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OLD SERIES]

*Nec aranearum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.*

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## THE FISHERIES.

### MR. PERLEY'S REPORT.

[Concluded.]

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 at the Neguec Villages, who, at the price stated, could with reasonable diligence, earn £1 each in the 24 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 are found all along the New Brunswick coast from Baie Verte to Caraquet, but not within the Bay of Chaleur. Those best known in the 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, *degele*.—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 Tahusiac, but those of the finest description are found on extensive beds in Shippegan Harbour, Saint Simon's Inlet, and Caraquet Bay, from which localities they are exported every season to Quebec. The number of bushels exported from the Port of Caraquet 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 favorable 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.

## 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 (*clupea vernalis*) 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, 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 (*clupea arsolola*) 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 flavorless, 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*) 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 20lbs. weight, or even more; but those of 3lbs. to 5lbs. are considered the best flavored. They are never salted, but always 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 St. Lawrence. Of these the Salmon Trout (*salmo trutta*) is of the largest size and most valuable. The common Trout (*salmo fario*) is taken in every possible variety everywhere.

The Sea-trout seldom ascend the Rivers far above the tideway; 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 7lbs., though the most usual weight is from 2lbs. to 5lbs. They are very abundant in June, in the Bays and Harbors of Prince Edward Island. At the Magdalen Islands they are taken in nets, and being pickled in small casks, and exported to the West Indies, if carefully cleaned, cured, and packed, they there bring a higher price than Salmon.

In the tideway 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 fario*) 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 practiced 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 last, 1,300 large Trout were thus taken out of one pool on the Scadouk 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 (*salmo eperlanus*) is found in excessive abundance in all the Rivers and Streams flowing into the Gulf. In the latter part of Winter, when they are in the best condition, they are taken thro' holes in the ice, and are at that season 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 fishery under proper management, might be made of considerable profit, as the Smelt is really delicious, and always highly esteemed.

Eels of large size and fine quality, are taken every where within the Gulf, and 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 (*pleuronectes flexus*) 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.

The fresh Salmon packed in ice which were sent last season from St. John to Boston by the Steamers, owing to the facilities of transport in the United States, in two days after they left St. 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 St. 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 St. 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 toward 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.

## AGRICULTURE.

From the New England Farmer.

### BOYS SHOULD BE MECHANICS.

Boys should have tools for their own use, and they should be taught to use them, and keep them in order. In this way every boy may learn the use of common tools; and then, in case he is a farmer, he can attend to various mechanical affairs, and not have to spend a few hours' time to procure a mechanic to do an hour's work, as is often the case with the farmer, especially in sections sparsely settled.

Some boys know so little about the use of tools that their fathers pay a considerable bill annually to furnish them with playthings, when they are big enough to make all carriages, &c., that they need for amusement, if they were furnished with tools, and had but very little instruction.

When a boy is big enough to haul a sled up hill and slide down, he should be capable of making his own sled, and not depend on another. Every boy can do far more than he or his parents are aware of, if he is placed under favorable circumstances for trying, and for developing his mechanical powers.

A farmer once remarked to us, that he was in want of a drag at a busy season, and after spending more time in trying to get some one to make it than would have been required to construct it, he was under the necessity of attempting the job himself; and he succeeded well. Had that farmer been trained to the use of tools in his boyhood, he would have known his ability, and would not have wasted his time in the vain endeavor to procure another to do what he could do himself; and that was doubtless only one among many instances of his depending on others for what he might have accomplished himself at much less expense.

From the Mass. Ploughman.

### SIDE-HILL PLOUGHING.

Ploughs are now made to go back and forth in the same line, and to turn all the furrows down hill. This is convenient when the land lies in such a position that one side of the hill is inaccessible.—When one side only can be ploughed, the side-hill plough turns the whole in one direction, and no lands are marked off.—Some farmers object to turning the furrows all down hill, because they would not expose the high parts to barrenness or dead furrows. But ploughing furrows up-hill is decidedly up-hill work, and should be avoided if possible. When we