

for all the autumn spawning fishes, based their untenable objections upon the freedom in fishing permitted on the American side of the lakes and in their rivers.

The early settlers upon the shores of our inland waters had neither the boats nor the fishing gear suitable for fishing in deeper waters:—Many fish were then caught in the rivers, creeks, and bays principally during their spawning seasons, in the spring months; and in the autumn, whitefish and trout were taken on the bars and reefs, bays, their regular spawning places in the lakes. Salmon were invariably killed in the rivers and creeks which they entered only for breeding purposes.

Freezing establishments were not known then. Ice was not stored to enable fish to be handled in the summer months; salting, barrelling and fishing in the spawning season became the custom of the country. Fish were then taken in the more circumscribed places where they were more easily caught. In the spring months, the spawning rivers were fished from end to end with seines, dip-nets, rod and line and spears; the destruction was carried on constantly by day and night.

The rivers and streams served as breeding places. The parent fish that escaped destruction, having performed the office of spawning there, returned largely to the lakes—the young remained in the streams until sufficiently grown, when they were carried down by the freshets to the lakes where, in their turn, they became mature and their instinct directed them to return again to the same waters to reproduce their species.

These great natural sources for keeping up the supply of fish in our inland waters have been largely destroyed. The fouling of rivers and creeks by drainage, sawdust and other refuse of mills and manufactories, obstructions in the shape of dams, the shallowing of waters consequent upon the removal of forests and cultivation of the soil, has unfitted many rivers and streams for the propagation of fish.

At the present time the great lakes must be depended upon almost wholly to keep up a supply of fish food for the people. The spawning grounds in the lakes must now be amply protected, as well as all other waters found suitable for the propagation of fish. Commercial or net fishing of any kind should never have been permitted in such waters as the Detroit and other like rivers and streams which were resorted to by fish solely to perform the office of spawning.

5.—DESTRUCTION OF YOUNG AND IMMATURE FISH AND WASTEFUL FISHING.

Where the destruction of the fishery is so nearly complete as in Lake Ontario there is no difficulty in obtaining details of wasteful fishing and the destruction of young and immature fish.

In the Georgian Bay and Lake Huron the destruction of salmon-trout and whitefish is now full on, the end is rapidly approaching. Small and immature fish are shipped packed in ice to the city dealers and to the United States; those not fresh enough are salted or converted into oil. The fish that are carried away and spoiled in gill-nets during storms, or decay in the water by fishing a greater length of net than can be properly handled, is described by witnesses as covering "tons weight" and "sufficient to foul the waters."