

The expense of protecting the rivers, although much visible result must be the work of years, is, I think, well worth the cost. The fishery service will have attained its highest state of efficiency when it can be conscientiously reported that "there is nothing to report," but as long as the least intelligent of the community continue to hold the opinion that any person on the plea of being a "poor man" has a right to steal from the public water farms for his own individual benefit, so long must public money be spent in the fishery service.

As the result of personal inquiry into the circumstances of a good many persons known or suspected to have hitherto made a business of poaching, I have found that rarely, if ever, does the privilege of poverty they claim arise from the impossibility of obtaining honest and legitimate work, and not in any case has that poverty been ameliorated by the idle and precarious pursuit of plundering the streams.

VARIOUS FISH.

A close season is wanted for bass. An extension to this Province of the regulations that obtain in Nova Scotia under Order in Council, of date 28th April, 1875, would answer the purpose. This sportsman's fish is now found in but a few places of the island, where it is ruthlessly slaughtered by net and spear, but not often taken by hook and line. Referring to last year's Report, page 269, I beg to renew the suggestion that a small appropriation is required to tow out and boom a mass of drift logs at Costain's Creek, Miminigash, Prince County, beneath which, at the falling of the tides, some hundreds are annually crushed to death. As that is the place most frequented by bass, the destruction is the more lamentable.

Eels of the first quality are abundantly taken in moveable traps of wire and lath in King's County, but elsewhere are speared through the ice for home consumption. No systematic attempt is made to send them to market. The hint may be worth something that smoked eels are considered a delicacy by the German residents of New York. Pickled eels are quoted high in the Gloucester market.

Clams are found in plenty between high and low water mark in the sandy margin of almost every estuary. Formerly they were much used for mackerel bait, but are now almost entirely superseded by chopped herring. Four cents per quart, shelled, was about the store rate given to the Acadian French, who made a business of collecting them. At this price it is a question for commercial men to estimate whether it would pay to can them for the market of New England, where these bivalves seem to be a kind of institution. At all events none are canned here, although I observe they appear among the preserved products of the United States Fisheries, and samples were sent to the Berlin Exposition.

The manufacture of "finnan haddies" (haddock) has not yet been attempted here.

Smelts, abundant in every brook, are only made use of for home consumption. It seems noticeable that while the canning factories preserve most kinds of fish, flesh and fowl, this valuable little fish, so well suited for a condiment, should be passed over. A trial would probably show that smelts may be prepared to resemble sardines more closely than do the fry of herrings that are used for that purpose at Eastport, Maine, and elsewhere.

At the Berlin and St. John, N.B., Expositions premiums were taken for sardines prepared in oil, in vinegar, in mustard and in spice, and it may be worth while for some enterprising canner to try similar preparations of smelts. A close season is scarcely required as yet. Two instances of seining smelts for manure in Queen's County came to light, and steps were taken in regard to the offence.

Halibut fishing scarcely figures in this report. Eighteen hundred pounds were taken as may be said as accident. The halibut fishery requires, for its full development, an equipment that none of our fishermen possess. The Americans who came into Canadian waters expressly equipped for halibut fishing set about 200,000 yards, or ten miles, of ground lines twice a day, with hooks six feet apart, in two to three hundred fathoms of water, and the result is lucrative. It is obvious that such a