

## APPENDIX No. 10.

## REPORT OF W. H. VENNING, Esq., INSPECTOR OF FISHERIES FOR THE PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK, FOR THE YEAR 1880.

FISHERIES OFFICE, ST. JOHN,  
31st December, 1880.Hon. J. C. POPE,  
Minister of Marine and Fisheries,  
Ottawa.

SIR,—I have the honor to submit the following Report and remarks on the fisheries of New Brunswick, together with a statement of the catch for the year now closing.

## SALMON.

From some causes unknown even to scientific enquirers, there has been a very serious falling off in the catch of salmon during the past year. In some localities but little over half the usual catch has been made, while in the whole Province the decrease has been fully thirty per cent as compared with former years. I regret my inability to assign all the causes of so serious a failure in one of our most important fisheries. No doubt some unusual and exceptional cause has been in operation, but, so far, it has escaped the research of both fishermen and *savants*. But, in addition to this unusual and unknown cause, there can be no doubt that in all our estuaries and rivers the number of nets has been excessive and out of proportion to the stock of fish. In view of these facts I must again express my conviction that no additional nets should be licensed in any of our salmon rivers or their estuaries. And it becomes a matter for serious consideration whether the weekly close time should not be lengthened by at least twelve hours. Under present circumstances I know of no other practical means of enabling a sufficient number of parent fish to reach their spawning beds to keep up the supply.

## BASS.

This fishery shows signs of improvement, and the catch exceeds somewhat that of last year. In Northumberland, where the new smelt regulations have prevented, in a great measure, the destruction of young bass, the improvement has been most marked, and at the present time this fishery is yielding very encouraging returns. If any doubt existed as to the wisdom of the protective measures adopted by the Department, the marked improvement now visible in the Miramichi fishery would effectually dispel it, and I trust the present regulations will be adhered to as absolutely necessary to the preservation of this valuable fishery, notwithstanding the misrepresentations of interested persons. For the first time in many years has this industry shown any marked signs of improvement, and there can be no doubt that the change is due entirely to the protective regulations ordered by the Department and enforced by its officers.

## SHAD.

There is no improvement to be noted in this fishery. For many years it has continued to decline, owing, as I have often stated, to excessive fishing. An additional weekly close time is the only measure I can recommend for its improve-