

in the depths of the ocean. But no portion of this system is practised in our American rivers. There is not a salmon weir in the province; and the consequence is, that young and old, kelt and grilse, worthless and unwholesome, the fish are killed by the indiscriminating net and the cruel spear.

It appears to me that the Hudson's Bay Company set little value on these fisheries, and maintain them merely as an accident appertaining to the fur trade which is far more profitable. The approaching termination of their lease and the consequent uncertainty of their tenure may perhaps appear a sufficient reason for their not incurring the expense of erecting weirs, by which much more profit could be made of their fisheries. Unproductive and wasteful as their mode of fishing is, *the protection the Hudson's Bay Company affords is the only present safeguard for the existence of Salmon in Canada.* I am persuaded that *were that protection withdrawn for ONE SUMMER, without the substitution of some other as effective, this noble fish would be utterly exterminated from our country.* Fishermen from Gaspé, Rimouski, New Brunswick, Labrador, Newfoundland, the Magdalene Islands and the United States—whose numbers and skill would enable them to do thoroughly what the servants of the H. B. C. from their paucity and inexperience do ineffectually—would swarm up our rivers, and with nets, spears, torches, and every other engine of piscine destruction, would kill, burn and mutilate every fish that ventured into the rivers. Already has this been attempted. For the last two or three years schooners from the United States, have regularly arrived, in the salmon season, at the Bay of Seven Islands, their crews well armed, and have set their nets in the river Moisie, in despite of the officers of the H. B. C. Similar circumstances have occurred at other fishing stations in the tributaries of the St. Lawrence; no means, that I am aware of, having been resorted to for punishing the aggressors or preventing a repetition of their outrages. The river Bersinies has this year (1856) been altogether in the hands of a speculating and rapacious American, who employed the spear of the Indian to furnish him with mutilated salmon, several boxes of which he brought to this city, in the month of September, when they were out of season, unfit for food and flavorless, having previously glutted the markets of Portland, Boston and New York with more palatable fish.

There can be but little doubt that many of the salmon streams in Lower Canada would be as productive, under proper management, as rivers in Europe for which large annual rents are paid; but it must