

prepared
an appoint-
ment, whose
duties, capa-

needs.
not do, it
is to retain
from the
orders, as
rendering
estimate
they are
the large
upon
or no loss
of the
subjected
the habit
the arrears
the cost,
the rate at
not resist
payment

to which
has ap-
peared. But,
they are of
much have
May last
and, he for
we report
previous

er of the
movement
Grants,
applied.

th, round
fisheries,
ried, has
ervation.
and where
available
supplies
ordinary
newwich.

In Prince Edward Island, during the last three or four years, there appears a most promising increase in the export of fish, as compared with former years. Yet fishermen, as a class, can hardly be said to exist, although the Island is surrounded by the best fishery in the world,—so profitable in fact, that hundreds of schooners are annually attracted to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence from the northern coast of Nova Scotia, and from the more distant coasts of Maine and Massachusetts.

In view of these facts, and of the comparisons which they establish, and of the still more prominent fact that the preservation of the fisheries in the Island, limited as it is, compared to the immense advantages possessed, has been in no way promoted by the reservation, the undersigned are clearly of opinion that the Fishery Reserves of Prince Edward Island should be abandoned, and that the territory, thus nominally dedicated to a branch of industry which will more surely grow from the operation of natural causes than from adventitious aids, should be left to the unrestricted use which the necessities or intelligence of the people may suggest, or the interest of commerce require.

Practically, as already shown, these reserves have never been respected. The reclamation by the Crown, or of persons claiming under the Crown, in case of licence issued, of those parts of the reserve which have been actually reduced into possession, and improved land cultivated (if possible at all) could only be accomplished by means of expensive and harassing litigation, rendered still more embittered by a sense of injustice. It is difficult to get over an acquiescence of nearly a century in the enjoyment of property untrammelled by the exercise of a dormant encumbrance reserved in the grant, even though there be no Statute of Limitations in the Island against the Crown. It would be equally difficult, after a lapse of 90 years, territorially to define where that reservation commenced and where it ended. The sea coast has changed, in many parts materially receded. From the north point to the east point, is the great curve which constitutes the bight of Prince Edward Island, and which is the principal resort of American fishermen, there is, and has been, as correctly as can be gathered from observation, and the statements of those who have longest lived on that coast, a receding of the mainland at the rate of two feet a year. On one of the islands in Richmond Bay, there was formerly a French burying ground, which it must be assumed, was originally some distance above the water level; 15 or 20 years ago coffins were washed out by the sea.

From the north point to the west point, where the coast is bolder and more rugged, the receding has been at the rate of one foot a year, and from the west point to the east point, on the south and convex side of the Island, at the rate of one foot and a half a year.

At one point, near Cape Egmont, within the memory of living men, the mainland has receded 300 feet. Thus it may fairly be assumed that at least 200 of the 500 feet have gone since the date of the grants.

The enforcement of the legal right to the encumbrance at the