

TRUTH FOR THE PEOPLE

OLD SERIES.—15TH YEAR.

TORONTO, ONT., JUNE 5, 1886.

NEW SERIES.—VOL. VI. NO. 296.

TRY AGAIN.

As the time for closing our Bible Competition approaches, the interest is increasing. The present is a very favorable time to enter for the middle awards, which, as will be seen by reference to our advertising pages, are large and valuable. A good many are availing themselves of the opportunity of having three trials in this competition. This is done by remitting \$3, which entitles the competitor to a dozen and a half of spoons, three trials in the grand distribution of awards, and TRUTH for one year. Let others participate. Try to-day.

OUR FOOD FISHES.

As every one must be aware there has been for many years past a sensible decline in the catch of different fishes. This fact is due to various causes, some of which were inevitable, others of which were avoidable. A large decrease has taken place in the salmon hatchery; but this is to a considerable extent a thing unavoidable. Anybody familiar with the past topography of Ontario knows that many a stream running into Lake Ontario which forty years ago were full of salmon and trout, have now become so foul and shrunken that the sucker only can survive in them, while several have dried up altogether.

The decrease in the volume of water is due to the stripping of the adjacent country of its forest, and to the steady downpour of run upon the unshaded stream. The foulness is due to the fact that the shrunken stream winds through league upon league, not of woodland, but of cultivated fields which furnish refuse, vegetable matter, the excrements of cattle, etc. Put one of the delicately organized members of the Salmonidae into one of these streams, no matter how large the volume of water may be, and he dies in forty eight hours. The vegetable spore in the water, or something of that kind, seems to fasten upon his skin; and in the space of a couple of days he becomes a hideous creature, the loathsome, scurf-like disease having spread all over his skin. The salmon cannot live upon vegetable food. In its eating season it pursues fishes.

Now from these facts it becomes apparent that as agriculture increases in a country watered by salmon streams, the condition of those streams for the accommodation of salmon in the breeding time becomes altered for the worse. Hence there must be a constant decrease in salmon in those rivers subject to the conditions noted. But there are many splendid salmon rivers in Canada whose physical surroundings are a guarantee that their waters must ever remain a desirable habitat for the salmonidae family. It is not unknown to our readers that there is in existence at Newcastle, Ontario, a splendidly con-

ducted fish hatchery, under the management of our capable pisciculturist, Mr. Samuel Wilnot. The object of this establishment is to hatch out salmon, salmon trout and white fish from the eggs, and keep the same in the hatchery till the little fishes are capable of making their own living. They are then taken away, and some are put into one river, and some into another. Some one asks, Is nature not capable of carrying out this part of the work best herself? and our answer is that she is not. Let us take a case, which we are certain Mr. Wilnot could establish. A female salmon ascends a stream, gets upon a shallow, burrows till she makes a hole in the gravel; and into that hole deposits her eggs. There they remain from midsummer till the following spring. But they are ever subject to being carried away by violent floods and by spring ice; and they are always a tempting bait to other fishes. As a consequence it is estimated that not more than three or five per cent. of the eggs deposited in this way ever reach maturity. But over ninety per cent.—we believe that we remember accurately—of the eggs put into Mr. Wilnot's hatchery arrive at maturity.

Now every well-conditioned salmon river has a capacity for accommodating a certain number of salmon, just as a field of steady crop is capable of supporting a certain number of sheep, or heads of cattle. The object of fish culture, as directed by Mr. Wilnot, is to supply the capable rivers and waters with all the fishes they can maintain from infancy to maturity. There is strong, sound proof that his system is accomplishing this end; and those who deny the fact have either some unworthy end in view, or have no knowledge of the matter. In view, then, of the constantly decreasing value of certain salmon rivers, it is plain that the maintenance of the supply by every possible means in the superior streams is a matter of great moment to the country. The question of the protection and propagation of our fisheries is of more importance than all the subjects over which the House of Commons has wrangled for the past five years.

Now we have referred to certain rivers rendered unfit for members of the salmon-family owing to the surcharge of vegetable matter in their waters. But this overcharge, while fatal to the salmonidae, makes the river a perfect habitat for another fish, namely the carp. The carp has been introduced into vegetable-charged streams in Germany; it has thrived there in a marvellous way, and has become one of the chief food fishes for the working people. Mr. Wilnot imported some young carp from the American ponds, and put them into his own. Some of them died because the ponds were at first not suitable; but their growth and increase since have justified Mr. Wilnot's anticipations. Why then should not an effort be made, and a strong one too, to stock all our waters with fishes which must in time form such an important item upon the people's food list? From the first this hatchery establishment, judging from the blue books, has been treated in the most miserly way.

Economy is all very well, but economy is the next thing to criminality when it is displayed in a matter touching the food of the people.

The lobster, as we have already stated, is fast disappearing from overfishing; and there are long stretches of coast in the Baie des Chaleurs where a lobster now is never seen, although a few years ago a flourishing business was done at these places. We must remember that as our fisheries decrease, our population increases. But the politicians do not care very much how the next generation is to fare. They are interested only in the affairs and the fruits of the hour.

Nevertheless we commend this article to the attention of the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. GLADSTONE'S MEASURE.

As to the estimate that Mr. Goldwin Smith puts upon the act of our Canadian Parliament in passing resolutions of sympathy with the Home Rule movement, he is only partly accurate. If it were not for the Irish vote in this country it is not likely that anybody would bother enough about a transatlantic constitutional question to introduce resolutions respecting it. But Canadian sympathy for all that would be with the movement; because our people see that it is an attempt, though not a happy one, to give Ireland a form of domestic government similar to that which has prospered in each province of the Confederation.

No thoughtful man who has studied the working of our Canadian institutions believes that the scheme as originally proposed by Mr. Gladstone, or as since modified, can work. In our experience it has in its vitals the seeds of collision, turmoil and disaster. Englishmen have not condescended to look at our system of government which presents upon a small scale a uniform and harmonious combination of responsible parliamentary bodies, rising from the elective council of the country, to the general Parliament of the united Dominion. Our constitution is made off-hand, and based upon the broadest political and constitutional experience. The causes of discontent in older and more hallowed institutions have been avoided; and our system is an expression of the wisdom of a thousand years.

The British constitution is not a creation, but a growth; and a growth that has had the opposition of kings and of privilege in every shape. Looked at from our point of view it has not nearly reached its full development yet. Nor, in our experience, is safely in limitation; but in expansion. The old proverb here is strongly true: "Wide will wear but tight will tear."

Now to be specific. From our humble experience there is only the one plan by which the desires of Ireland and the safety of the empire can be reconciled, and that is by giving to Ireland a system of domestic legislative power almost exactly like that held by a Canadian Province in the Confederation. A similar local parliament, one chamber, elective say every four years, should be given to England, and a similar one to Scotland. Then each of our world

have control of purely local affairs; matters which, indeed, ought never be permitted to occupy the time of the Supreme Parliament. Then representing the minorities should be a Supreme Parliament maintained where it now stands. The House of Lords, of course, would retain its present status.

All such questions as foreign policy, war and defense, post-office, trade, revenue, taxation, and a portion of justice, should belong to the Federal Government. That system works well enough here; and if Ireland refused to be satisfied, it is impossible at all to please her. She would have what a self-governing colony in our Confederation has; and for all our advanced ideas of constitutional freedom, one of our provinces never complains that she has not liberty enough.

THE FISHERIES DISPUTE.

There has been no little excitement in diplomatic circles over the seizure of certain American fishing vessels by our Dominion officials. The list of seizures so far comprises the *Adams*, captured at Digby, Nova Scotia, for purchasing bait; the *Elia Doughty*, at St Ann's, Cape Breton, for the same offense, and the *Jenny and Julia* at Digby for a similar infringement. The captain of the *Elia Doughty* affirms that he had the right to purchase bait, because he had a permit to "touch and trade" from an American Collector. The captain of the *Jennie and Julia* affirms that he required the herring which he purchased not for bait, but for smoking. The contention by both captains is the same, namely, that they were engaged in trade and not in fishing, and that their permit to "touch and trade" made legitimate their proceedings. The contentions of these skipper seem to have been accepted as an expression of sound international law by certain American officials and statesmen, and diverse newspapers of the commonwealth. There is a difference in the cases of the two named offenders. The captain of the *Jennie and Julia* denies that he wanted his herring for bait (though there is an absolute certainty that for such purpose he did want them) but there is no use in the captain of the *Doughty* putting in a similar plea, for here is his telegram:—"English town, O. B., May 17. Sargent, L. & Skillen, Portland—Our vessel is seized by the Government for buying bait. It is no good. (Signed)—W. Doughty." The telegram was forwarded to the Secretary of State.

Two questions arise. First, of 1818, and, secondly, and trade given to the collector can transfer fishing vessel first of the Treaty of 1793. American fishing vessel, repairs, vessel, war, of on.