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Newfoundland.

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REPORT

OF

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

SALMON FISHERY,

[Presented by Mr. DELANY,]

26TH APRIL,

1860.

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*[Ordered by the Hon. the House of Assembly  
to be printed.]*

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COMMITTEE ROOM,

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,

23rd April, 1859.

THE Select Committee appointed by the House of Assembly to consider and report on a Bill for the Protection of the Salmon Fishery in this Colony, beg leave to Report that they have had the matter under their consideration, and submit the annexed Bill for their approval.

The Committee also beg leave to submit a Document received by your Committee from Mr. MATTHEW H. WARREN, containing some very valuable information and statistics, in connection with the Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and the United States, Fisheries; which they consider well worthy the perusal of the Members.

All which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN DELANY,  
*Chairman.*  
THOMAS KNIGHT.  
STEPHEN MARCH.  
J. W. ENGLISH.  
CHARLES FURYE.

## A BILL

*For the Protection of the Salmon Fishery of this Colony, and for other purposes.*

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*Be it Enacted*, by the Governor, Legislative Council and Assembly, in general Session convened :

1.—No person shall by spearing or sweeping with Nets or Seines, take or attempt to take, any Salmon, Grills, Parr or Trout in any Bay, River, Cove, Lake or Water Course above where the tide usually rises and falls; and Nets for taking Salmon above the usual rise and fall of the tide shall be set or placed only on one side of such River, Stream, Cove, Lake or Water Course, and at such times, and in such manner, as hereinafter provided for that purpose.

2.—No Stake, Seine, Wear, or other contrivance for taking Salmon, except Nets, shall be set or placed across any such River, Stream, Cove, Lake, or Water Course, and that each Net shall not extend more than one-third of the distance in a straight line across such river, Stream, Cove, Lake or Water Course.

3.—After the passing of this Act, it shall not be lawful for any person to construct or erect any Mill-dam, Wear, Rack, Frame, Train, Gate, or any other barrier or erection, on, over, or across any River, Stream, Cove, Lake, or Water Course, so as to obstruct the free passage of Sal-

mon, Grills, Parr, Trout or other Fish resorting thereto for the purpose of spawning: Provided always, that all Mill-dams or other erections placed on, over, or across any River, Stream, or Water Course resorted to by fish for spawning, shall be built with a waste gate, opening or slope sufficient for such fish to pass and return down, and which shall be kept in repair during the whole season of such fish passing up and returning.

4.—No person shall haul, catch, or take any Salmon in any Net having the meshes, mokes or scales of less than            inches at least, from knot to knot.

5.—It shall not be lawful for any person to buy or sell Salmon, knowing the same to have been taken in contravention of this Act; and any Salmon so taken or sold shall be declared forfeited to the complainant by any Justice of the Peace.

6.—It shall not be lawful for any person to moor or set, or cause, or procure to be moored or set, in any Harbour, River, Stream, Lake, Cove, Creek or Estuary, or on any other part of the Coast of this Island or its Dependencies, for the purpose of catching or taking Salmon, any Net nearer to any other Net set or moored for a similar purpose, than one hundred yards for a single Net, and two hundred yards for a double Net, or a fleet of Nets.

7.—No person shall before the    day of  
or after the    day of    in every year by  
any means whatever, fish for, take, or catch any

Salmon on any part of the Coast or Shores of this Island, or in or near any Bay, River, Stream, Cove, Lake or Water Course thereof: Provided always, that if the time limited in this Section shall be found to operate injuriously in any part of this Island; it shall be lawful for the Governor and Council, at any time, to appoint any other time or times, and which shall be as binding on all persons as if specially mentioned therein.

8.—Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this Act in any respect, shall forfeit a sum not exceeding \_\_\_\_\_ pounds, to be recovered in a summary way before any Justice of the Peace; and in addition, all Spears, Implements, Boats, Nets, Seines, Wears, and other contrivances used or employed in or about or preparatory to the taking of Salmon, Grills, Parr or Trout, contrary to the provisions of this Act, shall be liable to forfeiture, and the same shall be seized under Warrant of any Justice, and detained until the trial of the offender before any Justice, when they may be declared forfeited, and ordered to be sold at public auction for the use of the Colony.

9.—The one-half of all penalties recovered under this Act shall be paid to the party prosecuting the offender to conviction, and the other half thereof to Her Majesty for the use of this Colony.

10.—This Act shall continue and be in force for \_\_\_\_\_ years from the passing thereof and no longer.

LETTER

FROM

MATTHEW H. WARREN, Esq.,

On the subject of the SALMON and other  
FISHERIES

*Of the British North American Provinces and  
the United States of America.*

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Now that the Protection of the Fisheries is claiming the attention of the Maritime Powers of Europe and America, and that the Legislatures of our Sister Colonies of Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, &c., are bestirring themselves on the same subject, more particularly on that of the Salmon Fisheries, it behoves the Government of Newfoundland to see what can be done to encourage and develop the vast fishing resources she possesses, and which are in extent and value, more than those of the United States and all the British North American Provinces united.

The Government of New Brunswick in 1849, in Council, determined to prosecute enquiries respecting the Fisheries, and for this end appointed MOSES H. PERLEY, Esq., as Commissioner, and gave him the following instructions :

1st.—To ascertain the number of fishermen employed 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 nearly as may be, the boats and vessels employed in these Fisheries.

- 2nd.—To ascertain distinctly the present modes of conducting the several fisheries for Herring, Cod, Ling, and Mackerel, with a description of the several Fishing Lines and other Tackle employed, in order to know what improvement may be advantageously introduced.
- 3rd.—To ascertain, and enquire into the existing modes of curing and packing Fish, with a 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 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 improved mode of Fishing, Curing, and Packing each description of Fish, upon which the value of the article so greatly depends in every Market.
- 5th.—To enquire as to the proper season for each fishery, in order to prevent the catch of Fish at times when they are of no great value; also, to ascertain the extent to which

the fisheries in the Bay of Chaleur is injured as is alleged, by the destruction of Caplin and Herring for Manure, in order that advisable measures might be adopted for preventing further injury to the Herring and Cod fisheries in that Bay, now said to be threatened by total annihilation. 3

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, whether they make any and what encroachments.

7th.—The destruction of Fish in 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.

How well Mr. PERLEY accomplished his task, can be seen from his admirable reports on the Sea and River Fisheries published by the Government of New Brunswick, and which have gone through two editions; and also may be known from the fact of the Imperial Government having appointed him the British Commissioner to determine, with a Commissioner from the United States, the boundaries of the Mouths of the Rivers in the United States and British North America.

The American Mackerel Fishery employs 1,000 vessels of from 60 to 130 tons, with crews averaging 15 men, giving a total of 15,000 fishermen in this branch, catching upwards of 300,-

000 barrels of Mackerel annually. These vessels do not get any bounty.

In 1851—Nova Scotia exported 100,047 barrels of Mackerel.

It has been ascertained that the exports alone, of the Island of Cape Breton within the Straits of Canso, in 1850, was 59,270 barrels of Mackerel. I see by the official returns, that in 1850, there were 246,463 barrels Pickled Fish inspected in Massachusetts alone.

ANDREWS, in his celebrated report on the Trade and Fisheries of the British North American Colonies, says,—“Although Mackerel are said to abound on the Southern Shores of Newfoundland, as also North of Cape Ray, and thence up to the Strait of Belle Isle during the summer season, yet this branch of the fisheries is neglected by the residents of the Island.

“They have no outfit for the Mackerel fishery whatever, and this excellent fish seems to possess perfect impunity on those Coasts of Newfoundland which it frequents, going and returning, when and as it pleases, without the least molestation.”

The Legislature of Nova Scotia last season passed a law to prevent the taking of Mackerel in Seines before the 1st of October.

The *Newbrunswick* of the 10th ulto., says,—“We are glad to find that the Protection of the Sea and River Fisheries is claiming the

attention of all the Colonies, and that measures are being taken to carry out the object in an effective manner."

In Massachusetts last year a Bill passed to prevent the taking of Mackerel in Seines, confining the catch to Hook and Line only. The people of Massachusetts have had a severe warning as to the total destruction of a valuable Sea Fishery in the matter of Herrings. In ancient days the Bay of Massachusetts and all its Coasts and Harbours abounded with Herrings, which at proper seasons came into the beach to spawn in such vast multitudes, that it was thought impossible to diminish their numbers. Every species of device was devised to take these Herring while in the act of spawning, and then of very little value. The facilities for taking them were, however, so great, that the work of destruction went on bravely.

The Herring fishery gradually declined under a mode of fishing which struck at its very existence, and *now* no Sea Herring are to be found on the Coast of Massachusetts.

The same reckless mode of fishing was pursued on the Coast of Maine, with exactly the same results, and it is only on reaching Grand Manan and Campo Bello, in the Province of New Brunswick, that the Herring fishery is found of any extent or value.

Such is also the case on the shores of the Magdalene Islands, in St. George's Bay, Fortune and other Bays in Newfoundland, and on

the shores of the Gulf of the St. Lawrence, and like the New Brunswickers we should not only protect the spawning beds of the Herring ourselves, but call on the American Government, as they have done to assist us in their protection.

The American Government viewing the total destruction of their valuable Herring fishery on the Coasts of Maine and Massachusetts, have acceded to the representations of the British Commissioner, and have directed that no American fisherman take Herring during the period specified by the Government of New Brunswick.

Enquiries have been set on foot by the United States Government, to ascertain, if it be possible to re-establish the fishing for Sea Herring and Mackerel on the American Continent, but the destruction there has been so complete, that it is extremely doubtful if this can be effected.

By the recklessness and improvidence of their own fishermen, the Americans have lost a most valuable fishery, which in all probability, they will never again regain.

ANDREWS.—Fo. 579, says,—of the Salmon fishery, “This is a valuable fishery in Newfoundland, but it is not prosecuted so extensively as it might be, nor are the fish so valuable when cured as they ought to be, from the manner in which they are split and salted. This branch of the business under better management could be rendered much more extensive and profitable.”

Before taking a view of the Salmon fishery of Newfoundland, I would say a little on those of Great Britain, Ireland, and of the British American Colonies.

In former years Salmon were so plentiful that it was sold at 1d. and 2d. per lb. and in my native County, Devonshire, it was often formerly inserted in the Apprentices indentures, that they should not be compelled to eat Salmon oftener than twice a-week.

Before the year 1812, and even to 1815, almost every river in the United Kingdom and Ireland swarmed with Salmon.

In Scotland, the Tweed with its 150,000 Salmon, at a rental of over £20,000 per annum; the Tay, a smaller river, the Deveron, the Don, the Spey and numerous others.

In Ireland, the Shannon, Bann, Lee, Foyle, Blackwater, Lagan, and the Moy with its 70,000 Fish in one season. Numerous others are to be found in the Emerald Isle, the value of whose Salmon fisheries is computed to be worth £500,000 annually.

In England, the Tamar, Exe, Tyne, Trent, and many others.

In Wales, there are also a few Salmon Rivers, the principal fish being Trout in that district.

The vile practice of fishing at all times and

seasons and by all appliances, has driven the dogged, but noble fish from many of the rivers, and lessened the numbers frequenting others, causing destruction of a greater portion of the fisheries; the war of extermination waged against them with nets of every description, with hook and spear, poisoning them with lime, spearing them by torch-light, and to crown all, denying them a right-of-way to their spawning beds, by building dams, or setting barrier nets."

EPHEMERA, in *Bell's Life of London*, says, "We have frequently seen a band of men come down the celebrated Salmon Rivers in the North of England and in Scotland, with a horse and cart, and in a short space of time catch as many as the animal could draw; in fact, the destruction of Salmon at this season of the year (October and November) is quite appalling, and were it not for the vigilance of the Guardians of the Rivers, and the strictness of the laws, (too late enforced) this species of fish would scarcely be able to exist.

*Britain* The artificial process of propagation is carried on in ~~Britain~~ with astonishing success.—Millions of impregnated ova are brought to life annually, and thus those rivers which were almost entirely destroyed, are now becoming of value. The process is simple, the results wonderful, and so certain that they can be securely counted on."

MR. BOSWELL, an eminent brewer of Quebec, who takes a great interest in the Salmon Fishery, told me his Brother John Boswell, Esq., Attorney-at-Law of Dublin, six years since, pur-

chased in the Encumbered Estates Court a barren River, or rather a fishery, or what had been one, for the purpose of breeding and rearing Salmon; so successful was he in stocking the River, that in October 1856 he sold his rights to a London Company, and cleared nine thousand pounds by the operation.

Dr. W. A. Adamson, in his Lecture before the Canadian Institute in December 1856—said—It is unnecessary to magnify the importance of this Fishery as an economic production, or as an article of Commerce. As food it is beyond comparison the most valuable fresh water fish, both on account of the delicacy of its flavour, and the numbers in which it can be supplied.

By prudence, a little exertion, and a very small expense now, it may not only be rendered cheap and accessible to almost every person in Canada, but also an article of no small commercial importance as an article of export to the United States, in which country, by pursuing the course which Canada has hitherto imitated, this noble fish has been almost exterminated. He says also: Were the tributary streams of the St. Lawrence accessible to them, they would ascend and again stock them with a numerous progeny—even were this found not to be the case—then we have the system of artificial propagation to fall back upon; a system which, according to the Parliamentary Commissioners has been practised with immense success in different parts of Ireland.

M. COSTE—Member of the Institute, and Professor of the College of France, in his

reports to the French Academy and French Government says, it has answered admirably in France; and according to Mr. W. H. Fry and others, quoted by him in his treatise on artificial fish breeding, has been generally effective in Scotland.

This system, as is well known, consists simply of transporting from one River to another the impregnated eggs of the Salmon, and placing them in Shallow waters with a gentle current, where they are soon hatched, and become Salmon-fry or par, and able to take care of themselves.

In consequence of the ova of the Salmon, which are deposited in the months of October and November, becoming congealed in the subsequent months, Canada appears to offer greater facilities for their safe transport than those countries in which the system has been so successful, but whose climates are more temperate.

It is a well known fact in the Natural History of Salmon, that it invariably returns to the stream in which its youth was spent, and that so we may calculate on our having our most barren Rivers stocked with as valuable articles of consumption as our fowl-houses or our farm-yards.

In the well regulated Salmon Fisheries of Europe, the fish, by the construction of proper weirs and reservoirs, are almost as much under the control of the managers as the sheep on their farms, or the poultry in their yards. They can

send such as they please to market, permit the fittest for the purpose to pass on to propagate their kind, allow the young to enjoy life till they become mature, and suffer the sick and unhealthy to return to their invigorating pastures in the depths of the ocean. But no portion of this system is practised in our American Rivers; there is not a proper Salmon Weir in them, and the consequence is that young and old, kelt and grise, worthless and unwholesome, the fish are killed by the indiscriminating net and cruel spear.

MOSES H. PERLEY, Esq., says:

The preservation and maintainance 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 fish up those streams which they have formerly frequented, but from which they are now excluded by mill-dams, &c., 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.

MR. JOHN DUNCAN, who has fished on the Restigouche forty years, states, that twenty years since 3,000 Barrels of Salmon were shipped annually from that River, and that last season not 300 barrels were caught.

No River in North America (except perhaps Columbia) yield so large a supply of Salmon as the Restigouche; but its character in this respect is fast fading 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 amongst the things that have been.

I may mention here that the Fish Markets of New York and Boston are in the season in a great measure supplied with fresh Salmon from the Rivers St. Lawrence and St. John in New Brunswick, and from the Port of St. John alone, over 50,000 Salmon packed in ice are sent annually to the United States.

The Salmon fisheries of Newfoundland and Labrador are as valuable as those of any of the British Provinces, and if some means are not devised, and laws enforced for their preservation, their total annihilation will be the consequence.

In examining the evidence of those who have reported on the Salmon Fisheries of Newfoundland, JAMES M. WINTER, Esq., says,—“Twenty-five years or thirty years since a vessel used to take a full cargo of 1,000 tierces of Salmon annually from Gander Bay River, and not thirty tierces are caught there now.”

In Biscay Bay River, near Trepassy, from 80 to 100 tierces of Salmon were taken annually forty years ago; of late years, the average catch has been not more than ten to twenty tierces.

A weir has been for many years used in that river. In Halls Bay there are three large Salmon Brooks or Rivers, in which weirs are constantly used, these weirs are placed across the Rivers. In the reports of MESSRS. COLLETT, OAKLEY, BLACKBURN, STARKE, LARMOUR, FOREST and WINTER, given in 1856, we find that our Salmon fisheries, like those of Canada, New Brunswick, and the States, are in a fair way of becoming as valueless as they would have become, had those Governments not interfered and protected them. Each and all agree in saying that the cause of the decline of our catch of Salmon is the barring all access to the Rivers and Brooks by nets, pounds, gates, frames and weirs, the spearing the Salmon that have leaped or forced the barriers, and the hauling or scooping the fish on their spawning beds. The most of those gentlemen who were examined think it necessary that a law should be passed to determine the distance or space there should be left between each Net or fleet of Nets. I have visited almost all the harbours between this port and Anchor Point in the Straits of Belle Isle, and from Bradore to Grady Harbour on the Labrador, scarcely a season elapses that there is not a dispute and quarreling about the berths of Nets, I may say in every harbour, and I deem it highly necessary that laws should be passed to determine this and other matters connected with the Net and Seine fishery.

Mr. COLLETT says,—“Many of the Brooks in this, (Bonavista Bay), are held by some particular tenure, which it may not be equitable to interfere with, or allow others to do so, inasmuch as the present proprietors or possessors held

them by purchase from the other so styled proprietors ; therefore in such case I would respectfully submit that the present possessors should be protected during life or occupancy in the possession thereof, and that none others than the said occupiers of the Salmon Brooks should be permitted to fish within the heads bounding or forming the estuary within which the said Brook or Brooks is or are intended. He also states the mesh used is too small.

It is also advised that Salmon Nets should be taken and kept up from Saturday night to Monday morning, as required by law in Britain.— J. M. WINTER, of Fogo says,—“There has been great dispute with regard to the rule which should regulate the laying down of their Nets, as some are in the habit of placing what are termed Berth Nets, viz., small pieces of Nets at certain points, and claiming such points as their vested rights, thus causing serious inconvenience and loss to those who are not prepared, or may be unable to adopt the same course ; the consequence is that encroachments upon each other frequently arise, and blows are exchanged, there being no definitive law or rule by which all should be governed.”

Mr. PRENDERGAST, in his report of last year, says,—“Whilst at Henly Harbour, several complaints were made to me by the residents of that coast, that they were obstructed in the setting of their Nets, as they had uniformly been accustomed to do, and that the rules and regulations which were observed in that particular, from the establishment of the fisheries at Newfoundland, were disregarded by the transient settlers. I

generally understood that such rules were observed and enforced by the law authorities whilst resorting that coast; the Statute of 5 Geo. 4, Cap. 51, Sec. 2, commonly called the Fishery Act, notices the existence of such rules, regulations, touching the size of the mesh of Seines, and other matters are fully set forth in the Imperial Commission of Vice-Admiral of Newfoundland. It is regrettable that rules and regulations which were found by long observance and practice to be so beneficial for the general interests should be permitted to fall into disuse, now that settlements are rising up in every Creek, Cove and place on the coast. It appears the time has arrived when it is necessary and desirable that the weak should be protected against the strong, a collection of these regulations to be observed by fishermen so well understood, may be made by the Magistrates in the several Ports of the Island, and may be embodied by the Legislature, or by a Commissioner appointed for that purpose."

It cannot but be a matter of surprise and astonishment that the Cod, Herring and other fisheries of Newfoundland have received so little attention from the Government, and the people generally, and that means have not been taken to develope and encourage them. Newfoundland must in a great measure depend on the inexhaustible wealth of her Fisheries, more valuable than the gold mines of California and Australia ; all we have to do, is to see they are used and not abused. God in His great Wisdom, Goodness and Bounty has given us a sea of waters where we are not required to sow that we might reap, we have no ground to manure, to

plough and to drag, but we have the great deep wherein there is a vast multitude of fishes and with skilful care and good management, with the auxiliary aid of Agriculture they will still be found a vast source of wealth to the large population that will then inhabit our shores.

The Whale Fishery is pursued to some considerable extent from Gaspe and the Bay of Chaleur. The Whales taken in the Gulf of St. Lawrence generally average from 3 to 10 tons oil. The mode of taking them is somewhat different from that followed by the Greenland fishermen and those from Gaspe first acquired an acquaintance with it from the people of Nantucket. An active man accustomed to boats and schooners may become acquainted with it in one season, and it can be prosecuted profitably to any extent in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Straits of Belle Isle, on the Coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador. The vessels best adopted for this fishery on these coasts are schooners of 80 to 100 tons manned by 8 men besides the Master.

The men row toward the Whale and when near use paddles which make less noise than oars.

I see by Mr. Prendergast's report American vessels were Whaling in Trinity and Conception Bays last season and used the newly invented harpoon this is much disapproved of by the Gaspe Whalers who I have conversed with, they say three Whales out of four that are struck get off and die and are destroyed without being of any benefit. The Whale fishery must heretofore have been carried on to a considerable

extent on the Labrador, as on Whale Island, at the entrance of Henly Harbour, I saw bones of from 50 to 100 Whales.

That the fishery can be carried on from Newfoundland as well as Gaspé, we can but admit, as many of the Whalers fish in the Straits of Belle Isle. I have made six passages up the Gulf and River St. Lawrence, the Whales; are not near so plentiful there as on the Labrador shore.

Our Western and Northern Coasts are in the season swarming with Mackerel, inviting the attention of our fishermen, but as ANDREWS says, they come and go as they please with perfect impunity. This fishery is failing on the Nova Scotia Coast, and as it is a sportive and capricious fish, continually changing its haunts and habits, we may reasonably hope it will soon revisit all our coasts that it heretofore frequented in such quantities.

The Herring fishery may well demand our most serious attention, it is an abundant source of wealth if properly managed and attended to, yet our people have been so blind to their own interests, that they have taken no pains in the cure, and the consequence is that Herring from Newfoundland are becoming valueless in Foreign Markets. I am glad, however, to find they have at last been deemed worthy of notice by the Government; that laws have been made (and I do hope enforced) to prevent their being hauled in Fortune Bay by seines, and also that they have been the means of having curers from Scotland to instruct our fishermen in the art of cur-

ing. I have seen those put up by Messrs. C. F. BENNETT, & Co., and can safely say they are the best cured herring that I have ever seen in Newfoundland, and I do hope that our Legislature will put on an export duty on herring in bulk, or what would be more effectual, prevent their being shipped in bulk coastwise or foreign.

Those persons who have seen the herring put up by Messrs. BENNETT, I would ask to contrast them with those they have seen landed loose from vessels bringing them in bulk from the Westward, and yet these herring were packed and actually branded No. 1 Herring; fancy what could be thought of No. 1 Newfoundland Herring branded by Inspectors of such description as used to be shipped by our Merchants; again, what quantity of No. 2 and No. 3 were shipped, or rather I would say were branded so.

I have seen in the States and in Canada pickled fish, say Herring, that were branded No. 1, even allowing they had lost their pickle, that should not have been branded No. 3. I believe that our late Inspection system was worse than useless, the brand carried its own condemnation.

The Herring caught on the shores of this Continent, are not inferior if taken at proper seasons, to the Herring of Holland or Britain, and if proper pains were taken in the cure, I would challenge them to procure a better article.

The means to cure the evil in a great measure, after our people have learnt the art of curing, would be a strict Inspection Law, and Com-

missioners the same as the Commissioners of the British Herring Fishery, who, in their report of 1839, state that when the Board was instituted in 1810, the whole number of barrels of Herring cured was 90,000, whereas the number in 1839, was 555,559 barrels, that it employed 50,000 fishermen (men and boys), 11,357 boats, 1,925 coopers, and 23,972 men, women and children, in gibbing, packing, and other labour.

The quantity of Nets in use was over 1,000,000 square yards.

The Herring properly cured in Britain are branded with a Crown, and so determined were the Commissioners to preserve the integrity of their brand, that on complaint being made of some Herring landed at Hamburg, they at once despatched their General Inspector; the complaints on a rigid examination, being found correct, they at once dismissed their oldest officer. I find by reading the reports, the security given by the brand, has caused a great increase of consumption.

I notice the following in the *London Journal*,—"The quantity of Herrings cured on the Coasts of England and Scotland, from January, 1848, to January, 1849, amounted to 687,982 barrels, being an increase on the previous year of 172,000 barrels. Much encouragement is being given to the British Fisheries."

In 1817, Newfoundland exported as per Customs Returns, 1,726 barrels Herring; in 1852, 42,715 barrels, and it was calculated that there were 30,000 barrels sent from Fortune

Bay, and 20,000 barrels from St. George's Bay; of these 50,000 barrels, the most part was shipped in bulk.

I cannot but again revert to the unwise course pursued by our fishermen, and our Government in not carrying out the laws as regards the hauling of Herring in seines; of what benefit I may ask is the immense quantities of Herring that are taken in bulk by Nova Scotians, Americans and others to Halifax, Boston, &c. and there put up. It is a well known fact that Herring have not been so plentiful in Fortune Bay and other of our Southern Bays the past few seasons, and I have just heard they have even become scarce. It has been said by some persons the Herring come in on the Coast in such immense numbers that it is impossible to diminish them; look at Maine and Massachusetts, what would the Americans give, if they could re-establish the Herring Fishery on their Sea board? bitterly have they repented having killed the goose that laid the golden egg.

As regards our Cod Fisheries much might be done to develope and encourage them, by giving the fishermen protection, enacting judicious laws as regards the mesh of seines, and nets, the hauling of Cod seines, and the preventing the hauling of seines except at coves and proper places, and not on the ground the hook-and-line-men resort—the prevention of the wholesale destruction of Caplin and Herring for manure, &c.

I would also suggest that a title should be given to persons holding fishing rooms on the Coast of Labrador, that some law should be en-

acted to determine what waterside the Planter may take and occupy; almost every good Fishing Harbor is taken up, disputes are every day arising about rooms, possession is now the only title, and the boundaries are only imaginary ones between each.

On the Labrador Coast the most valuable Rivers and Salmon Posts are claimed and occupied by persons who pretend they have the right from former occupiers of the Fishery; by others that they have grants from the Imperial Government to certain Rivers and Fisheries; what their titles may be is not known; but now that Salmon is becoming so valuable an article of commerce, it is not fair these Rivers and Posts should be monopolised, if the parties in possession have no other claim than their being the strongest.

I would also beg to draw attention to the benefit that would be derived by our fishermen, at seasons when Bait cannot be procured, if Clam beds were formed at the heads of our Bays, and in the Harbours where practicable.

The past season, the Canadian Government caused one of their Superintendents to form Oyster Beds in several places in the St. Lawrence; and I think; where the cost is so little, it should also be done in some of our Harbours and Bays.

Strict laws and regulations should be passed and carried out for their preservation for a few years.

In putting up Herring or Salmon it is very

necessary a better description of barrel should be used, as I can say from long personal experience, that a great portion of those shipped, lose pickle, and will not stand the hardship of sea and land transport.

I see no reason, if proper attention was paid to the cure of Herring at Newfoundland and Labrador, that they should not fetch as high prices as those of Scotch and English cure.

The Canadian Government, for the better preservation of the Salmon Fisheries, last year advertised the Rivers to be Let by tender for either three or five years; at the expiration of the Lease, the Tenant would have the preference on their again being Let—the Lessee was bound to obey all the laws, and would be protected in his rights. I do not know what amount the Rivers were Leased for, but have understood it was for several Thousand Pounds.

The Government of New Brunswick, if they have not already Leased their Salmon Fisheries, intend doing so. I had a conversation in October or November last with MOSES H. PERLEY, Esq., who has had more opportunities of studying this subject than any person in the Provinces, his opinion and in which I was led to coincide, was, that for the preservation of the River Salmon Fisheries, it was necessary they should be leased for five years; it would then be the interest of the Lessee to prevent all illegal modes of fishing, and to stock the Rivers he had rented.

The Americans have the right of fishing on

our Coasts, but not above the mouths of the Rivers, and it is the right of the Government of Newfoundland to lease the Rivers in this Island and Labrador.

Before doing so, the best information should be obtained of the quantity of Salmon such River so proposed to be leased yielded, the modes of fishing used in such River, &c., &c.

I would also suggest, that sufficient notice of the intention of the Government should be given (if they should determine to Lease the Rivers), as last year in Canada it was not the case, and many of the occupants of Rivers with which there was no communication in the winter, did not know the Rivers were to be Leased until after they were Let.

Your obedient servant,

M. H. WARREN.

P. S.—I yesterday received the following information from MOSES H. PERLEY Esq. dated St. John's, New Brunswick, April 16, 1860.

Oyster beds may be formed by laying the Oysters in about six feet water at low-tide, in places where there is not much current, with a soft bottom free from weeds.—A sandy bottom is not fit; the Oysters drift about, and the sand

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spoils them.—An Oyster bed is easily formed—Some seasons since, a Schooner with Oysters for Quebec, from Caraquette, was driven into Bathurst Harbour, late in November, and frozen in.—The cargo of Oysters was thrown into a quiet Cove ; some of them retained their vitality, and a bed of capital Oysters is now the result.

Clams require a bottom of mixed mud and sand, into which they easily penetrate, and it must be deep to enable them to go down sufficiently in winter.







