

A.

Numbers of United States vessels frequenting British North American waters.

1.—Mr. Simon Chivirie, of Souris, P. E. I. :—

From 1848 to 1873 about 400 vessels in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Since 1873 not over 200 in same Gulf.

For past 4 years average 300 vessels.

For 1876, average 450.

For 1877 there are 400 U. S. vessels in Gulf of St. Lawrence already. They are coming every day.

Fishing has failed on U. S. coast, and whole fleet will be down on British coast, and will number 900 sail.

2.—Mr. James R. Maclean, of Souris, P. E. I. :—

Number of American fleet in 1858 was 600 to 700 sail. Saw the same year, near Port Hood 450 vessels, chiefly American. Has counted 400 sail anchored under the south shore at East Point. The average of United States fishing fleet frequenting the Bay yearly would be 500, including the year 1874. The number of vessels during the last 3 years has declined, particularly in 1875 and 1876. Has been told that a fleet of 400 seiners would be in this year, 1877.

3.—Mr. John Campion, of Souris, P. E. I. :—

1862—Probably 600 vessels. Two or three hundred in our vicinity. On Cape Breton shore all fished close in shore.

1863—About 300 sail around Sydney alone; all got fares; all inshore. Average catch about 650 barrels; some as high as 1500. The whole of them so far as I know filled their vessels.

1864—About 600 or 700 sail. Average catch 600 or 700 barrels.

1865—About 600 sail. Average catch over 670 barrels.

1866—About 600; about 250 at P. E. Island. They fished so close in shore that the boats had to get out of their way. Catches good.

The American fleet were arriving in the Bay very fast when I left. Some of them in a week caught 300 barrels with seines. One vessel threw a seine around a very large school and found it so large that they had to cut it. It was estimated to contain 1000 barrels.

4.—Mr. Joseph Campbell, of Souris, P. E. I. :—

In 1855 the number of the American fleet would average from 250 to 300 sail.

The American fleet averaged 500 vessels in 1866 and from 450 to 500 in 1867, and 400 in 1869, 1870 and 1871.

I understand there will be from 500 to 600 vessels in the American fleet in the Bay this year, on account of the failure of the fisheries on the American coast. This number of American vessels engaged in mackerel fishing and from 50 to 100 more are engaged in the cod fishing.

5.—Mr. William S. MacNeill, of Rustico, P. E. I. :—

In 1852 there were from 100 to 150 American vessels in the centre of the bend of P. E. Island and were inshore most of the time. In 1860 often saw 50 or 60 American vessels come out of Malpeque and come and fish right inshore.

6.—Mr. Poirier, of Tignish, P. E. I. :—

I have seen 300 sail come into the waters between Cascumpeque and Minnigash. They fished close to the shore. The Americans run as close to the shore as they can safely do, and I have very often seen them run so close that they grounded.

7.—Honble. Mr. Howlan, of Cascumpeque, P. E. I. :—

In 1854 at the commencement of the Reciprocity Treaty the tonnage employed in the American fleet was about 154,000 tons, from 1854 to 62, it ran up to 203,000 tons odd, and in 1868, two years after the Treaty was abrogated, it fell to 84,000, caused by a number of vessels going into other business, for one thing, into the coasting trade and other lines of business. Another reason was the irritation caused by the surveillance exercised over them in the Gulf.

I have seen 340 United States vessels annually in my harbor generally when there was a gale of wind. Very few have visited the harbour within the last two or three years. They say that the present time 400 vessels are on their way to the Canadian fisheries, and that 400 more are following them. My own impression is that there will be from 500 to 600 American vessels in the Bay this year.

The estimates of 350 American vessels is no guess work. The number of vessels is pretty well known, Canso, Souris and Georgetown are generally the headquarters of the fleet in the Gulf. The