

country. If it were possible to prevent the snaring of Ruffed Grouse, the present protection would, no doubt, be ample; as it is, however, the *habitants* pursue their work of trapping unmolested, and the only feasible way of stopping this would seem to be by prohibiting the sale of these birds after a specified time; the law would not then be violated to such an extent as the market hunters would not be able to dispose of their game and would in consequence restrict their efforts to obtaining a supply sufficient for their own use.—WALLACE.

THE DESTRUCTIVE BRUSH WEIRS.

That there is cause for the decrease of Salmon along the shores of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the tributaries of the St. Lawrence, cannot be denied. They have steadily decreased in these waters since 1841. The blame for paying high prices for this wholesome food, must rest on the shoulders of the Government, who have allowed the inhabitants residing along the sea-board to erect "Stake or Barrier Nets" and "Brush Weirs." The "Stake-Net" is a Scotch invention introduced into Canada about the year 1818, and they have been found effective modes of capture, by intercepting the fish in their approaches to the rivers. They are formed of strong netting attached to "Stakes" driven into the shore, and these nets extend from high to low water mark; thus placed before the course of the fish on their way to the breeding grounds. The "Stake-Net" terminates in a chamber or trap from which there is no escape. The "Brush Weir" is more destructive; composed of wicker-work or brush-wood, it also has a chamber with a narrow entrance wherein all kinds and sizes of fish are caught at the ebb of the tide. These destructive traps are self-acting, working night and day. Although the fishery regulations require an open space to be made in the lower part of the chamber to be covered with net-work to

admit the passage of small fishes, the provision is defeated by quantities of seaweed and other floating substances which close the netting at every tide. We advise the Government to destroy every one of these warring fences at once and forever. "Stake-Nets" should be absolutely abolished in the Lower St. Lawrence. In 1841, Salmon were abundant; 50,000 being the annual catch on one of the Labradorian rivers, and during the latter year, 1,800 Salmon were taken during one tide at Tadoussac. Other rivers along the Lower St. Lawrence were then equally productive, but the "Weirs" and "Stake-nets" extended rapidly, and since then Salmon, Shad, Cod, Herring, Striped and Sea-Bass have been annually destroyed by "Brush Weirs." These engines when first placed in Scottish and Irish waters, produced profitable returns to the Weir-holders; but, during this time, destructive results so far as regarded the propagation of Salmon. The British Government became alarmed, and a scientific commission was appointed to make enquiry as to the cause. The following is an extract from the Report of Sir William Jardine, one of the Commissioners. It speaks for itself.—

"In adverting to the evil done to the Fisheries by the use of these fixed barriers, and in pointing out the course believed to be indispensable to preserve what remains of these Fisheries, may be interfering with the gains of a few, who, in large estuaries or other favored localities, still reap a precarious harvest from their use; but I hold it to be due to the public that the destruction caused by the modes of fishing hitherto and still practised should be frankly indicated without regard to the private gains of any individual. There is no doubt that the longer these obnoxious Engines are permitted to exist the more difficult will be their removal. The instances in older countries of the destitution, the riots, the bloodshed and loss of life caused by these nuisances to fishing and navigation ought to be a warning to us."

Here in Canada, we have a Fishery Department which is cognizant of the fact that these "Brush Weirs" are annually a source of