

This was a most unfavourable season for the catching of parent fish. In the early part of the season the rivers were very low, and salmon could not ascend, although they were reported as unusually plentiful in the tidal waters during the month of September. Then, during the month of October it rained heavily and continuously, so that it was impossible to work the nets. This is particularly true of the Margaree River. Salmon were reported very plenty in the Margaree, but could not be taken. In the Upper Middle River, where nets could be worked, some days the catch was above the average. The few days that nets could be handled in the Sydney River the catch was better than ever before. In all the rivers operated on the salmon were more plentiful than for some years back, but for the reason of the heavy rains we could not catch them.

Condition of the Hatchery.

The present condition of the hatchery is good. This fall the floor and bottom work of the building was found to be in such bad condition that it could not be repaired. All the bottom work had to be taken out and replaced by new material, which necessitated considerable labour and expense. New sills, trimmers, joice and floor had to be put in; also, the posts were considerably decayed, and had to be cut, up as high as the window sills. On one side new rough boards had to be put on outside and inside 3 feet high, and the same shingled on the outside and the inside wainscotted. The building is good now for eight or ten years more without any further repairs. It will, however, require painting, which will cost about \$80 for the outside and \$40 for the hatching room inside.

Increase of Salmon.

The beneficial results arising from the operations of this hatchery are becoming more apparent every year. The early run of salmon in the Mira River this season was far above the average. The few fishermen there, though poorly equipped, did better than for years past. Mr. Robertson, while engaged in building a bridge on the Sydney River, reports having seen more salmon sporting around there than ever before; so much so, he says, that some of the inhabitants decided to furnish themselves with nets for the coming season. Mr. Grantymire, of Little Bras d'Or River, reports having seen shoals of salmon of a very small and uniform size, and in numbers never seen there before. Mr. George Munroe reports the same of the Margaree River, having seen them on several occasions about the Margaree Harbour bridge. Mr. John Brown, at Big Pond Cranberry (entrance of the Sydney River) took 75 salmon in three days, all weighing from 9 to 11 lbs., and in the one week scored 100. I am informed that the Mira fishermen are very poorly equipped, some of them fishing with only the half of an old net, none of them having anything like proper gear. This is true of many of our salmon fishermen, but I understand they are to prepare themselves better for the coming season. The work of this hatchery is only beginning to show itself. Some men are very slow in giving credit to an institution of this kind, especially when they look upon it as experimental. Most of these men never heard of fish culture till this establishment was built, and look upon it as robbing nature of its work.

Land-locked salmon could be very suitably planted in some of our lakes. There is a chain of lakes near Margaree, called Lake Law, which I think would be most suitable for them. Several gentlemen from the States, who are thoroughly acquainted with the habits and requirement of these fish, pronounce these lakes suitable. At present these lakes are practically useless, as far as yielding any kind of fish is concerned. If stocked with land-locked salmon they would become of great value.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

C. A. FARQUHARSON.

Officer in Charge.