

# THE CANADIAN SPORTSMAN AND NATURALIST.

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*We wish to publish the Game Laws of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Correspondents in the above Provinces would do us a favour by addressing authentic copies to 806 Craig Street, Montreal.*

## THE NATASHQUAN.

The river bearing the above name, meaning "where the seals laid," enters the sea on the north shore of the Lower St. Lawrence, some distance below the settlement of Esquimaux Point, and almost opposite the north-east end of the Island of Anticosti. The harbour of Natashquan is 244 marine miles from Gaspé Basin, and 372 from Quebec. The entrance to the river is about four and a half miles east from the settlement, and the whole of the coast at this place consists of sand. Iron sand also occurs in many places in abundance. It appears to us that the Natashquan has been during early ages, a great drift outlet from the far interior, as on its banks for twenty miles inland, the iron sand can be found at this day. The Chief of the Mountain Indians informed us that this river decreases in width and depth as one proceeds north; it branches off into a number of small rivulets, and that iron sand is seen far in the interior. Its estuary has doubtless undergone many early changes, and we are told they still continue. The channels of the river are greatly encumbered by sand, making it difficult for an ordinary keeled boat to reach the camp near the falls. This was the case in 1867, when two men were required to pole the tortuous stream. Half way between the estuary and the fall, the river is blocked up by three long islands, producing a strong current on the eastern channel. The fall is not more than nine feet, but on account of an almost squarely formed island above it, the force of water is great. It was the daring attempt to leap this

nine feet fall in a canoe, that cost Mr. Astley his life last summer. During the year 1867, only one salmon netting station was allowed by Government, and it placed in salt water one mile west of the Hudson Bay Post. We are now informed that there are nine or ten salmon nets placed in the estuary; two from the large sand island in the centre of the river outlet; one a short distance west of the Post, and three above it on the same side, and four from the opposite bank. Now we believe this is over doing a river, which was always considered a good surface fishing one. It is therefore no wonder that *Salmo salar* is becoming scarce in this wholesale dry-salting, smoking and tin-canning age. The Natashquan from its coast-arenaceous situation, and wide extent of estuary will always be a good salmon river, but many agencies are at work to destroy its prolific proficiency; for instance, during our visit we made a charge before Commander Fortin against the Indians then camping near the Post, to the effect that when they depart for the north in August or September, up the Natashquan, they reside close to the salmon spawning grounds, and spear the fish indiscriminately. The speared salmon are spread open, dried, smoked, or formed into heaps in the woods for future use in case of want, or not being successful in the capture of caribou; but should they be fortunate in obtaining plenty of the latter, these heaps of speared salmon are not required, but are allowed to rot or become food for Labradorian quadrupeds. The Chief on being asked if the charge was true, answered that it was perfectly true; that he had no control over his people at this time. He honestly stated they speared the salmon to revenge the Government for taking from them the liberty of fishing the rivers when visiting the mission. What is to prevent these Mountain Indians, who range the coast from the Saguenay to