

In another part of the same letter the reverend gentleman adds—"I reiterate that both Weirs and Standing Nets ought to be prohibited by law, as being destructive to Shad, and very ruinous to our Fisheries and commerce. "The Brush Weirs," writes Mr. Perley, "are believed to be most injurious to the Shad Fishery, as in almost every case they were found to take the smallest fish only."

Many other authors could be cited to show the injury done to the Shad Fishery by the Weirs, as they capture the small fish, and thus cut off the succeeding year's supply. They are as destructive to the Shad Fishery as they are to that of the Salmon.

The Salmon affecting the Gulf and River St. Lawrence are identically the same species as the *Salmo Salar* of the British coasts,\* possessing the same instincts, and have been diminished by the same means. Both kinds are reproduced in fresh waters, and migrate periodically to the same ocean, where they grow to an equality in size. In the spring and early part of summer the fish which have fattened themselves in the sea return again along the coast to their native rivers, there to deposit their spawn. The instinct by which they are impelled at a certain season of the year to make their way from the sea for this purpose—the early-breeding fish ascending to the higher parts of the streams, the later fish in succession sowing the lower portions with their seed, so that, in a natural state of things, the whole course of a river, so far as it affords suitable spawning ground, becomes stocked with the ova, is a beautiful arrangement.

In their migration to the spawning grounds the Salmon, Shad and other fish seek their pathway for miles close along the shores.—Yarrell † writes "When the Salmon rove along the coast in quest of the mouths of the different rivers in which they annually cast their spawn, they generally swim pretty close to the shore that they may not miss their port; and the fishermen who are well aware of this coasting voyage take care to project their nets in such places as may be most convenient for intercepting them in their course."

Russell‡ says "The chief aim of legislation on the subject, both in England and Scotland from Magna Charta downwards," and it may also be added now in Ireland, "has been to prevent the raising of standing gear in the run of the fish, but this prohibition did not extend to the sea coast, partly because that was not then known to be the run of the fish, and partly because no sort of engine had formerly been invented capable of standing and acting effectively in the open sea. It has now however been discovered that the sea coast is almost as much the course of the fish as is the channel of the river or estuary. The Salmon returning to the fresh water does not lie off in mid-ocean and then, as with a needle and compass, steer

\*Descriptive Catalogue of Fishes.—Perley.

† Hist. of Brit. Fishes, vol. 2, p. 56.

‡ The Salmon, p. 123.