

## Marine and Fisheries—Fisheries Branch.

port and Lubec began canning till June 1st when the catch in the weirs did not equal more than 25 per cent of the demands of the canneries. However, the prices per hog-head of herring ran up very high on several occasions. Many years have passed since such high prices were received by our weir fishermen, and it is hoped that the contemplated increase in the pack of the sardine factories will ensure better prices in the future for our weir fishermen.

Steaming around Cape Sable on May 17th I found the U. S. mackerel fleet cruising for mackerel between Lockeport and Lunenburg. The first school of mackerel, consisting of 50 barrels, was taken off Liverpool on May 19th by one of this fleet. We cruised with this fleet between Lockeport and Halifax till 25th inst., when you ordered us to cruise as far as Canso. A run was made to Halifax where we landed our six-pounder gun and Winchester rifles, and received a Gatling with a complement of Sniders.

Cruising eastward to Canso and the Cape Breton coast I found at intervals vessels of the U. S. mackerel fleet, who were making very poor catches, which they attributed to stormy weather and frequent fogs.

North Sydney was reached on the 7th of June where the ship was bunkered and Inspector Bertram joined us. With this officer on board we proceeded on a cruise up the coast visiting numerous lobster factories, also cruising up Big Bras d'Or Lake, where Mr. Bertram left the ship.

After passing through St. Peter's Canal a run was made towards Lunenburg, arriving there on the 11th of June, and Inspector Hockin joined the ship. Steaming into St. Margaret's Bay and as far east as Dover, the resident mackerel fishermen were found to have set their mackerel traps without previously procuring a license for same from the local fisheries officer. Considerable opposition against the taking out of licenses was experienced by us from the several trap owners, but eventually they all paid the requisite fees and the licenses were issued to them.

Not until June 16th did we complete our work with those trap fishermen, and were then ordered by you to cruise to the Bay of Fundy. We arrived at Passamaquoddy on the 20th where fishing of all kinds was found in full operation. The fishermen were making fairly good catches and good prices were being realized by them.

During the short visit to my district, numerous fishery disputes were settled, overseers visited and licenses and orders were issued regarding various matters requiring immediate attention. On June 29th the Bay of Fundy was again left behind and Halifax was visited for the purpose of beginning the patrol of coast between there and Canso, and preventing the illegal lobster fishing so long carried on there during previous close seasons. We cruised along the coast to the eastward, visiting all the harbours and destroyed many hundreds of traps. Thousands of lobsters were liberated, factories were visited to see that they were not in operation, and suspected persons were warned of the fate that awaited them should they become implicated in the violation of any of the lobster regulations.

On the 12th and 13th July we ran into the greatest number of traps, setting between Dover and Canso, where the practice of fishing up to the 15th of July had been carried out each year. This was quite feasible here, on account of its proximity to the line where the close season does not commence till the 15th. By the havoc that we made here at Dover among the lobster gear, I am of the opinion that the fishermen will not exhibit the same carelessness in leaving their lobster gear in the water in future at the expiration of the lobster season. On July the 15th, at Canso, I received, according to your instructions, from Messrs. Whitman the tug "Active" and placed her in the Government service in charge of First Officer Burns of the "Curlew." Two seamen were given him also, and two from the "Osprey," and her equipment was completed by the 22nd. We left Canso in company and began cruising westerly after illegal lobster fishing.

This work between Canso and Halifax was continued till August the 16th, when Inspector Bertram was taken on board at Port Hawkesbury and we began a cruise around Cape Breton in the interests of the various fisheries, lobsters particularly. Numerous factories were visited, and warnings given to several suspected persons. Mr.