

injunction,—“It is unseasonable and unwholesome in all months that have not an “r” in their name, to eat an oyster.”

But if the beginning of the oyster industry in the Old World be shrouded in obscurity, no less is it difficult now to trace when the fishery began to be pursued in Prince Edward Island. The importance of the industry as it obtains here assumes considerable magnitude when it is observed that all the oyster fishing grounds of Canada may be said to group around this wonderful little Island; and notwithstanding that large quantities are fished on the opposite shores, Prince Edward Island naturally holds first place both in point of present production and future possibilities.

It is indeed well known that in the forties, Bedeque Bay, on which now stands the progressive town of Summerside, produced considerable quantities for export, and the size and quality of the Bedeque oyster has never been surpassed. But with the exception of some small coves where a few may still be procured for home use, or to sell at “fancy” prices, the old beds are now, to all intents and purposes, dead. Mud-diggers—that bogie of the oyster expert’s dreams—have been known to



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penetrate twenty feet, through shells on these old beds, which fact in itself is a patent evidence of the old-time plentitude of which we hear our fathers talk. It was not before the end

of the same decade that the long hidden wealth of the now famous Malpeque or Richmond Bay, two miles distant overland on the northern side of the Island, acknowledged now-a-days to be par excellence the natural home of the oyster, was at length discovered.

It is reasonable to suppose that scientific investigation and the oyster expert had not at that early date come much into vogue, and hence the unparalleled adaptability of this whole bay