

4.—DUNK RIVER HATCHERY.

PROVINCE OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Report of the Officer in charge of Prince Edward Island Hatchery, 1888.

I beg to submit the following report of proceedings at the Dunk River Hatchery for the past year.

In the fall of 1887, 1,000,000 eggs were laid down in good condition. They did remarkably well up to the 22nd of March, when one of the heaviest freshets ever known on the river carried away our water gate and reception house.

I wired the superintendent to know what was to be done. He answered me back immediately to hire men to carry or pump water on the eggs night and day until further orders. A few days after Mr. A. B. Wilmot, of Bedford Hatchery, was directed to come over from Bedford to assist me. We got the ova into as small a compass as possible, so that we could keep plenty of water running over them all the time, and thus keep them in good condition until they could be carried away. Mr. Wilmot then returned to Bedford and did not come back until the *Northern Light* Steamer was able to cross the straits about the first week in April. Mr. Wilmot brought boxes to pack the eggs in for transportation to the Bedford Hatchery, which was done immediately on his arrival. About 800,000 eggs were so much injured that they were not fit to take away.

As the damages at hatchery were not repaired, there was nothing done here this season.

Increase of Salmon.

Salmon were never so plentiful since the hatchery was built as they were this season. On account of the heavy rain they came up the river earlier than usual. A great deal of trouble was caused by poachers this fall. On account of the dam being broken, the fish could run up several miles further, and there being so much woods along the river, poachers were on the look out day and night to catch the salmon. They would come to the river disguised so that you could not tell who they were. I had to apply to the Inspector of Fisheries of the Island for some special wardens, and they did very good service. Several boats were captured, some of which were claimed by the inhabitants as stolen. We destroyed two of the boats, as they were of no value, except for poaching on the river.

There are reports of large numbers of clean salmon being seen around the coast, and there have been large numbers caught in different places that we get no official account of at all. I have it from good authority that a Mr. Myrick, of Tignish, two years ago, caught a large number of salmon weighing from ten to fifteen pounds in traps, of which we get no official account. One person said he saw 1,000 frozen salmon in his establishment at one time. It is reported generally, and I believe also, that there is a very marked increase in all the rivers that we have planted fry in, which goes to show that the hatchery has been the means of helping to make this increase.

More Wardens Wanted.

If this hatchery is not repaired before another season there will have to be two wardens appointed for up river, and one below, also, as I cannot protect the whole river properly without these wardens. It took up nearly all my time day and night travelling up and down the river, and I could not prevent them from poaching. Several shots from revolvers were fired at us in the night to frighten us and drive us off the river. There will also have to be one warden appointed for Wilmot River, as there is no one but myself to look after that river and I cannot properly see to both rivers.

With regard to breakage of the dam it was caused principally by trees that were cut and felled across the river above the pond, and they came down with the freshet.