

them would now, I am sure, for any consideration, go back to the old system; and they much prefer paying for licenses which promise them protection and security, to running the risk to which they were exposed formerly of seeing strange fishermen who never fished there before, and whom, perhaps, they had never seen, fishing alongside of them. Thanks to the system of licenses, each fisherman has his own fishing ground, where he is never molested, and is always ready to take advantage of what the tide may bring him from day to day.

This system works well, I think; and it would be difficult to find a better and unadvisable, unless there were an evident diminution in the produce of the salmon fishery, to resort to different means of taking this fish.

I might refer to several rivers in which the salmon have increased in an extraordinary manner; but I will only speak of the Grand River in the County of Gaspé, in which, two or three years ago, it was difficult to take even a few salmon with nets. This year General Davis, from the United States, took 160 there with the fly, besides the number taken by the fishermen at their fishing stations. This, it seems to me, is a most satisfactory result.

To conclude, I will add, that according to the reports of all the Fishery Overseers, as well in the Bay of Chaleurs as on the north shore, more salmon than usual visited our rivers this year at spawning time, so that we may expect a large catch in 1868.

OF SPEARING.

For some years past the Government has been doing all it can to protect salmon and trout against the use by the Indians of that destructive weapon the fish-spear.

At first, out of kindness, the Montagnais and Micmac tribes of Indians were allowed the use of the spear, and were permitted to spear both the above kinds of fish, but on the express condition that they should kill fish in that way for their own use only, and should not sell any to white people.

But it was soon found that the Indians, abusing that exclusive privilege, not only gave salmon they had speared in exchange for goods, but also sold such salmon to traders for money, and that at a very low price in most cases, for the purchasers took advantage of the law being against them to pay them as little as possible.

The Government, seeing that, decided at once that the free use of the spear should be abolished, and that the Indians should enjoy the right of using that weapon only in such places as should be indicated in licenses to be granted to them by the Department, such as the River Bersimis, in whose waters they fish with nets and by torchlight, and the River Mingan where they have also leave to set nets during the visit of the Missionaries in summer.

Except in some cases, that part of the Fisheries Act has been very well obeyed this season, both on the North Shore where there were only two cases of contravention, and on the South Shore where not a single complaint of its violation was made. The fact is, that the Government, by stationing a Fishery Overseer at *Ste. Anne des Monts* this year, prevented a great number of fishermen in that neighborhood from indulging in their unlawful habit of spearing fish; and it is to be hoped that, by the use of such effectual measures, the beautiful River of *Ste. Anne des Monts*, which flows from beyond the Chicchacs, and which has some of the finest spawning beds in Canada, will be restored in a few years to its rank as one the best stocked with fish of all our Rivers.

I have a word to add on the subject of the Indians. Their privilege of spearing salmon and trout, by the use of which hundreds of families supported themselves during summer, having been in some degree curtailed, for the purpose of allowing our rivers to become new stocked, these poor people, particularly on the North Shore, find themselves in a very precarious position, for it must not be forgotten that seal fishing and duck shooting are no longer what they were fifty years ago. White men and civilization have caused the partial disappearance of these creatures, particularly within the last few years, when our fishermen from Gaspé and Bonaventure have found out that cod abounds on the North Shore of the River St. Lawrence, and have resorted thither in crowds. Nothing frightens and drives away seals like the noise and the constant coming and