

Amongst the anglers of the Gaspé coast there are many complaints against the depredations of a few species of birds. The salmon net-fishermen and other professionals are not insistent, but the clubs are decided in their charges and have even gone so far on many streams as to place bounties upon the heads of the supposed worst offenders. Such bounties have been established upon the St. Johns and the York rivers according to the following scale: Cormorants, sheldrakes, kingfishers, and divers 25 cents per head, and for a kingfisher's nest with female bird \$2.

Elsewhere than about Gaspé I have heard few complaints against cormorants, but in this locality they are popularly regarded as the worst enemy of salmon and application has been made to have these bounties supplemented by a Provincial grant.

Evidence apparently against the cormorants is not wanting. Knowing that all the salmon smolt must pass through the estuarine mouths of the rivers to the sea and again re-pass them when ascending as grilse the presence of numbers of fish-eating birds of itself is disturbing enough, but when one hears from reliable sources that some twenty-seven fingerling salmon (parr) have been taken from the crop of one cormorant, the evidence superficially looks alarming. Investigation, however, shows that these constantly reported tales are variants of a few cases so often repeated as to greatly exaggerate their importance and hide their exceptional character. But all cormorants found on the upper reaches of the rivers must, until other evidence is forthcoming, be assumed to eat salmon, as they and a few trout are practically the only fish the waters contain.

According to our experience, supported by the evidence of various experienced rivermen, guides, guardians, and fishermen, cormorants rarely ascend the rivers beyond tide influence, but congregate in the shallow saline water of the estuarine mouths. From various frequenters of the rivers we heard that one rarely sees more than half a dozen cormorants within the river proper throughout the year. During our stay we saw and took one bird barely above tidal influence and later obtained two more shot by others in the same vicinity. Our bird we knew by observation