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ESTABLISHED 1882.

National Sea Fisheries Protection Association.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

CONFERENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SEA FISHING INDUSTRY, 1892.

PRICE EIGHTEENPENCE.

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National Sea Fisheries Protection Association.

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE

HELD ON

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24th, 1892.

PRESENT.

Messrs. F. G. Aflalo, London; W. G. Ainslie, M.P., Lancashire; G. L. Alward, North Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee; James Alward, Grimsby; B. J. Amery, Grimsby; H. T. Anstruther, M.P., St. Andrews Burghs; R. L. Ascroft, Lancashire Sea Fisheries Committee; Geo. A. Bacon, London; Henry Barber, London; Joseph Barber, London; Sydney Barber, London; Frank Barrett, Grimsby; F. D. Barrett, Hull; Geo. Barrow, London; E. Belleroche, Anglo-Belgian Chamber of Commerce; A. D. Berrington, Board of Trade; Sir Edward Birkbeck, Bart, M.P., President of the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association; Messrs. W. Bowyer, Southampton Harbour Board; B. M. Bradbeer, Mayor of Lowestoft; Christopher Brown,

Bridlington Quay; W. L. Calderwood, Marine Biological Association; C. F. Carter, Grimsby; Dr. G. B. Clark, M.P., Caithness; Messrs. Richard Collins, Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee; Alfred H. Cork, Grimsby; Sir Savile B. Crossley, Bart., M.P., Lowestoft; General Sir Wm. Crossman, K.C.M.G., M.P., Northumberland Sea Fisheries Committee; Messrs. R. A. Dawson, Lancashire Sea Fisheries Committee; John Dent, Northumberland Sea Fisheries Committee; Ald. G. Doughty, Grimsby; Richard Douglas, Grimsby; W. T. Dunlin, Grimsby; R. W. Duff, M.P., Banffshire; Joseph Dyer, Brixham; W. C. Edwards, Hull; F. W. Fison, London; Dr. G. H. Fowler, Marine Biological Association; Messrs. Robert Frayne, Grimsby; C. E. Fryer, Board of Trade; Dr. T. Wemyss Fulton, Fishery Board for Scotland; Messrs. Ald. Ed. Grindley, Liverpool; John Guzzwell, Grimsby; Auguste Hamman, Belgium; the Right Hon. Edward Heneage, M.P., Grimsby; Messrs. Robert Hewitt, Gt. Yarmouth; Ernest W. L. Holt, Marine Biological Association; W. Howlett, London; Geo. Hutchings, Hastings; Chas. Jeffs, Grimsby; Geo. Jeffs, Grimsby; Matt. Jenkinson, Filey; Edward Jex, London; Thos. Kenny, Garnish, Co. Cork, Ireland; J. Knight, Brixham; G. W. Langley, Sheffield; Jas. Leeming, Grimsby; F. W. Leleu, London; W. Lengfield, Hull; G. S. Letten, Grimsby; John Little, Plymouth; Wm. Lloyd, Hull; The Earl of Londesborough; Messrs. Richard Loram, Hull; Vincent W. Lynn, London; Jas. MacCombie, Glasgow; The Macgillycuddy of the Reeks, Killarney; Messrs. A. W. Maconochie, Lowestoft; Donald Mackenzie, Stornoway, N.B.; J. R. Mackrill, Grimsby; J. Otto Macqueen, Aberdeen; Hy. Maddick, Hull; H. Noel Malan, Board of Trade; Col. J. W. Malcolm, M.P., Argyllshire; Messrs. Richard Mallock, M.P., Torquay; Baillie D. Mearns, Aberdeen; J. M. Morison, Stornaway, N.B.; H. Morris, Grimsby; T. C. Moss, Grimsby; Alderman Harrison Mudd, Grimsby; Joseph Murrell,

Grimsby Ice Company; E. Newby, London; Chas. Oakley, London; R. Davis Odell, London; John Owston, Scarborough; W. R. Oxley, Grimsby; Geo. Packer, London; Edwin Plowman, London; William Pyper, Aberdeen; W. F. Rice, Lowestoft; Richard Roach, Hull; W. L. Robins, Hull; John Ross, Stornoway, N.B.; Joshua Rowntree, M.P., Scarborough; H. E. Russell, London: W. Sanders, Brixham; J. L. Sayer, London; Edouard Sève, Belgian Consul General; W. Sutton, London; Alderman G. J. Tilling, Southampton Harbour Board; Alderman Hy. Toozes, Hull; J. Wrench Towse, *Hon. Secretary*; Major J. A. Travers Weybridge; Messrs. Thos. Walker, Aberdeen; Stephenson Warcup, Flamborough; H. Watts London; J. W. Webb, Hull; J. Williams, London; W. H. Williamson, London.

On the motion of Mr. Alderman Mudd, seconded by Mr. Jex, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Bart., M.P., was unanimously elected president of the Conference.

The President: After a lapse of 3 years you are again invited to assemble here at the invitation of the Executive of the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association, and by the kind courtesy of the Prime Warden and Court of the Fishmongers' Company, we are allowed to meet again in this same Hall that we have met in on former occasions, with such great success. We are assembled here to discuss various subjects which in the opinion of the Executive are of great importance to the Fishing Industry, an industry that you, as practical men, know full well, is carried on under the greatest difficulty and dangers and risk of loss of life and property. You will observe from the agenda that we have placed on it several, what I would describe as, old friends—matters which have been discussed here on several former occasions; but in our opinion it is most desirable that these subjects should be again brought to the notice, not only of the

Fishing Industry, but of the public and of the authorities, and that they should be pressed forward and in some directions carried through by legislation. I am glad to report that we are honoured to-day with the presence of several gentlemen who are connected with and serve on the Sea Fisheries Committees in various districts round the coasts of England, under the Sea Fisheries Regulation Act, 1888. These Committees, if I may say so, are still in their infancy, but at all events sufficient time has elapsed to enable those gentlemen to represent to this Conference how the Sea Fisheries Regulation Act, 1888, has been working and what further action might be taken with regard to an extension of the powers. I should like with your permission just to refer briefly to two or three subjects which have been placed on the Agenda. Taking first of all No. 1 that we are to discuss to-day, "The Prohibition of the Sale of Undersized Flat Fish." On that subject I fear disappointment has been felt by the entire fishing trade and by a vast number of fishermen round the coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and that no decided action, as regards bringing this matter to a conclusion, has yet been arrived at; and I believe it is the opinion —almost the unanimous opinion—that it should not be delayed any longer, that it ought to be pressed forward and that Parliament ought to take it up in a decided way by carrying through legislation to put a stop to the unfortunate destruction of immature fish that takes place not only in the North Sea but in various other quarters. Now it is only right that I should mention that though it is three years since we met here as delegates of the fishing industry of the United Kingdom, still, two years ago we had a Conference which we termed our International Conference, at which delegates from foreign Maritime Powers honoured us with their presence, and very important resolutions were passed on that occasion; and speaking briefly, the position of this matter stands as follows:—Three

Resolutions were passed on the occasion I allude to two years ago, and with a view of carrying out some International Agreement with the various Powers represented here. On the occasion I refer to they were requested to draw up a set of questions with a view of investigating on their own coasts what would be the best steps to take for an International Agreement. I believe I am right in saying that Denmark has already commenced investigations with a view of taking action in this matter, and backing up England. Belgium has passed a law which I believe gives to the King extensive powers with regard to dealing with the question of the capture and sale of undersized fish. The other Powers are, I hope, taking the necessary steps to enable all these Maritime Powers to meet again here in London and to come to an unanimous conclusion with a view to a convention being drawn up and agreed to by the various Powers. I regret that Spain has not yet taken any action in the matter, but I hope that Government will do so. Well, now, coming to ourselves, that brings me back to No. 1 on the Agenda. I do think that knowing what a very strong feeling there is upon this question of the destruction of immature fish, it is the bounden duty of the Government to pass some legislation, and without delay. However, I will not trespass further, but inasmuch as these Foreign Governments are taking the question up, surely we, the first maritime country in the world, and with our important fishing industry, and looking at it also as regards the question of the food supply of the Nation, this matter should not be longer delayed. However, the resolutions to be brought to your notice will be spoken to by practical gentlemen. We then come to No. 2, "Trawling within Territorial Waters." No doubt considerable discussion will take place as regards steam trawling within Territorial Waters, and I believe some representatives from Scotland have a *bonâ-fide* grievance that it is all very well passing regulations for the prohibition of trawling within certain

districts, but if the Government does not supply cruisers to enforce these regulations, they become a dead letter. No. 3—Sea Fisheries Regulation Act, 1888. I hope that the gentlemen who are present here serving on the Sea Fisheries Committees, that whatever their grievances may be with regard to any defects in the Act will speak out, and enable us to bring pressure to bear upon the Government to benefit the Fishing Industry. No. 4—"Extension of the system of Branding cured fish." Everybody is well aware that in Scotland there is a law that enables branding to be carried out, and we are informed that there are other portions of the United Kingdom which feel that this question of branding ought to be extended beyond Scotland. Then to-morrow you will have an exceedingly important question brought to your notice with regard to the question of a close time for oysters. I need not say one word about it beyond reminding gentlemen that there has been a notice in the public Press of a very important meeting that took place in the City of London quite lately upon this question, and it will be pointed out to you that a decision, and a very important decision upon the question of the sale of American oysters that have been re-bedded in waters in England has been given, and the question was raised whether these oysters are to be considered as English oysters, and come under the provisions of the Act known as the "Fisheries (oysters, crabs, and lobsters) Act, 1877," or whether they are Foreign oysters. I believe that matter, you will find, will lead to a very considerable and lengthy discussion. No. 2 on to-morrow's Agenda is the question of telegraphic and telephonic communication between lighthouses, lightships, and the shore and general coast communication. That, I shall ask leave to have something to say about, as I have a notice on the Agenda paper to bring before the House of Commons at an early day. The question of the Development of Irish Sea Fisheries is one that will have our heartiest sympathy, and I

hope that we shall be honoured with the presence of some gentlemen from Ireland. Our old friend—or perhaps, as some gentlemen will say—our old enemy Railway Rates crops up as usual, and we have our standing grievance that the Railway Rates for the conveyance of fish are most oppressive and most unfair to fishermen and the public. Technical Education for Fishermen, though the last on to-morrow's Agenda, is one that will have your warmest sympathy, and it ought to be encouraged in every way possible. I would point out what is well known, that Ireland sets us all a bright example of what is being done at the Baltimore School. Then on the third day the first question for discussion is National Insurance for Fishermen. That I shall ask leave to say something about with reference to the establishment of the Royal Provident Fund for Sea Fishermen. The second subject for that day is the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, ; then the Culture of Sea Fish ; and then Market Rents and Tolls. This concludes the Agenda for the Conference, but I am bound to say that during the discussion of the Executive this morning, it has been pointed out that there are other subjects that gentlemen would be very glad, indeed, to have brought up. I have no doubt that several are disappointed that we have not placed on the Agenda the question of the North Sea Fisheries Convention. We have not referred to a subject which has been often dealt with before—the question of Commercial Treaties with Foreign Powers, and the unfair way in which our English Fish is treated on being exported to Foreign Ports, nor to the question of Artillery Practice Seawards, and the unfortunate case of loss of life at Plymouth. Some of our friends from the West may feel aggrieved that we have not placed the matter on our Agenda, but inasmuch as a Committee has been appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into the matter, there is no necessity for us to deal with it ; but if it is possible to find time at the conclusion of

to-day, or of the other days; to bring forward any other matter, of course it will be for the Conference to decide whether they will entertain the question or not. I have now only to thank you for your kindness in listening to these few preliminary remarks which I have made, and I commend to you most heartily the important subjects which we have on the Agenda, and I hope and trust the conclusions you will arrive at during this Conference may be for the lasting benefit of the Fishing Industry, an Industry which one and all of us wish for prosperity in the future as we have endeavoured to help them in the past. (Cheers.)

PROHIBITION OF THE SALE OF UNDER-SIZED FLAT FISH.

Mr. JAMES ALWARD (Grimsby): I will try to be as brief as possible in the duty I have to perform to-day on the subject of the sale of under-sized flat fish. Nothing that will come before this Conference can be of more vital importance. We have sought to bring about international action on this subject, but we have aimed at the larger matter before proceeding in a more humble way. We, at a preliminary meeting, have to-day determined, with the hearty co-operation of the major part of the fishing community of the nation, to propose a resolution before this Conference which we hope and trust will receive the unanimous support of the large ssembly which I am pleased to see before me. The Resolution is:

> "That this Conference, having regard to the "disastrous consequences resulting from "the wholesale destruction of undersized "flat-fish, hereby requests the Government "to take immediate action in the matter, "and, as a first step, to enact a law to "prohibit the sale of undersized flat-fish in "British markets during certain seasons."

The resolution is reduced to the greatest form of simplicity; it embodies a principle which we hope we shall unanimously agree to. There may be little matters of detail affecting certain localities which may require qualification and explanation, but we feel sure there is no man engaged in the fishing trade—I do not care what branch of the fishing it may be—but must know that in order to establish and maintain the stability of the fishing trade, if we want to preserve it, we must have some regard to the immature or under-sized fish. It is a well-known matter of history that certain valuable fisheries have decayed. The whale industry has for the want of proper protection died away; and you know that a great deal of anxiety has been caused in relation to the seal fishery. Now we who know the circumstances of our own trade so well, surely will not allow the goose to be killed that lays the golden eggs The importance of the fishing industry to the country is such that it claims the attention of the Government. It is becoming an important feature in the well-being of the nation, and therefore we do not think we are asking too much when we call upon the Government to take such action as in their wisdom may seem fit, to protect us to maintain this valuable industry. Those gentlemen who will enlarge upon the subject are furnished with statistics which will astonish those who have not taken part in previous Conferences, and I will now leave the subject in their hands.

Mr. Alderman Toozes (Hull): It is my duty and not altogether a pleasure to second the resolution. I am a representative of the Hull Fisheries, and for weeks we have had preliminary meetings in the town prior to coming here to seriously consider this question. I am not a scientific man, but I do claim to be a practical man, having had over 50 years experience in the fishing industry. I quite agree with Mr. Alward that if something is not done, and done very speedily, it will be of no use holding these conferences so far as the trawl fishing is concerned in the North of England. We see

daily and monthly and yearly that the catch of fish is decreasing. I know I am now speaking in the presence of the Board of Trade, and I am also speaking in the presence of a very eminent man of great authority—Sir Albert Rollit—who represents those who are largely interested in the fishing business, because Sir Albert is Chairman of one of the largest Fishing Companies in the North of England. Sir Albert Rollit may say to the Conference: "How is it that in 1886 I see you landed plaice to the tune of 976 cwt., and in 1891 you landed 118,716 cwt?" It may be accounted for by the quantity of appliances put into operation for the capture of these fish. Since 1886 we have expended in Hull alone over a million of money in additional appliances for fish catching; consequently that has caused a greater search over the whole of the North Sea for fish. Prior to 1886 if they got amongst the small fish which gather together in such great abundance for so many months in the year they would get away from the spot as soon as possible, because they knew they were committing destruction. I am sorry to say that in the last two or three years they have made a practice of going amongst the small fish because they have found a sale for them, and can therefore earn a trifle more than those who do not go there. This accounts for the large increase in the number of fish landed. As to the value of it, although we caught and landed 118,716 cwt. of fish in 1891, the value of it was not comparable with that of the 976 cwt. caught in 1886. You will therefore see that the quantity does not make up for the quality so far as value is concerned. Not only that but it is wilful destruction. I may say that within the past 12 months we had a box of fish landed at Billingsgate, and the purchaser bought them for small fish. He subsequently returned them to the stall which I am interested in, and we compensated him for them. He said he bought the contents of the box as small fish, but remarked that he did not think he was buying "ivy leaves."

I asked to have the fish in the box counted. For your information I may tell you that if a box of plaice contained from 40 to 45 fish, that would be a very good box; but this particular box contained 1,036 fish. How many boxes would that number have made if they had been allowed to remain in the water for a couple of years and reached maturity? I hold that fish are like sheep—they are lambs this year and sheep next. Whatever our scientific men may say with respect to their breeding, my opinion as a practical man is that this is the result of fishing in the deep sea. We have a vessel which landed yesterday 1,500 boxes of fish, and there was not a solitary plaice amongst them. I therefore appeal to you as to whether you do not think there is a dimunition in the quantity of fish. If this is allowed to go on continually it is my opinion that within 7 years the trawling business in the North Sea will not be worth the attention of the people who send there, and that there will not be a fish in the sea that will pay those who catch it. I know there are several gentlemen in the room anxious to give their opinions upon the subject for and against the resolution; because our friends on the Southern Coast do not altogether agree with us in regard to the size of fish that should be allowed to be caught. I hope, however, that we shall discuss it in an amicable manner and do the best we can for ourselves.

Mr. Ascroft (Lytham): I agree entirely with what the previous speakers have said as to the necessity of prohibiting the sale of undersized fish, but there are some words in the resolution I want to be left out, and they are "During certain seasons of the year." I consider undersized fish should be sold at *no* time of the year. In the North Sea the mesh of the trawl net used is as a rule of a fair size, but when you come to the Irish Sea you find deep sea trawlers using nets which are only 4 inches in circumference—one inch from knot to knot. There is, therefore, a necessity of regulating the size of the mesh as well as the sale.

There is no doubt we have not the power, or the Government cannot exercise much right as regards the size of the net outside territorial waters, but the Government can say what fish shall be allowed to be landed. With us there is a great shrimping industry. Everything that can be used for food is brought ashore. I should like also to see the word "Landed" substituted for the word "Sale." The "landing" of undersized fish should be prohibited. In that case you would not have to prove a sale. In the one case you would have to prove that a man has sold undersized fish; but if a man is in possession of undersized fish on shore that proves at once that the fish has been landed. I should like to move the omission of the words "During certain seasons of the year;" and also that the "landing" of undersized fish should be prohibited.

Mr. Dawson (Superintendent of the Lancashire Sea Fisheries District): I have great pleasure in seconding the amendment. I think if you only prohibit the landing and sale of undersized fish during a certain portion of the year it would not cover what is wanted. In our District it has been the custom to catch immature fish at all seasons of the year, and this is what we want to prevent. Only the other day a shrimp trawl brought up 6,000 immature fish in one hour's drag. I am glad to find that public attention has at last been aroused to the importance of preserving and improving our fisheries. Unfortunately, I am afraid, this is brought about by the decrease in sizable fish, and by the price demanded for the best class of flat fish. The question now is what is the best thing to be done under the circumstances? I am sure nothing will be so effectual, and at the same time so economical, as an Act of Parliament to prohibit, not only the sale, but the landing of fish under certain sizes. There is no doubt the Act of 1888 is not extensive enough. It only deals with methods and instruments used in fishing; unfortunately there is no power whatever to prevent the landing of fish under certain sizes, and so

long as a market can be found for undersized fish, so long will they be brought to market. The prevention of illegal fishing in territorial waters is a most difficult matter, and it is most expensive. The Act of 1888 only extends seawards 3 miles from low water mark, and outside that fishermen can use what mesh they like, consequently, daily a large quantity of immature fish is thrown on the market. If the landing of immature fish was prohibited it would lessen the expense of watching inshore territorial waters. It is outside the boundary that immense quantities of small flat fish have been taken—so small that in several instances they have not been sent to market because it was thought they would fetch nothing, and they have been sent to Aquaria. The statistics published by the Board of Trade last year point to more fish being landed last year than in the year before, and I have met people who have argued that if it is the case how is it that we are complaining about the decrease of the fisheries. I can only say that to my mind the increase has been brought about not by any improvement in the fisheries but principally by the large increase of steam trawlers, of which there has been an immense number built in the last few years, and as we all know the steam trawler, as regards catch, does something like 5 times as much as a sailing trawler. I am certain that the inshore fisheries have decreased very materially during the last few years, and sooner or later the Government of this country will be bound to pass an Act prohibiting the sale of undersized fish, and the sooner that is done the better for the public, and for all interested in the fisheries, and especially for the fishermen. I think if it is done soon the fishermen will not feel it anything like what they will when scarcity comes and makes it imperative on the Government to do something. I have taken the opportunity during the past few months of inquiring from nearly every fisherman I have met along the coast as to what they think, and up to now I have not met a single one who is not in favour of legis-

lation against the sale of undersized fish. I believe this is also the opinion of the fish dealers and fish salesmen. The only argument I have ever heard against the proposition is that, as regards the North Sea, if the prevention of landing or sale is made penal it may injure the fishermen who fish there, and not benefit the fisheries; that our fishermen will use a mesh of a larger size, but the fishermen from other countries who are not bound by any Act of this country will use a small mesh. The only answer to that is that Denmark and Belgium have done something, and I am sure if England will support them other countries will follow. But whatever happens there is no doubt our inshore fisheries would be protected. They are the great nurseries of sea fish, and unless the nurseries are protected, outside fishing cannot go on, and I should urge the Conference to do all in its power to get an Act to prevent the sale and landing of immature fish.

The President: I am sure you will give a warm welcome to the President of the Ostend Chamber of Commerce—M. Hamman—and no doubt he will be able to give the Conference some interesting information with regard to the Act of Parliament which I believe was passed in 1891 with regard to the Belgian Fisheries.

Mons. Hamman (Belgium): The International Conference held here in July, 1890, recommended legislation upon immature fish, and that meeting of scientific and practical men requested every Government there represented to take steps to enact regulations about fishing, and especially about fishing within territorial waters. After my return home from the Conference of 1890, I addressed our Chamber of Commerce and gave a report of the proceedings. Also one of my friends in Ostend, Mons. Borgers, published a very interesting notice on the subject. The Belgian Government appointed a special committee, called the Comité de Mariculture, to frame a bill on fishing within territorial waters. I was a member of that

committee, and I am glad to be able to read you the new bill of August, 1891, which is a result of our labours, and which is as follows :—

First Section of the Bill.—"Within the limits of three miles from the coast all kinds of fishing is only to be practised by natural fishermen. We understand to be an act of fishing at first the capture of all kind of fish or shell-fish ; secondly, the capture or destruction of immature fish, fry or brood. The King has the power to make special international agreements to allow foreign fishermen to fish within our territorial waters.

The 2nd Section of the Bill says :—"The regulations to be observed by fishermen when sailing or anchoring within these limits are to be promulgated by the King.

The 3rd Section and 4th Section concern police officers and penalties.

The 5th Section provides the fish and fishing gear will be seized by the police officer and sold by auction.

6th Section :—If the infringement occurs after sunset the penalties will be heavier.

8th Section and the most important Section of the whole Bill.—A special Act will be decreed by the King to determine the restrictions to fishing by the Belgiam fishermen themselves into territorial waters. This special Act of the King is not yet published, but I am authorised to express my opinion that it will be decreed in the following terms or thereabout :—First article : Within the limits of 3 miles from the coast and during the months of April and May fishing is prohibited with trawl nets and all other dragging apparatus except the very small shrimp net, handled by a single person, not exceeding 2 yards or thereabouts both ways.

Second Article :—It is at all times forbidden to land, to carry, to hawk about, to offer for sale, or sell turbots, brills, or plaice, measuring less than 254 millimeters (10 inches) and soles, or lemon soles measuring less than 18 centimeters (about 7 inches).

The King retains power to enlarge these measures later on. By the third Article it is at all times forbidden to capture the fry of mussels from the piers, dykes, and other works along the coast. The following articles concern penalties and measures of supervision.

I believe, gentlemen, this Bill and the decree will have a very good effect on the fisheries. I hope it will be acknowledged that Belgium has done her duty. We must now hope that other countries and in particular Great Britain, as your able President has said, will do the same.

Sir Albert Rollit, M.P.: No one, I think, can overstate the importance of this resolution, but if we desire to make it practical through legislation, it is eminently desirable that we should be as unanimous as we possibly can be, otherwise great difficulty will arise. I mention that because I am going to oppose the amendment and to urge you to pass the original resolution. Now, like Mr. Toozes, I must plead guilty to coming from Hull and to being a steam trawler. A great deal has been said against steam trawlers, but I venture to say that they are not so black as they are sometimes painted, and if we had to argue the cause of the steam trawlers against the cause of other people I think we should find other people considerably blacker than the steam trawler. However, we are not going to discuss that, but I ask you not to believe that we are as black as we are painted. But Mr. Toozes says that our interests and principally the interests of the Humber ports are distinctly against legislation as a mere matter of immediate interest, but we see and are going to urge that our ultimate interest and the ultimate interests of the trade and of the consumer, and of everybody are distinctly in favour of some action being taken. Now it has been said by a previous speaker who has not been converted from his original view against any action being taken—I think there are a few, and I come in contact with them occasionally—there are a few who pray like the impenitent thief: "Oh, Lord convert me

but not to-day." (Laughter). They are always praying for legislation the day after to-morrow. They will reserve the happy harvest for their own time and leave posterity to takes its fate. I mention that because I think it is still necessary to remind those who are dealing with this question of the high authority which is in favour of some action being taken. I need hardly quote the report of 1888, but you will remember that it recommends restriction—and I do not think any nation has simply unrestricted fisheries—it recommends action being taken because free fishing is wasteful; it is also pronounced to be, upon ample evidence, destructive, and lastly it means the destitution of the fisheries, destitution of the owners, destitution of the men, and of the consuming public so far as the fish are concerned. With these conclusions of that report I most heartily agree, and I think they are confirmed by all scientific and expert evidence which can be brought to bear on the subject. Let me speak of the experience at our doors. We need not go into the question of whale fishing; I think we need not go so far away as the Behring Sea, although this subject is creating international difficulties which we are very glad to see are being gradually solved through the very proper means of international arbitration. But we may cite a very plain fact which faces us at the Humber day by day. You will find one class of people speaking a broad Yorkshire dialect—to which class I belong; you will find another class of people speaking a refined and soft dialect—to which class Mr. Toozes belongs; and that refined tone has followed the fish. The fish being driven away have gone northward and the catchers have gone with them, and they have followed a wasteful practice, which, if it is continued in the North Sea will deplete it and it will drive the fish away to the coast of Ireland which will have to be fished, but it will be difficult. But you have heard how the fish have fled and men have followed them, and if you will read the records of those fisheries you will find

why they have been followed, and of the wasteful and wanton destruction. I have only one other point to refer to. Denmark has been mentioned. Now as Chairman of the London Chamber of Commerce I have been in Denmark recently, and there I find one great concurring testimony, so far as they can judge, to the economical value of the steps which have been taken. Now Denmark has the largest steam fleet in the world so far as one great company is concerned; it has immense energy and enterprise, and in regard to collective, modern and organised industry, there is nothing which can be compared with Denmark at the present moment, so you have an economical, practical experiment conducted by most able observers and men of business, and one which you may well follow. But let me ask is England to follow anyone? the greatest Maritime Power in the world. What would have happened to us in 1846 if we had waited for people to lead us in the matter of the Factory Act? In the last year or two we have been followed at Berlin, not only on social grounds, but because it has been a great commercial success which has ministered to the advancement of the people, and the splendour of the race so far as size and ability is concerned. Surely that is an example which can be followed in relation to our fisheries and which will be justified by experience. Something ought to be done, but when you go for legislation to do it you meet difficulties. We have differences of opinion as to the size of mesh; we shall have more difference of opinion as to the practicability of legislation. For that reason I ask you to be as unanimous as you can be or you will run a risk of not succeeding. Remember if you exclude all the year the report of 1888 will be cited against you, and that it distinctly limits the proposal to certain seasons of the year. Remember if, upon a point of that sort, which is a detail, we split instead of proceeding cautiously and tentatively by preparing the public mind for the value of the results of experience, you may ruin

what seems highly wise and practical support. I heartily support the original resolution, though it is against one's immediate interest, but with the certain fact in mind that it is in the ultimate interest of all classes.

Alderman Grindley (Chairman of the Markets Committee of Liverpool):—I have very great pleasure in supporting the amendment. I may say, as Chairman of the Markets Committee of Liverpool, that there are to be seen tons of small immature flat fish coming into the market not fit for food. I do not believe there has been an ounce of meat on those fish, and they ought never to have been landed. It has been urged that if this were allowed to go on much longer, the fishing in Liverpool Bay, with regard to flukes and soles, in a few years hence we shall have no fish of any kind at all, I therefore urge upon this Conference, the immediate necessity of pressing upon the Government the advisability of passing an Act, as early as possible, to prevent the capture and sale of immature fish; and I trust that whatever is done at this Conference will be, as Sir Albert Rollit has said, unanimous. We have had many complaints in the Lancashire Sea Fisheries district, but now that we have got into full working order, everything is being done to prevent the catching of all kind of fish I have alluded to, which will indeed be very beneficial in the future, and I venture to think will cheapen the fish food supply.

The Rt. Hon. Ed. Heneage, M.P.: I have always held that the only possible way of stopping the catching and the sale of immature fish, is to prohibit the sale of it, and therefore the market for it. But I also agree with Sir Albert Rollit, that it is extremely desirable that we should be unanimous; but let us also be practical. I cannot help thinking, that there is a great deal of force in the amendment which has been moved, I cannot see how, from a parliamentary stand-point, we can urge the Government to prohibit the sale of fish for a portion of the year, and at the same time allow the

same class of fish to be destroyed during the rest of the year. It appears to me, all our arguments fall to the ground, the moment we attempt to define a certain portion of the year as that in which fish ought not to be caught. Therefore, while I should be glad that we should be unanimous, either one way or another, I cannot help thinking, looking at it from a practical point of view, that we should be far better off if we adopted the amendment, and struck out the words "during certain times of the year." It will be perfectly competent for the Board of Trade to put in an Act of Parliament, if they choose to deal with it, certain times of the year; but I think we ought to ask for all we want and get what we can. I am sure you will all agree with me that we ought to tender our thanks to Mr. Hamman, for the very able address he has given us, and for so kindly coming here to-day to represent Belgium. I am sure we may congratulate him, and the country he so ably represents, on having taken the initiative in this great movement. There is one other point I should also like to mention. I agree, that to prohibit the "sale" of fish is not enough, I think the words used in the Belgium Act are very good indeed, and I for one should not mind adopting them; but I think we have some very good words in an Act of our own, and it is always good to go back to our own legislation, namely the Crab and Lobster Act. The words are these: "A person shall not take, have in his possession, expose for sale, consign for sale, or buy for sale." I think if you have those words in an Act, it would be impossible for a person to miss being caught, and I strongly suggest that we should have those words in our resolution. There is also another point I should like to have seen in the resolution. I think the Government should have been asked, by law, not only to prohibit the sale of immature fish, but to give power to the Sea Fisheries Committees, under the Act 1888, to carry out that law. I think they will be the proper bodies to do it; and if we are to go to Parliament and ask them to legislate, I think

if we could come to a unanimous and practical conclusion on the whole matter, it does not much matter whether we alter the original resolution or not. We want to go upon a thing upon which we are unanimous, and which we can ask Parliament to carry out, and which your members present can support and speak upon. It is for these reasons I have made these few remarks. I think we might modify our resolution with very good effect; but while I am willing to accept the resolution or the amendment in order to procure unanimity, I am strongly in favour of the proposition, that the amendment should be adopted and certain words struck out of the resolution.

Mr. R. Collins (Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee): It is somewhat gratifying to me to be here to-day, because the subject has assumed this particular aspect. On former occasions, I believe, the subject of capture and destruction of immature fish has occupied the attention of Conferences, and it has occupied the serious attention of the fishing community for at least a quarter of a century; and notwithstanding the fact that intelligence and practical ability, and also scientific information has been devoted to the subject, the perplexing problem remains to some extent unsolved. Much has been said on former occasions at Committee Meetings in my county, and it is a singular thing that it is discussing it to-day. A great deal has been said about fishing instruments, and as to what particular instruments are most destructive to fish. In Cornwall there are two classes of fishermen, and each tries to place upon the other that their instruments are the most destructive. It must be known that every sea fishing instrument is more or less destructive, and that with all the care practicable, there must of necessity be an amount of destruction; but I agree with the remarks of Mr. Heneage at a previous Conference, that where to draw a line between wilful and accidental capture is an important question. A considerable portion of the immature fish which are now destroyed,

could be kept alive and put back into the water, if the fishing community and every branch of the industry were more considerate of their own interests. I speak as a practical fisherman. That there is destruction, and wilful destruction, evidence is not wanting. The most serious question to my mind is that an immense quantity of the immature fish so destroyed, are exposed for sale in almost every market in England, and meeting with purchasers at a worthless price, it induces the carrying on of what is well described as alarming destruction. Arguments have been put forward that it is good food supplied for the people. This may be met by the argument used in this room three years ago, to the effect that it is not only that small fish are caught, but it is well known that more fish come into the market than is disposed of. This being the case, the necessity for the wholesale destruction of immature fish for food supply is baseless. It may be asked what means can be taken to prevent destruction, and I am glad to hear that this question has assumed a shape that will be accepted by the entire fishing community. I must say that I thoroughly agree with the amendment. Mr. Geo. Alward, at a former Conference, said it could be accomplished by making it illegal for anyone to have in possession immature fish, and prohibiting the offering it for sale. That is the substance of the resolution which has been placed before my Committee. I am here to support that resolution, not only on the grounds I have mentioned, but because in Cornwall it will be the means of destroying the prejudice and ill-feeling engendered in the minds of one class of fishermen against another, as this resolution will apply equally to the whole. Therefore, as representing the County of Cornwall with a fishing population of 36,000, I agree with the resolution as proposed by Mr. Alward.

Mr. Alderman Mudd (Grimsby): I am glad to find that there is such unanimity of feeling and of opinion on this subject. The difference between the resolution

and the amendment, I think will be easily met. The representatives of Grimsby and Hull, in Conference this morning, framed a resolution, hardly expecting that the Conference would be so united upon the question of the prohibition all the year round. I am very glad that facts really do convert people, and I could not help feeling, when Sir Albert Rollit made reference to the prayer, "Lord convert me, but not just now," that he was really speaking from experience (laughter), because, if you will refer to his speeches in the past, you will see that facts have pressed upon Sir Albert until he is converted. And the facts will convert the country, and if they do not act sufficiently to make them take steps to alter the condition of things, the country will be starved so far as the fish supply is concerned. Statistics, which are very misleading, were read from the Government returns. Even the documents brought forward by our own Association are so far as this question is concerned, fallacious and misleading. We hear that we landed so much fish in such a year, and that now we are landing more and, it is said, consequently there is no diminution of fish. A document just handed round by our Association, shows that in the year 1888, there was landed 598,142 cwts. of plaice, and that in 1891 there were 711,322 cwts. landed. That is taken on the surface as evidence that there is an increase of plaice in the North Sea—or at least it is so in the minds of some people. Alderman Toozes has referred to the way in which the Hull fleets play upon the small fish on the Dutch and German coasts during the summer months, and, whatever we may say about the destruction of small fish here, it is nothing like what it is in comparison with what goes on, on the Dutch and German coasts. The Hull fleets last year were landing 20,000 boxes of small plaice in a week; they caught scarcely anything but small plaice. I happen to be Chairman of the Grimsby Ice Co., which possesses a large fleet of about 100 smacks and 5 steam carriers. We have been trying, during the last five years, to act

up to our conscience, and avoid those small plaice in the summer months, and while others have gone and destroyed plaice in the North Sea, we have instructed our Admiral of the fleet to keep in mid-ocean, in order to avoid small plaice. We can therefore, give evidence beyond dispute of the condition of fishing in the North Sea, and I will tell you what we have found. In the year 1888 we sent to market 161,847 boxes of haddocks, but now there is a dimunition of haddocks as well as of plaice to a certain extent, according to our findings. In the year 1891 we sent 152,835 boxes of haddocks to market, thus showing a decrease of 9,012 boxes, though we had the same number of smacks at work in the same waters that we had in 1888. In the year 1888, we landed 50,862 boxes of plaice, but in 1891 we landed only 33,050 boxes, showing a decrease in plaice of 17,812 boxes. In following the figures through, we find that that decrease is gradual, and we find that the same observation applies to soles and turbot. I will quote figures to prove it. In 1888 the proportion of prime was 7 per cent.; in 1891 it was 5½ per cent. In the year 1888 the proportion of plaice was 19 per cent., and in the year 1891 it was 15 per cent. That shows a constant dimunition of prime flat fish, while there is a small decrease in haddocks according to our evidence. I think these figures must be taken as conclusively representing the condition of deep sea fishing in the North Sea, because our fleets are on and round about the Dogger all the year round, and have been for the last five or six years. I do hope our Members of Parliament and the representatives of this Association will do all they can to give some effect to the Conferences, and to the resolutions that we have come to in the past, and that we are now passing, because this waiting becomes tiresome and most grievous in effect upon our balance at the end of the year. Our fleet has been working for the whole year, and we have not a penny piece to pay to our shareholders, and if this state of things continues

we shall come to ruin so sure as God made little apples. (Laughter.)

Mr. Mallock, M.P.: All the gentlemen who have spoken to this resolution have referred to the North and East Coast, but as I understand the matter, very different arguments would apply to the South Coast. No doubt there are many gentlemen here who were here two or three years ago when this question was discussed, and it was admitted, I believe, almost unanimously that a sole, for instance, caught on the South Coast ten inches long was a very different fish to one of the same length caught on the North Coast—that it was much more valuable for food, and that there was much less harm done in catching such a fish. It has already been alluded to by one speaker that the South Coast stands on different ground to the North Coast in this matter. Therefore, I think that as well as defining the season of the year, it would give satisfaction if the locality could be defined in some way. There are friends of mine here from Brixham who can speak from practical experience, which I cannot do, and I hope some of them will be able to give the Conference their views upon the subject. I am sure as the resolution stands it would be unpopular along the South Coast of England.

Baillie Mearns (Aberdeen): When I see so many gentlemen from England taking part in this important discussion I think it would not be out of place for one from Scotland to say that he must hold by the amendment. I think the restriction a necessity, and that it should be for the whole year round, as there should be no time from January to December in which immature fish should be allowed either to be landed or sold in the markets of this great empire. I must plead guilty to being connected with vessels which have brought immature fish from the Horn Reef and that district to the Port of Aberdeen, but the taking and the landing of that class of fish, has on the few occasions on which they were brought, proved a dead loss, as it ought to

be. We have therefore given the masters of our steam trawlers in the North of Scotland instructions not to go to ground where immature fish can be got, as we have no desire to see such placed for sale in our market. I consider that these small flat fish which have been so well styled as ivy leaves, should by Act of Parliament, neither be allowed to be landed or sold in any market of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Alderman Mudd: I should like to say on behalf of the mover and seconder of the resolution, that I believe if I called upon them to accept the amendment, we should be at one so far as the discussion is concerned.

Sir Albert Rollit, M.P.: I should like to except myself as a supporter of the original.

Mr. W. L. Robins (Hull): I rise to support both the resolution and amendment. We are only, as a trade, too fully conversant of the immense amount of destruction going on amongst the immature fish, and we are now asking for prompt legislation in the matter. I represent a large fishing fleet working in the North Sea. Two years ago we and our Grimsby friends came to the conclusion that somethig must be done. I object to too much legislation, but I do not see any way out of it. And I should be glad if possible to see it made international for the protection of our coast lines and so preserve the immature fish. I have attended these conferences for two or three years but we do not seem as yet to make much progress. In Hull we have three hundred and fifty sailing trawlers and one hundred and fifty steam trawlers. We say in the interests of the trade, also the public and those who have to follow us, something must be done by the Government to stop the sale and capture of immature fish.

Mr. Jex (London): You know this is an old subject of mine. Twenty-five or thirty years ago when I brought this before the notice of many gentlemen connected with the fisheries, it was said I was out of my mind; many of you here to-day will remember it, and I think your pockets will remember it too. I find a great

many of you who said I was out of my mind are now with me. I think the motion and the amendment are both good. I think that the motion should run that at any time of the year, if fish under a certain size is found in the possession of anybody, those people should be liable to a penalty; then under-sized fish would find no market here and it would stop them from being brought from the other side of the North Sea. We, in London, know that thousands of boxes of immature fish come from Denmark, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and other places; it is a disgrace to any nation to send such to another country's market. This importation would be stopped if a penalty was put upon those having undersized fish in their possession. Without such a penalty the prohibition of our English trawlers would be useless. During last summer steamboats came from the North Sea, from the Coast of Denmark and Germany with 2,000 and 3,000 boxes of plaice of such a size that it was a disgrace to any nation and to any fishermen to catch them. In some instances we found over a thousand plaice in a box. We are cutting off our noses to spite our faces by catching and sending to market these fish. We are killing them before they are able to bring forth their own kind, and if we did that with the beasts of the field, we should be told we were doing an injury to the public. Fishermen are doing a great injustice to themselves. If the fish contained in the box of which I have been speaking had been allowed to remain six or eight or nine months in the sea they would have filled ten or twelve boxes. Fish life is the most growing life we know of; this is proved by statistics. During the last three or four months we have been receiving hundreds of boxes of plaice a day from the fleet of vessels working off Orfordness and North to the Hinder Light, and on the Coast of Belgium some of these vessels have been on trips of ten and twelve days, and then have come in with 20 or 30 boxes of plaice with a few large ones on the top and all the others being small

ones. It is a great shame, and the Government ought to step in. The Government should pass a short Act making anyone found in possession of fish under a certain size liable to a penalty. Another point is, that almost 30 years ago a vessel of about 30 tons could go and get more fish in one night than one of my 70 ton vessels now gets in a fortnight. Who is to blame for this dimunition? We have been the cause of it ourselves by catching these immature fish. It ought to be stopped.

Col. Malcolm, M.P. (Scotland): I want to bring you back to the position you are in. I cordially agree with the amendment, but it has been so generally accepted by all present except Sir A. Rollit, that I need not go into that, but having now had the honour of a seat in Parliament for a good many years I want to get you to make this resolution as practical as you can. I do not think it is the business of this Conference to draft an Act of Parliament; we shall get into a mess if we try, but I think the resolution proposed, simply calling on the Government to introduce a Bill to prohibit the sale of undersized flat fish in the market, is sufficient for us, and let us leave it to Parliament, to the Government draftsman to see how that can be carried out, and do not let us waste time in telling them how to do it.

Mr. Sanders (Brixham): We wish to agree with the representatives of the fishing industry from the Northern and Eastern Ports; but what applies to the North Sea does not apply to Brixham. We have an increase of fish at Brixham, and during the last three years we have increased 100 per cent. in the amount of fish landed at Brixham. There is one thing I should like to see embodied in the amendment on proposition so that I may know what action to take in the matter. Neither the amendment nor the resolution states what sized fish may be caught. That is an important matter, because we shall be asked to vote one way or another and we shall want to know what we are voting upon. We

think that the landing of undersized fish should be prohibited as well as selling, because we know that fish is sold for manure in Northern Ports when there are big catches. At Brixham, we have no cause to complain. We are anxious to raise no note of discord, but we are anxious so far as possible to agree with the Northern and Eastern fishermen, but we think specimens should be produced.

Mr. Chas. Jeffs (Grimsby) : I am pleased that we find ourselves in the position we do to-day upon the discussion of this subject. Since 1888 the destruction of small flat fish has been going on as rapidly or more rapidly than ever. We were in good hopes four years ago that our Government would put a stop to the wasteful destruction of immature fish; but Governments take a lot of moving, and I doubt whether we in the trade have risen to the occasion in the manner in which we ought to have done and demanded an Act of Parliament which we are now in some hopes of getting. I hope and trust it will not be the case in this matter, as in many others, that the Government will cause an inquiry, because from the Land's End in the North to the Land's End in the South we are practically agreed that this wilful destruction of immature fish must be stopped, or the ruination of the fishing industry will soon come. I am somewhat in a dilemma with regard to the South Coast. Several years ago I was at Brixham, and there I found the same complaint that we ourselves have, namely, that there was a diminution in the catch of flat fish, viz., soles, plaice, and turbot; but our friends to-day say that this is not the case, and that they have an increase of fish. But they are not in the same position as we are. What do we find there? We find that their vessels leave their coasts and go into the North Sea for many months in the summer, that they also go round on the Irish Coast and that therefore their grounds get replenished and rested. If they have an increase I am very pleased; I wish we could say the same. I agree with the amendment and think

that small flat fish should not be allowed to be landed or sold at any time of the year. No less than a million of money has been spent at Grimsby and Hull during the last year on increased catching power, and that may be a reason why there is an increase in quantity, but there was not so much mature flat fish landed in 1891 as in 1888; but of the immature flat fish 400 and 500 boxes a week have been landed out of one steamer, Even that does not represent what has been caught, for more has been thrown overboard than the quantity brought to land. We ask that this may be put a stop to by passing an Act of Parliament during the present session, because there will be no opposition to it from any M.P. from any part of the United Kingdom. I hope the resolution will be passed unanimously.

The Macgillicuddy: This is the first time I have had the honour of meeting any large number of gentlemen in London on the fishing question. Having been in the Navy, I take considerable interest in the fisheries of my country. I have, during the past two years, managed to accomplish a little, having received great assistance from Father Davis, whom you all know. Every gentleman from my part of the country, the South-West of Ireland, knows that this is the marrying-time in Ireland, and that the priests are fully engaged; and we know that if they did not attend to their duties, in addition to there being no little fishes, there would soon be no little Irishmen. (Great laughter). I could have wished that some gentleman of larger experience than I have had, had the opportunity of addressing you to-day on this matter. I had the opportunity of visiting Grimsby last January, and I can say from my observation about the coasts that I think to stop the sale of immature fish is one of the soundest and best things that could be done for this industry. In Ireland, where we are trying very hard to start a trawl fishery, we should be very sorry to see our harvest taken away and killed before it grew. I feel a difficulty in voting either for the amendment or for the resolution, but I

think the amendment and the resolution may well go together. Therefore, if I may, I will support both.

Mr. G. Alward (Grimsby): Having agreed in the first instances to the original proposition, not believing that we should get much further than that, I should have been content, but after hearing the speeches that have been made, I feel certain that everyone who took part in framing the original resolution is prepared to accept the amendment. So far as we are concerned in this Conference, it appears to me that we have convinced ourselves. Mr. Mudd, I think, has dealt well with Sir Albert Rollit, and Sir Albert, I believe, admits himself to have been a sinner, but that now he is a converted man. I do not speak of that lightly. I speak of it with all the weight it deserves, because the conversion of a gentleman like Sir Albert Rollit upon the great question which we have under discussion means something in the House of Commons, and it means something outside this Conference generally, and I am very pleased that we have arrived at this position. Then there is the public. The public will have to be dealt with, and we shall have to show the public that it is to their interest that the sale of undersized fish should be stopped. I believe the public generally, look upon the trade in Conference as having their own interests to serve apart from those of the general public when we are dealing with any particular matter. Now it will be the duty of all interested to disabuse the minds of the public on this question. We unfortunately have too little data in the past with regard to whether fish has been caught in greater or less abundance. That is evidence of carelessness on the part of the Board of Trade, who should look into the various branches of industry in this country. But they have not, until very recently, collected very reliable statistics upon fishing. Since coming into this room I have seen a report setting forth the quantity of fish in cwts. caught in England, Ireland and Scotland for several years past. With

regard to flat fish we landed in England and Wales in 1891, 99,194 cwts. of soles and plaice—in excess of 1890. That is a most significant fact. Grimsby and Hull are two of the largest fishing ports, and from a commercial stand-point I should like to show what it has cost us. It has cost Hull £300,000 and Grimsby £260,000 to take our part in that small increase for one year. That is to say we have put to sea from Grimsby 48 steam-boats, and a similar number from Hull to say nothing of sailing trawlers, and with all that additional power and money spent, we have only been able to increase that particular kind of fish by 99,194 cwt. of plaice and soles. From a commercial stand-point this is most significant. The public have got their fish a little cheaper, but at your expense. The average price of plaice in 1890 was 19s. 3d. per cwt., and in 1891 18s. 10d. This shows that commercially the thing is going wrong. At Grimsby we have landed more fish it is true than we have ever done in the history of the port; but only to the extent of 440 tons—that is, 440 tons landed over the largest amount that was ever landed before, namely in 1886; and yet during that time we must have spent at least half a million of money. That is a most remarkable thing, and one which the public should take notice of—that we are certainly trying to produce fish for the public, but at an immense cost. We in this Conference are all convinced of the facts, and we certainly must try to convince the public and rely upon our Members of Parliament to take this matter into their serious consideration. With regard to Brixham, I believe they will be highly satisfied when the proposals as to the sizes of fish are mentioned. As to their fishery increasing instead of decreasing that arises entirely from the fact that they have left their own grounds almost entirely, and have gone some scores of miles away to catch fish and bring it back to Brixham. That is no proof that fish round the coast are increasing. I have the greatest pleasure in supporting the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: I have been requested to ask the Brixham representatives whether they will explain as regards the increase or diminution of fish in their district, whether it is not the fact that the Brixham trawlers go as far as St. George's Channel and the Irish coast; and if there has been an increase of fish, whether it is not due to the fact that they have been leaving their own waters and going elsewhere.

MR. SANDERS, Brixham: The Brixham grounds are more fished to-day than they have been in any time. It is true we have vessels going into the St. George's Channel, but the increase in the number of vessels has been so great that the Brixham grounds are fished more to-day than before. Our vessels, excepting one or two, do not go to the North Sea, and they have not for the last five or six years. The increase of fish that I spoke of, means fish landed at Brixham. Fish caught in the Irish Channel is not landed at Brixham.

MR. W. H. WILLIAMSON (London): I ask whether the mover and seconder of the resolution have not accepted the amendment.

ALDERMAN TOOZES: I hope Mr. Alward will consent to a withdrawal.

MR. J. ALWARD. Most thoroughly I do.

The resolution as amended was then agreed to.

MR. SAYER: The Executive Committee have had considerable discussion about the sizes that should be the limits, and I for one, have always disagreed with the Executive as to the size. They wanted it twelve inches for plaice, and I have always stated, that places like Brixham and the South Coast would never accede to twelve inches for plaice. If you go to ten inches, I should be prepared to support the resolution. With persistent opposition, Hull and Grimsby have at length agreed to ten inches, so that I hope the resolution I am now about to move will be carried unanimously. It is this:

"That in the opinion of this Conference, it is
"desirable that, seeing the great destruction

"of unmarketable fish which takes place, "more especially in the North Sea, no flat "fish should be allowed to be sold, bought, "exposed for sale or consigned for sale "within the United Kingdom, unless such "fish are of or exceeding the following dimen- "sions—namely, plaice 10 inches in extreme "length, turbot and brill 12 inches, and "lemon soles 11 inches, and that this "resolution be forwarded to the Board of "Trade."

Members of Parliament will probably say "We have nothing to do with trying to make laws," but I contend that every practical man ought to throw out suggestions and state what he considers fish fit for food should measure. We have, up to the present, been allowed to sell plaice two or three inches in length, and to jump up to twelve inches is really going too far. I hope you will agree with this resolution as to the sizes of saleable fish. We have only taken the question of flat fish at present.

Mr. Alderman Mudd, in seconding the motion: As the last speaker has referred to the position now held by Grimsby and Hull, I would like to say that at a Conference at Hull, where we had two sizes of fish before us, after full consideration we agreed that the size of plaice should be twelve inches. Since that, and since our Conference here, to try to meet all interests round the Coast, I believe Grimsby and Hull are unanimous now in the agreement, that we will accept the figures of the sizes suggested by the mover, Mr. Sayer, that is, that the plaice should be ten inches instead of twelve. You must understand, when we met in conference, we met as fishers in the deep sea, and we had the sizes from other Coasts—I refer to Holland and Germany—before us, and for our interest, there is no doubt it would be very much better if we carried the size to twelve inches; but we, in this Conference, have to consider each other and all the

interests, and therefore, in order to be united, we have arranged to agree that the size should be ten inches instead of twelve.

Mr. Williamson : I should be glad to know, if this resolution is passed, how it will affect the recent decision of the fishing industry with regard to the measurements they gave to the foreign delegates who came to this hall. Those foreign delegates received information that measurements of much larger size than those set forward by Mr. Sayer were to be adopted.

The President : I understand that there were no measurements officially given to any of the foreign delegates.

Mr. Williamson : Then that alters the decision. I submit to put such a resolution as this before a meeting is not business. We ought to give opportunities to consider the question, and as an amendment to this resolution, I move :

> " That this matter be deferred until 10 o'clock
> " to-morrow morning, and that it be the first
> " order in the Agenda."

This will enable Brixham, Grimsby, and all other places interested in it to discuss the matter on its merits. Then we have a large agenda of business to-day, and if we are to go on discussing this matter as regards the sizes of fish, we shall have to ask the Prime Warden of the Fishmonger's Company to allow us to wait here until 8 o'clock to-night. I am anxious to get on with business, and therefore, I suggest that we should let it be the first matter before this Conference at 11.30 to-morrow.

Mr. Heneage, M.P. : I recommend the mover of the resolution to accept this suggestion. There are many reasons why it should be accepted, and I think it is only fair to those gentlemen who have come here to discuss the second resolution.

Mr. Moss : I have very great pleasure in supporting the proposal.

Mr. Sayer: I am quite willing to accept the proposal but I hope that we shall have representatives on the Committee who have come here from the South Coast. I have persistently maintained that the size of plaice should be ten inches on behalf of the South Coast, and I am quite willing to accept the amendment if we can put those representatives on the Committee to-morrow morning.

Mr. Mallock, M.P.: I desire to move the amendment:—

"That this Conference recognises the fact that "the limitation as to the size of fish in "different localities must vary."

I think that would help the Committee.

The President: The Committee will consider that.

Mr. Alderman Mudd: As the seconder of the resolution I quite agree with the amendment of Mr. Williamson, and I do think it would be most important that a representative from each place should be on the Committee, because we disagree when we come here, at least we have here all parties differing, and let us have all conflicting opinions on the Committee.

Mr. Little: I suggest that a Select Committee be appointed from this Conference to meet to-morrow morning—that a Committee be appointed, and that that Committee should pass a resolution, and that the resolution should be submitted to the meeting to-morrow morning.

The President: Mr. Williamson, would you suggest that the whole Conference should meet to-morrow as a Committee, or did you suggest a Committee?

Mr. Williamson: Let us have an open Committee, let those attend who have an interest in the question.

The Secretary (Mr. J. Wrench Towse): Then the resolution will be:

"That it be referred to the Committee to be "appointed by the Conference to confer and "report to the Conference to-morrow."

Mr. Williamson : I should say an open Committee of such Delegates as take an interest in the matter.

Mr. G. Alward (Grimsby) : I think we are practically agreed, and why should we enter into another Conference when we are here meeting in Conference ? Those gentlemen who disagreed with the size the year before last I believe are practically agreed now.

Mr. Duff, M.P., (Banffshire) : We have met here to-day and have been discussing one subject of the Agenda for upwards of two hours. We have to deal with very complicated questions. I say, as practical men, it is quite impossible to go into that question now unless you are going to sacrifice everything else on the Agenda. There are a number of gentlemen who have come here from the North of Scotland and other parts, and I respectfully submit to you we ought to submit this to a Committee, and allow the Conference to-day to proceed with the other subjects on the Agenda.

Mr. Heneage, M.P. : A Committee of the whole Conference ?

The President : It has been moved and seconded :

" That in the opinion of this Conference it is
" desirable that, seeing the great destruction
" of unmarketable fish which takes place,
" more especially in the North Sea, no flat
" fish should be allowed to be sold, bought,
" exposed for sale, or consigned for sale
" within the United Kingdom, unless such
" fish are of, or exceeding, the following
" dimensions, namely—plaice ten inches in
" extreme length, turbot and brill twelve
" inches, and lemon soles eleven inches,
" and that a copy of this resolution be
" forwarded to the Board of Trade ;"

to which an amendment has been moved by Mr. Williamson and seconded by Mr. Heneage,

" That this matter be referred to a Committee,
" to be appointed as a Committee of the

" whole Conference to consider and report
" to the Conference on its assembling to-
" morrow morning."

The amendment was thereupon submitted to the meeting, and on a show of hands, the President declared the amendment carried, and asked the Delegates at what time they would wish to meet.

It was arranged to meet at ten o'clock in the morning.

Mr. William Pyper (Aberdeen): The resolution which stands in my name is as follows:

" That in the opinion of this Conference
" beam trawling should be legal within
" territorial waters at certain seasons of the
" year, and that shutting up such a large
" space of water as the Moray Firth would
" mean a serious loss to the food supply of
" the nation, and lead to complications with
" foreign powers."

Which I now beg leave to formally move, and in doing so I wish to thank your Committee for their kindness in sending to myself and two friends who have come from the far north an invitation to be present at this most important Conference of those connected with the fishing industry of the United Kingdom. I need not say that in dealing with this important question of beam trawling, I shall only do so in so far as it comes under my own immediate knowledge, namely, as conducted on the north-east coast of Scotland, leaving to other gentlemen to take up in the course of the discussion the question as it may affect the various parts of the coast in England and Ireland. There are three modes of fishing carried on on our coast: 1st., Herring by the drift net; 2nd., White Fishing by the drift net and line; 3rd., White Fishing by the beam trawl. The total catch by these modes of fishing for the past two or three years, shows an average of almost a million pounds sterling per annum, of which one half is herring and the other white fish. As is well known, the herring

fishing on the north-east coast of Scotland is, and has been for many years, the most important of its kind in the world. The white fishing as carried on by drift net and line, is conducted by a hardy, industrious class of people who have been located in the fishing towns and village for centuries past. Until within the past few years they seem to have been contented with their lot, and not having the same desire for land as the fishermen on the west coast, have had less trouble with the landlords. I believe arrears of rent are hardly known among our fishermen on the east coast. I have not the statistics for 1891, but for the year 1890 the fish landed by these line fishermen was £212,374 as compared with £185,024 for 1889. Steam fishing by beam trawling is quite new on the north-east coast, and is confined to Aberdeen, where the first trawler belonging to the port commenced operations in March, 1882. The value of fish landed at Aberdeen previous to that date was under £10,000. No proper statistics were kept until 1884. Since that date the following are the quantities and value of the fish landed:—1884, 90,716 cwts., £54,567; 1885, 117,024 cwts., £64,345; 1886, 142,508 cwts., £74,341; 1887, 176,173 cwts., £86,900; 1888, 181,318 cwts., £101,941; 1889, 193,845 cwts., £118,503; 1890, 262,247 cwts., £169,120; 1891, 300,524 cwts., £211,325. These figures show the combined catch by trawl and line separately. They are as follows, from 1887; 1887, trawlers landed in Aberdeen 6,389 tons, £73,500; 1888, 6,580 tons, £84,400; 1889, 6,859 tons, £98,600; 1890, 8,608 tons, £136,000; 1891, 9,949 tons, £154,262. Line boats landed in Aberdeen; 1887, 3,300 tons, £24,359; 1888, 2,905 tons, £28,079; 1889, 3,777 tons, £33,468; 1890, 5,000 tons. £49,418; 1891, 5,081 tons, £55,463. The figures show the extraordinary rapid and continued catch of fish landed in Aberdeen, which I believe, is unexampled in an other port of the United Kingdom, and which now makes Aberdeen the second port as to the landing of fish. We who are here to-day from

that city are naturally proud to point out to you that the fishing industry of our good old city, which in 1882 was under £10,000, is now £211,000 per annum. But this important industry has not been allowed to grow to such extraordinary dimensions in our midst without being assailed. At a very early period of its history, complaints came from the line fishermen as to the loss supposed to be sustained by them through the steam trawlers. The allegations were many and various, such as clearing the sea of fish, destruction of spawn, destruction of lines and nets, destroying the herring fishing, taking immature fish ; and so early as 1883 a commission was appointed to enquire as to these serious complaints, its first sitting being held at Aberdeen. The Commission afterwards continued its enquiry along the east coast of Scotland, and also part of the east coast of England. The report of that Commission did not as a rule bear out the allegations made, but notwithstanding this ever since steam trawling has been hampered and interfered with by Acts of Parliament and the action of the Fishery Board for Scotland, first by a series of experiments and then finally by closing the territorial waters on the coasts of Scotland. And at the present moment petitions are being got up by the line fishermen to close the whole of the Moray Firth. Now, gentlemen, the matter is very serious. I say it is serious, so far as the food supply to the nation is concerned, but it is also a very serious state of matters to those who have their capital invested in steam trawling. There are now upwards of 80 steam trawlers fishing out of the port of Aberdeen, representing a capital of not less than £250,000, of which one-half is owned in the city. I quite admit that if the process of catching fish by steam trawling was doing harm to the general industry or in any way interfering with the supply of fish, no amount of capital held by interested parties could be considered as an argument for its continuance. But I am prepared to prove the very

reverse. Ever since beam trawling commenced on the north-east coast of Scotland, the catch of fish both by line and trawl has increased year by year, not only so but the price has also increased year by year. Leaving the trawling figures alone this is clearly shown by the fact of the line fishing at Aberdeen increasing in quantity from 1887 of £24,359 to £55,043 in 1891, whilst the average price advanced from about £8 in 1887 to about £11 per ton in 1891. That is the state of matters along the coast. I know the fishermen give a different account altogether. Some two years ago it was stated by line fishermen at a public meeting held in Peterhead that it was not worth their while to go to sea now, as all the banks in the Moray Firth were cleared of fish by the trawlers, and that whilst previously they could get from 6 to 10 boxes of fish, they now could get only 2 to 3 boxes. That very year, however, the landing of white fish at Peterhead was £47,289 as compared with £35,942 for the previous year. So much for the supply and the price. And now as to another complaint, namely the destruction done by trawlers in catching immature fish. That immature fish are caught both by line and trawl cannot be denied; but I have the evidence of an eminent gentleman, a member, I understand, of this Conference, Professor McIntosh, who stated at the last Conference, held within these walls, "that he regretted to say that the fishermen on the East Coast, particularly in the Bay of Aberdeen, sometimes landed from 80 to 100 boxes of immature fish in a morning, averaging from 7 to 9 inches in length." The line fishermen along the Aberdeen Coast get the credit of using the smallest hooks of any fishermen in the kingdom. Mr. R. S. Holmes, fish salesman, Berwick, stated before the Commission, "that there are some immature fish among trawl fish, and a great many among line fish." He says, "I got a great many line fish that are perfectly useless, not worth 2d. a stone." Mr. George Sim, Naturalist, Aberdeen, well-known as a man of great scientific research, and a

member of some of the leading societies in the kingdom, who has closely watched the fishing industry since 1882, but who has no personal interest in the matter, says :—" Trawlers do not deny that young fish are killed by them, and I have most favourable opportunities of observing what they do in this way. Ever since trawling began at Aberdeen I have taken careful notes on this head, and I can confidently assert, taking the line fishing along our north-east coast, more immature fish are killed by them than there is by trawlers. Take, for an example, the village of Collieston alone—who has not heard of Collieston Speldings ?—these consist of young haddocks and whitings, which when split, salted, and dried ready for market, are in a majority of cases not larger than ' a man's hand.' This work has been carried on at Collieston time out of mind." All these facts by such important authorities, were known to the Fishery Board and to me, and I am sure to you also. It was therefore a most extraordinary statement, in the report of last year at page forty, " that the primary object of the Board in passing the bye-law (which partially shut up the Moray Firth) was to prevent the capture by trawlers of immature fish." Butler speaks of a class of people that,

" Compound for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to " ;

and as a northern writer says, " It does seem hard that trawlers should be damned for sins by the line fishermen, who are as guilty and more so of committing them in the upper waters of the Moray Firth." And now, gentlemen, I have done with the immature fish question, and I trust I have clearly shown you that the reason given for shutting up part of the Moray Firth by the fishermen has no real foundation in fact, and that if immature fish are taken, we, the trawlers, are not sinners above all men. As to the spawn question in such a place as this, and among gentlemen who so well understand the question,

it is not worth my while to detain you for a single moment. It has been proved without doubt that the spawn floats, and that the beam trawl does it no harm. At the commencement I referred to the various modes of fishing as carried on on the north-east of Scotland. There is one mode to which, however, I did not refer, which has done. and still is doing, a great deal of mischief. It may be legal but in my opinion it is hardly fair, and in some cases hardly honourable, namely,—"fishing for fishermen's votes"—which is carried on by gentlemen who are either in or would like to get into Parliament. It may be noted that the electors in the fishing villages of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire are rather an important body in the electorate, and to get at these voters some very peculiar methods are adopted. A gentlemen well-known in Parliament, Mr. Peter Esslemont, M.P., was in the year 1881 Lord Provost of Aberdeen—and a worthy Provost he was—and as such convened a meeting of those interested in the fishing industry in connection with the Fisheries Exhibition in Edinburgh, and among other remarks he observed :—"They would also agree with him in saying that one of the greatest difficulties in carrying on this great and important industry was the Conservatism with which the fisher people were surrounded. The fact was that they existed very much in communities by themselves, and that they had not been subjected to the same stirring influences as other parts of the country had been, which were accustomed to interchange of thought with their neighbour in regard to all mercantile pursuits by going hither and thither and seeing how business was done, here and there and everywhere. The fisher people had been content to live together in their own towns and villages, to go on from generation doing the same thing by the same means." He concluded his speech by saying he hoped ere long to see the city of Aberdeen the most important fishing port in Scotland; and in reply to a question by

a Mr. Thomas Walker, at that time connected with the line fishermen, who said the fishing grounds were destroyed by trawlers, Mr. Esslemont said the object of the meeting, was not to see what the legislature could do for them, but what as practical people they could do for themselves with regard to getting improved appliances. This Mr. Walker is here with me to-day. He took Mr. Esslemont's advice, gave up the line fishing, and is now one of the largest trawl owners at our port, and is here to support the Resolution I have moved. In 1889 the scene is changed; Mr. Esslemont is now M.P. for East Aberdeenshire, and he goes down to one of the Conservative villages, and he says at Port Erroll:—"The beam steam trawling had been destroying the food supply of sober and hard-working old men who had that only to depend upon without any corresponding benefit. If there had been any benefit there would have been something to say; but from all the evidence he could find there was no benefit whatever." Not a word of advice to go in for new appliances, but he comes down on Mr. Walker and others by saying that by these new appliances they are taking the bread out of the fishermen's mouths without any equivalent benefit. The equivalent benefit, in the case of the north-east coast fishermen, being an increased catch of fish for the year he is speaking of from £185,000 to £212,000 for the year following. Mr. Esslemont must have known how well these fishermen were doing, but he prefers to talk nonsense. Other M. P's. along our coast adopt the same style of speaking, after which you will not wonder at the grandmotherly legislation we have had in fishing matters for the past few years. Now, I trust I have been able to show you that there is really no benefit to line fishermen by keeping trawlers out of the territorial waters, and I have no hesitation in saying there is a decided loss. It is admitted, on all hands, that the trawlers catch fish that line fishermen cannot, such as turbots, soles and brill, of which there were no less than

£51,266 worth landed at Aberdeen by trawlers last year. It is also a well-known fact that at certain seasons of the year these flat fish are found in large quantities in the bays on the Orkney, Shetland and Caithness coasts. This is well-known to the Fishery Board, as one of their number, Mr. Johnson, only recently coolly suggested to a trawl owner that at certain seasons of the year we should pay the fishermen of Sandside a sum of money for the liberty of getting within the three mile limit. The value of the fish which only we can catch at the period he suggests would amount to not less than from £30,000 to £40,000, and ten per cent. on that sum would mean no less than from £3,000 to £4,000. The fishermen of Sandside Bay are under twenty in number, so I need not ask you to draw your inference so far at least as one member of the Fishery Board is concerned. In conclusion, allow me just to say that my objection is that the Fishery Board does not represent the whole of the fishing interest in Scotland, and we would wish you Members of Parliament and gentlemen to give us some assistance in legislation, and a Fishery Board of the country, connected with the County Councils; but instead of that we have a number of gentlemen sitting in Edinburgh, whom we never see. I have great pleasure in moving that Resolution.

Baillie Mearns (Aberdeen), in seconding the motion: I my say that in Aberdeen alone, upwards of 3,000 people are indebted to the trawling industry for their daily bread, which would show to any impartial mind how important the industry is to us as the distributing centre for the whole north-east of Scotland. The Scotch Fishery Board have put sundry restrictions upon the industry, and endeavours are being made to increase them. If such is done, and the line fishermen along the north-east Coast get their own way, this trade will be completely crippled, and the money expended on the 80 steam vessels presently working from the Port, will be reduced by fifty per cent. of their original value.

No doubt we may be met with the statement that the Fishery Board are not intending to shut up more of the fishing waters; but those of us who are interested in the industry have no confidence in the constitution of this Board at all. It is not a representative board, but for that the present Government is not to blame. But for the obstruction they received from the opposition last year, a Bill would have been brought in for the purpose of making it more representative. I am aware that they are armed with great powers, and I am also aware, that it has been stated that they will not exercise those powers, to the detriment of the industry, but we at present know that when a complaint is made against a steam trawler, say coming in contact with the lines of a fishing boat, and a prosecution instituted at the instance of the Board, the trawler is put to the greatest inconvenience. The vessel has to be laid up. The crews have to go two, three, and four hundred miles to attend court, and when it is found that the case against them cannot be proved, they have to pay their whole expenses; whilst the complainers, the line fishermen, get all their expenses paid. I could give other grievances against this Board, but as they are of a personal character, I refrain from doing so. I am personally dissatisfied with its Constitution, and if it is true, as has been over and over again reported to me, that the Board are chartering a boat belonging to a member or members of that Board, while the Board's own cutter, the Garland, is lying in Granton Harbour disused, and that the said boat which is chartered, is using the Fishery Board's flag, and fishing in the inshore waters, whilst others are kept out of it, then I consider that it is time that such a thing is put a stop to, and I would advise the members of Parliament present to take a note of what I am saying upon this point, as it is one on which much feeling has been expressed in our northern quarters, and ought to be thoroughly investigated and looked into, as a public board ought never to traffic with the goods of its own members.

Mr. Duff, M.P. : I appear here to-day not only as an old official connected with this Association, but also in the character of a representative of the Moray Firth Sea Fisheries, which represents some 8,000 fishermen on both sides of the Firth. I have listened to the speech, I might, I think, almost call it the written essay, of Mr. Pyper. But really, gentlemen, he got through his figures with such a rapidity, a rapidity that can only be surpassed by a modern steam trawler, that I was unable to follow him. Neither shall I endeavour to follow the seconder of this motion with regard to his remarks on the Fishery Board. But I do not think myself, as far as I know Scotland and Scotch Fisheries, that the trawling interest would be very much improved if the Fishery Board was popularised. That is my own individual opinion. But with regard to this motion I propose to meet it with an amendment, to strike out the word "legal," in territorial waters and substitute "illegal," and

"That further restrictions be placed upon the "trawlers for the purpose of protecting "spawning beds, and breeding grounds."

I am in direct opposition to this motion. The greater portion of the speech of Baillie Pyper was taken up in showing that a greater amount of fish was captured. I do not deny that, but you are living on your capital; you are diminishing the supply of fish. I do not believe it is possible to supply the public of this country with fish if you do away with trawling altogether, but I do say this, that you ought to have trawling under certain definite regulations, and unless you do that you are really killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. I am really almost afraid to go into figures after the numbers that have been showered upon us. But in the official report of the Fishery Board for Scotland last year attention is called to the enormous falling off of fisheries in the North Sea—that is, fish landed on the East Coast of England, including the Dogger-bank. In 1887 there were upwards of 287,000

hundred-weight of fish landed on the coast; in 1890 it was only 180,000 hundred-weight; so that there was a decrease in three years of 100,000 hundred-weight. The falling off of those fish has been so serious that it was suggested, and I believe agreed upon here, that an International Conference should be held to place restrictions on the trawlers. I do not know if you have lost sight of that, but I think an International Conference is necessary with regard to the inshore fishing, the Fishery Board for Scotland, who have access to all the fishery statistics, say that the falling off averaged £14,000 per annum since 1885. Now that is a very large reduction indeed, and simultaneously with this falling off we find a very large increase in the number of steam trawlers. The steam trawlers in Scotland altogether in 1883 were 43, representing 2,004 tons. In 1890 there were 118 trawlers, representing 4,705 tons. So that we find the falling off in the inshore fisheries has been contemporaneous with the increase of steam trawlers. But there is another point connected with this, and that is the number of English trawlers which are now coming down to Scotland. It is not enough that we have to do with these Scotch steam trawlers, but we are being invaded by England. I find in 1883 there were 18 Scotch and 29 English; in 1890, 31 Scotch and 47 English trawlers. Now, gentlemen, why do these English trawlers come down to us? What is the meaning of that? (A voice "Because it pays."). I can tell you the meaning of it. They have exhausted their own grounds, and now they want to exhaust ours. On the East Coast of England the fishing in 1887 was valued at £819,000. In 1889 it dwindled down to £510,000, and the report of the Scotch Fishery Board goes on to say; "In the course of three years the soles caught have diminished by 20,127 cwt.; turbot by 13,289 cwt.; other prime fish by 83,576 cwt.; the total decrease in value being £309,759. Hence English trawlers are coming North in increased numbers, and probably in a few years the

statistics of the flat fish caught in Scottish waters will show a great decline." That is the report of a scientific gentleman who has investigated this matter. I think that from the figures I have given you it is obvious that the English trawlers having ruined their own waters are now going down to destroy ours, and I think this Association ought to take some immediate action in this matter. Now with regard to the general action of the trawlers, I maintain that it was all very well in old days when they had not such large nets; but now they are never off the ground, they are at work every day of the week, and every hour of the day, perpetually destroying the ground. It has been proved over and over again by scientific men that the action of the steam trawler destroys the food supply and shelter of fish at the bottom of the ocean. The steam trawlers complain that they have everybody combined against them—members of Parliament, men of science— even people who compile statistics are said to be in a conspiracy against them; but my firm conviction is it is quite impossible to go on taking the supply of fish we do out of the ocean, and it is our duty to put some restriction on it. I would suggest that this Association petition that full powers be given to close the whole of the Moray Firth against trawlers. In the Moray Firth there is Smith's Bank—one of the most important breeding places, and we want to keep the trawlers out, and we will do it. It has been said that in Aberdeen there are 3,000 men engaged in the trawling industry. But what are 3,000 men compared to the 48,000 fishermen of Scotland? I do not advocate this especially in the interest of any class; but I say it is impossible to go on getting the amount we do out of the sea; therefore I think you ought to take action, and I beg to move the amendment.

Mr. Anstruther, M.P.: I ask leave in a very few words to second the amendment of my honourable friend. I am aware that this is almost entirely a Scotch question, and therefore I have to crave your

indulgence in taking up the time of so many gentlemen who are interested perhaps more closely in other matters. At the same time I think it is only fair to ask that if gentlemen interested in the industry, whatever may be their view, take the trouble to come from long distances, that they should be heard. It was my intention to meet the resolution of Mr. Pyper by a direct negative, but the result will be the same if the amendment is carried. My reasons for opposing Mr. Pyper's resolution are not in any way personal to himself. The first clause of his resolution appears to be unnecessary and superfluous, and the second deals with a matter of local interest with which I do not think it necessary that the time of the Conference should be taken up. The first clause is to this effect, that beam trawling should be legal within territorial waters at certain seasons of the year, and I ask leave to state for the information of those who are not so intimate with the question as some of us, that it was only so late as 1889 that the "Herring Fisheries Act," which my honourable and gallant friend Colonel Malcolm introduced closed all the territorial waters against beam trawling, but there was an important reservation "save only between such points on the coast, or such other defined area as may from time to time be permitted" by the Fishery Board. It does appear to me that if the Fishery Board, as at present constituted, has the right to allow trawling within specified areas within territorial waters, it is quite unnecessary for us to affirm that which already is the case. I do not intend to deal with what I have called the local question of the Moray Firth; I am not intimately acquainted with that district, but from all that I have read I think the Secretary for Scotland is quite prepared to hold the balance even between the conflicting parties. I should like to say one word before I sit down, as to my own position with regard to trawl and line fishing. I am not one of those who go about breathing out threatenings and slaughter against trawlers because of the methods

which they use. I have always been prepared to recognise that any man is entitled to apply his industry and capital to any mode of fishing by which he can get the best financial returns. But at the same time I have held that where evidence could be brought forward that the method of beam or otter trawling was injurious to the food supply, or productive of wanton or inevitable damage to the gear of line fishermen, then that method of fishing ought to be placed under restrictions. In conclusion, I would read to you one sentence from the report of the Fishery Board with regard to that very important point of the food supply: "The primary object of the Board in passing this Bye-Law in relation to the Moray Firth, was to prevent the capture by trawlers of immature fish, which exist in large numbers in the area closed, especially off Spey Bay." I can hardly believe that any gentleman who assented, as I believe Mr. Pyper did, to the first resolution to-day with regard to the capture of immature fish, could take the line he is now taking in the direction of removing restrictions. One of the principal questions now being discussed, is how to prevent the wasteful destruction of immature fish. So important has this subject become in relation to the fish supply, that an International Conference was held in London in 1890, with the object of devising means to lessen it. It is believed that the capture and destruction in large quantities of such fish, is the chief cause of the diminution in the fish supply. That, if I have no other reason, is to my mind quite sufficient and conclusive for supporting the amendment of my honourable friend, as against the resolution moved by Mr. Pyper.

Mr. R. Collins (Cornwall): The Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee has already passed a Bye-Law for the prohibition of steam trawling in territorial waters. I have endeavoured to gather up all the information I can from outlying districts as to the effect of that prohibition for the last two years. Of course the period is very short, but the conclusion generally

arrived at is that, for all inshore fishermen and for the preservation of breeding grounds the prohibition of steam trawling in territorial waters has resulted in very beneficial effects. Before my Committee, who met at noon to-day, there is a resolution to the effect that the prohibition be extended to sailing trawlers as well as steam trawlers. I am not prepared to say anything as to the decision of that committee, as I have asked them especially to defer any decisions on the matter pending the decisions of this Conference. They will be looking forward to the decisions of this Conference with a great deal of interest, but in order that we may have fair play, fishermen themselves are asking that it be extended to sailing trawlers. The President of my committee is thoroughly interested in all the fishing industry of Cornwall, and as such, he endeavours to legislate without partiality upon all questions brought before the committee. Now one of the grand results of prohibition of inshore trawling is this: it has prevented a great deal of destruction of inshore property. I brought before this Conference in 1889 the fact that a great deal of injury had been done to the property of inshore fishermen, because of trawlers entering the bay for fish. That has been prevented.

Mr. Jex (London): Some remarks have been made rather detrimental to the Scotch Fishery Board, but I have heard it said that it is time we had a Fishery Board in England and Ireland, those are only verbal statements, I say that practical men object to trawling within the three mile limit. We all know that all bays and estuaries are feeding grounds for young fry, and if trawling is allowed within the three mile limit we are doing ourselves an immense amount of injury, and I think the Scotch Fishery Board has done a wonderful amount of good for the line men. We know there can be no fairer fishing carried on than line fishing. I know the steam trawlers pay very little respect to a line fisherman, and if they are within three

miles they go over their lines. Hence the prohibition ought to be extended to the three mile limit in England, Scotland, and Ireland. We are cognizant, everyone of us here, of what an immense amount of immature fish are caught; hence I believe that if a resolution is passed here to-day prohibiting steam trawling within a three mile limit all round the coast it will have a beneficial effect on the food supply of the country. At present, they can go within a short distance and scrape up everything, and that is detrimental to the food supply. I believe if a ballot were taken all round the coast, a large majority of catchers would be in favour of the Government prohibiting steam and other trawling within three miles from low-water mark. I would not object to a man trawling in any part of the sea if he had a mesh of net that would allow immature fish to escape, but if we catch all the immature fish we shall get no large fish. Mr. Duff has said that Englishmen have caught all the fish on the coasts of England and have now commenced to go to Scotland. Why should they not do so? But I cannot conceive this statement being made in a public Conference that we English people have diminished our own fishing grounds and have gone to Scotland to diminish theirs, when Scotch people are doing the same as we. We have a number of Aberdeen plaice in the market to-day: What is the result? They are full of spawn.

Mr. Pyper: I deny that.

Mr. Jex: I will bring you some and let you see them. It is a good thing that the Scotch Fishery Board should prohibit catching with steam trawlers, and shut up the Moray Firth and Smith Bank, and the public and general consumers will be benefited thereby. The Scotch trawlers have done an immense amount of harm. They have been sending hundreds of boxes of fish to Billingsgate crowded with spawn, instead of leaving them to bring forth their own kind. I am proud that the Scotch Fishery Board has closed the three mile limit, and I hope they will stick to it.

Mr. Dawson (Lancashire): I am of opinion that as places differ very much, the districts themselves are the best authorities to deal with this question.

Dr. Clark, M.P.: I am glad to find that our friends from Aberdeen, who are interested in this matter, have no support at all. I should like to go further, because while I represent one side of Moray Firth I also represent one Firth where you can trawl—the Pentland Firth. Both in the Solway Firth and the Pentland Firth you have the same condition of things—trawlers going there destroying the property of other men who have no remedy at all. I quite agree with Mr. Anstruther, that this question of lines versus trawling is simply one of economics. I think the facts point in the direction, that instead of trawlers being useful and beneficial, they are baneful and harmful in every case. But even if it were not the case, fair play should be given to all. At the present time we have that wretched "Jackal" in the Moray Firth to see that the law is obeyed. Under the circumstances, I think the feeling of this meeting, is that instead of approving of the action we are asked to take by our Aberdeen friend, we should go further and say that this Conference petitions Parliament to pass a measure prohibiting steam trawling in the territorial waters of the United Kingdom. I am sorry for those friends who have sunk a quarter of a million in the business, all they have to do is to go further out, and it would be better for themselves and the community.

Mr. Sanders (Brixham): Thirty years ago, my uncle could not find a market at Hull. Fish all over the North Sea was then very plentiful, but the trouble was not to find the fish, but to find a market for them. That was in a district where, previous to the last three or four years, there has been very little inshore fishing, and yet there has been a falling off in the supply. That does not look as if the falling off in the North Sea was the result of inshore fishing. You might imagine from some speeches, that the North Sea is

barren in fish, as the Devonshire Moors are of grass. I believe that fish now is only obtained in the North Sea, by going a distance that was not dreamt of ten years ago. I may say that we, of Brixham, boast ourselves of being the mother of you all, of being the oldest fishing port in the United Kingdom for trawling. We have there an open shore in many cases, and it is quite possible for a trawler to tow the trawl right on to the beach, and I venture to say there is no other part of the world where the foreshore is worked so much as near Brixham; and if trawling on the foreshore was a dreadful source of killing young fish, then Brixham must have killed them all by this time. But the fact is, we land more fish to-day than we even did four years ago, and that is to me the conclusive proof. If I may express an opinion on the matter, it is that the North Seas have been over fished, and there I think the difficulty comes in. I personally very much regret that on the Agenda the words "trawling" should appear. Along our coast we have shrimp trawlers, horse trawls, and otter trawls, and I think to attempt to legislate for deep sea trawls and leave the others untouched, is only touching the fringe of the matter. It is no uncommon thing to see a quantity of shrimps landed with fish not fit for anything—all kinds of fish —plaice, whiting, dabs, soles—everything. I am speaking within my knowledge when I say I have known at Brixham, or within a very short distance, large seine boats, five tons, go out and come in full with not a single fish that would be sold for food. However, with regard to steam trawling, I shall be very glad to speak later on. I think the question now before the Conference is the fishing in territorial waters.

Mr. George Alward (Grimsby) : I think the district we represent would support the amendment. I believe it is our duty to do so, seeing that we have already this morning imposed restrictions in the North Sea with regard to small fish, and it is only natural that we

should assist the Scotch people in trying to impose those restrictions in their own waters. I think we shall be unanimous that the Scotch Board is doing a grand thing for their own fishing interest, and I believe that when the gentleman who spoke on behalf of Aberdeen has had a little more experience in deep sea fishing, he will find himself in the same position as Sir Albert Rollit was in this morning—a converted man. I know that Aberdeen is in its infancy, and that what they have realised in seven years it has taken us 50 years to realise, because that 50 years has been expended in discovering newer fishery grounds and in inventing more desirable means. All the experience of those fifty years was at the disposal of Aberdeen. I think we have not heard the last of the restrictions on the sea fisheries, but I venture to say that ere long we shall find ourselves either in this hall or somewhere else imposing further restrictions in the shape of an entire close season for fishing in the North Sea. A remark made by Mr. Jex is worthy of consideration—the catching of those fish in the spawning season. We have been dealing hitherto with the catching of baby fish which are not allowed to mature. Then comes the question of catching those who have to make the baby fish, and the question is whether that will not come under discussion. It does not apply only to flat fish, but to every fish in the sea. I know we are not now prepared to discuss these matters, but I do know this, that along our shores where there was plenty of fish, there is now none; and though I heard what our Brixham friend said, I take it with a great amount of reservation. The reason why they came to the North Sea was that that kind of fish was not marketable, and I think if that was argued out minutely our friend would have to admit it. His figures are dangerous facts to put before a Conference. He has stated that their fishing boats go miles from Torbay, but if you were to take the quantity of fish caught in Torbay and leave out the fish caught in the distance, it would not

keep half the fishermen of Brixham, and I think we are doing a grand work in supporting the Scotch Fishery Board. We are, in our own locality, putting on restrictions. Perhaps that may be some consolation to our Aberdeen friends. Our North Eastern Board have prohibited trawling within a certain area, and I believe our minds are made up, if possible, to prohibit trawling within territorial waters.

The Amendment being put to the meeting it was declared carried.

The President : It has been suggested to leave out certain words, and the substantive resolution will stand as follows :

"That in the opinion of this Conference beam trawling should be illegal in territorial waters, and that further restrictions should be imposed for the purpose of protecting spawning beds and breeding grounds."

Mr. Williamson (London) : I cannot help thinking that up to the present we have been discussing steam trawling as it affects Scotland. Now if we look at our Agenda paper it states definitely "steam trawling within territorial waters," and I should like to move an amendment "That this Conference is of opinion that steam trawling should be prohibited within the territorial waters of the United Kingdom."

Mr. Duff, M.P. : My motion applies to the whole of the United Kingdom ; it is not confined to Scotland.

Mr. Williamson : Mr. Duff's motion says it should be illegal, but it is not illegal at the present time. You must make it illegal first, and I submit that the amendment I put forward would be a general expression of opinion on the part of this Conference, emanating from the whole fishing industry upon a general question, that we say as a representative gathering that steam trawling, in territorial waters at any rate, should be prohibited. That is an expression that Parliament could deal with, and then the representatives of our fishing stations in Parliament would have something definite to go upon.

Mr. Heneage, M.P.: I would like to point out that the Amendment is unnecessary because Mr. Duff's resolution covers the whole ground. The Scotch Fishery Board have perfect power to declare it illegal wherever they choose, and those Boards in England under the Sea Fisheries Regulation Act of 1888 have equal power. Therefore it is unnecessary for you to go to Parliament for further powers.

Dr. Clark, M.P.: As a matter of fact the Solway Firth was kept out by the Act, and as regards the Pentland Firth which I represent, there have been great complaints, and I wish you to go further and put Pentland Firth in the same position as the Moray Firth.

Mr. Duff, M.P.: My motion points to further legislation without stating distinctly what the legislation is.

The President: I think Mr. Williamson will see that "beam trawling" covers "steam trawling."

Mr. Dent: The Fishery Committees have power to prohibit fishing in territorial waters, in Northumberland we have adopted it. The Fishery Committees have the power to pass the Bye-laws.

Mr. Newby (London): Surely if "trawling within territorial waters" is prohibited, that includes steam trawling or any other trawling. I think it must be all kinds of trawling.

Mr. Ascroft (Lytham): I beg leave to move as an amendment that the word "beam" be struck out.

Mr. Duff, M.P.: I have no objection to accept that Amendment.

Mr. Collins (Cornwall): That will raise a very important question in my county. If it refers to all drag nets of course it will refer to seines of all descriptions, and Cornwall being a particularly seining country that will raise very serious questions. Seine fishing for mackerel will of course come under the description of drag nets.

Mr. Ashcroft (Lytham): "Beam and otter trawling," will those words do?

The President: Is it your pleasure that the word "otter" be added after "beam," so that it will read "That in the opinion of this Conference beam and otter trawling." Mr. Ascroft now suggests that it should be "all trawling" instead of "beam trawling." Is it your pleasure that the word "beam" be omitted, in order to insert the word "all"? Those in favour of that suggestion please hold up their hands.

The suggestion was carried unanimously.

The President: Then the resolution will be as follows:

"That in the opinion of this Conference all "trawling should be illegal in territorial "waters, and that further restrictions be "imposed for the purpose of protecting "spawning beds and breeding grounds."

Dr. Clark, M.P.: Do I take it this means that there should be protection outside territorial waters for spawning beds?

Mr. Duff, M.P.: What I understood was that the Secretary of State for Scotland has power under the Act of 1888 to close the Moray Firth, and I do not think it would be possible without a further Act of Parliament to extend it beyond territorial waters.

The President put the resolution which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Robert Frayne (Grimsby): The resolution I shall put before you is in connection with the North Sea Fisheries Convention, and the manner in which it is carried out, and is as follows:

"That this Conference do lay before the Govern- "ments of the Countries who are signatories "to the North Sea Convention the great "disparagement in the sentences passed "upon skippers of fishing vessels caught "trawling inside territorial waters, and feels "that the time has arrived when an arrange-

" ment should be made whereby the penalties
" inflicted on offending skippers should be
" the same in each country that has signed
" the Fisheries Convention, and according
" to the magnitude of the offence com-
" mitted."

I have two cases of vessels which, when towing along the Lincolnshire coast, have been caught inside the territorial waters. First, the French vessel "Auguste." It was reported to the masters of the "Fire Fly" and the "Red Wing" that she had been towing along the Lincolnshire coast, and although the man went clear for a time he was eventually caught. He did damage for which he was fined £10. When the skipper of the "Miss Leak" called out and told him of the damage he was doing, he abused the skipper. Then on the 26th June, 1890, the "Etoile du Nord" was abreast of the Wash. Anyone acquainted with the Coast will know that abreast of the Wash it is very easy to be in territorial waters and not know you are there. This man had done no damage; he was towed into Grimsby by the "Red Wing," and was fined £3. The other man was fined £35, including damage. I now wish to show you the case of the "Clio," G.Y. 915. This vessel, on the 2nd May, 1891, was caught towing on the German coast. The skipper had given the order to haul, the boiler began to blow and he was obliged to let the water out, make up the manhole, pump water in, get steam up again and proceed, and the tide going to the eastward, he went in further than he intended to. He was caught 325 yards within the limit. Anyone will know that with an eastern tide that vessel must have gone more than 325 yards while he was getting steam again. Now, sir, this man was an aggressor; he certainly was inside the limit when the German gun vessel came to him. The skipper of that vessel was imprisoned for 51 days. He made mats part of the time, until the blood ran from his fingers. He paid £4 1s. 6d.

as a fine, and I believe that our Government, or the Board of Trade paid another £4 12s. 6d. which was charged to him. Seeing that we have an International Convention, I hold it is time we had an International penalty for the breakers of that Convention. If a man is found just inside the territorial waters without knowing it I hold he should not be punished as this man was punished. Our men should not be made felons and put into gaol for 51 days and compelled to walk the cell until their boots will not go on their feet. It is time our Government did what they could to alter this state of things, and I hope a representation will go from this Conference to try and make the sentences according to the magnitude of the offence committed.

Mr. Douglas (Grimsby): I take it, the Sea Fisheries Protection Association is to protect fishermen of this country, as well as the fishing industry. Therefore, I think this is the proper place to bring the question forward. About 17 years ago, I was once boarded by one of His Danish Majesty's gun boats and ordered off the beach, but was not sentenced to 51 days' imprisonment and kept to hard work. I feel that it is a disgrace to any nation to allow this to go on without entering a protest against it. We have not the power to say to the German Government "you shall not convict our men," but we have the power to try and use our influence to induce that Government not to give so much punishment. In this case the man's boiler had blown out, and the tide had drifted him towards the land, otherwise he would not have been there.

Mr. James Alward (Grimsby): I think I can claim the ear of the Conference on the strength of what took place on the Executive Committee this morning. I entirely endorse all that has been said by the two previous speakers with regard to the severity of sentences inflicted on our men, when compared with those inflicted upon foreign fishermen for transgressions on our coast; but I have something more than that to say. A man who violates a law, holds himself liable according to the

goodwill of the community to some punishment. The case I have to refer to is one which this Conference has been troubled about several times—that of a man whom we think guiltless. Unfortunately, the operations of the law about which we complain seem to reverse the maxim, and hold a man to be guilty unless he proves his innocence. The convention which we have tried rigidly to enforce has been received with good conscience by all our people—both men and owners; but I refer to the case of the Lady Godiva, which happened so long ago. Twice we have been in the presence of Lord Salisbury, who has informed us that after the legal proceedings come to an end the diplomatic action will come in. I want to put it to this Conference that the meanest subjects of Her Majesty's realm should receive the same protection as is afforded to foreigners. Comparisons are odious, but I read in history, that the nations who have acted unjustly to natives of England have been called to account. The Madagascar case is one quite in point. A man was said to have transgressed the French laws in Madagascar and he was imprisoned there, the British Government stood by him and obtained a large compensation. In our case, however, the poor fellow was thrown into a German prison. His vessel was run into by a German cruiser, ball cartridge was fired into his vessel, the captain of the cruiser took her into a German port, after strong negotiations had been going on, the man was declared innocent on two trials, and the fishing gear which was confiscated, was handed over to the smack owners of Grimsby. But after that the Germans elected to take the case to a higher court in Leipsic, and it was determined from the evidence that the net was wet, and from various other frivolous points, that the man was there with the intention to fish. I submit to you whether we have not the right to ask respectfully that we may be furnished with some information as to how the case is proceeding. I base my request upon the statements made by the highest

authority, namely, Lord Salisbury, and the various other gentlemen whom we have had the privilege of appealing to on this matter.

Mr. Heneage, M.P.: I should much prefer that the President should have replied to the question, but I may say this, that I for one feel precluded from going into the question of the Lady Godiva at the present moment, as diplomatic action is going on. In the case of the Clio, I am very glad that the Board of Trade have remitted the expenses incurred on the skipper's behalf. The real facts are these. There does not seem any reciprocity between the German and other Governments about this North Sea Convention. When skippers are unfortunate enough to come within the jurisdiction of English Courts they are allowed every liberty until they are tried, they are allowed to sell their fish if they have any on board; they have every privilege they can have, and they then generally end by being fined, but when they are in territorial waters in Germany, they come within the local law of Germany, and there they take another course altogether. They seem almost to imagine that a man is guilty before they have looked at him. They at once put him in prison and keep him waiting for trial, and during the whole time they treat him as if he was convicted. That is extremely unfortunate, and in the case of one man I believe he was innocent. But our difficulty lies here, that we cannot prevent any other Government from acting as they think fit in their own territorial waters in accordance with the law of the land. I think all the weight of this Conference has been brought to bear on the Foreign Office to show the difference of treatment which is meted out to those who abuse the law of this country and those who abuse the law of Germany. Any resolution which you can pass with unanimity to-day might strengthen the hands of our Chairman to go to Lord Salisbury, and ask him to enter into diplomatic correspondence with Germany, and to show him what the effect of this feeling is on our people, and how it

may tend to raise a bitter feeling against the Germans when they get themselves in our waters. I think everything you can do you ought to do, but I want to be distinctly and clearly understood that no representative in Parliament can help a man to get out of the clutches of the law in a foreign country if he gets into them. I believe communications have been going on for sometime with Germany about the Lady Godiva. I think I need not detain the meeting any more, and I regret the Chairman himself did not state, what I believe, that he agrees with what I have said. I believe everything is being done that can be done by the Foreign Office, but you will strengthen their hands immensely by the resolution proposed.

THE PRESIDENT: I thought it only fair that Mr. Heneage should make the statement that he has done, and that I should not do so because it ought to be publicly known that Mr. Heneage has been doing his very utmost in this question.

The Resolution was put and agreed to.

THE PRESIDENT: I presume the Conference would desire that a copy of that be sent to Lord Salisbury. ("Yes, yes.") Then that is agreed to.

MR. ANSTRUTHER, M.P.: Mr. President, I do not intend to trespass for more than one minute upon your patience. With regard to the point in the Agenda about the necessity of cruisers to enforce the regulations, I am the more emboldened to move this resolution by the reception the Conference was good enough to give to the amendment of my friend Mr. Duff in a previous discussion. I think the Conference will all agree, that if restrictions are imposed either by bye-laws or Act of Parliament, there should be adequate means of enforcing whatever penalties may be laid down. The question has been brought to the notice of the authorities of Scotland recently, by my friend Mr. Duff, by a question addressed in the House of Commons to the Lord Advocate last week. I wish to move:

"That this Conference of representatives of the "sea fishing industry of the United Kingdom, "desires to bring under the notice of Her "Majesty's Government, the fact that the "Marine Police for the superintendence of "fisheries, especially in Scotland, is inade- "quate to the duty laid upon it by successive "Acts of Parliament, and calls for strengthen- "ing at an early date."

I would only read two lines from the report of the Fishery Board. "The Board must again express regret that the arrangements for the general superintendence of the fisheries, and more especially against keeping the waters closed against beam trawling, are wholly inadequate." That being so, I think it is only right on such an important occasion that we should pass a resolution embodying our views.

Mr. Duff, M.P.: The case has been so fully stated by my friend, that I do not wish to detain the meeting. I think it must be obvious to all of you, that it is absolutely necessary, unless the laws are to be brought into contempt, that some means should be taken to enforce those laws. At present, so far as Scotland is concerned, the law is treated with contempt. If this motion of my honourable friend is carried, it will be a very good thing to send a copy of the resolution to the Secretary of State for Scotland.

Mr. Ascroft (Lytham): In Lancashire we have established a Sea Fisheries District, and in order to have Marine Police, we are obliged to have a large steamer. We have three coast guard stations there, and we want to have the assistance of those men, and the assistance of the cruisers. Why should the County of Lancashire be saddled with the cost of the Marine Police along the coast for the benefit of the whole population? I think the expense of the Marine Police should be on the Government. I support the resolution.

Mr. Collins (Cornwall): I fail to see the necessity for employing this large Marine Police on the Lancashire Coast. We applied from our committee for the assistance of the coast guards, and the Admiralty readily granted all the assistance we asked for. The coast guards are our Marine Police all along the coast.

Mr. Dent (Northumberland): We applied on the Northumberland Coast for the assistance of the cruisers; but the request was not granted. I think it should apply to the United Kingdom.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The President: That a copy of this be sent to the Government.

Mr. Anstruther, M.P.: Yes, the Secretary of State and Chairman of the Fishery Board of Scotland.

Mr. Dent: I think it should be sent to the Fishery Department of the Board of Trade too.

The President: It will be naturally.

Mr. Anstruther, M.P.: I meant the resolution to be general, but I put in parenthetically "especially Scotland," because it affected me more directly.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888, EXTENSION OF POWERS.

Mr. Joseph Barber (London): I shall have very little to say in support of my resolution, because when you hear it read you will be satisfied that every word spoken in favor of the first resolution to-day in connection with immature fish, will apply equally to this particular resolution:

> "That in the opinion of this Conference, it is "most desirable that the local Sea Fisheries "Committees established under the Sea "Fisheries Regulation Act, 1888, shall have "power to prohibit the sale of undersized "fish in their respective districts."

Recently many Sea Fisheries Committees have been appointed by the Board of Trade in connection with the County Councils, with power to superintend fisheries of the districts. The Act of 1888 gives them power to regulate the mesh of the net, the description of instruments which may be used in the capture of fish, the possession of fish, and almost everything in connection with fishing. But it does not give them power to regulate the sale of fish or prohibit the sale of undersized fish. They may prohibit any certain mesh or net, but they have no power to prohibit the sale of fish which may be considered unmarketable. Of course, the Local Fishery Committees can have no power outside territorial limits. Therefore, while the resolution which has been adopted unanimously, in connection with the question of immature fish, applies to the international waters, this one applies equally to the territorial waters, and those who supported the former resolution this morning, can only act consistently by supporting this one. I beg to move the resolution.

Mr. George Alward (Grimsby) : I have very great pleasure in seconding that resolution. It proves to my mind that the various Fishery Boards are anxious to carry out the same objects we are attempting to carry out here, that is, they are anxious to check the catch and prohibit the sale. This resolution asks the Government to give them extended powers in order that they may do that. Now there is some disagreement as to how far the Act goes in that direction. It is unnecessary to go much into this question, because we are all nearly agreed, but there has been a resolution agreed to and a Bye-law made in our district, which prevents the boats from fishing between the 1st April and the 30th September, both inclusive, and also within a portion of our district another restriction is placed from the 1st February to the 30th September. Now while they have placed the restriction upon those people, there is no law to prevent them offering

the fish providing they get them. Then, again, there is the dispute as to whether the Act of 1888 can give any jurisdiction beyond high-water mark, and whether the whole of the jurisdiction is not confined to searching the boats and other things—whether it does not cease above high-water mark. Consequently that Act is not of very much use when you come to put it into operation. I second the proposition, and I am sure it is in the right direction.

Mr. Berrington (Board of Trade): Of course, I have no right to ask to be allowed to take any part in your discussion, but I should like before this resolution is put to the meeting, to ask if the meeting realises that prohibition of the sale of fish in particular districts will not carry out what they want. If I am a member of the Lancashire Board, and want to prohibit the taking of undersized fish in the Lancashire District, it would be of no use to me to prohibit the sale of fish in that district, provided they could be sold all over the rest of England; and any regulation that might be made by a committee for their particular district, would be no protection to the fish of that district elsewhere.

Mr. Barrett (Grimbsy): There is one remark I should like to make on this subject arising from the observation made by Mr. Berrington. It occurs to me that we can reasonably support this resolution as a step in the right direction. Until the time when the legislation we hope for is enacted these local measures would surely be better than none at all. The objection that Lancashire might prohibit the sale of undersized fish, while a neighbouring county having no Sea Fisheries Committee might simply ignore the matter, is not, I think, an insuperable one, for the reason if there is anything calculated to open the eyes of people who are backward in discharging their duties it is to have the matter brought directly under their notice and the fact that people would be able to carry out this nefarious trade shadowed by Mr. Berrington, would appeal to them more than anything else. I know we have had

a great deal of difficulty in our neighbourhood to fight some interests connected with shrimping and inshore fishing. We had to give way to some extent in order to effect a compromise, but it appears to me that it is far better to have the resolution than not, and the objection that there may be a few counties here and there which will not follow in the wake of other counties will not have much effect upon the usefulness of this resolution, because if anything is likely to wake them up to a sense of their responsibility it will be this.

Mr. Newby (London): I take it this is a permissive Act on certain authorities, but if the District Fisheries Committees carry out prosecutions I suppose the Government have power to prosecute offenders themselves. ("No, no.") Then this is something more than permissive.

Mr. Joseph Barber: I should just like to say a word in reference to the objection. It is very good indeed as far as it goes, but the same objection would apply equally to every other provision under the Act of 1888 because it is limited in its operations to the area of the district in which it is in force. For instance, a Local Fisheries Committee may enact a Bye-law which will prohibit the capture of a certain size of fish, or the use of a particular net, but that Bye-law will not apply outside their district, and therefore I think that if the Local Committees are to be sustained in their action, in one respect they may equally be entrusted with the authority we now suggest they may have power to administer.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Mr. Little (Plymouth) moved,

"That in the opinion of this Conference, the "Sea Fisheries Regulation Act should be "so amended as to create districts in "accordance with the wishes of the large "fishing centres, and to give real and "larger representation to those actually "engaged in the sea fishing industries."

I cannot better illustrate my meaning than by referring to the objections which Plymouth and Brixham fishermen had to the draft order to create a district now issued by the Board of Trade. They objected to the draft order on these grounds. 1. That the union of two such counties as Dorset and Devon was undesirable and unwieldy, and would be ineffective. 2. That the proportion of representatives from the different County Councils was not equitable, insomuch that the districts most interested would be very much under-represented when the nature of those interests were considered. 3. That the undue preference given to fresh water fishermen over sea fishermen was absurd. After reading portions of the draft order relating to those points, Mr. Little said: As far as I know, there are no inter-county difficulties that need arranging. One reason why objection is taken to the proposed district is that the railway communications between the two counties are most inconvenient. Devon men would have to go through Somerset to get to Dorset, and vice-versa, so that in order to get the representatives from both counties to meet, some town in Somersetshire would have to be selected. Then the question arises, "Is the fishing industry of Dorset so important as to need this inconvenience?" The sea fisheries of Dorset are perhaps, the smallest of any county on the coast of England—certainly they are the smallest on the south-coast—while Devon has the largest. They also complained of the manner in which it is proposed to apportion the representation on the Board. Devonshire is to have ten representatives from the County Council, Dorset five, Cornwall a part of the coast only, and Plymouth, Devonport, and Exeter one each. There are twenty other members, but nine of them are to be representatives from Boards of River Conservators in those counties. In this way Plymouth and Brixham, which catch 19-20ths of the fish of the district, would get only 1,20th of the representation on the Board. Plymouth and Brixham alone landed fish in 1890

amounting to £260,000, and other parts of Devon landed £25,000 worth more. Dorset, however, landed only £10,915 worth in 1890, which was only equal to 1-17th of Plymouth, 1-26th of Brixham, or 1-29th, of the whole of Devon. The freshwater conservators, who were to have nine seats on the Board, landed only about £334 worth of salmon, and yet they were to have nearly one-half of the entire "fishery" representation.

Mr. Little's attention was called to the fact that H. M. Inspector was to hold in the following week an enquiry into the question to which he had alluded.

Mr. Saunders (Brixham): I have very great pleasure in seconding the motion. The matter is, as I understand, that the County Council of Devon have applied to the Board of Trade for the appointment of a Sea Fishery District, and although there are two such important places as Plymouth and Brixham, we have not been consulted. I understand the Local Government Bill is to give the people the management of their own affairs. Now we have no management of our own affairs. I want to know what nine Conservators have to do with the Sea Fishery District. I say that these gentlemen who would come from the Boards Conservators would practically know nothing about what they are asking legislation upon. In the composition of the Committee there are said to be eleven elected by the Board of Trade, but if the River Conservators elect their own men why should not the fishermen elect theirs? But the Board of Trade says "No, we will elect the Fishermen." We have learned with very great pleasure from Mr. Mallock that inquiry is to be made at Brixham as well as Plymouth. But when I left Brixham yesterday we knew nothing about it, and I think this Conference should help such places as Plymouth and Brixham to get representation. The basis of representation on the Sea Fisheries Committee should be either according to the number of men employed, or to the output of fish. The large town may say "We are very much greater ratepayers than you

are, and we require more members on the Sea Fisheries Committee." Now Brixham is exclusively a fishing town. It has a population of 8,000 people, and we have a right to know what numbers we shall get on the Fishery Committee. It is a very important matter for us.

Mr. George Alward (Grimsby): This is a matter which we have waded through somewhat in our own district, but we have not suffered as our friend has. In the first place the representatives are created by representative institutions, County Councils. The County Councils are made up of representatives of various places within the Counties. Now, if Brixham has its fair number on the County Council of Devon they ought to take good care that Brixham is well represented on the Fishery Board. If not there is something wrong in the locality. I cannot agree that the Sea Fisheries Regulation Act of 1888 is so defective, and requires amending on the points referred to by our friend. I believe it is not a fair representative institution where a central authority has the right to elect one half of the representatives. In our own district we have twenty people directly appointed by the Board of Trade. The district is a large one, and when you want the practical knowledge of the fishermen they are not there, because there is nobody to pay their expenses. Then I would like to impress upon them to extend their Fishery Districts as far as they can for uniformity of bye-law. My suggestion was on the East Coast, that our Fishery District should extend from the Tweed to the Thames. Now our friends here are sorry that the Board of Trade is extending their district. Our complaint was that the Board of Trade would not extend ours. If you are going to cut up the seaboard into small districts, you will have different bye-laws, and consequently your bye-laws will be of little use. So far as railway communication is concerned, I think you would get over those difficulties, and so far as direct representation from the fishermen is concerned, I think in your County Councils you have

got direct representation, and if Brixham and Plymouth have not taken care—through their representatives on the County Council—to get their men on the Fishery Boards, then they have lacked in their duty.

Mr. Joseph Barber (London): The object of the Act of 1888 was not to legislate in favour of any particular locality, or port, or class of fishermen, but so far as possible to protect the interests of all, not only of trawlers, but also of shore fishermen and others connected with the fisheries. I have listened with great interest to the remarks made by the gentlemen from Brixham, but it appears as if their object is to secure the interests of certain particular ports in Devonshire, without having due regard to the claims of the shore fishermen of the locality. I think it would be inconsistent for anyone in this Conference to vote for a resolution manifestly opposed to the intention of the Sea Fisheries Regulation Act, which was very carefully considered, and its provisions were from time to time under the consideration of various Conferences and the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association. The object the Association had in view was to secure as much as possible the interests of all, rather than to act in favour of any particular ports or systems of fishing. Certainly if this resolution means anything it is in favour of particular interests as against the general interests of the districts of the locality, and I would ask the mover if he does not think it better to withdraw it and submit his views to the Inquiry Committee which is about to be held under the Board of Trade authorities. Those authorities are impartial. Of course they are bound to consider the provisions of the Act. If the resolution is pressed I must move the previous question.

Mr. J. Little: We do not object to Dorset because we want a small district, but because the communications between the two counties are so bad and the amount of business done in Dorset is to small for the inconvenience likely to arise. The amount of fish

landed and sold in Devonshire is 300,000 cwts., the amount of fish landed in Dorset is 10,000 cwts., or $\frac{1}{7}$ of Plymouth only, or $\frac{1}{26}$ of Plymouth and Brixham, and $\frac{1}{29}$ of the County of Devon. The fish dispatched by rail from Devonshire is 200,000 cwts., of Dorset 6,000 cwts. less than $\frac{1}{33}$ part of Devon. The whole amount of salmon caught on the South Coast of England, from the North Foreland to Land's End, only amounts to 1,003 cwts., the amount of Devon and Dorset would be 334 cwts. equal to $\frac{1}{24}$ part of the fishery representatives. With your permission, however, I beg to withdraw the resolution.

The President: I would remind Mr. Little of this fact, that the official, Mr. Berrington, is not going to hold one inquiry, but three inquiries, and then his report of the inquiries and the order will be laid on the table of the House of Commons, and can be amended there.

The resolution was then withdrawn.

EXTENSION OF SYSTEM OF BRANDING CURED FISH.

The President: With regard to the system of branding cured fish, I think we shall have to adjourn it to Friday, because Mr. Maconochie, who was going to move the resolution on the subject, was suddenly called away, unfortunately, owing to the illness of a near relation.

Mr. Sayer (London): I wish to move a resolution, which is not on the paper, but is one to which I am sure everyone will agree.

> "That this Conference desires to support the "application of the Stornoway Harbour "Commissioners, now being made to the "Public Works Loan Commissioners, for a "loan of public money on the usual terms, "towards the improvement and extension "of Stornoway Harbour."

By the request of the President Mr. Sayer consented to leave his motion for consideration at the end of the Conference, and to give notice on the Agenda.

The Conference Adjourned till 11.30 on Thursday morning.

National Sea Fisheries Protection Association.

FISHERIES CONFERENCE, 1892.

SECOND DAY.

Thursday, February 25th.

AGENDA.

1. Fisheries (Oysters, Crabs, and Lobsters) Act, 1877.
   Close time for oysters.
   Sale of foreign oysters.
2. Telegraphic and telephonic communication between lighthouses, lightships and the shore, and general coast communication.
3. Development of Irish fisheries.
4. Railway rates.
   Actual working rates.
5. Technical education for fishermen.

National Sea Fisheries Protection Association.

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE

HELD ON

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25th, 1892.

Sir E. Birkbeck, Bart., M.P., President, in the chair.

Present:

Messrs. Geo. L. Alward, Jas. Alward, B. J. Amery, Captain Anderson, Messrs. Jos. Appleyard, R. L. Ascroft, Captain G. L. Austin, Messrs. H. Barber, Jos. Barber, S. Barber, F. Barrett, F. D. Barrett, Geo. Barrow, G. H. Baxter, J. W. Becket, E. Belleroche, R. R. Bentley, A. D. Berrington, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Bart., M.P., Messrs. W. Bowyer, L. Bowmany, B. M. Bradbeer, S. Broadbent, T. W. Broadbent, Christopher Brown, W. L. Calderwood, A. H. Carter, C. F. Carter, Dr. G. B. Clark, M.P., Messrs. R. Collins, A. H. Cork, Sir Savile B. Crossley, Bart., M.P., Major-General Sir Wm. Crossman, K.C.M.G., M.P., Messrs. R. A. Dawson, John Dent, Ald. G. Doughty, R. Douglas, W. T. Dunlin, Jos. Dyer, R. Easthope, W. C. Edwards, Peter Esslemont, M.P., Sheriff H. S. Foster, Dr. G. H. Fowler, Messrs. R. Frayne, C. E. Fryer, Dr. T. Wemyss Fulton, Messrs. F. Gann, H. Gann, Alderman E. Grindley,

S. Jacobs, Chas. Jeffs. Geo. Jeffs, Matt. Jenkinson, E. Jex, E. Kemp, F. Kenny, J. Knight, Rev. W. S. Lach-Szyrma, Messrs. G. W. Langley, F. Leleu, W. Lengfield, Jas. Leeming, G. S. Letten, John Little, Wm. Lloyd, The Earl of Londesborough, Messrs. Vincent W. Lynn, Jas. MacCombie, The Macgillicuddy, Messrs. J. R. Mackrill, Henry Maddick, H. Morris, T. C. Moss, Alderman H. Mudd, Joseph Murrell, Geo. G. Musson, Chas. Oakley, R. D. Odell, S. Osborne, John Owston, W. R. Oxley, Geo. Packer, Chas. Petrie, E. Plowman, Wm. Pyper, J. E. Richardson, R. Roach, W. L. Robins, Joshua Rowntree, M.P., H. E. Russell, James Russell, W. Sanders, J. L. Sayer, E. Seaman, E. Sève, W. Stammers, Wm. Sutton, Alderman G. J. Tilling, Alderman H. Toozes, Major Travers, Messrs. Thomas Walker, Stephenson Warcup, H. Watts, J. W. Webb, W. H. Williamson.

The President : The first matter that we have to report is that to-morrow at the end of the Agenda a resolution will be submitted relative to the question of increased Harbour accommodation at Stornoway, in Scotland. It was brought forward last evening when the room was nearly empty, and I stated that I thought it would not be fair to take a resolution when the Conference had almost concluded the day's proceedings, and that notice ought to be given of the same, because I felt there might be other fishing ports which might also desire increased accommodation with regard to their harbours. Therefore it will be taken to-morrow at the end of the day. We had also to postpone the question of "Extension of system of branding cured fish," which must also be taken at the end of the day to-morrow. Unfortunately the gentleman who was to move the resolution was suddenly called away on account of the ill-health of a very near relative. I have to report that it is extremely desirable that we should endeavour to close our proceedings to-day at 4 o'clock,

because a number of Members of Parliament have to go to the House of Commons, and a good many left yesterday between 4 and 5. It would be much better if we had rather shorter speeches. We had no less than 66 speeches yesterday. I have also to report that the movers and seconders of resolutions to-day are to be limited to ten minutes, unless leave be given for extension, and each speaker afterwards is to be limited to five minutes. The first matter will be for the Mayor of Lowestoft, who was in the chair this morning at the Committee of the whole Conference, to report the result of the consideration this morning of the sizes of marketable fish.

Mr. Bradbeer (Mayor of Lowestoft) reported the result of the open Conference Committee, held in the morning, on the reference of yesterday's Conference and stated that after considerable debate, it was decided the following should be the sizes :—

Plaice	10 inches	Votes :	Only 5 against
Soles	do.	,,	23 to 5
Turbot	12 do.	,,	24 to 2
Brill	do.	Unanimously carried	
Lemon Soles,	11 inches	....	24 to 1

The President thereupon put the question that the several sizes as recommended be confirmed and on a show of hands, he declared the report adopted.

Mr. Williamson (London) : I should like to know whether it is the intention of the Conference to send a copy of the resolution passed yesterday with regard to undersized fish, together with these resolutions, to the Board of Trade. If not, I move that such be done, and that the President of the Board of Trade be urged to give immediate effect to the resolutions.

Mr. Rowntree, M.P., suggested that in addition the resolution be sent to the Sea Fisheries Committees.

The resolution being put, was carried unanimously.

Mr. Jeffs (Grimsby) : I have a petition from Grimsby signed by over 1400 fishermen and others in support of a larger size of fish than we have adopted,

but I have deemed it wise to fall in with the majority. Still I present you with the petition from Grimsby, and one from the London Fishmongers, signed by 293, and one from Colwyn Bay, signed by 38, in support of the resolution that has now been carried.

THE PRESIDENT : But this is not a memorial to this Conference ; it is to Sir Michael Hicks-Beech.

MR. JEFFS : Yes.

MR. HARRISON MUDD (Grimsby) : It was thought it should go through you and this Conference.

THE PRESIDENT : Then it is suggested that this be sent to Sir Michael Hicks-Beech from these ports and from this Conference.

The motion made, the resolution was carried.

"FISHERIES (OYSTERS, CRABS, AND LOBSTERS) ACT, 1877."

MR. JEFFS : In proposing that the minimum size of saleable crabs should be increased from 4¼ inches to 5 inches, I do it in the interest of the crab fishermen, in favour certainly of the food supply of the country, of the fishmonger, and of the fish merchant. We find, as fish merchants, that there is scarcely any sale for crabs 4¼ inches across the widest part of the fish. We know well, that when the Crab Act was about to be enacted, the fishermen themselves, whom this Act sought to benefit, opposed it, believing it was going to do them a serious harm. Like all reforms, it had its enemies and its opposers. It does not matter from what quarter the reform is offered. Those who are concerned in it, and whom the act is to greatly benefit, are the very people from whom we may expect the opposition. I believe that the people in Filey, Scarborough, and Flamborough were opposed to the Crab Act, but on what grounds I cannot see. In Grimsby, I have inquired personally of the crab catchers, and they informed me that they would prefer that they should not be allowed to take a crab under 5 inches. When they, as they

formerly did, took crabs of a very small size, the crabs almost became extinct, but these last two or three years our crab fishermen in Grimsby have earned more money than ever they did during the five years previously, because they have not been allowed to catch the small crabs. We hope and trust that this Conference will assist us in the matter. At the North Eastern Sea Fisheries Board we carried the proposition unanimously, and a proposition has been sent to this Conference asking this Conference to confirm that which we have done. I believe it will be an everlasting benefit to the crab catchers, merchants, fishmongers, and to the general public, and therefore I trust that this Conference will carry the motion unanimously.

Mr. Alderman Toozes (Hull): Seconded the resolution.

Mr. Roach (Hull): I move an amendment, that a crab should be 4½ inches instead of 4¼. At one time very small crabs came into the port of Hull and different places. The Crab and Lobster Act has done a great deal of good for the crab fishing. I think several friends from different parts of the Yorkshire Coast will agree with me that a 4½ inch crab is a very good crab for market. It is not a crab which everybody would purchase, but there are a mass of poor people who want the 4½ inch crab. Our Grimsby friends no doubt want a larger crab, because they send them away to different parts to their customers; but I think 4½ inches would meet the views of our friends from Scarborough, Withernsea, and all round that coast.

Mr. Owston (Scarborough): I beg to second the amendment. I have caught crabs now for about 30 years, and I would say all credit to those who catch crabs in daylight and in deep water, where they are never troubled much with small crabs. On our Yorkshire coasts, we have to work in shallow water. We have to put our boats for the night's work into 10 and 11 fathoms of water. When we leave home after tea and commence the night work, we have to

take our crab pots in our boat, and take her into 9 or 12 feet of water, and then we have to work amongst crabs big and small. The majority of the crabs we catch are 5 inch crabs, and any seafaring man that understands a crab, knows that one from 4¼ inches up to 5 inches is the sweetest crab in the sea. I have seen large crabs from Scotland and other parts, which, when boiled, you might make a buoy of, full of water. I saw one here yesterday in a fish shop, and I drew my friend's attention to it. A small crab is the sweetest to eat of any shell fish, and a large crab is good for nothing. If an amendment is to be made with regard to crab catching it should be in the direction of a close time.

Mr. Newby (London): We in London consider 5 inches too small, we hardly know what to do with the 5 inch crab, but if our friends, the fishermen, would only allow the 5 or 4 inch crabs to grow, they would vastly benefit their pockets. Small crabs fetch little or nothing, but large crabs fetch a great deal of money here.

Mr. C. Brown (Bridlington Quay): I represent some fishermen in Bridlington, and the crabs we catch there run from 4 to 5 inches. It is shallow water where we fish. We have a large trade there, sending the crabs into country villages, and if you extend the size beyond 5 inches, what will become of those poor people? They will not be able to buy any crabs at all. A 5 inch crab at the present day is worth 3d. and sometimes 4d. in London. In the country villages round Bridlington, there are many children who want penny crabs, and if you extend the size to 5 inches those children will never get one. We must consider the supply for the poor as well as for the rich. I think 4¼ inches a very good size.

Mr. Langley (Sheffield): As a salesman, it is my opinion that the Act is best as it stands. I never heard any of my customers wish for any reduction in the size. I think we should do wrong if we had the Act altered in any way.

Mr. R. Frayne (Grimsby): I should like to lay before you some information I received through our Society. Having been instructed to write to different crab fishing stations, whose boats frequent Grimsby in the crab fishing season, I wrote the following letter to South Runtin in Norfolk, Sheringham, Withernsea, Cromer, Easington, and Spurn Head. The boats belonging to those places all bring their crabs to the Humber ports in the crab fishing season. "Dear Sir, I have received a letter from the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association, in reference to the Crab Act, enclosing a copy of a letter from the Grimsby Fish Merchant's Association, asking that the limit of the size of crabs allowed to be caught should be increased one inch. One clause in the Fish Merchants' letter to London reads thus:—'The crab fishermen who are running into this port, are anxious to sign a petition, and there would not, so far as we learn, be the slightest opposition to the extension of this Act as indicated. We have been asked by the authorities in London to get the opinion of the Crabmen. I have been advised to write to you on this subject. Will you please lay this matter before your crab fishermen, and let me have the decision they arrive at as soon as possible." I have in my hands the letters I received from the different districts. From Runtin I received the following:—"The length 5¼ inches is too long for us, our measure 4¼ inches is long enough. Our men are all against an increase." From Sheringham: "I have read your letter to the crab fishermen, and there is not a single fisherman who agrees with it, for the fishermen say when the Crab Act was about to be passed, several fishermen voted to bring them for sale at 4 inches. But the Board of Trade made the order for 4¼ inches. You might be surprised when I state to you that when we first commence crab fishing on our coast, half the crabs we catch are not 5¼ inches long. As regards the Yorkshire crab fishing, there are several fishermen leave here to fish on the Yorkshire Coast for crabs, and they say that it would not do to extend the

size as much as that. Their opinion is that the Spurn Point crabs are the largest crabs caught all along our coast, but I have been crab fishing for several years on the Yorkshire Coast, and can speak from experience that the crabs caught at Spurn are the largest crabs caught anywhere near. For twenty miles north of the Spurn Point, crabs are not so large. On our coast they are smaller still. The fishermen wish me to state that they are satisfied with the present length (4¼ ins.) As regards the Spurn Point fishing, their opinion is that they might be extended one half inch, and that would be sufficient, for the last two or three years have been very good seasons for crab fishing, and as soon as there is a bad season, the buyers will not call out so much about the size, for the demand will be as much as the supply. We are sure bad seasons will come again as they have done years ago, and the fishermen say that they will not then be able to earn their living by catching them. These are the wishes of the fishermen." I, as a fisherman, have no interest one way or the other. I represent the fishermen of Grimsby, and we do not care what size you catch crabs, but we are fishermen, and care for the industries of other places. We want to legislate for the best interests of the country at large, and we say that for any gentleman or company of gentlemen to write to the National S. F. P. Association, and say it is the wish of the fishermen that the size should be extended, when the fishermen know nothing about it—if it is not wrong it is a long way from being right. In the name of the fishermen of Grimsby I condemn this sort of action.

Mr. George Alward (Grimsby): I wish to say in reply to the remark made by Mr. Brown, of Bridlington, as a representative from that port, that their representative on the North-Eastern Fisheries Committee was agreeable that the size should be extended to five inches, and so far as my memory serves there was no opposition to it. Personally I have no interest in the matter. When it came on for discussion at the North-

Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee meeting, my decision followed the opinion of the people who represented the localities most deeply interested. I voted that the size should be increased from 4¼ to 5 inches, because I thought it was the wish of the fishermen whose representatives were present. I scarcely think there is sufficient common agreement for this Conference to take the question up. It should be referred back again to the various Fishery Committees in order that they may do the best according to their judgment in their particular localities. I therefore suggest that the proposition be withdrawn and referred back to the proper quarters.

Mr. Dent (Newcastle): I do not think we should touch the Act of Parliament with regard to the size of crabs. The proper people to deal with this question are the Sea Fishery Committees on different parts of the Coast. I ask the Conference to pass a resolution that it is desirable in the interests of the crab fishermen to make a close time.

The President: We must get rid of this first resolution and amendment, and you can move that afterwards.

Mr. Dent: I would like if any practical fisherman here could tell me what is the time crabs and lobsters generally spawn in the North Sea.

Mr. Roach (Hull): I quite agree with my friend who just sat down. I think there ought to be a close season for crabs. I believe I import more crabs into Hull than all the rest of Hull together, thousands of barrels, and I not only import them, but boil them, and I know that hundreds of barrels contain crabs that ought never to have been caught, because they were on the point of spawning. If you put the small fry back again the fishermen would reap a better harvest next year. Scotland begins much earlier than the North of England, and we cannot all take one ground.

The amendment was then put, 19 voted for it and 21 against.

THE PRESIDENT: I declare the amendment lost.

MR. WILLIAMSON (London): I move another amendment—"that no action be taken." If I could gauge the opinion of the speakers to-day it is that the Act as it at present stands had better remain untouched.

MR. LANGLEY (Sheffield): I beg leave to second that.

MR. OWSTON (Scarborough): I believe the feeling will be that the fishermen do not want any alteration, and I am strongly of opinion that the question is not of such a burning nature that any amendment of the Act is wanted at present.

MR. FRAYNE (Grimsby): I have one letter here from which I will only make one quotation, and that is from crab fishermen, who say that thousands of crabs under 4¼ inches are landed in Grimsby.

MR. NEWBY (London): Is not this amendment a direct negative?

THE PRESIDENT: I would point out to the Conference that Mr. Williamson's proposition is a direct negative to the resolution, therefore I shall now put the original resolution.

The resolution was put; 26 voted for it and 38 against.

THE PRESIDENT: The resolution is lost.

SALE OF FOREIGN OYSTERS.

MR. WILLIAMSON (London): I should like the meeting to notice the Agenda where it says "Close time for oysters" and "Sale of Foreign Oysters." The Executive who are responsible for the way in which this Agenda should be submitted, agreed that there was no question for discussion to-day with regard to close time for English Oysters, but that we should discuss generally the "Fisheries (Oysters, Crabs and Lobsters) Act,

1877," as it affects foreign oysters bedded in English waters. I have asked the Executive to permit me to submit the following resolution, for the consideration of the Conference. I ask for a full, free and complete discussion, and if any one has real practical evidence to give, no one more than the President, and above all the Fishmongers' Company would be glad to hear their opinions.

" That in the opinion of this Conference of the
" Fishing Industry, the Fisheries' (Oysters,
" Crabs, and Lobsters) Act, 1877, should
" not be applicable to foreign oysters bedded
" in English waters, and this Conference is
" further of opinion that it was not the
" intention of the legislature when the
" measure was introduced into the House
" of Commons to apply it to imported
" oysters from abroad."

I think it only fair to state with regard to the recent action of the Fishmongers' Company v. Williamson at the Mansion House, that the Company was actuated by no other desire than to serve the public interest loyally and faithfully, and not to harass the oyster trade, merchants or planters. They conferred with me on this matter, having regard to the fact that they were of opinion that if foreign oysters were allowed to remain in our beds during the summer months, spat might be secured, and a large increase obtained in the oyster supply. Desirous at all times of associating with any authority whereby our oyster supply might be improved, I willingly consented to a friendly action with the Fishmongers' Company. They said, " The whole of the cost of the action we will bear," and upon that understanding we will consider what course shall be taken. Everyone will agree with me, that that was a kind course for a public authority to take. The action was tried, as you are aware, at the Mansion House, and a decision was given by a magistrate that foreign oysters bedded in English waters should come under

the Act of Parliament which governs English oysters. I think that oyster traders and planters were greatly surprised at the decision, and I hope that I shall be able to ascertain from those present, that they are of opinion that such a decision was contrary to the interest of the trade, and possibly to the interests of the general public. The result is, judging from the action of the Company, and the circulars they have caused to be issued in London and various fishing stations along the coast, that we can only for the moment come to the conclusion that it is their intention to take action upon the judgment. The judgment practically says that if I receive French, American, or Portuguese oysters, and put them down in my fisheries, they practically become English. Now, practical men must admit that it is impossible for a foreign oyster to alter its shape or nationality, and it is the custom of the trade to sell French, Portuguese, and American oysters, solely as such; but the decision says, if we bed them in English waters we can sell them as English oysters. The merchants have no desire to do such a thing. We wish to call a spade a spade, and to tell the public that we sell them for what they are. Let us look at this for a moment from a public point of view. If this judgment is enforced, it does not deprive the public of the supply of those oysters. I only made arrangements yesterday, that if the decision is to be put in force, instead of the imported oysters being put down, in the Medway and elsewhere, they should go to Holland, with the natural result that the selfsame oysters will come from the Dutch beds as formerly from the English beds. Men who have small plantations will have their living taken away, and the public will not be hindered from dealing with those oysters, because they will be put down in foreign waters. What will be the further result? That the fishermen engaged in oyster culture will practically lose their livelihood in favour of the foreigner. The London oyster merchants have expressed the opinion

that if a close time is made it should be made absolute, by which I mean that if the sale is stopped during the summer months, then the sale of foreign oysters should be stopped too. But then you raise the question of Free Trade, which Parliament is not prepared to go into. This matter has been before the Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee, and they have come practically to the same conclusion as set forth in my resolution. We are now, as it were, on the very eve of receiving our foreign supply, and what we want to-day is a distinct expression from this Conference, in order that every man present who has an interest in the bedding of foreign oysters in English waters, may go away with the understanding that he will not be interferred with, and that his business will go on as usual. The Fishmongers' Company have dealt with this, in every respect, with the utmost possible good faith, and if this resolution is carried it will then be the duty of all representative authorities to approach the Board of Trade to get them to confirm this opinion, and if the Board of Trade say that under the Act it is necessary to exclude the foreign oysters, let them introduce a new Act and put an end to the matter altogether. I further state that I believe, if this resolution is carried, the Fishmongers' Company would be quite prepared to support the oyster trader and not in any way to interfere with the industry. I do hope that those present will not be afraid to express their opinion freely and openly. It is a great trade question, and there is a decided interest at stake.

Captain Austin (Whitstable): I have very much pleasure in seconding the resolution. The Act of 1877 was no doubt based on the report of a Select Committee, which took evidence in 1876, but if you look through the evidence given before that Committee, you will not see one syllable about the importation of French oysters. In fact in those days it was hardly known, and certainly the sale of them was unknown. But evidence was given by representatives of the Conway Oyster Company who were engaged in the American

oyster trade, that if the close time was enacted it would put an end to the American trade altogether, because American oysters were in a better condition in the summer months than at any other time. One question asked of Mr. Birch was, "If there is an exception made in favour of American oysters, I presume that will meet your view?" The answer was, "Certainly, that is what I desire;" and notwithstanding the decision of Mr. Alderman Phillips, I maintain that that provision was put in the Act expressly to meet the sale of the American oysters, and I submit it meets the case of all other foreign oysters. This trade has been going on for several years past; it has now reached very large proportions, it provides work for a large number of fishermen, oystermongers, retailers, costermongers, &c., and if the sale is prohibited it will ruin a great number of men, shut up many shops, and do a great amount of injury. For what reason? It was not pretended that it was any injury to the English beds. I think we ought to protect our fishermen from inimical action, wherever it comes from.

Mr. Musson (Liverpool): I have great pleasure in supporting this resolution. Mr. Williamson said all the trade were astonished at the decision of the magistrate, but we were still more astonished that the matter was allowed to rest where it was. I speak for the oyster people in the North, when I say that if we had had any intimation we would gladly have supported Mr. Williamson in carrying the case to Appeal. We think we have rather a complaint against the Fishmongers' Company. The Act was passed in 1877; it has been in abeyance ever since; they take the decision of a London magistrate, and with all due respect to the Aldermen, I do not think they are very learned in the law. In 1877 my firm, in consequence of our large interest in the American oyster trade, had a correspondence with the Board of Trade, and the sum and substance of it was:

Board of Trade, Harbour Department,
Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
17th July, 1877.

Gentlemen,

I am directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th inst., addressed to Lord Elphinstone, further on the subject of the operation of Section III. of the Fisheries (Oysters, Crabs, and Lobsters) Bill, now before Parliament, and in reply to the enquiry therein contained, I am to state that if the American oysters are placed by themselves at Cleethorpes, so that they can be identified, the exemption in that section will apply to them. If, however, they are placed in a bed with other oysters, the difficulty of proof so far as to bring them within the exemption would be considerable.

I think a letter like that shown to the magistrate would very much have altered his decision, because it is evident that the intention was to exempt American oysters. We have since asked the Board of Trade to give us another expression of opinion, and they have of course said that now that the matter has been before a magistrate they could not give it. I trust that the proposal will be unanimously carried, as I think it would be of great benefit. But personally, I would sooner see the Fishmongers' Company prosecute, say us, and we will beat them, and set the matter at rest.

Mr. Richardson (Brightlingsea): Millions of oysters are consumed in the summer time, when our artisans and mechanics go to the sea-side and enjoy themselves with a dozen good oysters for about a shilling, and the trade has been built up to an extent that we can hardly take cognizance of. I hope and trust that this Conference will pass this resolution unanimously, and give us free trade along with the foreigners. If this decision is carried out we, as Englishmen, are put on one side, the foreigners are brought in to sell and we are starved out. If the oysters come from Belgium they must cost

more money, and I should say would hardly be in such good condition as when taken from the bed. If a man has a hundred barrels of oysters over, he has them in his shop, and he can retail them the whole week. But if we lay them down in the river we are not allowed to take 50 barrels up on Wednesday, and put them in the market. Why? Because putting them in water naturalises them. I can compete with a foreigner if I have the same opportunity, but if I have my hands tied I cannot. I do not think the Fishmongers' Company have looked these facts in the face. I believe if they do they will say, "We believed we were doing it for the good of the public, but we do not think so now." I wish something could be done to resuscitate our public grounds. If a man is going to introduce five million oysters, he will reckon up the time he can sell them in, and instead of five millions he will only have two millions. I will challenge any man in this assembly to bring me any American spat that was spatted in English waters. I hope and trust that the Company will come to the conclusion that in carrying out the prosecution they will do harm to the public in general.

Mr. Broadbent (Sunderland): We have had three or four planters explaining their views, and I think it only right that we should have the opinion of retail dealers. We stand between the planter and the consumer. Speaking for myself and brothers, we represent 17 towns, we have 26 shops between us, all in the North of England. We have shops at the seaside, where people go down for recreation, pleasure, and health, and we have been 13 to 14 years under this very law, and have never had any interference. We, as it were, have built our hopes of business upon these seaside resorts as well as inland towns. I grant in London, it would not affect you so much, but it would affect us if we had to close our shops for three months. The oyster has been proved to be in good condition—better than at any other time. I also think that Frank Buckland, when he gave his evidence, ignored the American

oysters. The Americans are at their best in the summer time. We have had sufficient to prove that the oysters are not out of season during those three months.

Captain Anderson (Whitstable): I was very pleased when Mr. Williamson stated that he considered the Fishmongers' Company had taken this up from a public standpoint. I understood him that there was a friendly action raised between the Fishmongers' Company and himself to test this question, but the Whitstable Oyster Company knew nothing about the case until three or four days before the trial, and I am much surprised Mr. Williamson did not ask the Alderman to state a case for a superior court, and more especially so, considering that he now appears to be dissatisfied with that decision. I regret he did not do so, because at present we are in a state of embryo, we know not whether the decision of the Alderman is good or bad law. If I understand the case aright, the close time for natives was brought about, wholly and solely because it was hoped it would be the means of increasing the native oyster, and secondly, but in no way secondary, because the oyster is unwholesome at certain seasons of the year. If a French oyster is put down in English waters it undergoes exactly the same process as the native oyster in every shape and form. I am speaking now of its sickening and spatting. If a close season time which is being honestly observed, is necessary and desirable for the native oyster, it is also necessary and desirable for the French oyster. But taking the other view, we say if the Englishman is to be thrown out of the market for the benefit of the foreigner, then it is an injustice to us. I heartily agree with my friend Mr. Williamson when he says "let us sell good oysters," but I am surprised to hear him say so, and yet advocate the continuance of selling them all the year round, when it is an undisputed fact that between the months of May and August they sicken and spat. If there is to be a close season, let it be made absolute. Surely the Government of the day (now that their attention

has been called to the matter) will never allow the unwholesome oyster to be sold in the English market, and instead of the Act being discontinued, we would rather see it strengthened and made absolute, so that no oysters whatever should be sold during the close season, and that is the view of the Whitstable Oyster Company. I cannot disguise from myself the fact, that if the decision of the Alderman is upheld, my Company will be affected very considerably. We employ hundreds of men upon our grounds and beds, and during the close season our men will be thrown out of employment, but we always observed a close season until the last 7 or 8 years, when we were compelled to sell all the year round, because our customers said, "If you do not sell like other people through the close season, we shall go elsewhere, and where we go in the close season for our second oysters, we shall continue to go all the year round." We therefore, in conclusion, hope, if this close season is to be enforced, that we should approach the Board of Trade and the Fishmongers' Company, and ask them to join with us in making the close season absolute.

Mr. Appleyard (Grimsby): I endorse every word that Mr. Williamson has said. I would like to ask if it is a certain fact that the American oysters retain their nationality? We expect, as practical men, to deal with the practical thing just as it stands. I ask again, is it a fact that the American oysters retain their nationality? Does this Association acknowledge that? (Hear, hear, and "yes, yes.") The Act is as clear as a sunbeam. I never saw oysters come from anywhere that were so deformed as American oysters as a rule. Many men talk about oyster spatting who know little about it. I have never in all my experience seen one American oyster in the first stage of spatting.

Mr. Baxter (Billingsgate): I support and endorse what has been said by Mr. Williamson. This Act has been in vogue now for many years, and as oyster merchants, we naturally ask why it has been suddenly

enforced. If it would tend to any improvement or any public benefit, let the steps be taken. But in this case, I submit it does not. I have planted foreign oysters in the spring for many years by millions. They come over in poor condition, and are improved by the English beds, until they are fit to sell. If this Act be carried out, what are we going to do ? I hold in my hand a letter from a gentleman abroad, in which he says, "Are you likely to do anything with oysters from May to September, if the close time for English oysters is maintained ?" That means, "If you close we are ready to begin." As a consequence, we might close up the oyster industry all round the coast and discharge our men, and say "If you want any oysters you must wait till they come from abroad." They will not be any cheaper, they will not be any better—they will be a good deal worse. Yesterday I had a letter from another party abroad, saying that he was laying out ground with French oysters, so as to have them ready when the occasion comes. If the season is closed here, and open on the Continent, then they can sell their oysters, and we will not know whether they are worth £1 or 6d. I may add, that of all the oysters we have re-bedded from abroad, we have never had any spat or young oysters which have matured or fetched anything.

Sir Albert Rollit, M.P. : I do not know whether the Conference is agreed, but if it is quite agreed as to the best course to be taken, perhaps I may be allowed to offer just a suggestion or two. I do so because, however much we may talk about free trade, foreign preference and naturalisation, this is after all really a question of law, much as you dislike law and as having some little knowledge of law, perhaps you will allow me to say a word or two. But before I do that, I wish to congratulate Mr. Appleyard, of Cleethorpe, on two things. In the first place he has produced two things, he has produced an Act of Parliament which is as clear as a sunbeam. In the next place, he has asked an extremely difficult question, namely, whether oysters retain their

nationality after being bedded in this country. Unfortunately we have not an Oyster Naturalisation Act, under which you can go to a department, pay £5, and obtain naturalisation papers, as many foreigners do. The Act of Parliament puts the obligation upon a seller of satisfying a Court that they were taken within the waters of some foreign state. Of course, it is obvious that the line of argument upon that point is really a question of time and degree. If the oysters were brought forthwith across, there could be no question. If they were planted such a short time that it was merely warehousing, there would be no question again. But the question arises directly Mr. Appleyard raises his question, do they retain their nationality? I believe, as a matter of fact, some do and some do not. It shows the diversity of answer. Why, I have cultivated oysters in a cellar, not American, but Portuguese and French, and Portuguese and French beyond question will retain their natural condition, and go through their natural processes. There arises the whole point of the question. If that be so, I am quite satisfied that a most difficult question arises, whether they were taken in foreign waters, whether the law is to look to the remote taking, or to the approximate taking in which they have been going through those natural processes, and my impression for what it is worth, is that the law looks to the immediate rather than the remote principle. That is a general principle as old as the Roman law. That is a maxim which has had to be tried through centuries, and it is creating the legal difficulty at the present moment. Do not disguise from your minds that Mr. Appleyard's question is not clear as he suggests, and do not believe that the Act of Parliament is as clear as a sunbeam. I never came in contact with one. I think you may ask what obviously should be done to begin with. I have not that disrespect for Aldermen which one speaker indicated. They are generally men of sound practical sense, under the guidance of lawyers, and generally give good sound

decisions, but obviously it is not a tribunal to settle the construction of an Act of Parliament affecting a whole trade in England, and it is not a tribunal which should finally be allowed to raise a grave cause of injury to Englishmen, if they are wrong. There might have been difficulties as far as you know which limited the application for a test case. I think still, perhaps, if the magistrate were asked and the importance were pointed out, he might let a case be stated. One gentle man offered himself as a victim to the law. I remember a country attorney who once advertised his business for sale, and put in "N.B.—Clients rich and obstinate." Well, if one gentleman is willing for the sacrifice, let him. But, lastly, why should not you go to the Board of Trade and point out that this difficulty of construction has arisen, owing to the fact that the Act of Parliament is not as clear as a sunbeam, and being unanimous, and having justice on your side, and assuming that you are agreed on your points of natural history, you can ask the Board of Trade to pass a Defining Clause, which, if all are unanimous, and if there is no reason for dissent, could be passed in three or four days, and what is not as clear as a sunbeam might be made a sunbeam itself. That latter course commends itself to me.

Mr. Ascroft (Lytham): I do not consider that in the Act of Parliament the American oyster is referred to at all. The American oyster is a totally different animal, in every shape and form, in spatting and in the time the embryo has free life. In the English oyster 48 hours is the amount of free life, and the American oyster has 5 or 6 weeks. I am of opinion that a very great hardship is done now to English fishermen. They go fishing in extra territorial waters; they have to deposit their oysters in the close season and cannot lift them during the close season. I do not think the baptism of an American oyster makes it English. You cannot change the animal and you cannot wash off the leopard's spots, or perform any great miracles. The

watering places will have the oysters somehow or other, and why should not we have the privilege of lifting the oysters at such places as Blackpool, and others, where millions of oysters are sold every year.

On the resolution being put it was carried unanimously.

Mr. Williamson (London): Following on the last resolution I suppose there must be two others, and I believe that they will be passed without any discussion. I have but one answer to make and that is with regard to the question why did not I appeal against the order of Alderman Phillips? For the simple reason that I was not asked to appeal, and it was only within a few weeks past that any communication was made to me from any branch of the oyster industry. However, what the oyster industry require now is that no action should be taken during the present year by the Fishmongers' Company.

> "This Conference requests the Fishmongers' "Company to take no action during the "present year in order that oyster traders "may have an opportunity of settling the "whole question in the proper channels."

That is a request to an honourable body, and we as practical business men will be able to see that the Act of Parliament is read aright and understood aright both by ourselves and the general public.

Mr. Petrie (Liverpool): I have much pleasure in seconding that. I am a dealer in American oysters. Messrs. Musson and myself, I think, account for two-thirds of the American oysters that come to this country. We were very much surprised at the action of the Fishmongers' Company *v.* Williamson. Mr. Musson and myself have offered to take it to an Appeal Court free of expense to the Fishmongers' Company, but the Company refuse to give us any definite answer. Secondly, I think the motion is a very apt one, and it will give us time in the coming season to have a test case.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. Williamson: Sir Albert Rollit has made an offer, and I accept it on behalf of the oyster merchants: it is this, that if we desire to make proper approaches to the Board of Trade he will assist and co-operate. I move:

"That a deputation from this Conference be "appointed to wait upon the President of "the Board of Trade in order that a definite "decision with regard to the Act may be "arrived at."

Mr. Langley (Sheffield): I beg to second that.

Sir Albert Rollit: I would suggest it should be a definite course of action. You cannot ask the Board of Trade for a legal decision.

The President: It had better be "That this Conference appoints the Executive Committee to wait upon the Board of Trade."

Mr. Williamson: I am reminded by Sir Edward that the Executive of the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association would be the most convenient authority. I therefore move—

"That this Conference appoints the Executive "Committee of the National Sea Fisheries "Protection Association to wait upon the "President of the Board of Trade with "regard to this particular Act in order that "a definite course of action may be arrived "at."

Mr. Langley: I am not quite certain that the Executive Committee is the best body to entrust it to.

The President: Let me point out to you and to the Conference that we cannot ask the President of the Board of Trade, straight off, to meet us to-morrow, and the Conference comes to an end to-morrow; therefore we should have to ask him to arrange for an early date. I only suggested the Executive Committee because that course has been adopted on previous occasions.

Mr. Langley: There are several people who are on that Committee who might like to go.

The President: We will get over that then, by my stating on behalf of the Executive that we will invite all gentlemen desirous of attending, and give them full notice.

The resolution was carried.

The President: Of course we will have due notice inserted in the "Fish Trades Gazette"—our official organ—when this deputation is arranged, and we will communicate to all those interested in the subject. Those gentlemen who are interested must please to send an intimation to the Secretary of the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association stating that they are desirous of attending.

TELEGRAPHIC AND TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION.

The President: The next subject on the Agenda is No. 2. "Telegraphic and Telephonic communication between lighthouses, lightships, and the shore, and general coast communication." Before I call upon Mr. Bradbeer, Mayor of Lowestoft, who is going to move a resolution on that subject, it may be convenient if I explain to the Conference the exact state of affairs with regard to this matter. The Royal National Life Boat Institution have for several years had this question brought prominently before their notice, and they have urged that some action should be taken in the interests of the better saving of life, that a scheme of coast communication either by telegraph or telephone, or both should be carried out along the coasts of the United Kingdom, and last session I gave notice of a motion to bring tbe matter before the House of Commons, but I was unable to secure a night for discussion. I have this year given notice of a motion and have second place on Tuesday, March 22, when I hope to be able to bring forward the question. Before

I read the terms of that motion, I ought to explain in the first instance that it resolves itself into three matters, the question of the saving of life at sea, the commercial question, or the military and naval question. As far as I am concerned, I am heartily in accord that something should be done on behalf of all those three questions. But as Chairman of the Lifeboat Institution, I took up that with regard to the better saving of life around our coast, and the terms of my motion are as follows:—"That with a view to the better prevention of loss of life and property in cases of of vessels in distress or shipwrecked, and to give the earliest possible information to life-boat authorities and rocket apparatus stations, in the opinion of this House it is desirable that a complete system of telephonic and telegraphic communication should be provided by Government round the coast of the United Kingdom, and that all coast guard and signal stations be so connected and that on those parts of the coast where such stations do not exist, the postal telegraph offices nearest to the life-boat stations be telephonically or telegraphically connected." That is such a good matter that the House of Commons ought not to think twice about it, but to say "aye" to it at once. There can be no question about it. The cost will not be great. But if it will be great, the House of Commons ought to have no doubt about the subject. I shall only quote one case, though in winter time we have a case every week—one that occurred last Friday. Though there was no loss of life itself, it was wonderful there was not. On Thursday last, a steamer of 3,000 tons left Cardiff. She was caught and ran aground on Lundy Island. There was no rocket apparatus—I do not know why—the Board of Trade have not supplied any—but the inhabitants made a make-shift apparatus and hauled the crew up a cliff 80 feet high. It was not until Sunday morning that information was received on the mainland that this disaster had taken place. Had there been a cable from Lundy Island to the mainland,

not one lifeboat, but half-a-dozen lifeboats would have been there within so many hours. The case is so good that there is absolutely no necessity to speak to practical men, who know the dangers round our coast. Another case was in that disastrous snowstorm in November last, when over 70 lives were lost in the vicinity of Start Point, when the roads were all blocked and no communication could be carried on. These lives were lost when many of them could have been saved if there had been telegraphic communication. It may be asked why in my resolution before the House of Commons, do I not go into the larger question? I do not, as a matter of policy. I am convinced that the Government cannot say nay to it; it is a matter that must be dealt with, but the other question, of communication with floating light vessels, with islands, and rock lighthouses is larger, more difficult, and a far more expensive matter, and what I feel myself is that we should let a Commission, if necesssry a Royal Commission, inquire into the practicability of carrying out this larger scheme with regard to light vessels and outlying lighthouses, and make a practical investigation, and report to the House of Commons. As regards coast communications, they ought to go at it tooth and nail at once. I hope I have stated clearly to the Conference how the matter stands, and I now call upon Mr. Bradbeer to move a resolution with regard to this matter.

Mr. Bradbeer (Lowestoft): moved

"That this Conference desires to impress upon "Her Majesty's Government the great "importance of carrying out without delay "a system of telegraphic and telephonic "communication around the coasts of the "United Kingdom in accordance with the "terms of Sir Edward Birkbeck's motion "standing in the Order Book of the House "of Commons, and further to appoint a "commission to enquire into and report

"upon the question of telegraphic and tele-
"phonic communication between the shore
"and light vessels, and rock-lighthouses."

I have no doubt there are many gentlemen present desirous of speaking upon this question, therefore, I will not occupy your time long. I may simply say this, living as I do upon one of the most dangerous coasts around the United Kingdom, I am sorry to say that we have many wrecks week after week, month after month, and I consider that everything that is possible should be done to set up telegraphic and telephonic communications. So far as regards the desirability of bringing this matter before the authorities, there can be no doubt whatever. We know perfectly well that upon the coast, the East Coast in particular, wrecks are very numerous, and if communication could be established, either by telegraph or telephone, it would be a great advantage to all concerned. This communication is not only necessary for the shipping, but for trawlers and drifters, more particularly for the trawling interest. I therefore beg to move that this resolution be supported by the Conference.

Mr. Little (Plymouth); I wish to express my thanks for being called upon to second the resolution. The great object and aim in view of everyone who has the question at heart is that of saving human life, and nowhere is the proposed electrical communication likely to be more effectual than on the rugged coasts of Devon and Cornwall. Our Chairman has just given us two examples of disaster that occurred on the Devon coast off Lundy Island, one happening last week and the other in the blizzard of March last year. So much has been said on this subject by different Chambers of Commerce and by public speakers that it is almost impossible to say anything new on the subject; but as this Conference is representative of the Sea Fishing Industry there is just another phase of this question about which there has not been much said in public, and that is that the proposed communication is likely to

benefit the fishermen commercially. I am sure the few local instances I shall give you in support of this contention will be equally applicable to other parts of the United Kingdom. Our Yarmouth and Lowestoft friends will bear me out on this point. Very often we find when the mackerel fleet is there from Lowestoft and Yarmouth and Cornwall they meet with very heavy catches of mackerel. I have known boats in Plymouth to make in one day £2 and £3 per 100 and the next day 10s. per 100. I have known boats to come within sight of Plymouth breakwater with from £200 to £300 worth of Mackerel on board and then the wind had died away, the next day there is a glut of fish in the market and then a smaller profit is made. If there was communication with the land from the Eddystone and places off Plymouth, the fact that boats are coming up might be signalled. For a 10s. tow all this could be arranged. In the spring and other parts of the year Yarmouth and Lowestoft trawlers fish with the Plymouth and Brixham boats. I have known them to come home with 1,500 and 2,000 hake, with other fish, per boat, and I have known cargoes to be destroyed through fish coming in late owing to being becalmed between Dover and Plymouth. If there was a communication between the outlying headlands of Cornwall for a small tow of 30s., sometimes £40 or £50 might be saved. This is somewhat speculative but I will give you one case in point which happened last week. It happens that on the Cornish coast there are two towns near the Lizard which are in telegraphic communication with each other, and information was sent that there was a large shoal of mullett, and the boats went out and caught £60 or £70 worth of fish. This often happens at different times of the year. The great object in bringing this question forward is the saving of lives at sea, but at the same time it is a question which commercially we ought not to lose sight of. This certainly is the most popular question which could be brought before any maritime community in

England. I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution.

Mr. Owston (Coxswain Scarboro' Lifeboat): I do not know that I ever stood up with so much confidence at any meeting as I do at the present time to speak on behalf of the introduction of the telephone. We had two cases in Scarboro' last winter where communication would have been most valuable. A small boat left Scarboro' and the weather came on so heavy that it was impossible for a boat to live many hours. It occurred to me to wire to a distant station, but we had to send the message to the telegraph office by a man on horse-back. It was too late. When the men approached Cayton Bay they found the remains of the boat, which had been smashed to pieces, and only one of the crew of that boat was picked up, and he was dead. I believe, and many believe with me, that if we had had telephonic communication at Scarboro' along the coast we could have communicated with other people who would have been present when the boat was beached to have lent a helping hand. Another case was that of a vessel in distress off Flamborough Head. Having received the information we launched with the aid of a steam-tug, put to sea and fortunately found the ship, but in a sinking condition. We took her in tow and fortunately reached Scarborough harbour in safety. If there had not been a telegraph office open and if it had been dark I firmly believe the crew of the vessel would have been drowned. I believe if we had a telephone along our coast it would be a great advantage. Since 1871 I have had charge of the Scarborough lifeboat, and I am pleased to say I have never lost a man up to the present. (Cheers). On one occasion there was a vessel driving under the Whitby lights, and there was no means of getting the news to me. She had a colour flying for assistance, and as it was blowing a heavy gale from the north she soon passed Scarborough. If there had been telephonic communication so that I could have heard that this vessel was approaching Scar-

borough, I could have met her within a mile of Scarborough Castle. I did not, however, know anything about it, and when I saw the vessel I had to set sail and go out about S.E. by S. from Scarborough to reach the vessel, and then we could not make Scarborough but had to go to Filey Bay. If we had had any means of communicating with each other I should have been able to land the men and place them in safety two hours before I did. I believe the telephone will be a great success along the coast. This is worth an Englishman's while studying, and I hope and trust steps will be taken in the right direction.

Mr. Sheriff Foster: I am glad to have this opportunity of saying a word on a subject which does not require any apology from one who is not an expert. I was listening this morning to a subject which can only be properly handled by those in the trade and by experts; but this resolution not only appeals to those engaged in the fishing trade and those on the sea coast, but it appeals to every one of us. We pride ourselves upon being a maritime nation, and surely the first care of a maritime nation should be the safety of those who embark in all those perils of the sea with which this resolution is connected. I confess that I should like to have seen this resolution even more decided in its tone than it is. I had given notice of a resolution of a more comprehensive character, but I was glad to make way for my friend the Mayor of Lowestoft because he speaks with authority as representing a maritime town. I quite realise the difficulty which you have in the House of Commons in dealing with a large subject all at once; but I cannot see why it is necessary to ask a Royal Commission to inquire whether we ought to have telephonic communication with our lightships and with our lighthouses. It seems almost an incredible thing that while the telegraph has been invented for more than a generation, and that by means of it all the ends of the earth are brought into contact one with another, that many of our lightships and our lighthouses are

more isolated from us at the present moment than the distant country of Australia. We know what is going on at Australia, whereas we might not know for a day or two what is going on in connection with the lightships round our coasts. That is a state of things which only has to be considered for a single moment for the Houses of Parliament to say "this state of things must be put an end to," and I cannot see what a Royal Commission has to do with it. There may be a certain difficulty in erecting telephonic or telegraphic communication with some outlying lighthouses owing to friction which might arise from the play of the water upon the cables as against the rocks. That might apply in some instances. One instance was mentioned which this resolution will not remedy, except in the way of a Commission, and that is the necessity of communication with the Eddystone Lighthouse. I have only heard two objections against this extension of our communications. I refer not only to the communication round our coasts to which the resolution of Mr. Bradbeer refers, and to which we all agree, but with the outlying houses and lightships. One objection is the expense, and the other objection is that in times of war our lighthouses which heretofore have been considered outside the operations of any warfare, might be treated as being within the operations because they were a means of communication with the enemy. Now, as to the question of expense, I am sure we all agree with the Chairman, that if the matter was one of great importance, this wealthy maritime nation ought not for a moment to allow such a question to stand between us and the lives of our men, but after all is it such an expensive matter? We know the enormous strides which have been made during the last five years in connection with the cost of the telephone, and I do not hesitate to say that whereas there may have been some hesitation on the part of the Government five years ago in establishing telephonic communication until they had seen how far improvements in the telephone were to go; still that matter has

been overcome, and it no longer lies in the mouth of the Government to say they will see what further developments there will be. As to the second objection: I do not consider it a practical one, for I believe that by the comity of nations lightships and lighthouses would always be considered as neutral territory. I cordially support the resolution, and I should have been glad if it had gone further and had insisted, so far as the opinion of this Conference is concerned, upon the necessity of establishing communication between lightships and lighthouses.

M. Seve (Consul Genl. of Belgium): I have much pleasure in supporting the proposition, and permit me to congratulate the Conference upon having put on the Agenda such a humane and universal question. If telegraphic or telephonic communication is made between the lightships and the shore, you will render a great service not only to your fishermen and sailors, but also to Belgian sailors and fishermen. I should, however, wish that the law should not only be National but International. I am glad once more to have had this opportunity of advocating the passing of a law which will be for the benefit of every sailor and fisherman and every one who wants protection in combatting the terrible perils of the sea. I hope this law will be passed very soon in your country, and I trust that Belgium in that case will do what we have very often done before, namely, imitate your great and good nation.

Mr. Kenny (Garnish, Co. Cork): As an Irishman, I have very great pleasure indeed in supporting the resolution, and thoroughly agree with every point put forward. Telegraphic communication with various centres is much needed, but most important at several stations, such as the Eddystone Lighthouse, Lundy Island, and also at the Bull Rock Lighthouse in West Cork. I have already pointed out in the "Journal of Commerce," and to Lloyd's, the advisability of making the Bull Rock the signal station for the American steamers, instead of

Brow Head. I was glad to observe this morning, that the Board of Trade was represented here, because they may take this matter up, and have it investigated. It is an old and very true saying, that "what is everybody's business is nobody's business," and I earnestly wish that some gentleman would make it his own personal question and urge the importance of speedy action. I regret that the President of our Association could not be present at this Conference to advocate this matter, but in his absence you must be content with the few remarks of mine. He has commissioned me, however, to say that he will give the hospitality of his home to any gentleman going over there to make an investigation. I say, without fear of contradiction, that there would be at least two hours' earlier notice of the arrival of the "Liners" from the Bull Rock Lighthouse than there can be from Brow Head. I need not tell you what an advantage this would be to the shipping community at Liverpool and elsewhere. I have to thank you very much indeed for your cordial reception, your co-operation, and the time you have patiently given me.

Mr. Dawson (Lytham): If we had had communications between the different life boat stations in 1886, that great disaster would never have happened, which took place at the wreck of the Mexican at Southport. That could not have happened for this reason, if we had had a telephonic or a telegraphic communication in those days, we should have known that the Southport boat had started, and neither the Lytham nor the St. Anns boat would have been launched, and the people wauld never have left that portion of the shore where the Southport boat was capsized.

Mr. James Judd (London): I shall be pardoned, I hope, if I say a word or two on this question, because it has been already remarked that it is one of those questions upon which it is not necessary to have technical knowledge—the knowledge which you gentlemen present have upon matters of detail. We are

eminently a practical people, and it is an astounding thing, that at this time we should be advocating the necessity of communications around our coasts. Being an eminently practical people, it might be advisable, even though it may lead to the postponement for a short time of our purpose, that a committee should be appointed and for this reason, that we should get overwhelming facts from a humanitarian point of view ; not only should we show the number of lives that would be saved, and unfortunately you have uncontested evidence of the number of lives that might have been saved, because you have had evidence of the number of lives that have been lost, but a commission would get such information that no Government would allow such a disgraceful condition of things longer to exist. There is another aspect of it, and alas, one has to say in the eyes of some, a more important aspect of the question, the commercial effects of the existing state of things. If we were shown, as it can be shown, that an immense saving would take place were this communication effected, the question of cost would be convened a little because there would be an absolute return. Now-a-days you have to show hard-headed English people a way by which they will make an adequate return on their investment, and they will be ready to make it, and what as individuals we are ready to do the nation will do. I therefore hope, Mr. President, you who have done so much for the fish industry will be able to get this important work accomplished for the practical value of it no one can doubt.

Mr. Dent (Northumberland) : There has been so much said on this point that there is but little left for me to say, but I may tell you that the ship owners have taken this question up most earnestly, and we are very glad that you are now coming to the front to fight it out in Parliament.

Mr. Collins (Cornwall) : You all know that Cornwall has a rugged coast, and frequent shipwrecks and loss of life are heard of. Within the last few days we

had a most awful shipwreck near the Land's End, where, as you know, there is a large outlying coast with which there is no communication whatever, we have no communication between the Lizard and Falmouth, that means an extent of coast of at least 40 miles. Now the loss of life upon that coast is very deplorable. On the occasion of the blizzard, which has been referred to by the President, within a space of 5 miles we had 12 wrecks, one of which was the large vessel, the "Bay of Panama," and 30 lives were lost. The tale of a most heroic deed will be in the memory of you all; a young farmer pursued his way on horse back through the density of the night, and through the storm from the south side of Helford Creek to Falmouth. Through the long hours of the night he toiled that he might land the news at Falmouth that this large four masted English ship was stranded. The result of this ride was, that the life saving apparatus rescued 16 lives with great difficulty, but many lives were lost because there were no appliances at hand to save them. All along the coast of Cornwall there is grave necessity for the proposal of our worthy President being carried out. With reference to the fishermen, I have only one remark to make. You have already heard how a large shoal of fish were caught through news being brought to land that they were in the Channel. Recently, at the Cove of Sennen, which is the extreme point of Land's End, they caught a large shoal of mullet, but, in consequence of there being no communication, there were no buyers and the fishermen had to do the best they could to dispose of this large and valuable catch of fish. They would have realised something like £1,000 had there been buyers, but instead of that they were obliged to sell them at very unremunerative prices. You see now the necessity of establishing communication all along the coast of Cornwall, as well as all round the coast. I heartily support the resolution.

Mr. Travers (Fishmongers' Company): I only wish to interpose one word as a matter of information. It is

information of which your President, in his position as one of the Company of Fishmongers is aware; but I wish to announce to those who are not in that position, that the Fishmongers' Company have already petitioned Lord Salisbury, as head of Her Majesty's Government, upon this subject, and therefore—I am speaking as a Fishmonger—we have done what we could, and we will continue to do what we can on this important question.

Mr. Sanders: This is a very sore point with me, and a very painful one. In March, 1888, some of our trawlers began to go round the Channel, and one of them was caught in a heavy gale of wind. She was sighted from the Coast Guard Station about 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning, and they saw her driving in with mast and bulwarks and everything carried away. The Coast Guard told me that he had to be careful what he was about, and that he could not send assistance until he could see that assistance would be required. Ultimately he had sent news that assistance would be required, but the nearest station where there was any rocket apparatus was Penzance and St. Ives, and the only way of communicating with them was by sending two men on horses. My brother was master of that vessel, and the whole of the crew were drowned. When the rocket apparatus came up the vessel had sunk. In my opinion it would have been possible to have saved the men if direct communication could have been had with the rocket apparatus. I think that it is a disgrace to a wealthy nation like England that such a state of things should be allowed to last so long.

The President: I have the permission of Mr. Bradbeer, and I have no doubt the seconder, Mr. Little, will agree; to make an important alteration in the latter part of the motion—we are cutting out the question of the appointment of a Commission. The resolution will read as follows:—

"That this Conference desires to impress upon
"Her Majesty's Government the great im-
"portance of carrying out without delay a

" system of telephonic and telegraphic com-
" munication round the coast of the United
" Kingdom, in accordance with the terms of
" Sir Edward Birkbeck's motion, standing
" in the Order Book of the House of
" Commons, and further to urge that tele-
" phonic and telegraphic communications
" between the shore and light vessels and
" the rock lighthouses be also forthwith
" undertaken."

The resolution, as amended, was then agreed to.

DEVELOPMENT OF IRISH FISHERIES.

THE MACGILLYCUDDY: The resolution I have to move is:—

" That this Conference is of opinion that it is
" essential that the Government should at
" once afford material assistance to Irish
" fishermen towards increased facilities for
" placing Irish fish upon the English
" markets."

I have great pleasure in proposing this resolution, and in doing so I have to thank you for the very kind way in which allusion was made to the Irish interests yesterday, when the question was first introduced, and also for the kind feeling which I have found expressed with regard to this matter since I have moved amongst you. I believe that it is an uncontradicted fact that there is an immense quantity of fish round the coasts of Ireland of divers sorts. I think there are over twenty sorts, and much of it is fine fish, but that is now getting scarce, both on the coast of Ireland and in the North Sea. A great deal of it is coarse fish, and coarse fish is very much handicapped when it has to meet heavy carriage. The principal question that I shall put before you to-day for the development of our fisheries is that of obtaining some mode for sending fish here at rates which will not be killing, as present rail-

way rates are. In Ireland we have not any manufacturers to lessen the monopoly of the railways such as you have here. You are able to send your fish to market in any way you like, for you have a large number of carrying steamers. In Ireland, where we have no railways, how much more do we want a large number of carrying steamers? I will refer to a page of the Irish Fishery Inspector's Report of 1890, which may be taken as official. From that report I find that there are in Ireland 540 fishing stations, but the returns given are very defective, and only 120 of the principal ones are given. The rest of the stations are left out, and I believe that arrangements have not been made to collect statistics accurately. If I were in a position to give you them to-day, you would find that the quantity would be very much greater than the 70,000 tons caught and marketed. I do not think those figures give any idea of the enormous quantity of fish wasted on the Irish coast in consequence of the want of means of transport. The report shows that there were about 70,000 tons of fish of all sorts sent to market, the mackerel being the principal kind of fish. The mackerel season exists for the greater portion of the year—principally in the spring and autumn. The spring mackerel, from its perishable nature, employs 64 steamers for 12 weeks in two counties, and those two counties are scheduled as congested. The cost of those steamers comes to £120,000, and the value of the mackerel was £173,000. That will give you an idea of how greatly the industry is handicapped. Then we come to the autumn mackerel. That we are now finding market for in America, and how great that market is, and how much it may assist us may be inferred from the fact that the Americans are sending to the Cape of Good Hope for cured mackerel, and to the Pacific, Norway, and Ireland, and last year they ascertained that the Irish can cure fish as well as any men in the world. The subject of technical education will be dealt with by other speakers. I have made that a portion of the scheme which I have tried

to embody in a pamphlet called "Ireland's opportunity." To show the great difference between the proper and improper curing I have carefully analysed official figures, and I find that Irish-cured mackerel for the year 1890 amounted to 38,800 barrels, and they made in America an average price of 17 dollars, or £113,524. I am taking the top price to show the disparity between the cases I shall mention, because the Norwegian mackerel did not get top prices. The Irish top price came to £113,524, and the Norwegian price on the same quantity came to £195,045, a difference of nearly £84,000, which is the result of technical instruction. That £84,000 would have bought off a dozen steamers, which we want. That is the difference of the price of cured fish within a year. As to the quantity, I may quote Mr. Green, the Fishery Inspector specially deputed by the Government to find out the old fishing grounds which have been lost to ken since the Irish fishing failed.

[The speaker then quoted at considerable length from Mr. Green's report.]

Now, I need not trouble you with quoting any more, but I may say if mackerel can be cured and can fetch an average price of 18 dollars a barrel, a barrel holding less than 200 lbs., this would be an immense source of wealth. Our fishermen frequently pursue their calling in canvas canoes, and the total number of our first-class boats is not equal to the number of your boats that come and visit us during the year. Now, as to the question of steamers and the difference in prices. I have analysed, from the official reports, the prices of fish on the West Coast of Ireland and in the English markets. Cod, on the West Coast of Ireland, average 7d., while in 22 English markets they average 3s. 1½d. Some, sold alive, fetched 6s., 8s., and 4s. 6d. for what averaged in Ireland 7d. I am talking of live cod. Now, if we could turn that 7d. in Ireland into even half these live prices in England, it would pay for all these steamers that our poor fellows want to make their living, but between them and the markets stand

the railway companies. I will give you, for instance, the Great Southern and Western main line of Ireland. I find that the ordinary rates by the cwt. to ten large towns from Limerick Junction, which is about the same distance from Dublin as any point on the West Coast of Ireland—the average price from Limerick Junction to London, Northampton, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Huddersfield, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Bristol was 6s. 8d. per cwt.—that is £6 13s. 4d. a ton. How are we going to carry fish at £6 13s. 4d. a ton? The special rates come to £3 8s. per ton, but before they can get the fish on to the line at all they have to be carried over one of our light railways—the Dingle Light Railway a distance of 24 miles, at a cost of 9s. per ton, and if you add that to the £3 8s. you can understand why, even with special railway rates, the fishing industry is unable to live. I have put into pamphlet form a scheme which I think might meet this difficulty, and I have taken as my model a group of Manx boats, the owners of which have formed a co-operative society amongst themselves, and catch their own fish and hire the steamer to send it to market. The Manx owners paid down £10 per vessel to commence with to supply this want. [Read report of Fishery Inspector.] Now, gentlemen, if I can get your support in pushing my little plan with any improvement any other gentleman is able to make, I shall feel that my time has not been lost, and I shall thank you all.

Mr. Joseph Barber (London): I second this resolution with a great deal of pleasure because I feel sure that this Conference—and in fact Englishmen throughout the world—sympathise with any appeal that may come from Ireland. This resolution appeals to the Government for some assistance towards providing greater facilities by which Irish fish may be placed in the English markets. Now, if anyone will take the returns from the Board of Trade as summarised by the Committee of the Association, one thing must strike

them as being a matter of greater prominence than any other, and that is, that while it is stated in the returns in almost every instance the quantity landed upon our English coasts has increased from year to year in the past five years, the amount paid for the fish per cwt. has at the same time increased in a greater ratio. That being so it indicates that while the supply of fish to inland customers is increasing the demand is increasing more rapidly; if not, people would not be prepared to pay a greater price for it year after year, and that fact being established I think we cannot doubt for a moment the probability of our having to look to Ireland before long for a greater portion of our supplies of fish. Therefore, being a matter of such importance in connection with our food supply, we can appeal to the Government with confidence and ask them to provide greater facilities for placing Irish fish in the English markets. The Macgillycuddy has referred to the matter at so great a length that it is scarcely necessary to say more; but you will understand that the turning point of this question will be railway rates. The Macgillycuddy has referred to the question of providing steamers, but in connection with the fish trade steamers must always be at a disadvantage in long distances.

The Macgillycuddy: You cannot carry fish alive by rail.

Mr. Barber: No; and Ireland so far as communication with London, Manchester and Birmingham and the principal inland towns is concerned, is a long way off, and it would be impossible for supplies to reach all these important inland centres by steamer communication, therefore we must fall back upon railway rates. The Government is already endeavouring to establish better communication with the West Coast of Ireland by means of an improved railway system. It is only fair we should place before them the necessity not only of providing railways, but also of providing reasonable and moderate rates, and for other facilities—I mean in the way of carrying fish by the fastest possible trains

and to ensure connection with steamers by which it shall cross the channel without delay. Fish does not improve by being kept over for 24 hours. The question has been suggested as to how English fishermen look upon this subject. I believe English fishermen are liberal minded enough to know that in any thing that can be done towards developing the fisheries in Ireland will be something to their advantage, because wherever there are large quantities of fish, and facilities to get it to market, there you will find English boats ready to capture it. If there had been such facilities in existence in connection with the West Coast of Ireland a large number of our own vessels would have been fishing there many years ago, and have been reaping a very handsome harvest in return by sending the fish to the inland markets in England. I therefore entirely concur in the resolution proposed, and I hope you will heartily support it on the grounds I have mentioned.

Mr. Kenny (Garnish): After the lengthened speeches of the Macgillycuddy and Mr. Barber I shall not trespass much upon your time. I am anxious, however, to point out to you that the seas bordering on South-west Cork furnish an inexhaustable mine of wealth which, if you extract it, will afford a magnificent food supply to tens of thousands of your people, and at the same time give profitable employment along many of our congested districts. Develop the fishing industry and that will develop others, such as boat-building, net making, and so on. It also differs from other things in this—that the seed is providentially cast for you, and you have merely to drop your nets and garner the harvest. The same field may have abundance the next night. Without piers and slips, however, at some places where they are sadly needed—such as at Garnish and Ballydonegan—it is impossible at times to prosecute the fishing. To encourage a company, too, to improve the present mode of transit of the fish to market, the Government would very materially assist by subsidising fast steamers when the cargo would be below a certain minimum. It was

interesting to note your speeches on immature fish. We have no such grievance. In fact, if you were to sit on the rocks with me at times and see the huge fish sporting themselves at the surface, you would be inclined to think that they had formed a kind of "Mutual Admiration Society" when they had escaped the fisherman's net so long. I thank you, gentlemen, for placing the subject on your Agenda paper, and have much pleasure in supporting the resolution.

Mr. J. L. Sayer (London): I have always stood up on behalf of the Irish Fisheries since I have been connected with the trade, and think that what is required is a low railway rate. I say there is no fish which comes into the market like the Irish fish. Irish mackerel and Irish herrings have a very fine flavour, but they are prevented from coming into the English market by the high railway rates. I consider that the Great Western Railway Company are exceedingly hard upon the Irish people. They bring coal from South Wales at 6s. 8d. a ton, but for Irish fish from Milford they charge 65s. a ton. Now, I think that is a very high rate, and hope the Government will interfere and say to the Company "Why cannot you bring common kinds of fish at something like the rate at which you carry coal." We empty the trucks directly the fish arrives, but as to coal it is in the trucks sometimes 4 and 5 days, and sometimes a week. I think there ought to be a lower rate for the common kinds of fish, both from Scotland and Ireland. If something is not done in this way the foreigners will take possession of our markets. They are getting their fish into London at 10s. to 15s. a ton. How do you think we can develope the Irish Fisheries if we have to contend with the enormously high rates charged by the railway companies. I hope some sort of expression will go from this Conference to the Great Western and other Railway Companies with a view of asking them to lower their charges for the carriage of common kinds of fish from Ireland and Scotland; because, having been connected

with Ireland for 25 or 30 years I am of opinion that we shall have to go to Ireland for our fish supply, especially for prime fish, in a very short time.

Mr. Alderman Mudd (Grimsby): I do not know that I need say much on this question, but expressions have been put forward as a feeler as to how the English fishermen may view the question of supporting the Irish demands on subsidising the trade. So far as I am concerned I believe anyone who traverses the West Coast of Ireland for the purpose of learning the condition of the people and the position of the fishing industry along the coast will come to the conclusion that I did, and that something ought to be done by the Government to develope the fisheries and to help the people. Two-thirds of the people along the coast are without shoes or stockings. There is a splendid fishing ground at their very doors, but they have neither the experience nor facilities for developing it. I say it is the duty of the Government to help these people in some form. I support the principle of the resolution, namely, that it is the duty of the Government to assist in the development of the Irish Fisheries, and I believe that ere long, as has already been suggested, we ourselves may be very glad of facilities for the carriage of fish which we may catch there.

Mr. Newby (London Fish Trades Association): Great stress has been laid on railway rates. I quite agree with what has been said, but I lay greater stress upon the railway delivery of these choice fish during market hours. It is of no use bringing fish into the market at 8 and 9 o'clock, when the West End fishmongers go home at 7 o'clock. We lose a lot of money in that way. With regard to salmon, the salmon of Ireland is of the greatest importance to the Irish nation, not a word has been said about that fishery to-day. I believe that if the salmon industry had been properly brought before the House of Commons, so much money would not have been spent in buying up land as in favouring the fisheries of that country. I have always

understood that Providence smiles on those who work themselves. We in England have a great cause of complaint as to the way in which Irishmen look after their fish. They send it here in the dirtiest way possible. Their salmon is the finest in the world, but in consequence of the dirty ice they put on it, they seriously deteriorate the value. If the gentlemen whom I see here, and who have great influence with the Irish people, would only instruct them to take more care of their fish and to pack them in a proper manner I am sure they would be well rewarded for their trouble.

The Macgillycuddy: Mr. Newby; Rome was not built in a day; when we get more fish we will take more care of it.

The resolution was then carried unanimously.

RAILWAY RATES.

Mr. J. L. Sayer (London): I beg to move:

"That this Conference, while recognising the "concessions gained for the fishing industry "in the modified classification of merchan- "dise, schedules of rates and charges and "perishable merchandise classification, as "detailed in the London & North Western "Railway Company (Rates and Charges) "Order Confirmation Act, 1891, is strongly "of opinion that no practical benefit can "accrue to the industry from those con- "cessions inasmuch as they do not affect "the actual rates now charged, which are "excessive and, in some cases, almost pro- "hibitive, and that the Bill known as the "'Railway Companies (Carriage of Fish) "Bill' should be re-introduced into Parlia- "ment."

I consider that the inquiry so far as the fishing industry was concerned, was a complete fraud. Dust was thrown in our eyes to induce us not to proceed with the Bill

which we drafted at a very great expense and trouble. In the Railway Rates Inquiry they inquired into maximum rates of something like £8 a ton on herrings. We know that they do not fetch £8 a ton, so what is the good of inquiring about a rate which we know they never can charge us. The most they charge from Scotland is £3 15s. a ton. I hope the President will re-introduce the Bill which we drafted. He obtained 200 signatures to it, and I blame him for not going on with that Bill. I cannot understand why he did not proceed with it. There is honour in defeat, and if our President had been defeated we should still have had the satisfaction of knowing that he had produced the Bill which we drafted, and which we as practical men thought would have been a great benefit to the fishermen of England. We must study the fishermen of England. If the fishermen cannot live, we cannot get the fish, and we must therefore study them. It is not the consumer, not the middle man, but the fishermen whom we must look after, and if they cannot send their fish to market they cannot live. I hope you will one and all agree with this resolution, and that the President will re-introduce that Bill, known as the Common Kinds of Fish Rates Bill.

The President: I think before I call upon the seconder of this motion, it is as well that I should explain in a few words the little error that our friend Mr. Sayer has fallen into. (Hear, hear.) I will only deal with the facts of the case. The facts are these—that the "Railway Companies (Carriage of Fish) Bill" was introduced by myself at the request of the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association. I balloted for the Bill at the commencement of the Session, and like a large percentage of disappointed Members at the commencement of the Session, I was amongst that lot and did not get a place for the Bill. It is a standing rule of the House of Commons that a Bill must be read a second time before Whitsuntide if it is to be proceeded with. Let that be clearly understood. The Bill never

came before the House except for a very brief period indeed. It was blocked by the chairman of one of the leading Railway Companies; therefore being blocked it could not be taken after 12 o'clock at night. There never was an opportunity to get on with the Bill. I did my very utmost with the Government to persuade them to grant the fishing industry a night for the discussion of the Bill. I obtained, as Mr. Sayer has said, over 200 signatures to a memorial to the Cabinet asking that this Bill should, by special permission, be taken. That was in June, and it was just the time when the Government always takes the whole time of the House. What was the next step? The Government Bill was introduced, and I was asked to try before the Grand Committee on Trade to introduce the clauses of the Bill into the Government Bill. There was a certain number of gentlemen connected with fishing ports on the Grand Committee. When I moved that these clauses should be inserted in the Government Bill, I was naturally opposed by the Government because it was dealing with quite another question, namely, maximum rates, and this Bill referred to actual rates. Not one, so far as my memory serves me, of those M.P.'s representing fishing ports were there to support me. That is exactly what happened. I am sure there was not present one of the members who had backed the Bill—Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Hunter, the highest authority on railway rates, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Gillhooly, Mr. Mallock, Mr. Barclay, and Sir Albert Rollit. I am certain that everything that could be done to get this Bill passed was done. It is only right that I should publicly make this explanation

Mr. Oakley (London): I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution for various reasons. The Bill that has been referred to as Sir Edward Birkbeck's Bill was under consideration by the Executive Committee of the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association for about two years, and was thoroughly discussed from time to time, and it was supposed to

contain something that fishermen wanted or what the industry required. You have heard from Sir Edward Birkbeck the unfortunate circumstances that prevented the Bill coming to the front; but what has stood in the place of it has given no satisfaction to the fishing industry. There has been a great deal of clamour raised in this Commission, no doubt instigated by the Railway Companies, with regard to terminals. I would point out to you that to a very great extent what is the interest of the Association is also to the interest of the Railway Companies. We are not opposed to railway interests, and I cannot understand why all this clamour about terminals should be set up. Terminals are part of the railways, and a railway should have all the appliances of a railway, and there should be one charge made by the railway for carrying from one point to another. There is another important feature they made a great question of, and that was with regard to through rates. What they mean by through rates I do not think is generally understood by the public. Through rates should be over two or three lines of railways over long distances, but they should not include collection, delivery and terminals. I submit that it suits them in a very great measure to do that. I have been on the coast myself and seen fish seriously deteriorated for want of cartage. The fishing industry is suffering enormously in this matter. I have seen fish standing in the sun for the greater portion of a day, and instead of the fish coming into London on the following morning fit and clean for sale and fit for any west end customer, it came in in a very bad condition and did not therefore realise what it should have done. Another thing that has not been dealt with in the manner that is provided for in "Sir Edward Birkbeck's Bill" is that fish consigned to the coast or to the continent cannot be diverted. This would be a great convenience if it could be managed. What Companies mean by through rates is when the fish is consigned from any given port to another given

port that it must go there. That frustrates the idea of the consigner. One of the things provided for in "Sir Edward Birkbeck's Bill" was that the consignor should have the control of his fish and that the railway should take it over their line and make delivery at the other end. That is what Railway Companies ought to do, and they ought not to have anything to do with collection or delivery. Then the question of re-distribution—the most important of all—has been entirely lost sight of. Re-distribution in my view is one of the greatest things we have to study in the fishing industry. As matters stand at present re-distribution of fish when it leaves the coast is positively prohibited. People living in many large villages and towns do not know what fish is. If a low rate for the carriage of fish were made, I contend that much of it would go over the railway a second time. In "Sir Edward Birkbeck's Bill" it was provided that fish might be sent by passenger train at a trifle above the goods rate. When the London market is over-charged there is no outlet for the fish to the country districts owing to prohibitory rates. What is the use of bringing the fish to London if there is no outlet?

The Rev. W. S. Lach-Szyrma (Newlyn Fishery Association): I have been asked to represent our Newlyn Industry. We feel there that it is a vital question to the Cornish fishery to have cheap communication. In the summer time thousands of fish are destroyed and sold as manure which might very well have been used in the London market. The real question is one of communication, and the heavy charges made by the Great Western Railway. Sometimes fish are cheap, and as we are 300 miles from London it is manifest that they could not get remunerative prices. I know cases in St. Ives in which five millions of fish were caught in one seine. A great quantity of our fish might be sold if they could be got to market. I really represent both sides, and being a shareholder in the Great Western Railway, I should not like the shares to go down. I

should not like the railway to lose anything by it, but I believe they would gain more by charging a fair rate for the carriage of fish from Cornwall than by making the prohibitory rates which exist now. Though we want to have larger receipts on the railway, we also want cheaper communication between London and our fishery.

Mr. Newby: What sort of fish were these five millions to which you referred?

Mr. Lach-Szyrma: Pilchard.

Mr. Williamson (London): A word on behalf of the London public in this matter. Again and again we are hearing in the Press, and we know as practical men it is only too true, that there is any amount of fish caught upon the Irish and Scotch coasts and elsewhere which cannot be brought to London owing to the prohibitory railway rates. Now the resolution submitted to you to-day asks this Conference to submit again to Parliament the old "Railway Rates (common kinds of fish) Bill." I believe directors and others connected with the various railway companies have always met this Bill with the answer that it simply means confiscation. I answer back by stating to them confiscation is in no way applicable to this question, because if you want a cheap railway rate, the only way to get the Companies to reduce their rates is to bring in a powerful opposition; and I submit if a powerful opposition could be brought to bear upon the Great Western in the neighbourhood of Newlyn and Penzance we should have a much lower rate. But we are going to Parliament to raise the question *de novo*. We consider the recent inquiry of the Board of Trade so far as we are concerned has ended in an absolute failure. It has done us harm in many cases, and has raised the rates for the carriage of fish, and it has done us one very serious injury. Prior to this inquiry many railway companies would bring the fish from the English and Scotch coasts at computed weights. They have abolished them now, and I say that is a misfor-

tune; but if we go to Parliament and ask them to consider this Bill, the whole of the merits of the question will be brought under discussion by a representative body in the House of Commons. That has not been done yet because our esteemed President has not had an opportunity; but if the Bill is re-introduced it will be discussed on its merits. We, as practical men, must not consider the railway companies. Parliament has given them a very powerful monopoly, and surely as a return for the monoply the least thing they can do is to bring our fish food supplies into the great metropolitan centres, whereby the fishermen on the one hand may gain a living, and the London and metropolitan poor may have the benefit of this cheap fish food. If we go to Parliament and state our case, Parliament must listen to us. The National Sea Fisheries Protection Association has in its memorandum of articles a certain provision which enables them to use their endeavours so far as possible to obtain due representation of the fishing industry in Parliament. It is a great misfortune for us that our friend, Sir Edward, is not more ably supported in the House, and we ought not to leave this Hall unless we thoroughly make up our minds that we will use our best endeavours with the various representatives in the legislature with whom we have a voice, and endeavour to impress upon them the necessity of advocating the desirability of this Bill of ours being made law. When once it is made law the railway companies will fall in with it; and why? Because they will recognise the fact that augmented supplies mean augmented receipts, and then we should get the benefit, but until that time arrives the railway companies will consider our application as one of confiscation, which is untrue. I might have said a great deal more, but I do appeal to the country and to Parliament to remember this fact that thousands upon thousands of tons of cheap fish food can be obtained and brought within our metropolitan centres provided companies will use their machinery to do it with and

bring it at a fair rate. If we push our Bill we shall get it passed.

Mr. James Judd: I think the resolution should be modified by using the word "little" instead of "no" advantages. There is one thing I wish to call the attention of the Conference to and that is the question of re-distribution. I had the opportunity of having an interview with Mr. Birt of the Great Eastern Railway, to see if there was any possibility of developing the distribution of the supply of fish through the instrumentality of the railways, and I ventured to suggest that it might be worth the consideration of the Association whether it is not possible to get a market for fish at every railway station. We know that there are lots of places in England where the people never see fish. A system surely could be adopted with the aid of the telegraph when there is an immense quantity of fish landed at our various ports, by which the fish might be distributed on these exceptional occasions to the villages throughout the country. This may appear a fanciful hope, and it may be thought would be rendered impossible by its cost; but there are two things in reference to this feat, namely, what you pay, and what you get for what you pay. If you could get your fish distributed you would not mind paying the cost, because you would be enabled to get the fish to a greater number of customers at prices much higher than those afforded by the present limited number of markets. It may be worth consideration whether a scheme of this sort would be practicable or not, but I think an attempt should be made in some way or another to multiply your markets and thus meet the wants of the people of this country, and enable them to obtain fish in places where they cannot obtain it now.

Mr. Newby: I object to the Common Kinds of Fish Bill, as I think it should relate to all kinds of fish, because the common kind of fish of to-day is very likely in the near future to be prime fish. I hope to see through the instrumentality of the Fishmongers' Com-

pany the primest of fish, so far as cheapness is concerned, brought to the doors of every person in London—I mean salmon. If it had not been for the Fishmongers' Company taking the salmon fisheries under their wing some years ago, salmon would not have been an article of food, but would now have become an article of the greatest luxury. I am surprised that Mr. Judd did not state what the indefatigable manager of the Great Eastern Railway, Mr. Birt, proposed to do. Mr. Birt proposed to carry vegetables and deliver them and collect the money, at about 1s.per package, which if successful would affect many green-grocers. I support the Bill because I believe if it is carried it will be a means of getting cheap distribution of fish food in London. We do not believe in railways distributing food ; we do not believe in theories ; we believe in costermongers and cheap fish shops as being the best way of distributing fish in London.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR FISHERMEN.

Mr. Ascroft (Lytham) : The reason I speak on this subject is that we are the only county that has gone to any extent in promoting technical education for fishermen. In Lancashire the County Council are a great way in advance of the London County Council, and they have devoted the whole of the money which they so fortunately received from the compensation for publichouses to technical education. Their share of that which the fishermen are getting is devoted to two purposes. In the first place they have asked Professor Herdman, of the Liverpool Marine Biological Society, to deliver lectures upon the different food and shell fish on our own coasts, making the men acquainted with the lives of those fish which they catch. In the next place they have devoted £200 a year to the establishment of a school of navigation in which fishermen are taught free by a thoroughly

competent master the use of charts and the use of quadrants so that they may be able to get their latitude. I have been across the North Sea, and I can tell you that if you know where your latitude is you cannot go very far wrong. The depth of the water and the color will tell you within a mile or two where you are. I think if the example set by Lancashire is followed by other County Councils, the fishing industry will benefit thereby. Fishermen will be none the worse off for possessing this information, and it may do them a great deal of good. I have great pleasure in moving this resolution;

"That in the opinion of this Conference, it would
"be of great benefit to the fishing industry
"if provisions were made by County Councils
"for the technical education of fishermen."

Mr. Geo. Alward: I have very great pleasure in seconding the proposition. What has taken place in this Conference during the last two days, and more particularly this morning, proves to me that technical and scientific education is highly requisite in connection with the fisheries. We have now got established round the coasts official boards, which are supposed to collect information and to watch over the interests of fishermen. It is very well known that but little scientific knowledge has been brought to bear upon sea fishing until very recent years, and the more scientific knowledge we obtain on this question the greater the necessity appears to be to get further information, and having got these institutions established all round the coast, I believe this Conference will do well to call attention to the fact that they have money at their disposal, and that they cannot do better than devote some amount of it to the technical education of fishermen. We have fortunately in our locality two institutions which can lay claim to a fair share of any money which may come to our locality, one is the Fisher Lads' Institute, established years ago, for the purpose of educating fisher lads and fishermen, but all has not been done

that can be done, and that has principally arisen from the want of means. We have an Institution which can be utilised more fully so far as navigation is concerned and we have established a small Biological Society for the purpose of scientific investigation. There again we fall short of information which we ought to obtain for the want of means, and if such institutions as these were assisted by the money in the hands of these local institutions, I believe we should derive a large benefit therefrom. I will second the resolution.

Sir Wm. Crossman, M.P. : I must not allow the mover of this proposition to flatter himself that Lancashire is the only county in which the question of technical education for fishermen has been considered. We have in Northumberland considered it for 18 months, and we have gone very much on the same lines as Lancashire has done. We have selected fishermen from the villages who had been appointed by their fellow fishermen to attend the school of navigation at South Shields. These men are paid 35s. a week and receive instruction in all practical matters concerning what I may call inferior navigation, which is necessary for them to know—how to manage boats—and at the same time it enables them to get the Board of Trade certificate of a certain class. We have also arranged for Prof. Cossar Ewart to give a series of lectures in the fishing villages, and I think, therefore, you will acknowledge that we have gone as far as you have.

Mr. Ascroft : I do.

Sir Wm. Crossman, M.P. : Then it has been brought before the County Council that fishermen should be taught how to cook properly. This would be a good thing, not only for their comfort but for their health. I am afraid that various counties may go upon different lines. It would be a great thing if some conclusion could be come to as regards the nature of technical education which ought to be given to fishermen. There is a great tendency for scientific people to talk over the

heads of the people, and put knowledge at their command in words which fishermen cannot understand. That is a matter to be avoided, not only in fishing but in other matters; but if it can be arranged that the outcome of this Conference should be the establishment of a course of technical instruction to be given to fishermen, it would be a very good thing, and it would enable the County Councils to assist the fishermen.

Mr. Douglas (Grimsby): On behalf of the fishermen of Grimsby, I am entirely in favour of technical education, and I think that schools for the purpose ought to be established.

Sir Albert Rollit: I should like to say two or three words about this all important subject, and I speak as a member of the Council of the Marine Biological Association. I am going to tell you where you can help us. On that council we have been devising some means for technical education, but it is true that the men we have to deal with, feel themselves that they are bound to talk over the heads of the people. They have not a unity of tongue with the people. We do not grasp the particular subjects which have to be dealt with. I will tell you how you can render real service in the solution of the problem, and that is by putting before us a scheme showing exactly and practically what you wish to be done and how you would wish it should be done. That scheme I will convey to the council, and I have no doubt you will render them very material help. I am now arranging for a lecturer to go to the trawlers in Hull, and you are doing something of the sort at Grimsby, but you want to continue science and practical work. Without science practical work is only a rule of thumb, and there is no training; at the same time, without practical work science is only professional. There must be the workshop combined with the school. I am sorry that another public engagement has taken me from the Irish Fisheries question, but I have the deepest sympathy with the work which the Macgillycuddy is doing. I

went to Baltimore in the autumn, and I can say I never saw anything so splendid, socially, practically, and politically, anywhere as in the schools at Baltimore. I travelled two nights to see them, and I was well repaid the trouble. There you have that which is not eclipsed in the world. There are two lessons which I think you may well learn, go to Baltimore and learn how to do it, and then go to Clifton and learn how to do it. Where I can lend a hand in relation to that country, and also my own in relation to the fishing, I will do so.

THE PRESIDENT: I have received a telegram from Mr. Anderson, of Lewis, of the Fishermen's Association of Stornoway, which reads as follows:—"Regret cannot be present at Conference, would respectfully suggest that Conference pass resolution asking County Councils make provision for grants for technical education for fishermen. Our County Council has already given grants for teaching navigation."

MR. FRAYNE: I rise in the name of the Grimsby fishermen to say that we have done nothing to educate the fishermen. We have a fisher lads institute, and I say it is a shame that our County Council have not done something in the matter. With regard to what Sir Albert Rollit has said, nothing could be better than to get some practical men to work with you.

The resolution was then agreed to.

On the motion of SIR ALBERT ROLLIT, seconded by SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN, it was resolved:—

"That the Executive be requested to prepare a "draft scheme of practical technical educa- "tion for fishermen for submission to the "Marine Biological Association, Branch and "Affiliated Associations, County Councils, "and others."

National Sea Fisheries Protection Association.

FISHERIES CONFERENCE, 1892.

THIRD DAY.

Friday, February 26th.

AGENDA.

1. National Insurance for Sea Fishermen.

2. Merchandise Marks Act, 1887.

3. Culture of Sea Fish.

4. Market Rents and Tolls.

National Sea Fisheries Protection Association.

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE

HELD ON

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26th, 1892.

Sir E. Birkbeck, Bart., M.P., President, in the chair.

Present:

Messrs. G. L. Alward, Jas. Alward, H. T. Anstruther, R. L. Ascroft, G. A. Bacon, H. Barber, J. Barber, F. Barrett, F. D. Barrett, G. Barrow, E. Belleroche, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Bart., M.P., Messrs. W. Bowyer, B. M. Bradbeer (Mayor of Lowestoft), W. L. Calderwood, C. F. Carter, R. Collins, General Sir William Crossman, K.C.M.G., M.P., Messrs. R. A. Dawson, John Dent, Alderman G. Doughty, R. Douglas, W. T. Dunlin, W. C. Edwards, J. H. Fellows, R. Frayne, Dr. T. Wemyss Fulton, Messrs. Alderman E. Grindley, J. Guzzwell, A. Hamman, The Right Hon. Edward Heneage, M.P., Messrs. E. W. L. Holt, Wm. Howlett, C. Jeffs, G. Jeffs, E. Jex, E. Kemp, T. Kenny, J. Knight, Rev. W. S. Lach-Szyrma, Messrs. Jas. Leeming, F. Leleu, W. Lengfield, G. S. Letten, John Little, W. Lloyd, W. R. Locking, V. W. Lynn, J. MacCombie, The Macgillycuddy, H. Maddick, H. Noel Malan, S. Matt, J. M. Morrison, H. Morris, T. C. Moss,

H. Mudd, David Murray, Joseph Murrell, C. Oakley, W. R. Oxley, E. Plowman, Major Rasch, M.P., Messrs. E. W. Rashleigh, W. F. Rice, R. Roach, W. L. Robins, Wm. Rome, H. E. Russell, W. Sanders, J. L. Sayer, E. Sève, Wm. Sutton, Alderman G. J. Tilling, Alderman H. Toozes, J. A. Travers.

The President: I have received a letter from the Solicitor-General (Sir Edward Clarke) expressing great regret that he was prevented being here on the first two days, but he expects to be here during some portion of the day. He has, however, a very important case in which he is engaged. Since I left here last evening, I have been summoned on a Parliamentary Committee, which meets at half-past 3 to-day, so I must ask the Conference to excuse me at 3 o'clock, and to vote the Mayor of Lowestoft, who is Vice-President of the Association, to the chair. We have a gentleman present, Mr. Evelyn W. Rashleigh, delegate from the County of Cornwall Fishery Committee, who is hon. secretary of the Fisheries Exhibition of Cornwall, and he desires that I should state that a very extensive Fisheries Exhibition will be held in Cornwall in July, 1893. It is very influentially supported. I have pleasure to state that the Executive Committee this morning, has given permission to the Mayor of Lowestoft (Mr. Bradbeer) to read certain resolutions that were passed at Lowestoft, bearing upon subjects that have not been dealt with during our Conference, and which are not on the Agenda. The Executive considers that the subjects are of very great importance, and they have expressed the hope that the Conference will allow this resolution to be adopted, and, if possible, without debate, so that we can go on with the other subjects at once. I therefore call upon Mr. Bradbeer to formally move each of these resolutions, and if some gentleman will second them, I will put them to the meeting at once.

Mr. Bradbeer (Mayor of Lowestoft): I am exceedingly obliged to you for having consented, with the

Executive, to allow me to bring before the Conference the following important resolutions, which I have the pleasure to move:—

A protest against the exorbitant tariff now imposed by the French Government upon British-caught fish was read by the Mayor of Lowestoft on behalf of the fishing industry of that town.

"That it is desirable that Her Majesty's Govern-
"ment should instruct the British Consuls
"and representatives in North and South
"America, Africa, Australia, New Zealand,
"Spain and Portugal to specially report
"whether there is any demand for salted
"and smoked herrings in or near their
"respective districts, and to give all infor-
"mation they can respecting the same."

Mr. Jex seconded the resolutions which, being put, were unanimously carried.

NATIONAL INSURANCE FOR SEA FISHERMEN.

The President: Before entering upon the discussion of National Insurance for Sea Fishermen, it may be as well that I should point out to the Conference that the question has been debated at previous Conferences, and since we last met, a Charter of Incorporation has been sanctioned and carried through for the establishment of a Royal Provident Fund for Sea Fishermen. The Society was formally inaugurated at England's largest and most important fisheries port, namely, Grimsby, on the 4th January last, when the meeting was eminently successful on account of the great energy, perseverance and determination of all the fishing industry at that port, to make the establishment of the society a national success; and having been present on that occasion, I can most faithfully report that I never came across a body of men interested in the wel-

benefits and the like, but I would like to give this Conference a resumé in a very few words of what has been my experience in Scotland in endeavouring to form branches of the Royal Provident Fund. It will be universally recognised that those gentlemen who take the pains and give the time entirely gratuitously —and chief among them is our President of to-day— to manage the affairs of this fund should be supported by the industry in their efforts to ameliorate its condition in this respect. It is open to any branch, by consulting the Central Council, to get the very best actuarial or financial opinion; and by becoming affiliated to the Royal Provident Fund it makes it a certainty. There are one or two difficulties which have come in my way. I have found that many of the existing Fishermen's Societies are neutral benefit societies, and provide for benefits to wives, orphans, or dependents in the case of a fisherman losing his life by accident and equally in case of his death from natural causes. Well, those of you who have gone into the question of the Royal Provident Fund know that we have no power to insure against death by natural causes. It would have been impossible for us to come into competition with the large interests involved in the business of life assurance, and it was wisely determined by the Council that we should, in going to the Privy Council to ask for a Royal Charter, limit our operations to loss of life by accident in pursuit of the calling and not to natural causes. It would be impossible for the existing Mutual Benefit Societies to become affiliated with the Royal Provident Fund. Therefore it appears to me that the best course to pursue is to form new branches upon the basis of the Royal Provident fund. I found also another difficulty. Some of the Mutual Benefit Societies have no fixed schedule of payments or of benefits, or if they have fixed payments they have no fixed benefits. The Directors may from time to time deal with accidents or deaths as they arise, and take whatever sum of money their fund

Executive, to allow me to bring before the Conference the following important resolutions, which I have the pleasure to move:—

A protest against the exorbitant tariff now imposed by the French Government upon British-caught fish was read by the Mayor of Lowestoft on behalf of the fishing industry of that town.

"That it is desirable that Her Majesty's Govern-
"ment should instruct the British Consuls
"and representatives in North and South
"America, Africa, Australia, New Zealand,
"Spain and Portugal to specially report
"whether there is any demand for salted
"and smoked herrings in or near their
"respective districts, and to give all infor-
"mation they can respecting the same."

Mr. Jex seconded the resolutions which, being put, were unanimously carried.

NATIONAL INSURANCE FOR SEA FISHERMEN.

The President: Before entering upon the discussion of National Insurance for Sea Fishermen, it may be as well that I should point out to the Conference that the question has been debated at previous Conferences, and since we last met, a Charter of Incorporation has been sanctioned and carried through for the establishment of a Royal Provident Fund for Sea Fishermen. The Society was formally inaugurated at England's largest and most important fisheries port, namely, Grimsby, on the 4th January last, when the meeting was eminently successful on account of the great energy, perseverance and determination of all the fishing industry at that port, to make the establishment of the society a national success; and having been present on that occasion, I can most faithfully report that I never came across a body of men interested in the wel-

fare of the fishermen of the country, who worked harder and who did more for the establishing of the success of this National Society and I am glad that we are honored with the presence of one of the Council of the Royal Provident Fund for Sea Fishermen, namely, Mr. H. T. Anstruther, M.P., who will move a resolution with regard to this matter.

Mr. Anstruther, M.P.: I am very much indebted to the Executive for giving me the privilege of making a few remarks upon this subject to-day, and of being permitted to move the resolution which I shall submit to you, but I am bound to say I am a little disappointed that the President, who is so very intimately acquainted with the subject, has not given the Conference the benefit of a rather more extended speech upon the matter.

The President: I wished to give you the credit of doing it.

Mr. Anstruther: I have not come here prepared to enter into details, because I hold an opinion which I think will be very generally shared by members of this Conference, that we have rather to lay down broad principles here in as short a time as possible, than spend many hours in discussing matters of detail, which are better dealt with by committees. I therefore beg to move the following resolution:

> "That this Conference desires to emphasize the "urgency of the question of insurance for "fishermen; to draw the attention of the "population to the advantages afforded by "the Royal Provident Fund for Sea Fisher-"men; and to commend the institution to "the liberal support of the public."

As I am speaking on this question to a converted audience I do not think it necessary to enlarge upon the urgency and necessity of insurance for fishermen. We are all agreed as to the necessity. All that we desire in bringing the subject up on this occasion is to emphasize to the public through our friends and the press that it is considered a subject of

the very highest importance by all who have anything to do with the fishing industry. On the general question of fishermen's insurance I hold that anyone who may find himself in a position comparatively easier than that of the sea fisherman should approach this subject with great deference, because it is not for us to preach, it is rather for us to persuade them that it is for their own good that they should take the important step. But I would urge upon those fishermen who have not made any such provision that they fulfil a three-fold duty in doing so. They owe a duty to themselves ; they owe a duty to their friends, and in a certain measure they owe a duty to the public. The public of this country has never been behind hand whenever an appeal has been made to them at a time of disaster or calamity. It redounds very much to the credit of the generous sentiments of the public that this has been the case; but fishermen, on the other hand, owe it to the public that they should make some effort to help themselves. I am very well aware that in most of our large fishing ports and in many of our smaller ports most laudable attempts have been made by the fishing population to place themselves and their families beyond the reach of want should anything happen to themselves. At the same time I think that every one will agree that much remains to be done, and it is for us to urge upon the community to complete the work which has been so successfully begun. With regard to the second clause of my resolution dealing with the advantages offered by the Royal Provident Fund for Sea Fishermen, I would take this opportunity of asking the members of the Conference to make themselves acquainted with the contents of the blue pamphlet, some copies of which the secretary to the fund has placed at our disposal, and to urge upon all of you the advantages which are to be derived from forming branches affiliated to the Royal Provident Fund. It is not for me, on an occasion of this kind, to enter into details as to payments and schedules and

benefits and the like, but I would like to give this Conference a resumé in a very few words of what has been my experience in Scotland in endeavouring to form branches of the Royal Provident Fund. It will be universally recognised that those gentlemen who take the pains and give the time entirely gratuitously —and chief among them is our President of to-day— to manage the affairs of this fund should be supported by the industry in their efforts to ameliorate its condition in this respect. It is open to any branch, by consulting the Central Council, to get the very best actuarial or financial opinion; and by becoming affiliated to the Royal Provident Fund it makes it a certainty. There are one or two difficulties which have come in my way. I have found that many of the existing Fishermen's Societies are neutral benefit societies, and provide for benefits to wives, orphans, or dependents in the case of a fisherman losing his life by accident and equally in case of his death from natural causes. Well, those of you who have gone into the question of the Royal Provident Fund know that we have no power to insure against death by natural causes. It would have been impossible for us to come into competition with the large interests involved in the business of life assurance, and it was wisely determined by the Council that we should, in going to the Privy Council to ask for a Royal Charter, limit our operations to loss of life by accident in pursuit of the calling and not to natural causes. It would be impossible for the existing Mutual Benefit Societies to become affiliated with the Royal Provident Fund. Therefore it appears to me that the best course to pursue is to form new branches upon the basis of the Royal Provident fund. I found also another difficulty. Some of the Mutual Benefit Societies have no fixed schedule of payments or of benefits, or if they have fixed payments they have no fixed benefits. The Directors may from time to time deal with accidents or deaths as they arise, and take whatever sum of money their fund

permits. In other cases they at their annual meeting lay down a scale of payment which shall hold good during the forth-coming year. Now neither of these conditions complies with the requirements of the Royal Provident Fund, for it has been suggested in the rules which we offer to Branch Associations for acceptance that in every case where a branch is formed there should be set down a fixed schedule of payments to be made, and of benefits which will accrue under any circumstances that may arise. I was met at once in my own coast boroughs with the question—"tell us what benefit you can assure to us before we answer whether we are willing to make a certain contribution?" —a very reasonable position to take up, I think. I therefore went back to the Council and made a suggestion that has been adopted—that there should be a set of schedules prepared by the actuary to the fund showing what benefits would accrue upon certain payments. I hope very much that we shall have the schedule prepared shortly, because we shall then be able to go to the fishing population with a much clearer idea of our position and be able to point out the benefits which will accrue. I have been very anxious not to go into any detail in this matter. I am afraid, from the interest I take in the subject, I have been tempted to err against the canon that I have laid down for myself. I will only say, in conclusion, that I beg it may go forth to the public from this Conference that the question of insurance for fishermen is one of the highest importance, and that "those who go down to the sea in ships" may not only take with them the warm wishes for their welfare of everyone ashore, but may go to sea with the confidence that those whom they may leave behind may not be wanting in that material consolation which after all is the first necessity of life.

Mr. James Alward: Of all questions brought before us at this Conference the one now under consideration surely must claim the closest attention. National

Insurance for Fishermen has been adopted here and put forward under various schemes and aspects, but at the present moment we have reached the period when we come with confidence before the assembly and say "it has been reduced to practical shape, and the object in canvassing it to-day is to obtain the co-operation of other persons who are here." I am encouraged in that remark because we were told yesterday that in certain stations so much attention is being paid to the moral welfare of the fishing community that instructions have been given on all matters which concern the well-being of the fishing trade. Now, if efforts of that kind are put forth for commercial purposes, surely the humanitarian aspect of the matter should claim serious attention. I am sorry that some of the fishermen who assembled here on the first and second days of the Conference are absent now, because if there is one thing more than another in which fishermen have an interest it is this particular subject and they ought to have remained in attendance to-day. I am encouraged by the fact that we have men of equal ability representing other parts. The necessity for this movement cannot be questioned. It is perhaps a misfortune to us in Grimsby that we stand in rather a disagreeable position with regard to this object. The fact of so many lives from Grimsby having been lost has perhaps embued us with more zeal than those residing in smaller ports where the loss of life has not been so frequent. In the decade now expiring we have suffered a loss of fishermen to the enormous extent of 800 in round numbers. We believe some of the losses to have been preventible, and we have been directing our attention to that part of the subject, and I believe we have succeeded, through the Board of Trade, in taking precautions to prevent such a sad loss of life; but nevertheless losses do and will go on in the fishing trade, and circumstances are such that they may be prevented from combining together in the manner in which persons on shore can do. The fishing community, although useful and important in

their relation to the national well-being, are deprived of combination. It devolves upon gentlemen present to-day—those possessing practical acquaintance with a business of national importance, and those having influence in the Councils of the nation, to render us all the assistance they can. We are further greatly encouraged that those in high positions have made this a close study, including H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, whose example is worthy of all emulation; and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, a practical seaman, and one who knows sea life, and they have been good enough and zealous enough to publish works on this subject, pointing out the percentage of loss in connection with the fishing trade. Even though we complain that the heads of the Government are lax in their duties, yet with such noble examples as these, if we do not co-operate and support them in a practical manner, it ill becomes us any longer to find fault. In two disastrous years during the last decade we had the miserable experience of seeing no fewer than 264 widows and orphans made in those two years. That is sad and lamentable. We have just tried to diminish that loss by protecting the lives of people so far as we know how, but we have also the duty of alleviating the misery and trouble caused to those survivors. Now, we established a fund of such a character that its stability is guaranteed under Royal Charter. The co-operation which we ask is guaranteed by reason of the influential persons who constitute the Council of that fund; and we hope to be able to influence gentlemen present to co-operate in the various parts of the country they belong to in this grand work. With regard to the institutions which exist, we are told that there are such for the relief of widows and orphans, but the peculiarities of the fishing trade are of such a nature that the institutions in existence for this purpose amongst the fishing community require to be of a special character. Fishermen vary in their circumstances to such an extent that it is necessary, in all important fishing stations, that

committees of a special kind should be formed to administer the funds we are bringing before your notice. During the past ten years we have appealed to the public on occasions of disasters, and have secured no less a sum than £7,000, but we are told repeatedly that the public cannot be indefinitely appealed to, and they demand at our hands that we shall build up an institution where thrift shall come in in connection with this matter. Pure charity, if recklessly administered, is demoralising rather than otherwise. We are told that if assistance is given to a fishing community that we should point out where they can assist themselves, for this is more to be desired than pure benevolence. The country is benevolent in its character, but at the same time the public is weary and disgusted by the administration of funds brought together for benevolent purposes, and we cannot induce true benevolence in charity better than by showing the public that we are disposed to do our duty and cultivate thrift. Fishermen do not desire charity; they desire that kind of assistance which, instead of demoralising and letting men down into the pauper state, co-operates with them and helps them in a manner which enables them to work with us. Relieving the wants of the widows and orphans is only one part of the scheme. We hope to be able to give material assistance to those that may survive the dangers and vicissitudes of their calling, so that when reaching an age when they cannot pursue their arduous work, we may have something to give men such assistance as shall be worthy of ourselves as men, and highly beneficial to the fishing community as a class. I hope what has been said to-day may have a lasting effect.

Mr. Frayne (Grimsby): I should like to know something about this Institution which we have taken a helping hand in forming at Grimsby. A fund for widows and orphans was started in 1883, and I have attended nearly every meeting which has taken place, and seen many benefits accrue to the people through the benevo-

lence of the British public. Now, when Sir Edward Birkbeck came to Grimsby and explained what this Royal Fund was likely to be, and how it was likely to benefit our fishermen, I, with others, saw the benefits that were likely to accrue from it, and we put the matter before our people to the best of our ability, and now our men are taking to it faster than they did before. We have now 230 members of the fund. Wishing to know how far-reaching this Institution is likely to be, and having asked in what position a man's dependents would be if he died at home, I put the question to our local chairman, Mr. Bannister: "If a man died of influenza, in what position will his dependents be in connection with this fund." I did this so that I might have something to go to the people with. His reply was that "they would be all right and receive benefit." I hope someone will corroborate this statement or put me right so that I may clearly inform the people. If our smack owners wish to do good they could not only hang up a bill in their offices but become honorary members, so that everyone connected with the fishing would have an interest in the fund. Then again each smack owner might persuade his men to join the fund, and if we get 3,000 or 4,000 of our men to join, the income will be considerable. Having shown that the men themselves will join, it will be a greater inducement to the outside and general public to help us as they have already done. There is no reason why every man engaged in the fishing should not join. The payments are so low that I do not see any thing to stop a man from joining. If they do not want assistance themselves somebody else will. That is an argument which should apply not only to our fishermen, but to all engaged in the industry. Every smack owner should either become a member pure and simple, or he should become an honorary member to help the cause.

The President: I will answer that question at once by reading the sub-section of the clause in the Charter

which refers to the subject; as I explained at Grimsby, the Council, cannot take up all the questions at first, that we have power to deal with. We took up first of all the question of the widows and orphans, and so far as I recollect, I have intimated at Grimsby as I have done elsewhere, that it was the wish of the Council to put in force further powers that we have under the Charter. Clause 8 of the Charter referring to this subject is as follows:—

"The purposes for which the funds and the income "thereof shall and may be applied shall be—

"(*a*) The relief or maintenance of the widows and "orphans or other relatives of or persons dependent "upon persons who have lost their lives by or as the "result of accident happening in the course of their "employment as Sea Fishermen of the United King-"dom or in connection with the Sea Fishing Industry "of the United Kingdom.

"(*b*) The payment, grant or purchase of fixed sums "or annuities or other allowances for life or otherwise "to or for persons who having been or being engaged "in the occupation of sea fishermen or exposed to "risks in connection with their employment in the "Sea Fishing Industry of the United Kingdom have "reached a certain age, or are in distressed circum-"stances or are prevented either permanently or "temporarily by sicknes (bodily or mental), accident "or other cause, or incapacitated by old age or in-"firmity, from following their occupation or calling.

"(*c*) Subject to the provision in clause (1) herein-"before contained, the purchase, taking on lease and "erection of any institution, house or other building, "and the acquiring of any land which the Council may "deem it desirable to purchase, take on lease, erect or "acquire, and the maintenance of any such institution, "house or building.

"(*d*) The payment of contributions towards the "building, maintenance or annual expenditure of or in "connection with any hospital, home or institution,

" whereby directly or indirectly sea fishermen may " be benefited.

" (*e*) The payment or satisfaction of the obligations " of any society undertaking, or body having objects " the same as or similar to those of the Corporation, " or some of them, and the assisting the formation or " the operations of any such society, undertaking or " body by loans, contributions, or other payments.

" (*f*) The payment to any person or persons, com- " pany or companies, or Government Department, " including particularly the Post Office Savings Bank, " of any monies which the Corporation may contract " to pay in consideration of such person or persons, " company or companies, or Government Department " undertaking to make payments for some or any of the " purposes for which the funds of the Corporation and " the income thereof may be applied as aforesaid.

" (*g*) Generally in furtherance of any of the objects " of the Corporation."

Therefore the council have now under consideration the question whether we would further carry out what was especially alluded to at Hull—the making of an old age fund, and we are also considering the question of a sick fund and an accident fund. All these three matters are now before Mr. Neeson, the highest actuarial authority that we have in London, I believe, who is going to place before us a scheme of payments and benefits bearing upon these additional subjects. I think, Mr. Frayne, that quite answers what you asked.

Mr. Frayne: I thank you, sir.

Mr. Jex: I am very glad to hear of the progress of the Royal Provident Fund, but I have heard no details as to what the usual payments will be. You have just alluded to several things which are under consideration, but I may tell you that there is such an Institution in the port of Great Yarmouth, taking in Yarmouth and Lowestoft people, called the Permanent Fund, which has £15,000 or £16,000 in hand. By paying 5s. a year into that fund, if a man gets disabled

he is entitled to 5s. a week, and 7 times what he has paid in if death ensues, and if he pays 10s. a year he will receive 10s. a week for disablement at sea or on shore, while engaged in his calling, or 7 times what he has paid in if he should die. Therefore being a Permanent Fund of a like character and having a very substantial sum in hand, members become life members by paying 5/- or 10s. a year. By this means they are provided for in case of accident, and their widows and orphans are provided for in case of death. I maintain that this is a fund which ought to be supported by every fisherman in the port of Yarmouth and Lowestoft, and a man who belongs to this does not want to go to the country. In my own opinion, from what I have heard of the Royal Provident Fund, this takes precedence of it by a very long way. If a man can insure for a penny or twopence a week, he need not go further to make provision for his widow or orphan. I think the Royal Fund is a capital thing to introduce amongst the people, but if they can also belong to the Permanent Fund that I have spoken of it will be a very good thing. I should like to hear a few details. I do not know whether there is anything to pay to this Royal Fund. It appears to me that up to the present time the fund arises from the surplus of the Fisheries Exhibition of 1883, and it has since been subscribed to by people in different parts of the country. The Permanent Fund of Yarmouth and Lowestoft, however, is a fund which has been accumulated in consequence of the payments of men who belong to it and probably some small sums that have been left to the fund from time to time. I have stood up on behalf of the widows and orphans of fishermen in this country more than any man, and I have gone to the country time after time and asked for money for them. Mr. Sayer and myself collected 100 guineas each for the fishermen lost in the late gale at Yarmouth and Lowestoft. There are many men who might subscribe to this Institution and make it self-supporting, and I hope this Conference will put such an

amount of stimulus into it that there will be a large accession of members to the fund. I hope and trust that it will go forth from this meeting that we hold out advantages to fishermen to insure their lives by joining the Permanent Fund, and let them also join the Royal Provident Fund, if they will.

The Right Hon. E. Heneage, M.P.: I entirely agree with everything said by Mr. Anstruther; but with regard to what Mr. Frayne said I very much regret that Mr. Bannister should have given that answer, but I am afraid I am the only person to blame. I undertook to be first President of the Fund. I was laid up with influenza, and I am afraid Mr. Bannister was not so much acquainted with the subject as he might have been. There cannot be the slightest doubt that influenza is not an accident at sea, and at the present moment the benefits of the Fund are limited to the widows and orphans of those unfortunate men who lose their lives at sea. With regard to what fell from Mr. Jex, he says no details have been given. I do not wish to weary the meeting, but perhaps after that challenge they will allow me to say what we have done in Grimsby in launching this Fund. We propose that there shall be a payment by each member of 1s. within 7 days of admission to membership, and that he shall pay 6d. a month as subscription, and that any member who is in arrear with his subscription shall pay a fine of a penny after a certain time. The benefits we propose are 5s. a week to the widow and 2s. 6d. a week to each orphan under 12 years of age, and 1s. 6d. for each orphan for the next 12 months. That is what we propose to do at Grimsby. I do not think I need read out any more. I think that will answer Mr. Jex's question with regard to what we have done, and these propositions are entirely based upon what was laid down as a model schedule of the Royal Provident Fund. I, for one, believe that the public who have hitherto been, as my friend has said, so very liberal in giving their subscriptions to appeals will come forward and join this Provident Fund. During

the last unfortunate gale which lost us so many lives at Grimsby in 1889, we got up through the liberality of of the public a very large fund amounting to between £4,000 or £5,000. As Chairman of that Committee I received a very large number of letters personally, besides those received by my friend and organiser, and to whom the fishermen are indebted more than to anybody else, Mr. Carter, of Grimsby. While they deplore the necessity of these appeals having been made, many of them said how glad they should be to become subscribers to any fund, if the fishermen would only begin to act a little for themselves, and I think Mr. Carter has in his possession now the names of a great number of gentlemen whom he is able to write to at once and ask for an annual subscription. I think if fishermen will only see this matter in the right light they will see that we cannot do everything at once. We have begun by providing for the widows and orphan; that is a very good beginning and it is for them to show, by taking up this fund in its present state, that we may look forward to a time when we shall be able to do more. I am very much in favour of pensions for old age; I believe that would be more popular than assurance for life. But we cannot do everything at once. I would appeal to the trade and to fishermen generally to support this Royal Fund not only in London, but in different towns where branches have been set up, and if they will do that, they will show their anxiety that it should go on and prosper; and then we shall be able before long to enlarge the benefits of the fund.

Mr. Ascroft (Lytham): To my mind, in England, charity, to a very great extent, is abused. I happen to be in the position of being agent to the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Society at the Port of Lytham. That is a Society conducted on the same principles, though not to the same extent, as the Royal Provident Fund. I would urge the question as to why we should have two societies for doing precisely the same work, when you have the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society at

every fishing and shipping station and life-boat station, which Society collects payments at no cost whatever to the public. The only thing that Society wants is extending, so that you may have weekly payments instead of payments by lump sums. To my mind, the abuse of charity is gigantic. We have all sorts of societies for giving honorary titles to men and salaries to useless officials. The abuse of charity in London is simply disgraceful. If a man wants a tooth drawn he goes to the hospital and gets it done for nothing. If you want people to do well you want them to help themselves. "God helps those who help themselves," and I know from experience that where there is the largest amount of charity there you find idle, drunken fishermen, with bad boats and no enterprise. Where there are fishermen who have nothing but themselves to depend upon, there you find thrifty men living in their own houses and putting by money, and public houses have to shut up because they cannot make enough money to pay for the license. I can give you a case in point. A beerhouse was sold last year for £7,000, where 400 pints of ale every noon hour were placed ready for the workmen to come in and take it as they came out from their work.

The President: I must ask you to keep to the point. We are on the subject of National Insurance and not on the subject of the sale of ale.

Mr. Ascroft: I want to show that thrift exists where men have to depend upon themselves and public houses have to shut up. In the place I am referring to, 99 out of 100 men are teetotallers, and every man belongs to the Society and has a banking account. I should like this Conference to express an opinion as to whether some agreement might not be come to between the Royal Provident Fund, and the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society with a view of merging the two concerns. By this means a great amount of money would be saved, but I do not believe in helping people unless they help themselves.

Mr. J. Little (Plymouth): I agree with what has been said upon the question of thrift, but my idea is that there is a great deal more thrift amongst our fishermen than among any other class of the community. It has appeared to us at Plymouth that the Royal Provident Fund meets all requirements. We have just established a Society at Plymouth, and one of the reasons I am here is to obtain information with respect to the Royal Provident Fund—how it is managed in other places, what the terms of payment are, and whether the subscriptions are collected from individual members of the Society, and whether the money is paid by vote. I understand in some places the subscription is made from each individual who wishes to join the Association, and in other cases a collection is made at so much per boat. If there is any gentleman here who can give me information privately it will be a great advantage to us. It has been mentioned that so far the Council of the Royal Provident Fund have only decided to deal with cases of death. We do not, fortunately, get a great number of deaths, the actual loss of boats engaged in the fishing is not very great. We thought the principal part of the rules referred to old age and accident, but the Council has not yet dealt with those cases. As the President, however, has said, that has been provided for, and we thought we could go into that matter at once. We want a lot of information on the subject, and we are looking forward, sir, to your visit to Plymouth as one of the Commissioners to enquire into gunnery practice. We do not like the constitution of that Committee much, and we look to you, sir, as our only friend. I should be very glad if you could inform me as to the rules relating to old age and accident. As to accidents, there is a great deal of machinery used in trawling and drifting at Plymouth, and men have met with accidents and been laid up for months at a time, and we thought this fund could be utilised in such cases.

Mr. Douglas (Grimsby): I have taken an active part in assisting to start this Institution, and I consider it a very great honour to think that I was the first member in Grimsby to join the Royal Provident Fund. I joined it under the opinion that it was an accident fund. If I am at my work in connection with the fishing industry ashore or afloat, if I catch a cold that is an accident. How it can be anything but an accident I fail to see. If we catch cold or influenza while at work in connection with the fishing industry I say that we or our dependents should be able to claim on the Royal Fund as it now exists. Mr. Heneage said it was only intended those who went down to the sea in ships would come in for benefit, but I think the benefits should be extended to anyone working in connection with the fishing industry. I have induced a number of men to join and I have told them that if they are working ashore or afloat they would be able to claim on the Royal Fund. A friend of mine wishes to know whether, supposing a man went to a theatre and unfortunately lost his life whether that is an accident while he was connected with the fishing industry. Though not engaged in actual work at the time, still he would be connected with the fishing industry. That is a thing that will have to be settled by the Committee. Mr. Ascroft made some reference to this Fund clashing with the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society, with the view to show that this Fund is not wanted. I, and many of my friends in Grimsby, are of opinion that the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society is a good institution, but we also acknowledge that the Royal Provident Fund is a good institution, and in that case we had better join both of them rather than neither of them. I object to Mr. Ascroft's assertion that fishermen are not thrifty generally. We claim to be a thrifty class of men, and we have, through the aid and benevolence of the public, during the last ten years provided for every widow and orphan who has been left by those who have been unfortunately lost at sea. Our men are all alive to this

fact, and why they have not joined the fund as quickly as they ought to have done, although 300 have joined in about a month—which is no mean number, they hold back because they are thrifty men and want to know more about the Fund before they join it. I like to see a man understand what he is doing, and not pay his shilling and then pay no more. If a man looks into it first the probability is that he will remain a member. My opinion of the Royal Provident Fund is that it is a great necessity for fishermen, looking at it from a national point of view as well as a local point of view, and I think that many more will join as soon as the benefits are laid clearly before them.

The Macgillycuddy: Not knowing that this fund was started, I had tried something of the kind on the west coast of Ireland, which is subject to the full force of the Atlantic swell on an iron-bound coast, and where fishermen are subject to greater danger than your men. I have listened with much interest to the remarks made by the previous speakers, and have learned a good deal from them. That which has struck me most is—whether you look upon your fisheries as a great national institution, as a great source for your national food supply, as a great recruiting ground for your Navy, or as a great support for a large section of your population—in the different funds spoken of there seems a standing off of one fund from another fund, a lot of little individual funds each under separate administration; and as to cost, the cost of administering a small concern is not far short of the cost of administration of a big one. If you have a lot of these it appears to me that you would secure very great economy and save an enormous amount of waste, and have a greater hold on the sympathy and liberality of the public if you amalgamated all these funds into one central committee. You are very desirous of raising the individual status of future fishermen, and I notice there is an omission of young people coming to adulthood. The difficulty in my country is, that when they come to

adulthood most of the younger members emigrate because there is nothing to support them. There is not the price of a second boat there, and I have calculated that we have lost there 100 millions of money owing to the want of means to live. I think the scheme should contain provision to assist the young men when they reach manhood either to buy a share in their father's boats, or to buy new boats for themselves. I think it is a pity that that has been left out of the scheme. In the matter of funds I think it would be a very fair thing to look to the County Councils in England. We are dependent upon Poor Law Unions, Grand Juries and County Cess, to assist those who are disabled by accident or old age. I think a portion of these funds might be fairly allocated to marine insurance in proportion to the population who may become dependent upon the rates or upon a public fund. I am glad to hear this move has been made, and in my country I know it will be received with acclamation.

Mr. Bradbeer: Allow me first, to give a little information in respect to the fund which exists at Lowestoft called the Widows' and Orphans' Permanent Fund. Each boat be she a drifter or a trawler, pays a sum of 15s. annually. In the event of a loss the widow receives for four years a sum of 5s. per week, and each child 1s. per week up to the age of 12. That fund has worked very well indeed. Then there is another question which, I think, requires some little attention, and that is with regard to the Ship-wrecked Mariners' Society. Two days after I had the honour of being appointed Mayor of Lowestoft, a very unfortunate gale happened on the 11th November, in which 21 men were drowned, leaving 46 widows and orphans. I took the opportunity on the spur of the moment to appeal to the public generally, and I have great pleasure in saying that a sum exceeding £400 was raised. I received 25 guineas to that fund from the Fishmongers' Company, and I also received 100 guineas from the Corporation of London, both of which acts of

benevolence will long be remembered by all of us. We arranged to provide for each widow and child on the same terms as the Permanent Fund. Unfortunately—I do not know how it happened—the authorities of the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society blamed me very much for having raised this fund, and thought I was acting antagonistically to their fund. I could not see it. The superintendent called upon me and seemed to blame me very much, but informed me that in all probability that particular society would send us a subscription, but that subscription has never reached me. It is perfectly true that the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society do render help immediately in extreme cases of necessity. I quite agree with the principle of helping oneself. I have had proof over and over again that unless fishermen will endeavour to help themselves they cannot expect the general public to help them. It is one of those things with which we are occasionally twitted, and we are told "Why not ask the fishermen to subscribe a small sum?" You will scarcely believe it, but there are only about 200 subscribers to the Widows' and Orphans' Permanent Fund at Lowestoft, although it is in a good pecuniary position. It is the greatest difficulty possible for salesmen and owners to get men to pay this small sum of 15s. a year, and many of the widows and orphans who were bereft in the gale of November, are benefited because the owners thought well to pay a subscription for the men, though the men often positively refused to do it themselves. I would impress upon fishermen the necessity of joining this fund. I am glad to hear that Grimsby is so thrifty. We have to deal with a different class of men at Lowestoft. The fishermen of Lowestoft, particularly those engaged in the drifting fishing, come from all parts of the country, and they say "We go for one voyage and not for a second, and therefore why should we pay the full subscription of 15s. for a three months' voyage?" Our worthy president is coming down to Lowestoft, I am glad to say, upon this matter, and I hope that our Society will merge into this admir-

able Society—the Royal Provident Fund. I shall do the best I can to support our President on the occasion when he honors us with his presence at Lowestoft.

Alderman Toozes: Is that boat-subscribing Institution self-supporting?

Mr. Bradbeer: Yes; we have money in consols, and I think we have a balance of £160 or £170.

Mr. Alderman Mudd (Grimsby): This is a question which comes nearer my heart than any question that we have had before the Conference. I am sorry that the discussion to-day has been one of comparison between the Royal Fund and other benefit societies. I am certain it has never been the intention of the promoters of the Royal Fund to come into competition with any of the existing benefit societies. There are specialities which surround the fishing classes. It is the serious calamities and visitations of God which from time to time have fallen upon our fishermen that have induced the nation at different times to respond to the call made upon them to exercise their benevolence. It is to provide for these cases that the Royal Fund exists. I am glad the management of that Fund is now turning its attention to making provision for old age. It was my misfortune when at sea to have as shipmates at different times three old men, and I have grieved for those men, especially during stormy weather, and thought it was a shame that they should be compelled to go to sea. I am glad to hear from the speech made by Mr. Anstruther that the Committee have this matter in hand, and I hope the managers of our Royal Fund will pursue that feature until they have accomplished something in the way of giving fishermen some strong inducement to subscribe to the fund and thus enable them to provide for themselves in old age. Since the Royal Fund was started at Grimsby I have endeavoured to find out the reason why it has been treated so coolly by the people of Hull, and I find that the reason is that they have in that part a strong fund and they do not see any special advantage in the Royal Fund. If they

will only study it they will find that there is provision made on a very liberal scale—more liberal than any I have seen yet; but fishermen still say, "What benefit are we to get from it?" We say that the nation sympathises with old fishermen who have for so many years, with their lives in their hands, provided the nation with food, and that the nation is prepared to assist them if they will do something towards providing for themselves. The fishermen are very anxious to subscribe, and say, "If you will give us something like a Superannuation Fund we will subscribe all round." I believe they will, and I believe that the establishment of such a fund will be one of the strongest inducements for them to join the Royal Fund.

Major Rasch, M.P.: This is the first time I have heard of the Royal Provident Fund, and I think there are few people in Essex who know anything about it, and my object in speaking is that by advertisement or propaganda the subject should be ventilated at fishing stations on the North Sea Coast, and if that is done it will be found that the Fund will receive a good deal of support.

The President: We have had a long debate upon this very important question but I think the time has not been thrown away. I think the arguments which have been used are most important. There are several members of the Council of the Royal Provident Fund present and you may be sure that they and I will give special attention to what has been said on this occasion. In answer to Mr. Little's question I said we thought it more prudent to deal in the first instance with provision for the widows and orphans, and I also said that Mr. Neeson, our Actuary, is now preparing a scale of payments and benefits to put before us with regard to the forming of an old age fund, a sick fund and an accident fund. I think those are the three special points which have been mentioned to-day. The Meeting will clearly understand that the Council

have already taken this matter up and are dealing with it, because upon the report I made from Grimsby and Hull, and from a very important memorandum that was prepared by Mr. Anstruther after a meeting he held in Scotland, we came to the conclusion that it was an absolute necessity that we should deal with this point at once. We have all heard the Grimsby proposal, and a very good one it is. The Council of the Royal Provident Fund simply place before the various fishing ports a scheme as suggested. We do not wish to dictate to them, but we wish to give them —and have given them—every possible local option; but all we ask is that whatever payments and benefits may be laid down by branch associations they must be strictly in accordance with actuarial calculations, and that we will not give our sanction to any proposal that may be misleading to the fishermen in any way whatever, and we wish branches to be on an absolutely safe basis. Now, I have been requested, as Mr. Little has said, to visit Plymouth, which I am going to do at Easter, with regard to the Artillery Practice Commission, and I am going to meetings at Yarmouth and Lowestoft. I would ask various Members of Parliament, irrespective of politics, to do what they can in their respective constituencies, whether it is in Scotland, in Ireland, or anywhere else, with the view to bringing this Royal Provident Fund before the fishermen in the different ports. It is impossible for me or for members of the Council to go round to every port, but we will do our utmost to make the Fund known in every way we can. The payments which Mr. Neeson submitted to us for consideration were payments of twelve shillings a year, and the benefit from that was to be five shillings a week for the widow for five years and two shillings per week for children whilst under the age of twelve years. Of course we are going to prepare a schedule which will contain the Grimsby proposal, and we shall probably make some others, and these are going to be issued in the form of a very simple short pamphlet—something

far more simple than the pamphlet we have already issued—so that every fisherman will be able to grasp the details in a moment, as it will be perfectly clear and intelligible. Then I ought to point out what has been so kindly said by some speakers that we have never for one moment wished to run counter to any existing institution, whether it is Odd Fellows', Foresters', Shipwrecked Mariners', or any other Society. We simply wish to carry out the proposal that the Prince of Wales made that the surplus of the Fisheries Exhibition of 1883 should be devoted in the direction we have taken up, and what His Royal Highness intimated on that occasion was that he hoped that a national fund would be established and that fishermen would become subscribing members to the same. That is what we have done. There have been many people, I am sorry to say, who have suggested in so many words that there should be a free scramble for this surplus, but we have obeyed the orders of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who is the President. I have the highest opinion of the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society possible, but that Society deals with various other matters—ours only deals with this one subject. There is one other point which has not been mentioned, and that is that it is provided under our charter and bye-laws that so far as possible the Council of the Fund in London are to make grants in cases of serious calamity to some of the branches round the coast if they appeal for assistance in case of serious disaster. That matter will be taken up and considered in all its bearings by the Council in London. I hope I have answered every point raised.

Mr. Esslemont, M.P.: I do not wish to say one word with regard to the discussion which has taken place on the Provident Fund, but I do wish to say a word in response to the appeal made by our president that Members of Parliament should, in their constituencies, bring under the notice of fishermen the benefits to be derived from such a fund.

As a magistrate and a member of the Town Council of Aberdeen, where there is a considerable number of fishermen, I have been constantly brought into contact with questions of this kind, and I appreciate all that has been said with regard to fishermen and their connection with this fund. I do not agree with the remarks that fishermen are not a thrifty class, but I do agree that they have not given that attention to matters of this kind which I think they ought to have done, from the thrifty disposition which they possess. It will be a great pleasure to me to bring the benefits of the Institution under the notice of my own constituents. A few days before I left the city of Aberdeen I had the pleasure of being present at a friendly gathering of a new Friendly Society instituted amongst the fishermen there. I quite appreciate the advantage of gathering up the benefits of all these local institutions, and, if possible, incorporating them in one strong institution. I, for one—and I speak for other members of Parliament—shall be very pleased to do anything in my power to bring under the attention of fishermen this very excellent idea, for which, I think, we are very largely indebted to the Prince of Wales, namely, the practical way of taking advantage of the sum derived from the Fisheries Exhibition to make it a sort of nucleus and stimulus for building a comprehensive Provident Fund upon, and I am sure it will commend itself to the general appreciation of fishermen.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1887.

Mr. Joseph Barber (London): This Conference has, on several former occasions, taken into consideration the provisions of the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887; and expression has been given by resolution and otherwise to the opinion that it is very desirable that the produce of our sea fisheries,

especially in the manufactured form, should be protected by the provisions of that Act. Curers and others interested in producing specialities in connection with cured fish and sending to market specially prepared fish have their own trade marks, and it is very desirable that those trade marks should be protected. It is very well known to the trade that such protection is not always afforded by Government officials in connection with the fish trade. While other products are looked after and protected, the produce of the fisheries is often without consideration, therefore I move this resolution, which I hope will be sent to the Board of Trade, and which I trust will strengthen the position of curers and others connected with the fishing industry:

"That this Conference urges on the Government "the necessity for instituting some suffi- "cient means of securing the observance of "the 'Merchandise Marks Act, 1887,' in "connection with the sale of fish."

Mr. Ascroft: There is no doubt at all that Mr. Barber has explained the matter thoroughly, and I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution.

Mr. Jex: I support this resolution. We find all foreigners sending fish into London or other great centres of England, have their names and addresses upon the packages. It is very essential that Englishmen exporting goods to foreign countries should have their names upon them and be protected. There should be something to show that they are English goods coming from English people.

Mr. Sayer: Since these Conferences have been established the Norwegian gentlemen who are sending over kippers do put their names on the boxes.

Mr. Newby: I think if anything could be done towards doing good for the poor Scotch crofter fishermen it should be done, for they are entitled to the greatest respect. Our markets are flooded with Norwegian herrings, and they are caught in such a way that it is impossible for Scotch fishermen to compete.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

CULTURE OF SEA FISH.

Mr. Ascroft: The resolution I have to move is as follows:—

"That this Conference in view of the diminution
"of the food fishes is of opinion that Sea
"Fish Hatcheries should be established as
"in Norway, The United States, Canada,
"and Newfoundland, for the purpose of
"increasing the fish supply, and that it is
"of the greatest importance for the fishing
"industry that marine laboratories should be
"established at suitable points around the
"coasts of the United Kingdom with the
"view of affording information to practical
"fishermen and others on the habits of life
"and history of the food fishes."

It divides itself into two heads; the first is the establishment of hatcheries, and anyone who has read in the Canadian Fishery Report of last year the evidence there given in favour of establishing hatcheries cannot deny that the resolution is necessary. In the Sacramento River in California the salmon were practically abolished; it was not worth while to fish for salmon. The United States then established hatcheries and there are now 18 canning stations on that river, each station employing 15 nets, and they can fish as long as they like, but the hatcheries are beating them and the fish are more numerous every year. It, however, is possible to over-catch and over-fish any district. If we, by means of artificial culture, can increase the food supply, it is our bounden duty to do so. In the United States, although I consider they are, in this work, 15 years behind where they ought to be, the person in charge of the deep sea department, Mr. Collins, who

is in charge of the Fishery Section of the Exhibition of Chicago, captures cod on the Grand Banks near to spawning, brings them ashore in a welled vessel, designed after the Grimsby smacks, and then they are put into boxes in the neighbourhood of Boston where they hatch out from 150 millions to 200 millions of cods' eggs a year. This has been done with good result, and last year a schooner with hand-lines shared in one week £7 per man, after fishing on a place where there were no spawning cod ten years ago. A most valuable fishery has been founded where there was no fishery before. Now we come to the question of marine laboratories. As a rule fishermen know everything about the catching of fish, but they have never taken the trouble and have never had the opportunity of enlarging their knowledge. Now, however, with technical education, within five years fishermen will take a far larger and greater interest in their work than they have done before. We are establishing a marine laboratory at Liverpool, and I think it is the duty of the Government to assist these laboratories all round the coast. I have great pleasure in moving this resolution, which, I think, is as important as any that have come before the Conference.

Mr. George Alward: I have the greatest pleasure in seconding this proposition. I think it follows naturally on many other things which have taken place at this Conference. We have been making progress from year to year in these Conferences, and what we have now before us is the result of what has gone before. It was thought when the matter was first introduced years ago that it was impossible to deal with sea fish. It has been demonstrated that river fish, more particularly the salmon, can be artificially propagated, and that it is being done to a large extent in America. Then the Americans turned their attention to sea fish, more particularly to cod. With regard to England we are not so deeply interested in cod as we are in flat fish, I do not mean to say that there is not a vast industry

connected with the cod fisheries, but at this Conference our deliberations have had regard to the diminution of flat fish. So far as flat fish is concerned, but very little has hitherto been done with regard to artificial propagations. Much has yet to be learned, and this resolution is proposed with a view of asking this Conference to call the attention of the Government to the necessity of establishing certain suitable institutions for the purpose of gaining such knowledge. Scientific knowledge has been very useful to our fishermen, but we want it applied to practical knowledge; and unless we can have institutions at which practical men can have demonstrated to them what can be done by their own aid, we shall not get all the benefits which can be conferred upon us. We want to teach our fishermen that it is possible—and I believe it is possible—that they can while carrying on their own work assist in the propagation of the species which they are at the same time trying to catch. Now it has been thought that if our fishermen can be taught the very simple method of fertilising the egg of the fish while engaged in their own work, we shall accomplish a very mighty improvement in replenishing the seas which we are trying to denude. This can be done by the aid of marine laboratories. No man can be careless of his own interest, and I think observations made by our fishermen would be very useful, and they could be digested and put into a form which would be of the utmost importance to the community at large. Though this question comes under the head of technical education, I think it is also an economic question, and it is one on which I think the fishing industry would do well to spend some money themselves. Hitherto those institutions which have been established have not received much support from those interested in the fishing. We have hitherto called undersized fish immature fish, but we have now taken to the word "undersized" and ceased the use of the word "immature" because scientists have told us that "undersized" and "immature" are two different

things. This is what we have to demonstrate to our fishermen, and get them to interest themselves in the matter.

Mr. Calderwood (Plymouth): This subject has for many years received considerable attention in the United States of America, and in Norway. In both countries the eggs of the cod have been treated with greatest success, and have been hatched and turned out in great numbers. Cod eggs may in fact be said to be amongst the first free floating eggs experimented with, although the more hardy demersal eggs of fresh water fishes were, as everyone knows treated many years previously. In treating floating eggs, it was of course found necessary to construct the apparatus on an entirely different principle. A considerable number of methods were employed in America, and Captain Dannevig, in Norway, constructed his ingenious box which could be used for either pelagic or demersal eggs; and so hatched both cod and lobsters in the same apparatus. More recently, Newfoundland has established a hatchery at Dildo Island, where cod and lobsters are also hatched. During the first season, Mr. Adolph Nielsen, the Superintendent, hatched and turned out into the waters of Placentia Bay, 4,039,000 lobsters. In the following year, 1890, 17,000,000 cod were hatched and turned out in Trinity Bay, and 7,995,000 lobsters. More recently Captain Dannevig has adopted a new method. He collects fish ready to spawn and places them in an enormous tank. Here the eggs are shed and fertilised, and on floating to the surface are carried off by the overflow pipe. This pipe delivers the eggs into a receiving box so arranged that while the water flows away the eggs are retained. The eggs are then placed in the hatchery and developed. Immediately after hatching the fry are let loose in the sea. Whenever it is known how and where to obtain ripe male and female fish of any particular species, and the natural conditions under which their eggs develop, it is possible to hatch and turn out the young in large numbers in the manner

already described. That is, once the methods have been demonstrated, the question merely becomes one as to the scale on which the operations are to be conducted. At the Marine Biological Laboratory, we have already hatched the following food fishes :—sole, merry sole, flounder, plaice, thick back, mackerel, grey gurnard, red gurnard, pilchard, sprat, herring, whiting, pouting, poor cod, and also great numbers of lobsters, I should think several millions, besides unedible fish of various kinds. The Fish Commissioners of Newfoundland consider this hatching and immediate turning out into the sea, a most important undertaking, and no doubt great credit is due to Mr. Nielsen for his energy and skill in manipulating with success such a large quantity of eggs ; but to my mind operations of this kind are not complete when the larvæ are hatched, but only when they have been reared to an age when they are capable of protecting themselves from their numerous enemies. Time of course will show whether this turning out of newly hatched larvæ has been the means of reviving the cod and lobster industries of Newfoundland; but to put it briefly I am of opinion that this method is perhaps equally valuable in supplying the cod and other fishes with a most nourishing and abundant food supply. To take the case of the lobster, the larvæ when hatched is a free-swimming clawless little animal, living entirely near the surface of the sea. It in fact very closely resembles the adult forms of a certain group of small swimming crustaceans. During the early part of its existence it moults or casts its shell frequently. The shell of the lobster does not grow, and therefore the animal to increase in size has to draw itself out of the old shell and grow a larger one. Until it assumes its adult condition, and sinks to the bottom it may therefore be devoured by any enemy. I therefore consider that could the young lobsters be reared sufficiently long to tide over these early critical stages, the percentage of those reaching maturity would be enormously increased. The same remark applies to cod, and to

second part deals with the establishment of institutions like the Biological Museum at Plymouth, which has been recognised, and is generally recognised now, as about as good as such a place can be—extremely well-constructed, extremely well managed, and as being the home of a scientific investigation which must be of enormous value to the people. I do not think we ought to forget—and if I mention the Government in this matter, I will mention also the Company in whose house we are at this moment assembled—we must not forget that we owe that most valuable institution partly to the great generosity of the Fishmongers' Company and to the assistance which they give to the holding of meetings with regard to subjects of this kind, and partly also, I am glad to remember, to the action of the Government, which gave £5000 towards the establishment of that museum, and now, I believe, contribute £500 a year towards the expense of its maintenance. Well, one cannot expect to have many institutions so complete as that established in many parts of the country. Nor am I indeed clear that that is necessary because institutions of that kind are rather the homes of scientific experiments and investigation, and when the problem is solved it does not matter at what part of the coast it is solved. The next matter is to employ it for the benefit of the public in the largest way, and that is by the establishment of hatcheries; and so I have yet hope that the time is ripe for advancing in that direction, and I hope that Plymouth and other places have succeeded in showing that it is practical to deal with questions of this kind on the coasts, and that the Government—whatever Government it may be—would be doing a real public service and advantaging the people by increasing substantially the food supply if it devoted its attention to the establishment of food fish hatcheries and to attaining the results which our American brethren believe they have already produced. I put it in that way because I believe, with Mr. Calderwood, that there is very much doubt as to the effect of

the very large out-turn of larvæ from these places. No doubt the figures appear enormous when one hears of 500 millions of cod and 37 millions of lobsters, but those which come to maturity are a very small percentage of those which are turned into the water. I do not know whether in America they have perfected any system by which they protect the young so as to give them a chance of arriving at maturity. But the first part of the process has been achieved. It has been shewn that the hatching can be done. The next part of the process is to carry it out for the advantage of the people, and I shall be very proud to think that the example of Plymouth, or that the work done at Plymouth, may result in advantage to the whole industry of the country and to the people of the country. For leading the way to that most desirable result, I need scarcely say that in both capacities I shall be extremely glad to support, with colleagues, any practical suggestions that are made to carry out the proposals in this resolution.

Sir William Crossman, M.P.: In America they not only hatch them, but keep them for three years.

Sir Edward Clarke: That is not on the coast of Newfoundland.

Sir William Crossman: No; that is as regards salmon.

Mr. Calderwood: In Norway there has been an investigation made as to whether codfish can not only be hatched but reared. A large basin was constructed and 500,000 cod fish eggs which had been hatched seven days previously were placed in it, and figures were recorded each month as to how the fish progressed. You will find that Captain Dannevig reared them up to about 9½ inches, and then the basin was frozen over with ice and he did not see any more as to their growth; but during that time he only had about 5 or 6 deaths in the rearing of the fish.

Mr. J. Alward: What time did it take to rear them to 9½ inches.

Mr. Calderwood: I would not like to say because I have not the figures with me.

Sir Edward Clarke: Do you know the area of the basins?

Mr. Calderwood: 50 yards by 30 yards.

Mr. Collins (Cornwall): This is a subject in which the County of Cornwall is just now specially interested. I need only remind some of the gentlemen present, that a year and a half ago, a somewhat lengthy paper on "the decline of some of the Fisheries on the Cornish Coast, its cause and cure," was presented to The Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, and read at their Annual Exhibition. The first species noted was the particular kind of fish which was at one time regarded as exclusively Cornish, viz.: The Pilchard, the decline of which is attributed to the falling off of the crab fishery. Haddock, conger, cod, ling, and hake are noted as having materially fallen off. The writer attributes the decline of these fish and the falling off of flat fish to over-fishing and the destruction of fish beds. I am not here to discuss the merits of that paper, but to note some of the suggestions as a means of cure, and to elicit what I am convinced will be the best practical and scientific opinion on the subject of the culture of sea fish, as a means of resuscitating the fisheries on our coasts. The writer suggests as a preventive against destroying or disturbing the coral and sponges, and so interfering with the sea bottom, "that an experiment should be made with an invention consisting of a long revolving cylinder with barbed spikes around it to be towed over the sea bottom and by it spearing the flat fish." I do not know what this particular instrument would be called. He "would further suggest that a fishing craft be fitted out, and manned by practical and scientific men for the purpose of looking up and noting the undeveloped resources around the islands of Great Britain and Ireland, especially reporting on the condition of the surface and bottom of the sea on the West Coast of Ireland." Secondly, in order to revive the almost extinct haddock fishery, we are advised to take a precedent from our

cousins across the sea, who, the writer states, "succeeded beyond the hopes of the most sanguine." He thought the only way of resuscitating the haddock fishery was to get eggs of those fishes from the North of England, set up a hatchery on our coasts and when the young were a few inches long turn them into the sea; he proceeded to point out that some fish had strong homing instincts, and the probability was that were young haddocks to be hatched on our own coasts they would remain long there. In regard to conger, cod, and ling he knew of no other means than that referred to in the case of haddock. It is argued that the United States of America have been practising this kind of work for about 20 years, with the remarkable result that the State of Massachusetts alone was, in the year 1890, hatching 130,000,000 eggs from cod, haddock and pollock. I stated at first that it was not my intention to discuss the merits or otherwise of this paper, what I am particularly anxious to secure is the best practical and scientific opinion as to the probable results of an attempt to cultivate sea fish in the way described, and here permit me to notice what Professor Ewart, of Edinburgh, stated at the Conference of 1889, "something was said about the breeding of fish, and that we should expect to find where they are, and then establish hatcheries, and reference was made to the breeding of fish in America, but we must not dogmatise about fish breeding yet. I have seen," continued the Professor "what has been done in America, and what has been done in Norway, and although great strides have been made in the direction of fish breeding and sea fish breeding, no one can point to any experiment carried on on a sufficiently large scale to indicate either success or the opposite, and before we can trust to increasing the number of fish in the sea by breeding, very much larger experiments must be performed." This was the statement of Professor Ewart two years ago. What I am anxious to know is whether the learned Professor or any other authority has seen anything in

the past two years, any development, or any experiments on a sufficiently large scale that would indicate success. We are specially interested in this matter just now. Some of you are aware that it was intended to hold a County Fisheries Exhibition in Cornwall this year, but one of the primary causes of its postponement is the gigantic proportions it has assumed; foreign exhibits of all kinds are now anticipated, in addition to the most improved appliances in the United Kingdom. One of the principal objects of this Exhibition is to develop the fisheries on our coasts by adopting any probable means of success, and by inaugurating a School of Fishery. Another reason which has induced me to request that this should be placed upon the Agenda, is that out of the £500 apportioned to the Fisheries Committee for technical education in the County of Cornwall, it is proposed to send a delegate to America with a view to ascertain the results of sea fish hatching and the manner in which it is conducted, spending about £300 of the money so apportioned, which is generally considered as a misapplication of the money and a useless expenditure. I am fully convinced that the Cornwall County Fisheries Committee are anxious to promote the best interests of the fishing industry. This anxiety has characterized their deliberations at all and every meeting, and the proceedings of this Conference of representatives of those interested in the sea-fishing industry, comprising the most practical and scientific opinion, will be contemplated as a means of guidance for future operation. Trusting that these remarks will elicit a free and full expression of opinion upon this important subject, I submit them to your consideration.

Mr. Holt (Marine Biological Association, Grimsby): So far as my own experience goes I can most fully confirm what Mr. Calderwood has said. I may add that on many occasions at sea I have hatched soles, plaice, haddock, and many other kinds of fish in extremely small quantities of water—in vessels only

two inches high and one inch wide; while this does not bear specially upon the culture of sea fish, it serves to illustrate the hardiness of the egg. In America the benefits derived from the culture of the shad are by no means confined to an increase in the supply of that fish, but it has been found that the supply of those large and valuable fish which follow the shad inshore to prey upon them has been also largely augmented. It has been urged that of the large number of small fish that have been placed in the sea by Captain Dannevig and others, only a small percentage comes to maturity. Be this as it may, no one will be inclined to say that a small increase is not better than none at all. There should be no difficulty in bringing fish from the spawning grounds in well-smacks, on board of which a circulating pump would be useful in order that the water might be kept fresh in case of a delay, such as waiting for a tide. In the case of haddock, to which Mr. Collins, of Cornwall, has alluded, it may be doubted whether difficulties would not arise in rearing the young, since the latter seem always to live in rather deep water, and might not thrive in the shallow ponds of a hatchery. But haddock do not seem to be diminishing very much, at all events on the east coast, and in the case of the most important fish, viz., sole, turbot and brill, the same difficulty does not arise. The importance of protecting fish in their earlier stages of life cannot be too strongly urged, since it is then that they are the most exposed to the attacks of enemies, and the mortality is consequently the highest. The Conference appears to be so unanimously in favour of the resolution that I will not take up its time by any further remarks.

Mr. Rashleigh (Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee): I should like to support this motion as to the culture of fish. In the County of Cornwall the question of improving our fisheries is taking up all our time and attention. We have evidence that we are losing large numbers of fish which we used to see on our coasts years ago. When I was a boy the haddock was a very

£800 gain. On the other rivers, the Shannon and the Sligo, an experiment was tried of importing fish from the Rhine and crossing them with Irish fish, and the result has been a large increase in the size of the Irish fish.

THE PRESIDENT: I ought to mention with regard to the support given to the Biological Society that I think I am right in stating that the original grant given by the Government was £5,000 and £500 a year for a certain number of years. Last year a £1,000 was given and a £1,000 is promised for the coming financial year; but I do think that taking into consideration the work which has been done by the Marine Biological Association, that instead of making the grant £1,000 a year they ought to make it at least £2,000 or £3,000 a year.

The resolution was then put and carried.

THE PRESIDENT: As I stated this morning I must now leave the chair, and I wish to express my very warm thanks to you for the assistance you have rendered me during the time I have had the honour of being allowed to preside over this Conference, and I wish you all engaged in the fishing industry the greatest success and prosperity that man can wish.

A hearty vote of thanks to Sir Edward Birkbeck, for his attendance at the Conference was moved, seconded, and agreed to with acclamation.

THE PRESIDENT thanked the Conference and left the chair, which was taken by Mr. Bradbeer.

MARKET RENTS AND TOLLS.

ALDERMAN TOOZES (Hull): The resolution which I have to propose is as follows:—

"That in the opinion of this Conference the
" rents and tolls of the various Metropolitan
" Markets are not equitably charged, and
" that under the existing system the supply

"of fish is excessively overcharged, and "further that it is necessary that such "rents and tolls be adjusted on a basis of "equality and the laws now in force be "amended accordingly."

I came to speak entirely upon the question of sea-borne fish, I have nothing to say with respect to land-borne fish; that I shall leave to Mr. Oakley, who will second the resolution. We are certainly very heavily charged for our rents and tolls at Billingsgate Market alone. In 1890 our Company paid for rents and tolls in Billingsgate Market £3,287 1s. for sea-borne fish caught on the Dogger Bank, and in 1891 we paid £3,116 1s.—that has nothing to do with land-borne fish—yet some of the Companies this year will not be able to pay one penny dividend. We have made an appeal to the Corporation of London to reduce their charges until we begin to pay a good dividend, when we shall have no objection to their raising the rents and tolls.

Mr. Oakley: In seconding this resolution I not only have to complain of the exorbitant charges, but of the way in which these charges are enforced, and of the irregularity as mentioned in the resolution. The mover having already spoken of the charges made with regard to sea-borne fish, I will confine myself to the land-carried fish which is excessively charged. I will first call attention to the method in which the tolls are levied by the Corporation on land-carried fish. They now charge 2s. 6d. per van load whether the load consists of 3 packages or of 3 tons. That is a very great hardship upon small consignments. I say that these tolls should be entirely abolished because the Corporation give no consideration for them. A great deal of the fish does not come into the market for sale, besides which the salesmen in the market are already paying excessive rents for shops and stands, and that ought to be sufficient. For the Corporation to charge tolls for fish that do not come into the market, and for which they give no consideration, is an injustice to the fishing

industry. The Markets Committee are favoured by an Act of Parliament by which they can enforce these charges. The moment fish arrives as near the approaches of the market as they can get, even if it is half a mile, the carman is responsible for the toll. Then you are met by the Police Act, for the police step in and say: "you are a trespasser and I shall summons you for being here longer than necessary," and that means a penalty of 40s. or a month. That is not only a hardship upon the fishing industry, but it is a great injustice and burden upon society, and ought to be stopped. Then you are met by another law which says: "If you are not in the market with sea-borne fish or land carried fish in time to catch the market you are liable to the consignor." Hence we are subject to three Acts of Parliament, and there is no compensation whatever. It will be remembered that at a previous Conference it was mentioned that there was a vacant space in front of the market caused by the making of a new street. A deputation was formed to go to the Corporation with a view of getting that reserved for the accommodation of the trade generally. The Corporation was approached upon that subject, but instead of reserving that space they have elected to build upon it, thus depriving the fishing trade of the rights for which they have to pay. I submit that having deprived them of that accommodation, they have no claim for the tolls because they do not give an atom of convenience for them.

Mr. Joseph Barber: We propose that the tolls of the various Metropolitan markets should be equalised, and in order to satisfy you of our reasonableness upon this point, I will draw attention to the fact that whereas the Metropolitan Meat Market salesmen are charged a rent of 1½d. per foot per week, the salesmen in Billingsgate are charged 9d. per foot. Now the salesmen in the meat market are provided with extensive accommodation in the way of offices, enclosed premises, &c., but those in Billingsgate Market have simply a square of flag stones—only standing room—and

it is almost impossible for them to fairly exhibit consignments. If you take into consideration the difference in value between fish and meat—meat being worth £30 to £40 a ton, while the Board of Trade statistics show that fish is not worth more than £8 to £10 a ton—why should meat pay 1½d. and fish 9d. per foot. I hope this resolution will be carried and sent to the Corporation and the Board of Trade.

Mr. Alderman Doughty (Grimsby): I consider that portion of the trade interested in water-borne fish to Billingsgate Market suffers very seriously from the excessive charges in the nature of tolls, market rents, and market dues, made on them by the Markets' Committee of the London Corporation. There have been attempts made, on two or three different occasions, to get these charges reduced, as they press unduly, not only on the carrier of the fish, but also on those who toil in the north sea in catching the same. Unfortunately the reductions that have been made have amounted to little or nothing in the aggregate, for although a trifle was taken off the market rent, yet when we received our bills we found that other parts which had never been charged before were charged against us, bringing our rents up to very much the same. I am very glad to learn that there is an attempt being made to get the tolls equalized; why should we be charged 9d. per square foot for bare flag stone on which to sell our fish, while salesmen in the Metropolitan Meat Market pay only 1½d. per foot for much better accommodation. We paid for rent alone last year £1450 for a few stands upon which to sell the water-borne fish, for a few hours each day. The same thing obtains with regard to tolls; in 1890 we paid £1780 for dues on our steamboats. If we got value for the money paid it would not matter so much, but the accommodation is abominable, business cannot be done satisfactorily owing to the cramped condition of the market. If we pay large sums of money, surely, in a supposed free market, we ought to receive some equivalent in return.

The want of more quay room and market space costs us a very considerable sum of money to get our fish out of the vessels into the market, and out of the market to the purchasers' carts. Whether it be the catcher of the fish or the buyer who pays these charges, it all comes to the same thing; as the fisherman says, "It has to come out of the cod end," and all these heavy charges become a tax upon the consumer, for before it reaches him of course all expenses have to be added, for none of us, if we can help it, do our business without profit. Getting the fish from the vessels' holds under such primitive conditions costs the Companies concerned many thousands per year, and getting the fish out of the market to the customers' carts cost last year nearly £12,000. With better facilities we should be prepared to pay fair charges, but as the thing stands to-day these tolls and unreasonable charges are an unfair tax upon the fish supply of this great city, upon those interested in the trade, and upon the fishermen in particular.

Mr. Sayer: I am afraid I am one of the culprits, being a member of the Corporation, but I wish to put Mr. Barber right. The meat trade pay 2d., not 1½d. per foot.

Mr. Barber: I will accept the correction so far as the ½d. goes.

Mr. Sayer: The Steamboat Companies pay 6d. and 7d., and the wholesale tenants pay 7d. to 9d.

Mr. Toozes: I did not name any price; but I assure you we pay the amount per annum I have mentioned.

Mr. Sayer: I say the Steamboat Companies are put upon the most favourable conditions of those who bring fish to London. I agree with the resolution. I think we ought to be charged a fair price; in fact, I think they ought to take the tolls off altogether. Mr. Jex and I, who have always been craving for a reduction of these tolls, have actually been put off the Markets Committee. I do not say it is for that, but every market tenant has been put off the Markets Committee. I should like to see the tolls abolished. I quite agree with the resolution.

Mr. Lengfield: Is there not another toll of 6d. a ton, which we have to pay upon our steamers in addition to that.

Mr. Sayer: No; the charge is 40s. for a steamboat of 100 tons.

Mr. Lengfield: We pay in addition to the 9d. per foot, 6d. per ton. It is not included in the 9d. per foot.

Mr. Newby: This is an old matter that we have to complain about against the Corporation. We have often complained about the tolls and charges, and gone to the Corporation about them, and the only answer we have received is: "No, no, no; we have no surplus market money to enable us to reduce these charges. I think that of all times this is the worst time for us to go to the Corporation. It must be within the knowledge of us all, the difficulty the Corporation have in obtaining money for market accommodation, and now this most serious trouble is come upon them—I allude to the foot and mouth disease. It is an alarming thing for this country. It is paralysing the receipts of the market and as the rent and tolls of Billingsgate are put into the pot with those of other markets, the Corporation will naturally say, "How is it possible for us to grant you the reduction in the face of such an expected loss?"

Mr. Barber: There is no reduction asked for. It is simply equalisation; that will not affect the total at all.

Mr. Newby: We have threatened a good many times to go to the Board of Trade, and if you are wise you will go to the Board of Trade at once without going to the Corporation.

The resolution was then agreed to.

Mr. Oakley: I move that a copy of the resolution now passed be forwarded to the Corporation and the Board of Trade.

BRANDING OF CURED FISH.

Owing to the unavoidable absence of Mr. Maconochie who was to move a resolution upon the subject, the consideration of this question was deferred.

STORNOWAY HARBOUR.

Mr. Sayer: The resolution I have to put before you is one of very great importance to our friends the Scotchmen, and those fishing from the port of Stornoway. It is:—

"That this Conference desires to support the "application of the Stornoway Harbour "Commissioners now being made to the "Public Works Loan Commissioners for a "loan of public money on the usual terms "towards the improvement and extension "of Stornoway Harbour."

It was harder for the fishermen of Stornoway last year to get their fish unloaded than it was for them to catch them. I am sure this Conference will do their utmost to assist them. They have to pay something like £3 to £4 a ton in railway rates to get their fish into English markets. They also require better harbour accommodation, and if we can help them in this way I am sure we will agree to do so.

Mr. Joseph Barber: I have very great pleasure in supporting a resolution of this character, referring as it does to a very important centre of the Scotch herring fishing. The National Sea Fisheries Protection Association are committed to the fullest extent to the furtherance and support of any application of any port for improvements of harbours and facilities for landing fish generally. The subject of harbours is an important one. This is the only application of a definite character that we have before us, but I understand that similar applications will come before the Association from Brixham and other places, and we shall be pleased to support them. With reference to Stornoway, I am sure you will all sympathise with the application when you know that its situation is very exposed, and the coast is very dangerous. Every possible facility should therefore be provided for fishermen to land the fish

after it is caught. I do not ask you to express an opinion as to the manner in which the suggested improvement should be carried out, and we do not go into the question as to what the outlay should be. We simply ask you to support an application to the Public Loan Commissioners for a loan on the usual terms.

Mr. J. M. Morison (Stornoway): I desire to thank you on my own behalf and also to convey to you the best thanks of my fellow islanders—many of whom are fishermen—for the hearty manner in which you have supported this proposal. For the last two or three days I have been very much impressed by the manner in which the various subjects brought before this Conference have been discussed. It appeared quite evident that the Association has the best interests of fishermen at heart, and I do not doubt but that with its representative character and the very influential position occupied by many of its members, its voice will be respectfully listened to in any proposal having for its aim the good of the trade. The improvement of Stornoway harbour is not purely a local but a national necessity. Boats from all parts visit us; from Berwick on the east coast to the Isle of Man on the west coast. It is the centre of a great industry, the herring fishing being now carried on there nearly all the year round, so that it is now the largest herring-curing station in Scotland. Besides the herring fishing, a very large business is done in various other kinds of fish at all seasons, so that the demands made upon the Harbour Commissioners for refuge and shelter as well as for landing facilities have taxed all their efforts, and we now trust that with your valuable aid the Board of Trade and Loan Commissioners will come to our help and grant us the means required on the most favourable terms, so as to enable us to complete the works.

Mr. Jeffs: I do not agree with this. I believe Stornoway belongs to Lady Matheson, who is a very rich lady. If we go to the Commissioners for a loan, we

shall be enriching the already rich. The fishermen ought to go to the lady who owns the harbour and the Island. I say that Brixham is as much in need of harbour improvement as Stornoway. I say that Lady Matheson ought to find the money for the improvement of Stornoway harbour.

Mr. J. M. Morison (Stornoway): The fact of the matter is, the Harbour Trust of Stornoway is in no sense Lady Matheson's property. She is merely paid fue duty as a proprietress in the ordinary way: The trust have the management, and have spent £33,000 already in permanent improvements.

Mr. Barber: Here is the danger of going into purely local questions. Mr. Jeffs has raised a question which is purely local, and he has shown that he has no sufficient knowledge by which he can form a correct opinion. Therefore we should avoid all local questions pure and simple. This loan is applied for for the benefit of all sea fishermen who may visit Stornoway, and it is the business of the Loan Commissioners to see that it is granted on those terms.

Mr. Jeffs then withdrew his opposition and the resolution was passed unanimously.

The Chairman: I move that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Harbour Loan Commissioners.

Mr. Sanders (Brixham): The question is as burning a one for Brixham, as it is for Stornoway.

Mr. Sayer: If this gentleman will bring his application before the Conference the Conference will consider it.

Mr. McCombie: Being deeply interested in the fish trade of Stornoway, I fully endorse all the remarks made by the last speaker, and much regret that Mr. Jeffs should have found it necessary to raise any opposition to this resolution. I think it ill becomes anyone in the fishing industry to raise such objections, when it is known the great difficulty in obtaining loans to provide suitable accommodation, and safety for the fishing fleet.

VOTES OF THANKS.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have now a very pleasing duty to perform, and I am sure you will appreciate it in the same way in which I am about to propose it to you; and that is a resolution of thanks to the Prime Warden and Court of the Fishmongers' Company for their kindness in allowing us the use of their Hall, and their hospitality during the Conference. I am sure there is not a gentleman in the room who must not have seen the amount of facility offered to us, and the kind hospitality in every way with which we have been treated. Our warmest thanks are due, and I trust you will accord them with hearty and unanimous consent.

MR. ALDERMAN TOOZES: I beg to second the resolution and to confirm every word that has been said; on behalf of myself and all outlying districts.

The resolution was agreed to.

A vote of thanks was then passed to Mr. Bradbeer for taking the chair in the afternoon.

THE CHAIRMAN: Of course it is a most agreeable thing to have ones services recognised. Coming from only a small town but representing a large interest in the fishing, I assure you that this Conference has been to me most gratifying. We have had the largest attendance at the Conference each day that I ever recollected. If I have been of any service or can be of any service, my humble efforts will be devoted towards promoting the prosperity of this Association. I thank you very much.

MR. SAYER: There is one vote of thanks that we ought not to part, without giving expression to and that is to Mr. Joseph Barber. We know that he has a great deal to do with the arranging of these Conferences, and and it is no light work to put the matters before you in the manner he has done. I will propose that we give to Mr. Joseph Barber a very hearty vote of thanks for the way in which he has got up the agenda paper, and for the manner he has worked for the Conference.

Mr. Jeffs: I have great pleasure in seconding that. The resolution was carried.

Mr. Barber: I accept your very kind vote of thanks not for myself only, but I accept it fully and in its fullest sense in reference to the Committee of the Association with which I have the pleasure and satisfaction of being intimately connected. I cannot claim for myself all that Mr. Sayer has been kind enough to suggest, because the work of preparation for this Conference is carried on by the Executive Committee of the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association, but as representing the Committee and Officers of the Association, and especially the Honorary Secretary, I thank you for your expression of recognition of the value of the work we are doing. The Honorary Secretary takes great personal interest in everything connected with the Association, and I am sure he works very hard. Anything that he can do to the advantage of the fishing industry and the fishing trade he is always ready to do, and I have much pleasure in moving a vote of thanks to our Honorary Secretary for the able manner in which he has conducted the work in connection with the Conference.

The Chairman: I have great pleasure in seconding that, I have found Mr. Towse, the Honorary Secretary, to be most affable in every way, and always ready to afford all the information he possibly can on every occasion. I endorse the proposition of Mr. Barber with much pleasure.

The resolution was agreed to, and the Conference separated.