

PROCEEDINGS
OF A
SPECIAL COMMITTEE,

APPOINTED ON WEDNESDAY, THE 15th JANUARY 1823,

ON THE BILL

FOR THE BETTER REGULATION

OF THE

FISHERIES

IN THE INFERIOR DISTRICT OF GASPÉ,

WITH AN INSTRUCTION TO CONSIDER, WHETHER
IT BE NOT EXPEDIENT TO EXTEND THE DIS-
POSITIONS OF THE SAID BILL TO THE

COUNTIES OF

Cornwallis and Northumberland.



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WITH AN INSTRUCTION

To consider whether it be not expedient to extend the dispositions of the said Bill to the Counties of Cornwallis and Northumberland.

COMMITTEE ROOM,

TUESDAY, 21st January 1823.

PRESENT—MESSRS. *Taschereau, Quirouet, Davidson, Bourdages, E. C. Lagueux, M'Callum and Taché.*

Mr. TASCHEREAU called to the Chair.

Mr. Joseph Barth, Mariner, appeared before your Committee, and made answer, as follows, to the questions put to him :—

Q. Do you know the River Ristigouche—what kind of Fishery is carried on there ?

A. I do know it—the Salmon fishery is carried on there.

Q. Has the Salmon fishery in that river decreased or increased of late years ?

A. It has decreased more than one half.

Q. What do you know to be the causes of that decrease ?

A. The obstruction of the Channels, sometimes with nets, at other times with lines having branches attached to them, which being agitated by the current drive the fish into the nets, so that the upper part of the river is deprived of them, and the fish cannot go thither to spawn and reproduce, which is one of the chief causes of the decay of the fish.

Q. Do you know of other causes ?

A. Yes, the Indians going to fish in the upper parts of the river too early, destroy the fish before they have spawned.

Q. At what time ought the Indians to be allowed to fish for Salmon, so as not to prevent their spawning ?

A. They ought not to commence earlier than the fifteenth of September, after that time I am not aware of any inconvenience from carrying on the fishery.

Q. Is there any and what inconvenience in permitting the Indians to spear their fish ?

A. Yes, 1st. Because they wound more than they take. 2ndly. Because the fish are thereby driven away. 3rdly. Because they spear the fish at night, by torch-light, which prevents their entering the river, as it is by night they endeavour to enter.

Q. What method do you know of which would be fittest for allowing the Indians to fish for Salmon, without destroying them ?

A. To restrict them to fishing with nets alone, as other fishermen do, without barring the channels.

Q. What regulations can you suggest respecting the nets ?

A. To do as the fishermen of Miramichi do, who raise the nets upon their posts, every Saturday, to give time for the fish to go up on Sunday. I would, however, have the channels free at all times.

Q. Do you mean then to say that the best means of carrying on the Salmon fishery, without destroying it, are to employ nets, without barring the channels, to take up the nets every Saturday ; not to use lines to which branches are attached in the channels ; not to fish earlier than the fifteenth of September, in the upper parts of the river ; and not to permit any person to spear fish, or to fish by torch-lights ?

A. Yes.

Q. Ought not the purchasing of Salmon, from the Indians, before a given time, to be prohibited ?

A. Yes, until the fifteenth of September, that the Indians may have no interest in carrying on that fishery.

Q. Are you aware of any other mode of obviating the inconveniences you have mentioned ?

A. Yes, the passing of a Law to regulate the Salmon fishery, and the appointing of a person not interested either in the fishery or the Salmon trade, to superintend the execution of that Law.

Q. Might such regulations, if adopted, obviate those inconveniences without corresponding regulations on the part of New-Brunswick ?

A. Similar regulations, on the part of New-Brunswick, would be wanted.

Q. Are not similar regulations wanted for the other rivers of Bay-Chaleur and Gaspé, where the Salmon fishery is carried on ?

A. I think so.

Q. Do you know of any other regulations which ought to be made for the Salmon fishery, by sea, at the entrance of the rivers ?

A. I think it would be proper in the Bays, along the coast, that the nets should begin only where the water is two feet deep at low-water, in spring-tides, and should be carried out towards the sea to the length of one hundred and fifty fathoms, and not farther ; because by so doing the fish might be led away from entering the river, which would deprive the neighbours of their chance ; with respect to the rivers, the length of the nets ought to be regulated by the channels.

Q. Do you know the manner in which the Eel fishing is carried on, and how is it carried on at present?

A. By Torch light, sometimes with Bow-nets (*Nasses*) and sometimes they are killed with sticks, where the tide is low, at a seasons of the year.

Q. Is there any inconvenience in these or in any of these modes of carrying on the Eel Fishery?

A. There is no inconvenience in taking Eels by Torch light, nor with Bow-nets, nor in winter on the ice; but there is in killing them at low tide with sticks, because it drives them away—The month of June, when they come among the herbage to spawn, is the only season when they ought not to be killed with sticks; but even then there is no inconvenience in taking them in any other way; nor ought they in autumn, about the month of October, to be taken in any way, because they then lodge in the mud for the purposes of re-production.

Q. Has not the Eel Fishery decreased through a want of the regulations you have mentioned?

A. Yes; it has decreased very much.

Q. Are you acquainted with the methods of carrying on the Cod Fishery, and what are they?

A. It is carried on in vessels which go on the banks, and in Sloops and Barges within and along Bays.

Q. When the fishery is carried on in vessels, is not the fish split at sea, and is not the offal thrown into the sea?

A. Yes; that is almost always done.

Q. Does any and what inconvenience arise from throwing them into the sea?

A. Yes; 1st—Because the bones which are swallowed by the fish kill them and drive others away.

2dly---While they have the offal to cat, they do not take the bait of the fishermen.

Q. Would it be possible for the Masters of those vessels to go ashore in order to split their fish there, instead of at sea, without too much inconvenience?

A. Yes; they may either land for the purpose of splitting their fish on shore instead of at sea, or they may keep the offal on board in casks in order to be afterwards thrown on shore.

Q. Do not the proprietors of Sloops and Barges also split their fish at sea and sometimes throw the offal into the sea?

A. Yes; they do so sometimes, and the same regulation ought to be made with respect to them.

Q. Has not the Cod fishing also diminished, and from what cause?

A. Yes; and the cause above stated is the only one.

Q. Is there not exported a large quantity of dried and green Cod-fish, and sometimes of a bad quality?

A. Yes; and great injury to the Trade in Cod-fish is thereby done.

Q. How happens it that the exported Cod-fish is frequently of a bad quality?

A. Sometimes from the weather, sometimes from the negligence of those who apply too much or too little salt.

Q. What remedy do you suggest for preventing the exportation of Cod-fish of bad quality?

A. There should be Inspectors, perfectly free from interest in the Trade in Cod-fish, and who might do as is done in Newfoundland and as Mr. Robin does, distinguishing three qualities of Cod-fish and assorting them as follows: that is to say, the first which is the best is called *Merchantable*, this is sent to Spain and the Brazils—the second called *Madeira*, which is usually sent to Madeira—the third called *West India*, is sent to the West Indies; what is brought to Quebec is usually the same quality of that which is sent to the West Indies.

Q. Have not some abuses on the part of Inspectors been discovered heretofore?

A. I cannot speak of this from my own knowledge, but I have heard it said there were abuses—the Inspectors having sometimes stamped the barrels before they were full, and having afterwards sent them to the dealers who have filled them with whatever they pleased.—If the abuses complained of can be remedied, these Inspectors will do good, because that will give confidence to purchasers, and will, in time, improve the credit, procure to sellers a higher price and establish a more regular Trade.

Q. Would it not be expedient to grant a bounty on the exportation of fish as an encouragement?

A. That would do a great deal of good. I think two shillings per hundred weight would not be too much on *Merchantable Cod-fish* and less on the other qualities.

Q. Where ought the Inspectors to be?

A. One at *Tracadia* or *Carleton*, one at *Bonaventure*, another at *Paspebiac* and one at *Gaspé* and at *Percé*.

Q. Do you not think it would be necessary for the encouragement of the Fisheries and Trade, that there should be Inspectors of fish at Quebec and Montreal?

A. I do not think so. It might nevertheless be useful at Quebec, because a large quantity of Cod-fish is packed there for the West-Indies. I am further of opinion that no fish ought to be brought from Gaspé Bay without having been inspected.

Q. Are you acquainted with the Herring Fishery, and has it decreased?

A. Yes; it has decreased and great abuses exist—The first is, that Herrings are too much used as manure—The odour which it exhales drives away the Herrings, and I am certain spoils the ground. The second is, that they ought not to be taken with the Seine—In this way a greater quantity is sometimes taken at once than can be cured, and they are thrown on the ground as manure.

The third abuse is, that many persons collect the spawn of the Herring conveyed to the shore by the sea, which ought not to be done, because the sea conveying it back after fecundation, that practice diminishes the quantity of the fish.

Q. What means are there of remedying these abuses and promoting that Fishery ?

A. The mode would be, to abstain from doing what is above-mentioned, and to take the fish only with common Nets (*Filets*)—In this way no more would be taken than could be salted for Trade. I see no inconvenience in using the Herring as a bait for Cod-fish.

Q. What do you know of the Capelin Fishery—What abuses therein are you aware of, and what means are there of promoting that Fishery ?

A. The Capelin is used as bait in the Cod Fishery. This Fishery has also decreased from the same cause which has affected the Herring Fishery. The manner in which this Fishery is now carried on by taking too much at one time destroys it, and drives away the Cod-fish and the Capelin by means of the tainted air along the beaches. No more ought to be taken than is wanted for daily use as bait. I have often seen that Fishermen could not repair to the banks for want of bait. It has been remarked that when no Capelin has been taken for two years, the result has been an increased quantity of Cod-fish and of bait.

WEDNESDAY, 22d January 1823.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

E. I. Man, Esquire, of Ristigouche, appeared before your Committee, and answered to the following questions :—

Q. Are there any local Laws or regulations for the Cod, Salmon, and other fisheries in the inferior District of Gaspé ?

A. None in force at the present moment ; there are, however, old British Statutes.

Q. Does the interest of the District materially suffer for want of local Laws and regulations relative to the fisheries ?

A. Most undoubtedly.

Q. What part of the District suffers most for want of such Laws or regulations ?

A. There are three rivers in the District of Gaspé, namely, the *Ristigouche*, the *Grand Cascadieu* and the *Bonaventure* rivers, which suffer materially for want of regulations ; and in the *Chaleur Bay* there are also Salmon fisheries carried on, which suffer in like proportion.

Q. Are there any existing Laws provided by the Province of New-Brunswick, regulating the Salmon fisheries in the rivers emptying into the Bay of Chaleurs ?

A. Yes, I understand there exists an Act of the Imperial Parliament, as well as local Laws made by the Provincial Legislature, and regulations made by the Quarter Sessions in virtue of the Law.

Q. Do these Laws apply to the river Ristigouche, which divides the inferior District of Gaspé from the adjacent parts of New-Brunswick; are these Laws and regulations, for the New-Brunswick side of that river, rendered nugatory from the want of corresponding Laws and regulations on the Canada side?

A. Owing to there existing no corresponding Laws in this Province, the Law and regulations of the Province of New-Brunswick have been neglected and abused, as far as relates to Ristigouche and Chaleur Bay, particularly with respect to the river and Bay *Nepesquit*.

Q. What, in your opinion, would be the most expedient means of remedying these inconveniences?

A. It would be very desirable and necessary if the Laws could be adopted to put each side of the river Ristigouche on the same footing; the want of corresponding Laws on each side has been the cause of great jealousies and disputes, and even murders, and has tended materially to the destruction of the fish, and consequently discouraged the fisheries.

Q. What, in your opinion, are the most advisable means of preserving the Salmon fisheries from the abuses to which they are liable for want of suitable rules and regulations?

A. I think it would be highly expedient to enact a strict Law, particularly calculated to give, to the almost ruined fishery, a chance of improving. It would likewise be very necessary to restrain the distribution of spirituous liquors to the Indians, which tends greatly to encourage them to fish Salmon at improper seasons, thereby totally destroying the breeding fish, in the remotest parts of the river, where they resort to, to deposit their spawn. I produce this paper, as a specimen of the care taken in England to avoid abuses which tend to destroy the Salmon fisheries, and preserving the breeding of the fish:—

“ SHANNON SALMON.”

“ The Chamber of Commerce, the natural guardians and active agents of every useful, every truly essential branch of agriculture and mercantile industry, has, we are happy to find, turned its attention to the preservation of the Salmon of our magnificent river. This is precisely what we expected from the gentlemen who compose this invaluable association.

“ For the last twenty years Salmon has not formed an article of trade here; before that period it had been regularly made up in tierces, and exported hence in considerable quantities, by the merchants, or the then proprietors of the weir, who were deeply interested in the preservation of this valuable fish. The wanton destruction of the breeding fish has, at present, materially injured the interests of Commerce, as to this branch of it: one hundred and ninety-six Salmon were destroyed not long since in a night, by one individual, in a part of the river not far from

“ this ; and as they were in season for depositing their spawn, it
 “ is calculated that they would have produced upwards of twenty
 “ thousand fish ! So far there was, in one solitary instance, a defi-
 “ ciency to a great amount, for it is an ascertained fact, that from
 “ whatever branch of a river, or minor stream that may supply that
 “ river, the young Salmon issue, when proceeding towards the sea,
 “ to that precise stream or river they are sure to return.

“ We doubt not but that the meeting, on the twenty-eighth
 “ instant, will be attended by happy consequences. This is a sub-
 “ ject of the very first importance to Limerick, as by due attention
 “ to it, a greater plenty of Salmon will be experienced than hitherto,
 “ for domestic uses, and the quantity exported prove highly advan-
 “ tageous to all parties concerned. The 31st Geo. II. prohibits the
 “ taking of Salmon, or any other fish, except by rod, from the
 “ 12th of August to the 1st of February. We hope that at the
 “ meeting alluded to, such arrangements will be made as the exigency
 “ of the case requires, and the bright prospect of future profit to
 “ Limerick imperiously demands.”

From the experience I have had these thirty years past in the Salmon fisheries in Chaleur Bay, I am confident that the principle laid down in the above paper is founded upon the best policy and sound judgment to preserve the breed of Salmon ; the Laws adopted in Scotland, particularly, seem peculiarly calculated to preserve that most essential principle.

Q. What are the best seasons to permit the fishing of Salmon, so as not to prevent it from spawning and peopling ?

A. From about the fifteenth of May to the tenth of August following ; after which period no Salmon ought to be killed, under any pretence whatever.

Q. Is not Salmon prevented from entering the rivers by some kind of way of taking it ?

A. They are prevented from ascending the rivers by extensive sets of nets which, for want of proper regulations, cross and bar the channels in many instances.

Q. What was the quantity of pickled Salmon exported from the river Ristigouche formerly ; and what is the quantity now ; and the reason of their difference ?

A. About the year 1790, there were near 6000 barrels exported, chiefly from Ristigouche, and that when the net fisheries were not pursued with half the avidity and experience that they are now—and now, for these several years past, there has been exported on an average, in my opinion, not amounting to 1000 barrels a year ; the reason of this difference is evidently the great abuses practised, *viz.* 1st—In barring the channel with nets, thereby preventing the fish from ascending the river to their spawning recesses. 2ndly. The great abuse, on the part of the Indians, in destroying them in their most remote recesses, at all seasons, by spearing them. 3rdly.

By barring the river with what is called *Nishigans*, (Weirs,) which is a kind of Fence in the river from one side to the other.

Q. Is there any inconvenience in letting the Indians spear the salmon, and what?

A. Yes; it is the general opinion of men experienced in the Fisheries of Ristigouche, that notwithstanding the abuses in the Net fishery, were the Indians restricted in spearing and using *Nishigans*, after the 10th of August, it would most essentially improve and revive the fisheries, from the reasons I have before stated.

Q. What regulations could you suggest for the Net fisheries?

A. By curtailing the length of the different stands (*tentures*) of Nets, from the New Mission Point, upwards, to the first Islands on both sides of the River Ristigouche, to one hundred and fifty fathoms of Bar-net, (*Barrières*) of each lot of one hundred and eighty rods, and leaving a certain space in the deepest water in the various channels, clear of any obstruction, and lifting the Nets from Saturday night till Monday morning, within the aforesaid space of fisheries; this might also apply to the *Casapedia* and *Bonaventure* Rivers.

Q. Do you know any regulations proper to be done for the Salmon fisheries at the mouths of the Rivers, that is to say at sea?

A. These fisheries, called the sea fisheries in contradistinction to the others, which are called river fisheries, might be allowed to fish from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and eighty fathoms of Bar-net to each lot, as they are not subject to use so many Swing-nets (*Queues*) as are required in the river fisheries.

Q. Can you suggest any other proper measure for the Salmon fishery?

A. In Miramichi, notwithstanding they have a great number of overseers, whose duty it is to watch and see the fishery Laws duly enforced, and these men are generally chosen from among the best characters and best acquainted with the Trade of fishing Salmon, yet many abuses of the fishery laws have occurred, from which I am of opinion, that it would be essentially necessary, that overseers of the Salmon fishery in the Bay of Chaleurs should be appointed, to enforce such Laws as may be made for those fisheries, and these men should be chosen of strict integrity, and who are well acquainted with the business of the fishery, and who have an interest in preserving the breed of Salmon in the different Rivers emptying in the Chaleur Bay. It is the opinion of many people of the Chaleur Bay, and of many other respectable people who have visited that quarter, that from the great extent of Ristigouche and its branches, where are to be found a great number of spawning recesses, perhaps more than any River known in Europe, if the breed of Salmon were properly preserved and protected in that River alone, all the Bay of Chaleur as well as the Gulph of St. Lawrence would be essentially benefited thereby.

Q. How is the Eel fishery carried on, and are there any and what inconveniences in any of the methods?

A. There is a great quantity of Eels taken in the Bay of Chaleurs by the Indians, but I do not know of any inconvenience arising therefrom. There are some French families in the neighbourhood of *María* and *Carleton* who are in the habit of fishing with *Weirs*, and have taken some tolerable quantities. Trials have been made lately to fish them in that way about the entrance of the Ristigouche, but have met with very little success. I should think that it is not necessary to make any Law for that fishery, as it is in its infancy, and rather difficult to form an opinion on this subject. I am of opinion that Mr. Barth is not correct with regard to the spawning season of the Eels, nor in the alleged abuses with respect to the fishery, and it would be cruel to restrain the Indians, after being in a state of starvation throughout the winter, from taking Eels in any way they please, which is the first relief they can get on the breaking up of the ice. The mode of killing the Eels with sticks lasts only for a few days in the Spring.

Q. Do you know any inconvenience in the manner the Cod fishery is carried on, and what?

A. I have heard that the Cod fishery has suffered most essentially from the vast number of vessels fishing on the banks near the shore and throwing their offal overboard, which is ravenously devoured by the fish, and some parts of it not proving digestible, to wit: the back and head bones kill them. Great complaints are made that the Americans encroach on our shores, contrary to Law. I have seen a representation lately, at Chaleur Bay, signed by a large number of respectable Merchants and Inhabitants concerned in the Cod fisheries, fully explaining the various abuses of that fishery in the Gulph of St. Lawrence; which representation, I understand, was submitted to His Excellency the Governor in Chief, and to which I refer. I beg leave also to refer to the Treaty between Great Britain and the American Government, regulating the privileges of the American fishing vessels in the Gulph.

Q. Did the Cod fishery diminish for some years, and what are the causes of that diminution?

A. The Cod fishery has failed in a great degree, and the quantity taken now is only about a third to what was formerly taken. The principle reason is what I have already above stated.

Q. What, in your opinion, are the means most expedient to be pursued to encourage the Trade of the District of Gaspé, and of upholding the same by preventing the exportation of Salmon or pickled fish badly or negligently cured?

A. Great abuses have taken place in shipping pickled fish from Chaleur Bay, bad in condition and short in weight; also in the casks not being of sufficient size. In my opinion each and every shipper of fish should be obliged to brand his casks on the head or bung-stave, with his name, the quantity and quality of fish

contained in each cask, and the year in which the fish were taken and cured, instead of appointing Inspectors for that description of fish. I am induced to form this opinion from the many abuses which I have a personal knowledge of having taken place in many instances, during the time there were Inspectors of fish in the District of Gaspé.

Q. Is not Dry Cod-fish distinguished in different qualities and what?

A. Dry Cod-fish is distinguished in three qualities, viz: 1st. Merchantable; 2d. Madeira; 3d. West India.

Q. What means do you suggest to ensure the exportation of Dry Cod-fish of good quality?

A. I know no better means than those adopted by the House of Charles Robin & Co. of *Paspébiac*, in Chaleur Bay, who are in the habit of sending the Captains of their ships or some trusty Agent to cull and select the different qualities of the above named description of Dry Cod-fish, And I would suggest that in the case of dispute between the seller and purchaser, it should be referred to Arbitrators chosen by the parties; thereby would be saved a very great expense and loss of time to the purchaser principally.

Q. Would it not be expedient to grant a bounty on the exportation of fish and what?

A. It would be expedient to grant a bounty on the exportation of fish of all descriptions, to put us on the same footing with the fisheries of Nova-Scotia and New-Brunswick, viz: on Dry Cod-fish, half a dollar per quintal; on Pickled Salmon, five shillings per barrel of 200 lbs. weight, and so on in proportion for smaller or larger casks of Salmon; two and six-pence per barrel of twenty-eight gallons of pickled Herrings and Mackerel; and I believe fifteen-pence ought to be allowed on Smoked Herrings per barrel of twenty-eight gallons, and ten-pence each, on Smoked Salmon.

Q. Would it not be expedient to allow a bounty to encourage the Whale fishery, and what?

A. I am of opinion a bounty upon all descriptions of fish and oil should be allowed, but I am not prepared to say what bounty.

Q. Do you know the Herring fishery—has it not diminished; are there any abuses in it, and what?

A. I approve entirely the information given by Mr. Barth, about the Herring fisheries, and the abuses adverted to by him, with the exception of restricting the Herring fishery with seines, which is almost the only way in taking Herrings in some parts of the Chaleur Bay, particularly at New-Carlisle, where the shoal of Herrings (*mouvée*) strikes the shore only a very short period on their way up the Bay, and where the fishery sometimes lasts but for one (and seldom more than two) nights, and can only be taken advantage of by vigilant attention in intercepting their passage with seines; whereas higher up Chaleur Bay they generally remain to spawn from eight to fifteen days, and can then be

taken to more advantage with nets than by any other mode of fishing.

Q. Do you know the Capelin fishery, has it not diminished— are there any abuses in it, and what?

A. With respect to this question, I can say but very little ; having always understood that people never take more than is necessary for bait, and occasionally pickling a few barrels, but I am of opinion they ought to be restricted from manuring their land with them, or with Herrings, or the spawn of Herrings particularly, on any occasion whatever.

THURSDAY, 23d January 1823.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Mr. J. O. Brunet, Merchant, appeared before your Committee.

Q. Are you acquainted with the Trade carried on between Quebec and the District of Gaspé, and what is it?

A. Yes, I am ; there is brought to us, from the District of Gaspé, dry and green Cod-fish, barrelled and smoked Salmon, Mackerel, green and smoked Herring, Cod-fish Oil, Whale Oil and Cod sounds ; also Grindstones, which are made at *Caraquet*, in Chaleur Bay, and a small quantity of Feathers and of Furs.

Q. Is the whole of that fish and oil used in Canada, or is it re-exported from Quebec?

A. The greater part of the dry Cod is re-exported from Quebec to the West Indies, as is also most of the salted Salmon, but of Herring a small quantity only is exported, because it is not well salted and packed. Five or six years ago a much larger quantity of Herring was exported, but the cause above stated has greatly discouraged the exportation, because the fish, on reaching the West Indies, was constantly found to be spoiled. I, this summer, caused to be re-packed several barrels, which I caused to be washed and packed again with coarse salt, which reached the West Indies in very good condition, and brought a price much higher than the common price.

Q. What qualities of dry and green Cod are so exported?

A. Cod of three qualities, Merchantable, Madeira and West-India ; but when it is exported from Quebec, as there is no Inspector, it is called *tal. qual.* that is to say indiscriminate with respect to quality.

Q. Would it be expedient that the distinction of quality, as to dry Cod, should be strictly preserved for the encouragement of this Trade?

A. Yes.

Q. What mode of maintaining and preserving that distinction of quality as to dry Cod, can you suggest?

A. It would be necessary to cause the same to be inspected, when packed for exportation, by Inspectors, of whom there ought to be two at least at Quebec.

Q. What qualifications should you deem requisite in such Inspectors, and what salary ought to be allowed them for their inspection?

A. I think a person who has been himself a Fisherman, and who has been in the habit of curing it, would be best qualified. I think two or three half-pence per hundred weight would be a sufficient remuneration; I believe, however, that in Newfoundland they have two pence.

Q. Would not the exported Salmon, Herring and Mackerel require inspection at Quebec?

A. Yes; for the reason stated with respect to dry Cod.

Q. What ought to be the salary for the inspection of salted fish?

A. I think what is allowed to the Inspectors of Pork and Beef would be sufficient.

Q. Would an Inspection at Chaleur Bay be necessary, as to fish exported from thence to be sent out of the Province?

A. Yes.

Q. Would it be proper to allow any and what premium on the exportation of fish and whale oil?

A. It would be proper to allow a premium only on the exportation of dry Cod-fish, of two shillings per hundred weight for Merchantable and Madeira Cod, and of half as much for the third quality.

FRIDAY, 24th January 1823.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Jeremiah Leacroft, Esquire, of Bermuda, appeared before your Committee.

Q. Is any fish exported from Lower Canada to Bermuda and other Islands and what kind of fish?

A. Yes; there are large parcels of fish and chiefly Dry Cod-fish exported from this place to the West Indies—Of pickled fish the quantity is comparatively small, owing to the bad state in which they are generally prepared and put up—Pickled Salmon, however, is an exception.

Q. Is any fish also imported there from any other country?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the fish exported from this country to the West Indies in as good a condition as that from other countries?

A. Yes; the Salmon and Dry Cod-fish are equal and perhaps better than from any other country, and particularly Salmon, if cured with strong coarse salt, which it ought to be, as well as all kind of pickled fish: as for Herrings they have been always imported and exported in bad condition.

Q. Can the fish exported from this country to the West Indies be sold cheaper or at the same price as that from other countries, and if there be a difference in the price will you explain the cause of it?

A. There is generally no difference in the price of the fish in the

West Indies, whether from this country or Newfoundland ; but from the latter place it can be afforded cheaper on account of its first cost at Newfoundland, but I do not see any reason why it should not be shipped from this port on equal terms, particularly when the outfits for the fisheries in this port can be furnished on more reasonable terms than at Newfoundland.

Q. If Herring was generally sent in good condition to the West-Indies, would the exportation of it to the West Indies be considerable ?

A. I should think it would be, because the consumption of this article, in some of the islands, particularly at Jamaica, is considerable.

Q. What defect do you know in the Herring now exported and which has discouraged lately the importation of it in the West Indies ?

A. The very bad state in which Herrings in this country have been packed ; the barrels being badly filled and the fish on that account break to pieces before they arrive in the West Indies.

Q. Do you also know any defect in the other kinds of fish imported in the West Indies ?

A. No ; I do not.

Q. Is there any defect in the size and quality of barrels and other casks in which the fish is sent pickled ?

A. There is no defect in my opinion, in the size of the barrels for pickled Salmon ; but Dry Cod-fish is often packed in too large hogsheds. The size of the barrels for pickled and other fish should be regular.

Q. Would it not be more advantageous to traders to have an uniformity in the size and quality of those barrels, casks and hogsheds, and what size and quality would you suggest ?

A. It would be very desirable that there should be an uniformity in the size and quality of barrels and casks.

Q. Is there to your knowledge any bounty allowed on the exportation of fish in the other colonies and in which ?

A. There is none to my knowledge in Newfoundland and Halifax ; I do not know if there is in New-Brunswick.

Q. Is any bounty allowed on the exportation of fish in any part of the United States ?

A. I do not think there is.

Q. To your knowledge has the fish exported from this country, without the allowance of a bounty, been able to meet a competition with the fish of other countries exported with such allowance ?

A. The future export of fish from this country, for the West Indies, will depend mainly upon its being shipped at such a price as to compete with that which is shipped from Newfoundland, and that would, in a great measure, be accomplished, were a bounty of two shillings per quintal allowed on Dry Cod-fish ; and as an encouragement for the exportation of pickled fish, a bounty of two shillings and six pence per barrel would be expedient. If something of this kind is

not resorted to, the export of Dry and Pickled fish, particularly the former, will be essentially reduced, if not altogether stopped, the late Act of the Imperial Parliament which allowed a drawback of the Crown Duty on Rum being repealed, which in its valuation of Dry fish permitted it to receive a bounty exceeding four shillings the quintal.

Q. Can the fish exported from this country meet a competition with the fish of the other Colonies or other Countries without such bounty?

A. I think not; for the reason above stated.

Q. Has the want of Inspection of fish in this Country contributed to discourage its importation in the West Indies?

A. I think an Inspector would be very necessary; as is the case in other Colonies and Countries.

SATURDAY, 25th January 1823.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Mr. Rémi Quirouet appeared before your Committee.

Q. In what does the trade of the County of Cornwallis consist?

A. In fisheries, produce of the soil, and lumber. The articles for exportation are Wheat, Barley, Oats, Butter, Peas and Fish; sometimes Pork and Beef are exported, though but to a small extent.

Q. Whither are the several articles you mention exported?

A. The Fish is generally exported to the West Indies, the Lumber to Europe, Newfoundland and the West Indies, the Butter to Halifax and Europe, the Wheat to Halifax, the Barley to Halifax and other places.

Q. What is the state of the fisheries in the County of Cornwallis, of what description are they, and where are they carried?

A. Between River Ouelle and l'Île Verte there is a great quantity of Herrings; there are Porpoise, Shad and Salmon Fisheries, a great quantity of Pilchards and Sturgeon, &c. &c. I have heard that below l'Île Verte there are considerable Cod and Salmon fisheries.

Q. Do you know in what the export Trade of the County of Northumberland consists?

A. The export Trade of that County from St. Paul's Bay consists in the same articles as that from the County of Cornwallis.

Q. What is the state of the fisheries in that part of the County of Northumberland, in what do they consist, and where are they established?

A. I know there are some established at the *Ile aux Coudres*, St. Paul's Bay and the Black River; they consist in Porpoise and Salmon. I have not been lower down than the *Ile aux Coudres*, therefore I am unable to speak of the Fisheries which are below that.

Q. Might not the Fisheries in these two Counties be increased? What has hitherto prevented their extension, and what means do you suggest for improving them?

A. They might be increased, and form a very considerable article of Export, if some encouragement were given by the Legislature, and regulations were made to inspect all Fish before sending it out of the Province—uniformity in the size and quality of the barrels is especially required.

Q. Whither is the fish of this Province exported?

A. Chiefly to the West-Indies.

Q. In what repute is the fish of this Country at those places?

A. Cod and Salmon are in high repute, but the Herring is in very low estimation.

Q. Why is the Herring so little valued?

A. Because it is ill salted, ill packed, and very often put into bad barrels.

Q. Do you know how the Salmon fishery, by torch-light, is conducted; and is it beneficial or detrimental?

A. I believe it to be very detrimental, for the fish are thereby driven off the shore.

Mr. John Macnider then appeared before your Committee.

Q. Do you know the state of the fisheries from Ile Verte to Cap Chat, in what do they consist, and where are they carried on?

A. I know no other fisheries except my own---one of these is at *Grand Mitis*, and the other at *Petit Mitis*, Cod, Salmon, Herring, Holibut, Eel and fish of other descriptions.

Q. Are there other places within those limits where fisheries might be established?

A. The Seigniori of Matane, Cap Chat, Rimouski, Bic and Trois Pistoles, are places very well adapted to the Fishery, chiefly for Salmon, Herring and Cod; there is also a great number of Whales and Seals.

Q. Whither is the fish taken at the fisheries you mention exported?

A. To the West Indies and sometimes to Spain and England.

Q. Might not the fisheries of those places be improved and by what means?

A. The improvement now necessary would be to employ professional men conversant with the trade.

Q. Is the produce a sufficient indemnification for the expense and trouble without a bounty?

A. I conceive that the principal means of encouraging fisheries would be to grant a bounty, as also a drawback on salt in all places where it is used for the fisheries.

Q. Are bounties granted in other, and in what Countries, and what bounties are to your knowledge so granted?

A. In England, the bounty granted is four shillings per barrel of Herrings, containing thirty-two gallons.

Q. Can the fish of this country bear a competition with that of other countries without a bounty?

A. No, it could not; because the bounty usually defrays the

expenses, and it is more difficult to export it from this country than from others which are situate nearer the sea?

Q. What bounty do you suggest?

A. Four shillings per barrel of Herrings as in England, and two shillings and six pence per hundred weight of Dry Cod-fish of the first quality, but the Salmon and Eel pay sufficiently without a bounty.

Q. Is it expedient to establish uniformity in the size and quality of the barrels?

A. It is very necessary to establish the same size, make and hoops of the barrels, as are used in England, without which the fish has no sale in the West Indies; the barrels ought to be of oak.

Q. Would it be expedient to establish an Inspector of fish previous to exportation?

A. It is very essential that the fish first sent, the Herring especially, should be strictly inspected, without which no more would be demanded.

Q. Where ought these Inspections to take place for the convenience of trade?

A. They ought to be made at the place where the fish is shipped, but I cannot specify the places, for that would depend on the places where the vessels might be stationed.

Q. Is there any and what particular season for taking the Herring which is for exportation?

A. After the month of September only as in England; for until that time the Herring is not fit to be exported, and there ought to be a prohibition to export that fish before that time, that being the only proper season for the purpose; and by taking them sooner millions of them are uselessly destroyed.

Q. Do you know of any, and what abuses in the Salmon fishery?

A. The abuses are spearing the Salmon, which ought to be prohibited from the twentieth of August to the end of September, because at that time they spawn.

MONDAY, 27th January 1823.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Mr. Andrew Paterson, appeared before your Committee.

Q. Do you know whether the exportation of fish from this country could enter into competition with that from other Colonies and Countries without a bounty?

A. Yes it can; but it would, however, be beneficial to the Province if a bounty was allowed.

Q. Is any bounty granted to your knowledge in any other Colony or Country on the fish exported?

A. Yes; there is a bounty on Fish exported from the North of Scotland and in England on Herrings. In the last Session of the Par-

liament there was something done to encourage the exportation of fish from Ireland.

Q. Do you know any inconvenience resulting from permitting the fish of this country to be exported without an Inspection?

A. Yes; there exist frequent difficulties between the buyer and seller regarding the quality of the fish, and I do not know any thing more necessary at Quebec than the appointment of Inspectors, because this appointment would enhance very much the value of our fish in foreign markets.

Q. Do you know any other regulations to be necessary for the encouragement of the fish trade?

A. The chief regulation necessary would be the appointment of Inspectors and uniformity in point of size and quality in the barrels, casks and hogsheads containing the fish, as is the case elsewhere.

Q. Do you know any part of the County of Northumberland where fisheries are now or might hereafter be established?

A. At the King's Posts, and at the Seigniories of *Mille Vaches* and *Mingan*, and the whole of that north coast, there might be established, as I have always understood, most excellent fisheries, and a great many American vessels are annually employed there, fishing in contravention to Jay's Treaty.

Q. Did any inconvenience arise to the fish trade from suffering Americans fishing in contravention to the Treaty?

A. Most certainly. The Gentlemen who leased the King's Posts have several times severely complained of this abuse, there ought to be stationed there an armed vessel to protect the trade and enforce the execution of this Treaty, as the Americans interfere and injure our trade in that quarter.

Q. Is to your knowledge a great quantity of fish imported into this country from Labrador and other places out of this Province to be re-exported?

A. Yes; there are several vessels fitted out in this Port for Labrador and other places, and who return to this place with fish taken to be re-exported.

Q. What are the fees payable to the Custom House on the coasting trade?

A. That depends whether the vessel goes out of the Province or not. A vessel clearing out for any port within the Province pays but trifling fees, but if the same should clear for any port out of the Province, as Labrador, Newfoundland or any other place, the fees amount to about eight or nine pounds, and in consequence of the fees being so heavy on small craft, making several trips in the course of the season, these fees paid to the Custom House officers amount to more on such vessels than on large ships which make only one or two trips; this having been represented to the principal officers of the Custom House at Quebec, they agreed to take one half of the usual fees on a vessel consigned to our House, and offered to take less, if the vessel was found not to be able to pay. My opinion is, that the heavy

fees exacted upon small vessels is a great drawback upon our coasting trade.

Q. Is any fish imported into this Province from Newfoundland and other British Colonies, re-exported, and from which?

A. Fish brought from Newfoundland, Miramichi, and I believe sometimes from Halifax, are usually re-exported.

Mr. James McTavish then appeared before your Committee.

Q. Do you know the Lower part of the County of Northumberland?

A. I merely know the North Shore of the St. Lawrence from Saguenay river to Labrador.

Q. Are any fisheries established on that shore, and what kind?

A. There are several Salmon fisheries.

Q. Do the Americans fish on that shore?

A. The Treaty of Ghent allows the Americans to fish within a league of the shore, from the gulph of St. Lawrence, including the Banks, as far as Mont Joli, on the North Shore; and Fox River, on the south shore; but they go beyond these limits as far as River St. Johns, on the north shore, to the serious injury of the present Lessees of the company of Mingan Seigniorie. They even entered, last summer the *Natasquan*, River to fish Salmon.

Q. Is any regulation to your knowledge proper to be made for the fisheries on the north shore of the St. Lawrence?

A. The principal regulation necessary to be made is, to prevent the Americans from anchoring and fishing on the banks of the principal Rivers on the Seigniorie of Mingan, as by their so doing, they prevent the Salmon from entering the said Rivers: their trenching the Codfish and throwing the offal over the side of their vessels particularly destroys the Salmon. The Americans have been in the habit of carrying on their trade, for the last twenty years, with from twenty to twenty-five vessels; these in general make two trips a year. These vessels are schooners from sixty to eighty tons, manned by from ten to eighteen men, and they anchor near the shore in front of our buildings.

Q. Is any regulation necessary to be made for preventing the too great destruction of Salmon by the Indians?

A. Yes; as the Indian method of spearing Salmon at night is very destructive.

Q. Did any inconvenience arise from the want of Inspection of the fish exported?

A. Yes, very serious; particularly for the West India market. All Salmon cured for a foreign market ought, in the first outset, to be well washed, salted in coarse grey salt, to remain in the Salting Tubs till the pickle runs over the fish: the next process is to pack them in tight *white* oak casks, with St. Ubes or Turk's Island salt. The fish ought to be well packed in the casks. I am particular in mentioning *white* oak, because the pine casks in which they generally pack the

fish at Miramichi and Halifax do not answer for a foreign market.

Q. Is it necessary to establish an uniformity in the size of the barrels, casks and hogsheds containing the fish for exportation and what size do you suggest?

A. The tierce for Salmon ought to be made of white oak, and to contain as near as possible 300 lbs. of fish, to be weighed on taking them out of the Salting Tubs, and the barrel to be made of the same material and full hooped, to contain 200 lbs. and to be weighed in the same manner as the tierces; being unacquainted with the Cod fishery I cannot give any information on that subject.

Q. Will you state as a matter of general information, the period at which the Salmon fishery begins and terminates during the season, from the observations which you have had occasion to make at the different posts under your directions, and whether it would be advisable to prohibit the fishery of Salmon at those different places and when?

A. The Salmon fishery on the King's Posts and the Seigniory of Mingan, usually commences the first week in June and generally terminates in all July. The Rivers upon the King's Domain generally discontinue giving Salmon ten or twelve days earlier than they do in the Seigniory of Mingan, and from my experience, I do not conceive that the Rivers on the King's Domain or Seigniory of Mingan ought to be fished later than the last week of July.

TUESDAY, 28th January 1823.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Mr. John Bruce of the Custom House of the City of Quebec, then appeared before your Committee.

Q. Is any fish imported from other Colonies into this Province and from what?

A. From Newfoundland, including Labrador, and sometimes from New-Brunswick.

Q. What kind of fish is so imported into this Province?

A. Cod-fish, Salmon, Mackerel, Herrings and a few trifling packages of other kinds of fish.

Q. Can a return of those importations be made?

A. A return can be given from Newfoundland and New-Brunswick, and in some instances from Labrador.

Q. Can you give an account of the drawbacks upon the salt used for the fisheries, and can you point out any inconvenience arising to the public Revenue, and can you suggest any thing about it for the encouragement of the fisheries?

A. The drawbacks upon salt, in 1821, have been on 10,049 minots £167 : 9 : 8, and in 1822, on 20,164 minots £336 : 1 : 4. As these drawbacks were paid without a deduction of 3 per cent

which is allowed to the merchant in paying the duties, the public Revenue has sustained a loss to the amount of 3 per cent on the above-named sums. If the drawbacks should be allowed on salt for the fisheries, above the limits now prescribed by the Provincial Statutes now in force, it would very much tend to their encouragement.

Q. To what places chiefly is the salt destined, upon which a drawback is allowed?

A. To the Bay of Gaspé and the Bay of Chaleurs.

Q. Can you suggest any regulation respecting Drawbacks to be allowed to prevent the abuses of it?

A. The deduction of 3 per cent, on receiving the duties, should also be deducted when a drawback is claimed; this would save the loss to the Revenue, as stated in a former answer. The parties claiming the drawback should be required to produce proof that the Salt is actually employed for the use of the fisheries, where it is practicable to do so.

Mr. John Fraser then appeared before your Committee.

Do you know the north shore from Cap Tourmente to Labrador?

A. I know the north shore from Cap Tourmente to the Saguenay only.

Q. Are any fisheries established in that part of the north shore, and in what place?

A. There are two regular Salmon fisheries from Murray Bay to Tadoussac, to my knowledge.

Q. Are any Cod fisheries in that part of the North Shore?

A. No.

Q. Are there any proper places to establish Cod fisheries in that part of the north shore?

A. I cannot say.

Q. Do you know of any inconvenience resulting in permitting Indians and others to take Salmon with torches, and will you mention them?

A. First the great detriment done to the fish by taking them in that manner, and to the regular established fisheries by going into them to strike the fish—secondly, by the injury done to good timber by these people going into the woods and taking off the bark of the best trees for torches, which occasions their decay.

Captain Barth, then again appeared before your Committee.

Q. What is the present custom at Chaleur Bay with respect to the fishing Rooms which are in common, and what have you to remark thereupon for the improvement of the fisheries?

A. The custom among the fishermen after the close of the fishery is, that the year following another has a right to take possession of the work made the preceding year by the last occupant, unless he

have some one there to take care of it during the seasons in which there is no fishing ; and it ought to be permitted to the persons who have erected these fishing rooms to resume the possession of them in preference to others, provided he returns thither to fish.

The Chairman laid before the Committee the following remarks on the fisheries, communicated to him by John Macnider, Esquire :

Remarks respecting the Rules to be observed in the fisheries, and curing of fish in the River St. Lawrence.

HERRING.

To be taken from the 20th of July to December, being the proper season ; and a bounty of four shillings, currency, per barrel to be allowed, after inspection : the barrel to contain thirty-two gallons, Ale measure, and the cask to be full hooped : and all Herring entitled to, or claiming a bounty must be gutted and salted the same day on which they are caught, and none but the healthy full grown Herring to be put up for exportation. Herring taken in April, May and June to be excluded from the bounty, and if possible to be prohibited from being taken in those months, as such practice will be ruinous to the Herring fishery.

COD.

May be taken at all periods of the season. Merchantable dried Cod-fish should be entitled to a bounty of two shillings and six pence for every 112 lbs. which, upon inspection, are found merchantable, and fit for a foreign market ; the fish to be inspected at the port of shipping.

Fresh Cod, brought to the Quebec market in the months of December, January, February and March, taken in the District of Gaspé, and the River St. Lawrence, should be entitled also to a bounty of two shillings and six pence for every 112 lbs. when weighed at Quebec.

SALMON, &c.

Salmon, Eel and other fisheries will sufficiently pay the expenses ; it would be therefore unnecessary to allow any bounty.

DRAWBACKS ON SALT.

The Drawback on salt might be allowed as high up as St. Thomas, satisfactory proof being at all times required that the salt was used in curing of any description for this market or for the consumption of the Inhabitants.

Some essential measures ought to be adopted to prevent the ruinous habits of spearing Salmon, practised by the Indians and others, in the different Rivers where the fish go up to spawn, from the 20th July till October, which if not put a stop to will ultimately ruin the Salmon fishery in this quarter.

WEDNESDAY, 29th January 1823.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

J. W. Woolsey, Esquire, then appeared before your Committee.

Q. Are you Agent for any of the principal Houses in Gaspé interested in the fisheries and fish trade ?

A. I am Agent for the House of Messrs. Charles Robin & Co.

Q. In that capacity, have you any knowledge of what those Gentlemen think necessary for the improvement of the trade in fish ?

A. They have complained that the Americans who fish on their coast do not conform to the fishing regulations which prohibit the casting the offal of the fish into the sea, and that they have no means of enforcing those regulations. The mode they suggest is to have cruisers to cause their rights to be respected, without which their trade and the fisheries will be destroyed ?

Q. Do you think the inspection of fish and oil for exportation necessary ?

A. I think it is so.

Q. Where would Inspectors be required ?

A. At all ports of export ?

Q. Do you know the coast of the County of Northumberland ?

A. I know the coast from the Seven Islands to the Straights of Belle Ile.

Q. Are there in that tract any and what fisheries ?

A. The principal ones are for Salmon and Seal. The first Cod fishery is at l'Anse Sablon, at the entrance of the Straights of Belle Ile, but a part of it is within the Government of Newfoundland.

Q. Might there be Cod fisheries established higher up ?

A. No ; for I have been told there is a want of bait.

Q. Do you think a premium necessary to enable the export fish trade of the country to come into competition with that of the other Colonies ?

A. It would be beneficial to the trade of this country to grant a premium.

Mr. Charles Wm. Ross then appeared before your Committee.

Q. Is there to your knowledge any inconvenience in exporting fish without inspection ?

A. Many.

Q. What are those inconveniences ?

A. A want of Inspectors ; whereby the persons sending fish to Quebec not being known, they can never be sure of the quality.

Q. Ought that Inspection to be of all sorts of fish in general, or of a certain kind in particular ?

A. I think it necessary for all sorts of fish.

Q. Is there any difference between the fish of Gaspé and that of Newfoundland ?

A. Judging from the Dry Cod which is brought hither from Newfoundland, there is a great difference in favour of that from the District of Gaspé.

Q. Is there any necessity or benefit in requiring the Inspection of all fish oil ?

A. I think there is ; because there are instances of fraud or negligence, the oil being very often mixed with water or sediment to the injury of the purchaser.

Q. In what should that inspection consist ?

A. In an allowance or deduction for the sediment or other foreign matter which might be found therein.

Q. Is any fish sent to Montreal, Upper Canada and elsewhere ?

A. Yes ; but I cannot say what quantity. There is even some exported by way of Upper Canada and the Port of St. John, in Lower Canada, to the United States. This is chiefly Dry Cod. Almost every American Sleigh which comes into the market of Montreal returns with Dry Cod. In the three months ended the 5th instant, the Americans exported by the Port of St. John 648 lb. of Dry Cod, 22 barrels Salmon and 7 barrels of Mackerel, and they brought to us 17,400 lb. of Fresh Cod ; but the quarter to end 5th April next will give a much more considerable exportation of fish. There is also some consumption of Cod in the Eastern Townships, which would be much more considerable if the communications were better. It is sold in the Township of Eatou at Ten Dollars.

The Committee then called for the Report of a Special Committee, appointed in the year 1817, on a Petition from sundry inhabitants of Kamouraska, praying for a drawback on Salt, which was read as followeth :—

Mr. Rémi Quirouet was examined, and stated : About seven years ago I was in partnership with Messrs. Chapais and Dame, and carried on two fisheries, for two years ; whereof one at River Ouelle, and the other at *Cap au Diable*, at Kamouraska. The chief produce was Shad and Herrings, in large quantity ; Sardines, Salmon and Sturgeon, but in less abundance. In the very first year of our fishery we took many hundred barrels of fish, and the second year above six hundred barrels, the greater part whereof consisted of Shad. The price of Shad is double that of Herrings ; we sold that fish, in part, to Merchants, for exportation to the West Indies. I went down with Mr. Chapais as far as Green Island ; I visited the spot, collected information from the Inhabitants, and found that, from River Ouelle to Green Island, a great number of fisheries might be carried on, in addition to those before-mentioned. I cannot exactly say what quantity all these fisheries might annually produce ; but I can assert that in some years it would be impossible to save the whole of the fish, because of the great quantity thrown upon the shore, and in the fisheries. In other

years less fish is produced, but generally in sufficient quantity ; nevertheless, such is the abundance, that these fisheries would merit equal encouragement to those of Gaspé. I think a premium or bounty upon exportation, as well as a drawback upon salt, would be proper. I think 3s. 9d. per barrel upon Herring and Mackerel, 5s per barrel upon Salmon and Shad, and 2s. 6d. per quintal upon dry Cod fish, would be a sufficient encouragement. The fish of Lower-Canada is little esteemed in the West India market, in consequence of its being ill cured and packed, and in one word, because not inspected. I am of opinion that our fish would be worth as much in the West India market as that of other countries, were it well packed with coarse salt. I am also of opinion that no quantity of fish ought to be exported from this country without having been previously inspected at Quebec, and that there ought for that purpose to be at Quebec a Sworn Inspector, invested with that office and having a salary. I have in part discontinued fishing at those fisheries from want of liberal encouragement, through want of a Drawback, and from the disrepute in which, from the foregoing causes, the fish of this country is in the West Indies.

Mr. François Quirouet, Auctioneer and Broker at Quebec, was examined, and in all things confirmed that part of the examination of the first witness, which relates to the disrepute in which the fish of the Country is in the West India market, from the causes therein stated, the necessity for the creation of the office of Inspectors at Quebec, with a salary for inspecting fish, and also the propriety of a premium or bounty upon exportation, and of a drawback as aforesaid.

Mr. Vincent Bonenfant, merchant at Quebec, confirmed the examination of the foregoing witnesses, and adds that between River Ouelle and Rimouski, a great number of fisheries might be carried on, and that in common years those fisheries abound sufficiently in fish fit for exportation.

Mr. Charles Taché, merchant of Kamouraska, was then examined, and answered as followeth : That from the River Trois Pistoles, most of the inhabitants of the first range of concessions, bordering on the river St. Lawrence, have fisheries there. That with Messrs. Pascal Taché, father and son, J. B. Taché, François Déchêne and Charles Taché, père, he carries on ten fisheries within the Islands of Kamouraska ; That they have this year salted one thousand barrels of Herrings, and three or four hundred barrels of Sardines, besides from two hundred to two hundred and fifty boat loads of fresh fish ; That in common years there might be salted three thousand barrels of fish ; That from Kamouraska to Trois Pistoles, there might in common years be taken as many as twenty thousand barrels of fish, such as Shad, Salmon, Herring, Sardines, Eels and Cod : That in the County of Northumberland, that is to say at *La Petite Rivière* at *St. Pierre & St. Paul*, at the *Eboulemens*, at Murray Bay and at Mount Murray, there is annually taken a considerable quantity of various kinds of fish, fit for exportation ; That there ought to

be appointed an Inspector having a salary, in the Counties of Cornwallis, Northumberland and Gaspé, and that the fish for exportation ought to be packed with coarse salt; That none ought to be exported until inspected; That the Inspector ought to undergo an examination, then take an oath of office and be liable to exemplary punishment for misconduct; That he ought to stamp upon every barrel of fish inspected and to be exported, the name of the County and his own name.

MONDAY, 3d February 1823.

MR. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Mr. James L. Marett appeared before your Committee.

Q. Do you know of any abuse or inconvenience, in the fish trade, resulting from a want of inspection of exported fish?

A. Yes, I consider the establishment of Inspectors, for the exportation of fish, as very necessary for preventing the abuses which bring it into disrepute.

Q. Did you formerly carry on the fishing business in the District of Gaspé, and of what abuses, tending to deteriorate them, are you aware?

A. I resided for a long time in the District of Gaspé, as Agent of the House of Messrs. Janvrin & Co. One of the chief abuses I know of is the spearing of Salmon by torch-light, with ought to be forbidden, for that method of killing Salmon destroys the stock of that fish. The custom of barring the rivers is also very pernicious, and ought to be forbidden.

FRIDAY, 7th February 1823.

MR. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Messire Painchaud appeared before your Committee.

Q. Have you not resided as a Missionary at Chaleur-Bay, and how long?

A. Yes; eight years.

Q. Have you had occasion to know the state of the Fisheries of the District of Gaspé during that time?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it not true that the fisheries have greatly diminished for some years past?

A. Yes.

Q. To what cause do you ascribe that, with respect to the Cod fishery, and the Salmon and other fisheries?

A. Principally to the manner in which those fisheries have been carried on for some years past.

Q. Would it be practicable, by means of good regulations to re-establish the former state of the fisheries?

A. Perhaps it would not be possible to reestablish it altogether,

but I think that by means of proper regulations its present condition would be much improved ?

Q. What regulations do you suggest ?

A. The following, according to the several kinds of fisheries, which are principally those of Herring, Cod and Salmon. First—The Herring Fishery. The practice of manuring land, either with Herring or its spawn, and the latter more particularly, should be strictly prohibited, as much more destructive than the former. Such a prohibition would, moreover, have an effect favourable to Agriculture, by proscribing a manure hurtful to the soil, and making it necessary to recur to some preferable substance. Secondly—The Cod Fishery. Considering the nature of the principal causes of its decay, I think a reestablishment very difficult. These causes are reducible to two : the first and most constant is the bad practice of throwing into the sea what is cut out of that fish previous to salting it ; the second, is the too great number of American fishermen, who have spread over our fishing grounds as far as the Gulph, since the last Treaty of Peace with the United-States more especially. Yet I do not consider their number, however excessive, as so detrimental to the fishery as the unrestrained practice, in which they use no discretion, of throwing into the sea the offal of the fish they take, for on this subject they are under no regulation, or if they have any they are not much observed. These interested fishermen, excited by the hope of immediate profit, and for the most part little attentive to the means of maintaining an abundant supply of that fish, on grounds from which the first difference between the two Nations may expel them, conduct themselves in a manner which the most strict and best observed regulations on the part of our fishermen can but very feebly remedy, for they are 60 or 80 to one of ours ; and they follow the fish as far as the Orphan Banks, to the great injury and annoyance of our fishermen. What then would avail to us the regulation of our little fisheries within the Gulph, if at the Strait of *Belle Isle*, and that between Cape Ray and Cape North, the fish be stopped and destroyed, as has been done, particularly this year. These two Straits are the only entrances they have to the Gulph ; the mode would therefore be, an understanding between the British Government and that of the United States, for submitting the fishermen of both nations to efficacious regulations, otherwise our Cod Fisheries in the Gulph will be in the same situation in which the Salmon Fisheries in the District of Gaspé now are. Thirdly—The Salmon Fishery. The Regulations for the reestablishment of that Fishery would be more easy, although more complicated than those for that of Cod Fish.

Q. Have you seen the proposed Fishery Bill, and have you any and what remarks to make which might tend to its improvement ?

A. Yes ; and my remarks are these : This Bill which, however, I have only read cursorily, appears to me very superior to that which

preceded it on the same subject, I would however add to its articles of regulation the following:—1st. Respecting the Cod Fishery, I should wish that not only the throwing the offal of that fish into the sea, within a shorter distance from the coast than four leagues, should be prohibited, but that it should be forbidden to throw any upon the fishing grounds, as the Orphan Banks, and others more remote from the coast, and that the fishing vessels should be obliged either to carry them to the shore and put them on the ground, or to carry them beyond the grounds above-mentioned. 2dly. With respect to the Salmon Fishery in the River Ristigouche, it would be necessary to fix, in some generally known manner, the boundary line between this Province and that of New-Brunswick, at least at the middle of the Islands of that River. 3dly. That according to the regulations observed in my time along the whole North coast of New-Brunswick, the South part of Chaleur-Bay and all that of the River Ristigouche excepted, every Saturday evening all the nets spread in the Rivers should be taken up, the consequence would be the gaining one day more for the Salmon to ascend, and a moral advantage, that of suspending the labour necessary every day for curing and salting the fish. 4thly. That a penalty should be imposed on every scow, flat bottomed boat, canoe or other vessel stopped in the current of the fishery rivers, for the shadow of such vessels, which are sometimes designedly left in the passage intended for the fish, and the vibration of their cables, alarm the fish and divert their course. 5thly. That it should be forbidden to lay nets in the secondary channels, that is to say in those formed by the enlargement of an arm of the River at the outlet of a Strait having but one channel. There is a custom of barring all the small channels, to leave a pretended channel or equivalent space, where the Salmon scarcely passes but by being driven. 6thly. To prohibit very expressly *Nijagans*, or Dykes, by which a River is barred, and to which sometimes all the Salmon within several leagues is conveyed; this custom alarms the fish which escape, and while the operation lasts, prevents the fish which comes from sea from ascending the River. 7thly. To prevent the felling of the woods along the margins of the Salmon fishery rivers, during the season for fishing and the season for the spawning of that fish, that is to say from the 1st of May to the 20 of October. This is founded on the conduct of certain adventurers, chiefly Americans, who, since the late war, cut and bring down in rafts lumber cut along those Rivers, and more especially that of Ristigouche, which being hardly more than an acre wide, is easily obstructed by those rafts, which turn away the Salmon; add to this, the noise of the work carried on along the borders of so clear and shallow a river. 8thly. That the Indians only should be allowed to take, kill, or catch Salmon above the limits fixed for the spreading of nets. 9thly. To prohibit the placing at the end of stands, near the channels, swing-nets, of which the length in a direct line with the stand might exceed the extremity. 10thly. That the fine imposed should be payable for each and every post or support of

nets placed below the middle of the bank (*écorre*) of any fishery channel. 11thly. That the deposition of a single witness, respecting any breach of the regulations, taken before the Inspector of fisheries, or any Justice of the Peace or Commissioner, should be sufficient. 12thly. That the Indians employed by the whites to make use of nets or seines above the limits fixed for the stands, in any Salmon fishery river, may be competent informers against any person inducing them so to act, and furnishing or causing to be furnished, the nets or seines for that purpose. 13thly. That the Indians, offending against the regulations, being usually unable to pay any pecuniary penalty, may be imprisoned for a stated time. 14thly. That the sworn Inspector be obliged to inspect, or, in case of his being sick, to cause to be inspected, all the stands at least once a week. 15thly. That the said Inspector be strictly prohibited from receiving any present or gratuity whatever, either in money or fish, from the fishermen or their servants or hired people. But all these Regulations will have little or no effect, unless with the effectual concurrence of the Province of New-Brunswick, whence I infer that it would be right, after having prepared the Fishery Bill, especially in what relates to Salmon, to request the Government of this Province to communicate the same to that of New-Brunswick, in order to induce them, after having examined the same, and made their observations, to concur therein.

SATURDAY, 8th February 1823.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Mr. Nicolas Brunet dit Dauphiné, appeared before your Committee.

Q. Do you know the Cod fisheries of Labrador and Esquimaux Bay, and where do they commence?

A. I know those in the upper parts. They commence at the river Goudebout, thirty-five leagues above the Seven Islands, and continue as far as Esquimaux Bay, and thence as far as the Hanoverian Posts, which are about one hundred leagues farther North than the Esquimaux River. But all that is included within the Government of Lower-Canada, is that part which terminates at the River Romaine, which is about one hundred and thirty leagues below the River Goudebout.

Q. Are those Cod fisheries beyond the River Romaine very considerable?

A. They were not very considerable about thirty years ago when I was there. Fifteen or twenty small craft came thither to fish. They may have increased since that time.

Q. Are the Cod fisheries which are below the River Romaine, and as far as the Hanoverian Posts, and within the Government of Newfoundland, considerable?

A. Yes, as considerable at least as those of Chaleur Bay.

Q. Are there in those parts fisheries of any other fish ?

A. There are fisheries of Herring, Salmon, Mackerel, Seal and Whale.

MONDAY, 17th February 1823.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Robert Christie, Esquire, appeared before your Committee, and made answer as follows :

Q. Have you any knowledge of any dissatisfaction or complaints existing among the Inhabitants of the Inferior District of Gaspé, with respect to the Fisheries carried on by the American fishing vessels, in the Gulf St. Lawrence ?

A. I have knowledge that the British Establishments in that District complain loudly of the decay of the Fisheries in that quarter, which they attribute to the advantages granted to the Americans by the late Treaty of 1818, and who they assert are in the daily habit of infringing upon it, by exceeding the limits assigned them, to the ruin of the British stationary Fisheries:—A letter written by a gentleman, concerned in the house of Messrs. C. Robin & Co. (who carry on the Fisheries in the Bay of Chaleurs and at Percé, on a great scale) addressed to Captain Bouchier of His Majesty's Ship Athol, in September last, with a view of drawing the attention of His Majesty's Government to the subject through that gentleman, has been put into my hands, by a friend to that concern. I now lay it before the Committee, as a document which may throw more light on the subject than any information of my own can afford to the Committee.

To Henry Bouchier, Esq. Commander of H. M. Ship Athol, at anchor in Paspébiac Roads.

SIR—It is with pleasure we comply with your request of yesterday to commit to writing what we had to say respecting the state of the Cod Fishery, and the American Fishing Craft.

The decrease of the Fishery in the Bay of Chaleurs, since the late Peace with the United States, is so great, that at Tracadiah, (Carleton) and Cascapedia (New Richmond) where the Fishermen used to make it worth their while to carry on regular Fisheries, they have of late caught very little more than for their own consumption, the rest came far short of paying their out-fit. At Bonaventure, New-Carlisle, Paspébiac, Nouvelle, and Port Daniel, the Fish is yearly decreasing, out of the Bay (to the Northward and Eastward) towards Percé, &c. since the above period a sensible decrease in the Fishery has also been experienced, though not in as great a degree as in the Bay. It is generally supposed by persons who have practised the Cod Fishery in this Bay, both in schooners and boats, that it receives (the Bay) its chief supply of Fish from the southward on the Orphan Bank.

It is beyond any manner of doubt ascertained, that many hundred

American craft (chiefly schooners) catch their load of Fish in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and chiefly on the Orphan Bank, and many close to the Islands of Miscou and Shipagan; as soon as the Gulf is free of Ice, the American craft take their station, so that before the 30th May, there are generally several hundreds on the Orphan Bank only, and its vicinity, this year their Fishery on these Banks has not been very abundant, so that next year more of them might go to the Northward than this year.

Thus, without their bounds, the Americans load their vessels with Fish, to the great prejudice and annoyance of His Britannic Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects; for the first Article of the Treaty of Commerce, clearly and evidently prescribes their bounds, "From Cape Ray (Newfoundland) to the Rameau Islands, from said Cape Ray to the Quirpon Islands, or to the shores of the Magdalen Islands, and along the Coasts, &c. from Mount Joli, on the Southern Coasts of Labradore, and thro' the Straits of Belle-Isle, and thence Northwardly, indefinitely along its Coasts, &c. &c." further in the same Article of the Treaty, it is said: "And the United States hereby renounce for ever any liberty heretofore enjoyed or claimed by the Inhabitants thereof, to take, kill or cure Fish, on or within three Marine Miles, of any of the Coasts, Bays, Creeks or harbours of His Britannic Majesty's Dominions in America, not included within the above mentioned limits, &c. &c." From the above extract of the first Article of the convention concluded at London, on the 20th October 1818, between Great-Britain and the United States of America, it is evident that since that period, the American Fishermen have acted in direct violation of this Treaty, by arrogantly and obstinately transgressing the generous bounds thereby allowed them, for it is too well known and felt, that they continue to fish on the Coasts of Nova-Scotia and the Coasts of New-Brunswick, to the very great prejudice and annoyance of His Britannic Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects of these Provinces, tho' as before stated, the American States have renounced by the Treaty, for ever, any liberty heretofore enjoyed or claimed by the Inhabitants thereof to take, cure, &c. We are sorry the Americans should be allowed to fish in any part of the Gulf, yet it is far from our intention to scrutinize or presume to fathom the causes which have occasioned His Majesty's Government to allow them such generous bounds, from Cape Ray, &c. as above noted; but we most earnestly entreat that His Majesty's Government would oblige the Americans to keep within the limits allowed them by Treaty—it is grievous to every British subject, who reflects for a moment, that if the Americans (who are on the progressive, in every respect) continue the Cod-Fishery, as they have done of late, the British Merchant engaged in that still extensive and valuable branch of trade, will be obliged to abandon it: and that thereby it will fall to the lot of the Americans, to the great prejudice of thousands of His Majesty's faithful and loyal sub-

jects, and also to the prejudice of His Majesty's Government, by lessening the Revenue, and destroying that highly prized and valuable nursery for hardy seamen : on these ruins the Americans would build a magnificent, commercial and political edifice. We humbly submit the above to your consideration, and have the honour to be with the most profound respect, &c. &c.

(Signed)

C. ROBIN & Co.

Paspebiac, 4th September 1822.

The Committee then caused to be read an extract of a convention, concluded between His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the United States of America, dated London, the 20th October 1818.

ARTICLE I.—Whereas differences have arisen respecting the liberty claimed by the United States, for the Inhabitants thereof, to take, dry and cure fish, on certain Coasts, Bays, Harbours and Creeks, of His Britannic Majesty's Dominions, in America, it is agreed between the high contracting parties, that the Inhabitants of the said United States, shall have, in common with the subjects of His Britannic Majesty, the liberty to take fish of every kind, on that part of the Southern Coast of Newfoundland, which extends from Cape Ray to the Rameau Islands, on the Western and Northern Coast of Newfoundland, from the said Cape Ray to the Quirpon Islands, on the shores of the Magdalen Islands, and also on the Coasts, Bays, Harbours or Creeks, from Mount Joly, on the Southern Coast of Labrador, to and through the Straits of Belisle, and thence Northwesterly, indefinitely along the Coast, without prejudice, however, to any of the exclusive rights of the Hudson's Bay Company : And that the American Fishermen shall also, have liberty, for ever, to dry and cure fish in any of the unsettled Bays, harbours or creeks, of the Southern part of the Coast of Newfoundland, here-above described, and on the Coast of Labrador ; but so soon as the same, or any portion thereof shall be settled, it shall not be lawful for the said fishermen to dry or cure fish at such portion settled, without previous agreement for such purpose with the Inhabitants, proprietors or possessors of the ground. And the United States hereby renounce for ever, any liberty heretofore enjoyed or claimed by the Inhabitants thereof, to take, dry or cure fish, on or within three Marine Miles of any of the Coasts, Bays, Creeks or Harbours of His Britannic Majesty's Dominions, in America, not included in the above-mentioned limits. Provided however, that the American fishermen shall be admitted to enter such Bays or Harbours, for the purpose of shelter and of repairing damages therein, of purchasing wood and of obtaining water, and for no other purposes whatever. But they shall be under such restrictions as may be necessary to prevent their taking, drying or curing fish therein, or in any other manner whatever abusing the privileges hereby reserved to them.

The Chairman laid before the Committee the following Return from the Custom-House, transmitted to the House, on the 10th Instant, by order of His Excellency the Governor in Chief.

E

PORT OF QUEBEC.

A RETURN of the Importation of Fish brought from the British Colonies in America into this Province, during the last three years, viz.—1820, 1821 & 1822.

YEAR.	SALMON.		COD-FISH.		TROUT.	CAPLIN.	HERRINGS.		MACKEREL & ALEWIVES.	GREEN AND PICKLED FISH.	
	Tierces.	Barrels.	Casks.	Cwts.	Barrels.	Barrels.	Barrels.	Boxes.	Barrels.	Casks.	Draughts.
1820	901	441	2	936	37	4	24				
1821	368	438	180	3795	5	28	42		210	3	
1822	805	360	112	7539		56	153	158	608	414	20
	2074	1239	294	12,270	42	88	219	158	818	417	20

JOHN BRUCE, for COLL^r.
T. A. YOUNG, COMPT^r.

CUSTOM-HOUSE, Quebec, 5th February 1823.

FRIDAY, 21st February 1823.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Mr. Pierre Doucet appeared.

Q. Do you know the Magdalen Islands?

A. Yes.

Q. What kinds of fisheries are carried on there?

A. The Herring, Seal and Cod Fisheries; formerly the Sea-Cow fishery was carried on there, but it is entirely destroyed.

Q. Whither are the several kinds of fish exported?

A. Great part of the Cod to Halifax and New-Brunswick, and one third to Quebec; the Herring to the West Indies and New Brunswick, and the Seal Oil is brought to Quebec.

Q. Do the Inhabitants complain of any abuses and of a want of Regulations for the Fisheries?

A. Yes: they complain that the Americans and the French come too close to fish, too near the land, and that those Fishermen, the French especially, throw the offal of the Cod-fish on the Fishery Grounds instead of throwing it into deep water, which destroys the Fish.

Q. What Regulations do you suggest?

A. It would be necessary there should be an armed Schooner for the protection of our Fisheries, and to enforce the Regulations which might be made.

Q. What would be the expense of such a Schooner, and what would be the annual expense of supporting it?

A. About eighteen hundred pounds for a Schooner; and to equip the vessel, there would be required at least twenty-four men besides officers, which, for seven months, would cost about a thousand pounds, victualling included.

MONDAY, 24th February 1823.

PRESENT—Messrs. *Taschereau, Quirouet, Taché, M^cCallum, E. C. Lagueux* and *Davidson*.

Mr. TASCHEREAU in the Chair.

Your Committee are of opinion that, from the foregoing evidence, the state of the fisheries, and of the trade in fish from this Province, may be sufficiently understood to enable the House to form a just idea of the importance of the subject entrusted to your Committee, and of the urgency of Legislative interference to rescue from impending ruin a neglected though most profitable branch of the Provincial Trade, with Europe, the West Indies and South America.

It appears to your Committee that the principal fisheries in this Province are the Whale, the Porpoise, the Seal, the Cod, the Salmon and the Herring fisheries; Mackerel and Shad have hitherto been taken in such small quantities as to be of little account.

The Whale fisheries are chiefly carried on in the Gulph and River St. Lawrence, as far up as Green Island. The Seal fishery is principally carried on on the North Shore of the St. Lawrence, and at the Magdalen Islands. The Cod fisheries (not including those of the Banks) are carried on at Gaspé and the Bay of Chaleurs to a great extent, and along the Banks of the St. Lawrence within the Inferior District of Gaspé, and upwards, on the same shore, to Great and Little Mitis, as well as at some places lower down than the Seven Islands, on the North Shore, and at the Magdalen Islands. The principal Salmon fishery is at the River Ristigouche, at the head of the Bay des Chaleurs; there are others in the different Rivers falling into the Bays of Chaleurs and Gaspé, and at most of the Rivers from thence up along the St. Lawrence to the South River, which empties into the St. Lawrence at St. Thomas, on the South Shore; and on the North Shore, from Malbaie downwards, at every considerable river. The Herring fishery is carried on throughout the District of Gaspé, and along the South Shore of the St. Lawrence as far up as Kamouraska, and at the Magdalen Islands. That of the Porpoise is chiefly in the River St. Lawrence, between the River Ouelle and the River du Loup, and at Murray Bay, or thereabout.

The places to which the fish are for the most part exported, are as follows:

Cod-fish to Europe and the West Indies, a part to the United-States, by the Inland Navigation, and to Upper-Canada.

Salmon is exported principally to Europe and the West Indies. Herring also to the West Indies. A great part of the product of these fisheries is consumed in the different parts of the Province, including the Eastern Townships. The Oils are chiefly consumed in this Province, the Exports being very inconsiderable. Cod-fish is also brought into this Province from New-Brunswick, Newfoundland, the Labrador, and sometimes from Nova-Scotia.

These fisheries (the Whale fisheries excepted, which are of recent date, and, with a little encouragement from the Legislature, might become of great importance to the export Trade) were much more considerable and successful formerly than at present; their falling off may be attributed to the following, among other causes:

1st. The great destruction of fish, resulting from the want of sufficient regulations, and the disregard shown to the existing Laws, and to Treaties actually in force.

2dly. To the inattention to the fisheries, principally arising from the discredit of our fish in foreign markets, owing to the total want of regulations, with respect to inspection previous to their shipment; in consequence of which fish of all qualities are indiscriminately sent abroad without controul.

Your Committee have satisfactorily ascertained that the commerce in fish is susceptible of great extension, and may become one of the most considerable and profitable branches of the trade of this

Province, and that new fisheries might be established to advantage in many places hitherto overlooked or neglected, along the South and North Shores of the St. Lawrence, if suitable encouragement were given for the purpose.

To promote this desirable object your Committee report and recommend as follows, viz.

First.---The Bill for regulating the fisheries in the Inferior District of Gaspé, as amended, containing regulations to prevent the wasteful and unnecessary destruction of fish, particularly of Salmon.

2dly.---That His Majesty's Government be most earnestly entreated to adopt speedy and effectual measures to oblige Citizens of the United States, and the Subjects of His Most Christian Majesty the King of France, fishing in the Gulph, to respect and conform to Treaties, as far as the same relate to the boundaries assigned them, respectively, for carrying on the fisheries in the Gulph St. Lawrence, and if possible to prevent their throwing the offal or gurry of the fish upon the fishing banks, a practice alike pernicious to the interests of the people and of the three Nations concerned in the Gulph fisheries.

3dly. That at the special request of several Merchants of Quebec, interested in the fisheries and in the exportation of fish, Inspectors be appointed at Quebec and Montreal, in virtue of an Act of the Legislature to be passed for that purpose, and that all fish intended for exportation be duly inspected, culled and branded previous to shipment, and that for these purposes a separate Bill be passed. Your Committee Report herewith the draught of a Bill prepared for that purpose by their directions.

4thly. That a moderate premium or bounty be allowed upon the exportation of fish, and that a drawback be allowed upon Salt to be used and consumed at the fisheries actually established or that might hereafter be established in any part or parts of the Counties of Cornwallis or Northumberland, above the limits heretofore by Law fixed, authorizing a Drawback on Salt, and that this be also provided for by a separate Bill, of which your Committee also report a draught prepared by their directions.

5thly. That a Drawback of the duty of two and a half per cent, imposed by the Act 53d Geo. III. cap. 11th, be allowed on all fishing materials going from Quebec or Montreal for the use of the fisheries in the said Inferior District of Gaspé, or in the Counties of Cornwallis or Northumberland, and that fishing materials, when imported into the said Inferior District, directly from the United Kingdom, for the use of the fisheries in that District, be exempted from the duty aforesaid, and that this be also provided for by a separate Bill. Your Committee also report the draught of a Bill for this purpose, prepared by their directions.

The diminution which the Revenues of the Province might experience, by adopting these measures which your Committee think it their duty to recommend, would be trifling in amount, and, con-

trasted with the beneficial results it must produce, your Committee are of opinion that it is scarcely possible to devise means by which an equal sum could be employed to better purpose. The Legislature owe it to the hardy and enterprising men engaged in our fisheries, and whose toil and industry are intimately connected with the commercial prosperity of the Province, to afford every succour, however small, that may tend to their comfort and encouragement. To know even that they are objects of the solicitude of the Legislature must in itself have a tendency to promote the fisheries, by stimulating the perseverance and cheering the hopes of that useful class of men.

Your Committee also recommend to the attention of the House the great and serious inconvenience felt by the Coasting Trade, in the grievous charges exacted at the Custom House on vessels sailing from Quebec for that purpose, as appears by the evidence offered to your Committee by Merchants of respectability of Quebec, and which appear to your Committee to be such as almost to amount to a prohibition to navigate small craft, or vessels of the size and tonnage in which the coasting trade is, and only can be, conveniently carried on. This your Committee are of opinion might be remedied by an Address to His Excellency the Governor in Chief, requesting that His Excellency will be graciously pleased to take such measures as may remove the grievance complained of.

ORDERED, That the Chairman do leave the Chair, and report.

The whole, nevertheless, respectfully submitted.

J. T. TASCHEREAU,

Chairman.

