

# REPORT

OF THE

## Commissioners of Fisheries and Game

OF THE

### STATE OF MAINE

FOR THE YEARS

1887 & 1888.



AUGUSTA:

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1888.



# REPORT.

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*To His Excellency Governor Marble:*

The Commissioners of Fisheries and Game have the honor to present the report of their department for the biennial term of 1887 and 1888.

Notwithstanding the ill-judged changes made in our laws at the last session of our legislature, our success has been greater than we had any right to expect. Our game has exhibited an almost phenomenal increase, while our fish planting and protection has resulted in a more than bountiful return to our crippled resources for law enforcement. How such success could have been achieved under the mistaken changes of our laws by the late legislative amendments, is only to be accounted for by the moral support we have met with from the press of the State and the country, and the aid and sympathy of the reputable class of our population, from the artisan and farmer to the professional man. Great slaughter of our game will undoubtedly be perpetrated from this period until such time as the legislature will remedy their error which we hope may be at the opening of the session in January, 1889. We refer to a moiety of the penalty being taken from the wardens and the whole given to the county, leaving no incentive, except the bare pittance of one dollar and fifty cents per day, which they would get whether they caught the offender or not. We most feared the wholesale slaughter of our game as an immediate result of the emasculation of our laws by our legislature, but whether it was too severe a tax upon poachers' credulity that such a mis-

take could be committed, or else the knowledge of the bribe to unlimited licence was slow in meeting their comprehension, the full effects of the error were not experienced until the present open time.

We regret to record that some of the worst poaching crimes, and most cowardly, have been perpetrated by a class of visitors from whom we had a right to expect something better, but evidently they came of a race that had bred back to some ancestral Newgate stock.

A case has just been reported to us, as occurring last June, of more than usual cruelty. A nursing-cow moose was killed in the region above Moosehead, by a person who took but a small portion of the meat, leaving the rest to rot. The deed was incited by what the perpetrator would dignify as the sportsmanlike mania to kill. Two calves, we were told, were left to starve to death. It was related that the poor little brutes were heard calling for their slaughtered dam some hours after. The brave nimrod who committed this act, was caught some days since by one of our wardens and compelled to pay his penalty of \$100. We may add, that he was on his way home with another moose, which as it had been legally killed within the open time since October first, he was allowed to carry away with him. Should not this law be so amended that in a case of this kind the perpetrator should be mulcted, in an increased fine for both? Two fatal cases have been related to us of poachers killing brother poachers in mistake for venison, reported in both cases as accidental.

In all such cases the parties should be indicted and tried for manslaughter, and such fine be imposed by the magistrate as the development of the case warrants. It is too convenient a method for those gentry to remove a rival poacher or a troublesome warden, to be left unguarded. Another case has just been reported to us of a person at Prospect being shot by a hunter in mistake for a deer. All such cases, as also every citizen or child or grown person pointing a gun or pistol at any person and causing a wound or death, and plead-

ing that they "did not know it was loaded," should be punished by both fine and imprisonment. If innocence be the plea, the public should be protected against fools!

A case reported to us as occurring at Seven Ponds involved two boats loaded with Massachusetts poachers and Maine guides, shining deer in early summer when mostly nursing does are killed. One of the boats mistaking the other for game, delivered their fire. The passengers and guides were not so well peppered as we could have wished. It is of comparatively recent date as to years, since a party of ministers of the gospel were hunting our moose in midsummer, when one, the youngest and probably the one misled, accidentally shot himself.

Great as has been the pecuniary returns to our commonwealth from the excessive influx of travel, it is capable of an almost unlimited increase by proper provision by our legislature for the rigid enforcement of our laws. A deer killed at the proper season at any of our sporting centers, is worth at least one hundred dollars to the State, while if destroyed and sold by the poacher, its net return is almost valueless. The freight on the carcass of a deer pays only about one dollar to the railroad, while the freight or passage of a passenger to kill that deer, will pay to the railroad from \$8 to \$10 to which is to be added the expenditures for board and luxuries, while in transitu.

Our summer visitors are all consumers, affording the best of markets on our own soil to the farmer, for every product of his field, dairy and poultry-house. Every village lake or pond if stocked and protected, may be made a source of steady income to the town, in attracting summer residents. All the great investments of the last few years in our wealth of water power, or rural or scenic beauty for summer homes, has been made through the attention attracted to it by the skilled judgment of our visitors, who in seeking health, and rest and recreation, have taught us the value of our own unappreciated homes. Will not our representatives at Augusta

give heed to this? Our inland fishery laws require amendment. All the trout and salmon are bred in the tributary streams to our lakes and ponds. Driving dams are put up at will by the lumberman. These are left in a state after the season of their use is past, that renders them impassable to the spawning fish. The present law allows us only to order fishways upon such streams as are *naturally* frequented by salmon, shad, alewives and *landlocked salmon*. This shuts us out from Moosehead, Rangeley and other important waters. All fishing in the tributaries at Rangeley, Moosehead, &c. &c. &c., should cease from the last day of August and reliable wardens put in charge, to patrol wood, stream and lake, until the first day of May, or in fact such should be their duty for the whole twelve months. Fishing in the lakes may be allowed until the first of October in trout waters. The black bass, deemed and we think justly, one of the gamest of fishes, abounding in many lakes that have been stocked by the commissioners, afford unexampled sport far into October. The raising the water in the Rangeley lakes has opened new feeding grounds to the fish, attracting them from their former and well known haunts, and thus disappointing many of the old frequenters of their accustomed sport, until the new pools were discovered. The cry went forth of diminution of fish production. The commissioners from careful observation, are satisfied that never in the history of the lakes, was the breeding of the fish in a more satisfactory state than at present. But here as at Moosehead, and at other angling centers, new, increasing and destructive elements are at work, which must be promptly met, for the State cannot permit any danger to threaten the most productive interest she possesses. The use of dynamite for the taking of fish, should be made a capital offence, punishable by imprisonment as well as fine. Spearing, netting and jigging, should also be severely punished, as offenses equally destructive to the fish as dynamite. The famous land-locked salmon of Sebago lake have been almost exterminated by the persistent practice of these cow-

ardly methods for years past. To patrol the banks of Crooked river with a sufficient number of wardens to check the destruction of the spawning fish, was found impracticable. Our only resource was to construct a weir across the river at the nearest feasible point to the lake, and secure if possible every ascending fish and thus protect them from the net, the spear, the rifle, the dynamite cartridge, and the gaff of the poacher, for all these methods, were and are practiced. We not only thus secured all the ascending fish, but the first year we took 700,000 eggs which we hatched, and turned the product of young fish, into the waters of the lake and its tributaries. The success of this first experiment has been made apparent this present year to all observant visiting sportsmen, by the capture of many young salmon, varying in weight from one to three pounds. Our attempt in 1887 to repeat the same experiment, was partially frustrated by a raid upon our works of a party of disguised roughs, who demoralized our guard of one *man* and his *boy*. The weir was cut through, the tanks broken open, and such fish as they could not carry away with them turned loose. We repaired the damage, and were enabled at the end of the season to secure about 200,000 eggs, which we hatched and turned into Sebago waters. We make no comments here. None are needed. We were peacefully engaged in protecting the spawning fish from being destroyed in violation of the law in close time, taking and hatching their eggs, and restocking the very waters that the perpetrators of the crime had laid waste. We shall continue to set our weir every year, and employ sufficient force to protect the property of the State.

Many land-locked salmon and other fishes are being destroyed by railroad men, and their employees on the tributaries of Ship pond, and at other places, by the use of dynamite. The law should make the contractor or the company responsible for the act of their employees, as the dynamite could not be obtained without their complicity. Dynamite was likewise

used for the destruction of salmon by men employed on the dam at the outlet of Chesuncook lake. We think a law imposing a heavy penalty as well as imprisonment, and making the employers responsible would abate the evil.

The admission of pulp mills upon our streams, more especially upon the Penobscot river the only salmon river (with the exception of the St. Croix, which Maine shares with New Brunswick) on the Atlantic coast of the United States, was and is a most fatal error. Our rivers should all be carefully cultivated to fish, and can be made to constitute an important feature of our food product. No manufacture of any kind whatever should be allowed to throw its waste into a river any more than into our highways. No argument or demonstration is necessary here. Take the line of current from any pulp mill and the dead perch, chub and other fishes will tell the whole story. Look at the rocks washed by the current direct from the mill, they are as white as if specially colored with lime. The salmon in ascending the river, carefully avoid the side on which is the deadly flow; to yearling fish or to newly bred fish it is fatal. In all our future planting of fish in the Penobscot, points must be selected above the pulp mills. Salmon have been accustomed to breed in the rapid water all the way from Veazie to far up to the fastnesses above Grand Falls, Sebois, &c. &c. The health, the comfort, the lives of those who dwell below the mills and are dependent upon the Penobscot waters for their household use, their drink. Are they not worthy of protection?

It is but right and proper that in every change proposed in the game laws the interest of the owners of the forest lands of Maine should be consulted. The wild game is the property of the State, while its pursuit which more or less endangers the property of the proprietors is controlled entirely by statute laws. We have often thought that the immense value of these timber lands rendered them as worthy of a carefully constituted fire department to be paid and controlled by the State, as the property of our municipalities. The present evil of a large and worthless class of semi-outlaws who live

entirely in the woods mainly by poaching, occasionally acting as guides, stealing hoop poles or juniper knees or anything that will sell, should be suppressed at once. With them and by them is the great danger of fire. Sometimes the fires are set intentionally to favor the blueberry crop or afford favorite browsing of young shoots for the deer; at others revenge; at others from the drunken saturnalia of irresponsible parties, they go with as guides during the close time for game. If the law should be so changed as to meet our proposal to the last legislature, viz: adding September to the open time, it would lessen, instead of increasing the danger from fire, as the better class of sportsmen who are now kept out of the forest from a sense of honor would then by their presence operate as a check upon them. Give us a sufficient appropriation to perform those duties our oaths and the statutes require of us, and our wardens would prove the best police against forest fires that can be devised, and one we think the owners of the timber lands would be grateful for and appreciate. Within the last biennial term, we have been applied to for wardens to afford protection to lumbermen operating in Washington county whose camps had been threatened with fire, and their horses and oxen with destruction by some poachers at Nicatous lake, if any more of their dogs were missing, thus falsely charging them with killing their dogs. These were also the men who sympathized with the murderers of Hill and Niles, and posted notices threatening the lives of wardens. (It is but a year since the lumber camp with much valuable property belonging to Mr. Page, was burned on the shores of Nicatous lake.) It is time our forests and summer resorts were weeded out from this class of outlaws, and a better and more reputable class substituted.

No more appropriate sentiments can be here expressed than the following extract we have cut from the columns of *Forest and Stream*, called forth from the occurrence of similar outrages in the west.

"It has come to pass nowadays that to chronicle all events connected with shooting and fishing means to devote space to reports

which properly belongs in the criminal news of the daily press. It was only the other day that we recorded the murder on the Tobique, and the gross miscarriage of justice by which the miscreants escaped righteous punishment. But if murderers of women go unhung in New Brunswick, they see to it that the hemp has its own out in Wyoming. That territory has a law forbidding the killing of game for market. In spite of this skin hunters and meat hunters have in years past invaded the territory and plied their trade. This can be done no longer with impunity. Public feeling is on the side of the law. News has just come of the fate that overtook two hunters in the Snake river country who sought to combine skin hunting and house burning. The combination would not work and the consequences were exceedingly disastrous. The hunters were T. W. Adams and one Dutchy; they were engaged in a wholesale slaughter of elk and antelope, saving only the skin and horns, when an ex-ranchman, Tom Johnson, remonstrated with them on the ground that they were violating the law and threatened to have them arrested. The rest is quickly told. The hunters fired Johnson's house at night, Johnson, his wife and child in arms, escaped from the flames and from the hunters' revolvers. The father made his way to the settlement and gave the alarm. Forty men turned out at daylight, captured the hunters, carried them into the settlement and jailed them in an adobe hut. In the night a hundred men hustled them out and the morning sun revealed two human forms dangling from the limb of a tree."

In these repeated cases where interference with game law breakers has resulted in personal violence and crime, the fact has stood clearly revealed that the offenders against the game laws are desperate characters and when these offenses are regarded with leniency, the tone of the community is abased. It was so with the Maine shacker incendiaries, the doggers who killed the Maine wardens, the New Brunswick salmon spearers and the Wyoming skin hunters. Lawlessness, with respect to one class of statutes here means rebellion against good order and the bonds of society. Desperate miscreants who break the game laws show themselves ready to stand at nothing, not even murder. Sympathy for them as poor creatures who must live and who have a God-given right to

support themselves by taking from nature her fish and her game is sympathy thrown away. "All these skin hunters, pot hunters, poachers, east or west, Adams and Dutchy, McFarland and Graves, Snake river or Nicatous lake, Wyoming or Maine are peculiarly sensitive as to the constitutionality of laws not one letter of which have they ever obeyed, and whose right to life or to live if it is to be earned by doing one's share of work, or earning his share of bread, or performing one single moral duty, is no stronger or more legitimate than that of a house rat. We know of no single instance where complaints have been made to us to send wardens to stop the netting and spearing and dynamiting of fish, or the dogging of deer or the snaring of grouse and we have referred the applicants to the local warden, or to his own manhood, when the reply has not been, 'we dare not, for our house or barns or camps would be burned, our stock poisoned or our lives endangered.'" Such are the deer doggers. What we require is the means to select and pay a dozen good and efficient men whom we can send to any and all parts of the State who shall be ever present and on duty and not only protect our fish and game from slaughter, but our forests from fire. Local wardens are of no account as we have shown. They can always be watched when they dare perform their duty, but are never reliable from neighborly dislike to make a quarrel or fear of loss of life or property. Give us a good square non-exportation law for our game and fish, for such has got to be the speculative mania of the day, such the enterprise and the wealth of the combined game dealers of Massachusetts and New York, that force enough can be put into our forests under our game laws, to sweep off every head of game in one season, if exportation is ever legalized. The capital invested in the refrigerator enterprise, could take but as a small item, all the game in our forests. Where are the countless herds of buffalo that but yesterday blackened our western plains? Where the countless droves of elk, deer and antelope? We have seen a train of cars standing at the Shaw's

tannery at Vanceboro, loaded with buffalo hides from the western plains, and we have now to feed those wild tribes of Indians with our beef cattle, where they formerly fed themselves from the buffalo. Our very western and southern men now come to Maine from their game desolated states to share our protected fish and game, increasing, even, under our very limited means of protection.

Your commissioners have 35,000 square miles of territory to not only protect, but to stock and cultivate from the generous appropriation of eighteen and one-half cents per square mile, \$6500, in all. From this sum \$2000 has to be annually paid to the Associated States Salmon Works for the purchase of our sea and land-locked salmon eggs, all expenses of hatching and distributing the young fish, all expenses of lawsuits, counsel, wardens, travelling expenses and engineer for fishways, etc. When the duties of the commissioners were confined to the inland fisheries alone, and those duties requiring but a portion of their time and attention, their salary was fixed at \$500 per annum. Not only has a large amount of territory been added to the fisheries department by our legislature, but the care and protection of the game of the whole State has been placed under our charge. Formerly the care of the inland fisheries gave us some rest during a portion of the year, but now that the care of the game has been added, the whole of the commissioners time is demanded. If but the salary and the same appropriation required for the fisheries alone, is to be continued to us, we have to request in the name of common sense and justice, that we be relieved of the care of the game.

#### SEA SALMON.

The run of salmon in the Penobscot river has been large in both years, but in 1888 far exceeding 1887 both in size and numbers. The capture in the weirs in tide waters was of corresponding numbers, the present year exceeding in quantity the record of many years past. The angling at the pools below the water works dam has been excellent; many fish

captured by the experts, and many more hooked and lost by tyros. The early part of the season great numbers of fish passed up the river making their way in the high water over the obstructions caused by the new dam at West Great Works. This dam would not have proved an obstruction to the fish, if notice had been given to the commissioners before its inception, that they might have sent an engineer to lay out a fishway to be built contemporary and part of the dam itself. The construction of the new dam destroyed entirely the State fishway built at the old dam below, while the accumulated water flowing over the new dam prevented a plan of a fishway being rendered by the engineer to enable the fish to pass over at all stages of the water. The fishway was promised completion when a plan had been provided by the commissioners, at various early dates, but for reasons as various, was never completed. A date for its final and positive completion was settled as to occur by October tenth of the present year. The fishway is not yet done. Very many of the large salmon, heavy with spawn, too heavy to ascend over any but the most ordinary obstruction were imprisoned in the water below the mills. Wild by their governing instinct to ascend to the wonted spawning beds, breathing the poisoned waters from the pulp mill, trying to penetrate the current of running water flowing beneath the mills, looking in vain for some means to ascend to the waters above the dam. These fish, decimated by the lime and soda poisoned water, by the spear, gaff and net of the local inhabitants, latterly found their way up the Otter river to avoid the tainted water and are there still imprisoned with no means of access to their old spawning ground. Although the waters of the east and west branches of the Penobscot have shown the presence of large numbers of breeding fish which much lessen the State's loss, yet the untoward act of the company in destroying the State fishway without proper notice and authority, and summarily constructing an impassable fence to the fish, however blameless the animus may have been, has subjected the State to great loss.

Every new dam across the Penobscot river necessarily subjects the State to increased expense in protecting the fish, for it is their wont to lay a few days below every new obstruction, at first perhaps to study the new obstacle placed in their path, afterwards, that the change of currents has afforded favorable resting ground. The projected new and immense pulp mill now under construction on the Penobscot river at Enfield, and which involves a huge dam to be built entirely across the river at Piscataquis Falls, and for which the commissioners have rendered plans for a fishway to be completed by the first of April, 1889, will afford a new resting ground for the salmon, which will require that all that section of the river be patrolled by wardens for their protection from the spear and net. In fact all the Penobscot river now requires protection from the Water Works dam to the mouth of the Wissattiquoik on the east branch and the Twin dam on the west branch. If the salmon fishery of the Penobscot river of the Atlantic coast of the United States is to be preserved, there must be no fishing above tide water but with hook and line. This is open to all without favor. No salmon ascend above the Water Works dam but to breed. Every fish killed above that point is just so much deducted from the State's fish production. For to grant a right for two days per week netting above tide water as application has been made for, is virtually to open the door to unlicensed destruction to every fish. We have the fullest confidence in the honor and sincerity of the applicants, but there are men who will kill the last salmon or the last deer, rather than do one honest day's work.

Complaints have been made and much remark current about the disregard of the tide water fishermen to the close time for salmon. In many cases they are guilty. We sent two wardens down the river to judge personally as to whether the weirs were stripped in obedience to the law. They found many of the weirs that it was impossible to decide upon, excepting at low tide. For instance, the opening does not

extend down to the bottom of the pound. Thus, if a weir was visited at high tide, it would show as if the marling was taken off and the weir incapacitated from taking fish; but when visited at low tide, the pound, boarded some distance from the bottom would contain a salmon. If the wardens were present the salmon would be set free; if not, presumably the salmon would be killed. If the warden should take out the salmon he would be charged with taking salmon in close time, the owner of the weir declaring that he himself visited it to save the life of the fish, or that the fish would have escaped at high water. The law should define the opening to be down to the very bottom of the pound or weir. We have been consulted by both parties up river and the tide water fishermen, as to the shortening the open time for salmon. All have proposed a fractional date of the month. We would suggest that the close time for weir and net fishing be July first.

Our success in salmon planting in the Penobscot river has been of the most gratifying character amply repaying the outlay in the purchase, hatching and care of the salmon eggs.

The St. Croix river of which we are joint owners with the Dominion of Canada, has exhibited decided improvement, for much of which we are indebted to the energy and enterprise of Mr. Frank Todd of the Dominion Fisheries Department, who has inspired all with new interest in the cause. Dominion contributions of young fry to the river have been larger than Maine's but we have done our best. We think the St. Croix destined to become an important river for salmon fishing, and will add much to the prosperity of the local inhabitants as well as the adjoining States.

We have made several plantings of salmon for the Kennebec river in the tributaries of the Sandy river. Young salmon of one or two pounds weight have been taken this last summer at Farmington Falls. The first salmon that passed through the fishway at Augusta when it was opened was killed with an extemporized gaff by a Frenchman at Water-

ville. It would require a very remarkable eel, sucker, chub, frog, fish or reptile, under any circumstances eatable, to escape the vigilance of a Canadian French village.

The Penobscot salmon works at Orland, owned by several associated States and the United States and controlled and managed by the United States Fish Commission has entered upon a series of experiments in retaining our young salmon fry in a preserve for at least one year, when they are supposed to be able to more effectually take care of themselves and more largely escape destruction from being devoured by other fishes when turned into their new homes. The initial of this experiment was by the late lamented Prof. Baird always ably sustained by Mr. Atkins. Col. McDonald the new incumbent of the office of United States Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries, enters upon his duties as a worthy and competent successor to his distinguished predecessor. Maine will receive in her rivers the results of these experiments, which want of means would have always denied to Maine. The United States Commission will probably apply to our State legislature for a lease of Craig's pond in Orland, to be used as a preserve of young salmon, from which to draft colonies of yearling fish for distribution. As the care, culture and stocking of that beautiful sheet of water will be of wonderful advantage in disseminating a knowledge of fish culture among the people, as well as a direct benefit to the State, we are led to hope that the applicants will receive prompt and cordial assent from the legislature.

Sea salmon eggs distributed 1887, 104,000 sent to Grand lake and put in St. Croix waters.

25,000 hatched at Orland by C. G. Atkins, and put in Craig's brook. These eggs were presented to Maine by the United States Fish Commission, 1888.

Purchased by Maine.....	232,000
Presented by United States Commission..	148,000
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	380,000

60,000 put in St. Croix at Vanceboro.

320,000 Penobscot and Madawamkeag rivers.

## LAND-LOCKED SALMON.

We have before in our reports remarked, that we have two varieties of these interesting fish so far as size is concerned, viz: those of Sebec lake and those of Grand lakes, being similar in size, making but a small average of some two and one-half pounds, while those of Sebago lake and those of Reed's pond, are very much larger, attaining the size of over twenty-seven pounds. These cases do not hold good of these fish, when the progeny of their eggs are planted in other waters. It has been asserted by many that the size of the waters has the effect of governing the size of the fish. Grand lake or those waters as to size, are surely equal to Sebago. Sebec is larger than Reed's pond. Webb's pond in the town of Weld, is a small sheet of water, and yet it has shown a spent fish of eleven and three-fourth pounds from a stock of Grand lake fish. Wilton pond has shown a seven pound fish of four years growth from Grand lake parentage. We have never found the land-locked salmon indigenous to any waters in Maine where the smelt was not also a native. In all cases of our own planting in new waters where the smelt did not exist, all have failed thus far excepting in the case of Rangeley, and there is to be found some small spring spawning fishes, whose spawning and period of hatching corresponds with that of the smelt, and probably fills its place in supplying food to the young of the salmon. The smaller variety of salmon of Sebec and Grand lake take the fly readily and afford fine sport. While the larger fish of Sebago and Reed's pond are seldom or rarely taken except by trolling with a minnow, or a smelt. How far this will govern, we as yet, have no case to decide upon from Sebago planting.

The wide popularity of this fish, its splendid game qualities, its rare excellence as a table fish, have all led to a wide popularity almost amounting to enthusiasm. The result has been applications from all sources for young fry to stock ponds. People do not seem to be aware that fishes are as peculiar as to the conditions of water as are fruits and flowers

as to qualities of soil. There is hardly one case out of ten when application for land-locked salmon fry to stock waters, if granted, without investigation by the commissioners, but would have resulted in failure and disappointment. One sure and positive test is the presence of smelts, for this always involves the existence of some pebbly, sandy-bottomed brook where the smelt spawn, and which is absolutely essential for the breeding of the young salmon, as well as the health of the grown fish. Four or five years since some cans of fry were sent to Naticus lake. They were transported with great care and fidelity by the respective parties in charge. While standing upon the platform in Bangor this last spring our attention was called to some fine land-locked salmon taken at Naticus lake by a party of fishermen. One of the fish weighed four pounds. If the tributary brooks of these waters can be kept clear of the dynamite cartridge and the spear and the net, these beautiful fish may be bred there to an almost unlimited extent.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF LAND-LOCKED SALMON, 1887.

Eggs taken at Sebago lake, 700,000. Planted as follows, viz: 5000 in Thompson's pond, Oxford. The balance put into tributaries of Sebago lake, viz: Burgess brook, Pleasant pond, Crooked river, Smith brook, Painter's pond, Raymond, Brandy pond, Jones brook and about 100,000 in streams near Bridgton, leading into Highland and Long lakes.

1888—Fifty thousand hatched at Orland from eggs taken at Grand lake and presented to Maine by the United States Fish Commission and distributed as follows, viz:

13,000, Patten's pond, Surrey.

7,000, Chain ponds, Franklin county.

3,000, to J. S. Blank pond, in Mount Vernon.

13,000, Orford's pond, Rockland.

1,000, Fits pond, Eddington.

13,000, Alligator lake.

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50,000

Two hundred and seventy-five thousand taken at Sebago, hatched at Edes Falls and put in Sebago waters.

#### BLACK BASS AND WHITE PERCH.

We still continue to receive applications for black bass to stock ponds. There are now so many ponds in various parts of the State that have been stocked by the commissioners, that our response is always that the people must learn a little more self dependence and wait upon themselves. While the black bass is highly esteemed by anglers for its game qualities, and brings many sportsmen to our State solely to enjoy the pleasure of taking it, it seems not to have earned with the people at large, the reputation of being so good a fish as the white perch. Every fish, as with almost every article of food, has its own special mode of treatment to make it more or less palatable. What would be correct treatment for a trout, would not bring out the fine flavor of a bass. Our method with the black bass is to skin it, then split it open on the back and remove the back bone, spread it open and salt it slightly, place it in the cellar on ice, if in hot weather, and broil it for breakfast the next morning. Try it. There is no better fish thus treated and you will call for more.

The white perch is a favorite with everybody. It abounds in many of our ponds, and were it not for the ever present pest of the poaching netter, might be more plenty and the means of bringing more summer residents to our country towns. Many complaints are made to us, but if the inhabitants of our villages have not the manhood to protect the greatest attraction and source of profit to the country towns from the poacher, surely the State cannot be expected to incur the expense of guardianship to every village lake.

#### MOOSE, DEER AND CARIBOU.

We have remarked upon the wonderful increase of our venison game animals. The moose have been more numerous than we can account for unless by immigration from the Prov-

inces. Some cause has undoubtedly affected this movement, and whether it be wolves, dogs, continued pursuit, or whatever be the cause such is the fact. More have been seen in parts of our State where scarce a deer has strayed for years. This has likewise been the case with deer. Wherever the law against dogs has been enforced, both deer, moose and caribou have made their appearance. The last winter very earnest applications were made to us to send wardens to the border counties of the State to protect them from the Indians from the Provinces who were over in March skin hunting moose in the deep snow and crust of spring. After consultation with the Governor and Council we sent relief, but the aggressors had gone. This evil will be increased this and coming years from the fact that a law has been enacted in New Brunswick, forbidding all killing of moose and deer for several years. One of our wardens last winter seized a whole car load of Caribou meat on its way to Boston market. We should be able to station two or three good wardens in our border counties to arrest all persons guilty of infractions of our game laws. Our fish and game brings so much revenue into our State in the form of money expended for our products of food as well as service and labor, that the State can well afford generously to aid in enforcing our game laws. Surely it is not too much to ask for a few thousands to be expended in producing millions.

Such is the fact, millions are the product of our summer travel all originating in the pursuit of our fish and game. The wives, sisters and daughters now come with the husband, fathers and brothers. We would suggest that the law taking a part of the penalty from the warden which was changed at the last session of the legislature, be restored at the earliest possible date of the session, that we may be able to meet all the skin hunters who will begin their cruel, dirty work after the first deep snows of January. If the law against hounding our venison animals could be enforced, scarce any care or protection would be required before the deep snows visited us.

In making a tour of observation among our sportsmen, it was almost universally requested that we would repeat our request to the legislature for the addition of September to the open time for deer, as also the law to make it penal to kill a cow or yearling moose at any time. We accede to this request, and most earnestly make the appeal for the latter law. Our reasons for the addition of September to the open months we have already given. We are earnest in belief of the reasons we have assigned. No better guard can the timber lands of Maine possess than the presence of good wardens, patrolling the forests on the trail of all hunters.

Give us a good square non-exportation law for venison. Give us the means of rigidly enforcing the hounding law, both for the sake of the game as well as our *farmers' sheep*. Let the close time to nets and weirs in tide water for salmon commence the first minute of July. Cause the opening of the weirs to be made to the bottom. There is some confusion in the minds of our trial justices as to the penalty for using nets above tide water in ponds and streams, as in Sections 51 and 52, Chapter 40, R. S. Let the law be so amended as to impose a fine of \$25 for setting or using a net in ponds or streams above tide water; be \$25 whether any fish are caught or not; and a further fine of \$10 for each salmon or land-locked salmon so caught; and \$1 for every other fish of any kind whatever so caught. The object is to protect the people at large from the netting poacher, who destroys the sport of every honest angler when he takes his holiday.

Money penalties in all cases do not operate equally as a punishment. Some of our most aggravating cases are by persons with whom the fine is hardly regarded as an obstacle in their path of waste and cruelty. There was a case occurring this last summer and in our close time for game, of a person from New York we were told, going through our forests on our water courses with canoes, boatmen, cook and guides with all the vulgar display of unaccustomed means, shooting at and wounding or killing everything that presented

regardless of all those laws of courtesy due to the laws of a State where he paid no tax and was but a visitor. Money penalty would be no punishment to one whose pleasures are cruelty. Could not our laws embrace discretionary power with the magistrate to sentence to imprisonment in such cases?

Respectfully submitted,

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