

Ontario Fishery Commission.

pens in which the whitefish and herrings were put were made of plank and were made handy so people could walk around them. The whitefish came up the river to spawn and were principally caught in October and November; we had 80,000 and 90,000 whitefish in a single pen at one time. There were in other pens at the same time 30,000 and 40,000. This was in November, which was their spawning time. Some of these fish were kept until March for the New York market. About 10 per cent died in the pens.

Joseph Allen, Sandwich, fisherman 20 years, still fishing (page 71), says:—The most herring are caught in Detroit River in November, their spawning season. They were caught in great numbers seven years ago. As many as 500,000 were caught on west side of Lighting Island on five stations; they were filled with spawn. In 1888 and 1889 we did not catch much more than enough to pay expenses. The Detroit River fisheries began to give out about 13 years ago. Seines were pretty close together then, in some places not room for more. In some places there were seven seines in a mile, that was the thickest. On the American side they were not quite so thick. The seines were the same build on both sides. Thinks fish feeding on each other does not reduce their numbers much—that man makes more difference than fish.

Charles Gauthier, fisherman, Windsor (page 74) says:—The spawning time for whitefish in Lake Erie commences about the 13th or 20th November in Detroit River. They begin a little earlier, but the month of November is the only time that whitefish can be caught in Detroit River in sufficient quantities to pay for fishing and has been so for a number of years. For 13 years, from the year 1876 to 1889, the close season for fish in Detroit River was suspended and several Ministers would not enforce it, because it was unreasonable. Whitefish in the Detroit River have decreased so that the largest catch out of two or three seines would be 400 or 500 fish. The whitefish came up the Detroit River to spawn. They were not taken at any other time. Very few were caught before 1st November. The bulk of the fishing was in the middle of November, in the height of the spawning time. I have known the Lake St. Clair fisheries; in 10 or 15 years they have decreased.

(G.)—ST. CLAIR RIVER.

Marquis A. Hitchcock, Sarnia, who fishes a seine at head of River St. Clair, Lake Huron (page 80), says:—In the old days there were three whitefish seines at his point, seining in October and November, and now fishing for whitefish is perfectly done. The fishermen consider there are none to be caught.

There are very few herring caught now at all; some years ago there was a very good catch. They spawn in November. Previous to 1892, we fished until the winter set in. No close season was observed by anybody above or below me. When we catch the first pickerel which come in they are full of spawn. They come here to spawn. They are all yellow pickerel (doré), no blue pickerel. Ten or twelve years ago we had three times the catch and paid \$500 a year for the license—not worth a cent now. The bottom of the fishery has fallen out. We catch them as low as 1 pound, for sale; under that they are not saleable. The sturgeon were ripest in spawning in July. We fished from the middle of May until the middle July. The sturgeon have almost left us.

John Lang, of Lake Huron (page 85):—Whitefish were very plentiful in former years, as many as 40 or 50 barrels in a haul—5,000 fish was an ordinary catch. These fish have fallen off very greatly. Sturgeon have fallen off, destroyed by overfishing. Yellow pickerel have fallen off wonderfully during the past four years, destroyed by improper fishing and overfishing. The river or large herrings have fallen off entirely. A smaller kind are now taken. Four years ago, I paid \$160 per day for the catch of one seine during September. I would not pay them anything now, the fishery has so greatly fallen off.