

THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH, ST. JOHN, N.B., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1904

SHAD, THEIR PROPAGATION AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES.

To the Editor of The Telegraph:

Sir: In your issue of Feb. 16th you say The Telegraph will be glad to give expression in concise form to the views of any person having special knowledge on the above subject.

Your correspondence from Westmorland don't seem to have studied the habits of the shad, or he said I do not agree in reference to their propogation. I suppose he refers to the (so-called) fall shad, that are taken at the head of the bay. Let me say those fish are not the fish that have spawned the previous spring, as their size shows. In Queens county spring shad run from three to nine pounds. The fall shad that I examined at Hopewell Cape ran from three to five pounds and I am of the opinion that the shad that spawn the two year old shad that go up the bay to feed on the flats, some think on the small red worm that used to be abundant in the eddies on those flats, before the province was contaminated with the shad that is let go from the mills on both sides of the bay.

In our waters, the spring shad feed on a kind of jelly substance, that forms on the bottom in the eddies, or on round particles of decaying vegetable matter. I have never been able to find, with the naked eye, anything in this jelly substance resembling worms, but have with a magnifying glass.

I am also of the opinion that if the taking of spring shad was prohibited, and the feeding grounds of the bay were as formerly, that the shad would soon become as abundant as formerly on the feeding grounds at the head of the bay.

But would it be justifiable from a financial point of view, or just to the fishermen in the other parts of the province, to deprive them of the profits and luxury, for the special benefit of a few?

Again, your correspondent says "while every effort is made to protect the lobster and herring, the shad is left unguarded and unprotected." Now, sir, that statement is not only untrue, but a suggestion that the fishery office in New Brunswick are a set of officers who receive their salaries, but render no service therefor, which is not in accordance with the facts of the case, as I am prepared to prove.

Regarding shad artificially is a subject to which I have given considerable time and study, together with some experimenting, and find it is entirely practicable. The difficulty is in procuring the parent fish at the proper time, and from the exacting conditions of the fish, it being impossible to keep the parent fish until the roe matures, as in the case of salmon. According to the operator with the proper handling boxes used on the spot, ready to perform the manipulations at once.

Your correspondent refers to the willingness of the government, and ends by saying "all that is really needed is to bring the real fish to the notice."

Now, sir, that sounds very plausible. But it is a pity that I am in a position to know several things. Now, sir, I think, and I believe you will agree with me, that it makes quite a difference in the action of the government, when they take the personal of their informant into consideration. I know that I informed the late government of my experiments and success in hatching shad, and offered to proceed to restock the stream, if they would give me the right to take the parent fish, and I only asked them to pay the expense of 850 per year. I made that offer more than once. Did they agree? No. I was only an officer of the Fisheries. Still they never asked an investigation.

Permit me to thank you and your correspondent for bringing this subject before the public, and I trust that others may be so agitated by the need of restocking the rivers with shad. And especially so, when it does not cost as much to hatch and protect them until they are quite able

to care for themselves, 10,000 shad, as it does, I am tempted to say, 100, but I will say 500 estimate, no hatchery to build, no expense for heating, etc., etc.

Only the expense of a few proper hatching boxes, and a few days' pay, as the entire hatching season only lasts about four weeks.

I am, dear sir, Yours, etc.

ISAAC T. HETHERINGTON, Overseer Fisheries for Queens county for twenty years.

Another Letter.

To the Editor of The Telegraph:

Sir—I enclose you herewith a clipping taken from Comfort last year, bearing on shad propogation. Some time when you have the space to spare would it not be a good plan to reprint it, as I think it would be interesting reading to many of your readers, and possibly lead to authorities to thinking of the matter.

I believe that by occasionally bringing this matter up in different ways will have a good effect.

It is really a question of great importance to this part of Canada, as the shad is considered one of the best food fishes we have hitherto had, in any great quantity, and they are fast disappearing.

The astounding statement made by the St. John dealer that "the taking of shad shad at the mouth of the St. John river did not effect the fishing farther up the bay," seems inconceivable.

A few years ago I saw 100 of these shad bought at random from a boat in St. John harbor, and watched them being cleared of their entrails. Sixty-one of these were "roe" shad, and putting the spawn at a low estimate of 20,000 eggs to the fish, you can readily see the cause of the disappearance of the species.

I do not know just what the average percentage of the shad caught in the St. John harbor are "roe" shad, but placing them at thirty per cent of the catch, and multiplying by say 10,000 fertile eggs to the fish destroyed, the result will, I am sure, show the cause of our depleted fisheries.

These fish that find their way into St. John harbor, not ten per cent of them go up that river. They come in from the deep sea, strike our shores and following along the coastline, hauling for food upon the flats, sporting and often the stomachs and winds driving them into the harbors for safety and protection, as the female at that particular time being in a delicate condition, is unwilling and unable to withstand the savage onslaught of the driving wind storm and is killed. It is not captured by the net of the "spring" fishermen, to export to the United States, but head waters of the bay. It is true that a great number find their way through the falls, but the greater portion of them are killed by the law of the bay, and spawn and recruit, were they not taken in St. John, as well as farther down the bay.

Our government should take the matter in hand. I would suggest stopping the fishing of shad for two years.

Shad hatching stations should be set up, and not allow shad to be taken until they have had a chance to deposit their spawn. In this way I believe we would very soon multiply to normal conditions.

It would very much improve the quality of the fish and in the end would be money in the pocket of every man engaged in the fisheries. Thanking you for space, I am, sir,

Yours, etc.

FISHERMAN.

Pre-debut, Westmorland Co., N. B., Feb. 15, 1904.

Shad Propagation in the United States.

Following is the article from Comfort, to which Fisherman refers:

The notion of planting and raising crops of fishes, just as if they were an agricultural product, seems extremely odd, and yet that is exactly what is done nowadays with shad. So completely is the output of shad under human control that, if it were so desired, the tidal rivers of this country could be literally crowded with them.

For a long time the winter habits of the shad are regarded as a perplexing puzzle. Of course, they are ocean fishes, entering the streams every year only for the purpose of reproducing their species, and that at the approach of spring they begin a migration northward, some of them entering the Potomac to spawn, others keeping on up the coast to the Delaware and to the Connecticut, and others yet continuing their passage to the rivers of Maine. This notion, however, has been proved erroneous.

It is now known that shad never go very far from the mouth of the rivers in which they were hatched. They spend the winter in the shallow waters near to and tempered by the Gulf Stream, which flows from the tropics northward. Annually, at spawning time, they return to their spawning grounds, and it is only at that time that they are exposed to the dangers of the sea, unless she is so unfortunate as to be caught and eaten. It is not likely that she ever enters any stream other than the Potomac.

The shad browse on the ocean bottom, where there is unlimited provender, and, inasmuch as the sea will support any number of them there is practically no limit to the multiplication of the species by artificial propagation. It is simply a question of gathering the eggs, which are ready to hatch, and placing them in a suitable environment, and the shad will be hatched in glass jars, and dumping the little fishes into the rivers, after they have been hatched in the glass jars, and they will take care of themselves when liberated. Swimming up the streams each spring, they fetch the eggs of the ocean bottom, otherwise inaccessible to man, and deliver them in the shape of toothsome meat and roe.

The principal stations for collecting and hatching shad eggs are on the Potomac, the Susquehanna, and the Delaware. Agents of the United States fish commission go out in the fishermen's boats, and, as the nets are drawn, they take the female fishes and express the roe from them, and place the eggs in a suitable body of each specimen, so that the eggs are poured into glass vessels, where they are immediately fertilized with salt water. To save expert labor, efforts have been made to teach the fishermen how to procure and fertilize the eggs, and with the result that at night the booming of cannon will be heard and the searchlights will flash and the guns will be trained upon an imaginary hostile fleet.

Colorado's Costly Industrial War.

In the grim tenacity of purpose, in the methods employed, in the number enlisted, in the cost, in the results, the industrial war now going on in Colorado is one of the most extraordinary ever recorded in the history of the world.

Thirty-five thousand workmen all on an average of five months' wages, 4,000,000 working days lost, \$10,000,000 a low estimate of the cost, \$20,000,000 a conservative estimate—loss from direct damage and non-production; \$50,000 cost of the National Guard ordered to three frontier parts of the state, and the cost of the protection of life and property. A total loss—of the most conservative estimate—of \$50,000,000. And this in a state where the total assessed valuation is less than \$100,000,000.

The result? A declaration of war between capital and labor, as the labor union in the state; the increase of the National Guard from 330 men, in March, 1903, to 3,000 men fully armed and equipped; courts and civil writs superseded in the mining districts and martial law declared; the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and the enforcement of the "vag" law in the mining camps and the mining districts; and the gradual being filled with imported non-union men.

It has passed the point where one can refer to it as an "industrial upheaval." It is a rebellion, a rebellion against every recognized standard of business as it exists today—a rebellion against the determination of organized non-union men to overthrow the union.

To get at the real beginning of this trouble, you have to go back just three years. In 1901, the state legislature, at the instigation of the labor union, passed an eight-hour law, applicable to all classes of labor in the state. A few months later, the supreme court declared it unconstitutional, as the best of the mind never, so that started the fight. Labor in Colorado organized for an eight-hour law. They went into politics and united with the Democratic party, and at the election they carried the state. They failed to win at the polls, and then came the threatened deluge of strikes, with a war cry: "We'll fight until we force an eight-hour agreement over the state."—Collier's Weekly.

It is interesting to watch a jar in which the shad eggs have been to hatch. Perhaps there will be 20,000 eggs in the receptacle, and, as a lot of them ripen at about the same time, the hatching goes on at a pretty rapid rate, so that every moment one sees a tiny fish emerge from its capsule. The latter, being larger than the parent, sinks to the bottom of the jar, while the fish rises toward the top and is sucked out through a tube into the tank beyond. At the hatching station the jars are run in batteries, hundreds of them together, and the multiplication of the species goes on at a rate which might well cause conservative old Dame Nature to blink with astonishment.

Since 1881, by means of artificial propagation, the shad output of the Atlantic coast rivers has been increased from 10,000,000 pounds to 45,000,000 pounds per annum.

BRITAIN PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES

Every Available Soldier of Royal Garrison Artillery Ordered to Man the Forts for Practice.

Halifax, Feb. 16.—A very important and rather significant order was issued today at the instance of Major General Sir Charles Parsons, commander-in-chief of the imperial forces of Canada. It calls for the manning of all the fortifications in three days' manœuvres.

A summons of the above nature, coming as it does in the midst of winter with the roads leading to the various fortifications blanketed with snow, together with the fact that two European powers are at war with each other, and that the British government is preparing for another war.

"What does all this mean," asked your correspondent of one of the Royal Artillery officers.

"It means very much," replied the officer. "We do not know when Britain will be compelled to take a hand in the war game in progress between Russia and Japan. We are certainly getting ready for any emergency that may arise."

"Can you say why orders have been issued for the manning of the forts?" "Yes, simply to ascertain if everything is in working order and to remedy any defects considered necessary—identically the same thing that would be done if the nation were engaged in actual warfare and wanted to be ready in case an engagement should loom up. We will remain three days at the forts and the manœuvres will begin tomorrow evening. All the guns will be thoroughly examined and as stated if anything is found unworkable it will be remedied. The men will be kept at it for three days and will occupy themselves in the meantime with the cleaning of the guns for actual warfare. Every gun will be discharged and thoroughly tested and when the men leave at the end of the manœuvres everything will be in readiness for practical use. The Royal Artillery will embark for the fortifications on transports, which will leave the King's wharf and Imperial wharf tomorrow afternoon. At night the booming of cannon will be heard and the searchlights will flash and the guns will be trained upon an imaginary hostile fleet."

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MRS. MAYBRICK, HER CRIME AND TRIAL.

Florence Maybrick, after having served nearly fifteen years in prison for the murder of her husband, James Maybrick, is practically a free woman.

There were no more of the winds, trees and the sea are words which must now take on a new meaning for her. Perfect liberty as one understands it, who has never risen to the bad end of the once attained by Mrs. Maybrick can never be known to her again.

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An Issue Next Election.

Mr. Wyndham in British House

Intimates as Much—Canadian Trade

Worth Catering To He Says.

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"But he went on to define retaliation in a way which shows that the ministry is entirely in sympathy towards Canada and other colonies. Mr. Wyndham instanced Germany's treatment of Canada, which kind of foreign action against which the British ministry would retaliate and sternly deprecated language which belittled the enormous value of the sentiment which underlies the Canadian, South African and New Zealand tariff preference."

"The Canadian preference had been of great value to British trade, he said. Continuing Mr. Wyndham added: "We do not make jokes or indulge in gibes about imperial dumping. For my part, if Canada places goods on our market in a manner that would be resented, or placed by another country, I would not look too seriously on that. I should distinguish between a blood relation and keen business competitor."

The radicals jeered, and turning angrily to them, Mr. Wyndham added: "We, at any rate, decline to regard the colonies as in all matters upon exactly the same basis as foreign competitors. If we look at the throne and the flag, that is supposed to be high faluting and redemptive, but we have the foreign force for our colonies as well for ourselves, and also the heavy expenses for these common services, and then say that in matters of trade you are only entitled to treat your colonies as foreign competitors—no preference, no colonies involving taxation of food or of raw material. I hope that now and ever this country will cherish the warmest possible feeling towards the colonies and the greatest gratitude for the sacrifices they have made in the common cause."

\$15,000 Fire at Sa-Bright.

Sa-Bright, N. J., Feb. 17.—A large part of Sa-Bright, a fishing settlement near this place, was burned tonight. About fifty frame buildings were destroyed. The fire started in a boarding house occupied by men employed in the fish ponds, and swept along the beach. Among the buildings wiped out were many fishermen's huts. The loss is estimated at \$15,000.

TO RAISE COTTON IN PRETORIA.

The Crop to Be Tested on a 3,000,000 Acre Tract.

Atlanta, Ga., Feb. 17.—Captain C. A. Madge, of the 3rd South Carolina Infantry, fought under Lord Roberts in the Boer war, is in this country in the interest of the Transvaal Consolidated Land Company, which controls 3,000,000 acres of fertile lands in Pretoria, a large part of which it proposes to plant in cotton. He is travelling through the cotton belt of the south studying the conditions of cotton culture. He says Pretoria is similar to this section as to climate, and he is of the opinion that the staple can be successfully raised.

He—"What should you say were I to ask you to be my wife?" She—"I should fall into your arms and say: 'O George!'" He—"I know, but it is the name of the man whom I'm going to marry."

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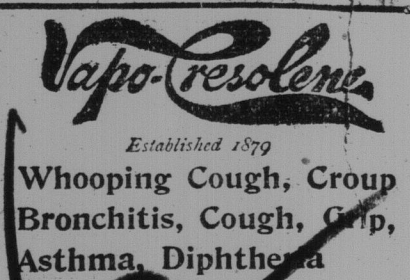
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