

SEA AND RIVER FISHERIES.

Report on the Sea and River Fisheries of New Brunswick, within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and Bay of Chaleur,

By M. H. Perley, Esquire, Her Majesty's Emigration Officer at Saint John, New Brunswick.

GOVERNMENT EMIGRATION OFFICE,
Saint John, New Brunswick, January 22, 1850.

SIR,—In obedience to the instructions contained in your letter of 3rd August last, I proceeded immediately on its receipt to execute the duties therein designated.

A Circular letter asking information as to the Fisheries of the Gulf Shore was prepared and printed for distribution, a copy of which is annexed.

I left this City on the 12th of August last, accompanied by one of my sons, and proceeded directly to Miramichi, by Shediac and Richibucto.

At Chatham I engaged two canoes and three Indians, and proceeded to the northward, visiting every Island, River, Creek, Gully, Harbour, and Fishing Station from Miramichi, along the Coast, to Shippagan; thence around the Islands of Shippagan and Miscou, to Caraquette Bay, from whence I coasted the southern shore of the Bay of Chaleur to Bathurst. Leaving the sea-going canoes at Bathurst, I hired a light river canoe with a resident Indian as pilot, and ascended the Nepisiquit River to the Grand Falls, where I rested one night. On my return to Bathurst, I resumed the sea-going canoes, and proceeded up the Bay to Dalhousie, examining the Coast and Fishing Stations and the Jacquet River by the way.

From Dalhousie I went by land to Athol House, at the head of Ship navigation on the Restigouche; and on my return to Dalhousie, I proceeded in the canoes down the northern or Gaspé side of the Bay of Chaleur, sixty miles, to Paspebiac. From that place, I crossed the Bay of Chaleur, in Messieurs Le Boutillier's yacht, with the canoes on board, to Little Shippagan, from whence I made the best of my way to Newcastle on the Miramichi, where I arrived on the 29th September.

The season being far advanced, and strong easterly gales having set in, the Coast south of the Miramichi could not be visited by water, and I therefore proceeded along that Coast by land to Shediac; from thence I returned to Saint John, where I arrived on the 8th of October.

The distance performed in the canoes was nearly five hundred miles; the whole journey was about nine hundred miles.

I have now the honor to present the accompanying Report as the result of the information obtained on this tour of duty, with such other information in relation to the subject as is interesting or important.

I crave leave to refer to my Report on the Fisheries of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, presented to the House of Assembly on the 8th March last, which I beg may be taken as part of the present Report, in order to its being more clearly understood.

It only remains for me to add, that myself and my son were every where received with the greatest kindness and attention, and every facility was afforded us for obtaining information; and I should be exceedingly ungrateful if I did not publicly acknowledge the exceeding hospitality extended to us at every place throughout our entire journey.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

M. H. PERLEY.

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APPENDIX.

No. 1. Copy of Instructions from Provincial Secretary.

No. 2. Copy of Circular asking information.

No. 3. Petition of the Fishermen of Point Miscou.

No. 4. Mr. Doran's Letter respecting Fisheries near Shippagan.

No. 5. Rules and Orders of the Sessions of Gloucester respecting the Salmon Fishery.

No. 6. Rules and Regulations of the Municipal Council, second division, County of Bonaventure.

No. 7. Statement of the Cod Fishery of the United States in 1848.

No. 8. Statement of Pickled Fish exported from the United States, and Bounties paid from 1843 to 1848 inclusive.

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No. 10. Extract from the Convention of 1818 relative to the North American Fisheries.

No. 11. Opinion of the Law Officers of England as to the construction of this Convention.

No. 12. Report on the Fisheries in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence.

REPORT.

In entering upon a description of the Fisheries of New Brunswick within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, it is necessary to state, that they fall naturally into two Districts, separated distinctly by the Miramichi River. To the northward of the Miramichi, the Sea Fisheries are prosecuted in a regular and systematic manner, from permanent Fishing Establishments, technically termed "Rooms," while to the south of the Miramichi, there are no such establishments, and the Fisheries, which might be prosecuted extensively in that quarter, are only followed in a desultory manner.

This Report will therefore fall under three heads:—

1st. The Sea Fisheries on the coast north of the Miramichi, around the Island of Miscou, and within the Bay of Chaleur, to the Canadian Boundary.

2nd. The Sea Fisheries from the entrance of the Miramichi River southwardly, to the Nova Scotia Boundary.

3rd. The Fisheries in all the Rivers within these two Districts.

The various Fishing Establishments north of the Miramichi, will be first described in the order in which they were visited, with such information as to the Fisheries of the Coast as was obtained on the spot.

THE DISTRICT NORTH OF THE MIRAMICHI.

Portage Island.

On the northern side of Miramichi Bay, at the entrance of the Miramichi River, is Portage Island, which on some of the older Maps is called Waltham Island. It is about four miles and a half in length, and nearly a mile in width at its south western end, tapering gradually to its north eastern extremity, where it terminates in a long narrow sand-bar.

This Island is yet ungranted. It is low and sandy, much cut up with marshes, swamps and small lakes; a portion of it only is wooded, with dwarf white birch, and scrubby pine and spruce trees.

Near the north eastern end of Portage Island, some buildings were erected about five years ago, with the necessary conveniences for putting up Salmon and Lobsters, in tin cases hermetically sealed. This station was occupied during the season of 1849, by Mr. William J. Fraser, of Chatham, who then for the first time set up "Fish Flakes," and undertook to dry and cure Cod and other Fish caught near this locality.*

When this establishment was visited in August last, it was in charge of George Letson, who furnished the following information in relation to it.

The season for putting up Salmon and Lobsters was over. There had been twenty two thousand pounds of Salmon, and four thousand pounds of Lobsters, put up in tin cases, of one pound and two pounds each. The quantity of Lobsters put up was much less than usual, owing to the prevalence of Cholera in the United States, and the consequent want of a market there.

The Salmon put up here were all taken around the Island, and were purchased of the fishermen, by this establishment, at 3d. per pound, fresh caught, with a discount of ten per cent. for cleaning, which was said to be equal to £3 5s. per barrel. The Lobsters were chiefly caught by the French Inhabitants of the neighbouring Neguac Villages, from whom they were purchased at 2s. 6d. currency, per hundred. They were very plentiful the past season, especially at Black Lands and Tabusintac Gully; and as proof of the ease with which they were taken, it was mentioned that one Frenchman, (Victor Savoy) had, unassisted, caught 1200 Lobsters in part of one day. There were from twenty to twenty five men employed at the preserving establishment during the season.

Up to the 18th August, there had been seven hundred quintals of Cod, Ling, and Haddock, caught and cured at this "room," to which a considerable addition was anticipated

* From 1643 to 1647, Jean Jacques Enaud, a native of the Basque Provinces of France, had an establishment on this island for taking the Morse or Walrus, and for prosecuting the Fur Trade and Fisheries.

anticipated before the close of the season. There were then thirty three boats engaged in fishing at this station, averaging three men to each boat; these were chiefly settlers from the neighbouring shores, who employed the period between seed time and harvest, in following the Fisheries. One boat was owned and manned by three Micmac Indians, from Burnt Church Point, and it was stated, that although their boat was an old one, worse rigged and provided than most of the others, yet these Indians would remain on the fishing ground in more severe weather than any other of the fishers, and never returned without a full load of fish.

In the early part of the season, the fishing boats here obtained their fares at no great distance from Portage Island; but as the season advanced, they had to go out from ten to fifteen miles from the land. In August, they were fishing near Point Escuminac, about twelve miles from Portage Island. These fishermen split and salted their fish in the boats, which usually came into the "room" about twice a week; they were using Mackerel and Clams as bait, but previously had used Herring. No Capelin had come in on this part of the coast.

It was stated, that early in July there were from twenty to thirty sail of American vessels fishing in Miramichi Bay, at the distance of five to ten miles from Portage Island; and they all obtained full fares of No. 3 Mackerel. One of these schooners entered the Miramichi River, and went up as far as Oak Point trading with the settlers for Salmon. The master of this vessel exchanged two barrels of superfine flour for each barrel of Salmon, but he neither entered or paid duties on what he landed. He took the dimensions of the various nets in use, and told the fishermen he would furnish them next year with similar nets at half the prices they had been accustomed to pay. These American fishing vessels have, during the last three years, traded at Fox Island, on the south side of Miramichi Bay.

On the bar at the southwest point of Portage Island was found a hovel occupied by a man and boy; they had been there a fortnight, with nets and lines, but had only caught a barrel and a half of Mackerel. These were all the Mackerel which had been caught at this Station during the season, by the New Brunswick fishermen, except such as had been used for bait. This man and boy had taken some fine Fall Herring, and a small quantity of Gaspereaux, exceedingly fat—so fat that they were boiling the offal in a kettle to extract the oil, which appeared abundant. It was stated here that numerous shoals of large Basse were then roving about Fox Island and along the coast, and that they could be, and were, readily taken, even in the day time, by a proper Basse spear.

A quantity of coarse bent grass grows on the Marshes and Beaches of Portage Island; and certain French residents of the Neguac Villages, under an old Minute of Council, claim a permissive right to cut and carry away this grass, paying the sum of £5 annually to the Crown.

Presuming upon the permission to cut grass, these parties have, of late years, set up a claim to the Fisheries of the Island, and during the past season they actually leased the Salmon Fishing on its shores to various parties, at rents from £2 10s. upwards. Six of the persons to whom they leased are persons residing at or near Burnt Church, named Peter Morrison, George Logie, John Davidson, George Davidson, John Anderson, and Alexander Logie. These parties, during the past season, furnished the Salmon for Mr. Fraser's preserving establishment. But the most extraordinary part of this affair is the fact, that the Act regulating the Fisheries in the County of Northumberland, (29th Geo. 3, c. 5,) positively prohibits any net whatever being set off Waltham or Portage Island; and this Salmon Fishery has been carried on here in open defiance of the Law, and as is alleged, much to the detriment of the Salmon Fishery of the Miramichi River generally. This case will be found more particularly referred to under the head of River Fisheries of the Miramichi.

Tabusintac Gully.

This Gully, (from the French *goulet*,) is a narrow entrance, between two low sand-bars, into the lagoon of Tabusintac, and through that lagoon to the large River of the same name. The depth of water in this Gully is six and a half feet at low water, and eleven feet at high water, an average tide being four and a half feet. The sides of the Gully are steep, enabling fishing boats and small vessels to come directly up to the shore.

On the west side of this Gully, a Fishing "room" was established during the past season by Roderick M'Leod, Esquire, of Tabusintac. There were nineteen boats employed, with three men each, fishing here, and Mr. M'Leod himself had two small schooners of fifteen tons each. At this "room" there were taken during the season, one hundred barrels of Spring Herring, five hundred quintals of dry Fish, and three hundred barrels of pickled Fish, chiefly Ling and Haddock. Late in the season, Mr. M'Leod's vessels were sent to Caraque, and they there caught eighty six barrels of the Fall Herring. This new establishment may therefore be considered to have made a successful commencement. Only five barrels of Mackerel were taken here during the season; a Mackerel seine was provided, but the Fish did not come sufficiently near the shore to be taken with it.

It was stated here, that American Fishing Vessels were frequently seen in the distance, but that they did not come near the shore, owing to the light draught of water.

The Fishing Boats from this Gully went out a long distance towards Escuminac, and caught their Fish in 25 fathoms water. They used Herring and Mackerel as bait, when they could be procured; but in August, they were using Clams. They frequently took Halibut of large size, a single fish being sometimes sufficient to fill a barrel.

Tracadu Gully.

The principal entrance to the Tracadu Lagoon and Rivers is at Little Tracadu Gully, in which there is six feet at low water, and nine feet at high water; at Spring Tides there is ten feet. At this place Mr. James Young, of Tracadu, has a small Fishing Station, which employed ten boats, with three men each, up to the 5th August, when the season was closed. The catch was 200 quintals of dry Fish.

The Jersey Houses, formerly, had an extensive Fishing "room" near this Gully, at which they caught and cured from 3000 to 4000 quintals of Cod annually. The Capelin then came in on this part of the coast in great abundance, and they were largely used by the Settlers for manuring the land. Apparently this had the effect of breaking up the run of these Fish, as now they have almost ceased to appear along this shore. With the disappearance of the Capelin, the Cod Fishery fell off greatly, and about six years since, the Jersey Houses found it necessary to break up there establishments here. A very few Capelin were seen at this place in the season of 1848, but none whatever in the season of 1849.

At Little Tracadu Gully, a number of the large White Sea Trout of the Gulf (*Salmo trutta marina*,) were taken in nets, during the early part of June last.

Shippagan Gully.

This Gully is at the southern end of Shippagan Island, and between it and the main land. It forms an entrance to Shippagan Harbour, from the Gulf, and has nearly the same depth of water as Little Tracadu Gully.

Just within this Gully, on Shippagan Island, in a well sheltered and very convenient position, is the Fishing "room" of Messieurs Wm. Fruing and Co., of Jersey, of which Captain George Alexandre, of Jersey, was found in charge.

At this place there were sixty boats engaged in Fishing, averaging two men and a boy to each boat. It was stated, that each of these boats would probably take 100 quintals of Fish during the season, but that the boats belonging to the firm, manned by Jersey men, would take more.

On the 21st August there were at this "room" 2,500 quintals of dry Fish, exceedingly well cured. On the day it was visited there were 600 quintals of cod spread out to dry; they were exceedingly white and hard, of the finest quality, and were about to be shipped to Naples, for which market the very best Fish are required. They are shipped in bulk, and the manner in which they are stowed in the holds of the vessels is very neat and compact. It requires great skill and care to stow them without breaking, and in such a manner as to prevent their receiving damage on so long a voyage; but long practice and experience have conquered these difficulties, and cargoes are rarely injured by bad stowage.

The Ling cured at this establishment are sent to Cork for the Irish market; and the Haddock to the Brazils. The first quality Cod cured here in 1848, instead of being sent to Naples were shipped to the Mauritius; it was not stated what success had attended this adventure.

Nearly

Nearly all the fishermen at this establishment were French settlers, who had small farms, or patches of land, somewhere in the vicinity, which they cultivated. It was the opinion of Captain Alexandre, that the fishermen here could not live unless they possessed land, and obtained something from the soil; if they did not they nearly starved. Those who are too poor to own boats hire them of the firm for the season, that is, until the 15th of August, when the Summer Fishing ends. If the boats are used for the Autumn or "Fall" Fishing, there is, of course, another hiring.

The Fishing usually continues until the 15th of October, and it was expected that the whole catch of the season of 1849 would amount to 3,500 quintals—if the weather proved favourable, probably 4,000 quintals.

The boats come in here directly to the "stage head," upon which the Fish are thrown; they are at once split and cleaned by the fishermen, on tables provided for the purpose; and 300 lbs. of Fish, fresh from the knife, are weighed off as sufficient to make a quintal of dry Fish, with the allowance of one tenth for the curer. If the Fish are split and salted in the boats, and lay one night, then 252 lbs. are weighed as a quintal. The fishermen are allowed for a quintal of Cod thus weighed, ten shillings, and for Ling and Haddock, five shillings,—the amount payable in goods at the Store of the firm, on Point Amacque, where a large quantity of foreign goods is kept, of every variety. Here were found Jersey hose and stockings—Irish butter—Cuba molasses—Naples biscuit, of half a pound each—Brazilian sugar—Sicilian lemons—Neapolitan brandy—American tobacco—with English, Dutch, and German goods,—but nothing of Colonial produce or manufacture, except Canadian pork and flour.

Some of the residents at Shippagan, who are in more independent circumstances, prosecute the fisheries in connection with their farming, curing the fish themselves, and disposing of them at the close of the season to the Jersey merchants, or to others, as they see fit. Of this class is Monsieur Leon Robicheaux, (who is mentioned in the Report of last year.) He has a good farm on Shippagan Island; the past season he planted forty nine barrels of potatoes, as also wheat, oats, and barley, the whole of which promised to yield an abundant return. Besides these farming operations, Monsieur Robicheaux and his family, caught and cured during the season, two hundred and fifty quintals of dry fish—in all twenty four thousand fish, the whole taken in twenty five to forty fathoms of water. For these, well cured and of the best quality, Mons. R. would receive from the Jersey merchants, in cash, for Cod, 12s., Ling, 6s., and Haddock, 5s. per quintal. They also took thirty barrels of Spring Herring, twelve large Halibut, and four barrels of Mackerel; this small quantity of the latter being merely the surplus beyond what Mons. R. required for bait, for which alone they were caught. Mons. Robicheaux stated, that a large Salmon had been taken only a week previously, (22d August) on a Cod line, from one of his boats; and he expressed an opinion, that there were many Salmon roving along the shores of Miscou, during the season. This opinion was subsequently found to be correct.

At this place a large Clam, or rather Mussel, was exhibited, which had been taken from the stomach of a Cod. The shell was of a dark blue colour; the flesh was light red, and it protruded much beyond the shell—it cut like meat, which it greatly resembled. These shell fish are said to exist only in very deep water; wherever they are found, there is always plenty of Cod, which are said to be exceedingly fond of them, and prefer them as bait to almost any other thing which can be used.

It was stated that the settlers on Shippagan Island, used five hundred barrels of Spring Herrings, as manure, the past season.

Miscou Island.

This Island lies at the north easternmost extremity of New Brunswick, at the entrance into the Bay of Chaleur. It is about nine miles in length, and four in width at its broadest part. The whole of it is very low, and its greater portion consists of cariboo bogs, mossy swamps, small lakes, salt marshes, and sand plains; the two latter producing a scanty growth of wild grass. There are however, some small tracts of land upon it fit for agricultural pursuits, and these have been granted to Mr. Andrew Wilson, and Mr. John Marks, who reside upon their lands. But wild, barren, and almost desolate as is this Island of Miscou, yet it is an admirable station for the Fisheries: its value in this respect was well known more than two centuries ago to
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the French, in whose history it has a conspicuous position. About the year 1635, a company was established in France for the purpose of carrying on the Fur Trade and Fisheries in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, of which, the King of France was at the head. It was called the "Royal Company of Miscou," and it had extensive powers and privileges. The principal station of the company was on the Island of Miscou, within the Harbour of Little Shippagan, which is formed between the Islands of Shippagan and Miscou, where it is said some of the foundations of the Company's buildings are yet to be seen. The principal pursuit of the Company of Miscou, was the taking of the Morse or Walrus, whose favorite *echouage*, or strand, was near Point Miscou, the north eastern extremity of the Island. These huge animals were valuable for their skins and the oil they furnished, as also for the ivory of their tusks. They were frequently killed by three and four hundred at a time, and their destruction was carried on so unremittingly, and with such success, that they have become wholly extinct at Miscou.

On visiting the *echouage*, or place where the Walrus were formerly slain in such numbers, a little to the westward of Point Miscou, it was found that the ancient beach is now nearly a quarter of a mile from the sea; a long strip of sand plain, covered with coarse grass and a great abundance of Cranberries, at this time intervenes between the present Sea-beach and the former strand. This strip of recent formation is called the *Grande Plaine*; and the curving shore in its front is called by the Fishermen *L'Ance a Grande Plaine*. On examining the ancient shore, near the outer edge of a belt of small spruce and fir trees, the bones of the Walrus which had formerly been slain there, were found imbedded in the sand in large quantities, and in good preservation, some of the skeletons being quite complete.

The Harbour of Little Shippagan is an exceedingly good one, and well sheltered; it is much resorted to by American Fishing vessels during heavy easterly storms, and as many as ninety sail of these vessels have been observed in this Harbour at one time. The entrance from the Gulf is by a small gully, in which there is only eight feet at low water and twelve feet at high water, in ordinary tides. This passage is only used by Fishing boats and small craft. The principal entrance is from the Bay of Chaleur; it is about half a mile in width, with eight fathoms at low water, which depth is maintained well into the Harbour, where the channel becomes narrow, with perpendicular sides, yet still very deep. This excellent Harbour is of great use and importance to the numerous Fishing vessels frequenting the Gulf, and the Bay of Chaleur.

Mr. Andrew Wilson's Establishment.

The farm of Mr. Wilson is on Miscou Island, a short distance to the eastward of Little Shippagan Gully, into which his fishing boats run for shelter; within the Gully, on the Miscou side, he has for several years occupied a convenient place for curing Fish. The soil here, although light and sandy, yields good crops. There were, on the 23rd August, several fine fields of oats, and some good wheat. The quantity of potatoes planted was 70 barrels, and nothing could be finer than the appearance of this crop, which promised an abundant yield. It was stated by Mr. Wilson, that in former years his potatoes had been but slightly affected with the potatoe disease, and that his crop of this vegetable was generally good. He keeps 70 sheep, and the mutton is peculiarly fine, owing to the character of the wild grasses on which his sheep are pastured.

Mr. Wilson is an emigrant from Aberdeen, in Scotland, who has been settled on this Island upwards of sixteen years. He has a family of eight sons and two daughters, all residing with him; from their unceasing industry and economy, this large family is now living in much comfort, and apparently becoming quite independent. Mr. Wilson himself is a person of intelligence and observation, and he furnished much information as to the Island of Miscou, and its Fisheries, which is here embodied.

The family has three boats, manned by six of the sons; up to the 23rd of August last, they had caught and cured 200 quintals of dry Fish, besides 140 barrels of Herrings. Last spring, the Herrings came in much earlier, and in greater quantities than were ever known before. Mr. Wilson said, that when he put out his nets on the 15th of May last, they became so completely filled with Herring, that he could not lift them

them out again. He cured as many as he could with all the salt at that time to be had. The Fish were in such abundance, and so close to the shore, that they came rolling in with the breakers in masses, and were picked up along the strand by the children.

It was stated by Mr. Wilson, as also by other persons along the coast, that none of the Jersey Houses would furnish salt, even to their best customers, to cure Herring, Mackerel, or any pickled Fish; and that they discouraged the catching and curing of all Fish, except such as were dried and fit for the Foreign Markets already mentioned. This was assigned as one reason why the valuable Herring and Mackerel Fisheries on this coast are not more extensively prosecuted.

Durin. the time Mr. Wilson has resided at Miscou, he never knew the Herring fail in any Spring, but they were more abundant the last season than he ever knew them before. Many Herring Fishers from the main land resort to this Island every spring; but it is thought that not more than one tenth of the Fish they take are salted, the remaining nine tenths being put on the fields as manure.

There has always been a good supply of Capelin at Miscou until the last two seasons, during which very few have been seen; but this falling off is supposed to be only temporary or accidental. It is said that when Capelin are plentiful at Miscou, they are scarce at Labrador, and *vice versa*. The past season Capelin were unusually abundant at Labrador, and the Fishing there, in consequence, was better than usual. Some of the boats that were there, with two men only, caught 100 quintals each boat in twelve days. At Labrador, one hundred Cod of eighteen inches each in length, are accounted a quintal.

The ice usually clears away from the shores of Miscou at the latter part of March or early in April. During some winters the open water is seen at all times; but if easterly winds prevail the ice is driven in, and closes the coast. The fishermen sometimes go out in April in small boats to take Seals among the ice in the Gulf, and it is said that they succeed well in proportion to their outfit.

When the Spring Herring come to the shore, the Cod, which follow them in, are taken at a very short distance from the land. As the season advances, the Cod retire to the deeper water; in August the best fishing was at fifteen miles from the shore, or even more.

Mr. Wilson's farm is bounded to the north eastward by a salt water Lake, called Grand Mal-Bay, which communicates with the Gulf by a very narrow gully through the sand reef, or sea wall, which separates the Lake from the Gulf. Mr. Wilson stated, that some years since a run of Cod entered Mal-Bay through the gully, and as a large portion of this Lake is dry at low water, about ten thousand Codfish were then left dry. Of these Mr. Wilson secured about one thousand, which he cleaned and cured; he was unable to take any more from the want of assistance, and the rest of the fish spoiled and were lost. On another occasion, he surrounded, and took at one haul of his net, the whole of a "schull" of Basse, 570 in number, weighing from 4lb. to 8lb. each. In this Mal-Bay, there is always during the season a great abundance and variety of wild fowl; in August, black ducks and large plover were observed in very large flocks. In the latter part of every season the sons of Mr. Wilson are accustomed to shoot, at this place, from 300 to 400 wild geese, for which sport they have proper decoys and large guns; the feathers are valuable, and the bodies of the geese, then in fine condition, are frozen down for winter use.

A small fat Herring comes in on this coast at the end of June, and remains all the season. They are caught at various distances, from half a mile to 20 miles from the shore, in a net with a mesh of one inch and a quarter. These fish are quite distinct and altogether different from the Spring Herring, or the "Fall" Herring. The latter are usually caught in nets with a mesh of one inch and three quarters, but the finest are taken in Mackerel nets, with a mesh of two inches and a half.

In corroboration of the testimony of Monsieur Leon Robicheaux, that Salmon were roving about Miscou, Mr. Wilson mentioned, that by way of experiment he put out a small Salmon net last June, and caught altogether twelve Salmon; the largest Fish weighed eighteen pounds, and the weight of the whole was 141 pounds. In the same net he also took seven Mackerel of very large size, two sturgeon, two shad, and more than a dozen of the large white trout of the Gulf. During the last week in August there

were many Basse along the shore, very fat and in fine condition. Mr. Wilson said that when salted these Fish are nearly as good as Salmon for winter use. Halibut of large size are said to be abundant at this locality.

From the point south of Little Shippagan Gully, which is named "Pidgeon Hill," to Point Miscou, the shore has a general curve inward, forming a sort of bight in front of Mr. Wilson's farm. This bight is much frequented by American schooners fishing for Mackerel. They entice the Mackerel to the surface by bait cut up by the Bait-Mill, (as described in the Report of 1849,) and they are sometimes so abundant here that the "jig" even is not used. One of Mr. Wilson's sons said he had seen the Mackerel almost in a solid mass alongside one of these American schooners, the crew of which were lifting them in very rapidly with iron wires, about three feet in length, having a hook at the extremity, which were fastened to a wooden staff, or handle, of about the same length. These schooners have been known to make full fares of Mackerel here in nine days. Since the Americans began taking these Fish in such quantities, they have become more scarce, or rather the resident fishermen are unable to take them, owing to their imperfect tackle, and antiquated mode of fishing.

Mr. Wilson is clearly of opinion that it would be far better for the resident Fishermen if the American fishers were allowed to land on these shores, for the purpose of cleaning and curing their Fish, than to compel them, as at present, to clean their Fish on the Fishing Grounds, where the bones and offal seriously injure the Fisheries—he says, they should either be excluded altogether from the Gulf, or else allowed to land upon its shores. He conceives that great good would arise, both to the Herring and Mackerel Fisheries, and much improvement, if the Americans were allowed to establish Stations on the shores of New Brunswick, for prosecuting those Fisheries. The benefits of competition were also alluded to by Mr. Wilson, who said—"the Jersey houses, exact too large profits, and keep the fishers in poverty; they look only to one branch of fishing, and discourage all others."

Point Miscou.

About four miles to the north eastward of Mr. Wilson's farm, and near to Point Miscou, are two Fishing "rooms" belonging to the Jersey houses of Fruing and Company, and Le Boutillier Brothers.

The first of these "rooms," belonging to Fruing and Company, is very close to the Sea-beach, with an open roadstead in front, and a heavy sea rolling in with any wind from the eastward between north and south. It was found in charge of Mr. DeCarteret, acting under the orders of Messieurs Alexandre at Shippagan.

This establishment employs twenty boats, having two men each; on the 24th of August, there was on hand 1100 quintals of dry Fish, and it was expected there would be 300 quintals more caught and cured before the season closed. There was no pickled Fish at this "room."

Mr. DeCarteret stated, that an American vessel fishing off Point Miscou, a week previously, and having on board nearly a full fare of Cod, had found the Mackerel in such extraordinary abundance, that the crew had thrown overboard one hundred and fifty quintals of green Fish, in order to make room for Mackerel, with which the vessel had been quickly filled up.

The "room" of Messieurs LeBoutillier is the nearest to Point Miscou, and was found in charge of Mr. LeBas. The buildings here are well and substantially built; they were in excellent order outside, and very cleanly within. The Fish Flakes are on a piece of ground neatly levelled, and now in grass; it is surrounded with high pallisades, as well to keep off marauders, as to prevent the loose sand from drifting in upon the Fish while drying.

At this "room" there were also twenty boats engaged, having two men each; they had taken 1200 quintals of Fish, and were expected to take 300 quintals more before the season closed.

Mr. LeBas stated, that the Americans had injured the Cod Fishing by glutting the Mackerel, so that a sufficient quantity could not be caught for bait; and that this, added to the failure of the Capelin, had caused a great diminution in the Cod Fishing at Miscou. Other baits being scarce in August, Smelts were used, which were taken by a seine. While the writer was at this "room," the seine was hauled three times, and besides securing a supply of very fine Smelts, it brought on shore small Cod and
Ling,

Ling, Flounders, one Plaice, many Crabs, Sculpins or *Crapaud de mer*, and Lobsters of all sizes in abundance. At an earlier period in the season, Mr. LeBass said, the seine brought on shore large quantities of Shrimps, which were turned out again as being of no use.

Although the Beach in front of Messieurs LeBoutillier's "room" is a little sheltered by two gravelly sand spits, which run out a short distance from the land, yet it is much exposed to easterly gales, and a very heavy sea then comes tumbling in. At such times the Fishing boats are moored outside the outermost roller, with the masts struck and all made snug to ride out the gale; or else they are beached, and hauled up above high water mark.—Except when the wind is off shore, there is much difficulty in landing supplies here, which are chiefly furnished from Messieurs LeBoutillier's principal establishment at Paspebiac in Gaspé.

The extreme point of Miscou was granted some years since to Peter John Duval, of Jersey, after which it was occupied by his agent Mr. Falle, as a Fishing station. The grant includes a wide, shallow, salt water lake, similar to Mal-Bay, designated on the plan "Munroe's Lake," but by the residents it is called "Frye's Lake." The gully through the sea wall, by which this lake communicated with the Gulf, was formerly at its southern extremity, but this is now filled up; and where Mr. Falle's "stage head" formerly stood in deep water, there was, last season a field of barley growing luxuriantly. The gully, or out-let of the lake, is now at its northern end, very near the extremity of Point Miscou.

The grantee of this property and his agent are both dead, and it is said to be owned at present by some person in Jersey. It is not occupied as a Fishing station, and in its present position, is in the way of others who wish to carry on the Fisheries. This unfortunate and improvident grant should serve as a caution to prevent similar grants hereafter, by which valuable and desirable Fishing stations may thus be shut up and rendered useless.

The Settlers on Miscou.

The "Fishing Rooms" at Miscou are shut up in the winter season, and left in charge of one of the residents, who is called the "Room keeper." The Jersey men employed here during the summer, either return to Jersey for the winter, or go to the Mediterranean in the vessels which take the dried fish to the markets there, returning to their posts in the spring. They are completely birds of passage, having no tie in this Province, or any interest in its general prosperity. The actual residents on Miscou number one hundred and twenty five souls, and are thus described—

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|----|
| On the Gulf Shore, | Andrew Wilson and family, | 16 |
| Little Shippagan Harbour, | Robert Harper, | 6 |
| " " | John Marks, | 6 |
| Point Miscou, at <i>Grande Plaine</i> , | John LeCoutre, | 6 |
| " " | George Sevret, | 6 |
| " " | Teton Chasseau, | 6 |
| At Frye's Lake, | Louis Gautier, | 11 |
| East of Point Miscou, | Josiah Ward, | 6 |
| " " | Francis Bezeau, | 7 |
| " " | William Ward, | 10 |
| " " | Michael Ward, | 5 |
| " " | Peter Bezeau, | 6 |
| " " | George Brown, | 10 |
| " " | Michael Plaw, | 3 |
| " " | John Vibert, | 6 |
| " " | James Ward, | 9 |
| " " | Pierre Dupuits, | 5 |
| " " | John Burns, (single) | 1 |

Total number of souls, 125

The settlers in Little Shippagan Harbour do not follow fishing, but attend to the cultivation of the land, some of which is there tolerably good.

The settlers at Point Miscou are all fishermen, who are employed every season at the Fishing Stations, to which they are more or less in debt. Their houses are built of logs and poles; these are small, and very ill fitted to resist the severity of the climate. They cultivate little patches of ground, in a very imperfect manner; the manure used is generally cods' heads. They are all squatters on Crown Lands, and appear very anxious to procure some title to occupy their several locations, either by licence of occupation or otherwise. While the writer was at Miscou they prepared the petition which is annexed to this Report, praying such licences of occupation, with privilege of the beaches in front of their locations; and also some arrangements with respect to the wild grass on the marshes and beaches of the Island.

The Petitioners stated, as a great hardship, that the Wild Meadows in the County of Gloucester are sold every season at Bathurst, where they are unable to attend, at a nominal sum;* that those on Miscou are purchased for a few shillings by one of the Jersey merchants, who charges them ten shillings per ton for the marsh hay, and five shillings per ton for the beach grass, which the fishermen themselves cut and cure. To these terms they must submit, or else they can make no provision for their cows, by which they endeavour to eke out a miserable subsistence during the winter.

To account for their abject poverty, they furnished the following statement, of the rates at which they were paid for the fish they caught:—

For 252 lbs. of Cod, fresh from the knife, (supposed equal to a quintal of dried fish,) 8s.; for the like quantity of Ling or Haddock, 4s. These rates are paid in supplies at the following prices: For Canadian fine flour, 51s. per barrel; for pork, (very poor) 10d. per lb; molasses, 3s. 6d. per gallon; tobacco, 1s. 9d. per lb; men's coarse shoes, 14s. per pair; coarse calicoes, 1s. 3d. per yard; tea, (very inferior quality,) 4s. per lb; other articles in proportion. For any supplies advanced in the winter or spring, 15 per cent. additional is charged.

The settler at Frye's Lake, Louis Gautier, has a wife and nine children, a very handsome and healthy family. Gautier himself is a fine figure of a man, and an excellent specimen of the French veteran soldier. He belonged in former days to the grand army of France, under Napoleon, and served in the 69th Regiment of the Line, which was in Marshal Ney's Division at Waterloo, where Gautier's military services ended. His house, which is very slight, contains but a single room, in the centre of which is a Canadian stove; there is a bedstead in one corner for Gautier and his wife—the children "encamp" around the stove, as they may. The house, when visited, was a perfect pattern of cleanliness, and the few articles it contained were arranged with true military precision. There was part of an acre of ground in cultivation; but weeds and thistles were more abundant than the crop. The situation of this settler will give a general idea of the position of the whole, except as to cleanliness.

All the settlers at Point Miscou complained bitterly of their poverty, and state of bondage. They said they were completely in the hands of the Jersey merchants, to whom they were indebted, and who dictated their own prices and terms of dealing. They appeared to feel very much the want of a School; and they stated the surprising fact, that they had never been visited by Priest or Clergyman of any denomination. The children are growing up unbaptized, and in total ignorance; this state of things ought not longer to exist in a Christian community which patronizes Foreign Missions. Their excellent health requires no aid from the Physician; but they desire a resident Magistrate to enforce the Laws and maintain good order at all times, but more especially during the Fishing Season, when the Island is the resort of many lawless fishers from abroad.

The general voice indicated Mr. Wilson as a fit and proper person; he is highly respected, and if he accepted the office, would perform the duties of a Magistrate fearlessly and faithfully.

The absolute state of serfdom of the fishermen of Point Miscou has been particularly described, because there are like bodies of fishermen at other localities in the northern part of the Province, who are held in nearly the same state of poverty and bondage. The more favoured inhabitants of New Brunswick, who dwell at a distance from its remote northern shores, will no doubt be surprised to learn, that there are any of their
fellow

* The whole of the Wild Meadows in the County of Gloucester were sold in 1848 for one pound only.—See Appendix to Journals of the Assembly for 1849.

fellow subjects, dwelling in the same Colony, who are even in a worse position than southern slaves, and of whose moral, physical, and spiritual wants, less care has been taken.

Shippagan Island.

This Island is about twelve miles in length, and from three to seven miles in width. A small proportion of it only is granted, but the shores, in every part where the land appears at all susceptible of cultivation, are settled by persons who are presumed to be squatters, as their locations appear by the official plan to be ungranted. The Island is all very low land, rising but little above the sea, and like Miscou, a large portion of its surface consists of bogs, barrens, swamps, and marshes, with many small shallow lakes, much frequented by waterfowl, which breed in the interior and unfrequented parts of the Island. Like Miscou also, it produces large quantities of cranberries, blueberries, and a variety of other wild fruits, of large size and fine flavor.

Off the western part of this Island, within the Bay of Chaleur, there is an extensive shallow flat, extending nearly two miles from the land, called the *Grande Batture*. On this flat there are numerous large blocks or boulders of granite firmly imbedded, which render it dangerous to cross, even with a fishing boat; the wreck of a fishing boat was noticed upon it when the writer crossed in his canoe. These boulders are brought over from the wild and mountainous shores of Gaspe, directly across the Bay, by the huge masses of floating ice driven over by the northerly gales, which ground upon the *Grande Batture*, and there melting, add the rocks they bring to those already deposited. With reference to this moving of rocks by ice, Mr. Wilson mentioned that there was formerly a very large rock directly in front of his landing place at Miscou, which was much in the way of his boats, and against which, in stormy weather, they had often received damage. But the severe winter of 1848-9, caused the ice to attain an unusual strength and thickness near the shores of Miscou; and when it moved off last spring, it carried off this large rock, to deposit it where, he hoped, it would be less troublesome.

Great Shippagan Harbour.

This spacious Harbour is formed between Shippagan and Pocksoudie Islands, and the main land. It comprises three large and commodious Harbours; first—the great inlet of Amacque, in Shippagan Island, the depth of water into which is from five to six fathoms; second—the extensive and well sheltered sheet of water called “Saint Simon’s Inlet,” the channel leading into which, between Pocksoudie Island and the main, is one mile in width, with seven fathoms water from side to side; and third—the middle channel, between Shippagan Island and the main land, which runs through from the Bay of Chaleur to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. The entrance into this channel, from the Gulf, is by Shippagan Gully, already mentioned, which will not with safety admit vessels drawing more than seven feet water, that being the depth on the bar at low water; but the principal entrance from the Bay of Chaleur has not less than five fathoms on the bar, inside which, within the Harbour, there is six and seven fathoms up to the usual loading place, in front of Messieurs Moor and Harding’s steam saw-mill, at the village; from thence to the Gully there is about three fathoms only. Vessels within the Harbour of Shippagan have good anchorage, are quite safe with every wind, and can load in the strongest gale; the rise and fall of tide is about seven feet.

This fine Harbour offers peculiar facilities for prosecuting the Fisheries, as the Fishing boats have the advantage of two entrances by which they can enter or depart with any wind, and resort either to the Fishing grounds of the Gulf, or those of the Bay of Chaleur, as best suits their interest or convenience. There is every facility for Fishing boats to come up to the shores to discharge their fares, and Fish flakes may be set up every where, without inconvenience.

The noble haven called “St. Simon’s Inlet,” the shores of which are almost wholly unsettled and in a wilderness state, runs several miles into the land, maintaining a good depth of water almost to its western extremity. From this extremity, where navigable, it is little more than a mile to the navigable waters of Pokemouche River. The two waters are separated by a deep peat-bog, nearly destitute of trees; and it has been proposed to connect them by a canal through the bog, which it is supposed

might be cut at no very great expense. There is much good land on the banks of the Pokemouche River, upon which there are as yet but few settlers. It is difficult and somewhat dangerous, even for small craft, to get into this River from the sea. The gully is very narrow and crooked, and there is but six feet water on the bar—vessels cannot load outside, there being only an open roadstead wholly exposed.

The logs and timber cut on the Pokemouche River are made up into long rafts, and when there is a favourable opportunity with the wind off the shore, they are towed along the beach by several pairs of oxen to Shippagan Gully, from whence they go up to the steam mill with the tide. If the wind or sea rises while the rafts are being towed, they are occasionally broken up, when labour and expense are incurred in putting them together again.

If Pokemouche River emptied into Shippagan Harbour, or if it could now be connected with it by a sufficient channel, great advantages would arise to the Timber Trade and Fisheries, while the agricultural improvement of a large tract of country would be specially promoted. Shippagan Harbour wants a River—Pokemouche River wants a Harbour—it is highly desirable that the two should be brought into connection.

Caraquette Bay.

The Bay lies to the northward of Shippagan Harbour, the entrance being between Pocksoudie Island and Mizzinette. In this entrance is Caraquette Island, which is about three miles in length, and one and a-quarter in width at its widest part. There is a deep but intricate channel on the south eastern side of this Island, leading to the Harbour, inside which there is good anchorage, well sheltered.

Along the south side of Caraquette Bay the land is all settled, and under tolerably good cultivation; from the sea, the settlement looks like a long straggling village. The inhabitants, with very few exceptions, are all Acadian French. The first settlers were from France, who established themselves here in the year 1638, very shortly after the formation of the "Royal Company of Miscou." The soil in general is very fertile, and produces good crops of grain, especially wheat, the atmosphere being dry and pure—fogs are almost unknown in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and Bay of Chaleur.

Very many of the inhabitants of Caraquette follow fishing as well as farming, but as they are more easy in their circumstances, they are not so much under the control of the great fishing houses as the poorer class of fishermen. They generally cure their own Fish.

The following information was furnished at Caraquette by James Blackhall, Esq., J. P., and Mr. Macintosh, a merchant there, engaged in the Fisheries.

From "St. Simon's Inlet" to "Point Mizzinette," which includes the whole settlement, or Caraquette proper, there are two hundred Fishing boats, with two men each, and some boys. The average catch of these boats is fifty quintals of Fish during the season. They take besides, large quantities of Spring and Fall Herring; the former are chiefly used as manure, the latter are exceedingly fine, perhaps as fine as can be found anywhere of the Herring tribe. Gaspereaux are caught also; late in the season they are an exceedingly fat fish, well flavoured; the only objection to them is their oily richness.

The Fall Herrings are taken at night; they are "gibbed" when brought on shore the following day, and salted in puncheons. At the end of three days the pickle is changed, fresh pickle being then put on. About a week after this, or at convenience, they are packed off in barrels for market. They are packed just as they come to hand; they are not sorted or selected in any way. Large and small, broken and damaged fish are all put up together.

The Herring nets in use at Caraquette are from 30 to 40 fathoms long and 80 meshes in depth; the mesh is $2\frac{1}{2}$ or $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Each boat has generally two nets, seldom more. No more Fall Herrings are caught than are needed for home consumption.

Mr. Mackintosh stated, that he has shipped Fall Herrings to Quebec, and the price at which they sold there was just equal to the freight from Caraquette. The reason was obvious; the fish were not properly cured, assorted or packed.

Very few Mackerel were taken in Caraquette Bay during the past season by the fishers there. Early in August the American schooners were fishing for Mackerel off Point Mizzinette, where they obtained full fares in a short time. The

The practice of cleaning fish on the fishing grounds, and throwing over the bones and offal, was strongly reprobated by Mr. Mackintosh as highly injurious to the Cod Fishery.

The long established and wealthy Jersey firm of Charles Robin & Co., whose principal establishment is at Paspebiac, in Gaspé, have a station at Caraquette, of which Mr. Briard was in charge. The buildings, and every thing else connected with this station, were in that perfectly complete and excellent state which marks all the establishments of Robin & Co.

They here take in fish from the inhabitants at the following rates:—Best Cod at 16s. per quintal; Haddock, 6s. per quintal. They do not take Ling at any rate, nor do they deal in pickled fish. The prices mentioned are paid in goods, thus,—Flour (not superfine) 45s. per barrel; pork, 8d. per lb.; molasses, 2s. 10d. per gallon; tobacco, 1s. 4d. per lb.; men's shoes, 11s. per pair. They do not sell any tea, that being an article rarely used in Caraquette.

Very fair Oysters are found in Caraquette Bay and Saint Simon's Inlet, but those in Caraquette Bay are said to be the best. Of these several thousand bushels are sent annually to Quebec in schooners; a small quantity only was sent the past season, owing to the existence of the cholera there, and the consequent want of a market.

At day break on the 29th August, the writer crossed that part of Caraquette Bay between Caraquette Island and Point Mizzinette, which is the best ground for Herring Fishing. On this "Herring bank," as it is termed, there were then 160 fishing boats, which had just taken up their nets after the night's fishing. They had not been very successful; the night had been clear and calm, and a dark night with a fresh breeze, is the best for Herring Fishing. The largest quantity taken by any of these boats during the night was six barrels; the fish were in the very best condition, and their excellence could scarcely be equalled, certainly not surpassed by Herrings any where. The fishermen appeared to have no idea that the Herring swims at various depths below the surface, according to the wind, the tide, and the situation of their food. They all fished their nets fastened to a buoy-rope, supported by floats on the surface; if the run of the fish happened to be below the depth of the net, they were of course missed altogether; and although there may be abundance of fish, yet the fishers, from the want of knowledge or skill, must be frequently unsuccessful. The fresh Herrings are sold to purchasers from 2s. 6d. to 3s. per barrel; three barrels of round Herrings will make two barrels when cleaned and salted.

On the 12th September, there were 280 Fishing boats on this bank, collected from all parts of the neighbouring coasts. At the close of the season, the Herring fishing was said not to have been good, less than the usual quantity being taken. The fish made their appearance on the 20th of August, previous to which not even a single one had been taken; there did not appear to be any deficiency in the numbers, and the failure of the Fishery may to a certain extent be attributed to a want of knowledge of the habits of the fish, and also of the manner of using nets in deep water, so successfully practised by the Herring Fishers of Loch Fyne.

The writer had an opportunity at Caraquette, of seeing the manner in which Herrings were treated after being caught. The night's fishing being over, the boats made their way to the shore, each to its own landing. The fishers had, in the first place, to get their breakfasts; after which it was absolutely necessary they should smoke their pipes. Having been out all night, a little sleep was indispensable; and, in too many cases, the fish lay in the boats or on the shore, nearly all the day, sweltering under a broiling sun. In the afternoon perhaps, they were "gibbed" and salted, but by this time the process of decomposition had actually commenced, and the fine flavor of the fish was utterly lost.

When it is recollected that the Dutch mode of curing, so successfully adopted in Scotland, requires that the Herrings, immediately on being caught, should be bled, gutted, cleaned, salted, and barrelled; that by being bled, the Herrings retain a sweetness of flavor and delicacy of flesh which unbled Herrings cannot possibly possess; and that the rapidity of the process of curing likewise aids in preserving the native delicacy of the animal, it cannot be expected that Caraquette Herrings, excellent as they are when first taken from the water, should possess any flavor when salted, or have any commercial value.

The manner in which these Herrings are treated, is almost an absolute waste of the bounties of Providence.

Grande Ance.

Grande Ance.

On leaving Caraque Bay, and rounding Point Mizzinette, to proceed up the Bay of Chaleur, the shores are found to consist of grey sand-stone, rising abruptly from the water, with but few and narrow beaches. Thus the shores continue to Grande Ance, which is a long narrow beach in a slight indentation of the coast. There were thirty boats engaged in Fishing here last August, with two men each. The Fishing Ground is directly in front of Grande Ance, within three miles of the shore; and the average catch of these boats is from 70 to 80 quintals each during the season.

There were several persons here taking in Fish from the resident fishermen. The principal of these was Mr. Alexandre, son of Captain Joshua Alexandre, of Shippagan and Jersey.

The rates allowed the fishermen last season were as follows:—For green Cod, fresh from the knife, ten shillings for 300 lbs.; for Ling and Haddock, five shillings for 300 lbs. These rates were paid in goods and supplies, at fishermen's prices.

Six or seven American schooners had been cruising off Grand Ance in the earlier part of the season, Mackerel fishing; they had all taken full fares and left the coast. They frequently came in close to the shore; while they were using their peculiar mode of fishing the Cod fishers could not procure any Mackerel for bait, and their fishing suffered in consequence, there being no Clams here. The Americans having left, the fishers were fitting up Mackerel nets for use; these were 20 fathoms long and 3 fathoms deep, with a mesh of 3 inches. It was said that nets 5 fathoms deep were better than those of 3 fathoms.

This Cove is greatly exposed to almost every wind from the northward, when a heavy sea comes in on the beach. At such times the boats are beached, and hauled up above high water mark by men and horses, the shore being somewhat steep. A breakwater and landing pier at this place would be of essential service to the fishermen, and greatly advance the Fisheries.

Teague's Brook.

From Grande Ance to Teague's Brook the coast consists of a range of sand-stone cliffs, rising nearly perpendicular from the water to the height of eighty and one hundred feet, and even more. There are two or three small Coves or indents in the cliffs, at Pokeshaw, where boats may land, but these landing places are not safe with the wind on shore. At Teague's Brook, (between which and Bathurst Harbour lies Salmon Beech,) the shore is less elevated, and slopes gradually back from the water. There is no Harbour or shelter even for boats along this line of coast, and a breakwater and landing place at Teague's Brook would make a good Fishing Station there, and be of great service to the farmers on the coast, by giving facilities for shipping agricultural produce, which they now greatly need.

Petit Rocher.

This settlement is on the Bay of Chaleur, about 12 miles beyond Bathurst Harbour, and on the whole of the long line of coast from Grande Ance to this Point there is not a single Fishing Station. This is chiefly owing to the mural cliffs which border a large portion of the coast, and to the absence of landing places and boat harbours which would afford shelter in stormy weather. Much good fishing is here neglected and almost entirely lost, no measures having been taken to create those facilities, and give that shelter from the storm which nature has provided elsewhere for the hardy fisherman. It is true that there is good shelter at Bathurst Harbour, but it has not been found a convenient station for prosecuting the Fisheries. At Petit Rocher there is a neat Fishing Station belonging to Mr. John Woolner, of Bathurst, who calls his place "Point Medisco," that being the name it bears on the ancient charts.

On this line of coast, (from Bathurst to Green Point,) there are forty Fishing boats, with two men each; the average catch of these boats is from 25 to 30 quintals of Cod, Haddock, and Ling, during the season.

The prices allowed the fishermen here were the same as at Grand Ance, that is 10s. for 300 lbs. of green Cod, and 5s. for the same quantity of Haddock and Ling. The fish are much smaller here than farther down the Bay, and are not so firm. Mr. Woolner said he found that 300 lbs. of green fish here would not make a quintal of dry

dry fish, as could be done at Grand Ance, owing to the Cod and other fish being less firm.

Mr. Woolner has a small but very complete establishment for putting up Lobsters, in tin cases hermetically sealed. He had during the season thus put up 2000 lbs. in tins, a much less quantity than usual, owing to the cholera having cut off the market.

He purchases from the settlers the white part of the Lobsters, boiled and free from shell, at two pence half penny per pound, which is salted in plain pickle, and packed in barrels for sale at Quebec. Of salted Lobsters, Mr. Woolner put up eleven thousand pounds during the season.

Several American vessels had been seen Mackerel Fishing off Point Medisco during the season, but with what success had not been ascertained.

For several years no Capelin have been seen on this side of the Bay of Chaleur above Grande Ance. Formerly, they were extensively used for manure, but they cannot now be had even for that base purpose, the run of the Capelin having been completely broken up.

Herrings, which were formerly abundant, have fallen off greatly in numbers on this coast. Mr. Woolner stated that, just outside Bathurst Harbour, there was a beach where the Herrings were accustomed to deposit their spawn in immense quantities, and the place was thence called "Herring Spawn Beach." He has seen the spawn thrown up on this beach by the surf in long thick rolls, or masses, which were carted away by the neighbouring farmers, and used as top-dressing for their fields! As a matter of course, this shameful proceeding destroyed the Herring Fishing at that place completely, and injured it all along the coast.

Green Point.

The wind being ahead and blowing fresh, the writer rested at this point a few hours, and during his stay went out to the Fishing Ground, about three miles distant, in a Fishing boat, with three Frenchmen, a father and two sons; the boat was a good one, built of cedar, about 23 feet long, with two sprit-sails. The fishing was in ten fathoms water, and there was considerable sea on. The fishing lines were greatly worn, and the hooks, were rusty, very blunt, and ill shaped. There was not a spare hook in the boat; and when a hook was lost, the line to which it had been attached was rendered useless, there being none to replace it. The bait used was Clam somewhat stale. Yet under all these disadvantages, sixty fine Cod and Haddock were taken in two hours, by which time the wind and sea had risen so much, that further fishing had to be given up. This case is mentioned, as an instance which came accidentally under the writer's own observation, of the imperfect and careless manner in which the Fishing boats are equipped. There is reason to believe that many of the boats in the Bay of Chaleur go out equally unprovided, and that insufficient and unfit hooks, lines, and bait, tend greatly to depreciate and render unprofitable the labours of the fishermen, who pay little attention to what they generally consider trifles.

While fishing off Green Point, a number of Black Porpoises were rolling about, and sometimes came very near to the boat. One large Ling was caught—these fish are not commonly taken in the day time, the fishing for them being generally during the night. Where boats go off from the land and anchor, the boy (and sometimes a very small one,) is left to keep watch while the fishermen sleep; and he employs himself during the night in hauling up huge Ling, of which he has a certain share as his proportion of the catch.

Heron Island.

There is excellent Herring Fishing around this Island, but the best stations are between the Island and the main land, the distance across being about two miles. A part of this Island only is granted, but the lots already granted are said to cover all the best beaches, and leave no Fishing Stations at the public disposal, which is much to be regretted.

Mr. Harvey, who keeps an Inn a short distance above Nash's Creek, stated that Fall Herring were taken about Heron Island abundantly; that no Shad, Basse, or Gaspereaux were taken in this part of the Bay; that few Capelin were seen; but Lobsters and Sea Trout were abundant. Mr. Harvey was very anxious that the Americans should be allowed to land on this coast, and prosecute the Fisheries, as

they would teach the young men the latest and most approved modes of fishing, from ignorance of which they could not at present follow fishing profitably—and he desired that his wishes should be made known.

Dalhousie.

It was stated by Dugald Stewart, Espuire, the Deputy Treasurer at this place, that the emigrants from the Isle of Arran, who are settled along the coast of the Bay of Chaleur, in the Parishes of Durham and Colborne, have tried the *long* line, or *bullow* fishing, with great success. This mode of fishing is exceedingly well adapted for those settlers, as they can thus procure a supply of fish, and a surplus for sale, with but little interruption to the labour on their farms.

When these Emigrants first settled on this coast they were very destitute, but they now own excellent farms which produce large crops, especially of wheat and oats. They have not only attained to independence and comfort, but many of them are becoming quite wealthy.

Mr. Stewart mentioned the case of a schoolmaster on this coast, named M'Allister, (a lame man,) who taught school during the day, and employed his evening hours in knitting nets. He fished for Herrings in the spring and autumn, at which periods there are school vacations for seed time and harvest. By pursuing this industrious course, in four seasons he earned sufficient to purchase a farm at the price of three hundred pounds, upon which he is now settled, and is quite independent.

There was a good supply of Capelin in Dalhousie Harbour the past season, as there is generally every season. It was stated by the Honorable Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Stewart, that they are still used as manure, but not to the same extent as formerly. Mackerel frequently enter the Restigouche River, and ascend some distance; occasionally they are caught at Escuminac Bay, about five miles above Dalhousie. Mr. Stewart stated, that no American fishing vessel had ever come so far up the Bay as Dalhousie; he is of opinion, that allowing American fishermen to establish Fishing Stations on the coast would be advantageous, especially in teaching the residents how to fish.

There is no Fishing Station, or any Cod Fishing prosecuted at Dalhousie.

DISTRICT OF GASPE.

Tracadegash.

Between Maguacha Point, at the entrance of the Restigouche, on its northern side, and Tracadegash Point, on the Gaspé shore, a distance of about fifteen miles, is Carleton Bay, which is well sheltered, with eight fathoms water, muddy bottom, and good holding ground. Ordinary tides in this Bay rise and fall eight feet, spring tides ten feet. At full and change of the moon, it is high water at three o'clock.

Mr. Joseph Marr, the Post Master at Tracadegash, stated that the Cod Fishery was formerly prosecuted extensively in Carleton Bay, from the beach, but it has fallen off very greatly. The buildings formerly occupied as "fishing rooms" yet standing, are now deserted, while of others the foundations only are seen. Large quantities of Capelin were accustomed to strike in here, but they were used extensively for manure, and but few are now taken. Immense quantities of Herrings were also used on this coast for manure, but this has been prevented during the last four years, by an order of the Municipal Council of this division of the County of Bonaventure.

There are not so many Cod now in the upper part of the Bay of Chaleur, (above Bonaventure,) as formerly, but more Haddock.

Mackerel of the finest quality were taken off Tracadegash Point during the past season, but only in small quantities, from want of the requisite skill and outfit. Mr. Marr was of opinion that 20,000 barrels of Mackerel might have been taken during the season, in Carleton Bay, by those who understood the Fishery. The Herring fishing commences here on the 20th August and ends the 20th September; the Fish are taken almost at the doors of the inhabitants. This Herring Fishery could be prosecuted much more extensively than at present, if under proper regulations.

Large numbers of White Porpoise were seen in the Bay of Chaleur the past season, which was an unusual occurrence, none having been seen there for thirty years previously. Their presence was supposed to have had an injurious effect upon the Salmon Fisheries

Fisheries of the Bay generally, as the White Porpoise destroys great numbers of Salmon, chases them in all directions, and breaks up their "schulls." These Fish are quite common in the River Saint Lawrence, where they are taken sometimes of the length of eighteen feet, in weirs set up for the purpose. They yield much oil of fine quality; their skins are dressed for traces, and the Canadian mail bags are made of them. Mr. Marr exhibited some of these bags, which were very white, thick, and soft; they stand much chafing, and effectually resist the wet.

Mr. Marr stated, that the American fishing vessels which frequent this Bay are in the habit of trading at Port Daniel; that they injure the Cod Fishing by throwing over the bones and offal of the Fish they take; and that it would be better to allow them to land, for the purpose of cleaning and curing their Fish, as they would then do less injury to the Fisheries. The Jersey Houses on the coast, he said, discouraged the Herring Fishery, and all other Fisheries, except that for Cod.

Mr. Marr had driven across the Bay of Chaleur, on the ice, from this place to Heron Island, a distance of nine miles, and crossing that Island, had again driven, on the ice, across the strait, two miles wide, which separates the Island from the Main, and landed at New Mills, on the New Brunswick shore. Mr. Marr exhibited a specimen of auriferous sand, from the bed of a brook on the New Brunswick side of the Bay, in which the grains of gold were very minute, but apparently very pure.

Mr. Edward Mann, who resides at Tracadegash, was prosecuting the Herring Fishing while the writer was there, in September. Mr. Mann is a person of much intelligence and information, and he cured his Herrings in a proper manner. Immediately on being caught the head of each fish was cut off, which allowed all the blood to escape; they were then gutted, cleaned, and salted at once. These fish were very firm, admirably white and delicate, and possessed a fine flavour. All the Fish which Mr. Mann would thus put up during the season, were engaged at £1 7 6 per barrel, thus affording the most convincing proof that attention to curing alone was quite sufficient to ensure a market, and a high price, for these Herrings. They were when caught precisely the same as the Caraquette Herrings, which, from carelessness and mismanagement, are without value.

Mr. Mann's Herring net had a mesh of two and a quarter inches, and his Mackerel nets a mesh of three inches; with thick twine the mesh requires to be a little larger. These nets were one hundred meshes deep; but the imported nets, which are one hundred and sixty meshes in depth, are considered the best for Fall Herrings.

While the writer was at Tracadegash, a fishing schooner arrived from Labrador, having on board three hundred quintals of dry Cod, and one hundred barrels of Herring. This schooner was intended to return immediately to Labrador to bring back another cargo which had been left there, the Fishing having been unusually successful on that coast during the past season, many vessels, as in this case, having made double fares.

Bonaventure Harbour.

On the beach at this place Messieurs George and Ferdinand Boissonault, natives of Canada, have a neat store and fishing establishment; and the Jersey Houses have buildings for receiving and storing dry Fish.

The Messieurs Boissonault stated that there were about one hundred and twenty boats, with two men each, engaged in the Cod Fishery, on the coast between Tracadegash and Bonaventure; and that the catch of these boats would average one hundred quintals of dry and pickled Fish, each, during the season. Not many Capelin are now seen at this place, owing to their having been formerly used largely as manure. Several thousand barrels of Herring are yet used annually at this settlement for the like purpose, and in consequence the Cod fishing has greatly fallen off at this place; fishermen who formerly caught three hundred quintals of Fish during the season, now only get one hundred quintals.

Several American vessels were off this place during the season, and obtained full fares of Mackerel; they injured the Cod Fishing materially by depriving the fishers of their bait.

Messieurs Boissonault strongly advocate the appointment of a Government Inspector to inspect and brand all Fish; as well to give character to the article as to prevent the gross frauds sometimes practised. They mentioned the fact of barrels of Fish being
sold

sold as containing Mackerel, the ends of which only contained that Fish, the centre part of each barrel being filled with Herrings.

The entrance to Bonaventure Harbour is between two long narrow bars of gravel, one extending from a high bank on the south side, and the other from the flat on the north, upon which stands the village of Bonaventure. There is sufficient depth of water in the gully to admit vessels of two hundred tons at high water. Inside the gully there is an extensive basin, and vessels lie directly against the gravel bank, with three fathoms at low water. The Bonaventure River is about sixty miles in length; it is called by the Indians the "Wagamet" or "Clear Water," from the exceeding purity and brilliancy of its waters. There are but few Salmon in this River, or Fish of any description, which is supposed to arise from the very extraordinary clearness of its waters; and this absence of Fish in the Bonaventure distinguishes it from every other River in the Bay of Chaleur. It may be said to be "the exception which proves the rule."

Large quantities of Sea Trout enter the Basin of Bonaventure from the Bay of Chaleur with every flood tide, and go out again with the ebb; these Fish have been designated "Tide Trout." They are of large size, and are readily taken by fly fishers from the sides of the gully, just as the flood tide begins to make. The sportsman, standing on the bar, amid kelp and sea weed, may here have excellent sport for about an hour each tide, until driven off by the advancing waves. He may then follow the Fish up to the basin, taking them at every cast, and perhaps conclude the fishing for that tide under the stern or alongside some large vessel loading in the basin. Again, on the ebb tide there is good fishing for a short time, but it is more difficult then to hit off the Fish, as they all appear to move out to sea in a body. The writer tried this fishing successfully on the 18th September; the Fish were brilliantly white, and in fine condition, very firm and well flavored. It was stated by an old fly fisher from England, who lives at Bonaventure Beach, that in the early part of the season, he took many of these fine Fish of the weight of three pounds and upwards. It was said that Salmon had been occasionally taken at this place with rod and line, while fishing for Tide Trout.

Paspebiac.

This place is sixty miles from Dalhousie, and derives its name from an Indian word signifying "The Great Landing." This landing is a long, curved, gravel spit, which stretches out into the Bay of Chaleur nearly three miles, forming on one side a tolerable Harbour, and nearly enclosing between it and the main land, a *Burrachois* or Lagoon, very convenient as a shelter for Fishing boats and shallops.

On a beach at Paspebiac, is situate the depot of the wealthy and well known Firm of Charles Robin and Company, of Jersey, which was first established here in 1768, by the late Charles Robin, the founder of the Firm, and has since gradually increased to its present extent. This excellent establishment comprises a great number of well finished buildings, stores, warehouses, forges, sail lofts, and workshops for every variety of purpose connected with the business, all kept in the neatest possible order. Each building of the establishment is numbered or lettered, and appropriated to a specific purpose; on no account is it permitted to be used for any other. An extensive stock of valuable goods is kept here; and a neat battery of six-pounders is always in good order, and ready for instant use, to protect the establishment. There is a ship yard here, at which the Firm have always built one vessel annually, for more than half a century, and from the care taken in selecting the timber, and in building, these vessels have become noted for their extraordinary durability.

Every Spring, a whole fleet of ships and brigantines belonging to the Firm, arrive at Paspebiac from Jersey, with double crews, and all the necessary stores for the season. These vessels are moored in front of the beach, their sails are unbent and stored, their topmasts and yards are struck and housed. The whole of the vessels are placed in charge of one master and crew, who take care of them during the Summer, and issue the salt, with which they are balasted, as it is required. The rest of the masters and crews are dispatched in boats and shallops to various parts of the Bay to fish, and collect Fish from those who deal with the Firm. When the fishing season is over, these vessels depart with cargoes for the West Indies and Brazil, but more frequently to the Mediterranean—to the Ports of Messina and Naples. There disposing

disposing of their cargoes, they thence take fruit or other freight to England; and fitting out again at Saint Heliers, in Jersey, where the heads of the Firm reside, they return to Paspebiac in the Spring, to resume the business of the season.

The admirable plan of systematic arrangement at this establishment, the great characteristics of which are, ceaseless industry, frugality, and caution—and especially the strict enforcement of the rule, that no person shall be retained about the business who cannot be profitably employed—have long secured it the most solid prosperity, and enabled the intelligent and enterprising founder of the Firm, to bequeath to his family a great amount of wealth.

On the same beach, adjoining the establishment of Robin & Co., is that of LeBoutillier Brothers, of Jersey, which, though not so extensive as the other, is well and neatly arranged, and kept in excellent order. The three brothers LeBoutillier were trained by the house of Robin & Co., and conduct the fishing business in the same systematic manner as that house, trading to the same ports, and with equal success and profit, but on a less extensive scale. Their whole export of dried fish for the year 1849, was expected to fall little short of 20,000 quintals.

Mr. La Perelle, the chief agent of the establishment of Robin & Co., stated that their house would export from 40,000 to 45,000 quintals of dried Cod, in the season of 1849, to the Brazils, and Mediterranean Ports. The fish for the Brazils are packed in large flat tubs, called "drums," into which they are pressed by a powerful screw. Each drum contains exactly 128 lbs. of dry fish, that being the Portuguese quintal; and the drums are shaped to suit the convenience of the Brazilians, who transport them into the interior of South America, slung in pairs upon mules. For the Mediterranean markets, the fish are stowed in the holds of the vessels, in bulk, and seldom receive damage, such is the excellent manner in which they are cured and stowed. The best and whitest of the Cod are required for the Neapolitan market, for even the Lazzaroni of Naples are very particular as to the quality of their fish.

Mr. La Perelle said, that Capelin struck in abundantly at Paspebiac the past season, and were used largely for manure. Herring do not come in here in sufficient numbers to be used for that purpose. At one time during the past Summer, there were five American schooners at anchor, about a mile from Messieurs Robins' establishment. They fished at the distance of three miles from the point of the beach, for Mackerel, and obtained full fares; some of the vessels had nine hundred barrels; while they were fishing they destroyed the shore fishery for Cod, as the fishers could not catch a sufficiency of Mackerel for bait.

Among the standing orders of the house of Robin & Co. for the regulation of their fishermen, is one, that they shall not split or clean their fish on the Fishing grounds, but always bring them to the shore before performing these operations. The people in their own employ are obliged to comply with this order strictly, and they endeavour to induce all others to be guided by it. They conceive it very injurious to the Fisheries to throw bones and offal among the fish, and the opinion of the Firm on this point, from their long experience and knowledge of the subject, must be deemed quite conclusive.

General Summary and Observations.

The number of Boats and Men engaged in the Sea Fisheries, and the quantities of dried Fish caught and cured in 1849, in the District north of the Miramichi, may be thus summed up:—

| LOCALITY. | Number of Boats. | Number of Men. | Number of Boys. | Estimated catch in quintals. |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Portage Island, ... | 33 | 80 | 20 | 900 |
| Tabusintac Gully, ... | 19 | 57 | ... | 500 |
| Tracad, ... | 10 | 30 | ... | 200 |
| Shippagan, ... | 60 | 120 | 60 | 6,000 |
| Point Miscou, ... | 40 | 80 | ... | 3,000 |
| Caraquette, ... | 200 | 400 | 150 | 10,000 |
| Grande Ance, ... | 30 | 60 | ... | 2,250 |
| Petit Rocher, ... | 40 | 80 | 23 | 1,200 |
| TOTALS, ... | 432 | 907 | 250 | 24,050 |

All the men engaged in this fishery are also part farmers; they cultivate some portion of land wherever they reside on the coast. Of the quantity of dried fish above stated, it is estimated that 15,000 quintals were Cod, and the rest Haddock and Ling.

The Ling is a fish known in the Bay of Fundy by the name of "Hake." In the Gulf this fish is taken of very large size, especially by fishing during the night. In appearance it corresponds precisely with the drawing in Mr. Yarrell's admirable work on British Fishes, (vol. 2, page 289,) and its description is the same as there given of the forked Hake; or *phycis furcatus* of Cuvier. Owing to the length, breadth, and thickness of the Ling when split, they are, at the best "rooms," dried on large flakes raised about eight feet from the ground, which have a greater circulation of air underneath. The Cod of larger size are also dried on these flakes.

Of the quantity of Fall Herring taken on this coast, it is quite impossible to give any estimate which may be relied upon as accurate. The principal Fishing ground is at Caraquette, and the whole quantity taken there in 1849, would probably amount to two thousand barrels, or perhaps exceed that quantity. The catch at other localities along the coast, would perhaps amount to one thousand barrels more.

The quantity of Mackerel caught and cured is so small as scarcely to be taken into account, in giving an estimate of these Fisheries. It was said that Mackerel had at times been imported from Arichat for the use of the inhabitants on this coast, near which thousands of barrels of the same fish are annually caught by Fishing vessels from Maine and Massachusetts.

The Cod, Haddock, and Ling, are cured by the Jersey houses in the most perfect manner; nothing can be finer than their best quality of dried Cod, when ready for shipment. By long practice and close attention to their business, the Jersey curers have become exceedingly expert and skilful; they are fully competent to give instruction to others, and are admirable teachers. The suggestion of Mr. Doran, of Shippagan, (in his letter annexed,) that some of the young men of this Province should enter the Jersey establishments, to learn practically this important part of the fishery business, as also the mode of conducting it generally, is well worthy of consideration.

Some of the gentlemen connected with the Jersey Fishing establishments in the County of Gloucester, complained bitterly of the heavy Provincial Duties on many articles imported for the use of the Fisheries. It was said that these duties were very burthensome to the Fishermen, who obtained no greater price for their fish than heretofore; but were, in consequence of the increased duties, obliged to pay much higher prices for their supplies than formerly.

With a view to ascertain the amount of duties collected at the Port of Shippagan, which includes Miscou and Shippagan Islands, Tracaday, Caraquette, Grand Ance, and all the Fishing "rooms" in that quarter, reference has been made to the Province Treasurer, and the following appears as the return of all articles imported into this District, which paid specific duties in the year 1849:—

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Brandy, | None. | Meats, (salted,) | 20,400 lbs. |
| Wine, | " | Soap, | 1,814 lbs. |
| Spirits, | 112 gals. | Lard, | 40 lbs. |
| Lemon Syrup, | None. | Butter, | 2,366 lbs. |
| Malt Liquor, | " | Cheese, | None. |
| Cider, | " | Candles, | 362 lbs. |
| Molasses, | 2,605 gals. | Leather, | 380 lbs. |
| Brown Sugar, | 9½ cwt. | Skins, | 2 doz. |
| Loaf Sugar, | None. | Cattle, | 1 |
| Crushed Sugar, | " | Horses, | None. |
| Tea, | 422 lbs. | Clocks, | " |
| Coffee, | 332 lbs. | Coals, | 45 tons. |
| Tobacco, | 4,803 lbs. | Apples, | 60 bush. |
| Dried Fruits, | None. | Wheat Flour, | 1,644 bar. |
| Fish, | " | | |

The specific duties on the foregoing articles, with the ad-valorem duties on all other dutiable articles imported, amounted in the whole to £518 2 6, which was the whole amount of Provincial duties collected for the Port and District of Shippagan, during the year 1849. When

When it is taken into consideration, that articles for the use of the Lumbering and Mill Establishments, and for consumption by the Agricultural portion of the population in that District, pay a considerable proportion of the duties there collected, the residue would not seem to be of such an amount as to fall heavily on the fishers, unless the articles for their use paid duty in some other part of the Province.

The Sub-Collector at Caraquette, gave it as his opinion, that there was very little smuggling on this coast. The writer's opinion is somewhat different.

THE DISTRICT SOUTH OF THE MIRAMICHI.

In entering upon a description of the Fisheries of this part of the Gulf Coast of New Brunswick, it is necessary to premise, that no Fishing "rooms" have yet been established south of the Miramichi; that the Sea Fisheries are carried on by the settlers upon the coast, who fish to such an extent, and in such manner, as suits their means, or their convenience; that the quantities they take are frequently only sufficient for their own families; and that but few of them cure fish for sale.

The Coast from Bay du Vin to Richibucto Head.

On the whole line of this coast, Spring Herrings are abundant, but they are only taken by the settlers for their own use; and there is reason to believe that many are used for manure. There is excellent Cod Fishing outside Fox Island, and off Point Escuminac, as has already been mentioned. From Point Escuminac to Point Sapin on the Gulf Shore, the land is a miserable sunken tract, almost uninhabited, and there is no good Harbour even for boats. From Point Sapin, across the Straits of Northumberland, to the West Cape of Prince Edward Island, there is good fishing both for Cod and Mackerel, and this ground is a favorite resort for American fishing vessels, many of whom obtain full fares here every season. From Fox Island in Miramichi Bay, to Richibucto, Salmon are caught all along the coast, there being nets at almost every lot. There were about 200 barrels of Salmon taken from Kouchibouguac beaches to Richibucto Head, during the season of 1849; these were all caught outside, by sea fishing, as it may be termed. There is no regulation for this Fishery; the season is from the 1st of June to the 15th of August, after which the Salmon are supposed to enter the Rivers, as no more are taken on the coast. These Salmon sell at Richibucto for £2 10s. per barrel, payable in cash.

On this line of coast, the Fall Herring are abundant, but only a few are taken at the Kouchibouguac beaches by the Salmon fishers; they caught about 200 barrels the past season. It was stated as a reason why so small a quantity was taken, that this Fishery occurs at the season when the settlers are engaged in making their Marsh hay, and that they have not time to attend to it.

Thomas Powell, Esquire, of Richibucto, stated that he has been fifty eight years settled at Richibucto, and that he was thirteen years of age when he first came with his father from Grimross, on the Saint John, to reside there. At that time there was not a white settler on the whole coast, from Shediac to Bay du Vin.

Mr. Powell thinks there is no Cod Fishing, properly so called, in the Straits of Northumberland, south of Richibucto Head, but north of a line drawn from that Head to the West Cape of Prince Edward Island, he thinks the Fishing very good. The in-shore fishing for Cod is from the 1st June to 15th August; after that the Fish move off into deep water on the Banks. Mr. Powell says, that vessels of thirty five tons, with crews of five men each, might prosecute the Fisheries from Richibucto profitably, fishing either on the Bradelle Bank, or at the Labrador; that if the vessels were larger than thirty five tons, they should be double that size, but these would not be so profitable as the smaller class. Mr. Powell is clearly of opinion, that the employment of twenty of these small vessels in the Sea Fisheries, would confer more real benefit upon that part of the Province, than all the Steam Saw Mills there.

As to Mackerel, Mr. Powell said they were and always had been abundant on this coast, but there were no preparations for taking them; he never knew a Mackerel net to be used, but Mackerel were occasionally caught in the Gaspereaux nets.

Mr. Richard Long, Pilot at Richibucto, stated that there are three Harbours between Richibucto Head and Point Sapin, for vessels drawing 8 or 9 feet water, and several good boat Harbours also. He described a small Bank, distant about ten miles, east
by

by north, from Richibucto Head, and in range of Point Sapin, where Cod were abundant, especially in the latter part of the season. There is seven fathoms water on this Bank, and a vessel of 15 or 20 tons might be filled in a week, using Lobsters and Clams as bait. Cod only are taken on this Bank, and they average from 40 to 50 to the quintal. Cod Fishing begins on the 20th of May, and lasts as late as the weather will permit in the autumn. Until the end of June, large Cod may be caught near the shore, but small Cod may be taken close in during the whole season. Mr. Long said, that during the summer of 1849, Mackerel were unusually abundant; the waters were alive with them.

Mr. Sylvester C. Wathen, a Merchant of Richibucto, informed the writer, that Cod averaging seventy to the quintal were abundant throughout the season, at the distance of four miles only from the Town of Richibucto; that there was also good Cod fishing at the Red-buoy, half a mile beyond Richibucto Bar. Early in the season the French settlers frequently went out in *flats*, or small punts, and caught what Cod they wanted, close to the beach. Haddock and Ling were abundant in the latter part of the season—Halibut were scarce—no Pollack had ever been seen on this coast. Mackerel were said to exist in great plenty; some of the “schulls” entered Richibucto Harbour in August last, and went up the River as far as the Bridge, *but none were taken*.

Mr. Wathen said, that outside Richibucto Harbour, the waters were perfectly alive with Mackerel every season, from 15th July to 15th September, yet there was no Mackerel Fishing. No vessels were fitted out on this coast for any of the Sea Fisheries.

David Wark, Esquire, of Richibucto, stated, that good Fishing “rooms” or stations for the Shore Fishery, might be established at the entrance to the Kouchibouguac and Kouchibouguacis Rivers, the Beaches being favourable, and in his opinion the Fisheries could be carried on there more profitably than at Newfoundland, because the fishermen could obtain other employment during the winter.

A fisherman from Prince Edward Island, named Wolff, was met at Richibucto; he had been out fishing for five weeks in a small schooner, having on board two men and a boy. They had fished in 8 to 30 fathoms water, and had caught thirty quintals of Cod; the fish averaged one hundred to the quintal. Mr. Creelman, of Richibucto, who had been out fishing with Wolff, said that on one occasion they had taken two hundred fish in two hours, about 20 miles from Richibucto. During the first week in September last, they boarded three American vessels off the West Cape of Prince Edward Island. One vessel had then 450 barrels of Mackerel, chiefly No. 2, and was on her second trip; the other two vessels had 300 barrels each; one schooner was from Newburyport, having on board four men and four boys; in one day they took 65 barrels of Mackerel. The Skipper of this vessel said he had fished for Mackerel on the same ground in 1848, and his share of the profits that year was five hundred dollars.

It is to be regretted that the depth of water at the entrance to the fine Harbour of Richibucto has recently shoaled to 13½ feet, owing to a new channel having broken out to the northward of the old one, and divided the water. This is a matter which requires some inquiry and attention, as the evil may yet be remedied.

From Richibucto Head to Shediac.

Between Richibucto and Buctouche Harbours, the coast is low with sandy beaches. Chockpish is nearly mid-way between these two Harbours; it is small, but is a good Harbour for boats, and the lesser description of fishing craft.

Buctouche, like all the other Harbours on this coast, is a Bar Harbour. Owing to some cause not explained, the water has gradually deepened on the Bar, during the last five years, to the extent of 18 inches. Formerly there was only 12 feet water; but during the past season, vessels drawing 13½ feet have gone over the Bar, not at the highest tides. The Bar is only 60 yards in breadth; outside it there is instantly three fathoms water, gradually deepening to sea-ward. Inside the Bar there are five, six and nine fathoms, up to the loading place at the Bridge.

Mr. Peter M'Phelim, of Buctouche, stated that in April, or so soon as the ice breaks up, the Spring Herrings are abundant, but that the settlers on the coast only take so many as are necessary for the use of the settlement. Formerly some of the settlers used them as manure, but a majority of the inhabitants opposed it, and succeeded in putting

putting a stop to the practice. After the Spring Herrings the Gaspereaux come in, and these are followed by Cod, which remain in-shore for about six weeks. During this period, Mr. M'Phelim has seen the Frenchmen go out in their flats or canoes, only fifty or sixty fathoms from shore, and fill them with Cod, fishing sometimes in two fathoms water only. Small Cod, he says, may always be taken along the coast from Buctouche to Cocagne; but there is throughout every season good Cod fishing from Buctouche across to Prince Edward Island.

Mr. M'Phelim says he has seen every part of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, and much of the Coast of Newfoundland, and he is quite certain that Buctouche Harbour would be found as good a station for Cod fishing as any where in Newfoundland. There are plenty of Clams at the Bar; and vessels frequently come there from the Bay of Chaleur to obtain them for bait. There is an extraordinary abundance of Lobsters along the whole of this coast.

Mackerel are very abundant off this Harbour. Mr. M'Phelim said that in the Strait between Buctouche and Prince Edward Island, the waters at times were perfectly "boiling" with them—*yet none were taken!*

On the first day of October last, great quantities of Mackerel entered the Harbour of Buctouche, and went up Big Buctouche River; shoals of them were seen playing about in the Basin, above the Bridge—but they all went to sea again—not one was caught!

Cocagne is also a bar Harbour; in ordinary tides there is nine feet water on the bar at low water, and 14 feet at high water—at spring tides there is two feet more. Within, there is a fine Harbour, well sheltered, with good anchorage in five fathoms water.

There are no boats or vessels fitted out at Cocagne for taking Cod, and that Fishery on the Gulf Coast of New Brunswick, may be said to terminate here as its southern limit. It was ascertained that between Point Sapin and Cocagne, the inhabitants on the coast employ about forty five Fishing boats, of 18 to 25 feet keel, with two sails, and generally three or four men in each boat. The whole catch of these boats will not probably exceed one thousand quintals during the season.

The following information as to the Fisheries at Cocagne, has been kindly furnished by William Y. Theal, M. D., who resides there:—

"The Fisheries, if they can be so termed, are conducted here in the worst possible manner. The Herrings appear in and about the Harbour immediately on the breaking up of the ice, and could be taken in any quantity with suitable preparation. The inhabitants generally go out for them in parties of four to eight persons, with a canoe and small net, say from fifty to one hundred feet long, and four to six feet deep, supported generally by bark lines, with buoys to bear it up, and bags of sand or stones slung, to sink the lower edge. Yet even with this rude outfit, they generally catch sufficient for their own consumption, and a large quantity to sell fresh.

"Many wagons from Sackville, Dorchester, Petitcodiac, and other places, are loaded here during the Fishing season with Herrings at two pence to six pence per hundred, payable in Tobacco at 2s. per pound, Tea at 4s. per pound, and small wares in proportion. In most cases, the Herrings are of a poor quality, yet I have seen them fully equal to those caught on the Labrador Coast. The Gaspereaux enter the Harbour and River a few weeks after, but the mesh of the nets being made for Herrings only, few of these are taken; they are generally fat. Mackerel are often seen in large shoals, but I cannot learn that there is a Mackerel net on this part of the coast. They are sometimes caught in Herring nets, and are brought for sale fresh.

"Cod were caught a few years since in tolerably large quantities by a few families who then had a boat; but they disagreed amongst themselves, and left the boat on the beach to perish. For the last three years no boat has been fitted out here. Occasionally a canoe will put out Cod fishing, and do very well. The lines are very large, of domestic make, with huge pieces of iron to sink them; the hooks are enormously large, and also of domestic manufacture.

"Oysters are here in variety and more abundant than in any other Harbour on the coast. Those taken up the River are of inferior quality; but those from the Harbour excel in flavour even those taken from the mouth of James' River in the Chesapeake, which are so highly esteemed in the United States. Lobsters are so plentiful in the season, that they can be purchased at the door from two pence to eight pence per dozen."

The Fisheries at Cocagne appear to be in a very primitive state, but little better than when the Micmacs were the sole residents on this coast.

Shediac Harbour to Baie Verte.

Of Shediac Harbour it is unnecessary to speak, the recent Railway Surveys having rendered it well known.

Messrs. James and William Milne, the very intelligent and able pilots who reside there, stated that there was no Cod fishing south of Cocagne; that they had never found any Cod south of a line from Buctouche to the West Cape of Prince Edward Island, and from thence to the eastward of Cape Tormentine. Within these limits the bottom is a soft blue mud, which is not favourable to Cod.

The Spring Herrings are abundant on this coast, as elsewhere; they do not enter the Harbours, and have not done so within the last twenty years. No Fall Herrings are taken, but the Messrs. Milne are quite sure they are outside Shediac Harbour. They have seen the herring gulls fishing for them; and last autumn they picked up one of the Fall Herrings, dropped by a gull which they frightened.

In July and August last Mackerel were seen in the Harbour, as far up as Scadouc Bridge, but nobody was prepared to take them, and some few only were caught in Herring nets.

Aboushagan and Tedish are boat Harbours, to the eastward of Shediac, between the entrance to that Harbour and Cape Bald.

At Aboushagan there is from 4 to 5 feet water on the bar, with good sand beaches near the entrance. Tedish bar is dry at low water; but there is a fine sand beach, on which boats are easily drawn up.

The Harbours of Big and Little Shemogue are between Cape Bald and Cape Tormentine. Big Shemogue is a good Harbour for boats, and vessels of all sizes, up to 130 tons. There is ten feet water on the bar at ordinary tides, with a channel about fifty fathoms wide. The Harbour inside is capable of containing one hundred vessels with anchorage in 2½ fathoms, well sheltered. This would be a very convenient Harbour for building small vessels; there are good situations for ship-yards, where the channel runs close to the shore. There is capital timber for ship building in this vicinity, the woods never having yet been culled; and it is singular, that the advantages of this snug little Harbour have been hitherto overlooked. Little Shemogue is about three miles to the eastward of its larger namesake, with nine feet of water on the bar, and ten to twelve inside.*

Off the Harbours from Shediac to Cape Tormentine, Mackerel are always in abundance every season; the inhabitants manage to take as many as answer their immediate purposes, but they make no effort to prosecute this valuable Fishery.

In Baie Verte, south of Cape Tormentine, the Cod fishing again begins; and Ling and Haddock are also taken, but not in any quantity. Spring Herrings, and Gaspereaux, are very abundant; the latter have been taken in large quantities during the month of June, in the Gaspereaux River, at the head of this Bay, not far from the Nova Scotia Boundary.

With reference to the Fishery for Spring Herring, Dr. Guimarin, who has resided on this coast, states, that he has frequently been present during the fishing season, and noticed the great want of boats, of sufficient size, to take the fish from the nets, even when there was only a moderate breeze. In these cases the fishermen could not venture to launch their small skiff or canoes, and the abundance of fish had often to remain until they were quite spoiled, and unfit for use. In moderate weather they would bring on shore such abundance of fish, that not having sufficient salt, or vats or casks to put them in, they would pile them in stacks on the beach, and those not sold fresh, would be used to manure the land. Dr. Guimarin says, the quantity of Herrings thus lost and destroyed every season, between Richibucto and Cape Bald, would amount to a small fortune, if they were properly cured and packed in barrels. He adds, that if the fishermen on this line of coast were provided with suitable nets and boats—with barrels, which might be profitably made during the winter, when they are quite idle,—and with sufficient supply of salt, the Herring Fishery might be conducted here upon a large scale, and with much profit.

SEA

* For a description of the Harbours from Shediac to Cape Tormentine, the writer is indebted to Philip Chapman, Esq., of Shemogue, and Messrs. Milne, of Shediac.

SEA FISH, FISHING, AND FISHING TACKLE.

Besides the Fishes mentioned, Flounders are abundant every where along the northern shores of New Brunswick, from the smallest "dab" up to the large "*platessa plana*," sometimes two feet in length. A specimen of the Plaice was seen at Miscou; and they are supposed to exist more or less abundantly in the Bay of Chaleur. Very little is known of the Flat Fish of the Gulf, the trawl-net not being in use. This net is greatly used in the Fisheries of the British Channel, where it is called a ground-net, drag-net, trawl, or trammel, for it is known by all these names. It is a triangular net, with a mouth from twenty to thirty feet wide, and one foot high; this is so suspended from, and drawn after the fishing smack, as to scrape along the ground, and capture whatever swims within a few inches of the bottom, for the mesh is so small that few Fish escape. All Fish that are marketable are taken out of the net; the small fry are thrown again into the sea. By the convention between England and France, relative to the Channel Fisheries, it is stipulated that no trawl-net shall be used of which the meshes are less than an inch and three quarters from knot to knot. When Lord Aylmer visited the Bay of Chaleur in 1832, in the "Kingfisher," that vessel was provided with a trawl-net; among the Fish taken by it in the Bay, the Plaice is mentioned. It is said that neither Turbot, Brill, or Sole, existed in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence; but there can be no certainty of this, until the trawl-net has been more extensively used.

One species of Eel only was noticed on the Gulf Coast; these are exceedingly abundant, and frequently of large size. An Eel split, salted, and smoked, was exhibited at Pokemouche; without the head, it was thirty inches in length, and fifteen inches in breadth, as split, nearly the size of an ordinary smoked Salmon, and quite as thick. It was taken in Pokemouche Gully with a Basse spear.

The Pollack, (*merlangus carbonarius* of Cuvier,) which is common in the Bay of Fundy, has not been seen on the Gulf Shore of the Province; none of the fishermen there had ever caught one. The Skate, which is abundant in the Bay of Fundy, (*raia batis* of Linnæus,) is not so common in the Gulf; a single specimen only, of small size, was seen at Miscou.

The only specimen of the Shark family found in the Gulf is the common Dog-Fish, (*spinax acanthias* of Cuvier,) which at times is troublesome to the fisherman. This is a viviparous Fish, one which produces its young alive. A female Dog-Fish opened at Point Miscou, on the 25th of August, contained a number of young very nearly full formed; it is therefore probable that the young fish are produced at the end of August, or early in September.

Three varieties of Herring were observed on this coast—the Spring Herring, which appear immediately on the departure of the ice in the Spring—the Fall Herring, which appear about the 20th August—and the small fat Herring mentioned by Mr. Wilson of Miscou, which are also found along the shores of Gaspe. The former belief that a great army of Herrings issued annually from the north, and made the circuit of the seas during the season, is now completely at an end. It is stated in Cuvier's great work on Fishes, (*Histoire Naturelle des Poissons*, vol. 20, page 47,) that the markets of Paris are supplied with Herrings from Calais and Dieppe, and that there is not the least difficulty in distinguishing the locality from which the Herrings are brought, when once known. Mr. Yarrell, in his work on British Fishes, (2nd edition, vol. 2, page 185,) says, "there can be no doubt that the Herring inhabits the deep water all around the coast, and only approaches the shores for the purpose of depositing its spawn within the immediate influence of the principal agents in vivification—increased temperature and oxygen; and as soon as that essential operation is effected, the shoals that haunt our coast disappear; but individuals are to be found, and many are caught throughout the year."

Neither Shad or Gaspereaux, (now ascertained to belong to the same family,) are common in the Bay of Chaleur. It is supposed that the water is too clear and cold for them, and the bottom generally, too rocky; these fish are known to delight in a soft muddy bottom, and turbid water.

Among the Shell Fish not previously noticed, Scallops may be mentioned; these were found of large size along the coast, between Tracadys and Shippagan. Many Sponges beautifully branched like coral were also found in the same locality.

Among

Among the products of the Fisheries, Oil from cods' livers must not be omitted. This important item in the Cod Fishery is valuable; the quantity produced from each quintal of Cod is supposed to pay for the labour of splitting and the salt used in curing. Of late it has been refined and rendered beautifully clear, and in this state is used for medicinal purposes; it is prescribed for consumptive patients, upon many of whom its effects are said to have been highly beneficial.

At each Fishing Station visited, specimens of the fishing tackle in use were procured, and it was observed that the hooks varied very much in size, shape and quality. Some of the hooks for Cod were of the rudest make, so short and ill-shaped that, but for the voracity of the fish, they would be of little use. The best hooks were obtained at Messrs. Alexandre's station at Shippagan; those for Ling have a very long shank, and are exceedingly well tempered and finished. The knives at this establishment are also excellent; they are manufactured by John Algor, Sheffield, and are superior to any others seen on the coast. The Mackerel hooks generally were much inferior to those made and used by the Americans; the "jigs" which were attempted to be used by the resident fishermen, were rude and clumsy affairs, as compared with the neat brilliant "jigs" made in Boston. The blue Mackerel line did not appear to be in general use; white lines were most common, and those, it is thought by the Americans, frighten the fish. The snoods to which the Mackerel hooks are attached, should be black, a fathom at least in length, and of less size than the line. The snood is attached to the end of the blue line, where the lead is also placed; and a small round piece of wood, about nine inches in length, is there required, to prevent the snood from becoming entangled with the lead.

The fishery with the long-line, or "bultow," is not practised any where on the coast visited, except between Bathurst and Dalhousie, by the settlers from Arran.

The rudeness of the fishing-tackle used by the fishermen of Cocagne, is described in Doctor Theal's letter from that place. The hooks, nets, and tackle in use throughout the district south of the Miramichi, were found generally to be clumsy and inefficient; but for the abundance of fish, and the ease with which they are taken, there would be but few caught by such unfit and primitive contrivances.

On the coast of Norway, Cod are caught in nets, and it is stated by Mr. Laing, in his Journal of a residence in that country, that these nets are becoming more in use every season. For this fishery, every boat is provided with six or eight nets, each twenty fathoms in length, and thirty meshes deep. The mesh of the Cod net is six inches from knot to knot, and is made of three-ply hemp thread. The back ropes and ground ropes of each net are fastened to the net, and the whole are set like Scotch Herring nets, only with longer buoy-ropes. The Cod nets are set at night in 60 to 80 fathoms water, and are taken up in the morning. The introduction of nets in the Cod Fishery is said to have improved, very considerably, the condition of the inhabitants of the coast of Norway, as by means of nets, the quantity of fish caught has been nearly doubled.

It is not at all unlikely, that Cod nets might be used with advantage on the Gulf Coast of the Province, especially in the early part of each season, when the Cod come close to the shores in pursuit of Herring, Capelin, and Gaspereaux.

THE RIVER FISHERIES.

As the Fisheries in the Miramichi River are of much importance, and involve nearly all the questions connected with the River Fisheries in this part of New Brunswick, they will be first described. The Rivers to the northward will then be taken up in their order to the Restigouche; after which the Rivers to the southward of the Miramichi, the Fisheries of which are of much less importance, will be described.

The River Miramichi.

The principal Fisheries in this River are those for Gaspereaux, Basse, and Salmon, all which have diminished greatly of late years, owing to the improper manner in which they have been conducted.

There are, besides, great quantities of Eels, which are chiefly taken through the ice in Winter by spearing; Trout, which are most abundant, and may be taken at all seasons; Smelt, which ascend this River and its tributaries, in almost miraculous quantities, very early every year.

The

The Gaspereaux enter the Miramichi during the first week in May, and ascend to their spawning places, which are about the head of the tide, both on the North West and South West branches of this River. They spawn very soon after they get up to their ground, and they go out to sea again in July.

In the North West Miramichi these Fish ascend no higher than the deep pool at Red Bank, at which place it has been customary to take them with a seine. This pool at times has been set so thoroughly that not a fish has been left, and the Gaspereaux Fishing, as such, may be said to have ended on the North West.

A very small meshed seine was used for the Gaspereaux, which destroyed great quantities of small Fish, especially the young Salmon, Trout, and Basse. The Gaspereaux Fishery on the Miramichi was almost a total failure the past season.

The Gaspereaux taken in the River are generally thin and dry, while those caught outside are very fat, as already mentioned. John T. Williston, Esquire, of Miramichi, who has much experience in the Fisheries, stated his opinion that they are not the same Fish; he says the outside Fish, which are called Summer Gaspereaux, never enter the Rivers. Besides their being fatter, they are smaller and more yellow in colour than the Spring Fish. It is quite possible that Mr. Williston is correct, and that the Spring and Summer Gaspereaux differ, as do the Shad which enter the River Saint John in the Spring from those which are caught late in the season in the Bay of Fundy. It may be remarked that Cuvier in his great work on the Natural History of Fishes, (*Histoire Naturelle des Poissons*, vol. 20, p. 416,) classes the Gaspereaux or Alewife of North America as of the genus *alose* or Shad, and designate it *l'alose tyran*, after Dr. DeKay of New York. Considered as a smaller species of Shad, the habits of the Gaspereaux may be much more readily understood, and the relative value of the River and Sea varieties better appreciated, by comparison with those of the Spring and Fall Shad.

Formerly great quantities of Basse, some of very large size, were taken in the Miramichi, but this fishery has also nearly ceased. These fish in the Winter gather in large shoals, and lie in a dull and half torpid state under the ice; they are then taken in the following manner:—A bag net is put upon a bow, or hoop of wood, six feet in diameter, and this hoop is attached to a pole, twenty feet in length. A large hole is cut through the ice, at some place, which the Basse are known to frequent, and the net is put down. The person who uses it, places the end of the pole across his chest, and walks about six times around the hole, sweeping the net about. It is then drawn up, and the fish removed; the operation is repeated until all the Basse are taken at that spot. This is done at night—the darker the night the better. The fish are very stupid, and easily taken, as they will not stir. The mesh of these Basse nets was formerly four inches, but the size has been diminished as the fish decreased in numbers, and now the very smallest are taken. Last Winter, great quantities of small Basse were thus caught in the Miramichi, by very fine nets; and it is supposed that they are now nearly exterminated.

The Salmon Fishery of the Miramichi has long been known for its extent and value. The first British settler was Mr. William Davidson from Scotland, who established himself on the banks of the Miramichi in 1764, and for many years after he caught and cured from 1400 to 1800 tierces of Salmon annually. The fishery is now so cut up and divided, that it is impossible to say what quantity of Salmon are caught, so many being consumed fresh, or put up by the persons who take them, for family use; but at a rough estimate, the whole quantity does not probably exceed one thousand barrels.

The Act 39 Geo. 3, cap. 5, for regulating the Fisheries in the County of Northumberland, prescribes the length of net to be used in the Miramichi, from the Bay to the head of the tide on each Branch of the River, and provides that no Salmon shall be taken in any manner, between the 30th day of August and the 1st day of April following. The Justices in Sessions are by the Act empowered to appoint Overseers of the Fisheries to carry out its provisions.

There is a wide difference of opinion as to the best mode of regulating and protecting the Salmon Fishery of the Miramichi and its tributaries, between those who catch Salmon in the tide-way, and those who take them in the fresh water above. The views and opinions of the several parties will be given as nearly as they could be ascertained,

ascertained, it being understood that all agree as to the decrease of the Fishery, and the urgent necessity for the adoption of means to preserve and protect it.

Donald M'Kay, Esquire, J. P., of the North West Miramichi, stated, that the white settlers fish the Rivers in all parts unlawfully, by netting, seining, dragging, spearing, and every other way possible, up to the very heads of the Streams; and that this unlawful fishing is continued until the close of the season, when the ice makes. The Overseers do not perform their duty, because they are not paid for it, and cannot afford to do it gratuitously, neither do they prosecute for breaches of the laws, as they are bound to do, because they have often to pay the costs out of their own pockets when they do. From Beaubair's* Point to the head of the tide on the North West, a distance of 14 miles, nets of forty fathoms in length are allowed. Mr. M'Kay said, these nets overlapped each other in many places, and in others completely closed the channel. He is opposed to spearing in the upper parts of the Rivers; but he thinks it might be permitted during the netting season, up to the head of the tide; but above that, all persons should be strictly prohibited from spearing.

Mr. M'Kay stated as his opinion, that the outside fishing—that is, the fishing in the Bay and lower part of the Miramichi—is prosecuted too largely, and destroys the run of the fish. In 1848 a great storm damaged and destroyed the nets outside; the week following there was an excellent run of Fish in the North West. Instead of one Salmon they took ten in a tide; but so soon as the nets outside were repaired, the fishing ceased. Mr. M'Kay is decidedly of opinion, that the size of the mesh of all Salmon nets should be regulated by law, as the mesh has been greatly diminished of late years, in order to take Grilse, which is very destructive; that nothing would protect the Fisheries so effectually as the appointment of proper persons as Overseers—say one in each Parish, who should be paid.

John T. Williston, Esquire, J. P., of Chatham, stated, that the great destruction of Salmon takes place from the head of the tide upward. The Fish are followed to the very heads of the streams, and there destroyed, among them, Grilse of small size, which are taken in great numbers. On the 1st of October, Mr. Williston stated to the writer, that during the preceding fortnight, several canoe loads of "black" Salmon salted, had been brought down the River to a dealer in Chatham; and that during the preceding week, a constable reported to him, that one hundred canoes were then employed in taking Salmon in the upper waters of the Miramichi. Mr. Williston stated his decided opinion, that some respectable person should be appointed to oversee the Fisheries of the Miramichi, whose duty it should be to enforce the law, and who should be paid.

With reference to the taking of black Salmon, or Salmon wholly out of season, the writer can state, that on the 27th of September last, he ascertained that Salmon Fishing was carried on, in defiance of the law, at Bartibog River, a tributary which enters the Miramichi, a few miles above Miramichi Bay. They were taken both by nets and spears; and the parties who used these different modes quarrelled nightly, and endeavoured to drive each other off the Fishing Ground. The fish were very thin and black, many of them so spent as scarcely to be fit for human food. Large Salmon in this state were sold at 15d. each. In coming up the Miramichi River in his canoe, during the night of the 29th of September, the writer, just before midnight, passed over two long Salmon nets which were regularly set, although the weather was then very cold, and the night frosty. These nets were set from a high bank or cliff, about a mile below the Saw Mills of Messieurs Gilmour, Rankin and Company, in places where they were not likely to be seen from the shore.

Mr. George Parker, of Chatham, stated that during the last three years large quantities of Salmon, out of season, have been brought down the River to Chatham for sale; that the Salmon Fishing during this period has fallen off very greatly, and will fail altogether if not protected. The Indians and settlers, he said, take them out of season up to the very heads of the streams, and in every stream; and encouragement is given to this wholesale slaughter of the Fish by small traders, who purchase them because they get them at a low price. They are packed with prime Fish, and sent abroad, and the character of the Fish is thus destroyed in distant markets.

The illegal Salmon Fishery at Portage Island, mentioned in the former part of this Report, appears to have existed for some time. The

* In the Act this is designated Beaubert's Point, which is probably the correct orthography.

The Honorable Mr. Cunard stated that the catch of Salmon at this Island, during the season of 1849, was less than usual. He also said that quantities of very small Grilse had been taken in the upper part of the Miramichi during the last season, some of which he had seen. Mr. Sheriff Black stated that one person at the head of the tide on the South West, took twenty barrels of small Grilse during the past Summer.

Alexander Davidson, Esquire, J.C.P., (son of the first settler on the Miramichi,) is well and thoroughly acquainted with the Salmon Fishery. He stated his firm opinion, that the outside Fishing is fair Fishing; that the mischief is done up the Rivers; that no Salmon should be taken after the 20th August on any pretence; that the taking of Salmon out of season should be punished criminally; and that the Overseers of the Fisheries should be paid officers. He mentioned, that one person on the Miramichi had sold Grilse to the amount of £80 during the past season, and that this taking of Grilse would soon destroy the Salmon fishery. He thinks the size of the mesh should be regulated by law, and that the mesh for Basse should not be less than five inches.

A letter was received from James Lechmere Price, Esquire, J. P., who resides in the Parish of Ludlow, on the South West Miramichi, which is so valuable, and so accurate in its details, that it is here given entire:—

“Ludlow, 8th October, 1849.

“SIR,—My attention having been directed to your Memorandum of the 10th August last, respecting the Fisheries in this part of the Province, I beg to furnish you with the subjoined observations, which relate to the Salmon Fishery on the River Miramichi.

“The Salmon enter the Bay of Miramichi early in the month of June, and are generally found in all the considerable tributary streams before the last of that month. In the Bay and other tide waters, they move rapidly in shoals, but after reaching the fresh water they separate into small groups, some of which pass leisurely into each of the tributary streams, as they present themselves at short intervals, while other groups occupy, for indefinite periods, favourable situations in the principal Rivers. During the latter part of July, in the month of August, and in the early part of the month of September, while the water is warmest near the surface, they are to be found, from the confluence of the tide to the uppermost waters of the River and its tributaries, occupying in quiet groups the deepest waters that the several streams afford, and at all times showing a preference to those places where the purest and coolest water is discharged by springs into the principal streams. This propensity appears to arise from the necessity which exists in cold blooded animals, for a low temperature, not only in the evolution of the ovum after it is cast, but also in the previous stages of gestation. For in the latter part of autumn, when the water gradually becomes coldest near the surface, they begin to separate in pairs, male and female, and in the month of November, when the spawning takes place, they occupy separately, in pairs, small cavities evidently formed by themselves, in the beds of the streams, near the shores and sand banks, where the water is shallow, and at the heads of the rapids with which the Rivers abound. At all seasons heavy rain, by suddenly increasing the quantity and changing the condition and circumstances of the water in the Rivers—thereby affecting the usual haunts of the Salmon—has invariably the effect of setting them in motion; and in truth, it appears not improbable that the flood, occasioned by the melting of the snow, and by the large quantity of rain which usually falls in the spring, by forcing into the Bay a greater proportion of fresh water, at a time when it is congenial to the fish, attracts them at the first to enter the River; and that a recurrence of nearly similar floods, at intervals during the summer and in the fall, produces the same effect upon those that arrive on the coast at a later period. A progressive deterioration takes place in the Salmon from the period of its first entrance into the fresh water, until it disappears in winter. The quality of the fish is not, however, much impaired until the middle of August, and it affords wholesome and palatable food until the middle of September—in which latter month, and in the previous month of August, it is generally preferred for undergoing the preservative process of smoking. At this season also, Salmon are commonly found in greater abundance than at any other time. When taken late in the month of October, the spawn of the female, as well

well as the sperm of the male, will escape from them by rough handling; but the female is never found free from spawn at an earlier period. The ova are then of the size of the largest pea, the skin of the fish is thick and tough, and the flesh gelatinous and white; rendering it altogether so unsightly and so unpalatable, that no necessity, which has heretofore visited the people of this country, has compelled them to use it, to any considerable extent, as an article of food.

“In the Bay, and below the confluence of the tide, Salmon are taken partly by set-nets, which are not permitted by the laws to extend beyond a certain portion of the River and Estuary; and partly by seines, and drift or sweep-nets, as they are technically termed, which, while suffered for the purposes of the Herring and Gaspereaux Fisheries, cannot be restrained from taking Salmon and Grilse at the same time. As regards the set-nets, it is not unusual for the owner to procure distinct portions of net which (after being formed at one end into a particular trap or pound, and being fastened to the part which, suspended on buoys or pickets, occupies the legal breadth of the river,) are separately extended down the stream; furnishing for ordinary occasions, convenient additional snares; while another portion, retained in its position by buoys alone, is at all favourable hours extended, slightly under water, quite to the opposite shore. In fact, the indifference with which these mal-practices have been regarded by the legally constituted authorities, has emboldened many, during the recent scarcity of food, to extend their nets openly from shore to shore.

“A competent law to compel the Overseers of Fisheries to be sworn into office, might obviate in some little degree these unfair modes of Fishing; but it would seem that no great reliance can be placed in the efficacy of a class of men, who, while pursuing their ordinary and urgent avocations, are not likely to have much spare time to devote to the purpose of watching, day and night, the nets of their crafty and vigilant neighbours.

“The truth is, that the fish, becoming more wily from experience, approach with greater caution, as they advance up the River, every obstruction that appears to threaten their safety—and as in this they are aided by the increasing clearness and decreasing depths of the streams, the fisherman is induced to adopt, step by step, different methods to ensnare them; and finally, in the upper portion of the Rivers, to resort for the most part to the use of the torch and spear, which, from the dexterity with which practice enables them to be employed, are effective every where in the clear, rapid water. This latter mode is not however, exempt from the consequences of floods. When they prevail, the turbid state of the water renders it impracticable.

“For twenty miles above the confluence of the tide, the South West Branch, which is the principal branch of the River, partakes largely of the character of the estuary, in point of depth and opacity of the water, and the fishery, though to a much more limited extent, is conducted chiefly by similar methods, without being susceptible however, of quite as many glaring abuses; the necessity for frequent intercourse by water communication, added to the limited width of the stream, and the increased rapidity of the current, rendering some of the ordinary expedients abortive. The spear is however used with great success in the Rapids on this part of the River.

“From this district to the upper waters of the River, comprising a distance of eighty miles of fishing ground, the shallowness and clearness of the water, the great velocity of the current, the inequalities in the bed of the stream, and the change that takes place in the habits of the Fish, all render the use of set-nets inexpedient, and owing to the same causes, nets for sweeping and drifting are of little service, not repaying the expense incurred in preparing them. To illustrate these positions, it is truly affirmed that a set-net, belonging to this part of the River, has been left in the stream suspended on pickets in the usual way, during a fortnight of the best periods of fishing, without yielding even one fish. This incident may perhaps be in part accounted for, by the fact, that during some seasons, in consequence of the scanty supply of water in the River, which gives greater facilities to illegal modes of fishing, very few Salmon except Grilse, make their way to this portion of the stream, until after the autumnal rains. It is to be remarked that the Grilse are for the most part milters. The spawners of that age, as it would seem, do not often enter the fresh water, while on the contrary, the young milters appear to accompany the spawners of advanced age in great numbers.

“In

“ In the year 1845, an Act of the Legislature was passed, prohibiting altogether the spearing of Salmon, except by the Indian tribes. This Act was so manifestly unjust towards the inhabitants of the upper part of the Miramichi River, where fishing with nets is almost impracticable, that no attempt has been made to enforce its provisions in that respect. Spearing might, however, with great propriety, be strictly prohibited in the month of October; for in the early part of that month Salmon are sometimes speared in considerable numbers, particularly in that part of the Miramichi River which flows through the County of York, notwithstanding their quality is deeply impaired, and although the near approach of the season of spawning and of impregnation forbids their destruction.

“ Above Boiestown, fly fishing is practised to a considerable extent, by occasional visitors; but this method, from its uncertainty, and from the large portion of time always consumed by it, cannot be profitably pursued by the inhabitants generally.

“ There are two points on the South West Branch of the River, notorious for the facilities which they afford for illegal fishing, and for the recklessness with which the immediate inhabitants avail themselves of the advantages of their position: one at Astle's, near the confluence of the tide, and the other at Arbo's, a short distance above the mouth of Cain's River. At both these places it is the common practice to extend nets across the entire River, at every favourable opportunity; and in the latter place, to adopt besides, every other known method of unfair fishing, some of which are indeed peculiar to the parties. To these unfair practices, so prevalent in the tide waters, and in their vicinity, aided by the superior natural advantages which the River there affords, is doubtless to be attributed the fact that the annual catch of Salmon is less by more than nine-tenths, in the upper eighty miles of fishing ground, than it is in the corresponding distance below.

“ The erection of dams across the smaller streams, by diminishing the accustomed scope of the fish, would doubtless have the effect of gradually lessening their numbers; but the fisheries on the Miramichi cannot be supposed to have sustained much injury by that means, as the dams heretofore erected, are inconsiderable, when compared with the vast number of streams which remain unobstructed in that way. It is evident, however, that a provision by law to compel the construction of fish-ways wherever dams are erected hereafter, is not undesirable. At the same time it must be confessed, that mills for the manufacture of lumber, have in one respect, promoted an equal distribution of the benefits resulting from the fisheries, as the transportation of lumber by water to the Harbour, has contributed not a little towards preventing the use of nets extending across the channel.

“ When the great increase of occasional fishers upon all the Rivers, is taken into account, it does not appear that the annual catch of fish has diminished much during the last twenty years; certainly it is not decreased to the extent which many persons suppose. In fact, the quantity taken on the River Miramichi and its tributaries was greater in 1848 than the quantity taken in any one of the preceding twenty years, while the present year has afforded an unusual supply to the fishermen in the Bay, and in all the tide waters.

“ It has been suggested that a law, confining the Salmon Fishery to three days of the week, during the fishing season, would, if rigidly enforced, conduce to a more equal distribution of the benefits to be derived from it, besides contributing greatly towards preventing the too rapid destruction of the species. Such a measure would doubtless be acceptable to many of the inhabitants of the Rivers, but to the professional fisherman it would be inconvenient, if not highly injurious.

“ I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES L. PRICE.

M. H. Perley, Esquire, Government Emigration Office, Saint John, N. B.”

The following letter from Alexander Davidson, Esquire, of Oak Point, (ten miles below Chatham,) also contains very valuable information and suggestions; it is likewise given in full:—

“ Oak Point, Miramichi, 10th October, 1849.

“ SIR,—In accordance with the request contained in your Circular, I give you below such information as I am possessed of, relative to the Bay and River Salmon Fishery at this place.

“The Bay Fishery has been gradually falling off for a number of years, and latterly, has become ruinous to many of those engaged in it. The River Fishing has fallen off in nearly the same degree, but the expense of River Fishing being less than in the Bay, the consequences of the failure have not been so severely felt. Still, it is felt, in common with the other, both individually, and as a source of trade.

“The great cause of the failure of the Fishery throughout this River, I attribute to the taking of Fish at an improper period of the year; and from the best information that I can collect, this is practised in all the Rivers that the Salmon frequent, but more particularly on the South West Branch of this River, and to prevent which, appears to be the greatest difficulty to overcome in restoring the Fishery.

“The law at present prescribes the time at which Salmon should be taken, and imposes a fine for any fish caught after that time,—and a fine on persons purchasing such fish;—still, they are openly sold and purchased, salted and exported, as Spring-caught Salmon, though very inferior to such. Those caught late in the season are hardly fit for human food.

“The next thing that I would draw your attention to, is the fishery along the outside of Portage and Fox Islands, at the entrance of this Harbour. Your personal observation would shew you the position of these Islands; and at the Fishing season, (although contrary to law,) the whole of the outside of them is studded with nets to the entrance of the Harbour, leaving little more than the Ship-channel clear. If this abuse is allowed to continue, (even should other matters connected with the up-river abuses be corrected, and the Fish partially return to the River,) the Bay Fishing will not be worth following, as immediately on the nets being set at these Islands, the Bay and River Fishery ceased to remunerate those engaged in it, and fell off, in proportion to the increase of the Fishery outside; for the obvious reason, that the Fish were prevented from entering the Harbour. These unlawful Fisheries outside have amply remunerated the few monopolists engaged in them, at the expense of every person who invested property for the lawful prosecution of the Fishery inside.

“To answer the great question—how to remedy these things, is more difficult than to point them out. There are local Overseers of Fisheries appointed by the Sessions in each Parish; these are useful to confine the nets to the length prescribed by law, and to regulate other matters among the legal Fishermen; but among the illegal, they are inactive; and up the branches of the River, are said to participate in the catch of fish out of season. The outside Fishermen threaten vengeance if they are meddled with, and continue their illegal course, even on Sundays.

“The laws regulating the Fisheries in this County appear to have been framed with much care, and are well adapted to the Bay and River; therefore, it is only in consequence of the breach of those laws that the Salmon Fishery has been destroyed.

“I have given the subject a good deal of consideration, and the only way I can think of, to remedy the evil, would be, to have two active persons appointed by the Government, in addition to the Overseers appointed by the Sessions, one for the upper part of the River, and the other for the lower part, including the Bay, and outside, as far as the law regulating the Fisheries extends, whose duty it should be to inform themselves of all infringements of the law, and to prosecute the offenders. They might be paid either by the Province, or by a tax on the Salmon exported.

“I would suppose that £50 each would be ample remuneration. I may add, that an active man might attend both Districts, as the trespassers in the upper District do not commence their operations till the Bay and outside fishing are over.

“I am, Sir, respectfully,

Your very obedient servant,

ALEXANDER DAVIDSON.

M. H. Perley, Esquire, &c. &c., Saint John.

From the foregoing information as to the Fisheries of the Miramichi, the following conclusions may be drawn:—

1st. That although an Act of Assembly was passed in 1835 to regulate the Shad Fishery of Northumberland, yet there is now no such Fishery in the Miramichi, nothing being heard of Shad.

2d. That the Gaspereaux Fishery, formerly very productive, has almost ceased, and is now without value or importance.

3d.

3d. That the Basse Fishery is nearly, if not quite, destroyed.

4th. That the Salmon Fishery has greatly decreased, and is in a fair way of being destroyed also.

To preserve what yet remains of these Fisheries, and to restore them if possible, the appointment of paid Overseers or Inspectors would seem to be absolutely necessary. The regulation by law, of the size of the mesh of the various nets in use, appears also indispensable, to prevent the destruction of small fish and fry.

The questions with reference to the regulation of the Salmon Fishery are of much importance, and similar questions have been the subject of much discussion in Ireland. They appear, however, to have been settled by the fourth Report of the Commissioners of the Fisheries in Ireland, which was presented to Parliament in 1845, an extract from which, in relation to the Salmon Fisheries, is here given:—

“ With the sanction of Government, we extended our inquiry to the whole of Ireland, free of all expense to the parties interested, instead of limiting it to those cases in which we received applications, (as the terms of the original Act might be construed to require,) because we early found, that such a course was essential for arriving at the whole truth, in order that we might be enabled to frame such regulations as should appear most conducive to the public interest.

“ We are persuaded that the adjustment of the question, in order to be useful and perfect, must be founded on uniform principles, be applicable to the whole country, and be supported by Legislative enactment, rather than by bye laws.

“ From a consideration of the weight of evidence given before Parliamentary Committees for many years: from the Report of Commissioners of Inquiry into the Irish Salmon Fisheries in 1836: and finally, from the evidence collected and the Report furnished by Messieurs Mulvany and Barry, we are led to indulge a hope, that the time is not far distant, when one uniform Close Season for Salmon, will be applicable by law, both to Great Britain and Ireland, there being no reason to doubt but that the habits of the fish are substantially the same in both countries.

“ To the proposition of a uniform Close Season for sea and tide-ways, we apprehend no well founded objection can be advanced.

“ But a slight departure from uniformity in the upper or fresh-water portions of Rivers, however apparently calculated to give rise to jealousies, will, we conceive, be found, upon investigation, judicious, and in fact to be the most expedient compromise (for such only it must be considered,) that can be adopted.

“ We are strongly impressed with the importance, not only to the public, but also to the parties locally interested, or possessed of extensive rights, of having the Rivers fully stocked with a supply of early breeding fish, and of the consequent necessity of ceasing from all kinds of fishing for Salmon, at an early period in the Autumn.

“ Further, we believe, that to open any part of the month of January would, on the whole, be attended with more evil than good: and that the few persons who have heretofore derived advantage therefrom, either under the provisions of the old laws, or by acting contrary to law, will participate largely in the benefits certain to arise from an improved system, effectually carried out, and will be amply rewarded for any temporary loss they may sustain, in being prevented from fishing in that month. We therefore propose—

“ 1st. That in the upper or fresh-water portions of Rivers throughout Ireland, there shall be a uniform close season, as regards *every mode* of fishing for Salmon, from the 15th of September to the last day of February inclusive.

“ 2d. That in the sea and tide-ways there shall be a close season from the 1st of September to the 31st of January inclusive.

“ 3d. That all net fishing for Salmon and Trout shall cease in the upper portions of Rivers on the 31st August, and that angling only for fish shall be permitted until the 15th September.

“ Some doubt has been expressed whether angling might not be permitted to a later period than the 15th September, but after due consideration, we are opposed to any such extension, which would be exceeding, by so much, of the open period fixed for the greater part of Scotland, by the Act 9 Geo. 3rd.

“ If

“ If in conjunction with a due observance of the limitation above proposed, suitable migration passes be left, even in what are considered the latest Rivers in Ireland, and if due protection be afforded during the close season, we confidently predict, that in the course of a very few years, the parties really most interested will find, in the improvement of the Fisheries, that their advantage has been consulted, in the refusal to accede to the full extent of their demands.

“ We wish further to report, and to impress upon the attention of all parties, that the Rivers are the natural nurseries, not merely for the Fisheries within their banks and at their mouths, but also *for the public Fisheries on the coast*; and that the times to be allowed for the Fisheries therein must be regulated by a consideration of what is best, on the whole, for the public interest.”

These opinions, formed after untiring research, and with much care, are worthy of great consideration in New Brunswick.

It is stated that in Scotland no Grilse—that is, a Salmon of less than 5lb. weight—is allowed to be exposed for sale, and that the taking of such is prohibited under heavy penalties. If all the calves in New Brunswick were killed at an early age, it is not likely that, afterwards, there would be many cattle; and if all the Grilse are taken, it is quite certain that Salmon will soon cease to exist. The capture of Grilse under a certain weight, either by net or spear, should be strictly prohibited.

As to spearing generally, the writer is of opinion that it tends, more than almost any other mode of fishing, to the destruction of Salmon, as it is most frequently practised while the fish are actually upon, or very near the spawning beds, in the upper or shallow parts of the streams, where they ought, on no account, to be disturbed. The Act of 1845, mentioned by Mr. Price, (8 Vic. cap. 71) should be extended to prevent spearing, by all persons whomsoever, at any time, or in any place; and the provisions of the same Act, with reference to the taking of Grilse, require to be rendered more precise, in order to prevent the utter destruction of the Salmon Fishery of the Miramichi.

Of the necessity of legal enactments for the preservation of the River Fisheries, there can be little doubt. Those fish which make the sea their only element, can scarcely be reduced in numbers, or extinguished, by any human effort. But it is widely different with the fish which live in fresh water, or which visit the Rivers occasionally; these are confined within narrow limits, and placed within reach of the avaricious and destructive contrivances of men, who capture them without either the toils or the dangers of the open sea. Hence the necessity of prohibitory statutes, and above all, *an enforcement of their provisions in an efficient manner.*

The Tabusintac River.

This is a large River, up which the tide flows about fifteen miles. Formerly many Basse and Gaspereaux were taken in it, but owing to the same destructive modes of fishing as in the Miramichi, those Fisheries are nearly at an end, very few of either Fish being now caught.

Salmon also frequented this River formerly, in considerable numbers, and the upper part of it seems particularly well adapted for this Fish; but it was stated by Roderick M'Leod, Esquire, who resides near the mouth of the River, that the Salmon Fishery of the Tabusintac is not now of much account.

On the banks of this fine River, there is much land of the best quality, especially from the Sea to the Bridge on the Great Road to Bathurst; yet the Settlements only extend about six miles up, along the tide-way. Owing to the upper portion of the River being in an unsettled and wilderness state, peculiar facilities have existed for the wholesale destruction of the Salmon, and these have not been neglected. The writer ascended the Tabusintac from the Sea, in 1841, during the month of September, at which season the Salmon Fishery ought by law to have ceased. Yet at the head of the tide, just where the fresh and brackish water mingled, two nets were found stretched from bank to bank, the one a little above the other. The smaller Fish which escaped the first net, were entangled in the second; not a single Salmon could pass up. It is not therefore surprising, that at present, the Salmon Fishery of the Tabusintac should be of little account.

The Tracadu and Pokemouche Rivers.

There are still some Gaspereaux and Basse in these Rivers, although they diminish annually. It was stated by Mr. James Young, of Tracadu, that he caught 222 barrels of Gaspereaux in these Rivers last spring. The whole quantity taken on the Tracadu River by the French settlers could not be ascertained; at Pokemouche, the catch of the season was estimated at 600 barrels, half of which were salted for sale. The Gaspereaux enter these Rivers about the first of June.

Mr. Young stated, that the Salmon Fishery on the Tracadu River was now of no value; he has tried it without success. On the Pokemouche River, a few Salmon are yet caught, but not of such large size as formerly. In 1841, the writer was with a spearing party on the Pokemouche, when several fine Salmon were taken; the largest weighed 22 pounds—it was not taken with an Indian spear, but with a Scotch leister. With some attention to the enforcement of the law, the Salmon Fishery of the Pokemouche might yet be rendered valuable. Spearing should be wholly prohibited; in this case, the writer speaks of the evil effects from his own knowledge.

In the Tabusintac River, the two Tracadu Rivers, and the Pokemouche River, large Trout are most abundant. They ascend these Rivers, from the Gulf, in the month of June, and they are to be found about the head of the tide in each, throughout the season, from one pound to five pounds in weight. They are sometimes taken in nets, in large quantities, and salted down in barrels. During the past season, "Tide-trout" were taken in the Pokemouche Gully by the Settlers, with the rod and line; the Fishing was only at young flood, on each tide, as at Bonaventure, in Gaspe.

The Nepisiquit River.

This River is eighty miles in length, and takes its rise from a small Lake, only three miles distant from the Nictau Lake, at the head of the Tobique. It discharges into Bathurst Harbour; and every season, great numbers of Salmon ascend the principal stream, as far as the Grand Falls, which are about twenty miles above the head of the tide. The Salmon cannot get above these Falls; they are high, and the waters are forced, with great violence, down and through a deep narrow gorge, offering no facilities for the ascent.

From the head of the tide, about two miles above the Town of Bathurst, there is a constant succession of "rough waters," cascades, rapids, and falls, with occasional pools, up to the Grand Falls; and in this space, the Nepisiquit has, at many points, much picturesque beauty.

Owing to the peculiar character of this River, it is well adapted to the sport of fly-fishing, and within a few years it has become the resort of fly-fishers from all parts, anxious to enjoy the noble sport of taking Salmon with rod and line. The favourite stations are, at the Pabineau Falls, seven miles from Bathurst,—and below the Grand Falls, fifteen miles farther up; between these two points, however, there are several places where the sport may be followed with success.

It was found, in ascending the Nepisiquit on the 3rd and 4th September last, that the River had been fished illegally, from the head of the Tide, to the Grand Falls, in every possible way, and that netting and spearing were then going on, although the fish were becoming "black" and thin.

In the great pool there were on the first of September several hundred Salmon, and many spawning beds were observed, in readiness for receiving spawn. The fish in the pool could not ascend the Falls, and owing to the low state of the water, they could not descend the River; they were like sheep in a fold. Many of them had been wounded by the spear, and were swimming about in a crippled condition; some with part of their tails cut off, and others with portions of their entrails protruding from wounds in the side.

It was said that a party, consisting of persons settled on the upper part of the North West Miramichi, which is but a few miles distant, had been engaged in taking Salmon at this pool. Two persons were found there, one named Walsh; the name of the other was not ascertained, but he was said to be employed by Walsh. A net was found drying on the shore; and twenty Salmon, newly caught, were discovered in a place of concealment, at a little distance.

The rules and orders of the Sessions of Gloucester, for regulating the Salmon Fishery in that County, (a copy of which is annexed) have been framed with much care, and knowledge of the subject, and they would probably be sufficient, if properly enforced; but, as at Miramichi and elsewhere, there is the same want of paid officers to enforce the law.

As the destruction of the Salmon at the Grand Falls of the Nepisiquit, fell within the writer's own observation, he felt it his duty to address a note to William End, Esquire, the Clerk of the Peace, stating what he had seen, and calling his attention to the subject. What took place thereupon, is stated in the following letter from Mr. End:—

“ Clerk's Office, Bathurst, Sept. 20, 1849.

“ SIR,—On receipt of your note from the Falls, I thought it my duty to lay the very important information it contained before a Special Session of the Magistrates.

“ The authorities here have always been alive to the necessity of preserving the Salmon Fisheries in the Nepisiquit; but from want of funds, and perhaps from defects in the law, their rules and regulations are either openly violated or secretly evaded.

“ The lawless character of the poachers, and the unprincipled conduct of the inferior store keepers, who readily furnish the supplies and become purchasers of the Fish, are obstacles not easily surmounted in a country without a police.

“ The Sessions entered at once into the spirit of your suggestions, and an Overseer of the Fisheries, aided by a small *posse*, was immediately despatched. They proceeded to the places mentioned in your note, and although it was evident that vast quantities had been carried off, they succeeded in capturing (I understand) 144 Salmon in Walsh's camp, besides small lots in other places. So much for the result of your one visit to the Falls; but I hope that those suggestions, which your personal observations will enable you to make to the Government, will be the means of introducing a system, by which this wholesale destruction of spawning fish, (at a season when they are of little or no value,) may in future be severely punished or prevented, and this item in the very limited inventory of our domestic sources of wealth and industry, may be saved from that destruction by which it now appears to be threatened.

“ I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM END,

Clerk of the Peace of the County of Gloucester.

M. H. Perley, Esquire, &c. &c. Saint John.”

This vigorous proceeding of the Sessions of Gloucester, shows clearly what may be done, when efficient measures are adopted for preventing illegal fishing.

The Trout Fishing on the Nepisiquit is exceedingly good, the Trout being of large size, and most abundant; but this fishing is generally overlooked, in the anxiety for the more noble sport of taking Salmon with rod and line.

There is no land granted on the Nepisiquit River farther up than the Pabineau Stream, six miles from Bathurst, and the Salmon Fishery is, therefore, Crown property. It has been suggested, that this Fishery might be leased to some responsible person, who should be allowed to fish the River, during the proper season only, and bound to protect it at other times, which would then, in all probability, be done effectively. In this way, the fishing could be preserved from the destruction which now threatens it, and rendered valuable and useful to the public. At present, Salmon of all sizes are destroyed, whenever it is possible to do so, by the Indians, the French, and the English settlers; all appear combined to exterminate them if they can, merely from a destructive propensity—for the fish are either lost for want of salt, or else so imperfectly cured as to sell for a mere trifle. Mr. Herbert, (better known as Frank Forester,) in his recent work on “Fish and Fishing in the United States and the British Provinces of North America,” at page 140, says,—“the wanton and stupid destruction of all kinds of game, whether feathered, finned, or furred, really appears to be a distinct characteristic of all the white inhabitants of America, wheresoever they are to be found; and it cannot be doubted, that ere long, they will most bitterly regret the consequences of their rapacity and wasteful folly.”

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The leasing of the Fisheries, in all the Rivers in the northern part of the Province, where they yet appertain to the Crown, is a subject worthy of consideration, in every point of view.

The Rivers between Bathurst and Dalhousie.

Between the Nepisiquit and the Restigouche, a number of small streams empty into the Bay of Chaleur, several of which are resorted to by Salmon, and nearly all by large Trout from the sea. The principal of these is the Jacquet River, said to take its rise in a small lake, and to be forty five miles in length. The upper part flows impetuously through a mountainous district; the lower portion glides swiftly over a gravelly bed—its waters are clear and brilliant. This River formerly abounded with Salmon; there are but few caught in it at present; and as there are no dams on the stream, or any obstruction to the free passage of the fish, they have probably been destroyed, as in the other Rivers mentioned. Large white Sea Trout, fresh run, were taken in the mixed water, at the entrance into the Jacquet River, on the 10th of September last. As the lands upon its banks are all ungranted, the Fisheries of this River still belong to the Crown.

At the entrance of the Benjamin River, a dam is built across, to raise a supply of water for a saw-mill; and there is attached to the dam, a sluice-way built of planks, sixty feet in length, which has an inclination of forty five degrees. A number of small Salmon had collected, last summer, in the pool at the foot of this sluice-way, at a time when, owing to the drought, no water ran over it. With the first rise of the stream from rain, the water passed over the sluice-way, but less than a foot in depth. The Honorable Mr. Montgomery stated, that he saw many of these small Salmon pass from the pool, up the sluice-way, making three leaps only, when they reached the pond above the dam; he counted a hundred Salmon in one day, which made their way up in this manner, the largest was not supposed to weigh more than eight pounds.

The Restigouche.

This is one of the noblest Rivers in this part of America. At its entrance into the Bay of Chaleur, it is three miles wide, and from thence to Athol House, above Campbellton, a distance of twenty miles, it maintains a great breadth, and may be considered for the whole distance, one magnificent haven, fitted for ships of the largest class.

The Restigouche is about 220 miles in length, and it has four large tributaries, each more than 60 miles long; with its numerous affluents, it is supposed to drain more than 6000 square miles of territory. At present, this River is the dividing line between New Brunswick and Canada, and the Fisheries in its waters are, therefore, under the control of each Colony, to the centre of the channel.

When the French possessed this country, there was a town called Petit Rochelle, which contained more than two hundred houses, on the north bank of the Restigouche, at the head of the tide. This town was destroyed by a British fleet, under Captain Byron, in July 1760, a large fleet of French men of war and store ships being, at the same time, burnt and sunk in front of the town. Some years elapsed before British settlers established themselves on the banks of this River; and it is probable, that for a long period after, no River in North America, (except perhaps the Columbia,) yielded so large a supply of Salmon as the Restigouche. But its character, in this respect, is fast passing away; the numbers have fearfully diminished of late years; and, if the present state of things continues, very likely a brief period only will elapse, ere the Salmon Fishery of the Restigouche will be numbered among the things that have been.

Robert Ferguson, Esquire, of Athol House, who has dwelt on the banks of the Restigouche more than fifty years, stated to the writer, that in the early part of this century, he himself, for many years, caught and exported 1400 barrels of Salmon annually. He thought that the whole catch on this River, the past year, would not exceed 500 barrels; but the season was an unfavourable one; the unusual drought, and the White Porpoises in the Bay, were both adverse to a good fishery. Mr. Ferguson attributes the great decrease of Salmon to the destruction of fish on the spawning beds, in the upper parts of the River, far beyond the Settlements, where they are speared, and netted, and poached, in every mode that can be devised.

Mr. John Duncan, a very intelligent and respectable farmer near Campbelton, stated that he has followed Salmon Fishing on the Restigouche for forty years; the fishing has greatly fallen off within the last ten years. Twenty years since, according to Mr. Duncan, 3000 barrels of Salmon were shipped annually from the Restigouche; in his opinion, not more than 300 barrels were taken the past season. The largest Salmon taken, within Mr. Duncan's own knowledge, weighed sixty pounds; in former years, he has known eleven Salmon, on the average, to make a barrel of 200 lbs; more recently, they averaged fifteen to the barrel; in 1848, the fish averaged seventeen to the barrel; but the past season, they were quite small, and very different from those of former years.

In the Restigouche, Salmon are taken one hundred miles above tide-water; they are also taken fifteen miles up the Quota-wam-kedgwick, one of its upper tributaries. Salmon ascend the Matapediatic River, very nearly to the Lake, about 60 miles; the fish in this tributary are known by being larger and much blacker on the back. The Salmon on the Restigouche are next in size to those of the Matapediatic; the fish which ascend the Upsalquitch are the smallest.

Mr. Duncan stated, that drifting for Salmon was practised on the Restigouche, all along the River, for eighty miles above the tide-way; a net, stretched between two canoes, is dragged down stream, and this is called "drifting." Nets are set, at night, quite across the River, where the channel is narrow; at the same time, parties are engaged with torch and spear, in taking Salmon, or driving them into the nets. It was mentioned by Mr. Duncan, that two men went eighty miles up the Restigouche, on the 1st of September last, and in a few days, brought down seventy Salmon, taken in this way; two Indians, who went up at the same time, also brought down twenty Salmon, taken with the spear.

At the close of the season, just before the ice makes in the Restigouche, large quantities of supplies, for the lumberers, are sent very far up the River, in large tow-boats or scows, each drawn by a number of horses. The upper part of the River is much impeded by broad, sandy shallows, and sand bars; where the water is not sufficiently deep for heavily laden scows, they are dragged across these shallows and bars, by the strength of three, and sometimes nine horses, aided by men. It unfortunately happens, that these places are the favourite spawning grounds of the Salmon, and great quantities of the spawn already deposited and covered, are thus trampled up, destroyed, or washed away. Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Duncan were both of opinion, that some damage had been done to the Salmon Fishery, by the "Scowing," late in the fall, when the River happened to be in a low stage; on such occasions the spawning beds are sure to suffer. Mr. Duncan, however, thinks that the greatest injury to the Salmon Fishery, arises from the Salmon being speared on these spawning beds, up to the very latest moment in the season before the River closes, when the fish are quite worthless; and that the great means of improving the fishery, would be to preserve the upper part of the River.

Mr. Robert H. Montgomery, of Campbelton, who is well acquainted with the upper part of the Restigouche, described, very graphically, the various modes resorted to, both by Indians and white men, to entrap and destroy the Salmon on the River, without reference to time or place, the great object appearing to be to take the fish, no matter whether they were worth anything or not—the spirit of destructiveness seems to have infected every body. The largest Salmon which Mr. R. H. Montgomery has seen taken, weighed 47 lbs.

Dugald Stewart, Esquire, of Dalhousie, stated, that no Gaspereaux or Shad were taken in the Restigouche. He took 26 barrels of Salmon last season at a Fishing Station owned by himself, at the entrance of the Restigouche, near the "Bon Ami Rocks." Many Ling, and large quantities of Lobsters, were also taken in his Salmon nets, which happened to be deeper than necessary.

The Honorable John Montgomery stated, that Salmon are destroyed on the Restigouche, by nets of great length, which are set, as well from the New Brunswick as the Canadian side of the River, and overlap each other, by which the channel is closed, and the passage of the fish obstructed. These nets are kept constantly set during the season, on Sundays as well as other days. Drift nets, extending entirely across the River, are likewise used; spearing on the spawning beds, and drifting over these beds,

are

are also practised. Mr. Montgomery said that spearing goes on at all times, when possible, without regard to season.

Mr. Mann, of Tracadegash, described the Salmon Fishing of former days, in the Restigouche, as something quite wonderful. At one period, there was a paid Overseer on the Canadian side, when the nets were better regulated, and the Fishery conducted in a much more proper manner than at present; but a like paid Overseer not being appointed on the New Brunswick side, it was found impossible to regulate the Fishery from one side only, and the Canadian Overseer was discontinued, since which the Fishery has suffered greatly. The largest fish taken in the Restigouche by Mr. Mann, weighed 54 lbs. He thinks the mesh of Salmon nets, in this River, should not be less than 6½ inches.

Mr. Mann mentioned, as a fact within his own knowledge, that the first Salmon which enter the Rivers every season, are almost invariably females, and fish of large size. In a hundred fish of the first run, not a single *male* will be found; the males ascend the River later than the females.

Mr. Joseph Marr, of Tracadegash, said that before the Salmon entered the Rivers, they went roving along the shores of the Bay of Chaleur, and many were taken on the coast. The fishermen professed to distinguish which Rivers were frequented by the Salmon caught on the coast, from their shape, size, and color; as a general rule, the fish which enter the Cascapediatic, in Gaspé, were larger than any other. During the past season, many Salmon were taken in nets at Tracadegash beach, by Nelson Verge, Esquire, which weighed forty pounds each; one taken by Mr. Marr weighed forty seven pounds. An official copy of the orders of the Municipal Council of the second division of the County of Bonaventure, relative to the Salmon Fishery of the Restigouche, was furnished by Mr. Marr, and is annexed to this Report.

The Act of Assembly in New Brunswick, (8 Victoria, cap. 65,) for regulating the Salmon Fisheries in the County of Restigouche, contains some very stringent and salutary provisions, but then they are not enforced. In practice, the Act seems almost a dead letter, as regards the Restigouche River. As stated with respect to the Miramichi, paid Overseers seem absolutely necessary to enforce the law; and an arrangement could be very readily made with the Municipal Council, on the Canadian side of the River, for the like officers on that side. Such officers, by a faithful performance of their duties, might so regulate the Fisheries, and restrain illegal Fishing, as to prevent the entire destruction of the valuable and important Salmon Fishery of the Restigouche, now in a fair way of being annihilated.

THE RIVERS SOUTH OF THE MIRAMICHI.

The whole line of coast, from Point Escuminac to Baie Verte, is low and sandy, with long narrow islets, or rather sand bars, in front, thrown up by easterly gales. Between these bars and the shore, there is almost a continued series of well sheltered lagoons, perfectly secure, and admirably adapted for boat navigation at all times. Through these sand bars the Rivers force their way by narrow passages called "gullies," from the French term *goulet*; these frequently fill up, and shift their position, from violent gales and heavy seas. Sometimes the lagoons are closed entirely by severe storms, and so remain, until the accumulated waters within sweep out the old gully, or force a new one. In speaking of the Gulf Coast of New Brunswick generally, this will be designated the Southern District.

All the Rivers in this Southern District, are broad and shallow, and the tide flows a considerable distance up each River, in proportion to its magnitude. In the largest Rivers, the tide flows the greatest distance from the sea.

The Kouchibouguac Rivers.

These are the first Rivers, of any magnitude, to the southward of Escuminac, and both discharge into the Kouchibouguac lagoon. The Kouchibouguasis is about six miles south of the other, and is the broadest River; the tide flows up it about twelve miles from the lagoon; up the Kouchibouguac the tide flows about six miles. At the head of the tide, on each River, there are dams, with saw-mills, above which the fish can not ascend. There was formerly good Gaspereaux and Salmon Fishing in the Kouchibouguac; but the fish being prevented from ascending to their spawning ground,

collected every year below the dam, until they were exterminated. Very nearly the same may be said of the Kouchibouguasis, in which a few Gaspereaux are yet taken early in the season. The Salmon Fishery outside the Kouchibouguac lagoon, on the beaches, has been already mentioned; the Salmon there are caught roving along the coast, seeking some other Rivers which they may ascend.

The Richibucto.

This is a large River, up which the tide flows about twenty five miles from the Gulf; it has five large tributaries, three of which enter on the north side, and two on the south side of the main River. There are dams and saw-mills at the head of the tide on the Richibucto, and also in a like position on its tributaries.

Mr. Powell of Richibucto stated, that he was connected with the firm of Pagan and Powell at that place in 1798; they continued in business until 1807. They exported during that time, 2000 barrels of Gaspereaux annually; one season they exported 3500 barrels. When the firm closed their business in 1807, the fish had become very scarce, but the River not being so extensively fished for some years, the quantity began to increase. The River was again "fished out" some years after; but owing to the Fishery not having been so closely followed for the last few years, Mr. Powell thinks the Gaspereaux are at present on the increase, as their reproductive powers are very great, if any opportunity whatever is afforded them.

The Basse were formerly most abundant in the Richibucto, it being exceedingly well adapted for these fish. They were taken formerly through the ice in the winter season, of large size, in immense quantities, in the manner already described in speaking of the Basse Fishing of the Miramichi. The fish, when thus taken, were sent off by sled-loads to Fredericton and Saint John, and they were sold all through the intervening country. When a favourable opportunity for this fishing occurred, they were taken in such quantities, that as Mr. Powell described it, they were "corded up" on the ice like fire-wood; if a thaw occurred before a sufficient number of sleds arrived to take them away, they were wholly lost. In this way, great quantities were destroyed, and there are no large Basse in the Richibucto at present; they are now seldom seen over twelve inches in length.

Mr. Powell stated that very few Salmon are now caught in the Richibucto, although they were formerly very plenty. On one occasion, many years ago, Mr. Powell himself caught seven hundred Salmon in twenty four hours; he attributes the great falling off in this Fishery to the erection of dams on all the streams, which prevent the ascent of the Salmon to their former spawning places.

In August 1837, the writer descended from the upper part of the Richibucto, where navigable for a canoe, down to the Gulf. The dam at the head of the tide had not then been long built; it effectually prevented the progress of all fish upwards, and below it there were great quantities of large Trout and some Salmon congregated, endeavouring in vain to get up. When Salmon cannot attain their proper spawning places, they drop their ova anywhere in the Rivers, without the usual preparation, and appear perfectly indifferent as to what becomes of it. Such has no doubt been the case on the Richibucto; and it is not therefore surprising, that Salmon have nearly disappeared in that River.

Mr. Wathen of Richibucto, stated that the Gaspereaux Fishing begins near the end of May, and lasts but a short time. The settlers on the Richibucto, and on the Aldoine, its largest tributary, take them for their own use only, none being now exported. He estimates the whole catch at present at one thousand barrels annually; but under proper regulations, he thinks many more might be taken without injury to the fishery. The Basse Fishing, Mr. Wathen said, was now nearly done. In 1849, while using a seine on the beach, at the entrance of Richibucto Harbour, he took two or three barrels of small Basse, at each sweep of the seine, which were salted. When the writer was at Richibucto in October last, the Indians were engaged every night in spearing Basse, and between the seine and the spear, even the small Basse will shortly be exterminated. It will soon become matter of history that large Basse were once taken in great quantities in the Richibucto; and that Salmon were also abundant in that River in former times.

The Act of Geo. 4, cap. 25, empowered the Justices in Kent to make regulations respecting the Fisheries of the different Harbours, Rivers and Creeks of the County; but in this as in other Counties, the regulations were not enforced, and hence the decay and almost total destruction of the River Fisheries in this County.

The Buctouche Rivers.

The Big and Little Buctouche Rivers both fall into the Harbour of that name. The tide flows up the Big Buctouche about thirteen miles, and up the Little Buctouche about ten miles. Both Rivers are in character very similar to the Richibucto, and the same statements with reference to the Gaspereaux, Basse and Salmon Fisheries of that River, will very nearly apply to those Fisheries in the Buctouche Rivers. The settlers catch a sufficiency of Gaspereaux for their own use. The large Basse have been destroyed, but the small Basse are yet taken through the ice, and with the spear; it was apparent that here also every effort was being made to exterminate these fish. A few Salmon yet enter these Rivers very late in the season, when just ready for spawning, and being unable to ascend, are destroyed in every possible way, at a time when they are lank, slimy, and quite unfit for use.

A few Shad are taken in these Rivers; but they are said to be thin and poor. There is great abundance of Smelts every spring. Parties of French settlers go up the brooks in log canoes, and each party frequently gets fifty to sixty barrels of Smelts, which are used to manure the land. There is an abundance of large Eels of fine quality; in the season of 1848 about three hundred barrels of Eels, taken with the spear in these Rivers, were salted for winter use.

The Cocagne River.

The tide flows about seven miles up this River; at the head of the tide there is, as usual, a mill-dam, which prevents all Fish from ascending the River.

Some Gaspereaux are yet taken here, but nothing was heard of Basse. While the River was unobstructed, many Salmon were taken in it; they are now scarcely seen. The dam was placed across this River about 1830; and for several years after, the Salmon came up and endeavoured to get over it, but without success. While thus endeavouring to make their way up, they were slaughtered in great quantities, and to such an extent, that it is believed none were left to preserve the breed. It was stated at Cocagne, that while the fish were thus collected one season, a Frenchman, in one night speared a sufficient number of Salmon to fill eight barrels; two other Frenchmen, during the same night, each filled two canoes; while several Indians, on the same famous occasion, lent their best abilities to complete the work of destruction! And it was completed.

The Shediac and Scadouc Rivers.

Both these Rivers empty into the Harbour of Shediac. The tide flows seven miles up the Shediac River, where a mill-dam prevents its further flow, and the ascent of all Fish whatsoever to the fresh water above. Up the Scadouc River, the tide flows three miles, a very short distance above which a mill-dam also prevents the passage of Fish.

As a matter of course, the Fisheries of these Rivers are nearly extinguished. Very few Gaspereaux are now taken; the attempt is made only by those who have failed in taking a sufficient supply of Spring Herrings. Some small Basse are still caught in nets; but Salmon are nearly, if not quite, extinct.

While the writer was at Shediac, in November, 1846, a run of Salmon, apparently the last of their race, entered the Shediac and Scadouc Rivers, and ascended nearly to the dam on each. It was reported, that on a Sabbath Day many persons were engaged in destroying these Fish, (which were black, lean, and slimy,) with spears, scythes, pitchforks, and such other offensive weapons as came to hand; apparently, the destruction was complete, as little has since been heard of Salmon in these Rivers.

Lobsters, Eels, and Smelts, are abundant in Shediac Harbour, and its Oysters have long been celebrated for their excellence and fine flavor; it must be remembered, however, that those taken near the mouths of the Rivers are greatly inferior to those taken in the deep salt water. For the information of sporting fishermen, it may be mentioned, that there is good fishing for "White Trout" on the Cocagne, the Shediac, and the Scadouc Rivers; and that Smelts and small Basse rise readily at the fly, and are frequently taken while fishing for Trout.

The

The Rivers from Shediac to the Nova Scotia Boundary.

The Rivers which empty into the Gulf, on this line of coast, are all flat, sluggish streams, of small size, and no very great length. They furnish Gaspereaux and Tide Trout, but are not large enough for Salmon.

Baie Verte is a broad, shallow Bay, which, at low water, is dry nearly two miles from the shore, except in the channel, which is then four feet deep, and rather crooked. There is only four feet water on the bar, at low water; the rise and fall of the tide is seven and a half feet. There is a good Gaspereaux Fishery in the Gaspereaux River, at the head of the Bay, on the New Brunswick side of which there is no other Fresh Water Fishery of importance.

FRESH WATER FISHES.

In addition to the Fresh Water Fishes already mentioned incidentally, there is the common Yellow Perch, (*perca fluviatilis* of Cuvier and Valenciennes,) which is found in many of the Rivers flowing into the Gulf. The "small American Basse," (*perca labrax mucronatus* of Cuvier,) better known as the "White Perc'h" on the Saint John, in many of the tributaries of which it abounds, has not been found in any of these northern Rivers.

A great variety of small Fish exist in each of the Rivers of the North, which it is not necessary to enumerate, as they merely serve as food for larger Fish. Fortunately, no Pike or Pickerel have yet been found in any of the Rivers of New Brunswick, and the great abundance of Trout, and other River Fish, may in some degree be attributed to the absence of these "fresh water Sharks," who are most destructive to all other Fishes.

COMMERCIAL VALUE OF THE GULF FISHERIES IN 1849.

The following Tables, compiled by the writer from the Custom House Returns, exhibit the trifling value of the produce of the Sea and River Fisheries, exported from the Gulf Ports of New Brunswick in 1849. The quantity of each article, at each Port, is here exhibited; and it will be observed, that the whole quantity of Pickled Fish exported, was 3,380 barrels only, and that 2,110 barrels were imported. It will be seen that Mackerel were imported, at Miramichi, from another Colony; and that at Richibucto, near which Fish are so abundant, 575 barrels of Pickled Fish were imported from abroad, and 110 barrels only, were exported. The whole value of Fish exported during the past year is £15,117 sterling, against which there is the value of the Fish imported, amounting to £2,269, leaving a balance of £12,848 sterling only, in favor of the exports of the Gulf Fisheries of New Brunswick.

It must not be forgotten, that the season of 1849, was one of unexampled abundance in the Sea Fisheries; and the following Tables therefore furnish a severe, but it may be hoped, a most useful commentary upon the state of the Provincial Fisheries within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence:—

Exports of the produce of the Fisheries, from the several Ports of New Brunswick, within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, during the year 1849:—

| PORTS. | Dried Fish. | Pickled Fish. | Smoked and Preserved Fish. | Fish Oil. | Oysters. |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------|
| | Quintals. | Barrels. | Boxes. | Gallons. | Busbels. |
| Miramichi, | ... | 2,306 | 531 | 455 | ... |
| Dalhousie, | 130 | 344 | ... | ... | ... |
| Bathurst, | 720 | 42 | ... | ... | ... |
| Caraquette, | 16,056 | 578 | ... | 7,572 | 2,304 |
| Richibucto, | ... | 110 | ... | ... | 240 |
| Shediac, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Totals, | 16,906 | 3,380 | 531 | 8,027 | 2,544 |

Imports

Imports of the produce of the Fisheries, at the several Ports of New Brunswick, within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, during the year 1849 :—

| PORTS. | Dried Fish. | Pickled Fish. | Smoked and Preserved Fish. | Fish Oil. | Oysters. |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------|
| | Quintals. | Barrels. | Boxes. | Gallons. | Bushels. |
| Miramichi, | 382 | Herrings 1,130 Mackerel 35 | ... | ... | ... |
| Dalhousie, | 1,153 | 370 | 21 | 772 | ... |
| Bathurst, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Caraquette, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Richibucto, | 138 | 575 | ... | 260 | ... |
| Shediac, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Totals, | 1,673 | 2,110 | 21 | 1,032 | ... |

Comparative Statement of the total quantities of articles, the produce of the Fisheries, exported and imported at the several Ports of New Brunswick, within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, during the year 1849 :—

| 1849. | Dried Fish. | Pickled Fish. | Smoked and Preserved Fish. | Fish Oil. | Oysters. |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------|
| | Quintals. | Barrels. | Boxes. | Gallons. | Bushels. |
| Exports, | 16,906 | 3,380 | 531 | 8,027 | 2,544 |
| Imports, | 1,673 | 2,110 | 21 | 1,032 | ... |

Return of the estimated value, in pounds sterling, of all articles, the produce of the Fisheries, exported from the several Ports of New Brunswick, within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, during the year 1849, distinguishing the Countries to which the same were exported :—

| PORTS. | Great Britain. | BRITISH COLONIES. | | | United States. | Foreign States. | Total Sterling. |
|---|----------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | North America. | West Indies. | Elsewhere. | | | |
| Miramichi, | 132 | 2,820 | ... | ... | 1,822 | ... | £4,774 |
| Dalhousie, | 27 | 611 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 638 |
| Bathurst, | ... | 440 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 440 |
| Caraquette, | 1,148 | 3,291 | ... | 1,190 | ... | 3,362 | 8,991 |
| Richibucto, | ... | 274 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 274 |
| Shediac, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Total Exports, | 1,307 | 7,436 | ... | 1,190 | 1,822 | 3,362 | £15,117 |
| Total value of Fish imported at the same Ports in 1849, ... | ... | 2,269 | ... | ... | ... | ... | £2,269 |

Return of the quantities of the various products of the Fisheries, exported from the District of Gaspé, during the year ending 5th January, 1850 :—

| DESCRIPTION. | Weight or Measure. | From the Port of New Carlisle. | From the Port of Gaspé. | Total from the District in 1849. | Total in 1848. |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Dry Cod, | quintals, | 28,230 | 52,109 | 80,339 | 89,931 |
| Pickled Cod, | barrels, | ... | 4,920 | 4,920 | 3,977 |
| Do. | quintals, | 24 | 817 | 841 | 1,074 |
| Tongues and Sounds, | barrels, | 15 | 6 | 21 | 62 |
| Salmon, | do. | ... | 290 | 290 | 275 |
| Mackerel, | do. | ... | 126 | 126 | 160 |
| Herrings, | do. | ... | 219 | 219 | 277 |
| Halibut, | do. | ... | 50 | 50 | ... |
| Cod Oil, | gallons, | 573 | 50,220 | 50,793 | 31,038 |
| Whale Oil, | do. | ... | 21,720 | 21,720 | 6,960 |
| Seal Oil, | do. | ... | 120 | 120 | 600 |

The value of all imports at the Port of Gaspé in 1849, was £32,286 currency; the value of exports the same year, was £51,880 currency. At New Carlisle, the value of imports from abroad, in 1849, was £12,511 sterling; the value of exports was £37,550. The imports and exports to and from Quebec are not stated in the Return from New Carlisle. The exports include Birch and Pine timber; Hackmatack knees, ship timber, treenails, and pegs; Hemlock lathwood; Spruce and Pine deals, boards, and shingles.

In order that some comparison may be instituted between the Fisheries of New Brunswick, in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, and those of the State of Massachusetts, which are so largely prosecuted in the same Gulf, the following official return of the quantities of all descriptions of Pickled Fish, inspected in that State, during the year 1849, is given :—

Fish Inspection Office, Boston, January 7, 1850.

The following is a return of the quantities of all descriptions of Pickled Fish inspected in this State, during the year 1849 :—

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Mackerel, | 231,856 barrels. |
| Salmon, | 1,821 " |
| Shad, | 416 " |
| Herrings, | 872 " |
| Alewives, | 2,189 " |
| Cod, | 97 " |
| Menhaden, | 78 " |
| Sword Fish, | 474 " |
| Tongues and Sounds, | 413 " |
| Blue-Fish, | 142 " |
| Halibut Fins, | 62 " |
| Salmon Trout, | 76 " |
| Total, | 238,496 barrels. |

JOHN P. OBER, *Insp'r. Gen. of Fish.*

The Salmon and Salmon Trout mentioned in the above Return, were doubtless taken in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, as there are no such Fisheries in the United States. The American fishing vessels obtain Salmon on the west coast of Newfoundland, and in the Rivers of Labrador, which abound with them. It is known, that they take the large White Trout of the Gulf, at the Magdalen Islands, where many of those Fish are caught every season in nets.

The Inspector General of Fish at Boston, has kindly furnished the following Return of Mackerel inspected in the State of Massachusetts, during the last six years :—

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| In 1844, | 86,180 barrels. | In 1847, | 232,587 barrels. |
| 1845, | 202,302 " | 1848, | 300,130 " |
| 1846, | 174,064 " | 1849, | 231,856 " |

GENERAL SUMMARY.

1. The foregoing Report is based upon personal inspection, and the statements of many persons of undoubted credit, dwelling near the Coasts, Rivers and Harbours visited. It shows clearly the great neglect of the Sea Fisheries, and the rapid decay of those in the Rivers, which are threatened with total extinction.

2. The Cod and other deep Sea Fisheries of the Gulf coast, are almost wholly in the hands of the Jersey merchants, who conduct their business very admirably, but solely with a view to their own profit, without regard to the interests of New Brunswick. They expend their earnings in Jersey, or elsewhere; they make no investments in this Province—and they do not aid in its advancement.

3. The people of New Brunswick must be incited, and encouraged, to enter into the deep sea and coast Fisheries; with moderate capital, and some knowledge of the business, they could undoubtedly prosecute those Fisheries with profit to themselves and much benefit to the country.

4. All the Fishing Stations on the coasts, beaches, and islands, appertaining to New Brunswick, within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, which are yet ungranted, should be surveyed, and laid out for "fishing rooms;" and these should be leased, at a fair rental, to persons engaged in the Fisheries; the lease to terminate so soon as each "room" ceased to be used for fishery purposes. No fishing "room" should be allowed to engross the whole of any favorite location, where there was sufficient space for more than one; and great care should hereafter be taken, to avoid such improvident grants as that at Point Miscou, which has effectually shut up a good Fishing Station there.

5. The Mackerel Fishery is most excellent in the Gulf, near the shores of this Province; but the inhabitants do not avail themselves of its abundance, while citizens of the United States pursue it largely near these same shores, with much profit. The annexed Returns, obtained from Washington through an official channel, show the extent and value of the Sea Fisheries of the United States; and it must be borne in mind that these fisheries are more extensively prosecuted in British waters than elsewhere.

6. By the Convention of 20th October, 1818, between His Britannic Majesty and the United States of America, it was stipulated, that the citizens of the United States should not, thereafter, fish within three marine miles of any of the coasts, bays, creeks or harbours of His Majesty in America. The Crown Officers in England, upon a case submitted to them by the Legislature of Nova Scotia, have given it as their deliberate opinion, that the prescribed distance of three miles, is to be measured from the head lands, or extreme points of land, and not from the interior of bays, or indents in the coast. A copy of the first article of the Convention of 1818, and also a copy of the opinion of the Queen's Advocate and Attorney General of England, are appended to this Report. The principle laid down in that opinion has not been denied or disputed by the United States; yet the fishing vessels of that country are accustomed to frequent—and during the past season, did frequent—the Straits of Northumberland, the Bay of Miramichi, and the Bay of Chaleur; in neither of which have they any right to prosecute the Fisheries. The citizens of the United States, by their peculiar mode of fishing for Mackerel, in places where they have no right, greatly injure the Cod fishers, by depriving them of bait; and they also damage the Cod Fishery, by throwing overboard the bones and offal of the Cod which they take. At present the Convention is openly violated; and American citizens practically enjoy every privilege they desire, save that of landing on our shores to dry and cure their fish. While the Convention exists, its provisions should be strictly enforced; or else, we lose the advantages of our position without any equivalent.

7. The resident fishermen have been deterred from engaging in the Mackerel Fishery by those interested in the Cod Fishery; they have been refused supplies of salt, and told they could not compete with the Americans, who were said to possess some secret in relation to it. This adverse influence must be counteracted, and the erroneous impression removed. Very many young men, on the coast, appeared anxious to learn the American mode of catching Mackerel; and it was proposed, in the Bay of Chaleur, to fit out one or more schooners, and engage Americans as sailing masters,

to

to teach the crew the "art and mystery" of Mackerel Fishing. There is no doubt that judicious measures could readily be devised for establishing this valuable Fishery on a large scale, and induce its being prosecuted by the resident fishermen, to whom it is offered at their own doors.

8. The Herring Fishery is most valuable and abundant; it can hardly be surpassed elsewhere. From unskilfulness in fishing, and ignorance of the best mode of curing, this Fishery is scarcely profitable, and the salted Herrings have no commercial value. The remedy would consist—in the employment of competent persons to teach the manner of so arranging the nets, as to take the greatest quantity of fish at all times, and of experienced curers, to give instructions in the Dutch mode of curing; the adoption of which has so greatly increased the demand for Scottish Herrings, and rendered that Fishery so valuable. The means successfully adopted by the Commissioners of British Fisheries, with respect to the Herring Fisheries of Scotland, may safely be followed in New Brunswick; and perhaps the establishment of a Fishery Board, with somewhat similar powers and duties, might also be advantageous, as well to the Gulf Fisheries, as to those of the Bay of Fundy.

Mr. John Mitchell, of Leith, who is engaged in the Herring Fishery of Scotland, in a letter to the Irish Fishery Board, as to the best mode of improving the Fisheries of Ireland, says—"The people ought to be taught to fish, and particularly, to cure; quality ought to be made paramount to quantity. The curers of Scotland were much benefited by some Dutch fishermen brought over, who cured Herrings, under my own superintendence, some years since."

With reference to the advantages of a Fishery Board, Mr. Mitchell, in a Memorial to the Board of Trade, states, that the British Fishery Board is one of the best managed establishments in Europe, which, by its judicious and well applied regulations, has raised the character of British Herrings to a most extraordinary degree, within a few years; and he conceives that the prosperity of the Fisheries of Scotland depends upon the existence of the Fishery Board and its Officers.*

9. As a most fitting Station for an Inspector and Teacher of the Herring Fishery, and for the services of experienced curers, Caraquette Island is respectfully recommended. It is in the immediate vicinity of the best Herring Fishing, and fortunately it is still the property of the Crown.

Other stations may be selected hereafter, as the Herring Fishery is extended. It is quite probable, that there are various localities in the Gulf, to which the Fall Herrings resort, but which are not yet known. It is only forty years since it was accidentally discovered that Herrings resorted periodically to the Firth of Forth, by a man dipping a bucket into the water.

10. The laws for the regulation of the inland Fisheries, appear, in general, to have been well devised; but there has been a total failure in enforcing their provisions, every where. Hence, the decay of these once valuable and prolific Fisheries, now hastening rapidly to their termination. With some amendments and improvements, the present laws might answer the purpose of preserving and increasing these Fisheries; but a general enactment, with adequate means for enforcing its provisions, would probably be found most effective.

11. A "close time" should be established, during which Salmon should not be taken in any way. The taking of "Grilse," or small Salmon, under a certain weight, should be restricted, and their sale prohibited. Spearing should be disallowed, and the regulations generally, for this fishing, should be as uniform as possible.

12. A moderate assessment upon all Salmon nets in use, should be levied, and applied to the payment of the Overseers of the Fisheries for their services. At present the proprietors of the Salmon Fisheries, on the several Rivers, enjoy them without expense, and expect the public to pay for their protection and preservation. The assessment principle has lately been established in Ireland. The Act 11 and 12 Victoria, cap. 92, provides for an assessment on certain engines used in the capture of fish, for the purpose of raising funds for the conservancy and police of the Fisheries.

Some

* The export of Herrings from Scotland in 1837, was 57,388 barrels; by the Board's exertions, this quantity was increased in 1843, to 181,853 barrels. It appears by a Report on the Fisheries of Scotland, by Captain Washington, R.N. [printed in Parliamentary papers of 1849,] that in 1848, there were cured in Scotland, 999,345 barrels of Herrings, besides 364,951 cwt. of Cod and Ling. Captain Washington estimates the value of boats, nets, lines, &c., belonging to the Scottish Fishermen, at £1,250,078 sterling.

Some objections being made to this Act, a Select Committee of the House of Commons heard evidence respecting it, at the last Session of Parliament. The Report of this Committee, published in September last, recommends a continuance of the Act, but such a modification of the scale of Duties imposed, as would cause the burthen of the assessment to fall, as much as possible, upon those who derived the chief benefit arising from its expenditure.

13. The Salmon Fishery of the Restigouche, once so abundant and so valuable, requires special attention. The Canadian Government might be moved to take part in the preservation of this Fishery; or the Municipal Council of the Second Division of the County of Bonaventure could be urged to join in the necessary measures. Some of the gentlemen of this Council, who were met in Gaspe, were most intelligent persons, fully alive to the existing evils, and most anxious that they should be prevented by vigorous action.

14. A law to prevent the use of fish as manure, is greatly needed. The practice is destructive to the Fisheries in every possible way; and it is injurious to the land, which, although stimulated for a season, is for several years after rendered almost unfit for agricultural purposes. The effluvia from the decomposition of the fish has been found unhealthy. In Dr. Storer's Report on the Fishes of Massachusetts, (page 118,) it is stated, that in the town of Barnstable, large quantities of fish were used as manure, the stench from which was most offensive, so as greatly to inconvenience travellers on the road; and autumnal fevers and dysentery, were more prevalent in that district than elsewhere in the vicinity.

The practice has been most extensively followed in the Bay of Chaleur, where the Fisheries have suffered greatly in consequence. The action of the Canadian authorities is also required to give full efficacy to a prohibitory law within that Bay.

15. No pickled fish whatsoever should be allowed to be exported, unless the casks bore the brand of an official inspector; and the sale of such fish within the Province, not inspected and branded, should be punished by forfeiture of the fish, or a sufficient fine. The rigid enforcement, in all cases, of an efficient inspection law, can alone prevent frauds and mal-practices, and establish the character of New Brunswick Fish in distant markets.

16. The Fisheries belonging to the Crown, in the Rivers whose banks are ungranted, should be leased on condition that each lessee should fish only at the proper season, and protect the River at all other times. By this arrangement, the Fisheries of the Rivers flowing through ungranted wilderness lands, which are now being destroyed in the most wasteful and reckless manner, might be preserved, and rendered profitable. In Ireland, where Rivers, whose Salmon Fishery was nearly exhausted, have been preserved for a time, the Salmon have increased most wonderfully; and the Salmon Fishery, in some cases, has become of exceeding value, in places where previously it had almost ceased to exist.

17. The rents arising from "Fishing Rooms," and River Fisheries, with the addition of any Legislative Grants, might be most usefully and beneficially employed in extending and improving the Fisheries in a great variety of ways. At almost every Fishing Station there is a great want of those conveniences necessary to a successful prosecution of the Fisheries. Landing piers, breakwaters and shelter harbours, boat slips and capstans, moorings, and small harbour lights or lanthorns, are all greatly needed; and probably few better modes could be devised of assisting and encouraging the industrious fishermen, than by furnishing these conveniences at the public expense. Short roads, or lines of communication, between piers, fishing harbours, or stations, with the nearest high roads, are also required almost every where. If advisable, premiums might be given for good boats and nets, for the most scientific and successful modes of fishing, or for the discovery of new fishing grounds.

18. It is a duty incumbent upon the people of New Brunswick to encourage, preserve and protect their admirable Fisheries. They should, with thankful hearts, use the gifts which Providence has bountifully bestowed, and prevent their reckless and improvident waste; so that they may hereafter be able to render a good account of their stewardship of that which has been beneficently vouchsafed to them.

M. H. PERLEY.

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

Copy of Instructions from the Provincial Secretary, to M. H. Perley, Esquire, relative to the Fisheries of New Brunswick, within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence.

Secretary's Office, Fredericton, 3rd August, 1849.

SIR,—The Lieutenant Governor in Council, having determined upon prosecuting certain inquiries, respecting the Fisheries on the Gulf Shore of this Province; His Excellency has been pleased to appoint you to execute that service, and to direct the following instructions to be communicated to you, for your guidance therein, viz:—

1st. To ascertain the numbers of the Fishermen now engaged in the Gulf Fisheries, distinguishing those who are Fishermen exclusively from those who only fish occasionally—or who combine Fishing with Agricultural pursuits; and also to enumerate, as near as may be, the Boats and Vessels in these Fisheries.

2nd. To ascertain distinctly, the present modes of conducting the several Fisheries for Herring, Cod, and Mackerel, with a description of the several sorts of nets, lines, and other tackle employed, in order to know what improvements may be advantageously introduced.

3rd. To inquire into existing modes of curing and packing the several descriptions of Fish, with the view of ascertaining what defects exist in these important particulars.

4th. To ascertain the most eligible Stations on the Coast, for the successful prosecution of the various Fisheries, in order to the establishment, at such Stations, of duly qualified Inspectors of all descriptions of Fish intended for exportation; and also of persons from abroad, competent to instruct the resident Fishermen in the best and most approved modes of Fishing, and of *curing, and packing each description of Fish*, upon which the value of the article so greatly depends in every market.

5th. To inquire as to the proper season for each Fishery, in order to prevent the catch of fish at times when they are of no real value; also to ascertain the extent to which the Fisheries in the Bay of Chaleur are injured, as is alleged, by the great destruction of Capelin and Herring for manure, in order that, if advisable, measures may be adopted for preventing further injury to the Herring and Cod Fisheries in that Bay, now said to be threatened with total annihilation.

6th. To acquire all incidental information as to the Gulf Fisheries which may be interesting or important, and especially to ascertain the extent to which they are prosecuted by Foreigners on the Shores of New Brunswick, and whether they make any, and what, encroachments.

7th. The destruction of Fish on Rivers, and the injury to the Salmon Fishery by Mill Dams, by illegal modes of fishing, and by the destruction of Salmon out of season, will form an important branch of inquiry.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,
(Signed)

J. R. PARTELOW.

M. H. Perley, Esquire, Saint John.

No. 2.

Copy of Circular asking information as to the Gulf Fisheries.

GOVERNMENT EMIGRATION OFFICE,

Saint John, N. B., 10th August, 1849.

Mr. M. H. Perley having been appointed by His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, in Council, to prosecute certain inquiries respecting the Fisheries on the Gulf Shore of this Province, is desirous of obtaining information on the following points, to which, among others, his attention has been specially directed:—

1. As to the present modes of conducting the Fisheries for Herring, Cod, and Mackerel—with a description of the nets, lines, and other tackle now employed, in order to know if any, and what, improvements may be introduced. 2.

2. As to the modes now in use of curing and packing the several descriptions of Fish, with the view of ascertaining if any, and what, defects exist in these important particulars.

3. As to the proper season for each Fishery; and whether Fish are now caught at times when they are of no real value.

4. As to the extent to which the Fisheries in the Bay of Chaleur are injured, as is alleged, by the taking of Herring and Capelin for manure.

5. As to the extent to which the Fisheries on the Gulf Shore of the Province are prosecuted by Foreigners, and whether they make any, and what, encroachments.

6. As to the destruction of Fish in Rivers, by illegal modes of Fishing—as to the various sorts of Fish (especially Salmon) being prevented ascending to their usual spawning grounds by Mill Dams, or other obstructions—and as to their being caught out of season and when spawning—with the best information that can be procured, as to the decrease of the Fisheries in each of the Rivers flowing into the Gulf, or Bay of Chaleur, from these or other causes.

Mr. Perley respectfully requests all persons who feel an interest in the Fisheries of the Gulf, to furnish him with whatever information they possess, with reference to the foregoing inquiries, or which may be interesting or important, as regards the Fisheries generally. Any observations as to existing nuisances, or obstructions, to the Sea or River Fisheries, and the means of remedying or removing them, will be gladly received.

As it is extremely desirable that the most full and accurate information should be obtained, in order that measures of real utility may be adopted to advance the Fisheries, it is hoped that all residents on the Gulf Shore, and within the Bay of Chaleur, will cheerfully aid in a work calculated to advance the general prosperity.

It is Mr. Perley's intention to visit personally every part of the Coast mentioned, and collect information on the spot; but all communications to him on the subject, until 20th September, may be addressed to the care of Edward Williston, Esquire, Newcastle, Miramichi; and after that date, to the Government Emigration Office, Saint John.

No. 3.

The Petition of the Settlers at Miscou.

To Sir Edmund Head, Baronet, Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief of the Province of New Brunswick, &c. &c. &c.

The Petition of George Sevret and others, on behalf of the Settlers at Miscou, Humbly sheweth—

That your Petitioners are British subjects, resident on Miscou; that they have all large families, and support themselves by fishing and farming; that they have made small houses in which they reside; and they pray that they may have Grants or Licences of occupation for the land they occupy, and privilege of the Beaches in front of their lots. These few years back, the vacant Marshes and Beaches were sold at auction for a few shillings, and the buyer charged a poor fisherman 10s. per ton for marsh hay, and 5s. per ton for beach grass, standing; the beach grass is hardly worth mowing on account of the sand in or about it.

And as in duty bound will ever pray.

George Sevret,

his
Peter X Sevret,
mark.

his
William X Ward,
mark.

his
Richard X Plaw,
mark.

Joseph Ward,

his
John X Burns,
mark.

his
James X Ward,
mark.

his
Michael X Ward,
mark.

his
Peter X Dupuit,
mark.

John Vibert,

Pierre Bezeau,

George Brown,

Francis Bezeau,

Chrysostom Cheseau,

James Ward, Jun.

} By Geo. Sevret.

No. 4.

Copy of a Letter from John Doran, Esquire, J. P., of Shippagan, respecting the Sea Fisheries.

Shippagan, 22d August, 1849.

SIR,—I have had great satisfaction in perusing your Circular Letter, asking information as to the Fisheries in this District, and within the Bay of Chaleur; and I beg to communicate to you the following observations:—

In reply to your first inquiry, I can state, that Herring, Mackerel and Cod are generally abundant, both on the Gulf Shore and within the Bay. For some years past the Herring Fishery, in the Spring, has not been so good as formerly, which was attributed to the want of some regulations when the Herring came in; the Fish are not allowed their proper time for spawning. When Fish of any kind are disturbed while spawning, they generally leave the ground, and seek some other spot where they can find rest. The present year the Herring came in great abundance, and remained on the different spawning grounds nearly three weeks, which was unprecedented; had there been a market for them, they could have been turned to good account.

The Cod Fishing could be made a source of wealth, as in my opinion, it is inexhaustible; there is no danger of taking too many Fish. Formerly, the Cod were principally taken in the early part of the Summer, when the Capelin struck in; but of late years, the Capelin have not appeared on these shores, which is attributed to their being seined and used for manure. If capitalists would turn their attention to the Cod Fishing on this coast, they would find it a safe and profitable investment. This year the catch has been abundant, owing to the large quantities of Mackerel in the Gulf, so that the fishermen had an abundance of bait.

The House of Charles Robin & Co. have brought the Cod Fishing to the height of perfection; by their care, industry, and judicious management, the partners have made princely fortunes. The principals of all the Fishing Establishments in the Bay of Chaleur, have been trained at their school; they have all done well, and are making money. Some of our youths, of respectability and education, should be sent to these establishments, to be trained, so as to be fitted to take charge of similar establishments. At the Jersey establishments, the young men are trained both to the shore and to the sea; they remain on shore at the "rooms" during the Summer, and in the Winter they go in the vessels, with the Fish, to the Mediterranean, and become acquainted with the Spanish and Italian markets. When out of their time, they can take their choice, either to remain on shore, or go as master of one of the vessels.

This sort of training is the first step towards establishing a Fishing Station. In the next place, the Station must be provided with a sufficient number of good boats, and a complete outfit of everything required for the Fishery; nothing should be out of order, or wanting, or else there will be disappointment, and loss will ensue. A good take of fish is the next thing, as regards the profits; but the heading, splitting, salting, and curing, are all essential matters, to which great attention must be paid, as also to the state of the weather. When there are several hundred quintals on hand, a large number of persons must be employed, and this must be done with great regard to economy. Care must be taken that the work goes on in a regular and uniform manner, at the smallest outlay for wages; and that the fish are not wasted, or so carelessly managed, or handled, as to become only second quality, instead of merchantable. The profits of the business consist in making the fish all of the first quality, which are worth 16s. per quintal, when the second quality are only worth from 8s. to 10s. per quintal. At this time, the second quality of Cod can scarcely find a market anywhere, while the first quality are worth 15s. per quintal in the Spanish markets. I believe no improvement could be made on Messrs. Robin's mode of conducting the Cod Fishery.

Our fishing boats are all whale built, from 23 to 26 feet keel; they have two masts, and now generally carry a jib. At each Fishing establishment it is necessary to have a sufficient supply of large and small cordage, blocks, anchors, grapnels, hooks, nets, lines of all lengths, kinds, and sizes, always on hand; and also provisions, such as best mess pork, flour, bread, corn meal, oatmeal, peas, rice, sugar, and molasses,—together with manufactured goods of all kinds, ready made clothing; and last, not least, a stock of salt sufficiently large for every emergency. If

If a partnership, or company, should be formed for prosecuting the Cod Fishery, they ought to own several first class vessels, from 100 to 120 tons burthen. It must be understood, that in this Fishery, a small business will not answer. The sea around us is a mine of wealth, but from want of enterprise and capital, we are just wasting our lifetime in useless drudgery. If the Cod Fishery could be established here, upon a large scale, it would open out all the Agricultural resources of this part of the Province, for the farmers and fishermen agree well, and assist each other. When a farmer on the coast can fit out a boat himself, and find a ready market for his Fish, he can carry on the fishing between seed-time and harvest, and soon become independent. He can compost to any extent, as you will have observed, by decomposing the cods' heads and other offal with lime, or plaister of Paris; and this manure is as good as the best guano, and will produce equally good crops.

Of the Mackerel Fishery we know nothing at all. All the Mackerel taken are used for bait, and such is the carelessness of our fishermen, that they scarcely salt a barrel to each boat, for their own use. All the information I have, is from hearsay; but so far as I can learn, the Americans must find it a profitable business. We want our youth instructed in the modes of catching and curing, and then this business might be brought into right operation. There is one thing certain—if it pays the Americans it ought to pay us, who have the Fish at our own doors.

As soon as the fleet of American fishing vessels arrive, they begin to draw the shoals of Mackerel around them, and then our own fishermen can not get any for bait. This year, four American vessels have fished off Grande Ance; as soon as they had baited the Fish, and commenced jigging them, our fishermen could not get a Mackerel, but were obliged to wait for bait until the Americans had filled their vessels.

As to your fourth inquiry, I think that a law should be enacted to prevent all persons from using any kind of Fish for manure.

I must not omit to mention the Cod Oil, which pays well; on an average, it adds about eighteen pence per quintal to the value of the Fish, which will overpay the salt.

Your obedient servant,

JOHN DORAN.

M. H. Perley, Esquire.

No. 6.

Rules and Orders respecting the Salmon Fishery in the County of Gloucester.

GLoucester, ss.—July Sessions, 1848.

At a General Sessions of the Peace, held at the Court House in Bathurst, in the said County, on the first Tuesday in July, in the twelfth year of the Reign of Queen Victoria, and in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty eight,—

It was Ordered, That from and after the end of the present Sessions, all Rules and Orders heretofore at any time made by the Court of General Sessions of the Peace of this County, for the regulation of the Salmon Fisheries within the same, be cancelled and rescinded; and that thenceforth the following Rules and Orders be deemed and taken to be the Rules and Orders regulating the Salmon Fisheries in the said County; saving nevertheless all penalties already incurred:—

Ordered, That the Salmon Fishery, with nets, shall terminate on the first day of August in each year; and that no net shall, on any pretence, be allowed to remain set after that time, under the penalty of Five Pounds each day.

Second.—Ordered, That no net shall be set or used for the catch of Salmon within the Harbour of Bathurst, on any middle ground, or flat, or in any channel between Mr. Read's Mills and the Points, or between Mr. Cunard's Wharf and the Points, or in any part of the Tatagouche or Middle Rivers; nor shall any net be set or used in any part of the Big Nepisiquit River, above John Swanton Bateman's Brook, under a penalty not to exceed Five Pounds per day.

Third.—Ordered, That all nets shall be set from the shores or banks of the said River, and that no net shall be set on, or from any middle ground, under the like penalty.

Fourth.—Ordered, That nets set in the Big Nepisiquit River, on either side, within three hundred yards, up stream, of the southern extremity of the middle ground, shall extend no farther into the River than a distance equal to one third the breadth of the

northern or southern channel, according to the side of said River on which the said net may be set; and that no net shall extend farther into the said River than one third the breadth of the channel, into which the said net may be set, under the like penalty.

Fifth.—Ordered, That no Salmon net shall be used of less than five and a half inches mesh, under the like penalty.

Sixth.—Ordered, That all Salmon nets shall have the name of the owner legibly marked, branded, or scribed on three or four pieces of wood or metal attached to the same, and that such marks shall be preserved on the said net during the fishing season, under a penalty of Two pounds per day.

Eighth.—Ordered, That before any net shall be set, the owner or owners, person or persons interested in the same, shall cause a memorandum, setting forth the name of the party interested, and the length of such net, with the particular location where the same is intended to be used, to be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Peace; and that the said Clerk shall thereupon forthwith notify the Overseers of the Fisheries, or some of them, of the fact of such net having been registered, for the guidance of such Overseer; and that any net set before such registry, shall be deemed and taken to be illegally set, and shall subject the owner to a penalty of Two Pounds per day for every day such net shall have been so set.

Ninth.—Ordered, That all net pickets shall be removed from the River by the sixth day of August in each year, under a penalty, against the proprietor of the net, for the use of which such pickets had been driven, of Two Pounds per day.

And whereas great injury to the Fisheries hath been perpetrated by the practice of spearing Salmon in, or in the neighbourhood of, their spawning places;

Tenth.—Ordered, That no Salmon shall be speared in any part of the Middle River, or the Tatagouche River, or in the Big Nepisiquit River, above the tide way, or in any of its branches, under a penalty of One Pound for each fish so speared; and if any person shall, directly or indirectly, buy, purchase, or barter for, or have in his or their possession, any Salmon, so unlawfully speared, he or she shall be liable to a fine of One Pound for each fish, one half to the informer and the other half to the Poor of the Parish; and all such fish shall be liable to be seized, confiscated, and sold by the Overseers of the Fisheries, and the proceeds appropriated in the same manner as nets unlawfully set may be seized and sold as hereinafter mentioned.

Eleventh.—Ordered, That if any net or nets shall be found set, or in the act of being used, contrary to these Regulations, or any of them, it shall be the duty of the Overseers of the Fisheries, or any of them, forthwith to seize, take, and carry away the same, and deposit it in a place of safety, and if such net be not claimed by the owner or party interested, and the penalty incurred paid within five days after such seizure, the same shall be publicly advertised for sale, and sold after three days, by public auction, and the proceeds, after deducting the costs and charges of seizing, keeping, and sale, shall be appropriated, one half to the Overseers of the Poor of the Parish, for the use of the Poor, and the other half to the Overseers of the Fisheries who may have seized and sold the said net.

Twelfth.—Ordered, That these Rules and Orders shall be in addition to all the provisions of the Acts of the General Assembly now in force, regulating Salmon Fisheries in the County of Gloucester, and all and every penalty herein and hereby imposed, shall and may be recovered before any Justice of the Peace of the said County, on the oath of one or more credible witness or witnesses; and in default of payment of the said penalty with costs, such Justice of the Peace shall commit the offender to close confinement in the common gaol, for such space of time, not exceeding twenty days, as he may see fit, according to the authority of the Act of the General Assembly in such case made and provided.

Thirteenth.—Ordered, That the Clerk of the Peace shall cause these Rules and Orders to be forthwith published, and shall procure one hundred copies of the same to be printed, together with such extracts from the Acts of the General Assembly, regulating Fisheries in the County of Gloucester, as may be necessary for the guidance of the Overseers of the Fisheries, and the information of the public.

By Order of the Court.

WILLIAM END,

Clerk of the Peace and Sessions.

By the second Section of the Act 3 W. 4, cap. 27, it is enacted, That any person who shall set any net or other device across any River, Cove, or Creek, in the County of Gloucester, to injure the natural course of Salmon in any place where they usually go, shall, on due conviction, on the oath of one or more witness or witnesses before two Justices, forfeit and pay the sum of ten pounds for the first offence, twenty pounds for the second offence, and fifty pounds for the third and every subsequent offence.

The third Section of the same Act imposes a penalty of ten pounds for using a drift net, with forty days imprisonment.

The tenth Section of the same Act requires the Overseers of the Fisheries, immediately on the commencement of the Fishing Season, as often as they or any of them shall deem necessary, or upon information given, to examine the Rivers, Coves, and Creeks, and if the Law, or the Rules and Orders made in obedience to it, is found to be in any wise contravened, to take immediate measures for preventing the same and prosecuting the offender.

The eleventh Section imposes a fine of ten pounds on the Overseer of the Fisheries for every neglect of duty.

The thirteenth Section empowers the Justices to compensate the Overseers for their services out of the proceeds of penalties and forfeitures, or from the County Treasury.

No. 6.

COUNTY OF BONAVENTURE.

Municipality, Second Division.

At the second quarterly meeting of the Municipal Council, second Division Municipality, County of Bonaventure, held on Monday, March 13, 1848, at New Richmond, within said Municipality.

A majority of the Councillors being present, and after a number of Resolutions were gone through, the following Rules and Regulations were unanimously agreed upon, and passed:—

1st. That each Circus Company, Showman, or exhibitor of Wild Beasts, coming into this Municipality, shall pay to the Secretary Treasurer, for the use of the Municipality, the duty of Five Pounds, under the penalty mentioned in the Act 10 & 11 Vic. cap. 7, on contravention thereof.

2nd. That each and every wholesale and retail trader, within this Municipality, shall take out a licence for keeping his or her store or shop, for the sale of any goods (excepting spirituous liquors) and shall pay the same to the Secretary Treasurer, for the use of the Municipality, at the prices fixed by this Council.

3rd. That tavern keepers, and all other person or persons within this Municipality, selling and dealing in spirituous liquors, shall take out licence for the sale of the same at the rates fixed by this Council; and that no trader, tavern keeper, person or persons, shall sell or trade within this Municipality, without such licence, under the penalty mentioned in the Act above cited.

4th. That all licences will commence and be renewed on the first day of April in each and every year, and that all persons are hereby required to take out the same before the first day of April next.

5th. That each and every person or persons, so taking out licence, shall in addition to the prices fixed for the same, pay a fee of five shillings for each licence to the Secretary Treasurer, who upon receiving the amount of licence money and fee, shall deliver to the party paying the same, his or her licence, signed by the Mayor, and countersigned by the said Secretary Treasurer.

6th. That each and every ferryman within this Municipality, shall take out his licence before the first day of April next, and in addition to the prices fixed for such licence, shall pay to the Secretary Treasurer the sum of five shillings, and shall give good and sufficient security, that the Rules and Regulations made by this Council, will be faithfully complied with. No person shall act as ferryman within this Municipality without licence, under the penalty of the law.

7th. That so much of a bye law passed by the late Municipal Council of the Township of Maria, on the 19th July, 1845, for the preservation of the Salmon Fisheries on the Cascapediatic River, and along the shore of the said Township of Maria, and other local Fisheries, shall be applicable to, and extend to the Townships of New Richmond, Maria, Carleton, and Nouvelle, and also to the River Restigouche, within this Municipality, with the following amendment, viz:—that no person shall set any Salmon net on the Restigouche River, below the Islands, above the length of one hundred and fifty fathoms, Bar net; that from the foot of the Island upwards, on each particular branch of the River Restigouche, within this Municipality—one third of the deepest water to be left open. No drifting for Salmon allowed.

8th. That the Secretary Treasurer do furnish the respective Overseers of Fisheries with a copy of the said bye law and amendment.

9th. That the Secretary Treasurer do cause the foregoing Rules and Regulations to be published in the *Gaspé Gazette*.

JOSEPH MEAGHER, *Mayor*.
WM. HARVEY. *Sec. Trea.*

March 31, 1848.

No. 7.

Statement of the tonnage and men employed in the Bank or Cod Fishery of the United States, the product of the same, and the amount of allowances paid to the owners of vessels engaged in the Fisheries, during the year ending 30th June, 1848:—

| Vessels, | Number. | Tonnage. | Men. | Boys. |
|-----------------------------|---------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| | 1,597 | 86,069 | 8,495 | 484 |
| Codfish, .... | .... | cwt. 558,640, | value \$1,566,919 | |
| Fish Oil, .... | .... | gallons, 165,210, | " 73,654 | |
| Tongues and Sounds, .... | .... | barrels, 607, | " 3,370 | |
| Halibut, Hake, and Pollack, | | cwt. 44,933, | " 99,491 | |
| | | Total value, | \$1,743,434 | |

Amount of allowances paid, \$243,432.

Treasury Department, Washington, 30th October, 1849.

ALLEN A. HALL.

No. 8.

Statement of the quantity of Pickled Fish exported from the United States, the Bounty paid on exportation, and the amount of allowances paid to the owners of vessels employed in the Bank or Cod Fishery, from 1843 to 1848, inclusive:—

| YEARS. | PICKLED FISH EXPORTED. | | | Allowances to Fishing Vessels. | Total bounty and allowances. |
|--------|------------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Barrels. | Rate $\$$ barrel. | Bounty. | | |
| 1843 | 17,575 | 20 cents. | \$3,515 | \$169,932 | \$173,247 |
| 1844 | 33,318 | " | 6,663 | 249,074 | 255,737 |
| 1845 | 20,871 | " | 4,174 | 289,840 | 294,014 |
| 1846 | 27,703 | " | 5,541 | 274,942 | 280,483 |
| 1847 | 32,441 | " | 6,488 | 276,429 | 282,917 |
| 1848 | 29,915 | 2½ cents. | 748 | 243,432 | 244,180 |

Treasury Department, Washington, October 30, 1849.

ALLEN A. HALL.

No. 9.

Exhibit of the quantity and value of foreign caught Fish, imported into the United States, during the years 1829, 1832, 1838, 1843, and 1848, and the amount of Duty which accrued on the same, at the rates levied at each period:—

| No. | Years. | DRIED FISH. | | SALMON. | | MACKEREL. | | ALL OTHER FISH | | Total Duties. | Total value. |
|-----|--------|-------------|---------|----------|---------|-----------|---------|----------------|---------|---------------|--------------|
| | | Cwt. | Duties. | Barrels. | Duties. | Barrels. | Duties. | Barrels. | Duties. | | |
| 1 | 1829 | 462 | \$462 | 999 | \$1,998 | 95 | \$143 | 122 | \$122 | \$2,725 | \$15,896 |
| 2 | 1832 | 1,359 | 1,359 | 2,104 | 4,208 | 32 | 48 | 264 | 264 | 5,879 | 28,584 |
| 3 | 1838 | 2,015 | 2,015 | 3,790 | 7,580 | 182 | 273 | 3,521 | 3,521 | 13,389 | 93,272 |
| 4 | 1843 | 188 | 188 | 2,640 | 5,280 | 12,733 | 19,100 | 1,391 | 1,391 | 25,959 | 91,613 |
| 5 | 1848 | 51,826 | 25,560 | 7,630 | 16,189 | 122,594 | 107,026 | 23,344 | 14,355 | 163,130 | 815,645 |

No. 1, Under the Tariff of 1816, Dried Fish paid \$1.00 per cwt.
 " 2, " " " Salmon " 2.00 per barrel.
 " 3, " " " 1832, Mackerel " 1.50 "
 " 4, " " " 1842, all other " 1.00 "
 " 5, " " " 1846, all Fish " 20 per cent. *ad-valorem*.

Treasury Department, Washington, 30th October, 1849.

ALLEN A. HALL.

No. 10.

Extract from the Convention between His Britannic Majesty and the United States of America, signed at London 20th October, 1818.

Art. 1. Whereas differences have arisen respecting the liberty claimed by the United States for the inhabitants thereof, to take, dry, and cure Fish, on certain coasts, bays, harbours and creeks, of His Britannic Majesty's Dominions in America, it is agreed between the High Contracting Parties, that the inhabitants of the said United States shall have, for ever, in common with the subjects of His Britannic Majesty, the liberty to take Fish of every kind, on that part of the southern Coast of Newfoundland, which extends from Cape Ray to the Rameau Islands; on the western and northern Coast of Newfoundland, from the said Cape Ray to the Quirpon Islands; on the shores of the Magdalen Islands; from Mount Joly, on the southern Coast of Labrador, to and through the Straits of Bellisle, and thence northwardly, indefinitely, along the Coast, without prejudice, however, to any of the exclusive rights of the Hudson Bay Company: And that the American fishermen shall also have liberty, for ever, to dry and cure Fish in any of the unsettled bays, harbours, and creeks of the southern part of Newfoundland, hereabove described, and of the Coast of Labrador; but so soon as the same, or any portion thereof, shall be settled, it shall not be lawful for the said fishermen to dry or cure Fish at such portion so settled, without previous agreement for such purpose with the inhabitants, proprietors, or possessors of the ground: And the United States hereby renounce, for ever, any liberty heretofore enjoyed or claimed by the inhabitants thereof, to take, dry, or cure Fish, in or within three marine miles of any of the coasts, bays, creeks, or harbours of His Britannic Majesty's Dominions in America, not included within the above mentioned limits; provided however, that the American fishermen shall be admitted to enter such bays or harbours, for the purpose of shelter, and of repairing damages therein, of purchasing wood, and of obtaining water, and for no other purpose whatever: But they shall be under such restrictions as may be necessary to prevent their taking, drying, or curing Fish therein, or in any manner whatsoever abusing the privileges hereby reserved to them.

No. 11.

Opinion of the Queen's Advocate General, and Her Majesty's Attorney General of England, upon a case submitted by the Assembly of Nova Scotia, as to the construction of the Convention of 1818, relative to the Fisheries :—

Doctor's Commons, 30th August, 1841.

MY LORD,—We are honored with your Lordship's commands, signified in Mr. Backhouse's letter of the 26th March, stating that he was directed to transmit to us the accompanying letter from the Colonial Office, enclosing the copy of a Despatch from the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, enclosing an Address to Her Majesty from the House of Assembly of that Province, complaining of the continued encroachments of American fishermen on the fishing grounds of Nova Scotia, and the adjoining Colonies, and praying that Her Majesty would establish, by an Order in Council, general regulations for the protection of the Fisheries, according to the code annexed to the Address.

Mr. Backhouse is pleased to request that we would take these papers into consideration, and report to your Lordship our opinion, whether there is any thing in the proposed regulations which would be inconsistent with the stipulations of the Convention of the 20th October, 1818, between Great Britain and the United States of America.

We are also honored with Mr. Backhouse's letter of the 19th April, stating that he was directed to transmit us a further letter from the Colonial Office, dated the 16th inst., enclosing the copy of a Despatch from the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, covering a copy of an Address from the Legislative Council of that Province, objecting to one of the above mentioned regulations proposed by the House of Assembly in the Session of 1848, and to request that we would take these papers into consideration, in addition to those referred to in his letter of the 26th March last, and that we would report to your Lordship, at our earliest convenience, our opinion thereon.

We are also honored with Mr. Backhouse's letter of the 8th of June, stating that he was directed to transmit to us the accompanying letter from the Colonial Office, together with a copy of a Despatch from the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, enclosing a copy of a Report of the House of Assembly on the subject of the Fisheries of that Province, and also enclosing a case for opinion, as to what rights have been ceded to the citizens of the United States of America, and as to what rights have been exclusively reserved to Her Majesty's subjects, and to request that we would take the papers into consideration, and report to your Lordship our opinion upon the several questions stated in the case above mentioned.

We are also honored with Mr. Backhouse's letter of the 5th ult., stating that he was directed to transmit to us a correspondence, as marked in the margin, which has passed between the Foreign Office and Mr. Stevenson, the American Minister at this Court, and the Colonial Department, on the subject of a remonstrance addressed by Mr. Stevenson, against the proceedings of the authorities in Nova Scotia, towards American Fishing vessels encroaching on the Fisheries of that coast, and to request that we would take these papers into consideration, and to report to your Lordship our opinion thereupon.

1st Query—In obedience to your Lordship's commands, we have taken these papers into consideration, and have the honor to report, that we are of opinion, that the Treaty of 1783 was annulled by the war of 1812; and we are also of opinion, that the rights of fishery of the citizens of the United States, must now be considered as defined and regulated by the Convention of 1818; and with respect to the general question, "*if so, what right,*" we can only refer to the terms of the Convention, as explained and elucidated by the observations which will occur in answering the other specific queries.

2nd and 3rd Query—Except within certain defined limits, to which the query put to us does not apply, we are of opinion, that by the terms of the Convention, American citizens are excluded from any right of fishing within three miles of the coast of British America, and that the prescribed distance of three miles is to be measured from the headlands, or extreme points of land next the sea, of the coast, or of the entrance of bays, or indents of the coast, and consequently, that no right exists, on the

the part of American citizens, to enter the bays of Nova Scotia, there to take fish, although the fishing being within the bay, may be at a greater distance than three miles from the shore of the bay, as we are of opinion that the term "head land" is used in the treaty to express the part of the land we have before mentioned, including the interiors of the bays, and the indents of the coast.

4th Query—By the Convention of 1818, it is agreed that American citizens should have the liberty of fishing in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and within certain defined limits, in common with British subjects; and such Convention does not contain any words negating the right to navigate the Passage or Strait of Canso, and therefore it may be conceded, that such right of navigation is not taken away by that Convention; but we have now attentively considered the course of navigation to the Gulf, by Cape Breton, and likewise the capacity and situation of the Passage of Canso, and of the British possessions on either side; and we are of opinion that, independently of Treaty, no Foreign Country has the right to use or navigate the Passage of Canso; and attending to the terms of the Convention, relating to the liberty of fishing to be enjoyed by the American citizens, we are also of opinion that that Convention did not, either expressly or by necessary implication, concede any such right of using or navigating the passage in question. We are also of opinion, that casting bait, to lure fish in the track of any American vessels navigating the passage, would constitute a fishing, within the negative terms of the Convention.

5th Query—With reference to the claim of a right to land on the Magdalen Islands, and to fish from the shores thereof, it must be observed, that by the Convention, the liberty of drying and curing fish (purposes which could only be accomplished by landing) in any of the unsettled Bays, &c., of the southern part of Newfoundland, and of the Coast of Labrador, is specifically provided for; but such liberty is distinctly negated in any settled Bays, &c., and it must therefore be inferred, that if the liberty of landing on the shores of the Magdalen Islands had been intended to be conceded, such an important concession would have been the subject of express stipulation, and would necessarily have been accompanied with a description of the inland extent of the shore, over which such liberty was to be exercised, and whether in settled or unsettled parts, but neither of these important particulars are provided for, even by implication, and that, among other considerations, leads us to the conclusion, that American citizens have no right to land or conduct the Fishery from the shores of the Magdalen Islands. The word "shores" does not appear to have been used in the Convention in any other than the general or ordinary sense of the word, and must be construed with reference to the liberty to be exercised upon it, and would, therefore, comprise the land covered with water, as far as could be available, for the due enjoyment of the liberty granted.

6th Query—By the Convention, the liberty of entering the Bays and Harbours of Nova Scotia, for the purpose of purchasing wood and obtaining water, is conceded in general terms, unrestricted by any condition expressed or implied, limiting the enjoyment to vessels duly provided with those articles at the commencement of their voyage, and we are of opinion, that no such condition can be attached to the enjoyment of the liberty.

7th Query—The rights of Fishing ceded to the citizens of the United States, and those reserved for the exclusive enjoyment of British subjects, depend altogether upon the Convention of 1818, the only existing Treaty on this subject between the two countries, and the material points arising thereon have been specifically answered in our replies to the preceding Queries.

We have, &c.

J. DODSON,
THOS. WILDE.

Viscount Palmerston, K. B., &c. &c. &c.

No. 12.

REPORT ON THE FISHERIES IN THE GULF OF SAINT LAWRENCE.

There is probably no part of the world in which such extensive and valuable Fisheries are to be found, as within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. Nature has bountifully provided within its waters, the utmost abundance of those fishes which are of the greatest importance to man, as affording not only nutritious and wholesome food, but also the means of profitable employment.

These Fisheries may be prosecuted as well in the open waters of the Gulf, as within every Bay, Harbour, Creek, Cove and Inlet in connection with it. Whether on the bleak and sterile coast of Labrador; or on the western coasts of Newfoundland and Cape Breton; or along the eastern shores of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick; or within the Bay of Chaleur; or around Prince Edward Island, Anticosti, or the Magdalen Islands, the Fisherman may pursue his labours with nearly equal chances of success, and the full prospect of securing an ample reward for his toil.

With such valuable and unlimited Fisheries in close proximity to these Colonies, and as it may be said at the very doors of the inhabitants, it is no less strange than true, that they are prosecuted to the greatest extent, and with most profit, by citizens of France and of the United States.

The French exercise an almost exclusive right of fishing upon the western coast of Newfoundland, the fertility and great mineral wealth of which have only recently become known, and are not yet fully appreciated.

From seven to eight hundred sail of American fishing vessels enter the Gulf of Saint Lawrence annually; and scattering over the whole of its wide extent, with little heed of the limits to which they are restricted by treaty, pursue their business unmolested, and but rarely leave their stations without full and valuable fares.

The Jersey merchants also prosecute these Fisheries with great zeal and assiduity, and, as it is believed, with much profit. They have permanent establishments and Fishing Stations in Gaspé, Labrador, and Newfoundland, and three or more establishments in New Brunswick; but they by no means confine themselves to any particular locality. They employ upwards of one hundred vessels almost exclusively in carrying the rich products of the deep to various foreign markets, besides the smaller craft required upon the coast. Two of the leading Jersey firms, Messieurs Robin and Company, and Nicolle Brothers, are supposed respectively to afford employment, directly or indirectly, to nearly one thousand persons.

The inhabitants of those shores of Cape Breton and Nova Scotia which are within the Gulf, pursue the Fisheries in their immediate neighbourhood to a moderate extent; and a few of their vessels visit the Magdalen Islands, and the Labrador coast, during the season. The people of Prince Edward Island, who are favourably placed for securing a goodly portion of the riches of the sea, make still more limited efforts; but their efforts can scarcely be described as more limited, or more feeble, than those of the people of New Brunswick, who dwell upon its shores, from Baie Verte to the western extremity of the Bay of Chaleur—those shores commanding as great an extent and variety of fishing ground, and as abundant supplies of valuable fish of every description, as can be found in any other part of the unrivalled Gulf of Saint Lawrence, while they possess equal, and perhaps superior, facilities for prosecuting its Fisheries, both extensively and profitably.

The most valuable Fisheries of the Gulf are those for Herring, Cod, and Mackerel. But before entering upon the question of their encouragement and extension, by increased facilities of communication, it will be proper to give some description of each. With this view they will be taken up in the order of the fishing season; after which, the secondary Fisheries of the Gulf will be briefly noticed.

THE HERRING.

The common Herring, (*clupea harengus*,) appears in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence at the end of April, or early in May, and the fishing continues until about 10th June, when they retire to deep water, having deposited their spawn. These "Spring Herring," as they are termed, are taken in "set nets" along the whole eastern shore of New Brunswick, around Miscou Island, and within the Bay of Chaleur. Being caught
while

while in the very act of spawning, they are thin and poor, of little value as an article of food, whether fresh or salted. Another Herring appears on the coast about the 20th August, and remains in-shore for a month; these are fat and in good condition, furnishing excellent food, and a valuable commodity for export. It is admitted, that when first caught, these "Fall Herrings" are fully equal in every respect to the best Scotch Herrings; and if they were cured in the Dutch manner, this Fishery, from the increased price and demand, would become one of the most important and valuable Fisheries of the Gulf.

The Herring is the animal delicacy of Holland, and there enjoys a very different reputation from that of the common salt Herring of Britain or America; yet the fish of both Holland and Britain are the same, being caught on the same fishing grounds, and those of North America are in no respect inferior.

The Dutch mode of curing Herrings is thus described by Mr. Chambers, in his "Tour in Holland in 1838":—"Immediately on being caught, the Herrings are *bled, gutted, cleaned, salted, and barrelled*. The bleeding is effected by cutting them across the back of the neck, and then hanging them up for a few seconds by the tail. By being thus relieved of the blood, the fish retain a certain sweetness of flavour, and delicacy of flesh *which unbled Herrings cannot possibly possess*. The rapidity of the process of curing, must likewise aid in preserving the native delicacy of the animal, for the Herring lies salted in the barrel in a very few minutes after it has been swimming in the water. I was assured that the superiority of the Dutch Herrings is solely ascribable to this mode of curing."

The greater mercantile value of the Dutch Herrings, on the Continent of Europe, being found to arise solely from this mode of curing, the Commissioners of the British Fisheries (in Scotland,) were induced to devote great attention to it, and to urge its general adoption by every means in their power. Their officers and inspectors were directed to brand every barrel of Herring, cured according to the Dutch mode, with the figure of the Crown. In their official Report for 1844, the Commissioners state that—"the unprecedented demand from the Continent for Crown brand Herrings, is a sufficient proof of the care with which the integrity of the brand is preserved, as well as of the high value which is set upon it in all the Continental markets. It was the strong conviction impressed upon the minds of the Commissioners, of the vital importance of preserving the integrity of the brand, which compelled them to exercise the painful duty of dismissing from the service one of the Board's oldest officers. As he had branded a cargo of Herrings, which afterwards went to Hamburg, where they were complained of, as having been found unworthy of the brand, the Board despatched the General Inspector of the East Coast to that place, in order that he might rigidly examine the contents of all the barrels; and on receiving an unfavourable report as to the result of his investigation, the officer was immediately dismissed. The effect of this prompt measure has been to raise the character of the brand even higher in the estimation of the foreign Fish Merchants, to whom the circumstances were generally known. It is by the preservation of the purity of the official brand that the produce of the British Herring Fishery is to be upheld in character abroad, and the demand for it largely extended in Foreign Markets."

As a proof of the gradually increasing confidence which the Crown brand received on the Continent, the Commissioners furnish a statement of the number of barrels exported to the Continent, during the preceding seven years, commencing with 57,388 barrels in 1837, and annually increasing to 181,583 barrels in 1843.

The Commissioners further say—"An extensive export Merchant has given it as his opinion, that if great care shall be continued in the selection, cure, and official Inspection of the Fish, the Continent of Europe would consume more British Herrings than are now caught in our Fisheries. Although they have to contend with all the disadvantages of a duty levied on them of ten shillings per barrel, British Herrings are now brought into competition with Belgian Fish in their own markets, and are annually diminishing the sale of Dutch Herrings, by furnishing part of the supplies in markets formerly entirely dependant on them. By this means their price has been so reduced, that the number of "busses" fitted out for the deep-sea Herring Fishery, has been already considerably diminished."

In their Report for 1845, the Commissioners say—"The increasing demand for British Herrings of late years in Germany, arises from their moderate price, their careful selection, their superior cure and quality, and above all, from the security which dealers have in the official brands. The general stipulation between sellers and buyers is, to deliver and receive "Crown" and "Full" branded Herrings; and Mr. Miller, the Inspector of the East Coast, states in a Report made to the Board, of the information gathered by him during a short tour of inquiry made by order of the Commissioners, that he has the authority of a firm at Stetting for stating, that they sold about 40,000 barrels of Crown and Full branded Herrings last year, which were every where received without objection. The Inspector found British Herrings at Berlin, Wittemberg, Leipsic, Frankfort, Cologne, and Brussels; and he saw several parcels in transit for more distant parts; the barrels were all Crown and Full branded, and the Fish were in fine condition, all well meriting the official brand, and much approved by every one. He frequently inquired for Dutch Herrings, and was uniformly shewn British Herrings as Dutch; and when he stated that they were British, they always insisted that they were Dutch, and they sold them as Dutch. So general is the use of British Herrings on the Continent, that at Embden, where a few years ago fifty vessels were annually fitted out for the Fishery, and a bounty of about £50 paid to each, the number of vessels was reduced to twelve, notwithstanding the continuation of that bounty. The Inspector General learned from the British Consul at Frankfort, that the navigation of the Rhine to Mayence, or Frankfort, has not been attempted by vessels laden with British Herrings, in consequence of the jealousy of the Dutch, who throw insuperable obstacles in the way. Those Herrings which have been sent thither, were transhipped at Rotterdam, when the charges levied in Holland proved to be almost prohibitory. But as the prospect has arisen of immediate transport by a Canal connecting the Maine with the Danube, the Catholic Countries of Bavaria, Hungary, and Austria, may be expected to afford new markets for our Herrings, when the navigation of the Rhine may be attempted, or when the Railway from Antwerp to Cologne may be employed."

These extracts from official reports of the highest character, show most clearly the increased value which the Dutch mode of curing gives to British Herrings; while the careful inspection, and the rigid measures adopted to preserve the integrity of the official brand, indicate in the strongest manner, the necessity for a similar inspection in New Brunswick. At present, from the entire absence of both skill and care, one of the most prolific and most valuable Fisheries of the Gulf is rendered of the least value, and there is a complete waste of the bounties of Providence. Herrings are taken in the largest quantities, at a season when they are almost unfit to be eaten, because they are then caught with the greatest ease, and at least expense, and thousands of barrels are found of so little worth, that they are used to manure the land, or are left to rot upon the beaches.

In the autumn, when the Herrings are in fine condition, they are taken during a few weeks only, because our fishermen are quite ignorant of the proper mode of curing to render them of value, and are not aware of the manner of using drift nets in deep water, which is so successfully practised by the Herring Fishers of Loch Fyne, and other noted stations in Scotland. By a similar manner of fishing, our fishermen could continue to catch Herrings until the latest period of the fishing season, and those taken last would be of the finest quality. The mode of fishing by drift nets is thus described by Mr. Yarrell, in his admirable work on British Fishes:—

"The net is suspended by its upper edge, from the drift rope, by various shorter and smaller ropes, called buoy ropes; and considerable practical skill is required in the arrangement, that the net may hang with the meshes square, smooth and even in the water, and at the proper depth; for, according to the wind, tide, situation of their food, and other causes, the Herrings swim at various distances below the surface."

"The size of the boat depends on the distance from shore at which the fishery is carried on; but whether in deep or in shallow water, the nets are only in actual use during the night. It is found that the fish strike the nets in much greater numbers when it is dark than while it is light; the darkest nights, therefore, and those in which the surface of the water is ruffled by a breeze, are considered the most favourable.

It

It is supposed that nets stretched in the day time alarm the fish, and cause them to quit the place where that practice is followed; it is, therefore, strictly forbidden."

Many thousands of barrels of the inferior "Spring Herring," are taken at the Magdalen Islands every season, at the period when they approach the shores of these Islands to deposit their spawn. They are then very poor, and as but little care is taken in curing them, they often prove unfit for human food. They are caught in large seines, which require 15 or 20, and sometimes 40 men to manage them; and they are capable of enclosing, and bringing to the shore, from 200 to 1000 barrels at a single haul. When taken from these seines, it is the common practice to put them in the holds of the vessels, without washing, bleeding, or divesting them of their offal. They are salted "in bulk," as it is termed, and so they remain until the vessel arrives at the Port whence she sailed, whether in the Colonies, or in the United States. They are then taken out and packed in barrels, sweltering in all their impurity; but whole cargoes frequently prove worthless as food, and are used for dressing grass land.

The number of barrels of Herrings exported from the several Ports in the Counties of Restigouche, Gloucester, Northumberland, and Kent, during the last eight years, is thus stated:—

| PORTS. | 1841 | 1842 | 1843 | 1844 | 1845 | 1846 | 1847 | 1848 | Totals. |
|---------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|
| Restigouche, | 13 | ... | ... | ... | 41 | ... | 75 | ... | 129 |
| Bathurst, | ... | ... | ... | 20 | 52 | ... | ... | 280 | 352 |
| Caraquette, | 26 | 87 | 16 | 50 | 110 | 437 | 396 | 28 | 1150 |
| Miramichi, | 140 | 346 | 219 | 1080 | 3732 | 1192 | 1189 | ... | 7898 |
| Richibucto, | ... | ... | 100 | ... | 49 | 120 | 93 | 48 | 410 |
| Totals, | 179 | 433 | 335 | 1150 | 3984 | 1749 | 1753 | 356 | 9939 |

A large proportion of the Herrings exported from the Miramichi, are of the description best known as the Gaspereaux or Alewife, (*clupea vernalis*) which leave the Sea, and ascend most of the Rivers of the Gulf, to spawn. They are a thin, dry fish, much inferior to the Sea Herring when salted; they find a market in the West Indies, as from their leanness they are less liable to spoil in a hot climate than the fat Herrings.*

From the preceding Table it appears clearly, that beyond furnishing some portion of the food of the inhabitants of the Northern Counties of New Brunswick, the magnificent and unlimited Herring Fishery of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and Bay of Chaleur, barely furnishes a sufficient quantity for export to prevent Herrings being altogether omitted from the Returns.

Of all the Fisheries of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, none could be increased to a greater extent, or would furnish a more valuable export, than the Herring Fishery, if placed under judicious regulations, and conducted with greater skill and care. The manner of taking Herrings by drift-nets in deep water, requires to be generally known and adopted. At present, these excellent and truly valuable Fish, which exist in the Gulf in myriads, during the latter part of the season, when they are in the finest condition, are only caught in sufficient quantities to furnish bait for Cod, and a supply for domestic use.

The Dutch mode of curing also requires to be introduced, in order that the full flavour and fine quality of the Fish may be preserved. If cured according to this approved mode, and properly packed in barrels of hard wood, bearing an official brand, (on which full reliance could be placed,) to denote the quality of the Fish within, the Herrings of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence would find a ready market throughout the whole extent of Canada, and would find their way by inland navigation, and the Great Lakes, to the most Western States of the Union, where there exists a large and constantly increasing demand. To other parts of the United States, and to Foreign Ports elsewhere, they might be profitably exported, if they could reach Saint John, at all seasons, at a moderate charge.

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* NOTE in 1850.—Since this Report was first published, it has been ascertained that Cuvier, and the American Naturalists, class the Alewife, not as Herring, but as a species of Shad, and designate it *aleosa vernalis*.

The Herring Fishery of the Gulf would be more benefited than any other, by the construction of Railways, and the increased facilities for communication which they would afford. No other description of Fish would probably furnish so large an amount of Railway traffic, as, if once properly established, this Fishery, which can now be scarcely said to exist, might be prosecuted to an almost unlimited extent.

THE COD.

The Cod Fishery commences from the 1st to the 10th June, and continues until the end of November; it may be prosecuted in every part of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, to a greater or less extent. The principal Fish caught, differs but little from the *gadus morrhua* of Linnæus, or ash-colored Cod. There are besides two varieties known as *gadus rupestris*, the Rock Cod, and *gadus arenosus*, the Shoal Cod.

Near the Shores of New Brunswick, the best Fishing Grounds, or rather those most frequented, are from Point Escuminac to Miscou, and thence along the Bay of Chaleur, to the Restigouche.

The inhabitants of the County of Gloucester prosecute the Shore Fishery to a greater extent than any others on the New Brunswick coast. Their principal stations are Miscou, Shippagan, Caraquette, and Grande Ance. They go out in boats, from one to fifteen miles from the land, in the morning, and when at the longer distance, do not return until the evening of the following day. The boats have two fore-and-aft sails, and a jib; each boat is managed by two men, and frequently there is with them a boy. Each man has two lines, from 30 to 48 fathoms in length, and they are also furnished with Mackerel lines, spare leads, and hooks. The boat has oars, an anchor and rope, compass, and small oven for cooking; the cost is about £18 for each boat, with complete outfit. The Fishermen generally build their own boats during the Winter: the keel is of birch; the timbers of cedar; and the planks of pine or cedar. A boat will last from six to eight years, and so will the sails also, with care.

The quintal, by which Cod are always sold, is 112lb of dry fish. It is considered a good day's fishing, at Miscou, for one of these boats to take ten quintals of Fish, which they frequently do. When first caught, 112 of the small fish, and 30 of the large size, are reckoned to the quintal.

Nearly all the fishermen of Shippagan and the Bay of Chaleur, split, salt and cure their own fish. When they do not, 252lb of green fish salted and drained, are given to a curer, to return 112lb of merchantable dry fish.

The boats, as they return from the Fishing banks, run alongside a stage built over the water, upon which the fish are thrown out. The first man that handles the fish cuts its throat with a single stroke of his knife, and slides it along a sort of table to another, who whips off the head, and drops it, with the entrails, through a hole in the table, into the water underneath, retaining only the liver, which is thrown into a tierce to make oil. The next man splits the fish, and takes out the backbone; on the manner in which these operations are performed, the quality of the Fish for market, in a great degree depends. They are then washed, and rubbed with salt, in which they remain for six or eight days; then, being again well washed, they are placed in what is called a "horse-pile," to drain. After draining twenty four hours, they are spread out to dry on long narrow wicker frames or stages, set up on purpose, called "flakes." They require to be frequently turned to prevent their being "sun-burnt," or "salt-burnt;" and they cure in about three weeks. It is not well to cure them too fast; they are best when dried moderately.

After the Fish are sufficiently cured, they are collected and laid in small circles, with the tails outwards; these circles are continually built upon, each row being larger than the one below it, until the pile is about three feet high, when the circles begin to diminish, so as to form a conical roof; this is covered with birch bark, and stones are placed upon it. The piles are thus rendered impervious to the heaviest rains; and in this position, the Fish are left to season before being packed for exportation.

The Bay of Chaleur Cod are more prized in the markets of the Mediterranean, and will, at all times, sell there more readily, and at higher prices, than any other. They are beautifully white; and being very dry, can better withstand the effects of a hot climate and long voyage, than a more moist Fish. The peculiarity of their being smaller than Cod caught elsewhere, is also of great importance as regards the South American

American market, for which they are packed in tubs of a peculiar shape, called "drums," and into which they are closely pressed by means of a powerful screw.

The usual baits for Cod on the New Brunswick Coast, and in the Bay of Chaleur, are—Capelin, in the early part of the season—and afterwards, Herrings and Mackerel—when no other bait can be had, Clams are used.

The Capelin (*salmo groenlandicus*) is a beautiful little fish, from four to seven inches in length, the under jaw longer than the upper, the colour of the back greenish, the under surface of the body silvery. They usually appear about Miscou, and in the Bay of Chaleur, early in May; but sometimes not until near the end of that month. The Cod Fishery does not fairly commence until the arrival of the Capelin, which continue near the shores until the end of July.

There has been great complaint of late years, in the upper part of the Bay of Chaleur, of the falling off in the Cod Fishery, which is said to be every year decreasing. At Carleton, Maria, New Richmond, and other places on the Gaspé shore, the fishing establishments are deserted, and going to ruin. At these places there was formerly an abundant supply of fish; but the inhabitants now barely catch enough for their own winter store.

This decrease is also felt on the New Brunswick shore. The settlement of Petit Rocher sends out about 50 boats only, which average a catch of 50 quintals each, during the season. The Pockshaw coast sends out a few boats, but they only fish occasionally. The Carquette and Shippagan boats, further down the Bay, take more than 100 quintals each during the season, which are of better quality than those taken off Petit Rocher. The decline of the Cod Fishery in the upper part of the Bay is attributed to the wanton destruction of the proper and natural food of the Cod—Herring and Capelin—which are taken in immense quantities; not for immediate eating, or for curing, or for bait—but for manuring the land!

In a representation made to the Canadian Legislature by a fisherman of Gaspé, it is stated, that this fisherman has seen five hundred barrels of Capelin taken in one tide, expressly for manure; and that he has also seen one thousand barrels of Herring caught at one time, and not taken away, but left to rot upon the beach!

It has been remarked in the Bay of Chaleur, that owing to this waste of the smaller fish, the Cod Fishery recedes, as agriculture advances. The lazy farmer, who thinks he can increase the fertility of his land by a single sweep of his seine, does so at the expense of the Fisheries, although a bountiful Providence has furnished the shores with inexhaustible quantities of kelp and seaweed, and other valuable manures, which really enrich the soil, while it is admitted that the use of fish greatly deteriorates it.

The Legislature of Canada has been strongly urged to make it a misdemeanor, punishable by fine and imprisonment, for any person to use either Herring or Capelin as manure; and such a measure would seem to be highly desirable in New Brunswick. To be effective, there should be similar regulations on both sides of the Bay of Chaleur.

The deep-sea fishery for Cod is not prosecuted to any great extent in the Gulf by the people of New Brunswick. A few schooners proceed from the Fishing Stations in the County of Gloucester, already mentioned, to the Bradelle Bank, about fifty miles from Miscou. In the Summer of 1839, H. M. S. Champion, in sailing from the East Cape of Prince Edward Island to the Bay of Chaleur, (crossing the Bradelle Bank) passed through a fleet of 600 to 700 sail of American fishing schooners, all engaged in Cod fishing.

The vessels of Gaspé frequently resort to Anticosti, off the eastern end of which Island, Cod are often taken in great abundance and of good quality.

The excellent fishery on the Labrador Coast is prosecuted almost wholly by the Americans, and by vessels from Newfoundland, Canada, and Nova Scotia. The vessels usually employed are schooners of 70 or 80 tons burthen, and they arrive on the coast about the end of May. Every part of the coast is frequented by fishing vessels during the season, from Mount Joli, at the southern boundary of Labrador, to the northern extremity of the Straits of Belleisle. On reaching the coast, the vessel enters some snug harbour, where she is moored, and there remains quietly at anchor, until a full fare, or the departure of the fish, requires the master to seek another inlet, or return home.

The fishery is carried on entirely in boats, and the number found most useful is one for every thirty tons of the vessel; there are two men to each boat. If fish are plenty,

and not too distant from the vessel, they are expected in good weather to get two loads each day. The return of the boats with fish is the signal for the dressing crew, who remain on board, to commence their operations. If it is intended that the vessel shall remain on the coast until the fish are ready for market, they are taken on shore as caught, and there dressed, salted, and dried, before being put on board the vessel. But it is the more common practice, especially with persons from the United States, to salt the fish on board, and take their cargoes home in a green state, drying them after arrival.

The vessels from Nova Scotia and Canada, in general, carry their cargoes home in a green state.

About three hundred schooners from Newfoundland resort to the Labrador Coast every season, during which they usually make two voyages. When they first return from the coast, they take home a cargo of dry fish; but on the second return voyage, a considerable proportion of the fish is in a "green" or pickled state, and is dried at Newfoundland.

The Labrador Coast is indented every where with excellent Harbours, which have been frequented for a very long period. From the security of these Harbours, and the general certainty of an ample supply of fish, this coast is preferred by many fishermen to any other Fishing Station within the Gulf.

The average produce of this fishery may be estimated at ten quintals of dry fish to every ton of the vessels employed; but the masters of the American schooners are dissatisfied when they fail to catch 12 or 13 quintals per ton. The baits are principally the Capelin and the Herring, both of which abound on the coast. The Herrings taken at Labrador, in the latter part of the season, are considered very fine; yet they are not caught as a chief object of pursuit, but merely as an adjunct to the Cod Fishery.

The quantity of dried Cod exported from New Brunswick Ports, in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, during the last eight years, is thus stated in quintals:—

| PORTS. | 1841 | 1842 | 1843 | 1844 | 1845 | 1846 | 1847 | 1848 | Totals. |
|--------------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Dalhousie, | ... | ... | 500 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 500 |
| Bathurst, | ... | 50 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,091 | 1,141 |
| Caraquette, | 7,770 | 9,638 | 8,670 | 8,841 | 7,456 | 11,673 | 8,672 | 14,678 | 77,398 |
| Miramichi, | ... | 486 | 300 | 150 | 70 | 272 | 1,398 | 298 | 2,974 |
| Richibucto, | ... | ... | ... | 40 | ... | 25 | 270 | ... | 335 |
| Totals, | 7,770 | 10,174 | 9,470 | 9,031 | 7,526 | 11,970 | 10,340 | 16,167 | 82,348 |

From this Return it appears, that the export of dried Cod from the Northern Ports of New Brunswick, is chiefly from Caraquette. This export is made almost wholly by the Jersey Houses of Robin and Co., and Le Boutillier Brothers, of Paspébiac in Gaspé, and Alexandre and Co. of Shippagan, to Brazil, Spain, Portugal, Sicily, and the Italian States. The export of Cod from the Gulf of Saint Lawrence to Foreign Markets, is a branch of business which the Merchants of New Brunswick have yet to learn.

The quantity of dried Cod exported to Foreign Countries from the District of Gaspé during the past year (1848,) is thus stated from official Returns:—

| | | |
|--------------------|--------|-----------|
| Gaspe Basin, | 41,269 | Quintals. |
| New Carlisle, | 46,523 | " |
| Total, | 27,722 | " |

The whole quantity of dried Cod exported from New Brunswick during the last eight years, is exceeded by the quantity exported from Gaspé during the year 1848 only, by 5,414 quintals.

There is reason to believe, that a considerable proportion of the Cod exported from New Carlisle, is caught on the south side of the Bay of Chaleur, and about Miscou, the fishing grounds being better near the New Brunswick shores, than on the Gaspé side of the Bay.

The quantity of dried Cod exported from Newfoundland in 1845, was 1,000,333 quintals, of which one-sixth was the produce of the Fishery on the Labrador Coast.*

The whole line of the New Brunswick Coast from Shediac to Escuminac, around the Bay of Miramichi, and thence along the shores from Tabusintac to Shippagan and Miscou, offers the greatest facility for prosecuting either the in-shore, deep-sea, or Labrador Cod Fishery. There are numerous harbours, creeks, coves, lagoons, and inlets, on this line of coast, well sheltered, with sufficient water for boats and vessels of every size and description; the beaches are admirable for drying fish, and there is abundance of wood at hand for the construction of stages and "fish-flakes." The soil, too, is generally excellent; and owing to the flatness of the coast, the shore is every where easy of approach. For the establishment of Fishing Stations by Merchants of capital and skill, or the organization of Fishing Colonies on an extensive scale, this coast offers rare advantages.

The Bay of Chaleur likewise possesses many advantages for the prosecution of the Fisheries. The whole Bay may be considered one great Harbour, as throughout its entire breadth and extent, there is not a single rock, reef or shoal. During the Summer it literally swarms with fish of every description known on the shores of British North America; and its ancient Indian name of "Ecketaun Nemaachi"—the Sea of Fish—well denotes its character.

The facilities for ship building are very great on the New Brunswick side of this Bay. The timber is of excellent quality, and noted for its durability, more especially the Larch, which is accounted equal to any in the world. Mr. MacGregor, M.P. for Glasgow, late Secretary to the Board of Trade, in one of his official Reports to that Board, says—"The larch-built vessels of the Bay of Chaleur are remarkably durable. A vessel belonging to Robin & Co., which I saw at Paspebiac in 1824, I went on board of again in 1839, in the Port of Messina, where she was then discharging a cargo of dry Codfish; to feed the Sicilians. This vessel, then more than thirty years old, was perfectly sound.

The "bultow" mode of fishing for Cod, introduced by the French at Newfoundland, and now being adopted by the English residents there, might very probably be followed with advantage by the fishermen dwelling on the New Brunswick coast.

The "bultow" is described as a long line, with hooks fastened along its whole length, at regular distances, by shorter and smaller cords called *snoods*, which are six feet long, and are placed on the long line twelve feet apart, to prevent the hooks becoming entangled. Near the hooks, these shorter lines or *snoods* are formed of separate threads, loosely fastened together, to guard against the teeth of the fish. Buoys, buoy ropes, and anchors or grapnels, are fixed to each end of the line; and the lines are always laid, or as it is termed "shot" across the tide; for if the tide runs upon the end of the line, the hooks will become entangled, and the fishing will be wholly lost. These "set-lines" have been some time in use on the Coast of Cornwall, in England, and the mode is there called "bultor" fishing.† A gentleman connected with the British Fishery Board has suggested an improvement, in fixing a small piece of cork within about twelve inches of the hook, which will suspend and float the bait, when it will be more readily seen by the fish. If a bait rests upon the ground, it is sometimes covered with sea weed, and often devoured by star fish, crabs, and echini.

In a Petition from the inhabitants of Bryant's Cove, in Newfoundland, to the Legislature of that Colony, in 1846, it is stated that the "bultow" mode of fishing had been introduced in that vicinity in the previous year, at first by a single line, or "fleet" as it is termed, of one hundred hooks; and this proved so successful, that before the end of the season, seventy five fleets were used, some of them three hundred fathoms long. The petitioners represent that the set-line, or "bultow," is the best mode of fishing ever introduced in those waters, as being less expensive in outfit, and in keeping boats

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* The French employ 360 vessels, from 100 to 300 tons each, with crews amounting to 17,000 men, in the Newfoundland Fisheries. Their annual catch of Cod averages 1,200,000 quintals. The Government bounty is eleven francs per quintal, which is fully the value of the article itself. A French vessel for the Bank Fishery, of 300 tons, has a crew of at least 40 men, and from 7 to 9 heavy anchors, with 800 fathoms of hemp cable, and 4 or 5 large boats, capable of standing heavy weather.

† Mr. Wallop Brabanon, in his Work on the Deep Sea Fisheries of Ireland, says this mode of fishing is much practised on the West Coast of Ireland, where it is called "spilliard," or "spillet" fishing.

in repair. They state that a set-line will last three years, and with care even longer; that the total expense of fitting one out, with a gross of hooks, is only fifty shillings; and that it is not moved during the season, nor taken up, except for overhauling and baiting, until the fish move out in the deep water in the autumn. The petitioners add, that the fish taken by the "bultow" are larger than those taken by the hand line, as also superior in quality; and that it was a common thing, during the preceding season, for one and a half quintals of fish to be taken off a gross of hooks, in overhauling the line of a morning. It appears that the lines are overhauled, and fresh baits placed on the hooks every morning and evening; and it is set forth as an advantage of the "bultow," that if the fisherman leaves it properly baited in the morning, it is fishing for him while he is at work in his garden; whereas, by the other mode, if he was not on the ground he could not expect fish. The Petition then proceeds thus:—"Your petitioners therefore pray your Honorable House to cause the following rules, or something like them, to pass into law, as like all new inventions, the set-line, or "bultow," has to struggle against many hindrances, from ignorance, and bigotry to the old method, yet, as your petitioners have endeavoured to show, the "bultow" has proved itself what may be fully termed 'THE POOR MAN'S FRIEND.'"

The rules which the Petitioners pray may become law, are simply that the fishing grounds may be divided into two parts, one for the "bultow," and one for hand-line Fishermen; that the "bultows," shall always be set parallel with each other, that they may not get foul, and may take up as little room as possible; and lastly, that a person conversant with this mode of fishing, may be appointed to enforce these rules, and to instruct those who are not acquainted with the method, in the proper manner of fitting out and setting the "bultow." The Petitioners conclude by stating their belief, that if their suggestions are carried out, the boats now used in the Shore Fishery will, in three years, give place to the "bultow" throughout Newfoundland, as they have already done in Bryant's Cove.

For the deep-sea Fishery, the "bultow" is of great length. The French fishing vessels chiefly anchor on the Grand Bank of Newfoundland, in about 45 fathoms water, veer out one hundred fathoms of cable, and prepare to catch Cod, with 2 lines, each 3000 fathoms in length. The snoods are arranged as previously described, and the hooks being baited, the lines are neatly coiled in half bushel baskets, clear for running out. The baskets are placed in two strong built lug-sail boats, and at three o'clock in the afternoon, both make sail together, at right angles from the vessel, on opposite sides; when the lines are run out straight, they are sunk to within five feet of the bottom. At day break next morning, the boats proceed to trip the sinkers at the extremities of the lines, and while the crew of each boat are hauling in line and unhooking Fish, the men on board heave in the other end of the lines with a winch. In this way four hundred of the large Bank Cod are commonly taken of a night. The Fish are cleaned and salted on board, and stowed in the hold in bulk; the livers are boiled to oil, which is put in large casks secured on deck. The French vessels engaged in this Fishery, are from 150 to 300 tons burthen; they arrive on the Grand Bank early in June, and on the average, complete their cargoes in three months. In fine weather, the largest class of vessels frequently run out three or four "bultows" in different directions from the ship, and thus fish 10,000 fathoms of line, or more, at one time, with a proportionate number of hooks.

Should this mode of fishing be approved, measures might be devised for promoting its adoption near the shores of New Brunswick.

If circumstances should arise to induce the prosecution of the Cod Fisheries of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence on a more extensive scale, some regulations will be necessary for an efficient inspection of dried fish, intended for exportation to Foreign markets, in order to give a character to the commodity, and prevent carelessness in curing. On this point, the Commissioners of the British Fisheries, in their Report for 1844, say—"It is very gratifying to observe, that there is a gradual increase in the annual export of dried Cod to Spain, where a most extensive market for the consumption of this description of fish may be fairly looked for in the course of some years. This can only be obtained by unremitting care on the part of the Board's officers, in their inspection and punching of the fish, the Spaniards being very particular in regard to the excellence of the article they purchase. The Commissioners have judged it right
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to order an improvement in the form of the official Punch used for stamping the dried Cod and Ling, and instead of that lately used, which cut a square figure out of the tail of the fish, for which some private marks used by curers were liable to be mistaken, they have adopted a Crown, which is less liable to be imitated."

Besides Cod, there are several species of fish of the same genus, caught in the Gulf, in the prosecution of the Cod Fishery. These are—the Haddock (*gadus aeglefinus*)—the Hake (*gadus merluccius*)—and the Torsk, or Tusk, (*gadus brosme*.) These fish are cured in the same manner as Cod, to which, however, they are inferior. They are known commercially as "Scale Fish," and on the average, they sell at about half the price of Cod.

The Cod fishers in the Gulf often take the large flat-fish, known as the Halibut, (*hippoglossus vulgaris* of Cuvier,) which sometimes attains the weight of 300lb. The flesh, though white and firm, is dry, and the muscular fibre coarse. These fish are cut in slices, and pickled in barrels, in which state they sell at half the price of the best Herrings.

THE MACKEREL.

The common Mackerel (*scomber scombrus*) abounds in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, and is one of the chief objects of pursuit with the numerous fleets of American fishing vessels which are to be found yearly in every part of the Gulf. The Americans begin fishing for Mackerel, in the Gulf, on the first of July, and finish at the end of September; but the resident fisherman might begin this fishing earlier, and continue it until the very close of the season.

Mr. MacGregor describes the Mackerel of the Gulf as being of much finer flavour than those caught on the shores of Europe.

It has been generally supposed that the Mackerel was a fish of passage, performing certain periodical migrations—making long voyages from south to north at one season of the year, and the reverse at another; but the error of this opinion is now generally admitted. It is known with certainty, that Mackerel remain near the coast of England at all times, as they have been taken there in every month of the year. Mr. Yarrell, whose work on British Fishes is of the highest authority, is of opinion that the Mackerel is not a migratory fish; he says—"The law of nature which obliges Mackerel and others to visit the shallow waters of the shores at a particular season, appears to be one of those wise and bountiful provisions of the Creator, by which not only is the species perpetuated with the greatest certainty, but a large portion of the parent animals are thus brought within the reach of man; who, but for the action of this law, would be deprived of many of those species most valuable to him as food. For, the Mackerel, dispersed over the immense surface of the deep, no effective fishery could be carried on; but approaching the shore as they do, from all directions, and roving along the coast in immense shoals, millions are caught, which yet form but a very small portion compared with the myriads that escape."

Although Mackerel are found in vast shoals along the whole eastern coast of New Brunswick, and within the Bay of Chaleur, yet the quantity taken by resident fishermen is so very limited, as not to furnish a sufficient supply for home consumption, and few indeed for export.

The Ports of the Province within the Gulf, exported the undermentioned quantities of Mackerel, in barrels, during the last eight years:—

| Ports. | 1841 | 1842 | 1843 | 1844 | 1845 | 1846 | 1847 | 1848 | Total. |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|
| Dalhousie, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Bathurst, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 33 | ... | 4 | 37 |
| Caraquette, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 256 | 99 | 25 | 380 |
| Miramichi, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 145 | 47 | ... | 192 |
| Richibucto, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Totals, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 434 | 146 | 29 | 609 |

This is a most "beggarly account" of a fishery, which ought to be, in this Province, one of the most extensive and most lucrative. The export of 29 barrels only

in the year 1848 is perfectly surprising, when it is considered that the season was one in which the Mackerel fishery was more than usually successful. In August last, the waters of the Straits of Northumberland, from Shediac to Prince Edward Island, were perfectly alive with Mackerel. Off Point Escuminac the American fishermen caught them with such rapidity, and in such quantities, that they were unable to clean and salt the fish as fast as they were caught; and it was reported on the coast, that they had sent on shore, and engaged some of the settlers at high wages, to go off to the vessels and assist in these necessary operations.

Monsieur Leon Robicheaux, an intelligent native fisherman, resident on Shippagan Island, from whom the writer obtained valuable information as to the Fisheries, stated, that although Mackerel were always plentiful during the season near Shippagan and Miscou, yet the resident fishermen were too idle to take them. He added, that they only caught a few as bait for Cod, or as matter of sport, when sailing to or from their stations for Cod fishing.

The American vessels which prosecute Mackerel fishing near the shores of New Brunswick, are fitted out in Maine and Massachusetts; they have two long voyages to make in going to, and returning from, their fishing ground, yet they find it profitable. If it be profitable to them, how much more so could it be made by resident fishermen who are spared the expense of costly vessels and outfits, high wages, and long voyages.

The mode of fishing pursued by the American Mackerel Fishers who frequent the Gulf, is that with the line, called "trailing." When a "Schull" is met with, the vessel, generally of 60 or 80 tons burthen, is put under easy sail, a smart breeze (thence called a Mackerel breeze) being considered most favourable. It is stated by Mr. Sabine, of Eastport, who is good authority, that he has known a crew of ten men, when fishing in the Bay of Chaleur, catch in one day, ninety packed or "dressed" barrels of Mackerel, which could not contain less than 12,000 fish.

If no fish are in sight, the American Mackerel Fisher on reaching some old resort, furls all the sails of his vessel, except the main sail, brings his "craft" to the wind, and commences throwing over bait, to attract the fish to the surface of the water. The bait is usually small Mackerel, or salted Herrings, cut in pieces by a machine, called a "bait-mill." This consists of an oblong wooden box, standing on one end, containing a roller armed with knives, which is turned by a crank on the outside; it cuts up bait very expeditiously. If the fishermen succeeds, the Mackerel then seem willing to show how fast they can be caught; and the fishing goes on till the approach of night, or the sudden disappearance of the remnant of the "Schull" puts an end to it. The fish are then dressed, and thrown into casks of water to rid them of blood. To ensure sound and sweet Mackerel, it is indispensable that the blood and impurities should be thoroughly removed before salting; that the salt should be of the best quality, free from lime, or other injurious substances; and that the barrels should, in all cases, be tight enough to retain the pickle.

In those Harbours of Nova Scotia which are within the Strait of Canso, Mackerel, of late years, have been taken in seines, capable of enclosing and securing 800 barrels; and in these seines, 400 and even 600 barrels have been taken at a single sweep. The "drift-net" is also used; but as it is believed that this mode of fishing is not so well understood on the coast of Nova Scotia, as on that of England, the manner of fishing near the latter, with the "drift-net," as described by Mr. Yarrel, is given in preference:—

"The most common mode of fishing for Mackerel, and the way in which the greatest numbers are taken, is by drift-nets. The drift-net is 20 feet deep, by 120 feet long; well corked at the top, but without lead at the bottom. They are made of small fine twine, which is tanned of a reddish-brown colour, to preserve it from the action of the salt water, and it is thereby rendered much more durable. The size of the mesh is about 2½ inches, or rather larger. Twelve, fifteen, and sometimes eighteen of these nets are attached lengthways, by tying along a thick rope, called the drift-rope, and the ends of each net, to each other. When arranged for depositing in the sea, a large buoy attached to the end of the drift-rope is thrown overboard, the vessel is put before the wind, and as she sails along, the rope with the nets thus attached, is passed over the stern into the water, till the whole of the nets are thus thrown out. The nets thus deposited,

deposited, hang suspended in the water perpendicularly, 20 feet deep from the drift-rope, and extending from three quarters of a mile to a mile, or even a mile and a half, depending on the number of nets belonging to the party or company engaged in fishing together. When the whole of the nets are thus handed out, the drift-rope is shifted from the stern to the bow of the vessel, and she rides by it as at anchor. The benefit gained by the boats hanging at the end of the drift-rope is, that the net is kept strained in a straight line, which, without this pull upon it, would not be the case. The nets are "shot" in the evening, and sometimes hauled once during the night, at others allowed to remain in the water all night. The fish roving in the dark through the water, hang in the meshes of the net, which are large enough to admit them beyond the gill-covers and pectoral fins, but not large enough to allow the thickest part of the body to pass through. In the morning early, preparations are made for hauling the nets. A capstan on the deck is manned, about which two turns of the drift-rope are taken; one man stands forward to untie the upper edge of each net from the drift-rope, which is called casting off the lashings; others haul the net in with the fish caught, to which one side of the vessel is devoted; the other side is occupied with the drift-rope, which is wound in by the men at the capstan."

The following is a statement of the number of barrels of Mackerel inspected in Massachusetts in each year, from 1831 to 1848, inclusive:—

| | | | | | | | |
|-------|------|------|---------|-------|------|------|---------|
| 1831, | .... | .... | 383,559 | 1840, | .... | .... | 50,992 |
| 1832, | .... | .... | 212,452 | 1841, | .... | .... | 55,537 |
| 1833, | .... | .... | 212,946 | 1842, | .... | .... | 75,543 |
| 1834, | .... | .... | 252,884 | 1843, | .... | .... | 64,451 |
| 1835, | .... | .... | 194,450 | 1844, | .... | .... | 86,180 |
| 1836, | .... | .... | 176,931 | 1845, | .... | .... | 202,303 |
| 1837, | .... | .... | 138,157 | 1846, | .... | .... | 174,064 |
| 1838, | .... | .... | 108,538 | 1847, | .... | .... | 232,581 |
| 1839, | .... | .... | 73,018 | 1848, | .... | .... | 300,130 |

It does not appear what proportions of these large quantities of Mackerel were caught in British waters; but it must have been a very considerable share, if an opinion may be formed from the numerous fishing vessels of Massachusetts seen on the coast of Nova Scotia, and within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence.

From all that has been stated, it must be considered settled, that the Mackerel Fishery, as a branch of business, cannot be said to exist in New Brunswick, although the eastern shores of the Province, and the whole Bay of Chaleur, offer the greatest facilities, and the most abundant supply of fish.

It is highly desirable that something should be done to encourage and promote this Fishery, which evidently offers such ample reward to the energy, enterprise and industry of the people.

THE SALMON.

Of these Rivers of New Brunswick which flow into the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, the two largest, the Miramichi and the Restigouche, furnish the greatest supply of this well known and delicious fish; but all the smaller Rivers also furnish Salmon in greater or less numbers. There are also various Bays, Beaches, Islands, and points of land along the coast, where Salmon are intercepted by nets, while seeking the Rivers in which they were spawned, and to which Salmon always return.

The Salmon of the Gulf are noted for their fine flavour; they are precisely similar to the *salmo salar* of Europe.

The quantities of Salmon in the River Restigouche and Miramichi, at the first settlement of the country, were perfectly prodigious; although many are yet taken annually, the supply diminishes from year to year. And this is not surprising when it is considered that many of the Streams formerly frequented by Salmon, are now completely shut against them, by Mill Dams without "Fishways," or those openings which the British Fishery Reports designate as "Migration Passes;" that in the branches of the large Rivers, as also in the smaller Rivers, nets are too often placed completely across the Stream, from bank to bank, which take every fish that attempts to pass—that "close time" in many of the Rivers is scarcely, if at all, regarded—and that,

that, besides the improper use of nets at all seasons, fish of all sizes are destroyed by hundreds, in the very act of spawning, by torch light and spears, at a time when they are quite unfit for human food.

The quantities of pickled Salmon in barrels, exported from the Northern Ports of New Brunswick, during the last eight years, are as follows:—

| PORTS. | 1841 | 1842 | 1843 | 1844 | 1845 | 1846 | 1847 | 1848 | Totals. |
|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| Dalhousie, | 138 | 273 | 552 | 591 | 565 | 766 | 613 | 381 | 3,909 |
| Bathurst, | 32 | 161 | 250 | 126 | 134 | 216 | 190 | 156 | 1,265 |
| Caranquette, | 11 | 20 | 13 | 5 | ... | ... | ... | 5 | 52 |
| Miramichi, | 1,614 | 2,295 | 1,093 | 1,616 | 1,836 | 146 | 1,531 | 1,571 | 11,702 |
| Richibucto, | 20 | ... | 107 | 137 | 77 | 78 | 61 | ... | 480 |
| TOTALS. | 1,815 | 2,749 | 2,015 | 2,475 | 2,612 | 1,206 | 2,425 | 2,111 | 17,408 |

Since the establishment of regular Steamers from the Port of Saint John to Boston, large quantities of fresh Salmon, packed in ice, have been exported, and the commodity has greatly increased in value. If facilities of communication were created by Railway, the fresh Salmon of the Gulf could also be sent abroad in ice, and their value when first caught, would be three or four times as great as at present.

The exceeding value of the Salmon Fisheries of Ireland and Scotland, cause great attention to be paid by the British Fishery Boards to the enforcement of most stringent regulations for their preservation and increase. With reference to the preservation of Salmon, the Inspectors of the Irish Fisheries reported to the Board, in 1846, as follows:—"In illustration of the benefits of a steady perseverance in a proper system, we may allude to the Foyle, where the produce has been raised from an average of 43 tons previous to 1823, to a steady produce of nearly 200 tons, including the Stake Weirs in the Estuary, and very nearly to 300 tons, as we believe, in the year 1842." The Inspectors also mention the case of the small River of Newport, County Mayo, which was formerly exempt from "close season." In three years, after the Parliamentary Regulations were introduced and enforced, the produce of this River was raised from half a ton, or at the utmost, a ton every season, to eight tons of Salmon, and three tons of White Trout, for the season ending the third year.

The preservation and maintenance of the Salmon Fisheries of New Brunswick generally, is a subject well worthy of earnest attention. To prevent the destruction of the fish during the spawning season, and by improper modes of fishing, as also to provide for the passage of the fish up those Streams which they have formerly frequented, but from which they are now excluded by Mill Dams, some further enactments are absolutely necessary, and more efficient means are required for enforcing the provisions of the law. The most valuable River Fishery of the Province is in a fair way of being rendered valueless, or wholly destroyed; and as the Rivers are the natural nurseries of the Salmon, the fishery on the coast will of course be destroyed also.

Large quantities of Salmon are caught every season on the Labrador coast, in stake-nets placed at the mouths of Rivers, which empty into Bays and Harbours; these are split and salted in large tubs, and afterwards repacked in tierces of two hundred pounds each. A number of vessels from Newfoundland and Canada, are engaged annually in this Fishery; but the American fishing vessels pursue it with great vigour and assiduity, and it is reported that of late years they have found it very profitable.

The quantity of pickled Salmon exported from Newfoundland in 1847, was 4,917 tierces, one half of which was the produce of the Salmon Fishery on the coast of Labrador.

THE WHALE.

The extent to which the Whale Fishery is carried on, within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, by vessels from Newfoundland, is very little known, nor is its value appreciated. The Jersey Houses who have fishing establishments in Gaspe, also fit out vessels for this Fishery, which cruise about Anticosti, and the northern shore of the Saint Lawrence. Mr. MacGregor, in an official Report to the Board of Trade, thus describes this

this Fishery:—"The Whales caught within the Gulf of Saint Lawrence are those called "humpbacks," which yield on an average about three tons of oil; some have been taken seventy feet long, which produced eight tons. The mode of taking them is somewhat different from that followed by the Greenland Fishers; and the Gaspé fishermen first acquired an acquaintance with it from the people of Nantucket. An active man, accustomed to boats and schooners, may become fully acquainted with every thing connected with this Fishery in one season. The vessels adapted for this purpose, are schooners of seventy to eighty tons burthen, manned with a crew of eight men, including the master. Each schooner requires two boats, about twenty feet long, built narrow and sharp, and with pink sterns; and 220 fathoms of line are necessary to each boat, with spare harpoons and lances. The men row towards the Whale, and when they are very near, use paddles, which make less noise than oars. Whales are sometimes taken in fifteen minutes after they are struck with the harpoon. The Gaspé fishermen never go out in quest of them, until some of the smaller ones, which enter the Bay about the beginning of June, appear; these swim too fast to be easily harpooned, and are not, besides, worth the trouble. The large Whales are taken off the entrance of Gaspé Bay, on each side of the Island of Anticosti, and up the River Saint Lawrence as far as Bic."

Mr. Bouchette in his work on Lower Canada, represents the Whale Fishery of the Gulf as meriting the attention of the Legislature, and needing encouragement; by which, he says, the number of vessels employed would be considerably increased, and this important branch of business would be so effectually carried on by the hardy inhabitants of Gaspé, as to compete, in some degree, if not rival, that of the Americans, who were, at the time Mr. Bouchette wrote, almost in exclusive enjoyment of it, and carried on their enterprising fisheries in the very mouths of the Bays and Harbours of Lower Canada.

Sir Richard Bonnycastle, in his work entitled "Newfoundland in 1842," says, "the Coast and Gulf Whale Fishery is now being of much value to Newfoundland." Sir Richard states, that the vessels employed are large schooners, with crews of ten men each; that the fishery is pursued during the whole of the summer months along the Coast of Labrador, and in and through the Straits of Bellisle; and that Whales of all sizes are taken from the smallest "finner," up to the largest *mysticetus*, or great common Oil Whale of the Northern Ocean, which occasionally visits these regions.

It is believed that hitherto no attempt has been made by the people of New Brunswick to enter into this Whale Fishery; and it would be a very proper subject for inquiry, whether it might not be profitably conducted by New Brunswick vessels, and the active and enterprising Fisherman of the Bay of Chaleur, who are equally well placed for carrying it on, as their hardy comrades on the Gaspé side of the Bay.

THE SEAL.

As the capture of the Seal is always designated the "Seal Fishery," and as it is blended with the other pursuits of the Fisherman, it may be proper to mention it here.

Five kinds of Seals are said to be found in the Northern Ocean; they bring forth their young on the ice early in the spring, and they float down upon it from the Polar Seas to Labrador, the Coast of Newfoundland, and the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. The two largest kinds are known as the Harp Seal, (*phoca groenlandica*), and the Hooded Seal, (*phoca leonina*). The other three varieties are known as the "Square Flipper," the "Blue Seal," and the "Jar Seal."

Large herds of these Seals are found together upon the fields of floating ice, which, when so occupied, are called "Seal Meadows." The Seal hunters endeavour to surprise them while sleeping on the ice, and when this occurs, they despatch the young with bludgeons; the old ones, which will frequently turn and make resistance, they are obliged to shoot.

Sealing is carried on very extensively from Newfoundland, in schooners of about eighty tons burthen, with crews of thirty men. It is attended with fearful dangers; yet the hardy Seal hunter of Newfoundland eagerly courts the perilous adventure.

The following Return of the number of Seal Skins exported from Newfoundland from 1838 to 1848 inclusive, will furnish some idea of the value of the Seal Fishery to that Colony :—

| | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1838—375,361 | 1841—417,115 | 1844—685,530 | 1847—436,831 |
| 1839—437,501 | 1842—344,683 | 1845—352,202 | 1848—521,004 |
| 1840—631,385 | 1843—651,370 | 1846— | |

The outfit for the “Seal Fishery” from the various Harbours of Newfoundland in the year 1847, was as follows :—

| | | |
|----------|--------|-------|
| Vessels. | Tons. | Men. |
| 321 | 29,800 | 9,751 |

Sealing among the ice is also prosecuted in early spring at the Magdalen Islands ; and also on the Labrador Coast, by the people who remain there during the winter in charge of the Fishing Stations, and the conduct of the Fur Trade. Seals are also caught at Labrador on the plan first adopted, by strong nets set across such narrow channels as they are in the habit of passing through.

Within a few years, the “Seal Fishery” has been commenced at Cape Breton, encouraged by a small Provincial bounty ; it has been conducted in vessels not over 40 tons burthen, with crews of eight men. In 1843, twenty two vessels went to the ice from Cheticamp and Margaree, and returned with near 10,000 Seals, which are stated to have amply requited those engaged in the adventure, as their outfit was on a very limited scale. In 1842, an enterprising Merchant of Sidney fitted out a Sealing vessel, on the Newfoundland scale, which in the short space of three weeks cleared the round sum of £14,000 ; and this extraordinary success encouraged others to enter into the business.

As yet, Sealing is altogether unknown to the inhabitants of New Brunswick ; although it is believed that the adventure might be made successfully by vessels departing from the north eastern extremity of the Province.

The Harbour Seal (*phoca vitulina*) is frequently seen along the coasts of New Brunswick during the summer season, and is believed not to be migratory. They are closely watched by the Micmac Indians, who often succeed in shooting them. The fur of these Seals is sometimes very handsome ; and the animal is always a rich prize to the poor Micmac.

SHELL FISH.

Under this head may be enumerated Lobsters, Oysters, Clams, Mussels, Whelks, Razor-fish, Crabs, and Shrimps, all of which are found in the Gulf, in the greatest abundance, and of excellent quality. Mr. MacGregor states, that they are all equally delicious with those taken on English, Irish, Scotch, or Norwegian shores.

Lobsters are found every where on the coast, and in the Bay of Chaleur, in such extraordinary numbers, that they are used by thousands to manure the land. At Shippagan and Carraquette, carts are sometimes driven down to the beaches at low water, and readily filled with Lobsters left in the shallow pools by the recession of the tide. Every potato field near the places mentioned, is strewn with Lobster shells, each potato hill being furnished with two and perhaps three Lobsters.

Within a few years, one establishment has been set up on Portage Island, at the mouth of the Miramichi River, and another at the mouth of the Kouchibouguac River, for putting up Lobsters in tin cases, hermetically sealed, for exportation. In 1845 no less than 13,000 cases of Lobsters and Salmon were thus put up at Portage Island. In 1847 nearly 10,000 cases, of Lobsters only, each case containing the choicest parts of two or three Lobsters, and one and a half tons of fresh Salmon, in 2lb and 4lb cases, were put up at Kouchibouguac. The preservation of Lobsters, in this manner, need only be restricted by the demand, for the supply is almost unlimited.

The price paid for Lobsters at the establishment on Portage Island, when the writer visited it, was two shillings and six pence currency (two shillings sterling) per hundred. They were all taken in small hoop-nets, chiefly by the Acadian French of the Neguac Villages, who, at the price stated, could, with reasonable diligence, earn one pound each in the twenty four hours ; but as they are somewhat idle, and easily contented, they would rarely exert themselves to earn more than ten shillings per day, which they could generally obtain by eight or ten hours attention to their hoop-nets.

Oysters

Oysters are found all along the New Brunswick Coast, from Baie Verte to Caraquette, but not within the Bay of Chaleur. Those best known in this Province for their fine quality, are the Oysters of Shediac; but the extensive beds which formerly existed there, have been almost wholly destroyed by improper modes of fishing, an utter disregard of the spawning season, and the wanton destruction of the fish by throwing down shells upon the beds. It is a singular fact, that ice will not form over an Oyster bed, unless the cold is very intense indeed; and when the Bays are frozen over in the winter, the Oyster beds are easily discovered by the water above them remaining unfrozen, or as the French residents say, *degèlé*. The Oysters are then lifted upon the strong ice with rakes; the process of freezing expands the fish, and forces open the shells; the Oyster is removed, and the shells are allowed to fall back into the water, where they tend to destroy the fishery.

Some Oysters of very large size and good quality are found at Tabusintac, but those of the finest description are found on extensive beds in Shippagan Harbour, Saint Simon's Inlet, and Caraquette Bay, from which localities they are exported every season to Quebec. The number of bushels exported from the Port of Caraquette, during the last eight years, is as follows:—

| | | | | | | | |
|-------|------|------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|
| 1841, | .... | .... | 5,000 | 1845, | .... | .... | 2,010 |
| 1842, | .... | .... | 7,000 | 1846, | .... | .... | 1,915 |
| 1843, | .... | .... | 5,290 | 1847, | .... | .... | 425 |
| 1844, | .... | .... | 6,000 | 1848, | .... | .... | 5,432 |

Oysters are abundant at Cocagne, Buctouche, Richibucto, Burnt Church, and other places on the coast; but in general, they are too far within the mouths of the fresh water streams, and their quality is greatly inferior to those affected by sea water only.

From the manner in which the Oyster Fishery of the Gulf Shore is now being conducted, all the Oysters of good quality will in a few years be quite destroyed. The preservation of this fishery is of considerable importance, and it might be effected as well by judicious regulations and restrictions, as by encouraging the formation of artificial beds, or "Layings," in favourable situations. Several persons on the coast intimated to the writer, their desire to form new and extensive beds in the sea water, by removing Oysters from the mixed water of the estuaries, where they are now almost worthless, if they could obtain an exclusive right to such beds when formed, and the necessary enactments to prevent their being plundered.

There are two varieties of the Clam, distinguished as the "hard-shell," and the "soft-shell." They are eaten largely in Spring, when they are in the best condition; and great quantities are used as bait for Cod. Clams are much prized by persons residing at a distance from the sea coast, and they are frequently sent into the interior where they meet a ready sale, as they can be sold at a very low price.

The Razor-fish derives its name from the shells being shaped very like the handle of a razor; the fish is well flavoured in the proper season, and not unlike the clam, though somewhat tougher.

Crabs of all sizes are to be had in abundance, but they are not often caught; neither are the Shrimps, which are to be seen in endless quantities. At times the waters of the Straits of Northumberland appear as if thickened with masses of Shrimps moving about, their course being plainly indicated by the fish of all descriptions which follow in their wake, and feed upon them greedily.

RIVER FISHERIES.

The principal Fisheries in those Rivers of New Brunswick which flow into the Gulf, in addition to the Salmon Fishery already mentioned, are those for Gaspereaux, Shad, Basse, and Trout. There are also Smelts, Eels, Flounders, and a great variety of small fish.

The Gaspereaux has been noticed under the head of Herring. This fish is found in almost every River, and the Gaspereaux fishery has been considered of so much importance, that various Acts of Assembly have, from time to time, been passed for its regulation and protection. But these laws have either been neglected, or not properly enforced, and this Fishery is rapidly declining. Very slight obstructions suffice to prevent the Gaspereaux from ascending streams to their old haunts; the dams for mills,

mills, or for driving timber, have shut them out in numerous instances from their best spawning grounds, and the greatest injury has in this way been inflicted on the fishery.

The Shad (*alosa vulgaris* of Cuvier) of the Gulf, are not taken in such numbers, nor are they of so fine quality, as those caught in the Bay of Fundy; comparatively, they are dry and flavourless, owing as is said to the sandy character of the shores of the Gulf, which are supposed to furnish less of the peculiar food of the Shad, than the muddy Rivers of the Bay of Fundy, where they are taken in such high perfection. This fishery has also been mentioned in several Acts of Assembly; but the habits and most usual resorts of the Shad of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, have not been carefully observed. It is not improbable, therefore, that a better knowledge of the habits of the fish might lead to this fishery becoming more valuable.

The Basse, or Marine Perch, (*perca labrax* of Cuvier) swim in shoals along the coast, and frequently ascend the Rivers to a considerable distance from the sea, to deposit their spawn. They are taken of all sizes up to 20lb weight, or even more; but those of 3lb to 5lb are considered the best flavoured. They are sometimes salted, but generally they are eaten while fresh. This fishery has also been attempted to be regulated and preserved by law, but evidently with very little success, as it is fast decreasing. Sad havoc is made among the Basse in the winter season, when they lie in numerous shoals half torpid, in shallow water. A large hole is cut in the ice above them, and they are lifted out with dip-nets; in this manner the Basse fishery in some of the smaller Rivers has been wholly destroyed.

There are two species of Trout found in the greatest abundance in every river, stream and brook which finds its way from the interior of New Brunswick to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. Of these, the Salmon Trout (*salmo trutta*) is of the largest size, and most valuable. The common Trout (*salmo fontinalis*) is taken in every possible variety, every where.

The Sea Trout, (*salmo trutta marina*) seldom ascend the Rivers far above the tide-way; when they first enter the estuaries early in the season, they are in the finest condition, and scarcely, if at all, inferior to Salmon. They are frequently taken of the weight of 7lb, though the most usual weight is from 2lb to 5lb. They are very abundant in June, in the Bays and Harbours of Prince Edward Island. At the Magdalen Islands they are taken in nets, and being pickled in small casks, are exported to the West Indies; if carefully cleaned, cured, and packed, they there bring a higher price than Salmon.

In the tide-way of the Rivers flowing into the Gulf, these fine fish might be taken in sufficient quantities to form an article of traffic. They afford great sport to the fly-fisher, especially when they first enter the mixed water of the tide-way in the smaller Rivers.

The common Trout (*salmo fontinalis*) are also eagerly sought after by the disciples of Izaak Walton; and although destroyed in the most wanton and reckless manner by unthinking persons, they are still abundant. The destruction of these beautiful fish takes place by wholesale, upon many Rivers in the northern part of the Province, and one of the modes practised is called "rolling for trout." When the streams are at their lowest stage in the summer season, a dam of logs, stones, and brush, is roughly built at the lower end of some pool, in which the fish have congregated. This "rolling-dam" being constructed, the stream for some distance above the pool is beaten with poles, and the fish are driven down to the deepest water, out of which they are swept with a net. The writer was informed, that in this way 3,600 Trout had been taken out of one pool at a single sweep of the net. In August 1848, 1,300 large Trout were thus taken out of one pool on the Scadouc River, while the writer was at Shediac. This practice is greatly to be deprecated, as by destroying fish of all sizes, it completely breaks up the Trout fishery on those Rivers where it takes place.

The Smelt (*osmerus eperlanus* of Cuvier, and *osmerus viridescens* of Agassiz,) is found in excessive abundance in all the Rivers and Streams flowing into the Gulf. In the latter part of winter, when in the best condition, they are taken through holes in the ice, and at that season are a very great delicacy; they are then frequently called "frost-fish." Immediately after the ice disappears, they rush in almost solid columns up the brooks and rivulets to spawn, and are then taken by cart-loads.

This

This Fishery, under proper management, might be made one of considerable profit, as the Smelt is really delicious, and always highly esteemed. It is believed that there are two distinct species of this fish, and that the smaller of the two is more highly scented, as well as more highly flavoured, than the other.

Eels of large size and of fine quality, are taken every where within the Gulf; besides those consumed fresh, they are pickled in considerable quantities, as well for home consumption, as for exportation. Mr. Yarrell, in describing the Eel, says:—“They are in reality a valuable description of Fish; they are very numerous, very prolific, and are found in almost every part of the world. They are in great esteem for the table, and the consumption in our large Cities is very considerable.”

In the calm and dark nights during August and September, the largest Eels are taken in great numbers, by the Micmacs and Acadian French, in the estuaries and lagoons, by torch light, with the Indian Spear. This mode of taking Eels requires great quickness and dexterity, and a sharp eye. It is pursued with much spirit, as besides the value of the Eel, the mode of fishing is very exciting. In winter, Eels bury themselves in the muddy parts of Rivers, and their haunts, which are generally well known, are called “Eel Grounds.” The mud is thoroughly probed with a five pronged iron spear, affixed to a long handle, and used through a hole in the ice. When the Eels are all taken out of that part within reach of the spear, a fresh hole is cut, and the fishing goes on again, upon new ground.

If a market should be found for this description of Fish, they could be furnished to an unlimited extent.

The common Flounder (*platessa plana* of Mitchel,) is found in such abundance in the Gulf, that it is used largely for manuring land. The writer has seen Potatoes being planted in hills, when the only dressing consisted of fresh Flounders, which were used with a lavish hand. They are seldom taken by the inhabitants of the Gulf Shore, who can readily obtain so many other descriptions of Fish of superior quality. The Flounder is long lived out of the water, and bears land carriage better than most Fish; there is no reason therefore why Flounders should not become a valuable commodity.

That the varied, extensive, and most abundant Fisheries of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence would be greatly influenced by the construction of a Railway along the Eastern Coast of New Brunswick, there cannot be a reasonable doubt; but in all probability, the proposed Railway from Shediac to the Harbour of Saint John, would affect those Fisheries in an equal, if not a greater degree.

The hardy and enterprising Fishermen of the Bay of Fundy dread the long and dangerous voyage around the whole Peninsula of Nova Scotia, to the fishing grounds of the Gulf, a voyage which frequently lasts three weeks, and is deemed by Underwriters equally hazardous with a voyage to Europe; but it is not alone the dangers of the voyage which deters them from the prosecution of these Fisheries; it is the great loss of time they occasion, and the expense they create, as these render the adventure, too often, far from profitable.

A Railway from Shediac to the Port of Saint John, which is open at all seasons of the year, would enable the various products of the Fisheries to reach a Port of shipment in four hours, and the necessity for the long voyage around Nova Scotia would be wholly obviated. The fishing vessels could winter at any of the Ports on the Gulf Shore which they found most convenient; their stores and outfit could be sent up by Railway; and they would, in such case, enjoy the advantage of being on the fishing grounds at the earliest moment in the spring, and the fisherman could protract his labours until the winter had again fairly set in.

The fresh Salmon, packed in ice, which were sent last season from Saint John to Boston by the steamers, owing to the facilities of transport in the United States, in three days after they left Saint John, appeared at table, in prime condition, at Albany, Buffalo, Niagara Falls, New York, and Philadelphia. If the Salmon of the northern Rivers could be transported by railway to Saint John, they would find a ready market in the numerous towns and villages of the United States, and the Salmon fishery alone would prove a perfect mine of wealth to the northern part of the Province.

The immense products which might be obtained by a vigorous prosecution of the Fisheries for Herring, Cod, and Mackerel, would not only furnish a fruitful source of profit to a railway, but they would afford such an amount of remunerative employment to all the productive classes, as almost to defy calculation. They would enable the Province to open up, and prosecute, a successful trade with several Foreign countries, with which at present the merchants of New Brunswick have no connection whatever. The farmer also, would be greatly benefited by the extension of the Fisheries in connection with the railway, because he would not only find a more ready market for his surplus produce, but he would be furnished with wholesome and nutritious food, at all seasons of the year, on the most reasonable terms.

Aided by railways, the Fisheries of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, now of so little importance, and such limited value, would take rank as one of the highest privileges of New Brunswick—its unfailing source of wealth forever hereafter. And while the efforts of the people were successfully directed towards securing these bounties of Providence, lavished with such unsparing hand, they would rejoice in the goodness of an all-wise Creator, and offer up humble but earnest thanks to Almighty God for his exceeding goodness and mercy towards his erring and sinful creatures.

M. H. PERLEY,
H. M. Emigration Officer.

*Government Emigration Office,
Saint John, March 5, 1849.*
