

netting was no longer tenable in the estuary, owing to the fouling of the nets, the fisherman would up stakes, moving to head of tide, amongst the islands, closing up the channel. For years the salmon sufficient to keep one small canning establishment running were hauled some of them 20 miles. On the advent of confederation a change took place. Indians were restricted and soon compelled to abandon spearing. Whites were more sharply looked after, and the channels in tide way better regulated, no moving of nets allowed, and the presence of anglers on the rivers assisted their protection. Such is a synopsis of the salmon fisheries from 1837 to 1871. Previous to 1837 I believe fish were plentier, as I have heard stories of the older settlers getting big hauls and the Indians seizing them and cutting the seine. Prior to the advent of lumbering in 1830 there were but few settlers on the river, as the lumber was the main inducement to settle. On the advent of the through railway in 1876 canning ceased nearly all over the provinces and shipments of fresh salmon was the order of the day. At that time one freezer existed in the Bay, now there are some 17 having more or less salmon, and for the 3 months of the present year—June, July and August 750,000 lbs. have found their way to Uncle Sam, irrespective of the shipments to Canada west, to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, for although both last named places have salmon of their own, our shippers will tell you quite a quantity goes to towns in both provinces from our northern bay. Still, no doubt, since fishing closed the freezers have added their quota and some 25,000 lbs. have been called upon from the Fraser River to supply the demand. The question now is are the salmon fisheries increasing or diminishing? Every unbiased, practical fisherman will tell you the salmon have increased these last 12 years, and during the last five, the supply has been wonderfully uniform, and unless from local causes such as storms, or injury to nets, a good, fair fishery has been obtained in many localities, extra to what was expected. Had no restrictions or Licensee Law been in force, no doubt netting would have been largely increased, as I have seen fifty new applications for net fisheries in one year in one division refused. Owing to the Government affirming their right to resume, in event of death or removal of a Licensee, all salmon net stations, the netters have formed an association to resist this encroachment on what they claim as their rights, and ask the Government to grant or to acknowledge these rights in perpetuity to them, their heirs or assigns. Now if they owned these rights, as they claim "why ask it?" According to English law and decisions the crown is only custodian of tidal waters for the public and they cannot be alienated, unless for some public benefit of general utility, and tidal water is defined as being below high water mark where tide ebbs and flows.

Certainly the netters cannot with any grace refuse the general public and to those riparian owners who by law have a right (which