

Marine and Fisheries—Fisheries Branch.

5. RESTIGOUCHE HATCHERY, QUEBEC.

RESTIGOUCHE HATCHERY, 1st Dec., 1898.

To PROF. E. E. PRINCE.

Dominion Commissioner of Fisheries,
Ottawa.

SIR,—I beg leave to submit herewith my annual report upon the operations, as conducted at the Restigouche hatchery, during the past year.

The eggs collected and deposited in the hatchery in the autumn of 1897 produced most gratifying results, fully 95 per cent were hatched, and the young fry were distributed in a perfect, healthy condition, in the following waters, viz. :—

Kedgwick River, 60 miles above hatchery.....	300,000
Main River, between hatchery and Kedgwick.....	345,000
Upsalquitch River	190,000
Metapedia River	300,000
Semi-eyed eggs, shipped in May, to Miramichi hatchery.....	250,000

A total of..... 1,385,000

Large numbers of the fry were conveyed fifty and sixty miles up the river, in the floating crates, and liberated in perfect condition.

Operations at the Government pond were begun early in May, as usual, and the pond reconstructed and the nets arranged in fishing order, with all speed, and as soon as the freshet would permit. The first run of fish entered the river very early, while in flood, and escaped both netters and anglers. The two Government nets succeeded, however, in capturing 321 of the largest and finest fish I have yet seen. These fish did very well in the pond; a few were lost from the fungi, and all Grilse and any injured adult fish were liberated. When the season came around for rounding up the fish, and separating the males from the females, and collecting the eggs, there were found to be 344 fish in the pond, 205 females and 139 males. Stripping began on the 19th October, and 2,500,000 eggs were collected and deposited in perfect condition in the hatchery, and the embryo is now quite large. The number of fish taken from the pond in the fall, exceeded the count kept by our own men, and that of the Club's sworn guardian, by 23 fish; occasionally, 25 or 30 fish are taken at one tide, and it is quite difficult to get an accurate account, as the fish pass out of the pontoon into the retaining pond. There will be entirely too many fry when hatched, for the capacity of the hatchery, and I would recommend the removal of at least 500,000 semi-hatched eggs in the spring to some of the other institutions which may require a supply.

Repairs to Hatchery.

The banking was removed from the building in early spring, and the whole foundation reblocked and filled under the sills with stone, also, the troughs and tanks were repaired and varnished, and all the plant made ready for the reception of the eggs this autumn. The hatchery is in good working condition and, with a few slight repairs each year, will now last for a long time. Very little new plant will be required for operations at Tide Head pond next season.

General Remarks.

I am pleased to have the opportunity of attaching the inclosed letters to this report, from guardians and others, who are thoroughly acquainted with all matters on the river, and speak from what they have actually seen and know. For my own part, I have heard nothing but words of encouragement and praise, for both the state of the river and the hatchery. There were no complaints from the anglers, fish were extra large and very plentiful, and the rivers were well guarded. The anglers are a great blessing to the country, and spend a large amount of money. The rivers are becoming more valuable each year, and so long as a couple of millions of healthy fry can be