
REPORT

ON THE

BAY OF FUNDY DEEP-SEA FISHERIES,

PREPARED BY THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE STATE OF
THE HERRING FISHERY AT GRAND MANAN.

WHILE attending to the duties assigned to us by the Honorable the House of Assembly, in regard to the Grand Manan Herring Fishery, the Subscribers necessarily had their attention drawn to the state of the Deep-sea, or Cod, Scale, and Mackerel Fisheries around that Island; and although their labours were not directed to the consideration of that most important branch of Provincial wealth, yet have they stated their views, under the ardent hope that so valuable a privilege may no longer be allowed to remain unimproved, and of little use to the inhabitants of the island,—to the people of the Province generally, and, so far as the mere quantity of food is considered, to the human family.

We have understood that several Members of the Legislature have, during the last few years, been urged to take up the consideration of the whole of the Provincial Fisheries, and use their exertions to draw into existence the latent capabilities which to such a vast extent belong, in an especial degree, to the Bay of Fundy deep-sea Fishery—but other objects have drawn their attention from this vital interest, and those inestimable sources of wealth remain without public countenance or aid, to flourish or to fade, as they list. It is true that the increasing population of the Colony, the growing demand for fish to carry into the woods, and their high and advancing price in the United States, have so combined as greatly to raise the value of the article in our markets, and thereby to preserve this languishing Fishery from becoming extinct, and which, but for those circumstances, it must inevitably have done; but there the matter promises to end, without any permanent basis worthy of so chief a source of trade to rest upon, unless the Legislature take measures to give it life and activity, and thus put a stop to such an astonishing fact as is stated by Mr. Fisher, Mr. Cunningham, &c.—viz. that Grand Manan at this day owns only 16 or 17 vessels of 25 to 30 tons each, engaged in this Fishery, and that, according to the evidence of Mr. R. Foster, the whole value of all sorts of fish caught there in a year, while green, does not exceed £2000 to £2200!!

It were useless to attempt to prove what no person denies—viz. that Grand Manan is more happily situated for an extensive Fishery, than any other spot on the coast of America—the inhabitants of the Island and the Province proudly claim this pre-eminence, Nova Scotia admits it, and the American fishermen, by their encroachments, prove it. Doctor Smith, in his "Natural History of the Fishes of Massachusetts," (1838 Edition, at page 12,) says, "The inhabitants of the British Dominions (Provinces) possess very great facilities for the promotion of this Trade. They have "a country filled with a heavy growth of the most valuable timber for the building of "vessels, and they derive no inconsiderable advantage from their proximity to the "Fishing grounds. They can and frequently do, in some districts, carry on their "fisheries in open boats, of cheap construction, within a few miles from the shore. "The bounty allowed by our government to encourage the trade, being, in part, in- "tended as a drawback for duties paid for imported salt, can scarcely be an adequate "cause for the superior success of our fisheries over those of the British, even on their "own shores. The secret of the success of our fishermen lies in their greater activity "and perseverance. A late English traveller in Nova Scotia was surprised to find the "bays swarming with Marblehead boats, before the Nova Scotians had moved in the "business." Again, at page 15: "Notwithstanding these facilities and advantages "on the side of the Nova Scotians, the fishermen of New England have entered into "the business with great spirit and zeal, and it bids fair to become one of our chief "and most permanent sources of prosperity. So rapid has been the increase of the bu-

“siness, that the eagle-eyed friends of retrenchment can scarcely keep pace with its progress, in order to prune off any extravagant allowance which a prosperous year of fishing might bring to the Inspector General.” Again, at page 21: “In relation to our sea-coast fisheries, the statutes and general principles are highly important, and new acts of legislation should be adopted with great caution. Our citizens would regard with extreme sensitiveness any enactments which might lead to abridge, under the appearance of enlarging their privileges. Whatever may be the right, our hardy and enterprising fishermen, for the sake of an exclusive privilege of fishing on our own shores, would scarcely wish to abstain from carrying their successful industry into the mouths of the bays and harbours of New-Brunswick and Nova Scotia.”

After what is above said and quoted, we shall insist no further on the superior position of Grand Manan, as a great fishing station—nor do we think it necessary, when addressing the Honorable the House of Assembly, to state the numerous and excellent harbours and places of shelter for small vessels, which are to be found on all the shores of the island, except the north, as, no doubt, the fact is well known to the honorable body—but we shall, before giving our opinion of the extent to which the deep-sea fishery may be carried from this island, and the mode of promoting it, respectfully draw your attention to a very material fact which we have no where seen dwelt upon as it should have been—a fact most material in itself, and especially so to the government of the Province, while devising means, and probably devoting funds, for the permanent advantage of this valuable and endless branch of its trade.

The Honorable House will have noticed the anxiety expressed by Doctor Smith, that no stop may be put to the practice pursued by the American Fishermen, of catching on the coasts of Nova Scotia and Grand Manan—and if it was asked why such anxiety should be felt, we would answer, that it was not only from the fisheries on our shores being far better than those along the shores of Massachusetts and Maine, *but also from the fact of the United States having but an extremely limited coast on which Cod, Seale, Herrings, or even Mackerel, can be found.* The great and growing population of America, already 16,000,000, can in no way be supplied with fish from their own coasts, and they have been forced to the Banks and shores of Newfoundland for that supply, which, even for their home consumption, was denied by their sea-board. The coast of the United States is of considerable extent, but the stations for Cod, Seale, Herring, and Mackerel, from Moose Island to Cape Cod, (which comprises the whole of their fishing grounds,) do not range over three hundred miles, and is totally disproportioned to their wants, even if their population was stationary, in place of promising to be 20 times its present extent, and spreading over the whole Continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. The North American Colonies, on the contrary, possess a sea-board of many thousands of miles, while their population does not probably exceed 1½ millions. Around all that coast, fish are to be found in endless quantities; so that when we compare the limited extent of the American fishing grounds proper, as contrasted with her vast and growing population, and the distance her fishermen have to go for what we may call foreign fish, in opposition to the Colonists, who are in sight of their homes—and when we also take into view the difficulties and exactions under which the Americans now begin to be laid by the owners of lands, near those stations, (Labrador, &c.) we shall cease to wonder at the constantly increasing prices paid for fish in the United States. The treaty of 20th October 1818, whereby Americans were forever allowed to fish around the shores of Newfoundland, the Magdalen Islands, and the coast of Labrador, shackled as that treaty is, does not, it seems, answer their expectations, and we are rather inclined to believe the Fisheries on those coasts, owing to such circumstances, have been so far from profitable for the last few years, that vast numbers of the American fishermen have become discouraged, and are turning their attention to other and more advantageous modes of employment. Indeed, we feel convinced that were the Colonists to exert themselves, America would soon find that she could not contend against such a combination of circumstances—especially in regard to the Bay of Fundy Codfish, three quintals of which are worth more than four of those from Labrador. The duty, (5s. per quintal, and 5s. per barrel of pickled fish,) imposed by America on Colonial fish, by the Tariff of 14th July, 1832, like her duty on boards, was found likely to operate to her own injury, and by an act of 2d March, 1833, those

duties are gradually to be reduced till 1842, and it is probable the demands of the country for both these articles, by or before that time, will cause them to be admitted free, or at a nominal rate.

What an encouragement to the extended prosecution of our Bay fisheries, do the above facts yield, and with what confidence may the Legislature, at this time, step forward and give countenance and aid to a trade which thus, from our local situation, and a variety of considerations, seems to force itself on the public attention. Every year will add to the population of the United States, and every year will her cities offer a better market, and probably lighter duties, or only nominal ones, on the introduction of our surplus fisheries.

By the evidence of Mr. Fisher and Mr. Cunningham, and from conversations with others of the most experienced and sensible people of Grand Manan, and also from knowing what has taken place at Brier Island of late, we have no doubt that the deep-sea fishery around Grand Manan is only limited by the exertions of those who prosecute it. Let us for a moment suppose even 100 such vessels fitted out yearly for this employment, and, on an average, for the season, that they should each procure (Messrs. D. Gatcomb, D. Ingersalls, and Mr. Flagg, this year, up to September only, caught each of them over that quantity,) 500 quintals; and such an abundance of wealth in that case would flow into the island, as must, in a few years, render it the most wealthy part of the Province, according to its population. We believe it may with ease be done, and the testimony of Mr. Fisher, and others there, joined to our own experience, making it certain that one of those fishing vessels may be built and fitted for £250, certainly shews, in positive terms, that it cannot be from the great capital required that this Fishery is not sedulously prosecuted. A vessel with 600 quintals of fish would be cleared in one season.

In no part of His Majesty's Dominions can small vessels be built more cheaply than at Grand Manan—the timber is better than at any other part of the Province—the iron, rope, chains, sail cloth, and all other requisites can be had in Saint John and Saint Andrews, on reasonable terms, and in no way can the Americans engaged in the Fishery supply the salt or fishing gear more moderately, than may be done to persons of that island, whose credit is good at Saint John or Saint Andrews. Surely, then, if the fishing station is superior, and the capabilities for building and fitting out vessels are at least equal—if the capital required is so limited, and the price received for their fish is encouraging, there must be some moral deficiency, in the absence of natural difficulties, which hangs over the inhabitants, and neutralizes those advantages—and it seems to the Subscribers that there is.

The population of Grand Manan, in some respects, seem a distinct class. No blame can in any way be attached to them for this—it is the result of their position, and possibly all has not been done to obviate the evils necessarily flowing from their insulated and retired situation—better things will soon follow, and the labours of a respectable Clergyman, the attendance at Schools, the improving state of the roads, and the success this year crowning the exertions of two or three active fishermen settled there, will, we have no doubt, do much good.

We fear that the extract heretofore made from Doctor Smith's work on the "Natural History of the Fishes of Massachusetts," will, by contrast, too well apply to the Grand Manan Fishermen—viz. "The secret of the success of *our* fishermen lies in their greater activity," for, though it is admitted that the American fishermen are very industrious and expert, yet has that industry and expertness been peculiarly observable in contra-distinction to the utter apathy of the parties on whose very shores those exertions of the Americans were and are displayed. In a thin and scattered population, the desire to excel cannot long exist, as man becomes slothful and careless, when placed beyond the constant view and the remarks of numbers of people. When, some thirty years ago, a few persons undertook to drag the inhabitants of the main land and islands near the extremity of Scotland, from the indolence into which they were sunk, owing to their secluded situation, and from having no funds wherewith to turn their honest and willing hands to industry, the attempt was considered by the many as a hopeless one. We shall have occasion to shew, in the returns of the fisheries, the happy results flowing from the exertions of those humane persons

The first step which we beg respectfully to recommend for the consideration of the Honorable House, is the propriety of securing for industrious fishermen residing on, or resorting to, Grand Manan, the free use of certain beaches around the harbours where the Fishing craft resort for shelter, so that no difficulties may hereafter be experienced from such places being in the hands of a few; and the Subscribers, while at Grand Manan, wrote a letter to the Lieutenant Governor, praying that any reserved lands fronting on Whale Cove, Long Island Bay, Grand Harbour, Seal Cove, &c. might neither be granted nor disposed of until such time as the Legislature met, in order that the same might be secured for the use of the fisheries. Should any few granted spots be peculiarly fitting, power should be given to purchase, or, in event of their owners proving unreasonable—which we do not apprehend—to take the same by valuation, particularly as the value is but small, while the advantage would be great and perpetual. At such stations, not only should there be an adequate space for erecting fish flakes, *to be used, gratis, by all*, but every fisherman, wishing to settle, should have an acre of ground for garden, &c. secured to him by the Province, out of such purchases, at a reasonable price. The settlement of population into villages, especially where any operation requiring a combination of workmen is intended, is the most certain mode of promoting such measures, as well as the happiness of the parties themselves, as no individual, with advantage to himself or the public, can attend to his farm, build and fit out his small vessel, prepare his nets and fishing gear, take and cure his fish, and look after his domestic affairs. In villages, too, that first of all considerations, education, is had with greater certainty and at less cost; aid and consolation in sickness are sought and found, and there also, any surplus property, whether fish or farming produce, can be disposed of to advantage, or exchanged for imported articles, at reasonable prices, in place of being reduced in value to one half their amount, owing to the distance from a market, and the want of competition. On the head of establishing two or three villages, we beg leave to be urgent, as it is the chief thing to be attended to; not that we would prematurely force improvements, but merely that parties might be encouraged to settle, by having lots secured to them around the principal harbours, and with the certainty that the plots for such small towns would be carefully preserved by the Province, for the use of the parties intending to prosecute the Fisheries, and others required to aid in the furtherance of fishing engagements. We would not recommend the Legislature to grant money, as was done for Scotland, to build such towns, but we decidedly recommend that locations for such may be permanently secured for the advantage of such as may wish to settle there. The sum needed to make the required purchases, should there be no reserves fitting for the purpose, would probably not, in the whole, exceed £1200 or £1500, and the sales to fishermen of acre lots would in time fully repay the outlay.

This would not only induce the people to secure lots, and build houses, but it would convince them that the Province were disposed fully to protect them and their interests, and support the Fisheries on an extended and permanent foundation. Dark Harbour should also be surveyed, and an estimate formed of the expense of opening the sea wall, which improvement, if effected, would yield an excellent shelter on the north side of the island, where there is none at present; so that while the fisheries would be advantaged, the communication with the other parts of the Province would be opened, without subjecting the inhabitants to the danger and loss of life so frequent, when attempting to go from or to the Island, during the winter months. The distance from Dark Harbour to Campobello is only six miles, and a weekly post-boat might soon be put on the line to the road at Dark Harbour.

Millions of acres of land are in the Province, on which the foot of man has scarcely yet rested, and on which the exertions of many generations will be employed—but there is only one great fishing station, open at all seasons of the year, where now and hereafter, the fostering care of the Legislature can, by possibility, be exerted, to secure a constant supply of fish, of the best qualities, for the country, and also an export of much value to other parts of the world.

“It is not easy to make people who are accustomed to live in an advanced state of Society, comprehend the difficulties under which people labour, who live in a scattered and detached state, without the advantage of markets for their produce, or the

“ means of procuring even the common necessaries, in exchange for any surplus they “ may have.” “ It is this state of dispersion that renders the lower classes of the people so necessarily dependant on those above them—it is this which prevents agricultural improvement from being carried forward to any extent—it is this which prevents individual exertion from being rendered beneficial to the individual, and which, of course, produces that general poverty that proves so universally distressful”—“ *for man, in a detached state of society, must be poor.*”

The deep-sea Fishery pre-supposes the parties employed in it to have made their selection, and to have abandoned farming, for the fishing season at all events—they never can be united with advantage. Lord Selkirk very properly observes, “ The custom so universally established in the Highlands and Western Isles, that every person should have some portion of land, large or small, has tended to render fishing an entirely subordinate employment, followed in an irregular manner, only as it suits the intervals of leisure from business on shore. It is a natural consequence, that the fishing boats and apparatus are in general extremely bad; nor is it surprising that, from these combined circumstances, an idea should prevail among the peasantry, that it is impossible, by fishing alone, to earn a livelihood.” How exactly is this the case at Grand Manan.

We have no wish to recommend a great outlay of money for sites for two or three villages—nor do we by any means wish to be understood as wishing the fishermen to be deprived of an adequate portion of land for raising his vegetables, or pasturing a cow, but only that he should devote his *chief* employment to fishing, residing, for the purpose of doing so the more effectually, in small towns, and thus form a society like the prosperous little town at Brier Island. Having endeavoured to shew the vast advantages flowing from such purchases and settlements, and given it as our opinion that it is the first and chief step to be taken, in order that the people may work to advantage, may have education, and know their interests, we shall now call the attention of the Honorable House to the subject of Bounties, as being the next most important step to be taken in establishing, if not in continuing, an extensive and lucrative fishery.

That there have been persons who fished for the Provincial bounty, and not for fish, beyond the required quota, may, in a few instances, have been the case—that some few persons obtained the bounty as Cod and Scale Fishers, when they were mainly employed in taking Mackerel, prior to the alteration of the Act in 1828, is also more than probable—but such instances were very rare—and, in allowing all which can be said against a fish bounty, we will also admit the general principle, that any pursuit which requires constant public support by bounties, can scarcely be worth following—but, nevertheless, the first two circumstances cannot be urged in opposition to the propriety of a bounty, and the last has never been fairly tested in this Province, for, while much money went from our Treasury to encourage the fishery, it went, by the unfortunate extension of the first law, in 1824, in the proportion of four to one to the vessels of Nova-Scotia, &c.—this Province being unprovided with vessels and fishermen—and it is only of late that the means of our fishermen have generally been such as to enable them to build craft; the demand for fish was so small, as to keep the prices down to the lowest range. But for events already stated in this report, the fishery would have been utterly extinct. We admit, that the prices now are sufficient, without a bounty, to remunerate *the few vessels* engaged in the trade; but we wish a Bounty or Grant, for the purpose of inducing *very many persons who are now doing little around their homes*, to embrace the fishery as means of support, and thus to reduce the prices, keep the market supplied both for home consumption and export, and increase to a large extent, (by such bounty to them alone,) the fishing craft owned in the Province, and so retain our supplies and returns among our own population, as far as the same can be done; thereby enriching the inhabitants, and the Treasury of the Province.

As to the extent to which the Cod, Scale and Mackerel Fisheries may be carried, around the shores of Grand Manan and its vicinity, we before alluded, in the evidence of qualified persons, who say, that its limits are only to be measured by the exertions of the parties, and the extent of the capital embarked in it; and we particularly regret that bounties should have ceased exactly at the period when the rise in prices of

fish throughout the United States, and the reduction of duties on their introduction there from the Colonies, would have acted, in concert with the bounties, as a sufficient stimulus towards the building of many small craft in this Province, and the permanent establishment of a lucrative and lasting trade. With South America, the West Indies, and, ere long, we hope, the Mediterranean, open for the surplus, (by a reduction in the Crown duties on the Wines from that quarter,) besides the quantities required for home consumption, and the brightening prospects in the United States, this trade, if encouraged, must prosper, and once fostered into a healthy existence, it will then require no future aid.

We have no doubt a more advantageous mode of granting Bounties than that heretofore adopted by the Province, might be followed, and we shall take the liberty of stating our views on this important point. We think no vessel belonging to any other place than New-Brunswick, should be licensed to follow the trade for bounty, whether fitted out in this Province or not. Two advantages would flow from such regulation, viz:—the growth in numbers of native and permanent fishermen, with all the benefits flowing from their labours; *and the fact that only one-third to one-fourth of the sum heretofore required for the appropriation*, would, in that case, be required for two or three years to come—our craft being few, even at this day. As Nova-Scotia gives no bounty to her own or other vessels, her fishermen can expect to receive none from this Province. By our Law of 1822, the bounty of twenty shillings per ton was payable entirely “to the owner or owners of any such vessel,” and was no doubt intended as an encouragement for persons of small capital to build and use such craft in fishing; but as the Law took no notice of how the crew were to be remunerated, but left that to be settled between them and their employers, this Act did nothing towards the increase of fishermen, save as hirelings, to be paid so much wages at the end of the season, when they would again betake themselves to any other employment offering, and perhaps never again go to the fisheries. Such system inspired no hopes into the men, and it even had the effect of reducing the fishery from the small gleams of prosperity which, from time to time it attained; for, as the owners of our vessels had every year to procure new and ignorant hands, they could not compete with better and more expert crews. It is true that many divided their catch according to such scale as they considered requisite to pay for the extra talents of the best of the crew; but this was not always the case, nor were they bound by Law to do so. Two modes of granting the bounty seem preferable to the above: either a bounty of 7s. 6d. per ton to the vessel might be given, and then a bounty on the catch of deep-sea fish, to be divided among, *and paid to*, the crews, according to the catch of each person, and extending to a sum not exceeding twenty shillings per ton of the craft—the prior 7s. 6d. included—or, the American system might be adopted. Besides the 5s. per quintal on foreign dry fish, 7s. 6d. per barrel on Mackerel, and 5s. on other pickled fish, which America, by the Tariff of 1832, imposes on their introduction, she also allows 1s. 3d. per barrel on the exportation of their own caught Herrings, &c. and 17s. 6d. per ton on all craft *from five and under thirty tons*, and 20s. on all over that size, engaged in the Cod and Scale Fisheries, if at sea the required time, and with the regulated number of hands. This bounty is there, as here formerly, paid to the vessel—but no vessel of twenty tons or upwards, employed in the fisheries, will be entitled to bounty, unless the master, before proceeding on the voyage, shall enter into an agreement with every fisherman on board, save apprentices, expressing if the voyage is for that one only, or for the season, and that the proceeds of such voyage or voyages shall be divided among them *in proportion to the quantities each man may have caught*; and the vessel is, *by the American Act of 19th June, 1813, held liable to each such fisherman, for six months after end of voyage, for the fair and honest division of all the catch, should the vessel have made more voyages than one, and landed her fish, and again gone to sea before the division took place.* If no bounty is given on vessels, no inducement exists for the fisherman’s furnishing regular, or indeed any returns of their voyages, or their catch—no knowledge is had of the increase, (for it can scarcely diminish,) of the fishery, no encouragement is by the public offered to induce parties to abandon the slothful and unproductive mode of fishing in open boats, which generally yields to those following it a most

scanty return of every thing but hardship and misery. In whatever mode the bounty may be given, it should be promptly paid, either in money, or in a debenture bearing interest from the date, and which would be equal to money, the day the fish were delivered; provided the voyage so settled for was to be the only one the vessel was to make during the season.

It is observed at Grand Manan, that the Province ought to give a bounty on their fisheries equal to the proportion of the revenue, as compared with their population—or 1-120th of the whole, as the inhabitants amount to 1000. So long as that island, in respect to appropriations, is considered part of Charlotte County, and receives only £150 or £200, per annum, for roads and schools, such observations may be made; but we would humbly observe, that it is the deep interest of all the Counties to foster the Fisheries around this island, without regard to such limited views of appropriation, till the returns which may so confidently be looked to flow from such care, and such wise conduct on the part of the Province, shall render any extra assistance unnecessary.—While looking over the principal acts passed in Great Britain, for the protection and increase of the fisheries, we could not but observe how few of the many checks and guards there imposed, are required in a thin and divided population, like that in the Colonies. It was not till the passing of 48 Geo. III. c. 110, sec. 4 and 5, that the fisheries began to yield full compensation to the government for all the outlay which she had previously made in their favour, and which now exhibit so valuable an item in her unexampled trade, and free, too, from the greater part of the bounties then given, as the fisheries are now little requiring that aid which was so absolutely necessary to establish them at first.

By the clauses 4th and 5th in that act, Commissioners were appointed strictly to superintend and direct the whole, with powers granted to them which it would be unnecessary, and probably unwise, to grant to any body of gentlemen here, though it might there and then have been necessary, and doubtless was so. In like manner we would suggest the propriety of appointing *Commissioners for the Bay of Fundy Fisheries*, partly at Saint John and partly at Saint Andrews—and a like Commission for a station on the Gulf Shores—whose duty it should be to carefully superintend all matters connected with these valuable privileges—to grant, as per the act above noticed, certificates for debenture, on return of the vessels with their fares, as well as licenses to fish—to report their labours annually to the Legislature as set forth in that act, (sec 1 Geo. IV. c. 103, sec. 6, G. B.) and from time to time to point out any parts of such existing acts as might be injurious to the fisheries, or any new regulations which might be required.

We humbly beg leave to furnish copy of a return made by the Commissioners for the Fisheries of Scotland, to the House of Commons, shewing the wonderful growth of the Herring trade, under their charge and faithful management,—and which must act as a strong inducement for following the like scheme here.

“ Abstract of the total quantity of White Herrings cured, in so far as the same have
 “ been brought under cognizance of the Officers of the Fishery, from the 1st June,
 “ 1809, when the system hitherto in force for the encouragement of the British
 “ Herring Fishery took place, to the 5th April, 1828, distinguishing each year :

PERIODS.	Herrings cured.		Barrels.
	Gutted.	Ungutted.	TOTAL.
Period extending from 1st June, 1809, to 5th April, 1810,	42,548	47,637½	90,185½
“ “ 5th April, 1810, “ 1811,	65,430	26,397½	91,827½
“ “ “ 1811, “ 1812,	72,515½	39,004	111,519½
“ “ “ 1812, “ 1813,	89,900¾	63,578½	153,488¾
“ “ “ 1813, “ 1814,	52,931½	57,611	110,542½
“ “ “ 1814, “ 1815,	105,732½	54,767	160,139½
“ “ “ 1815, “ 1816,	135,918	26,670¾	162,651¾
“ “ “ 1816, “ 1817,	155,776	36,567½	192,343½
“ “ “ 1817, “ 1818,	204,270¼	23,420¾	227,691
“ “ “ 1818, “ 1819,	303,777½	37,116½	340,894
“ “ “ 1819, “ 1820,	347,190½	35,301	382,491½
“ “ “ 1820, “ 1821,	413,308	28,887¾	442,195¾
“ “ “ 1821, “ 1822,	291,626½	24,897¾	316,524½
“ “ “ 1822, “ 1823,	225,037	23,832	248,869
“ “ “ 1823, “ 1824,	335,450	56,740¾	392,190¾
“ “ “ 1824, “ 1825,	303,397	44,268¼	347,665½
“ “ “ 1825, “ 1826,	340,118	39,115¾	379,233¾
“ “ “ 1826, “ 1827,	259,171¼	29,324	288,495¼
“ “ “ 1827, “ 1828,	339,360	60,418	399,778

(Signed)

“ JAMES DUNSMURE, SECRETARY.

“ Office for the Herring Fishery, }
 “ Edinburgh, 4th September, 1828.” }

The Commissioners, in another part of the same Report, show that, of the above, 211,659 Barrels were exported.

There is still another circumstance which we shall briefly notice, viz. the Inspection of Fish. The Inspection Laws are well framed, and there is no doubt, *if they were fully acted up to*, the greatest benefits would result, both to the parties using different sorts of fish, particularly pickled fish, in the Province, and to those who export them to foreign markets. It is only a few years since, that New-Brunswick Timber sold for less in the ports of England, than that from Quebec, &c. and among all the ports, probably Saint John sent the worst article—yet the representations and exertions of one Mercantile House effected such an alteration in the law, as has resulted in a complete change, and our timber is now the best. Why may this not also be obtained in regard to fish? and if the Colony is to devote herself to the encouragement of the trade, it would be well if the effort was also now made as to inspection. How far the Custom House were or were not bound to clear out vessels with fish on board, without regard to whether or not they were properly inspected, and certified to be in good order, we will not presume to say; but if the Province had the power to enforce such a regulation, (see 9 & 10, Geo. IV. cap. 28, sec. 6,) it would have been well had it been done, and, if no such power belongs to the Colony, some other means should at once be devised to answer the same purpose, as it is utterly useless to keep a law in force, unless proper persons are appointed to see it duly carried into effect: and we observe, by the 5 Wm. 4, c. 43, that the act regarding the Custom House has been allowed to expire, while now no means are provided to secure the character of the fish on export, as it is only a general duty to do so.

As may be expected, the River Fisheries are yearly on the decline, and the increasing mill dams, wares, tanneries, saw-dust, &c. &c. must lead us to expect this; and unless care is taken regarding close months, and the extent and size of nets, as in the Tweed, the Forth, the Tay, &c. &c. they will soon dwindle into perfect insignificance—this is another reason why instant care should be had to our deep-sea fisheries,—though it is also well to protect those of the rivers, which are now every day becoming of less and less value.

Having presumed to detain the Honorable House while thus detailing our views on this interesting subject, and having, while so employed, strongly urged—

1st—The purchase of two or three sites for villages at Grand Manan, for the permanent location of fishermen and their families.

2d—The granting of a small bounty, for the encouragement of the trade.

3d—The appointment of Commissioners for the careful superintendance of the Fisheries, and an efficient mode of preventing the export of fish, or their sale for home consumption, unless they are put up in all respects according to law; we shall conclude, by hoping the Legislature will give the whole subject its best consideration. The carrying trade, or the manufactures of a country may decay—the timber in the Province may be excluded from its best market, or it may be burnt in the forest, but the everlasting sea and its wealth are not subject to such variations—it refuses its gifts to none who properly seek them, and that country which possesses a valuable Fishery around its shores, *need never be poor*; and we are perfectly satisfied, that as no branch of the Provincial resources has been less carefully or judiciously fostered, so none, under proper regulations and encouragement, would yield such a bountiful and permanent return.

All which is respectfully stated, by

LAUCLAN DONALDSON,
JOHN WARD, JUNIOR,
THOMAS BARLOW,
JAMES BROWN,
THOMAS WYER,
JOHN ALLEN.

Saint John, 1st November, 1836.