

## Ontario Fishery Commission.

north and south shores, and some 1,700 fishing crafts, large and small. The fishing cannot stand all this net in the water. It is vastly too largely fished and must be reduced, otherwise the fishermen will lose their industry; saw last season three large lots of small 9 and 10-inch pickrel shipped. Close seasons are right in order to keep up the supply of fish food.

*John Yates*, fisherman, Midland (page 241), says all kinds of fish have fallen off very much in recent years, especially whitefish and trout. The small sized mesh and too many fishing has reduced the fisheries. If the size of mesh had been kept up at 5 inches as formerly, the destruction of fish would not have been so great. Pound-net pots should be  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 5-inch mesh. A close season for bass and all kinds of fish should be thoroughly enforced.

*W. J. Hodgins*, fisherman, Midland (page 247):—Fish are now one-third less than when he began. Overfishing and fishing in the spawning time have made a great difference in the fisheries. Quantities of fish are lost by fishermen having too many nets out, and leaving them in the water too long. The fish drown and die. The good fish are kept separate for the American market. The culls which they cannot sell are salted. Culls salted may be fit to eat by some, but would not eat them himself; has known 1,400 rotting fish thrown away at one time; approves of close seasons; something must be done to keep up the fisheries.

*W. W. Church*, fisherman, Midland (page 250), says seines destroyed the fishermen in Lake Ontario. They are a most destructive net. Fish are getting scarcer every year in the Georgian Bay. More salmon-trout are being caught as the whitefish drop off. That is the fish they go for now.

*Joseph Cunningham*, fisherman, Midland (page 257), says there are ten boats fishing now where there was only one ten years ago, making it appear that there is no falling off in fish. A good many fish are lost by drowning in the nets by their being out too long. Such fish are salted and then they go to market, otherwise they could not be used. It is desirable to have close seasons and spawning localities set apart where the fish would not be molested.

*Capt. McGregor*, master mariner, Georgian Bay (page 221), attributes the falling off of fish to fishermen using a greater number of gill-nets than they can attend to. Nets remain in the water until the fish decay and have to be thrown away. Last fall I lifted some gill-nets and at least a ton of rotten fish had to be thrown out of them. The excessive quantity of nets used had as much to do with this waste as the stormy weather. This will deplete the fisheries altogether if allowed to continue. The destructive work goes on in places 3 to 4 miles off shore on the honeycombed bottomed rocks, which are the real spawning grounds of the fish. This destruction applies to both salmon-trout and whitefish.

Neither trout nor whitefish under two pounds should be caught. A 5-inch mesh should be the lowest size licensed. Pound-nets in the locality of Cornell and Thessalon throw away and destroy large quantities of small fish. Late in October and in November fishermen use their old nets and take the chance of their being swept away, frequently full of dead fish. Fishermen now fish in water 70 fathoms (420 feet) deep, 15 and 20 miles out.

*Albert Hutchins*, Midland, Georgian Bay (page 227), says:—Before coming here fished in Lake Ontario about 30 years for whitefish and salmon-trout. The great majority were whitefish, and were caught at Wellington Beach with seines, as many as 5,000 to 10,000 at one haul during the night. This was in the summer time, June and July. These were salted and sold on the ground to dealers. He has caught as many in a season as would allow the owners of the seine for their share, about \$2,000. The other \$2,000 would go to the fishermen. Even more than this number were caught sometimes. Fishing was carried on in the fall of the year also. Whitefish were thick everywhere in Lake Ontario at that time; have known as many as 90,000 being taken in one haul in the night; was present and saw them counted; has often known from 5,000 to 10,000 being taken, and has taken 40,000