1888

Report of the Commissioner of Sea and Shore Fisheries of the State of Maine, 1888

Maine Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries

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REPORT

OF THE

Commissioner of Sea and Shore Fisheries

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1888.
regard of all these laws of courtesy due to the laws of a State where he paid no taxes and was not a citizen. Money penalty would be no punishment to our citizen, pleader or criminal. Could not our laws embrace discretionary power with the sovereign to sentences of imprisonment in such cases? Respectfully submitted.

E. H. MILLET,

HERB. O. STANLEY.

REPORT

OF THE

Commissioner of Sea and Shore Fisheries

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE

1888.
REPORT.

His Excellency S. S. Marble, Governor of Maine:

The commissioner of sea and shore fisheries has the honor to present his second report for the years 1887 and 1888. This has been an unusual busy year in this department.

The fish and game laws passed the last session of the legislature have proved good laws for the protection of fish and game, but some amendments should be made to properly carry them out and I must renew my statement made in my last report that it has been no small task to look after this branch of the fisheries stretched along the coast some 5,000 miles from Kittery to Eastport and amongst the islands.

With the small appropriation at our command we have not done all that might have been done if we had had more means to carry out our plans. We have endeavored to observe economy in all we have done and have at all times remembered that the resources were limited. We have found it difficult to get good wardens to serve for the pay since all the fines go to the county and I would therefore recommend that this part of the old law be restored, so that part of the fines go to the State and part to the warden.

LOBSTERS.

It is very noticeable that the last law of protection has had much to do with the increase of lobsters the past season for we have reports from all parts of the State that they have not been so plenty, cheap and large for ten years. We have abundant proof of this fact. One of the principle fish
dealers in Lewiston made this remark this summer, "The law can do a good deal in this way. I have seen no such lobsters for several years as these. They are beauties and I lay it all to the effect of the lobster law that just now is beginning to be apparent in its effects. In five years more the lobster will be as plentiful as ever and every one a champion."

Johnson & Young one of the largest and oldest wholesale dealers in lobsters of Boston writes one of the members of the last committee on fisheries as follows:

"We congratulate you on the success you have had in making a good lobster bill According to our judgment it is the most perfect that has yet been drawn; the measurement is definite and all its provisions clear. The difficulty heretofore has been the ambiguous language allowing loopholes for those so disposed to crawl out of, but this bill seems definite and easily understood. It shows the result of knowledge of the subject, and to our mind is the first real success that has attended the effort for a bill that would protect the lobster interest of your State. The bill in our opinion is all right and it properly enforced will benefit everyone engaged in the business in anyway, overcoming the opposition of one of the most powerful monopolies in your State."

It is stated by one of the largest dealers in lobsters in this State that "the average catch of lobsters on the Maine coast has been fifteen millions yearly for thirty years," and that we can use this amount yearly without any detriment to the increase of the lobsters.

I have requested the wardens to give me the number of lobsters caught this season and the number of men employed in the business but up to this time have only received partial returns, and will here give some of their statements for 1888 which will give some idea of the business.

Thirty men in Bremen caught 100,200 lobsters in 1555 traps.

Twenty-three men in Muscongus caught 34,400 lobsters in 1267 traps.

Eighty men in York, Kittery and Eliot fished about 1600 traps and 300 nets.
One hundred twenty-five men from Cumberland county line to York, caught about 350,000 in 6500 traps.

Thirty-two men in North Haven with 1900 traps caught about $125 worth to each man.

Seventy-five men in Vinalhaven with 4000 traps caught about $200 worth to each man.

The cost of each trap is about $1.00; the cost of car is about $25.00; the cost of each boat from $125 to $300.

From the best information that we can obtain we are actually using more than 25,000,000 annually. Now if this is correct it will be seen that we are annually using 10,000,000 more than the increase and if continued at this rate it will not take but a short time to make them extinct. Such being the fact we surely need to protect them.

No lobster increases in size except when they shed their shell. A lobster that is 9 inches long before shedding becomes 10½ inches long after shedding and the shell becomes hard. It is known to increase in 24 hours from 9 inches by shedding to 10½ inches. If the small 9 inch lobster is caught in the spring and sold for one cent each, were cast back into the sea and allowed to shed they will reach 10½ inches in a few months, and are worth almost any time 4 or 5 cents, and such lobsters were sold last winter from 12 to 15 cents each. Some such lobsters were sold last winter in Boston for 20 cents. The fishermen of Monhegan understand this and catch lobsters in the spring, fall and winter and let the young 9 inch lobster remain in the water and shed its shell and become hard in the fall. It then becomes what is called a smack lobster 10½ inches long or more and was sold last winter at wholesale for 12 cents. The Monhegan lobsters are amongst the best caught on the coast of Maine, and I know of no more prosperous community in this State than the fishermen of that island. Is there a farmer in this State that can raise any stock that will give him any such profit as this and that to without any expense of feeding? It seems a little strange that the fishermen cannot see it in this light, and let
the lobster remain until it sheds and become 10½ inches and is worth something.

Another reason why the young 9 inch lobster should not be used, but should be protected is this, we never find any eggs attached to a healthy 9 inch lobster, while the 10½ inch lobster has from 15,000 to 25,000 eggs attached. It will be seen by this, if this little lobster is destroyed before it comes to maturity how is the lobster going to be propagated on our coast? It would be just as good policy for the farmer to destroy his chickens before they are hens as the fishermen to destroy the 9 inch lobster. Some of the fishermen when they find little lobsters in their traps kill them and cast them back into the sea. Now it would be just as good policy for the farmer to kill his chickens because they annoy him when he feeds his hens, as it is for the fishermen to kill the little lobsters because they get into his trap and eat his bait.

One great difficulty we have to contend with is the New York market where there is no law in regard to the length of the lobsters. Short lobsters have been secretly shipped to New York in quite large numbers and in very bad condition before leaving this State. Some of them shipped in barrels were actually offensive and not fit to eat. Such lobsters are used at saloons and lunch rooms for free lunches.

I am of the opinion that the canners do not care to do much canning of lobsters in this State, if they did they could have canned 9 inch lobsters under the law up to July 1st. 1887, and this is as late in the season as they usually care to can. Out of some forty lobster and sardine factories in this State only fourteen or fifteen operated in 1887. This season not more than five or six factories canned any lobsters. Canning of lobsters in the Provinces can be carried on at much less expense than in this State and at much better profit. In the canning season lobsters can be bought for 70 to 75 cents per hundred pounds in the Provinces, and this is not more than 7 or 7½ mills each. Men's wages are $1.00 per day and women and boys about 50 cents and there is no duty on the
tin that the cans are made from. While in this State the usual price for a 9 inch lobster is about $1.25 per hundred pounds, or about 1 cent each, men's wages from $1.50 to $2.00 per day, women and boys from 75 cents to $1.00 per day.

It will readily be seen by this that it is for the interest of the canners to operate in the Provinces than in this State.

Capt. Riley Davis of Cushing, a man that takes a lively interest in the lobsters, writes as follows:

CUSHING, January 13th, 1887.

"I have carefully summed up the catch of lobsters for 1886, and find the best estimate I can get is over 23,000,000 for the past year. Now all candid men engaged in the business will be obliged to admit there has been a smaller catch the past year than for twenty years, from the fact that not more than one-half has been canned the past year as heretofore, and our market to some extent stocked with lobsters from the Provinces. At the present time it takes about twice the number of traps to catch the same amount of lobsters that it did ten years ago.

The fact is our lobsters have diminished in size as well as in numbers. Smacks that used to carry 1500 to 2500 now carry from 4000 to 7000. There are about sixteen lobster factories on the coast of Maine. Twenty-seven smacks, from sixteen to sixty tons, and a large number of men engaged in shipping in barrels. Several large New York smacks come each spring, and with the exception of a few that run to Nova Scotia, the whole drain comes on the coast of Maine. That some wise law, rigidly enforced, should be passed by the present legislature, will only prevent the lobsters from being exterminated or rendered unprofitable in a very short time.

I have followed the lobster business for over twenty years, and for one am interested."

It will be seen by the following extract taken from the Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries, Dominion of Canada, 1887, that the lobster is likely to be destroyed if fishing for them is continued as it has been, and they now see the need of protecting them, and have passed a law that makes a close time of six months:

"Owing to the heavy inroads made upon the lobster and the ultimate danger of complete extinction by over-fishing, it was found
necessary to curtail this fishing so as to give lobsters some chance of breeding and keeping up the species. With this end in view a regulation was adopted fixing the close time on that part of the coast of the Atlantic extending from Cape Canso westward and following the coast line of the Bay of Fundy to the United States boundary line, between 1st July and 1st December. In the remaining waters of the Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and in the waters of Prince Edward Island and Quebec (including Magdalen Islands and Anticosti), the close season is fixed between the 15th July and 31st December. It is earnestly hoped that these stringent measures will have the effect of preserving a valuable industry and preventing the depletion which is now being experienced on the coasts of Maine and Massachusetts.

In order to put some check on the growing traffic of illegally caught fish over the Intercolonial Railway, an Order in Council was adopted enjoining upon every officer, agent or employe of Government railways to refuse for transport any fish, unless the shipper or his agent produced a certificate from a fishery officer showing that such fish were caught in a legal manner. This order is believed to have had a most beneficial effect.

Mr. W. H. Venning, Inspector of Fisheries, St. John, New Brunswick, says:

"The returns show a most alarming decrease. In fresh fish the falling off has been 1252 tons. In canned fish, 2,031,253 pounds, nearly half the catch of last year. This decrease is caused entirely by scarcity of fish caused by over-fishing in the past. Many factories closed before the season was over, because they could not get fish enough to keep them running. I have so often foretold this result that I can now only express my regret that the end of this great industry has come so much sooner than even I expected."

J. Hunter Duvars, Inspector of Fisheries, Prince Edward Island, says:

"Keeping to the fishing features of my own Province only, I would say that, setting apart all local side issues, lobster canning along the whole 400 miles of island coast is completely exhausted. About this there can be no cavil. It is an uncontrovertible and patent fact. Many of the factories had to shut down in July for lack of fish, and not a few of the canners have drifted into bank-
COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

ruptcy. The size of the lobsters has become deplorably small, it
taking $7\frac{1}{2}$, 8, and, in one former good location, 9 to fill a one-pound
can. I am credibly informed that, owing to the poor quality of the
goods, most of the London, Great Britain, greengrocers have agreed
among themselves not to deal in Prince Edward Island canned
lobsters.

In 1885 there were canned. .......... 4,389,189 cans.
1886 “ “ ............. 3,616,780 “
1887 “ “ ............. 2,009,107 “

thus rapidly sinking from the mere absence of fish. According to
all indications the lobsters now taken are the young or fry, not old
enough to continue their species.

Having had the honor to be a member of the Government Com-
mission to enquire into and report upon the shell fisheries of the
Atlantic Maritime Provinces of the Dominion, I am precluded from
surmising what course it may be deemed proper to pursue in regard
to the future of these fisheries, and it is unnecessary here to define
the importance of that commission, tending, as it may be, towards a
cessation of lobster fishing for a sufficient length of time to bring
back the supply of fish to its former abundance. The places of
meeting of the commission in Prince Edward Island were adver-
tised in public prints, the sittings were open to all, and anyone
interested in the matter was invited to communicate freely with the
commissioners. Of the considerable number of representative men
who tended evidence it is noticeable that a large majority confes-
ssed they could see no other way to preserve the fishery from
total extinction than by definitely closing down all lobster factories
for such a term of years as would enable the fish to recuperate in
size and numbers.

The public mind, as expressed in conversation and through the press,
seemed generally to favor a total temporary closure. At the same
time it was urged that to close down suddenly for a term of years, with¬
out giving at least one year's notice, would be productive of much
injury, both to the fishermen who depended on a continuance of
their monthly wages and to the packers who had capital invested in
the industry. It was therefore felt that it would be but an act of
justice to grant one more year's fishing to work off stock before
the introduction of more stringent measures, should such be deemed
necessary.
Since then, the Order in Council, of date 17th December instant, has granted that privilege.

An experimental short fishing season will go a certain distance towards solving the question whether the fishery can be recuperated without total closure. The objection of some of the smaller packers to any closure is that during the lapse of packing the factories, traps and boats would rot, and thereby "inherent and vested rights" would be infringed. I cannot recognize this. Nobody possesses an inherent right to wipe out a fishery from over-greed, and vested rights cannot exist except as rights officially recognized, and lobster fishing localities are not officially recognized as fisheries (pecheries). In like manner there can be no claim for "compensation." I am happy to say that not one packer put forth any claim before the commissioners, claiming compensation for having ruined the fishery by over-fishing. It is an impossibility to frame any general regulation that will press equally on all localities. I might incidentally mention that packers on the south side of this province claim that from the different dates at which lobsters strike the north and south shores of the island, they are at a disadvantage as compared with packers on the north. They will probably bring this matter to your notice. Until the main problem of the lobster fishery is experimentally worked out, the side issues of leasing of areas and other questions must necessarily be left in abeyance. Certain persons state that the closing of the lobster factories will infer a large deprivation of interests on shore. I think not. It is quite possible to over-estimate the injury that would be done on shore. The cutting and supply of fuel for lobster furnaces is no great affair. To keep a lobster factory running with fuel is not much more than would be required to supply a schoolhouse log fire. When a factory is once supplied the only shore work is to repair damaged traps or to replace the few that may be missing. Were deep-sea products to be largely increased, as they ought to be, truckmen, railway and sea freight would not suffer. Saw-mills might cut fewer shooks for packing cases, but coopers would make it up by the greater number of barrels. In fact there is no reason why the collateral branches of shore industry should suffer from lobster closing.

A short season in 1888 under the regulation of an Order in Council might give some indication whether a continuance of similar short fishing seasons would afford sufficient protection to the fishery. As, however, this is not likely to be the case, and as this report when
laid before Parliament will be read by island packers, I would venture to suggest that it might be wise to prepare for yet more restrictive measures.”

A. C. Bertram, fish officer of Cape Briton Island, says:

“This branch of fishing shows a large increase over the catch of any previous year, but a depression in market value, equal to 20 per cent as compared with last year. There is a general impression that this fishery is being overdone to an extent that threatens its extinction at no distant date, and the depression in the present year’s prices points in that direction. It may be said, however, that the greater quantity taken points to an opposite conclusion. But it should not be forgotten that lobster canning factories are multiplying year by year, as well as the number of boats and men engaged in the catching. It has now become almost general for the shore fishermen to abandon all other fisheries, though ultimately more profitable, for the lobster catch. Ultimately the standard fisheries of cod, herring, mackerel, &c., are more profitable and give employment to a much larger number of persons, but the temptation to forsake these for the factories consists in the fact that factories pay cash on delivery of lobsters as they are brought in, whereas in the case of other fisheries a longer time must be wasted in waiting for returns, and there is, moreover, the depressing practice of local purchasers of, and traders in, fish refusing payment except in goods.

That the waters in some sections of the Maritime Provinces are being depleted by excessive fishing is beyond doubt, and to guard against the extinction of this valuable crustacea it has been suggested that lobster fishing should be entirely prohibited for two or three years, in order to give them an opportunity to recuperate. While this plan would be effectual for the time and even absolutely necessary if no other restoratives could be found, it is attended with difficulties. 1st—It might be felt a hardship by such as have invested in the business by the erection of factories, &c., to find themselves suddenly shut down upon, and a portion of the fishermen, too, might be disposed to complain. 2d—When the time arrives for the removal of the restriction, the business of packing would be revived, with probably greater energy than ever before, and in a short time the entire shutting down process would have to be again resorted to. These alternate suspensions would impress a
character of uncertainty on the business in reference to the interests of both fishermen and packers. Whilst it is evident that some restriction of the business is necessary in the public interest, hardship to any class of persons would possibly be avoided by adopting the following:

1st—A standard regulation of minimum size, below which it would be unlawful to kill lobsters, say 11 inches, and a strict supervision over all boats arriving at the factories to see that this regulation is faithfully obeyed; no sale to take place until the lot has been inspected.

2nd—No factory to be permitted to go in operation except under a license from the Department, and no license to issue to factories situated within a given coast mileage from any other factory already licensed; preference to be governed by priority of application. Some such method of restriction would preserve the lobster fishery in perpetuity, and avoid giving coloring to complaints on the ground of personal interest to any parties. The shortening of the open season would enable the Department to fix upon such dates for opening and closing in each year as would be adapted to all localities, irrespective of differences in early or late spring seasons."

Hon. George E. Foster, Minister of Marine and Fisheries, says:

"The catch of lobsters amounts to 857,098 lbs., as compared with the season of 1886, when the yield was 949,482 lbs., or a falling off this year of 92,384 lbs. The following tables show the annual catch since 1887 for the counties of Bonaventure and Gaspe with mainland and Magdalen Islands respectively.

### County of Bonaventure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Catch (lbs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>98,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>149,112</td>
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<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>97,404</td>
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<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>210,553</td>
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<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>137,636</td>
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<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>98,000</td>
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<td>1883</td>
<td>43,710</td>
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<td>1884</td>
<td>157,644</td>
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<td>1885</td>
<td>173,616</td>
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<td>1886</td>
<td>143,312</td>
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<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>78,111</td>
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</table>

### County of Gaspe (Mainland).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Catch (lbs)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>73,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>240,960</td>
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<td>1879</td>
<td>315,184</td>
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<td>1880</td>
<td>238,046</td>
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<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>266,656</td>
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<td>1882</td>
<td>147,430</td>
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<tr>
<td>1883</td>
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<td>1884</td>
<td>110,665</td>
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<td>1885</td>
<td>103,593</td>
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<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>257,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>311,023</td>
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</table>
In 1877 there were four canneries in operation at the Magdalen Islands; this season twenty-one. On the mainland of Gaspe there were in 1877 four canneries; this season eighteen at work. In the county of Bonaventure three canneries did the work in 1877; this year we had six. These statements show that while in 1877, when the industry was yet in its infancy, 448,669 lbs., of lobsters were put up by eleven canners, forty-five canneries with a larger number of traps and better appliances only succeeded in 1887 in taking 857,098 lbs., and the article of poor quality, as owing to the small size of lobsters now generally taken, much of the meat obtained is inferior, being soft and watery. It is absolutely necessary that steps be taken to curtail this over-fishing and this can only be done either by closing down altogether for a term of years or by shortening the fishing season and increasing the gauge which should be no less than ten or ten and one-half inches. At Magadalen Islands and elsewhere, lagoon fishing should be prohibited, as there is no question that the shoal warm waters of these lagoons are the natural breeding ground of the lobster.

Johnson & Young of Boston, have carried on a very successful lobster business at Vinalhaven the past season, (1887). They have a large pound, so-called, which is a pond of water several acres in extent, connected with the sea, the outlet being closed to the passage of lobsters by a wire netting. Last fall they purchased 900,000 ten and one-half inch lobsters of the fishermen, at four cents each, and placed in the pound. They must have food, and to satisfy their hunger were fed on fish cleanings, consisting of heads, fins and inwards of codfish, hake, &c., which were purchased at $1.00 per barrel. Seven or eight hundred barrels of this food was fed to them in all. After the winter had set in the lobsters were raked from the bottom of the pound as wanted, many being found buried in the mud at a depth of from two
to two and one-half feet, and shipped to Boston by rail from Rockland at the rate of from ten to twenty-five barrels per day. To reach the lobster it was necessary to cut through the ice some two feet thick or more. It was said that some of these lobsters were sold in Boston for twenty cents per pound, and some of them would weigh two or three pounds each. Lobsters so fed are said to be of very superior quality.

The Vinalhaven Echo says:

"Johnson & Young, who have a large lobster pound, have closed buying lobsters this fall, (1888). Their agent, Elisha Oakes, has bought and put into the pound 150,000, and all accomplished in twenty-two days. They paid three and one-half cents for them."

The lobster business at Cape Porpoise has grown up within thirty years from a small beginning. That year there were two fishermen, who had twenty pots between them, and fished a while in the summer. This winter, in addition to the boats, there are thirty-three men in the business, with 2160 traps, requiring fifty-four bushels of fish and clams to bait for each haul. The traps cost one dollar each when ready to set, showing a considerable investment of capital.

Biddeford, March 14, 1888.

Cape Porpoise lobster catchers are reaping a harvest at present, as that crustacean is very scarce everywhere but at that place, and sells for $25 per barrel in the New York market. One lobster catcher has averaged a barrel and a half at each haul, and made two hauls a week for the past month.

We often find barrels and boxes containing short lobsters without the shipper's name marked on them, but in looking on the under side of the card we find them marked x or with a sloop pictured out in pencil. The firm in New York having a key of these marks can tell who sent them as well as if they had the name of the shipper in full.

To prevent shipping short lobsters and game in this manner I would recommend that all barrels and packages
containing fish and game should require the shippers name marked on such packages in full. If the shipper is making an honest shipment he cannot object to this manner of marking his shipments. By doing this they would avoid their packages from being examined.

**Mackerel.**

This fish has been very scarce on our coast this season, and therefore the law has not been violated as much as usual. The catch of mackerel all along the shore has been very limited, and the seiners have seemed determined to catch every mackerel as soon as it might be discovered to be in the sea.

The total catch up to as late date as I have is only 25,511 barrels for 1888, against 56,919 barrels in 1887, 58,557 in 1886, 258,900 barrels in 1885, and 319,698 barrels in 1884. It will be seen that this season’s catch so far is not half as large as the two preceding years, and a mere trifle compared with catches of 1884 and 1885. In fact the present catch is the smallest known for fifty years, and many vessels will suffer great loss. What the cause of this falling off no one seems to know. To supply the demand many mackerel have been shipped to the States from England, a thing never known before.

**Smelts.**

This little fish is caught in weirs and in large quantities in this State, and shipped to Boston, New York and Philadelphia, at a profit in the fall and winter.

“Section 5th, laws 1887, provides that no smelts caught in such weirs after the first day of April, shall be sold or offered for sale in this State, nor shall smelts caught in any manner between the first day of April and the first day of October following.”

It will be seen by the above that no smelts can be sold in this State after April 1st, caught in any manner except by hook and line.
Many complaints have been made to me by people that could not get smelts to eat unless they were made liable to a fine, as the ice seldom leaves our bays and brooks in season for smelts to come up before April 25th, and it would seem that the time should be extended for taking smelts in the spring by dip-net to May 1st. It was formerly May 20th, but was changed to suit the weir men, and certainly it would look hard that the spring fishermen should be entirely shut off that the fall fishermen should gain.

Large quantities of smelts were caught in dip-nets last spring and left to lay on the ground to rot, when they might have been sold for $2.00 or more per bushel if allowed to be sold. Therefore I would recommend that dip-nets may be used up to May 1st, and that smelts caught in this State may be sold up to that time.

MENHADEN OR PORGY.

The migrations of ocean fish are among the mysteries against which scientists and practical men have beaten their heads in vain. The sudden disappearance of menhaden or porgy from northern New England coast ten years ago, and the gradual abandonment of these waters by the mackerel which is now in progress cannot be accounted for by any diminution in their numbers caused by the fishermen, by any known cause or by any supposed change in the temperature of the ocean and the re-appearance of the menhaden in our waters this summer is equally unaccountable. From Boothbay to Cape Cod the waters have been full of them, and Boothbay’s once great porgy oil business has been revived and has done a good business this season.

I quote the following: “Linneken porgy factory, Boothbay, received 1500 barrels of porgies one day last week. They employ three steamers, and fish are reported plentiful. Last week they manufactured 600 barrels of oil.”

After these fish have been away so long it seems hard that they must be destroyed again just as they make their appear-
ance in our waters. The small fishermen along the coast would like them for bait but the oil factories are using them in large numbers and it is feared that they will drive them away again. One or two oil factories have started up this season and it is understood that preparations are being made to go largely into the business next season. There has been quite a number of steamers and smacks that have violated the laws by seining in small bays and harbors within the three-mile limit and several cases of this kind are now pending in court.

It has been very difficult to catch these steamers as many of them are from other States, that steam into our rivers and small bays, cast their seines for a short time, then steam out and away before a warden can board them and learn their name or where they belong.

Unusual vigilance has been necessary on the part of the commissioners and the wardens to prevent their being scooped up as soon as they appeared.

Porgies are now canned as an article of food to a very great extent and in many instances are canned and labelled as sea trout or ocean mackerel.

This fish when fresh from the water is said to be delicious eating. This is especially true if they are served under the name of sea trout.

One captain writes that "no porgies have been caught on our coast for ten years and I am not sure but it is twelve, and if the seiners are allowed to fish within the three-mile limit it will be ten years more before they will come again."

Some minor changes are needed in the law for the protection of mackerel, herring, shad, and porgies, and other migratory fish, to make its provisions certain. Nearly every fisherman now has a construction of his own to put upon it, and that construction usually gives him a right to fish when, where, and as he pleases. The general provision may be well enough; but to be practicable in its operations, some uncertainties should be removed, and some of its provisions more definite.
ALEWIVES.

This fish is a very important one in this State as an article of food, and should be better protected.

Large numbers of this fish are caught in Damariscotta, Medomac, and George's rivers, and pays quite a portion of the town tax.

The catch in Waldoboro' in 1887, was from 75,000 to 80,000, and in 1888, 135,000.

In Warren in 1887, the catch was 217,460, and were sold for 26 cents per hundred, amounting to $489.04

Eleven men employed and other expense, amounting to - - - - - - - 244.50

Net, - - $245.54

In 1888, there were caught 386,100, and sold at 20 cents per hundred, - - - - - $772.20

Expense about - - - - - 250.00

Net, - - $522.20

The largest catch in one day was 58,000.

In 1884 these fish were sold for - - - $906.08

Expense, - - - - - 226.45

$679.63

Materials on hand, - - - - 25.85

$705.48

It will be seen by this that the alewives are gradually falling off each year.

Number of weirs on the George's river is 15, besides nets.

In Newcastle and Damariscotta there were caught about 600,000 at the mills, and 240,000 in river; 840,000 in all for 1887, and this was considered a small catch.

There were twenty-four weirs on the river in 1887. In 1888 there were taken on the river in twelve weirs, and at the mills (Damariscotta), about 1,215,000, or about 2430 barrels, as it takes about 500 of alewives to fill a barrel.
It will be noticed by this that there has been a large increase at the stream, and large falling off in the river.

This in a measure, I think, was caused by the law being better enforced in 1888 than in 1887.

Something should be done to protect the wholesale destruction of the young alewives, as they return to the ocean past the mills, where they are caught in the water wheels and ground into pieces, and in this manner thousands are destroyed.

SEA SALMON.

During the season for salmon fishing in 1887 and 1888 quite a number have been caught in Bangor with hook and line and bait of flies.

This manner of fishing has become very popular and has brought many sportsmen from about all over the United States and they leave a large amount of money in Maine for this pleasure, much more than if caught in weirs or nets. I would therefore recommend that the salmon be better protected in future.

SARDINE FISHERY OF MAINE.

The herring-sardine business is an enterprise of considerable magnitude in Maine. There are forty factories in the State. Their product last year was 450,000 cases. This year it will reach 500,000 cases. Each case contains 100 boxes and each box ten or twelve little fishes.

There was money in the business for a time. But greed made the packers careless, and the fish were put on the market in bad condition. That hurt the trade and it began to decline. To-day there is little money in it on that account. But a wiser method is coming. One of the best of the Eastport packers has dropped all French labelling, brands his own fish in his own name as herring, and guarantees them to be of a specific quality, and each box to contain no less than ten nor more than twelve fish. These fish he is selling at better figures, and can dispose of all he can make. Honesty is the best policy, even in the herring business.
The sardines of Maine are sent chiefly to New York. When properly cured they are a very excellent substitute for the more expensive sardines. If the Canadian government chose to be severe, it could destroy the Maine sardine business. That knowingly it permits it to flourish in Eastport is evidence of a neighborly spirit for which we should not hesitate to give due credit.—Board of Trade Journal.

In conclusion, I would say that the expense of enforcing the law for the protection of fish is very considerable, in order to afford the protection that the law is designed to give. Nearly all violators of the law have thus far shown a determined spirit in resisting all legal proceedings to enforce penalties, and much litigation may be necessary to establish the fact that the law must be respected by all alike. The appropriations so far have not been adequate for a successful enforcement of the law, and I would recommend that they be made more generous in the future.

Respectfully submitted.

B. W. Counce.
COMMISSIONERS OF FISHERIES.

The following list of the Commissioners of Fisheries of the United States, the several States and Territories, and of the Canadian provinces, has been compiled from information recently obtained by the secretary from first hands, and is believed to be full and accurate:

Dominion of Canada—John Tilton, deputy minister of fisheries, Ottawa, Ont.

Province of New Brunswick—W. H. Venning, inspector of fisheries, St. John.

Province of Nova Scotia—W. H. Rogers, inspector, Amherst; A. C. Bertram, assistant inspector, Amherst.

Province of Prince Edward Island—J. H. Duvar, inspector, Alberton.

Province of Quebec—W. Wakeham, inspector, Lower St. Lawrence and Gulf division, Gaspe basin.

Province of British Columbia—Thomas Mowat, inspector, New Westminster.

Province of Manitoba and North-west Territories—Alex. McQueen, inspector, Winnipeg, Man.


Arizona—J. J. Gosper, Prescott; Richard Rule, Tombstone; J. H. Taggart, business manager, Yuma.

California—T. J. Sherwood, Marysville; Joseph D. Redding, San Francisco; J. D. Harvey, Los Angeles.
Colorado—G. F. Whitehead, Denver; E. V. Bogart, superintendent.

Connecticut—Dr. William M. Hudson, Hartford; Robert G. Pike, Middletown; James A. Bill, Lyme.

Delaware—No commission.

Delaware—Elwood R. Norny, Odessa; Dr. E. G. Shortlidge, assistant and superintendent of hatcheries, Wilmington.

Florida—No commission.

Georgia—Hon. J. T. Henderson, commissioner of agriculture, Atlanta; Dr. H. H. Cary, superintendent of fisheries, LaGrange.

Illinois—N. K. Fairbank, president, Chicago; S. P. Bartlett, secretary, Quincy; Major George Brenning, Centralia.

Indiana—Enos B. Reed, Indianapolis.

Iowa—E. D. Carlton, Spirit Lake; Ole Bjorensen, superintendent of Hatchery, Spirit Lake.

Kansas—S. Fee, Wamego.


The commission has been without funds for about four years and consequently no work has been done.


Maryland—G. W. Delawder, Oakland; Dr. E. W. Humphreys, Salisbury.

Massachusetts—Frederick W. Putnam, Cambridge; Edward A. Brackett, Winchester; Edward H. Lathrop, Springfield.

Michigan—John A. Bissell, Detroit, president; Dr. J. C. Parker, Grand Rapids, Herschel Whitaker, Detroit; W. D. Marks, superintendent, Paris; A. J. Kellogg, secretary, Detroit; William A. Butler, Jr., treasurer, Detroit.


Mississippi—No commission.
**Missouri**—H. M. Garlicks, chairman, St. Joseph; J. L. Smith, Jefferson City; H. C. West, St. Louis; A. P. Campbell, secretary, St. Joseph; superintendents: Philip Kopplin, Jr., St. Louis; Elias Cottrill, St. Joseph.

**Montana**—No commission.

**Nebraska**—W. L. May, Fremont; R. R. Livingston, Plattsmouth; B. E. B. Kennedy, Omaha; M. E. O’Brien, South Bend, superintendent.

**Nevada**—W. M. Cary, Carson City.

**New Mexico**—Has no commission, but Governor Ross intends to have one established. Hon. E. S. Stover, Albuquerque, has given the subject much attention, and will impart information.

**New Hampshire**—George W. Riddle, Manchester, chairman; E. B. Hodge, Plymouth; John H. Kimball, Marlboro’; E. B. Hodge, superintendent.

**New Jersey**—Richard S. Jenkins, Camden; William Wright, Newark; F. M. Ward, Newton.


**North Carolina**—W. J. Griffin, Elizabeth City, chairman; R. B. Watson, Englehard; W. T. Cahoe, Bayborough.

**Ohio**—C. V. Osborn, Dayton, president; J. H. Laws, Cincinnati; John Hofer, Bellaire; A. C. Williams, Chagrin Falls, secretary; E. D. Poller, Toledo.

**Oregon**—F. C. Reed, Clackamas, president; R. C. Campbell, Ranier; E. P. Thompson, Astoria.

**Pennsylvania**—Henry C. Ford, president, 524 Walnut street, Philadelphia; James V. Long, 205 Ridge avenue, Allegheny City; H. C. Demuth, secretary, Lancaster; S. B. Stilwell, Scranton; A. S. Dickson, Meadville; W. L. Powell, Harrisburg.

**Rhode Island**—John H. Barden, president, Rockland; Henry T. Root, treasurer, Providence; Wm. P. Morton, secretary, Johnston—commissioners inland fisheries. James C. Collins, North Provi-
dence; N. P. S. Thomas, North Kingstown; James M. Wright, Foster—shell-fish commissioners.


Tennessee—W. W. McDowell, Memphis; H. H. Sneed, Chattanooga; Edward D. Hicks, Nashville.

Texas—Commission abolished.

Utah—No commission. A. Milton Musser, acting fish commissioner, Salt Lake City.

Vermont—Frank Atherton, Waterbury; Herbert Brainerd, St. Albans.


West Virginia—C. S. White, president, Romney; F. J. Baxter, treasurer, Sutton; James H. Miller, secretary, Hinton.

Wisconsin—The Governor (ex-officio); Philo Dunning, president, Madison; C. L. Valentine, secretary and treasurer, Janesville; Mark Douglass, Melrose; A. V. H. Carpenter, Milwaukee; Calvert Spensley, Mineral Point; E. S. Miner, Sturgeon Bay; James Nevin, superintendent, Madison.

Wyoming Territory—Otto Gramm, Laramie. (Dr. W. N. Hunt, Cheyenne, is commissioner for Laramie county and B. F. Northington, Rawlins, is commissioner for Carbon county.)
REPORT

of

Commissioners of Fisheries and Game

STATE OF MAINE.

1849-50.

[Signature]