

but to the general public here, that the law should remain as it is, I ask you to oppose it, and, if possible, prevent a great injustice being done to us. If you require a petition got up I shall have no difficulty in getting one largely signed.

H. S. Fish, Esq., M.H.R., Wellington.

Yours, &c.,

F. J. SULLIVAN.

Mr. F. J. SULLIVAN to Mr. H. S. FISH, M.H.R.

DEAR SIR,—

Dunedin, 1st September, 1891.

Your favour of the 28th instant duly to hand with thanks, and, on behalf of those interested, I beg to thank you for the trouble you have taken so far. I enclose press-copy of delayed wire sent you to-day. A lake and a sea or harbour always open to the sea are very different as far as the fishing industry is concerned—the one is entirely dependent on the increase of size and number upon its own resources, but the other depends upon its supply from the ocean. If the lake were closed altogether for a few years no doubt fish would increase in size and numbers, but if the ocean here were closed for one day or five hundred years it would not make any appreciable difference. In the harbour here we have seventeen miles of frontage to the water, making a total of thirty-four miles; but, on account of snags and other obstructions, it is only possible to haul a net in about forty different places, and hence it is only when flounders are upon these particular spots, and there happens to be a man fishing there, that these flounders are caught. There are more fishermen here than ever, and they are all earning a living, are improving their gear and boats, which proves conclusively that the fish cannot be getting scarcer, otherwise the men would be getting scarcer also, and their living more precarious. If it has not been found necessary to regulate the size of fish at Home, with their large consumption, we cannot believe it will do any good to hamper the men here, unless it is desired to have more unemployed. The fisherman is a capitalist of the right sort; in ninety cases out of a hundred his plant is his own, the result of hard work and frugality. As we have a grand coast-line, and latterly refrigerators that we can find a market the other side with, I consider every facility should be given to develop our naturally great industry. An Order in Council raising the size to 10in. would be as bad for us as a law stopping fishing altogether. The gear that is in use at present here to catch a minimum size of 9in. would be liable to confiscation, and large mesh substituted at considerable cost. Uncertainty of some other change coming in force next year make people with limited means very chary about investing their savings in gear. I trust I have made our case clear, but shall be happy to supply any information omitted.

Trusting you will be successful on our behalf,
H. S. Fish, Esq., M.H.R., Wellington.

I remain, &c.,

F. J. SULLIVAN.

Mr. J. BURT to Mr. H. S. FISH, M.H.R.

DEAR SIR,—

Salmon Pond, Clinton, 1st September, 1891.

Being in charge of the largest fishery in New Zealand, and noticing there is likely to be some alteration in the Fisheries Conservation Act, I thought I would drop you a few lines and point out to you one or two things which have come under my observation. In the first place, I think the size of the flounders should not be less than 10in., but I do not think there is any cause for alarm of them becoming extinct. The very greatest evil of the present Act is the fact that there is no officer to see the Act carried out; all is left to the Commissioners of Customs and the police. Now, it is not likely a fish-dealer will expose undersized fish when they know by doing so they are liable to prosecution. What is wanted is a good man to visit occasionally these fishing-stations and see what is actually caught, and try and prevent fishermen from hauling their nets on to the beaches, for I know many thousands of young fish die every tide by being left high and dry. I took six fish out of a boat at Port Chalmers; the largest fish of the six was only 6½in. long. I found then that if I laid an information that I would have to bear all the costs. I have secured under the present Act eighteen convictions for which fines amounting to close on £90 were imposed, every penny of which the Government put in their pocket, and did not pay one penny towards the prosecution. I am, however, a paid officer of the acclimatisation society, and could on many occasions have interfered, but I am only paid for looking after trout and salmon. If the Government paid only the bare expenses of the prosecution I am confident the present Act would not be a dead letter so far as I am concerned in the Otago District. And it would not cost much. I am confident if some arrangement for payment of the expenses were made that the fines for breaches of the Act would pay it five times over. Young flounders have been known to feed on sawdust and die in thousands, and only last year I got two millers fined for discharging sawdust into the streams. Hoping these hints may be of service to you,

H. S. Fish, Esq., M.H.R., Wellington.

I am, &c.,

JOHN BURT.

Mr. J. W. KELLY to the Hon. Mr. J. McKENZIE.

DEAR SIR,—

House of Representatives, 1st September, 1891.

I wish to draw your attention to a protest which I have received from a few fishermen residing at Invercargill against the altering the present legal size of flounders. I do hope that you will, before taking any steps whatever in this direction, consider those who have to make their living from fishery.

Hoping that you will not sanction any alteration at the present time,

Hon. J. McKenzie.

I have, &c.,

J. W. KELLY.

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