

are some years taken in sufficient quantities to supply the local demand. The reports for this season show a falling off in all kinds, but principally in salmon. The altered condition of all the streams and their surroundings in these counties, the settlement of the country and the clearing away of the forests have had the usual effect of gradually diminishing the supply of fish, and no reasonable hopes can be entertained of ever restoring these waters to their former productive state.

#### SAINT JOHN COUNTY.

The returns from this county show a falling off from the catch of last year which was exceptionally good, but still they show more than an average yield. The falling off has been principally in alewives and herrings, while the catch of salmon has nearly equalled that of last year. Overseer O'Brien makes the following remarks upon the harbour and outside fisheries:—"To make the gaspereau fishing prosperous it is necessary that there should be an early and strong freshet, which causes the 'falls' to run downwards continually while it lasts. The water being then very cold, the fish are numbed and unable to force their way up, consequently they approach the shores where they are taken in great quantities in the weirs and nets. Twenty-five or thirty years ago half the number of fishermen caught as many fish as are now taken, but this is not evidence that the fish are only half as numerous. Several causes are at work to bring about this result. The first and most prominent is the drifting of nets outside of the harbour and many miles below Partridge Island, which thirty years ago was never thought of, but is now extensively prosecuted both for salmon and gaspereau. About 100 boats are engaged in this mode of fishing, with an average of about 500 fathoms of net to each. It is obvious that so immense a quantity of net running in every direction must break up the schools of fish that are working towards the river. The area of the bay is so large, and the fish spread out so much, that this outside fishery is not so profitable as might be supposed. This mode of fishing, by breaking up the schools, causes the fish to enter the harbour in a scattering manner, and renders it difficult for harbour fishermen to secure them in large quantities. Inside the harbour another cause operating against the catch is at work. The noise and disturbance made by the great number of steamboats plying to and fro, frightens the fish and makes them swim below the bottom of the nets, especially during the freshet."

In St. Martin's District Overseer Skillen reports a better catch than that of last season. The fish-way in Salmon River dam has been a great success, and a large number of salmon has passed up during the season. Saw dust and mill-refuse have been a cause of complaint, but the mill-owners have promised to make arrangements to remove the evil as far as possible.

#### CHARLOTTE COUNTY.

The reports from this county are of a very satisfactory character in some respects, but in others they are discouraging, especially as regards the mills on the St. Croix River. The returns show a large increase over those of last years. Overseer Curran of the St. Croix district reports as follows:—"It gives me pleasure to inform you that the increase of salmon in the St. Croix is now visible. Numbers have been seen up the river, and they have got into the lakes and Tomah stream. Several young salmon have been killed by getting into the mill-wheels when coming down the river. The worst thing they have now to contend with is the saw-dust and mill-rubbish. On the American side of the river the authorities will not prosecute mill-owners, and this season I have not prosecuted any on the New Brunswick side. I have had a great deal of trouble to keep the fish-ways clear, and if some arrangement is not made to enforce the law on both sides of the river, it will be useless for me to try to stop the pollution of the water and the obstruction of navigation. Last spring great quantities of herring came into the river and Oak Bay, and large numbers were taken in the brush-weirs. Alewives and smelts were very plentiful this season. On the