

should do this in order to keep up the early runs, which in most marketable fish are by far the most valuable. It should also prevent the last spawners from being captured, as the late fish are always in a poor, flabby and unseasonable condition for food. The capture of early runs has in the case of salmon rivers had the effect of wholly destroying them and of rendering such rivers late. Late rivers imply a large proportion of degenerate, unsightly and undesirable fish. Prohibitions again have been enacted to prevent the disturbance of one kind of fish by fishing operations carried on for other kinds of fish. Thus nets for whitefish, pickerel or dore, and for coarse fish such as catfish, pike and suckers were prohibited in the Bay of Quinte for many years, not to protect the fish just mentioned, but on other accounts. Thus in summer such nets would take spawning bass, or, at any rate, would disturb them while spawning, and later would interfere with the bass anglers who desired these fine black bass grounds to be free from nets at the time. The fishermen themselves were not strongly averse to this summer net prohibition for three reasons—(a) they were employed by the anglers as boatmen and in other ways; (b) their nets readily rotted and became useless if used in hot weather; (c) catfish and other coarse kinds are soft and in poor condition in summer and fall, whereas in the cold winter months they are most valuable and in prime condition for market.

Very various, indeed, are the grounds for enacting close seasons and the reasons for enforcing them, but the ultimate object is the promotion and improvement of the fish supply, and conferring thereby substantial benefit on the fishermen and the public.

It is from the fishermen and from the public, therefore, that the authorities ought to look for every aid in the laudable task of fish protection. That such aid is not always to be relied upon is a matter of common knowledge. Indeed, it is too often the case that the parties likely to derive most benefit permanently from a brief protective prohibition do not realise that such benefit must inevitably accrue to them.

The published views of a well known Ohio fisherman may be given as an example. He said:—'Regarding this matter of a close season I have certainly some convictions. The difficulty along our part of the line of Lake Erie, which we have to encounter, is that the time that you can take these fishes best for the market is in the month of November, and in no other month to speak of can you take any whitefish in the head of Lake Erie. It is true that the head of Lake Erie is the natural spawning ground probably for the whitefish, but if you do not take them in the fall with pound-nets and other appliances in the head of Lake Erie, they must then take them with gill-nets. Now there is no use of making a close season to shut out this fishing article of food. You take the fishing of Ohio, and you take the month of November out of the fishing month, and you might just as well hang up your nets entirely on the American side, that is, on the headwaters. The month of November is the only time that it is possible to catch the fish, that is fish for commerce.'

A prominent member of a fishing firm in Michigan said: 'I think a close season to commence the first of September and end the first of January, would be what we ought to have. I think the State ought to take the money that is expended in hatching fish, and pay the fishermen to stop fishing during the close season; that is, pay the fishermen for their time while they are lying still in the fall, during the fall fishing season.'

Such an expression of opinion is proof of the unwillingness of the fishing community to realise the purpose and meaning of close seasons for fish. Public opinion does not appear to have reached the necessary state of enlightenment. The California Fishery Commissioners when they reported regarding salmon protection on the depleted Sacramento River in 1882, said:—

'The Commission has much satisfaction in being able to report that there now appears to exist a more harmonious feeling upon the necessity of preserving the fish in our rivers. During the year last past, from all the information we have, there has been exhibited, on the part of the conductors of the canning business, a fair and earnest desire to enforce the close season, and a commendable realization of the importance of preserving the fish from wasteful destruction, and allowing