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REPORT.

The Committee to which were referred the State of the Fisheries carried on in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and on the Labrador Coast, by inhabitants of this Province, the disadvantages under which they labor, the best means of removing the same and the expediency of Legislative encouragement for such Fisheries, in what respect and how:—BEG LEAVE TO PRESENT THIS THEIR FIRST REPORT:

Your Committee have given the subject referred to them, and the various petitions therewith connected, all the attention to which their importance is entitled.

To ascertain whether any and what encouragement were granted in the Lower Provinces, to the Fisheries carried on by inhabitants thereof, Your Committee, at the outset of their inquiries, caused circulars to be addressed to certain of the authorities in those Provinces from whom they deemed it probable that information on this head to be relied upon, might be obtained. The answers received have been, with one exception, full and satisfactory, some of them containing much statistical and other very interesting and useful information relating to the Fisheries and trade, and which are hereunto appended.

It is stated by the answer from St. Johns, Newfoundland, that “No bounties whatever are granted either by the British or Colonial Government in furtherance of the prosecution of the British Newfoundland and Labrador Fisheries, that these Fisheries are confined to the catch of Cod, Seal, Salmon, Herrings and Caplin on the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Bank fishery being no longer prosecuted. That they extend around the Island (except at such places as are held under treaty by the French Government, including the Islands of St. Pierre, Miquelon, and Langley) and on the coast of Labrador from the entrance of Hudson Strait to a line drawn due North and South from Ance au Sablon, to the 52° of North latitude. The supposed number of vessels and boats and fishermen employed in the Fisheries on the Newfoundland coast and Labrador the past year, (1851) is as follows:—

	Number.
Vessels and Boats,	4,570
Tonnage thereof.....	37,800
Men engaged therein.....	17,670

“Those vessels which are engaged at Labrador, return at the close of the fishing season, bringing back the families of the fishermen who have assisted in the cure of fish there.

“That the Seal fishery is prosecuted in registered decked vessels, fitted and sailing direct from the Island, all of which depart about the 1st March in each year, and return to port as soon as a sufficient success may attend the enterprise.

"They are usually from 50 to 200 tons, and are manned with compliments varying from 30 to 60 persons in each. The other fisheries above referred to are prosecuted in the summer months, or between May and October.

"That the Labrador coast is visited yearly by fishermen and trading vessels from the United States, Canada, Nova Scotia and neighbouring Provinces as well ; but where no Custom House is established, duties collected, or other revenue regulations exist.

"That from and after the 10th October, 1849, all Imperial duties ceased to exist in Newfoundland, and that goods are now only subject to the one Colonial rate on importation, as per table in the Appendix.

"That in order to obtain early foreign fish in Markets in Europe, numerous British and Spanish vessels sail from the ports of this Island (Newfoundland) between July and September for British ports at Labrador in ballast, and there load accordingly, which saves the expense of the transportation and final landing or re-shipment in this Country of such commodities as Codfish, Salmon, Herrings, and fish oils."

Mr. Hayward, Comptroller of Customs and Navigation Laws, at St. Johns, to whom your Committee are indebted for the above information, observes in conclusion : "That Newfoundland contains a population consisting of 95,000 souls, who are depending principally, if not altogether on other countries for food and supplies, and as the prosecution of Agricultural pursuits has not been found to answer, except as an auxiliary to our fisheries, I humbly conceive that a vast extended trade may be beneficially opened up with Canada in the supply by her of all description of provisions, more particularly in exchange for the staple articles of this Colony, such as Codfish, Cod and Seal Oils, Seal Skins, Herrings, Salmon, Mackarel and Caplin, if such a commerce were established upon a fair basis of Legislative Reciprocity."

Your Committee are left to infer from the information they have received from Halifax (Nova Scotia,) that no Legislative encouragement is afforded the Fisheries carried on from that Province, it being, it would seem the opinion there, that the Fisheries carried on along the sea coast of Nova Scotia will of themselves be sufficiently remunerative, and amply repay the industry and capital employed in them, and adequately protected in the exclusive enjoyment of their own fishing grounds against intruders from the neighbouring States.

With respect to the Fisheries carried on from New Brunswick, your Committee have ascertained that the Legislature of the Province has recently afforded a limited encouragement to them, by exempting from duties all articles necessary to the deep sea Fisheries, with a grant of £500 in 1851, and a similar grant in 1852, to Fishery Societies, on condition of their raising a certain amount by contribution among themselves, the said sums to be disbursed in premiums.

No bounties, however, are allowed by the Legislature of that Province toward encouraging the Fisheries. Your Committee are at the same time informed by the authority whence their information on this subject is derived, that a sufficient length of time has not yet elapsed to ascertain whether the above measure of granting money for premiums has had a beneficial effect in a public sense, or not.

In Prince Edward Island an Act was passed in 1851 "for the encouragement of the Cod and Mackerel Fisheries," by which a bounty of 12s. 6d. per register ton old measurement, is allowed on vessels properly manned, equipped, and embarked in the Cod or Mackerel Fisheries during either of the years 1851, 1852, or 1853, the said bounty payable to the person or persons being an inhabitant or inhabitant of the said Island, who shall own and fit out the said vessels from the Island, provided that such vessels are respectively equipped, and fully furnished with all needful supplies stores and materials. No person to be entitled to any such tonnage bounty on any vessel, unless it shall have been expressly fitted out for the Cod or Mackerel Fisheries, and have been at sea in the actual prosecution of the fishing.

voyage for a period of not less than three and a half calendar months, between the 15th day of June and the 1st day of October, in either of the said years, (unless and excepting such time as may be required to return to land fish caught or taken by the crew thereof) and shall not, during such period, have carried any freight, but shall have been solely and exclusively employed in the said Fisheries under this provision of the Act. The sum of £409 13s. 9d. was, in 1851, paid in bounties to the owners of 18 such small vessels, the total of whose tonnage amounted to 846, the highest of them being 150 tons, and lowest 17, and the total product of whose Fisheries for the season were 2425 quintals of Codfish, 350 barrels herrings, and 372 barrels of Mackarel.

Besides the above, it is also provided by the same Act "that for the further encouragement of the Mackerel Fishery of this Island there shall be granted and paid out of the public monies in the Treasury of the Island, over and above any tonnage bounty granted by this Act in each of the said years 1851, 1852 and 1853, £100 of lawful current money of this Island, which shall, in each of the said years, be paid and applied as bounties to the owners of such vessels or boats, as shall in such years be fitted out, equipped, manned, and supplied in the Island, and shall be owned by inhabitants thereof, and shall catch and bring into port into this Island the greatest number of barrels of Mackarel, being actually and *bonâ fide* caught and secured by the crews or other persons on board of such vessels or boats during the fishing season in any one of the above years, and to be paid in the following proportions, that is to say, to the owner of the vessel or boat having the largest quantity of barrels of Mackarel, the sum of £40; to the owner of the vessels or boat having the next largest quantity £30; to the owner of the vessel or boat having the next largest quantity £20; and to the owner of the next or fourth vessel or boat having the next largest quantity the sum of £10; provided always that no bounty shall be given or paid to the owner of any such vessel or boat not having caught and brought into port in this Island as aforesaid, at least one hundred barrels of such Mackarel, during the fishing season in the years in which such bounty shall be claimed."

The Government of France affords to its subjects carrying on the Fisheries at the Islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, upon the south coast of Newfoundland, or in the Gulph of St. Lawrence, a most liberal encouragement. It allows for every quintal of Codfish taken in our waters, that is to say, on the coast of Newfoundland or Gulph, within the limits prescribed them by treaty ten (10) francs, equal to 8s. 4d. sterling when debarked in France, and five (5) francs additional on their exportation in French vessels to Foreign States, and for every man or boy employed during the voyage fifty (50) francs.

The United States have made very liberal provision for the encouragement of their Fisheries. By an Act of Congress passed in 1819, three dollars and a half per ton are given to all vessels above five tons and under thirty tons, employed in the Fisheries, and four dollars per ton to all vessels above 30 tons, on condition always of four months sea service, that is to say, for a fishing voyage. An allowance of three and a half dollars per ton is also granted by the same Act to vessels above 30 tons for a voyage of three and a half months, provided the crew consist of not less than ten men.

It would appear by the above, that the Governments of Newfoundland and of Nova Scotia deem it unnecessary to encourage the Fisheries by Legislative aid, the capital and industry engaged in them yielding of themselves, a fair remuneration; and that although the Legislatures of New Brunswick and of Prince Edward Island have temporarily made provision for the encouragement of these Fisheries, it is but slender, and in fact only by way of experiment, the benefits whereof remain to be seen. The liberal encouragements granted by the Governments of France and the United States of America to their Fisheries, have the effect of sending, year after year, during the fishing season, fleets of their bankers and fishing craft into the Gulph where they carry on extensive, and no doubt, profitable Fisheries, constituting

nurseries for their respective navies, and of enabling them to compete with, and undersell us, in the article of fish, the products of our own waters, in foreign and even in our own, Upper Canada, markets, as the returns hereunto appended shew. Serious complaints, it is also to be observed, have been made, from time to time, against American Fishermen frequenting the Gulph, who, regardless of treaty stipulations, encroach upon our waters, and the fishing grounds exclusively reserved for our own Fishermen settled on the coast, and there carrying on the sedentary or shore Fisheries in barges or open boats; but the evils complained of on this score by the inhabitants have in a great measure been prevented during the last summer by the vigilance of the cruisers sent thither, and stationed in the Gulph for the purpose by the home Government, and particularly by Her Majesty's War Steamer "Devastation," Captain Campbell, whose zeal, diligence and activity seconded by his officers and men in this important service, have deserved the approbation and gratitude of the entire population of the coast, and which also your Committee with pleasure acknowledge.

Next to the articles of timber and flour, the products of the Gulf Fisheries constitute the chief staple of our export trade; and if your Committee may allude in connection with them to a matter of great public interest recently much discussed, and the subject, it is said, of negotiation at the present time between the Governments of Great Britain and the United States, viz:—Reciprocity in trade, very desirable certainly, upon equal and fair terms with our neighbours of the Union, it would be, to express their humble conviction, that to obtain it at the expense of admitting them to an equal participation in the fishing grounds on the seaboard belonging exclusively to our own people, and for which the United States have no equivalent of the like nature, nor indeed of any description to offer in return, would be a sacrifice, we can but ill afford, far exceeding in value the proposed boon, which it were more profitable to forego than acquiesce in at such a cost, which inevitably would prove the ruin of our sedentary Fisheries on the Gulf Shore. The cession of an equality of rights to foreigners with our fellow subjects in those Fisheries within the reserved limits would, in all probability, give rise to endless disputes, discontent, antagonism, and possibly, occasional conflicts between the two classes, and necessitate the establishment and maintenance of an expensive Coast Police force to preserve order, to say nothing of the demoralizing effects in a political as well as social sense which an intercourse with the crowd of strangers resorting to the Coast year after year during the fishing season would entail upon the settlers.

Your Committee append to this Report the information they have received from various persons more or less concerned in the Gulf Fisheries, and from whose concurring testimony it would seem that encouragement to those carried on from this Province is in their opinion to a certain extent indispensably necessary to enable them to compete with our Provincial, and particularly with our American neighbours; but it will also be seen by referring to the papers annexed, that there is considerable diversity of opinion as to the best mode of affording the proposed encouragement, some proposing merely to exempt all articles necessary to the fisheries from duties; others would give a tonnage bounty, as in Prince Edward's Island, to encourage the construction of Bankers or Small Vessels for the Bank Fisheries in the Gulf and Straits of Belleisle. Others propose premiums for the greatest quantity of fish, exceeding a certain amount, taken in any one "voyage" or season, by a barges' or boats' crew (generally of two men). Some speak of a bounty on the export of fish.

Which of these different modes may be best adapted for the encouragement of the Fisheries it is difficult to determine. In the way of experiment they may all be advisable; but to give any of them a fair trial, your Committee are of opinion, that three seasons at least, if not five, should be the term assigned for the purpose. It is maintained by political economists, and not without reason, that any branch of industry that is not of itself remunerative, ought not to be upheld at the expense of other branches. There are, however, so many considerations connected with this

favorite branch of national industry, to entitle it to the protection and encouragement of the Canadian Legislature, so many drawbacks to its successful competition with our neighbours, profitably occupied in those Fisheries at our door, that unless some temporary aid to animate and encourage those engaged in it, and to cherish and keep it alive, be afforded they may from a source of wealth as undoubtedly they might be made, dwindle, in so far as Canadian interests are concerned in them, into insignificance, and an age elapse before those who will succeed us shall, with the utmost industry and exertions, it may be in their power to realize, recover from the injury we shall have entailed upon them by our supineness and neglect. But unquestionably the first encouragement and most important to the success and prosperity of our Fisheries consists in the protection and maintenance of our fellow subjects engaged in them, in the exclusive possession and enjoyment of our own waters, without which all others will be found unavailing.

Your Committee finally are of opinion that it is expedient to afford encouragement to the Whale, Seal, Cod, Makarel, and other Fisheries carried on in the Gulf of St. Lawrence by inhabitants of this Province, by a total exemption of all articles necessary to such Fisheries from duties, so, as to place them as nearly as possible on an equality with those from foreign countries resorting to the same waters, with whom they have to compete. They are also of opinion that as an experiment it may be advisable to allow annually during three or five years, or for any other period sufficiently long for a fair trial, a moderate tonnage bounty as in Prince Edwards Island, to small vessels, that is to say, not exceeding 75, tons equipped and manned as Bunkers by inhabitants of this Province; and moreover, that to animate and encourage that most laborious and useful class of our Coast population, the laboring fishermen, a liberal bounty should be allowed to such of them in each settlement as by their diligence, industry, and success are an example to their neighbours, either by giving a bounty or premium to the respective crews of the four best boats, or in some other shape. These are the hardy and enterprising men settled on the coast, who daily, during the fishing season, resort at break of day in their barges to the neighbouring fishing grounds, drawing thence the cod and other fish, which, when cured, constitute the staple of our seaboard, and are exported by cargoes to the European and South American markets, bringing back to us, in return, the products of those countries, the duties upon which more than amply compensate us for those we may forego in encouraging the fisheries. Your Committee are further of opinion that an annual appropriation for the period aforesaid might also with propriety be made in favor of any Fishery Societies, which for the purpose of encouraging the Fisheries might be formed, as recently done in New Brunswick, and an amount be voted to each and every such Society, equal to the sum raised among themselves by voluntary contribution, for the encouragement of the Fisheries; on the same principle, in fact, as the votes in favor of Agricultural Societies are annually given.

If the views of Your Committee are approved of, and the suggestions which they have deemed it their duty to submit towards encouraging the fisheries are thought proper in whole or in part to be adopted, it will of course rest with the Executive Government to carry them out, and to recommend the money vote or votes necessary for the purpose, as no such vote can originate without its special recommendation. But Your Committee beg in conclusion to observe that whatever appropriations may be made for the purpose of encouraging the Fisheries, and they sincerely trust that encouragement will be afforded, they are humbly of opinion, that it will be better to leave the application of the monies voted for the purpose, and all necessary details in connection therewith, to the Government, to be regulated by it annually at the commencement of each season by an order in Council, as circumstances may require, rather than by an Act of Parliament, the provisions of which may not admit of deviation, in order that in an experiment of such vital importance to the industry

and trade of the Country, full scope may be allowed, and, if needful, a fair trial in another or, other shapes be afforded, if the first shall prove a failure.

The whole, nevertheless, most respectfully submitted.

ROBERT CHRISTIE,
Chairman.

10th May, 1853.

The undersigned dissent from the above Report inasmuch as they consider an expression of opinion by the Provincial Legislature of Canada, adverse to the surrender of the Fisheries, at this moment premature.

1st. Because it may embarrass or retard the progress of a Treaty, the terms of which, the public are led to believe, are now under consideration.

2nd. Because they concur in the opinions heretofore expressed by the Legislature of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, "That a free exchange of the "natural productions of the United States, and these Colonies, including those of the "Field, the Forest, the Mines, and the Fisheries, would be of greater advantage to "both countries," than retaining the right of the Fisheries.

The dissentients take also the opportunity to observe that the disadvantages under which our Fishermen on the coast of Labrador, the Gulph of St. Lawrence and generally in British North America labor, chiefly arise from the artificial aid conferred by the Government of the United States in the shape of bounties to the Cod and Mackarel Fisheries, which, it is ascertained by Official Returns from the United States Treasury, amounted from 1844 to 1848, to \$1,627,505, and furthermore by the imposition of 20 per cent. duty on fish imported from British North America into the United States, for consumption therein.

The practical operation of these bounties is to enable the Fishermen from the States of Maine and Massachusetts to build vessels, at higher rates, man them at higher wages, catch fish within our waters, on the sea coast, at less expense than our people can, and to convey them by sea to the ports of New York and Boston, and export them thence by Canal and Railway, (after paying tolls to the State,) to Upper Canada for consumption and there sell them at a profit.

The value of	the fish imported and consumed in Canada in 1851, was	£11,156	17	0
"	"	"	"	"
		1852,	13,231	0 0

on which a duty was paid of £1,395 17s. 2d., and £1,653 17s. 9d. Of the fish so imported into Canada, to the value of £6,623, and £7,769 15s. 6d. was the catch by fishermen of the States, when the same could have been caught by our own fishermen on our own coasts, furnishing return freights through our own waters, without duty or any other restriction.

The dissentients are moreover humbly of opinion that in case the Governments of Great Britain and the United States should not come to a mutual arrangement with respect to the proposed commercial intercourse now under discussion, the most prompt and effectual measure to regain the natural advantages to which we are entitled from our proximity to those Fishing Grounds, is to pay a direct bounty to the fishermen in precisely the same manner and to the same amount as the Government of the United States pay to their fishermen, to be apportioned by the Imperial and Provincial Governments, instead of the incidental bounty now paid to armed cruisers.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

WM. HAMILTON MERRITT.
G. P. RIDOUT.

APPENDIX.

The following letters were received in answer to a Circular sent.

HER MAJESTY'S CUSTOMS.

SAINT JOHN, N. B. 15th September, 1852.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 6th instant, requesting information relative to the Fisheries of this Province, and in reply thereto, have to inform you, that there is encouragement given by the Government of this Province to the Fisheries in the following shape, viz: Exemption from duties of all articles necessary for the deep sea Fisheries; a grant of £500 in 1851, and a similar grant in 1852, to Fishery Societies, on condition of their raising a certain amount; the money to be disbursed in premiums. The whole of this money has not as yet been expended however.

No bounties are allowed in this Province. A sufficient length of time has not elapsed yet, to ascertain whether the above measure of granting money for premiums has had a beneficial effect in a public sense or the reverse. With reference to the other particulars required by you, I beg to state that it is not in my power to furnish you with accurate information, but I have much pleasure in forwarding to your address by the same mail that conveys this letters, a very able report on the Fisheries of this Province, drawn up by M. H. Perley, Esq., under the direction of the Government, and which contains all the information required by you.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

ALEXANDER GRANT,

Controler.

W. C. Burrage, Esq.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, 18th September, 1852.

SIR,—I have the honor to enclose, for the information of the Canadian Legislature, two Acts passed by the Legislature of this Island, No. 1. An Act relating to the Fisheries which received the Royal allowance, 3rd September, 1844 No. 2. An Act for the encouragement of the Cod and Mackerel Fisheries, and also a return No. 3, of the amount of tonnage bounties claimed and paid by the Government of the Colony during the past year, in addition to which the sum of one hundred pounds was paid under the fourth Section of the Act.

Likewise, Royal Gazette, No. 4, containing copies of the despatches transmitted by Sir Alexander Bannerman to the Colonial Minister. It is impossible to ascertain the quantity of fish caught by the inhabitants of the Colony, the Fishery being chiefly carried on in boats which are to be seen in all parts of the Island.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES WARBURTON,

Colonial Secretary.

G. R. Goodman, Esq.

Controller Navigation Laws

(Translation.)

ANSWERS of the undersigned to the questions submitted to him, by the Committee to whom has been referred the state of the Fisheries in the Gulf.

1st. I have, at present, no Fishing Depôt in Labrador, but I transact business with a large number of fishermen and traders belonging both to Labrador and other places situated in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

2nd. But few of the Canadian ship-owners and fishermen frequent the Coast of Labrador, having no titles to the possession of the grounds occupied by them for fishing, and there being no authority to protect them in the possession of these grounds, they are constantly exposed to be forestalled by others in greater numbers than themselves, and they thus lose the fishing season. On this account the merchants of Quebec, are backward in making advances to persons, who, generally speaking, are possessed of nothing beyond their vessels, and whose means of paying for the advances made to them, do not extend beyond the profits arising from their fisheries. Canadian ship-owners have also another great disadvantage to contend with, which is, that in procuring their equipment, and the stock necessary for their traffic, on the Coast of Labrador, they are unable to compete with foreigners who procure the same articles free from the duties imposed upon the goods of Canadian ship-owners at Quebec. They are therefore obliged to sell at higher prices, and thus they can only effect sales to small bidders, in thinly populated localities which are not frequented by foreigners, indeed nearly the entire commerce along the Coast of Labrador is in the hands of traders from the United States, Halifax and Newfoundland.

3rd. I am of opinion that Government should give titles to those at present *bond fide* possessors of the posts which they now hold, and to those desirous of establishing depôts, on the payment by them of an annual rent to Government. Confidence would thus be instilled into these holders, for if it were certain that those to whom these fishing grounds are granted, might enjoy them in security, great improvements would be made. Many merchants; I myself among the first, would forthwith take concessions of land for fishing depôts if we were sure of protection, and that we should not witness the improvements made away with, which would be necessary to carry on these fisheries in a proper manner.

At the same time the same duties with which our merchandize is burdened, should be imposed by authority on foreign goods, or a remission (drawback) of the duties granted to us, the advantages possessed by foreigners over us, would thereby be destroyed—by means of a judicial authority to enable merchants to compel payment for goods advanced by them, the price of these goods thus advanced, would be considerably reduced, for at present the merchant is not only exposed to the risk which I have just mentioned, but there being no means of enforcing payment, he is moreover obliged to trust to the good faith of the fishermen.

4th. I consider it very desirable that Government should afford encouragement to those engaged in the fisheries, at all events, for several years to come, or until the fisheries shall have assumed a settled condition.

I conceive that the best means of encouragement would be to pay a certain sum per ton, to every vessel fishing for a certain number of months along the coast, and to accord some premium to the inhabitants for every quintal of cod taken by them.

I think, that should the Government offer any such encouragement the whale fishery, which is one of the most lucrative and most important in the Gulf, ought not to be forgotten. After, a few years encouragement, I am of opinion that it will become one of the most important objects our commerce.

I think it unnecessary to add, that this encouragement should be accorded at Quebec.

FRS. BUTEAU.

Quebec, 25th September, 1852.

PERCÉ, COUNTY OF GASPÉ, September 27, 1852.

DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your circular of the 14th instant, together with the questions of the Committee on the Fisheries, and in reply, beg leave briefly to submit the following remarks in answer, as the result of many years experience,

having been about 30 years engaged more or less in prosecuting the fishery business, keeping boats and employing men, as well as exporting fish to foreign and other markets, to a limited extent, however, compared to some others. In the first place, I consider those engaged in the fishery in this Province, to be labouring under almost every disadvantage and discouragement, compared with other Countries engaged in this branch of business; for instance the Americans, our neighbours, and the French, the only other nations beside ourselves engaged to any extent in the fishery, not only allow all articles for the fishery free of duty or nearly so, but actually encourage the fishery by large bounties, while we, of this Province, engaged in the same business have, with the exception of salt and lines and a few other articles, to pay the enormous tariff of from $12\frac{1}{2}$ to 30 per cent. On all articles of clothing, $12\frac{1}{2}$ and groceries, with the exception of molasses, the only sweetening used by the fisherman, it is nearly 30 per cent., consequently the cost of living to the consumers, is much more expensive, and the merchant, to enable the poor fisherman to live, is obliged to give a much higher price for fish than he can get for them. And as a consequence of all this, we cannot compete with those other Countries, when we meet with them in the same markets, for they can afford to sell their fish for much less a price, in the foreign Market than ours cost at home, and make money, while we must, and do lose; and unless something is done by our Legislature, to encourage and sustain the fishery, very speedily those engaged in it will be obliged to abandon the business in despair. I have generally employed about 30 men in my small establishment, but since the present high tariff has been imposed, I have reduced it to only 8 or 10 men, and some others, I know, have reduced from 100 to 30 men and boats accordingly. Not only the Americans and French fisheries are encouraged, but in all our sister Provinces, encouragement is given more or less in the shape of Bounty, and their duties are not so high. I need hardly offer the Committee advice as to the remedy in some measure, for those difficulties, for it naturally presents itself, first, a reduction or annihilation of the duties on the necessary articles used by the fisherman, and secondly, a liberal bounty on all exported fish; we have borne those impositions and hardships long enough, viz: high duties, no bounty and the Yankees allowed to fish in our waters (with the exception of the present year) without let or hindrance. I do hope the Committee will take all these things into their most serious consideration and recommend the Legislature to reduce or altogether remove the duties on all articles needed for the fishery, and to encourage by bounty. Surely there cannot be an empty chest now, as the answer used almost always to be when any thing was asked for the fisheries. Hoping I shall be pardoned for the length and rudeness of my remarks, by the Committee and yourself, I beg leave to subscribe myself one of the aggrieved fishermen of Gaspé, and yours and the Committee's

Humble and obedient servant,

PETER MABEE,
Percé.

W. C. Burrage, Esqr.,
Clerk Committee.

PASPEBIAC, 28th September, 1852.

SIR,—The undersigned have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the circular severally addressed to them by order of the Committee named to take into consideration the state of the Fisheries carried on by inhabitants of this Province, &c. &c. And having met together, respectfully beg leave to submit the result of their deliberations, for the consideration of the said Committee.

The disadvantages under which we labour are two fold. First, by reason of the high duty paid in this Province on most articles required for the Fishery. Secondly, the absence of bounties or assistance of any kind.

We therefore consider that the Legislature of this Province would not only confer a great boon on the Fishermen of the Lower Province, but also benefit the farmers of Upper Canada, and the trading and manufacturing community, by affording a bounty of twenty shillings per ton on all small vessels built and fitted out expressly for the Mackerel, Herring, and deep sea Cod Fishery. The poverty of the inhabitants generally, along this coast, precluding them from building decked crafts, for want of means to procure, to them, the only costly part—the iron work, rigging, sails, &c., &c. This the bounty would enable them to obtain.

In our present position we, cannot compete, either with the Sister Provinces or the fishermen of the United States, and unless some timely assistance be afforded, the fisheries on this coast will gradually dwindle into insignificance.

We would further recommend that a bounty of two shillings be granted to the fishermen on every quintal of cured Codfish. Seven shillings and six pence on each barrel of No. 1 Mackerel. Five shillings per barrel on No. 1 Herring, and a proportionate rate on the lower numbers of each.

These bounties would give new life and vigour to our gradually expiring fisheries. A large fleet of fishing vessels would be built in the course of a couple of years, affording profitable employment, not only to our own population, but to hundreds of young men from the Parishes below Quebec, thus causing an increased consumption and demand for flour, pork, manufactures, and imports generally.

In addition to bounties we beg leave further to recommend a reduction of duty on nets, lines, cordage, sail cloth, and all articles required for the fishery, all of which are obtained on more favourable terms in the neighboring Provinces. We will instance the article of molasses (an absolute necessary for Fishermen) which pays only two pence per gallon in New Brunswick, against five pence half-penny in Canada, equal to about fifty per cent. on the first cost.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient servants,

JOHN FAUVEL,

Agent to Charles Robin & Co.

ALFRED CARCAUD,

Agent to LeBoutillier Brothers.

PHILIP VIBERT,

BARNABAS MCGIE, J. P.

EDWARD PERREE,

Manager of the firm of Alfred Mansell, Esqr.

PORT DANIEL, 29th September, 1852.

SIR,—In answer to the question from the Committee on the Fisheries, I beg to state that I am not directly engaged in the Fishery, but as all the inhabitants, are if not directly, indirectly interested in the Fisheries, as it is our staple branch of Trade, and I rejoice with all others that the Legislators of the Province have taken a view favorable to the Fishermen. That a bounty or encouragement should be given to them as in the neighbouring Province, there is no dissenting voice heard,

if the Funds of the Province will allow of it without taxing one part of its inhabitants for the encouragement of the other. I recommend as follows, viz: To all decked Crafts who fit out for the express purpose, and a proof of following the same of not less than six months, ten shillings Currency, per ton on register, and four shillings per Barrel for No. 1 Mackerel, others in proportion, two shillings and six pence for No. 1 Herring, five shillings per barrel for No. 1 Salmon, others in proportion; one shilling per quintal of Dry Cod Fish, and that all fishermen fishing in boats or in shore be entitled and receive the same, always to be understood that no boat catching less than twenty quintals Cod Fish, or less than ten barrels of Mackerel or Herring, five barrels of Salmon, shall be entitled to receive anything, as it is understood for an encouragement for the man who takes the fish. I recommend that the bounty or encouragement if any, shall be paid upon proof of the quantities taken through the hands of the Municipal Council or Collectors, and not through the merchants whom the fishermen generally suppose will not do them justice in such cases. I further strongly recommend that all duties be removed from all articles required for the Fisheries. I also recommend low bounties, as at any future time they can be increased at pleasure while to decrease them would be attended with discouragement to the fishermen. For further information I refer the Committee to David LeBoutillier, Esq., M. P. P. for the County Bonaventure, who is thoroughly versed on the subject.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM McPHERSON.

To Wm. C. Burrage, Esq.,
Clerk to Committee on Fisheries,
Quebec.

NEW CARLISLE, 1st October, 1852.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of the circular you addressed to me from the Committee of the House of Assembly, to which a general answer has been sent, signed by other gentlemen and myself; but the subject is one of such vital importance, not only to this District but the entire Province, that I beg leave most respectfully to add some further remarks.

The subject of the North American Fisheries is one which has occupied my attention for the last twenty years, having been personally concerned and interested therein with parties trading on this coast, previous to my leaving London for this quarter, (in the capacity of Chief Superintendent of the Gaspé Fishery and Coal Mining Company,) and my family connexions in the Island of Jersey are extensively engaged therein on various parts of the Newfoundland coast. A residence in Gaspé of upwards of seven years, during which I have carefully inspected the entire sea-board on this side of the St. Lawrence, has enabled me to become thoroughly conversant with all the practical details of our fishing operations.

In old and wealthy nations, like the Mother Country, I fully admit the inexpediency of Bounties. But our position is widely different: capital, that great motive power of all extensive commercial operations, is wanting. The entire population of British North America engaged in the Fisheries may be said to be comparatively poor—the result of past improvidence. When the shore-catch was abundant and prices remunerative, the uneducated fishermen had no thought for the morrow. The sea yielded to him an abundant harvest, and he considered her treasures inexhaustible. But a new era has now been entered upon in the history

of our Fisheries. The vast shoals of codfish which formerly spread along our shores, no longer enter the bays, but keep in deep water, being intercepted by the immense fleet of American schooners which repair to the fishing grounds with the first open water each successive spring. This vast fleet owes its existence and *yearly increase* to the Bounty by which the United States Government has wisely created and fostered it. A similar provision in this Colony would enable us to compete with the Americans; and a few years would suffice to cause a number of small schooners to be built in every creek and harbour along this coast, in which our hardy fishermen could repair to the Banks, and secure a fair share of the wealth now swept away by strangers.

Such a step would also be an act of humanity on the part of our Legislators, as the more daring of our fishermen repair to the Banks in their small open boats, to the imminent risk of life and property, in addition to the severe hardships they endure, each successive year adding to the number of those who sleep in an ocean grave.

If our fishermen were enabled to meet the Americans on equal terms, they, the Americans, would no longer secure the lion's share of the spoil. This would check the increase of their fishing fleet, and gradually reduce it, because they have to come a long distance, where a few hour's sail suffices to place our people on the fishing grounds. At present the case is reversed, as those of our fishermen who repair to the Banks, can scarcely be said to have two days' fishing in each week, the other four being lost in going to and fro, &c. The American, on the contrary, remains quietly at his work until his schooner is loaded, each vessel performing two voyages in the course of the Summer.

If a Bounty were granted, two or three heads of families would unite to build a schooner, procuring the timber on their own, or waste lands of the Crown. The hull being thus obtained without much outlay, the merchants would advance the outfit, to be repaid by the Bounty. Without some such aid, a boat is all that our fishermen can afford to build. The merchant will not advance for the outfit of a schooner, when he can only depend on the exertions of the owner for his return, to which must be added the risk of loss by dangers of the sea. The hulls of three schooners are now rotting on the beach, within a short distance of my residence, because the builders had not the means of procuring the necessary tackle and apparel.

The Bounty given to the people of the United States, enables them not only to supply their own wants, but to become our competitors in the West India, Brazilian, and other Foreign Markets. Turn again to France, where a Bounty of ten francs, equal to eight shillings and four pence sterling, is paid on every quintal of fish imported into France. When sent to a Foreign Market, a lesser Bounty is allowed, but as I write from memory only, I cannot state the precise amount. To this add two hundred francs (I believe) for each apprentice shipped in vessels engaged in the Fishery, and an additional sum if she perform two voyages. The French are also our rivals in Foreign Markets, and when, as was the case last year, prices are ruinously low in Foreign Ports, the Bounty enables the French merchant to make a saving voyage, when ours suffer a serious loss.

Want of time prevents my entering into further details.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

PHILIP VIBERT.

W. C. Burrage, Esquire,
&c., &c.

CAPE COVE, 7th October, 1852.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 14th ultimo, requesting my opinion on the state of the Fisheries carried on in the Gulf of St. Lawrence or Labrador Coast.

I have been engaged in the Fisheries in the County of Gaspé, for the last twenty-seven years, during which time I have carried on the fishing myself, and have supplied the planters and fishermen to carry on the fishing. When I first came to this place, one boat and two men, would catch as many quintals of Cod Fish, as three boats or six men can now do; the reason for this difference is, that our neighbours (the Americans) are permitted to fish too close to our shores, (three miles) and to trespass year after year on our fishing grounds, obliging our fishermen to risk their lives in their small open boats, to fish at a distance of ten leagues from shore, and to toil days and nights in all kinds of weather. The change among the Roman Catholics, in the manner of keeping Lent, has occasioned a considerable diminution in the consumption of fish, and the heavy duties that have been imposed upon our imported goods, and no encouragement worth speaking of, having been allowed us, our fishermen are consequently in a state of great misery, and having in some instances been compelled to engage themselves on board American schooners, while others have gone to Quebec, to seek employment. The neighbouring Provinces have the means of under-selling us, in consequence of the bounty they receive, and the importation of the goods necessary for the Fisheries, free of duty.

I am of opinion that the articles necessary for the carrying on of the Fisheries only, should be admitted free of duty, such as, Nets, Seines, Lines, Hooks, Lead, Cordage, Boat Sails, Graplings, Gaff and Fishing Boats, and that a bounty of per quintal should be granted for dry Codfish cured by themselves. according to the quantity taken.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

THOMAS SAVAGE.

W. C. Burrage, Esquire,
&c., &c.

QUEBEC, 21st October, 1852.

GENTLEMEN,—In answer to the questions submitted to me by the Committee on the subject of the Gulf or Labrador Fisheries, I have the honor to state that I have been engaged in the Fisheries for the last ten years, and have had many proofs of the disadvantage and discouragement that the operative fishermen have to contend with.

The duties levied on every article requisite for the fisheries are so high that it is impossible for any man, however industrious, to live by his earnings. The consequence is now, that those engaged in the principal fishing ports in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, those who embarked largely in that trade have abandoned it, and their capital employed in a different channel.

I would, therefore, consider it would be advantageous for that particular trade that all articles necessary for the use of fishermen and the curing of fish should be imported duty free, and a bounty corresponding to that allowed by the American Government to their fishermen be granted to the fishermen, subjects of Her Majesty.

I am led to understand that a very large trade in fish has been carried on some years ago between the Gulf St. Lawrence and the West India Islands, which trade is now altogether lost to this Province in consequence of excessive duties and a total absence of encouragement.

These obstructions to the industry of our Gulf and Labrador operatives close a mine of wealth lying almost at their feet, which a Legislative enactment removing the obstructive duties, and granting the encouragement of a moderate bounty to the operative fishermen, say of twenty shillings per ton, would create a spirit of enterprise and contentment amongst the inhabitants, and prove of vast advantage to the Province at large.

I have the honor to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM CORBET.

(No. 449.)

INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,
QUEBEC, 23rd October, 1852.

SIR,—In compliance with the request of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly, appointed "to inquire into the state of the Fisheries carried on in the Gulf of St. Lawrence," as conveyed in your letter of the 20th instant, I have the honor to inclose a statement of the Revenue from the District of Gaspé, for the years 1846 to 1851 inclusive, and so much of the year of 1852 for which Returns have been received.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOSEPH CARY,

Deputy Inspector.

To W. C. Burrage, Esquire,

Clerk of Committees, Legislative Assembly.

STATEMENT of the Revenue from the District of Gaspé from the year 1846 to 1851, and so much of the year 1852, for which Returns have been received :

Ports.	1846.			1847.			1848.			1849.			1850.			1851.			1852. to 5th July.		
	£.	s.	D.	£.	s.	D.	£.	s.	D.	£.	s.	D.	£.	s.	D.	£.	s.	D.	£.	s.	D.
Gaspé,.....	989	8	3	627	9	3	468	10	3	2053	8	...	1918	14	7	1708	10	10	884	4	10
New Carlisle,.....	1461	13	11	2020	8	9	1317	17	0	2053	6	6	1239	1	3	1274	12	4	1243	8	1
Amherst,.....	158	17	5	278	16	3	107	5	2	388	15	2	418	12	7	111	11	0	107	10	10
Total, District,.....	2609	19	7	2926	14	3	1893	12	5	4497	9	8	3676	8	5	3094	14	2	2235	3	9

JOSEPH CARY,

Deputy Inspector General.

Inspector General's Office,

Quebec, 22nd October, 1852.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA,

3rd November, 1852.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letters dated 6th September and 21st October.

I herewith enclose the Acts for the protection of the Fisheries of British North America, and will endeavour to send you some further information on the subject alluded to.

I beg to say, that the honor of being the medium to convey such information as I can procure for the Committee, is of itself quite a sufficient recompense for any trouble which may attend it.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

HENRY TRACE,
Comptroller Her Majesty's Customs.

To the Committee of the Legislative Assembly.

GENTLEMEN,—In answer to your communication of yesterday, I have been engaged in the Trade and Fisheries of the Labrador, the past sixteen years. I have visited more than forty Harbours on that coast, and have given evidence to the Imperial Government, the Legislature of Newfoundland, and information to Sir G. W. Seymour, the Admiral of the North American Station, on the subject of the Fisheries. The Fisheries and Trade of Labrador labour under great and serious disadvantages—they are these; on the importation of fish, oils, furs, salmon, &c., the produce of Labrador (comprising its exports) into Canada, a duty is imposed of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., while the same articles imported thence into Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island pay no duties.

Labrador has a sea coast of 1,000 miles; in the fishing season a population of over 30,000, who import all the provisions they consume and export to the amount of £800,000 to £1,000,000 annually. The Americans and Nova Scotians fully alive to the profitable trade and rich fisheries of Labrador have, by every means in their power, endeavoured to foster and encourage it, consequently the United States and Nova Scotia each send many hundreds of fishing and trading vessels to Labrador, and this trade is yearly increasing, while north of Lance Sablon there is not, I believe, a single Canadian fishing or trading vessel. The advantages of the Trade and Fisheries of Labrador must therefore be evident, and I would suggest that all restrictions and duties should be removed, and the trade thrown open, and that a trade with a country which would consume so much of the produce of Canada, and where *no* duties *are* or can *be* collected or imposed, in consequence of its being under no direct Government, (the Americans having the same right of fishery as British subjects,) should, by every legitimate means, be encouraged.

In my opinion it is impolitic to begin a system of bounties, but should the other North American Colonies do so, (not otherwise) it would be an encouragement to, and 'twould enable your fishermen to compete with Americans and others, if a bounty of 20s per ton, Register, were given to all vessels under 100 tons, fitted out in and belonging to the Colony or hired for such purpose by a resident, which vessel should be *bona fide* employed in the fishery, and absent on such voyage for four months.

Your obedient servant,

MATTHEW H. WARREN.

Quebec, 28th October, 1852.

QUEBEC, 1st November, 1852.

SIR,—I have to apologize in not replying before this to the inquiries made in your letter of the 10th of September, in reference to the Fisheries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence or the Labrador Coast, but a press of business has prevented me from attending to the same.

The house in which I am senior partner, has been acting as agents for a number of establishments, residing at Gaspé and the Labrador Coast, engaged in the fishing business for nearly 20 years, and during that period cannot remember a single year but what complaints have been made to us of the difficulties houses engaged in the fishing business have had to contend with, in having to compete in Foreign markets with rivals, receiving from their Government large bounties, either on the fish itself or given to vessels engaged in that business, and I can say with confidence, if a small protection or bounty, say 2s. 6d. per cwt., was made on all fish exported to Foreign markets, in British vessels, that the trade of the Province would be most materially benefitted thereby, and a large increase of business be the result. And a further benefit would occur by the admission, duty free, of salt, declared to be imported for that purpose.

With respect to our trade with Labrador, it has not increased in any thing like the proportion that it should do, when compared with the increase of the population on that coast, which I have no hesitation in saying is caused by the impolitic course adopted by our Government in levying duties on their produce, when imported from without the Province, thus driving the trade into the hands of the Americans, and our neighbours of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, who frequent the Labrador in incredible numbers during the Summer season; and as there is nothing in the shape of a Custom House for hundreds of miles on the coast, the vessels trading there, supply the inhabitants with a large proportion of flour, provisions, &c., required, in payment for fish, furs, oils, &c., which, were it not for the duty already referred to, would, to a large extent, find its way here for sale, and returns would be sent from this in flour, provisions, &c. What makes the matter appear more inconsistent on our part, is that the very produce, (when imported direct, is charged with a prohibitory duty,) is admitted, *via* Nova Scotia, and cleared as their produce, duty free.

I would here remark that several of our correspondents residing at Forteaux, who have been doing business with us for a number of years, have threatened unless the Act is repealed, to quit the trade with Canada, and confine their transactions with Nova Scotia and the United States.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

HY. J. NOAD.

To the Chairman of the Committee
on the State of the Fisheries.

CUSTOM HOUSE, SAINT JOHNS,
NEWFOUNDLAND, 16th November, 1852.

SIR,—I have had the honor to receive your letter dated the 9th ultimo, requesting me to afford certain information to the Committee of the Canadian Legislative Assembly, on the subject of the Fisheries prosecuted from this Island, to which I beg leave to remark as follows :—

That I have employed a competent person to prepare the following described Returns in connection therewith, at considerable labour, which will, I have no doubt, be found on investigation, to convey much useful information to the Committee.

1. An account of all goods imported into this Island from various countries, with their respective values and quantities, for the year 1851, shewing whence the supplies for the Fisheries are derived.

2. An account of the staple articles, the produce of the Fisheries exported to all parts, with their values and quantities, and value of all other exports for the same period.

3. An account of all vessels entered inwards, and cleared outwards in this Island, (distinguishing British and Foreign) with their tonnage and men, and shewing the trade with the different countries.

4. Table, shewing the rates of all duties payable on articles imported into Newfoundland, (in British Sterling, or in Spanish Dollars, at the rate of 4s. 4d. each dollar) together with a list of all goods exempt therefrom, on importation here.

5. An account of all vessels cleared outwards in Newfoundland, for the Spring Seal Fishery in the year 1851, with their tonnage and number of men employed.

And I beg leave to report further, that no bounties whatever are granted either by the British or Colonial Government, in furtherance of the prosecution of the British Newfoundland and Labrador Fisheries.

That these Fisheries are confined to the catch of Cod, Seal, Salmon, Herrings, and Caplin on the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Bank Fishery being no longer prosecuted.

That they extend around this Island, (except at such places as are held under Treaty by the French Government, including the Island of St. Pierres, Miquelon, and Langley,) and on the coast of Labrador, from the entrance of Hudson's Strait, to a line drawn due North and South from Aux Sablon to the 52. of North latitude.

That the British Fisheries have been annually protected by the visit of a man-of-war, in Summer at the Western Ports, and by a ship-of-war, occasionally at Labrador; but the present season the British Admiral personally visited this Port in a line of battle ship, and was accompanied by a steam ship, and several others, smaller armed vessels, with a view to protection; added to which, the Local Government employed the present year, two small hired vessels only, for a similar purpose; and to prevent the French encroaching or taking bait in British waters, which is represented as having had a very favorable effect: such revenue hired craft were paid off at the end of the fishing season.

That the supposed number of vessels and boats, and fishermen employed in the Fisheries on this coast and Labrador the past year, is as follows, viz:—

Vessels and Boats,.....	4,570
Tonnage thereof,.....	37,800
Men engaged therein,.....	17,670

Those vessels which are engaged at Labrador, return at the close of the fishing season, bringing back the families of the fishermen who have assisted in the cure of fish there.

That the Seal Fishery is prosecuted in registered decked vessels, fitted and sailing direct from this Island; all of which depart about the 1st March in each year, and return to port as soon as a sufficient success may attend the enterprise; they are usually from 50 to 200 tons, and are manned with compliments varying from 30 to 60 persons in each.

The other Fisheries, before referred to, are prosecuted in the Summer months, or between May and October.

That the Labrador Coast is visited yearly by fishermen and trading vessels from the United States, Canada, Nova Scotia, and neighboring Provinces as well; but where no Custom House is established, duties collected, or other Revenue regulations exist.

That from and after the 10th October, 1849, all Imperial duties ceased to exist in this country, and goods are now only subject to one Colonial rate on importation, as per table annexed.

That in order to obtain early Foreign fish in markets in Europe, numerous British and Spanish vessels sail from the ports of this Island, between July and September, for British ports at Labrador, in ballast, and there load accordingly.

which saves the expense of the transportation and final landing or re-shipment in this country, of such commodities, as Cod Fish, Salmon, Herrings, and Fish Oils.

In conclusion, I beg leave further to observe, that Newfoundland contains a population consisting of 95,000 souls, who are depending principally, if not altogether, on other countries for food and supplies; and as the prosecution of agricultural pursuits has not been found to answer, except as an auxiliary to our Fisheries, I humbly conceive, that a vast extended trade may be beneficially opened up with Canada, in the supply by her, of all description of provisions, now particularly, in exchange for the staple articles of this Colony, such as Cod Fish, Cod and Seal Oils, Seal Skins, Herrings, Salmon, Mackarel and Caplin, if such commerce were established upon a fair basis of Legislative reciprocity.

Should further information be required by the Committee in future, I shall be happy in furnishing it on your application.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE J. HAYWARD,

Comptroller of Customs
and Navigation Laws.

W. C. Burrage, Esquire,
Clerk, Committee Legislative Assembly,
Quebec.

POINT ST. PETER, 17th November, 1852.

SIR,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 14th September last, with general questions subjoined by the Committee to whom is referred the consideration of the state of the Fisheries, carried on by the inhabitants of the Province or other British subjects in the Gulf of St. Lawrence or Labrador coast, and requesting me to transmit to you my answer thereto. In compliance with that request, I have the honor, through you, of informing the Committee that, as Agent here of Abraham DeGruchy, Esquire, of the Island of Jersey, I am engaged, concerned, and interested in the Fisheries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, by conducting one of the most extensive establishments in that business at this place, where I fit out and supply a considerable number of fishing boats for the Cod Fisheries in the Gulf, under, my own management and superintendence, and also supply a considerable number of the minor fishing establishments of this place, and for twenty miles along this coast, in every article they require, for their Cod Fishing, at their establishments; and Mr. DeGruchy's establishment has so existed here since the year 1836. I am not aware of any disadvantages under which the Fisheries of this Province labor under compared with the Fisheries carried on from neighbouring Provinces. But the Fisheries of this, as well as the neighbouring British Provinces, I am under the necessity of explaining, labor under great disadvantages as compared with the Fisheries carried on from France, the United States of America, and other Foreign nations, by the respective Governments of these Foreign nations extending to their Fisheries great encouragement, by exemptions from duties on every article required for their Fisheries, and liberal Bounties, whereby their Fish Curers are enabled to undersell the Fish Curers of this and the neighbouring British Provinces in all Foreign markets, and could even, if they were so disposed, undersell them in their home consumption—whereby this branch of business, which, in the Foreign nations referred to, is a source of wealth and commercial and naval importance, has, in this and the neighbouring British Provinces, become so depressed and insignificant as to be scarcely worth following after. These disadvantages, coupled with the encroach-

ments, for some years past, allowed to be made by the fishermen of the United States of America, with impunity, on the British fishing grounds in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, in the face of the existing Treaty of 1818, has depressed and discouraged this branch of business, that several, formerly very extensively engaged therein, have of late years entirely abandoned it, and embarked their capital in other pursuits; while those who have not as yet followed their example, have so curtailed their business, that often poverty, want and wretchedness has ensued among their fellow-creatures, who formerly made a tolerably good living. It is true that last season these British fishing grounds were well protected by Her Majesty's ships of war cruising in the Gulf, whereby a more successful fishing was realized than has been experienced for many seasons bygone; and in anticipation that the same protection will be continued, and in consequence of this Committee having been appointed by the Honourable House of Assembly to take into consideration the state of the Fisheries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Labrador coast, giving promise that something effectually beneficial is about to be done to encourage and promote the Fisheries of this Province, several of those who had abandoned the business are making preparations for resuming the same, and it is to be hoped they will not be disappointed in their expectations. I am clearly of opinion, that the only good that can be done for these Fisheries is to continue the protective force in the Gulf, extend to those engaged therein encouragement by exemptions from duty on every article required for the use of the Fisheries, and bestowing upon them such liberal Bounties as are extended to those engaged in the fishing business in the United States of America. In short, to assimilate the Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Fisheries in this Province as nearly as practicable to the Laws, Rules and Regulations of the United States of America. Such encouragement, I am satisfied, will satisfy the most fastidious, and enable all engaged therein to prosecute with spirit and energy a branch of business which gives employment to thousands of all ages and sexes.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JAMES ALEXANDER.

W. C. Furrage, Esquire,
Clerk Fishery Committee,
House of Assembly,
Quebec.

To the Committee of the Legislative Assembly on Fisheries.

Being one of those constituting the Committee on the Fisheries, I therefore consider it my duty to give my views on the matter, having been engaged in the Fisheries in Gaspé, twenty-five years, and at Labrador for the last ten years. I can positively state that the people of this Province, engaged in those fisheries cannot compete with the French, American, and even with those of our Sister Provinces, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and the Island of Prince Edward. The French Government grant a bounty of 10 francs for every quintal of dry fish cured by French subjects and brought into France; the Americans allow a bounty of 20s. per ton, measurement, of Vessels; Nova Scotia grants 20s. per ton, and Prince Edward Island 12s. 6d. per ton, and £400 in prizes; New Brunswick allows no tonnage bounty, but admits fishing tackle and other materials used for the Fisheries, free of duty. Under these circumstances, it is impossible for the fishermen of this Province to compete with their neighbours, and to trade in the same market. I would recommend a bounty of 20s. per ton measurement, for every decked vessel registered in this Province, engaged in the Cod and Mackarel Fisheries, during

the season, say four months, this would in part enable us to compete with the American fishermen, who charge us a duty of 20 per cent on fish imported by us into the United States. In the Bay of Chaleurs where the American vessels resort, in scores for mackarel, there is not a vessel of this Province so engaged, but if a bounty were given, it would be the means of enabling our fishermen to build schooners, and to adopt the same system of fishing as the Americans. The amount so paid by the Province would, in part be made up by the duty on luxuries, of 12½ per cent, which the fishermen would use, if they could compete and live as well as their neighbours; but under the present system, they can only realize the common necessities of life. I am of opinion that measures should also be taken to encourage, if possible, and by all means, the labouring fisherman industriously pursuing in his boat his occupation, and business at the fisheries; for instance, I would give a bounty of one shilling per quintal for dried fish, to any boat's crew of two men, who, fishing at least five months in the season, should take 80 quintals, or over. The annual appropriation for this encouragement to the Fisheries need not exceed £5,000. There formerly was a considerable trade with the West Indies, which has long ceased to exist, from the total inability of our merchants to compete in those markets with the Americans, and other foreigners. If encouragement were given, so as to revive that important trade, we should recover a hundred fold in our revenue, any small outlay we might make in promoting it. Our Fisheries are depressed beyond measure, whilst those of our neighbours are flourishing, and who, by means of them, carry on a profitable trade with the West Indies, South America, and the Mediterranean. I am of opinion that the produce of our own Gulf fisheries, if encouraged, would supply us in return with West India produce, more than necessary, for the supply of the whole consumption of the Province.

The oldest merchants in the trade of the fisheries are now fast curtailing their business for want of Legislative encouragement. The Government will, in my opinion, be highly blameable, if it does not extend its care and protection to the Fisheries. This we have long sought, and still seek for, not as a matter of favor but of justice, and we entertain a hope the Government will finally attend to our just demands.

DAVID LEBOUTILLIER, M. P. P.

Quebec, 8th November, 1852.

8th November, 1852.

Mr. Francis Ahier, of Gaspé having perused the matter submitted to the Committee, by David Le Boutillier, Esq., Member for Bonaventure, says, he concurs in all that is stated by that gentleman. A long residence in the Bay of Gaspé, that is to say since 1824, during which time he has been constantly concerned in the trade and fisheries, enables him to state with confidence that this branch of national industry having to contend as it does, with fisheries carried on at their doors by Foreigners encouraged by bounties as well as by their fellow subjects of the neighbouring Provinces, enjoying also encouragement, is going downwards. We cannot compete in Foreign markets with them. We have no trade for instance with the West Indies, although it might, if we had any thing like a liberal encouragement, carry on an extensive trade with those Islands, particularly in our inferior fish—fish of the best quality being sent to the Mediterranean and South America markets. The consequence is, that a large portion of the inferior fish of the Gaspé District goes to Halifax, whence it goes to the West India markets, by means of which the Halifax merchants carry on a profitable trade, bringing home West India produce in return, which he sends to Canada, deriving a handsome profit from a trade which we altogether forego for want of encouragement from the Legislature of our own Province, which most unaccountably seems insensible of the value of the fisheries

and immense trade that might be carried on through them. I think the bounty of a shilling per quintal of dried Codfish to a boat's crew of two men, realizing eighty quintals or over in any one season, scarcely a sufficient encouragement, considering the very low ebb at which, for want of protection for the time past, the fisheries actually are reduced; I am of opinion that if a bounty is to be given to the fishermen, it should be at least for the first season, one shilling and six pence, which for eighty quintals would make £6 or £3 for each man. This really would be an extra encouragement, though after all a small one, for five months' hard labor. Boat's crews not realizing eighty quintals, of course would get no bounty. Thus the laborious and industrious would be rewarded, and the country's trade would be the gainer, while the idle and negligent fishermen would profit nothing, at least, through the treasury of the Province; whereas those who should take eighty quintals or more would certainly get something worth while, for instance, a boat's crew who should take in the season 100 quintals, (which, in good seasons, is not unusual) would be entitled to £7 10s., and so on for any greater quantity. The Legislature should, of course, provide against imposition, and take care that the precise quantity taken by each boat's crew claiming the bounty be faithfully ascertained. I do not suggest anything on this head, as it is matter of detail only to be considered if the Legislature thinks fit to grant bounties.

QUEBEC, 23rd February, 1853.

SIR,—In acknowledging receipt of your communication of the 17th instant, I beg leave to state in reply to the question put to me by the Committee to whom is referred the consideration of the state of the Fisheries.

That I have not for many years had any concern in commerce, and consequently do not supply any house concerned in the Fisheries.

In reply to the general question, I beg further to state it is too self-evident to make it a question, that the Fisheries cannot be carried on to advantage, if at all, unless in some way encouraged by Legislative aid.

New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island allowing a bounty on fish, it is impossible that Canada, not being so immediately in the vicinity of the Fishing Grounds, can compete with them.

Many years ago when I was concerned in commerce, an Act was in force of the Imperial Parliament, I believe, 14 George 3rd, by which, under a Schedule, a certain value was affixed to certain articles, the produce of the West Indies and Canada; any person shipping Canada produce mentioned in the said Schedule, was permitted to bring a return cargo of articles likewise mentioned in the Schedule free of duty to the same amount shipped. The effect of this was to afford a constant demand for Canada produce at an enhanced price, and to enable the farmers and inhabitants to obtain the articles received in return at a reduced price. At that period the West India trade was very considerable, as the shipment of flour and other articles was generally made to the West Indies, not only by our own shippers, but also those of the other Colonies, as their vessels were sent to Quebec to load for the purpose of obtaining the advantage of the return cargo. Since that Act has been repealed there has been no trade of any consequence with the West Indies. I can suggest no better mode of encouraging the Fisheries (although I am aware that protection in any shape is considered objectionable) under the peculiar situation in which this Colony is placed, arising out of the protection given by all the surrounding Colonies, than a revival of that Act, with some changes and alterations to make it more applicable to the present state of the commerce of the country, by the addition of some articles not included in the Schedule, and leaving out others. Rum, for instance, was one of the articles of import which may now well be left out, and if my recollection is correct, I think Fish was not one of the articles of export mentioned, as

vessels that came up from Halifax generally purchased their fish below—a reference to the Act may, no doubt, suggest other articles. At the period I speak of, horses, which were one of the enumerated articles, were reared by the farmers for exportation, and a considerable commerce existed in that article, which has entirely, I believe, ceased to exist. A reference to the books of the Custom House will show the various articles shipped to the West Indies when that Act was in force. Vessels loading for the West Indies necessarily required many articles, the produce of the country, to make up an assorted cargo, such as apples, onions, potatoes, butter, &c., &c., all of which was beneficial to the farmer, and in various ways the loss of duty on the return cargo was amply made up to the country.

Your obedient servant,

BENJAMIN TREMAIN.

To W. C. Burrage, Esq.

(Extract from a letter received from Gaspé, to the Chairman of the Committee.)

Messrs. LeBontillier and Fauvel are great advocates for “protection,” as last season, the beneficial effects of which are already felt, in the rise, both of the American and Colonial markets. The Americans know better than our Colonial Government, the immense wealth, which we have in our Gulf and Shore Fisheries, which indeed are the very Peru of British America, and they are most anxious to participate in them in common with the Colonists, but these must know right well, that the thing is not safe or practicable without annexation, and that if we cannot get “Reciprocity” without sharing our Fisheries with Foreigners, we should do without it, as we have done before.

An Account of all the vessels cleared outwards in the Island of Newfoundland, for the Spring Seal Fishery in the year 1851, with their tonnage and number of men employed.

From what Ports sailed.	Ships No.	Tons. No.	Men. No.
St. Johns,.....	92	9200	3480
Harbor Grace,.....	64	5949	2398
Spaniard's Bay,.....	5	439	192
Carbonear,.....	34	3408	1226
Brigus, Cupids and Port de Grace,.....	57	5309	2019
Trinity and Catalina,.....	30	2573	999
New Palican and Hart's Harbour,.....	11	927	367
Greenspond,.....	23	1740	696
Bay Bulls, Aquafort and Reviews,.....	7	651	252
Total employed from the Island,.....	323	30,196	11,629

GEO. J. HAYWARD,

Comptroller of Customs and Navigation Laws.

Custom House, St. Johns,

Newfoundland, 16th November, 1852.

POINT ST. PETER, GASPÉ,

24th November, 1852.

SIR,—In answer to the general question subjoined to your letter of the 14th of September last, by the Committee to whom is referred the consideration of the state of the Fisheries carried on by the inhabitants of this Province or other British sub-

jeets in the Gulf of St. Lawrence or Labrador Coast, we have the honor to inform the said Committee that we are engaged and concerned, on our own account, in the Cod Fisheries carried on in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence to a considerable degree, having a pretty extensive fishing establishment at this place, where we fit out and supply a good many fishing boats under our own superintendence, and also advance and supply a good many smaller concerns and British fishermen with every article they require for their Cod Fisheries in the Gulf, taking payment for these advances and supplies in cod fish taken by these concerns and fishermen in the Gulf in the course of the fishing season, as we were formerly, as agents of Messrs. John and Francis Perree, of the Island of Jersey, engaged and concerned in these Fisheries. We must confess that we are not much acquainted with the Fisheries carried on in the Gulf or Labrador from the neighbouring British Provinces, and therefore not prepared to say that the Fisheries of this Province labor under disadvantages compared with the Fisheries carried on from the neighbouring British Provinces. But we know and feel the great disadvantages under which the British Fisheries in this as well as these neighbouring Provinces have to contend as compared with the Fisheries carried on from the United States of America, France and other Foreign nations, in consequence of the vast encouragement granted by the respective Governments, of these Foreign nations to their Fisheries, by exemptions from duty on every article required for their Fisheries, and by liberal bounties and other allowances, whereby they are enabled to undersell the Fish Curers of this and the neighbouring British Provinces in all Foreign countries, and could also undersell them in their own home markets—truly producing such a depression in the fishing business of this and the neighbouring British Provinces as to render it so unprofitable as to be not worth following after. The Fishermen of the United States of America having, for a number of years, been permitted in the face of the existing Treaty of 1818, to encroach upon the British Fishing Grounds in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence, to the great injury of the British Fisheries therein, is another grievance with which the British Fisheries in this Province, as well as the neighbouring British Provinces, have had these years to labor under; and all these disadvantages combined have so operated upon many who were extensively engaged therein as to abandon the same, and invest their capitals in other more profitable employment—while those who have continued to follow after the fishing business have so much limited their investments as to be seriously felt by the poor fishermen in this quarter. The protection, however, afforded to the British Fisheries last season in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence by Her Majesty's ships of war, having enabled those concerned in the Cod Fisheries in this quarter to realize a more successful fishing last season than they had done for a great many years previously; and in the expectation that the same protection will be continued in time to come, with the belief that something effectual will be forthwith recommended by the aforesaid Committee to ameliorate the condition of those engaged in the fishing business in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence, has so operated upon some of those who had abandoned the business that they are making preparations for resuming the same, and it is to be hoped they will not be disappointed in their just expectations. The exemption from duty on every article required for the Fisheries in this Province, and the extension of liberal bounties and similar other allowances to those engaged and concerned therein, as are extended and allowed to those engaged and concerned in the Fisheries from the United States of America, would be a great and advisable boon to be given to those engaged and concerned in the Fisheries in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence in this Province, and would enable them to compete with the Fish Curers of other nations. And therefore a continuation of the protection offered by Her Majesty last season to our Fisheries, and the extension to those engaged and concerned therein of bounties and other allowances as nearly similar as possible as are granted to those engaged and concerned in the Fisheries of the United States of America, are the only measures we can suggest that would remove the disadvantages under which the Fisheries in the

Gulph and Labrador labor under, as compared with the Fisheries carried on from France, the United States of America and other Foreign nations. In short we are of opinion, that unless the laws, rules, regulations, bounties, allowances and advantages of the Fisheries of this Province, carried on in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Labrador coast are assimilated as nearly as practicable to the laws, rules, regulations, bounties, allowances and advantages of the United States of America, that this branch of business which gives employment to thousands of all ages, must be entirely abandoned

We have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

JOHN and ELIAS COLLAS.

W. C. Burrage, Esq.,
Clerk Committee,
Quebec.

The following letter from Captain (now Rear Admiral) Edward Boxer, to the Executive Government on being called for by the Committee, were laid before it, by direction of the Honorable the Provincial Secretary.

(Copy.)

QUEBEC, 31st October, 1848.

SIR,—I have the honor to forward to you, for His Excellency's information, copy of a letter I have addressed to Rear Admiral Sir F. Beaufort, Hydrographer of the Navy, in answer to his request to supply him with a list of all those places, at which it had appeared to me, from my professional experience, it would be desirable a Light-house should be established, the establishment of Light-houses in our Colonial possessions, occupying at present the deliberations of Her Majesty's Government; and having served many years in this country, and given this important subject much consideration, and experiencing the great want of them while serving in the Saint Lawrence, in command of Her Majesty's ships *Hussar* and *Pique*.

I beg, therefore, respectfully to call His Excellency's attention to those I have considered of importance should be established without delay; the great loss of life and property that takes place annually, and the high rate of insurance on the trade in consequence, (ten per cent being now charged) with the prospect of the trade increasing, should the free navigation of the Saint Lawrence be granted, calls, in my opinion, for a further increase in those necessary guides for their safety, and I beg to assure His Excellency that the most experienced Masters in the Quebec and Montreal trade are also of my opinion, and when this great object can be obtained with so trifling an expense in their erection and maintenance, compared to its importance to the Province and its trade, the annual expense in maintaining them would not require more than three farthings a ton on the shipping, and their erection not more than £5,000, with the appropriated grant for the improvement of the navigation from Quebec to the sea, in addition to the 4d. per ton required for our present establishments, which was unanimously approved of in a Bill introduced by the Attorney General in the House of Assembly in 1847, but thrown out by the Legislative Council, but which is absolutely necessary, should be again brought forward at the next meeting of the Provincial Parliament, otherwise the present revenue will not be able to support its establishment; or the Bill so long recommended by the Trinity Board for the consolidation of all its laws, and made similar to the laws that govern the great commercial ports in England, (which is so much required) be introduced in its stead

I feel it also my duty to point out to His Excellency that the Trinity Board, (from its increased duties which require a constant superintendence and inspection) should be provided with a steamboat which has been so often petitioned for by the Board, and as the work can be done so much better and with half the expense of the one contracted for, it is therefore of importance it should be provided for in the new Bill which was introduced in the Bill thrown out.

I beg also to recommend that the Harbour Master's fees be abolished, a tax so unequally levied on the trade, a schooner of 60 tons paying the same as a vessel of 1,400, and a fixed salary paid to him out of the tonnage duty, which has also long been recommended.

It would also be advisable that the Harbour Master's boat, (which is so much required for the superintendence of the trade in this extensive harbour) should be relieved from its employment in conveying the Quarantine Physician on board vessels arriving in the Harbour of Quebec, more particularly as his duty could be as well performed by accompanying the Boarding Custom House Officer, their examination of the Emigrant ships being similar, and the trade relieved from an unnecessary delay in having two boats to clear them. And when it is taken into consideration that the navigation is open only seven months in the year, and the vast importance it is to the trade that every facility should be given them in passing through its extensive waters, having also to compete with the American canals. I trust, therefore, I shall not be thought presuming in having offered these suggestions for His Excellency's consideration, which appear to me (from my professional experience) are of so much importance to the interests of the Province, should be adopted.

I have, &c.,

EDWD. BOXER, R. N.

Captain of the Port, and
Harbour Master of Quebec.

The Hon. JAMES LESLIE, Secretary,
Montreal.

(True Copy.)

QUEBEC, 30th October, 1848.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a letter addressed to me by your direction, from Captain Beecher, of the 22nd ultimo, informing me that the establishment of Light Houses on the shores of our Colonial possessions is occupying in a great measure, the deliberations of Her Majesty's Government, and requesting me to send you a list of all those places where it appeared to me, (from my professional experience) it will be desirable a Light House should be erected, and whether it should be fixed or revolving, and the remarks and observations which lead me to that conclusion, and the advantages that could be gained by its establishment.

In answer to which I have the honor to inform you, that during the time I commanded Her Majesty's ships "Sparrow Hawk," "Hussar," and "Pique," I served several years on the North American station, my attention was necessarily called to this important subject, and while in the command of the "Hussar," was employed in surveying and settling the geographical positions of the different Capes and Head-lands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and on the completion of that service I had the honor to report to Sir Charles Ogle, the Commander in Chief, the great want of lights in the Gulf and River Saint Lawrence, and the importance for the safety of its trade (the amount of the loss of life and property being immense annually) its shores should be lighted, and I recommended that St. Paul's Island, Cape Rae, the east and west end of Anticosti, Cape Rosier, and the north and east end of Prince Edward Island, as good sites for their establishment; and while in the command of the "Pique," serving on the same station, I also had the honor to recommend to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the great necessity of further lights being established on Biquet and Red Island, and the importance of one being erected on Table Island on the coast of Nova Scotia, and I beg to refer you to that Report, dated July, 1833, which states my reasons for recommending it, and I am still of the same opinion, but I should further recommend that a gun be placed

there to fire every half hour in foggy weather. And on my appointment in 1841 to the office I now hold, I called the attention of His Excellency the Governor General and the Trinity Board to this important subject. The great loss of life and property, with the high rate of insurance on the trade to the Gulf and River call loudly for improving its dangers, and I recommend that Red Island and the east end of Anticosti should be lighted without delay, and a better system adopted for the education of Pilots; also erecting beacons, as land marks on different points on the south shore of Anticosti, and between Cape Chat and Cape Rosier, the land being so difficult to distinguish, particularly during short intervals of clearings in foggy weather, with the establishment of fog guns, bells and gongs at the different Light Houses. Those recommendations having been approved of and recommended by the Home Government to be adopted, and the Provincial Government having in 1847 granted £18,000 for that purpose, the Trinity Board this year has been enabled to adopt many of the suggestions recommended, (13) thirteen additional buoys having been laid down in the River, also contracting for beacons as land marks, and lighting the east end of Anticosti. Red Island will also be lighted the beginning of next month. But the St. Lawrence Canals having been opened this year, the trade must still further increase, being decidedly of opinion, if the free navigation of the Saint Lawrence is granted, with the corn laws repealed (having a practical knowledge of the whole route from Chicago to the sea) that the greater part of the produce of the Western States of America for Home consumption that have shipping ports in the Lakes, as well as our own, will be transported to Europe through the waters of the Saint Lawrence, for this simple reason that it can be done cheaper, quicker and shipped in better order, than it can be done through the Canals of the United States; also the yearly crops can be shipped before the navigation closes, it appearing to me, it would be more productive to the grower by warehousing it in England (to take the advantage of the markets) than to be shut up five winter months in this country; but to carry out this important object it would be necessary to give every facility for the transport of the trade through our Canals, with good and safe channels to them, carrying the same depths of water as can pass through the locks, and leaving no parts of its waters without good lights, buoys, beacons and pilots for its safe navigation; and having given this subject much consideration, I should therefore recommend the following places as proper sites for the additional lights that might be required, viz:

St. Paul's Island.

I have always been of opinion it was unnecessary that two lights should be established on this Island. The Commissioners appointed to examine and fix the site for a light on it, only recommended one, and it would have been far better had one of them been placed on the Bird Rock or Cape Ray. At present it appears to me of importance. that a gun to fire every half hour should be substituted for the bell, and I have just been informed by the master of the ship "Enchantress," wrecked on St. Paul's Island on the ultimo, that his vessel would have been saved had a gun been established on the Island to fire every half hour, as he must have heard the report in time to have avoided the danger. I should, therefore, strongly recommend that a gun be placed there in lieu of the bell, without the least delay, which is also the opinion of the most experienced masters in the trade.

Bird Rock.

I am strongly of opinion, that a light should be established on this rock, the current almost always setting to the southward, which frequently gets ships into difficulties among the dangers in its vicinity, and it being in the direct passage through the Gulf, makes it necessary that it should be seen in the night, that no delay might take place in rounding it, which is of importance to vessels inward and outward bound.

Cape Ray.

A light on this Cape would, in my opinion, be of the greatest service to the trade, the ice in the spring invariably setting down on the St. Paul's Island and Cape Breton; vessels are therefore obliged to keep on the Newfoundland shore; and this being the entrance to the Gulf, it is of importance that both sides should be lighted, for it often happens that one side is covered by fog, when the other is quite clear, which is another strong reason that one of the lights on St. Paul's Island should be shifted to it.

Cape Rosier.

I have always been of opinion that a light with a gun on this Cape would be of importance to the trade, the current invariably settling to the southward, and the wrecks that take place annually in its vicinity (five ships having been wrecked this season; one the "Astoria," with a general cargo, valued at £60,000) shews the great necessity for its establishment, and, had a gun been there to fire every half hour, those vessels would have been saved, as they must have heard the report in passing it, which would have enabled them to avoid the danger, it being very foggy when they run on shore.

West end of Anticosti.

A light having been established on the east end, it appears to me of importance, for the passage of the North Channel, that a light should also be established at the west end, it being a dangerous point, and which would be of great service to ships beating up between Anticosti and Cape Rosier, by allowing them to cross to the north shore in the night, a quicker passage being always made by beating up on that shore, in consequence of a strong current always running down on the south shore.

East end of Prince Edward's Island.

A light should be established on this low, dangerous place, which would be of the greatest service to the trade passing through the Gut of Canso, particularly to those bound to Miramichi, the Bay Chaleur, and the Gulf Ports of New Brunswick: it therefore appears to me of importance a light should be established there as soon as possible.

North end of Prince Edward's Island.

This low, dangerous point also requires to be lighted, which would be of importance to the trade bound to Miramichi, the Ports on the Gulf shore of New Brunswick, and the Bay Chaleur, and also to vessels passing through the Straits of Northumberland. Many wrecks take place on this coast.

Point Birch, Island of Miscou, at the South entrance of the Bay Chaleur.

The trade to Campbellton, Bathurst, Dalhousie, Carlisle, and other Ports in the Bay Chaleur, having so much increased, and is still increasing, makes it of importance that a light should be established on this low, dangerous point, and which would also be of importance to the trade of the River Saint Lawrence, many ships beating up with a foul wind, after being set up on that shore, the current invariably settling to the southward.

Bersimis Point, on the North Shore.

The great difficulty to distinguish distances from the lights in the Gulf and River Saint Lawrence, in consequence of a haze often hanging on the glass of the lanterns, makes it necessary that a light should be established on the north shore, between Point des Monts and the Saguenay, the brilliancy of Biquet light (at times)

often deceiving the Pilots and Masters of vessels as to the distance from it. I should therefore recommend that a light be established on Point Bersimis, as the most eligible site for one, which would very much lessen the dangers of Port Neuf and Manicouagan shoals. Many wrecks every season take place on these shoals.

Grandel Island (one of the Kamouraska Islands.)

A small light on this Island would be of great service to the trade, particularly in the fall months, as it would enable ships to pass Hare Island shoal with safety in the night, vessels often being obliged to heave to or anchor, waiting for daylight to pass between it and the Pilgrims.

St. Roch's Shoals, entrance of the Traverse.

I have always considered it would be of great advantage to the trade if a fixed light was placed on this shoal, instead of the floating light, which could be easily and safely done by sinking blocks and erecting a lighthouse on them, it often happening that the light vessel is injured by ships running aboard of her in passing through the Traverse, and sometimes breaks adrift in heavy gales of wind, leaving for a time that dangerous place without its necessary guide, and as the annual expense would not be half that of the floating light, which in a few years would pay for its erection, I should therefore strongly recommend that it be adopted; and while employed on the Naval and Military Commission for the defence of Canada, I pointed out to Her Majesty's Government the defenceless state of the River Saint Lawrence, and as heavy guns could be mounted on the blocks for the defence of the Traverse, (a most important point to be defended,) no time, in my opinion, should be lost in adopting this recommendation.

Bellechasse Island.

A small river light would be of service on this Island, and a refuge harbour, which is so much required for the river and gulph trade, could be made here with very little expense.

Carousel Island, one of the Seven Islands.

There being no light on the north shore to the eastward of Point des Monts, it would be of great service to the trade if a light was established on this Island, (the harbours among them being extremely good,) which would be very often useful as a refuge harbour in gales of wind from the eastward or westward. This light would also be of great service in beating up on the north shore.

Between Quebec and Montreal.

A small light is required on St. Antoine, a dangerous point, about 18 miles from Quebec. With this exception, the whole river between Quebec and Montreal is extremely well lighted.

Lakes St. Louis, St. Francis, and the River Ottawa.

The naval and military commission reported to His Excellency the Governor General, the great necessity for the establishment of lights on those Lakes and River, the trade (for the want of them) not being able to navigate them in the night; and the Canals being now open, makes it still more necessary they should have sufficient guides for that purpose, and measures, I believe have been taken to adopt their recommendation. The establishment of small lights between Cornwall and Kingston would also be of great advantage, it being of the greatest importance, their passage from the Upper Lakes to Montreal and Quebec should not be impeded, five months of the year being shut up, from having any communication with the sea.

Lakes Ontario and Erie.

Great attention has been paid to the lighting of those Lakes, but it appears to me the harbour lights should be made more brilliant, which would also answer for the general trade on their passage up and down, the American shores being extremely well lighted.

Lake Huron.

As our trade increases to Lake Superior, it will be necessary for lights to be established between the entrance of River Sinclair and Cape Hurd, and from that Cape to Sault St. Mary, also between Cape Hurd and Penetanguishene. That Cape or in its vicinity appears to me of importance should be lighted without delay.

In recommending the establishment of the above additional lights in the Gulf and River St. Lawrence, I am aware, in carrying them all out at present, it would be attended with too great an expense, not only for their erection but to the trade in maintaining them. But when it is taken into consideration, the dangers and difficulties of its navigation, in consequence of the horizon hardly ever being true, the currents so very irregular and the difficulty of judging the true distance from the land, with fogs and partial clearings, (the north shore often being clear when the south is covered), and the very great importance it is to the trade to get clear of its dangers (on their second voyage home) before the navigation closes, and the high rate of insurance (being now ten per cent.—England—fall voyage out and home—ten per cent.—United States, same voyage out and home about seven per cent) caused entirely by the great loss of life and property that annually takes place, by wrecks on its shores, and with a prospect of its trade increasing, should the free navigation of the Saint Lawrence be granted. No time, in my opinion, should be lost in establishing those of the most importance, and I should therefore strongly recommend the following, viz:—

St. Paul's Island.—A gun to fire every half hour in foggy weather to be substituted for the fog bell, and if practicable the revolving light to be removed to Cape Ray.

Bird Rock, Cape Rosier, with a gun to fire every half hour in foggy weather.

Grandel Island and a fixed light to be established on *St. Rock's Shoal* instead of the floating one. Should the above recommendations be carried out, I am satisfied the trade could easily maintain them, (the tonnage by Customs returns during the last three years, averaging as per margin, annually, independent of the Gulf and River Trade) by a duty levied of 5d. currency per ton, which would be ample for their maintenance, and less burdensome to the trade than in any other part of the world, and the unappropriated money, (for the improvement of the navigation below Quebec) with an additional grant of £5,000 would be ample for their erection.

I shall have the honor to send a copy of this letter to His Excellency the Governor General, and I have to request you will be pleased to lay this before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, who are aware of my great anxiety to improve the dangers of the Saint Lawrence, which every day shews is of so much importance to the North American Provinces.

I have, &c,

(Signed,)

EDWD. BOXER,
Captain Royal Navy.

P. S.—You are aware that my recommendation for the erection of an Observatory in the Citadel of Quebec has been approved of, and an estimate made by the Board of Ordnance for its erection, but I am sorry to say no other steps have been

Port of Quebec,
541, 246 tons.
Port of Montreal
50,000 (about.)
591,295 Tons.

taken for its establishment, although the cost for its erection and maintenance would be so trifling compared to its great importance to the trade, from the great difficulty they have in rating their chronometers after they once enter the Gulph of the St. Lawrence, the horizon at all times being so imperfect, and the Masters of vessels being generally ignorant to do so by an artificial one, and I am quite satisfied if the Government would pay for its erection (about £450) the trade would willingly pay for its maintenance.

I herewith enclose also agreeably to your request, a statement how the lights should be distinguished if my recommendations are generally adopted.

(Signed,) E. B.

Statement of additional lights (whether fixed or revolving) recommended to be established in the Gulph and River Saint Lawrence.

St. Paul's Island—A fixed light with a gun to fire every half hour.

Cape Ray—Revolving light.

Bird Rock—Red light with a gun.

East End of Anticosti, (exhibited)—Fixed light with a bell.

South-west End of ditto, (exhibited)—Revolving light with a gun.

West End of ditto—Fixed light with a bell.

Cape Rosier—Two lights vertical in the same light-house with a gun to fire every half hour.

East End of Prince Edward's Island—Fixed light with a bell. The one on the North entrance of the Gut of Canso to be changed to red.

North End of ditto—Red light with a gong.

Point Birch, North End of Mission Island—Fixed light with a bell.

Carousel Island, one of the Seven Islands—Two fixed lights, vertical in the same light-house, (one white and the other red) with a gong.

Pointe des Monts, (exhibited)—Fixed light with a bell.

Pointe Bersimis—Two lights vertical in the same light-house with a gong.

Biquet, (exhibited)—Revolving lights with a gun firing every hour.

Red Island, (to be exhibited immediately)—Fixed red light with a bell.

Green Island, (exhibited)—Fixed light with a gong.

Grandel Island—Two fixed lights vertical in the same light-house.

Traverse—Fixed light on St. Roch's Shoal with a gong.

Bellechasse—Small fixed light with a bell.

(Signed,) E. BOXER,
Captain, Royal Navy.

(True copy.)

(Signed,) E. B.

The Representation of the Chamber of Commerce of the Island of Jersey,

HUMBLY SHEWETH,—

That the Merchants of this Island have, for upwards of a century, been extensively engaged in the North American Fisheries in Newfoundland, Canada, New Brunswick, and Cape Breton, at all of which they have large establishments for carrying on the trade, which have been created at a considerable expense.

That the Capital employed by them in the Fisheries may be estimated at a quarter of a million pounds sterling.

That the number of vessels employed in the Fisheries by the Merchants of this Island may be estimated at about 100, measuring upwards of 10,000 tons,

giving employment to about 2,000 British Seamen, and a still greater number of Fishermen in the Colonies.

That the Fisheries are therefore of very great value, not only from the number of vessels and the Capital employed in them, but also as a nursery for Seamen.

That this trade has for several years past been suffering from various causes, partly from the privilege possessed by Spanish vessels of importing Fish into Spain and her Colonies at a less duty than that levied on Fish imported into British ships, and principally by the bounties given by the French and United States Governments to their respective people, and which are so considerable as to enable them not only to compete successfully with, but to undersell the British Merchants in all Foreign markets.

That the encouragement given to their Fisheries by the French Government will be apparent from the following statement of bounties allowed by them, viz. :

- 50 francs per man for the Shore Fisheries in Newfoundland and Iceland.
- 30 " " for the Fishery on the Banks of Newfoundland.
- 15 " " for the Fishery on the Dogger Bank.
- 10 " per cwt. for all Dry Fish exported to the French Colonies.
- 8 " " for Fish exported to Foreign countries bordering the Mediterranean.
- 6 " " for Fish exported to Sardinia and Algeria.

That, under all these circumstances, the Chamber of Commerce believes that if any concessions are made by the British Government, they will be most prejudicial to the interests of the British Fishery, and may be productive of its ruin.

That the Chamber has heard with alarm that on an application from the Governments of France and the United States for a revision of the existing treaties regulating the Fisheries in America, and asking for concessions to enable them to fish where they are not at present allowed. Her Majesty's Government has so far acceded to their request as to name a Commissioner to take these demands into consideration.

And the Chamber would humbly pray that instructions be given to the said Commissioner to make no alteration in the existing Treaties, as otherwise the British Merchant will be sacrificed, and the trade will eventually fall into the hands of the French and Americans, who enjoy most important advantages from the bounties allowed them by their respective Governments.

Differential duty in Spanish bottom about 2s. per cwt. ; previous to last years, 3s. (25 francs to the £1 stg.)

April, 1853.

Messrs. Stephens Mills & Co.
Montreal

H. Brown
m.p.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

1st Session, 4th Parliament, 16 Victoria, 1853.

FIRST REPORT

Of the Committee on the State of the
Fisheries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence
and on the Labrador Coast.

ON Motion of Mr. CHRISTIE (of Gaspé.)

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