

THE CANADIAN SPORTSMAN AND NATURALIST.

No. 4

MONTREAL, APRIL 15th, 1881.

VOL. I.

OUR SUCCESS.

When this journal was issued in January, it was with a sanguine anticipation that it would be well received by our Canadian people, among whom are many true sportsmen and students of Natural Science. We have not been disappointed; the list of subscribers has steadily increased, and we have now several of the most intelligent men in the Dominion supporting it. The periodical is therefore a success. We have a clear path before us, and our promises will be fulfilled.

THE MINGAN RIVER.

Mingan is an old Hudson Bay trading post, in by-gone days the most important and remunerative belonging to the Hudson Bay Company. A short distance east from the store houses, the good old river enters saltwater; one may say almost opposite the west point of the Island of Anticosti. Correctly speaking, the river has but two pools; yet, when there is a good run of fish, with proper management, three rods may be employed with comfort. There is no house near the pools; the surroundings have, therefore, wild charms to a stranger, and these arise principally from its historic associations as a camping-ground and retreat of British military officers from the Garrison of Quebec. Between the coast and the falls, the river takes the form of a crescent. A tributary enters it on the left, called the "Manitou," having a pool and fall of ten feet. Doubtless, salmon pass through this branch to their spawning-beds. At the base of the "Manitou" falls, we caught sea and brook trout, and it was here that we obtained the knowledge that *Salmo fontinalis* visited the sea. When Mingan was visited by us in 1868, the river was leased by Sir Greville Smyth, of England. The following occurs in our note-book:—

Arrived on July 16th, and was hospitably received by Peter Mackenzie, Esq., in charge of the post. The river, although narrow, is pretty as one follows it inland. It has abundance of sand-banks at its mouth; a grand estuary where the best of sea trout fishing can be had at this season. A tributary called the "Manitou" enters it about half-way from its entrance to the sea, and the fishing-pools are of easy access.

The gentlemen then fishing it, were almost daily tormented by Indians representing that they had nothing to eat, consequently they were supplied with as much food as Sir G. Smyth and his party could spare. But the supply of salmon given to them by the anglers was not considered sufficient to satisfy the Indians in camp at Mingan. One of the crafty aborigenes circulated a report among the tribe that he had seen a white man gaff a salmon in the whirlpool at the base of the falls. The report took well among the hungry Indians, and they at once determined to follow the white man's example. They notified the fishery guardian of their intention, and, on the following Sunday, a number of Indians entered their canoes to proceed to the falls where they speared several fish before the guardian could prevent them. The whirlpool of the Mingan is an extraordinary pot or round hole at the base of the fall, where a great force of water is kept in a continual circular motion. In this pot or whirlpool, in July, innumerable salmon circle, each awaiting its chance to leap to the first lodge. Here then, with spear in hand, did the Indians take their sweet revenge, procuring all the fish they required. The Mingan Indians should not then go to the pool for salmon, they were allowed by the Government the privilege to net trout near the mouth of the river. However, this grant appears to have been disregarded by them. They had trout