

FISHERIES ON THE RIVER SAINT LAWRENCE.

Communication from R. Nettle, Esquire, relative to the Fisheries, &c.

(Copy)

*Office of the Superintendent of Fisheries, Lower Canada,
Quebec, 21st January, 1859.*

The Honorable Provincial Secretary, &c. &c. &c., New Brunswick,

SIR,—I have the honor to transmit sundry documents relative to our Canadian Fisheries, which may perhaps prove useful as references.

Having lately made an official visit to the Restigouche, and as it is in part the boundary between the two Provinces, I would desire to ask, Would it not be advisable that the Salmon Fishery Laws of both places should be assimilated? A joint jurisdiction of the Magistracy, and other officials would, it appears to me, be very desirable, for it is a great evil that so valuable a River should be wantonly destroyed for want of a little judicious management.

By the accompanying papers you will perceive, that we are about to lease and license our Salmon Fisheries, not only because they will yield a revenue, but that by so doing, they will be protected and renovated.

I am aware that the Government of New Brunswick have appointed an Overseer or Warden for the protection of the Restigouche; but if I am correctly informed, the appointment is neutralized, from the fact that the salary is only to be paid when it is certified that the County Council have provided a like sum, and which I believe they object to do, the law not being compulsory.

No one will deny the necessity of some stringent measures if the Salmon Fisheries are to be preserved, nor is it enough only to enact laws; nor should the cost of protection be a charge upon the Revenue of the Province, at least, only for a short time.

You will pardon me if I venture to suggest the only true remedy: it is to lease and license the whole of the Salmon Fisheries, not only those that flow through Crown Domain, but all Nets that may be used; even though the charge for lease or license be only (for the first year or two) sufficient to meet the expense of an efficient protection.

It is obvious, that if by a proper protection a fishery be made to yield 100 barrels of fish, where without protection it yields but 50 barrels, the owner of the fishery being the party directly benefited, ought not only not to object, but ought to be glad to pay his portion towards the maintenance for such protection.

An earnest desire to see the Salmon Fisheries of both sections of country properly developed must be my apology for this long letter; and I beg to assure you that I shall be happy at all times to render any assistance in my power in the matter pertaining to my office.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

(Signed)

RICHARD NETTLE,
Superintendent of Fisheries, L. C.

P. S.—The Tay Salmon Fisheries yield a revenue of upwards of £18,000 per annum. The River is a mere mill pond compared to the Restigouche. Several other Rivers yield from £1000 to £10,000 per annum.

Our Fishery Act will be yet amended the next Session.