going to be of some benefit to the industry. We are not here to discuss at what season of the year lobsters can be taken in the largest quantities; we are here to determine at what season of the year fishing can be carried on profitably, and the fishing be at the same time preserved. That the lobster fisheries have been and are much depleted is a matter very evident to all who are engaged in the business. I say it is being depleted to an extent that few realize, and it remains with those interested to say and the government to say, and to say quickly whether or not this industry which brings into this province a sum not less than \$600,000 per annum, shall be utterly and absolutely destroyed, or whether it shall be handed down to posterity as one of the prominent resources of the Province. Personally I am opposed to making any material changes in the packing season. I think it would be well to try the law we have first and then if that is a failure why let us have another. My own opinion

is, that the decrease in lobsters is due, and entirely due, to the illegal fishing that has been carried on during the last six or eight years.

When the lobster business first started out on the Island, and for many years afterwards, when the lobsters approached the shore in the spring, they were very generally distributed along the entire coast. Some sections may, owing to certain local conditions extremely favorable to the habits of the lobsters, have had a slight advantage over other sections. But they were very generally distributed. A failure to secure a good catch in any section was unknown. To illustrate how surely and steadily has been the decrease of the lobster in sections where illegal fishing had been carried on, I will give statistics taken from a factory situated in one of these sections. During a period of six seasons at that factory the average number of 1 lb cans to each trap fished was in 1891, 24 22-25; in 1892 it was 16½; in 1893 it was 13½; in 1894 it was 12½; in 1895 it was 7½; and in 1896 it was 5½. I may here state that prior to 1891 in this particular section illegal fishing had been carried on and the fisheries were in a somewhat depleted condition when I went there. In contradistinction to this I will give statistics from a factory situated in a section where prior to 1891 and up to 1894 the law was very well observed. These also cover a period of six seasons. In 1891 the average number of 1 lb cans to each trap fished was 30½; in 1892 it was 12½; in 1893 it was 13 15-25; in 1894 it was 14½; in 1895 it was 15 3 25; and in 1896 it was 12½.

The alarming decrease from 1891 to 1892 was not due to over-fishing. That year the space between each lath on the traps was by regulation 1½ inches, and 15 days were taken off the season, mak-

ing the close season begin on July 1st instead of the 15th; and another cause was that the high price paid for canned lobsters in 1891 induced a number of persons to go into the business, resulting in there being more traps fished on that ground in 1892 than there ever was before or since that date. Since 1892, as the number of traps fished decreased, the average number of cans to the trap increased, proving to my mind that the lobsters in that section had received sufficient protection. It is a well known fact that the demand for extensions of the fishing season and sectional differences of season comes, and invariably comes, from those portions of the country where illegal fishing has been carried on. A man whom I think is at present in this hall told me only a few days ago, that he fished at West Cape the first spring a lobster factory was operated there, and that it was the best place for Lobster fishing he ever saw, and that lobsters continued to be plenty there for some years. I am told that at this once favored locality there are very few lobsters taken during the spring months. What is the cause of this? It looks to me very much as though the cause has been illegal fishing. At Cape Traverse, where the law has been most rigidly observed, there is no such thing as a scarcity of lobsters. Lobsters were more plentiful there this season than they ever were before, even in the infancy of the business.

And now about the proposed change. On the north side and on the east and west ends of P. E. Island, fishing in the fall would, it appears to me, be impracticable owing to the exposed nature of the coast. The only part of P. E. Island where it would be at all possible to fish with any degree of success is on that portion of the coast lying between Cape

Bear and West Point, and it is very doubtful if, in this section, it could be carried on profitably. During the shelling period, which begins about July 10th, and up to at least Aug. 20th, the lobster, in my opinion, is unfit for human food. What it is like after that period I have no practical knowledge of, but I am told that after Sept. 1st the condition of the lobster very much improves. If the evidence in favor of fall fishing is sufficient to warrant its adoption, I think it would be very unwise to have fishing begin before Aug. 20th. During the month of September, the weather becomes very stormy. It is very difficult to keep boats on an exposed coast and not one-twentieth of the gear could be landed. Every canner knows what a difficult matter it is to land gear in the month of July, which is the most moderate month in the year. In the month of November it would be almost impossible. Another great objection to sectional difference of season is that when the factories on the north shores of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick closed down every canner who happened to have any supplies left over from his spring's packing would come over to the south coast of the Island, put up a little shanty and begin fishing. Nothing could be more easily done and nothing is more probable. The result of this would be that all the lobsters would be caught up in a short time. It is said that lobsters approach very near to the shore in the fall of the year, and that they can be taken in very large quantities. One hundred traps setting in a square mile of ground may average, say, 15 lobsters to the trap. But this is no argument that if the number of traps were increased to 3,000, as would surely be the case if fall fishing were allowed, that the average would be the same. In fact

we have every reason to believe that it would not be the same, and if the same number of traps were fished in the fall as has been fished in the spring packers would not have found lobsters more plentiful at one season than the other, I have also heard it said that a change of season would stop illegal fishing. I wish I could think so, but I see no reason to believe that such would be the case. In fact I see every reason to think otherwise, as the weather is more moderate in the spring and the conditions for fishing far more favorable than in the fall. The only argument that I have heard advanced in favor of fall fishing worthy of serious consideration is that lobsters spawn in the spring and do not spawn in the fall. If this is the case, to allow the spawn to mature and develop by the natural process would be much better than propagating it artificially. I know that lobsters spawn in the spring in very large numbers. I have been told by fishermen in Nova Scotia and Maine where winter fishing is carried on that they spawn at all seasons of the year. I have no knowledge personally, as to whether on the coast of P. E. Island lobsters spawn in fall or not and must look for information on that point to those who have been fishing during the fall months. If it could be shown that lobsters spawn in the spring and then only, and one law could be applied covering Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and P. E. Island to protect them during that period, I would give it my hearty support, but I am very much opposed to any sectional difference of season.

I recommend that the open season for lobster fishing be from April 15th to June 30th and that this law apply to all parts of P. E. Island; but if the evidence that comes before the Hon. Minister

should in his judgment be sufficient to warrant his making a change in the law, I beg to assure him that he shall have my hearty co-operation and support in carrying it into effect and in giving it a fair trial. Whatever law comes into force should be made permanent, as these repeated changes very much unsettle the business.

Mr. Tidmarsh further stated that he did not believe lobsters were fit for human food between July 10th and the 20th August.

Mr. F. B. McRae, a lobster packer of Queen's County, could understand why the fishermen on the east desired only one season; but on the south side the proper and best time for lobster fishing was from the 20th of August to 20th October. He was not in favor of two seasons.

Hon. D. Farquharson thought such an important meeting could not but result in great benefit. He commended Mr. Tidmarsh's valuable paper. It is not to consult profit to those engaged so much as the protection of the lobster that this meeting is concerned. He was in favor of the fall season if the quality of the fish was equally good as in spring, and thought if the spring season to July were continued, the lobster grounds would become depleted.

Hon. Daniel Davies said there was no demand in the English markets in the fall for lobsters. The best fish are caught in the spring, and it is in summer they are demanded.

Mr. G. D. Longworth considered May and June the proper months to pack. The lobsters of August are soft shelled. In September, however, they are all right, but not equal to those caught in spring. Around Egmont Bay section but meagre catches are obtained in May and June, and the business there cannot be continued under present conditions. The market would not have fish packed in August or first part of September. He had lost money on such. A sale cannot be made in England even at this time in the year; the proper time is the spring. He thought the present close

season all right and he was opposed to shortening it, believing the majority of fishermen were in favor of spring fishing.

Mr. Chas Lyons said that on the south side it was almost impossible, owing to the winds from the east and the winds from the west, and the ice, to do anything until the 20th May. Consequently little is done before the 10th June. Spring fishing on the south side does not pay. All the fishermen from Point Prim to Cape Egmont will say this, and that they must have fall fishing. The same should extend to Cape Bear. It is in the interest of large buyers to keep the season as it now exists. It is said the lobsters during August are unfit to be caught, but nevertheless they have been caught, bought and shipped abroad. From Cape Bear and West Point on the south side the season should open the 20th of August.

Mr. Horace Hazard said he had endeavored to obtain the views of the different packers around the Island. He believed the season should remain as at present along the north side, from north side West Point, by North Point along to East Point, thence to Cape Bear. On the south side a change may be desirable from Cape Bear to West Point. Those who fished in the fall would be obliged to place their pack on the market when it was already supplied. But if they desired to do this, he would not oppose giving them the opportunity. He had had experience in fall fishing before the new regulations went into force, and remembered fitting out a man in Charlottetown, who fished lobsters right into December, and placed in our market fresh lobsters of excellent quality—better in fact than at any other time. He was opposed to two seasons and stated that extensions of the season had a depreciating effect on the English and French markets.

Mr. Jas. Taylor, of St. Peter's Island, was opposed to spring fishing. He thought the season should close on 1st July. The lobsters commenced to spawn about 20th Aug. The fall was the time to pack.

Mr. Theo. A. Stewart, of West River, believed millions of spawn were de-

stroyed by spring fishing, and if fall fishing only prevented this destruction a great good would have been accomplished. He advocated a season from 20th Aug. to 20th Oct., from Pt. Prim as far west as one can go. Try the experiment for one year.

Mr. Frank Schaefer, of Cape Traverse, favored spring fishing, and Mr. W. A. Leard, of Sea Cow Head, contended that the spawning varied according to the depth of water around the coasts. Beginning fishing on the 20th Aug. would suit his section.

Capt. Piggott, of the North Side, was satisfied that lobsters spawn all the year round. He was satisfied with the present close season. He believed a double season—one for the north side and one for the south would soon ruin the lobster industry. For instance in the spring all the packers would fish in the north, while in the fall all would go to the south, and the fishing grounds would be depleted. Speaking of labeling, he thought the labels should be in the hands of some Government official who should stamp them and allow no lobsters to be shipped without being so stamped. He was also opposed to any extension of time and never yet fished up to time limit. The average time of getting out traps in his section was from 15th to 20th May.

Mr Sheppard Allen, of Augustine Cove and South Shore, considered fall fishing the best by odds for that section. 1st Aug. to 20th Oct. was the best season.

Mr. J. H. Myrick, Tignish, was strongly opposed to packing in the hot season. He believed that such was in part accountable for the discoloration of the lobster. From reading works of eminent authorities on this crustacean he found that the lobster cannot breed more than once every two years, and did not believe that lobsters in spawn were more plentiful in one season than another. He was in favor of the fishing season commencing about the 1st of May and continuing for two months. He was only speaking, however, for his own section.

Hon. Peter McNutt, Malpeque, endorsed the views expressed by Mr.

Tidmarsh with the exception of the time, as fishing cannot be commenced on the north side before the 15th of May. He believed lobsters were unfit for food in August. Traps should not be set in the spawning grounds if it can be ascertained where the spawning grounds are. He thought such were close to rocky shores, and in the bays, rivers and estuaries. He was opposed to two seasons, but would not object to a week or two extension to the south side fishermen.

Mr. Wm. Irving, Cape Traverse, submitted the following statement regarding the percentage of lobsters in spawn caught in the months specified:

May 9	1	per	ct.	berried	lobsters	to	catch
" 16	2	"	"	"	"	"	"
" 23	3	"	"	"	"	"	"
June 2	5	"	"	"	"	"	"
" 8	6	"	"	"	"	"	"
" 15	12 $\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	"	"	"
" 22	12	"	"	"	"	"	"
July 1	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	"	"	"

7 per cent. per hundred for the catch.

And they fell from the above to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of 1 per cent, when the soft lobsters came in. For the protection of the lobster he considered the open season should be from 20th Aug. to 20th Oct.

1 o'clock having arrived, the meeting adjourned for one hour.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

Promptly at 2 o'clock the meeting was continued, the hall being again crowded and the proceedings characterized by the same unabated interest so evident in the morning session.

Mr. John Agneau, of Alberton, was the first speaker, and he considered July 1st the proper time for closing fishing, and the 1st of May the proper time to run the lines. He considered a more rigid enforcement of the law respecting illegal fishing necessary.

Mr H. W. Longworth, Charlotte-town, considered it was about impossible to make a living out of the business if the law were strictly adhered to. He submitted some figures taken from his factory at Egmont Bay, where fishing was commenced about May 20th.

There were seven boats in that factory with 300 traps each and manned by two men to a boat. The statement showed how exceedingly poor the fishing was in May; how it considerably increased in June and was over six times greater in July than in June. When the season closed the two fishermen had earned \$20, and were in debt about \$40. The fishing had to cease just when the lobsters were striking in. He stated the lobsters were all shelled by 5th or 10th and were beginning to crawl by 15th or 20th July. From that out good fishing can be obtained. He was in favor of commencing about 15th or 20th July or 1st Aug. For the section from West Cape to Cape Bear he would recommend beginning 1st Aug. Was in favor of the two months' limit. Fall fishing would suit us better and he was prepared to take the risk of the English market at that time. He found the lobsters had not varied in size in his section during the past six or eight years. The size limit was not enforced in this province.

Mr. Gilbert DesRoches, Miscouche, said the fishermen in his section, if it were not for the extension of the close season, would either have to drop the business or be outlawed. While their neighbors on the north and east were scooping in lobsters, the fishermen on the south were getting none, and just when fish did come, the close season went into operation. It was a great temptation to illegal fishing. He said that one factory in the regulation season packed 180 cases and in the extension time 400. This was proof that it was late in the season when lobsters could be got there in any quantity. At a meeting recently held in S'Side, a new regulation was asked for, namely, 15th July or 1st August.

Mr. Vincent Harrington, of Egmont Bay, agreed with Mr. DesRoches and Mr. Longworth, that the present close season is not the most favorable for that section. He thought that between June 1st and July 15th most of the spawn had been deposited. He substantiated his remarks with figures, showing 76 lobsters taken early in June; up to July 20th, 423; 21st, 713; 23rd, 717; 25th only two days later, 1525, and 27th, 1919 and 31st, 1700. This he held proved they

labored under great disadvantage in that section. He favored a shorter season when the fish were there to catch—from August 10th to October 10th would be a better open season than the present one.

Mr. R. A. Clarke, Alberton, opposed the extending of the close season beyond July 1st. Favored commencing fishing on May 1st.

Mr. C. Woodman, of the same place, thought a day should be fixed by law on which the lines are to be set out, and no lobster line should be allowed to be run out before a date so fixed. He also considered some improvement in the license regulation necessary.

Mr. Mich. Roy, Sea Cow Pond, thought the existing close season suited his section, though it might be shortened some 15 days. He fished up to August 1st, last year and found that the fish caught that late were not fit to pack. He agreed with previous speakers that a date should be fixed by law for the setting out of lines—May 1st, if agreeable. Did not believe lobsters were fit to pack from July 15th to Aug. 1st, in any part of the Island.

Mr. Thomas Howatt, of Cape Traverse, said, that although the spring fishing suited him, still if such destroyed immense number of spawn, then the fall fishing should be adopted. In his section the packers agreed on a date to set out their lines and no trouble was experienced. In three miles there were 9 factories which packed over 9000 cases this spring, a great majority of which he believed were spawn fish. He favored beginning about Aug. 10th.

Mr. Lawrence Lavers, representing Messrs Cogswell & Easton, Georgetown, agreed with the former speakers from that vicinity.

Mr. Simon Pinaud, of North Rustico, was in favor of a law to set out lines on May 1st. That month and June were the best season for fishing on north side.

Mr. Geo. B. McEachern, Souris, said he was a delegate appointed to be present. At a meeting held there last night it was unanimously decided that May

10th was the best date for opening the season on the north side. He strongly urged that a date not earlier than May 1st., be fixed for setting out the lines. In regard to the lobster spawning he was convinced that they spawn in every month of the year though probably more in some than in others. By catching lobsters in the fall the spawn is destroyed in the shape of the roe, so nothing would be gained in this direction by changing the close season. May and June, he believed, were the proper months to fish lobsters.

Mr. A. F. Larkin would allow the fishermen to commence as early as they saw fit, and would shorten the close season to July 1st. Prohibiting fishing to 1st May meant loss to fishermen about Mimingash and Campbellton.

Hon. D. Davies agreed with Mr. McEachern relative to the spawning of the lobster. He further stated the market in England was for the May and June pack.

Senator Arsenault, Egmont Bay, said it was only by the extension of the close season that the fishermen there profited. He heard no complaints of lobsters packed in July or August, but did of those packed in May and June. Would be satisfied for season to begin August 1st. He was in favor of later fishing than the present season.

Mr. J. A. Matheson, Campbellton, (Chairman) was in favor of the two months fishing, beginning at the opening of navigation. He objected to having a set date for placing the lines.

Mr. A. J. McDonald, M. P. P., Georgetown, did not agree with Mr. Matheson respecting the setting of the lines.

Messrs. G. D. Longworth, D. C. Morson and D. Farquharson considered it would be unfair to limit the time of setting out lines on the Island unless the same were done in regard to N. S. and N. B.

#### THE MINISTER SPEAKS.

As all matters pertaining to the lobster industry had by this time been most thoroughly discussed, the Hon. Mr. Davies addressed the meeting in an

earnest business-like manner. After expressing his sincere thanks to the gentlemen present for so heartily and numerously responding to his invitation, the Minister said he felt convinced that he was speaking to the intelligence and wealth engaged in the lobster fishing and packing of this Province, an industry the importance of which may be understood from the fact that the export of the product is over half a million of dollars annually.

In listening to the remarks of the various speakers, the Minister said he had acquired a great deal of information, which in considering and dealing with this most important matter would be invaluable to him. He stated that some years ago he had occasion to study the lobster fishery and in the course of his research had read the report of Mr. Frank Buckland, relative to the lobster industry along the coasts of Ireland, Scotland and England, and that eminent authority concluded that so far as those waters faced the Atlantic ocean no regulations or close season were required, but this would not hold good with respect to the estuaries and bays which it was possible to fish out. The conclusion arrived at by Mr. Buckland, Mr. Davies believed, would also apply to Canada, that is, the season will regulate itself on the north side, but when you come to Malpeque Bay and the Straits of Northumberland, the spawning grounds of the lobster, they must be protected. From North Cape round the North Side to Cape Bear and Grand River should remain as at present, and from Cape Bear to West Cape and to corresponding points in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick the regulations heretofore enforced were destructive to the industry.

He was profoundly impressed with the views of the meeting and promised that he would give them his most earnest consideration and consult with Mr. Prince, Commissioner of the Fisheries department, Ottawa, respecting the fall season for fishing. Those fishing on the south side, said the Minister, have signified their willingness to commence fishing between the 1st and 15th Aug., and risk the decline in the English markets for the fall pack, so if the

department tries the experiment it will do so purely as a matter of business and cannot be held responsible should the result prove unsatisfactory. He pointed out that the probabilities were that Parliament would not meet until February and stated that as early in the session as possible he would bring forward a bill legislating on this matter.

With respect to the fixing of a date by law on which to set out the lines, the Minister thought the preponderance of argument was in favor of such a date. It was not a question between the fishermen here and those of N. S. and N. B., but entirely between individual fishermen on the Island. One packer may have valuable gear and he should not be obliged to risk its loss owing to the recklessness of another packer in the section.

The Minister had little respect for minor regulations though no doubt good in themselves, but the safety of the lobster industry lies in the fixing of the close season, and the proper enforcement of the same. He hoped to fix a date which would meet with the

approval of the great majority of the fishermen. He would find means to enforce the law, because then he would be backed up by the moral opinion of the fishermen, and no expense would be spared to ascertain if the rigid enforcement of the close season, apart from all other regulations, will not stop illegal fishing.

The Minister concluded by again thanking those present for their attendance and the information imparted which he felt would prove of benefit to the department, its officers and the fishermen. The voice of this meeting, he said, would be preserved as a record of the occasion.

Before resuming his seat, Mr. Davies stated that he would hold similar meetings in N. S. and N. B. in order to fully investigate this subject before laying his views before Parliament.

A vote of thanks proposed by Mr. John McLean, ex-M. P., Souris, seconded by Mr C. Woodman, supported by Mr. G. B. McEachern, and enthusiastically and unanimously carried, closed the meeting at 3.30 o'clock, in time to catch the outgoing trains.

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