

There is nothing to report in regard to the fish of the streams. Several fishways have been ordered. A good many offences, all of them of small account, have been dealt with.

In view of the altered character of the fisheries a reorganization of the wardens is suggested. On the whole, the service is in good working order.

Care has been taken, in collecting the statistics, to place the figures beyond dispute. Details relating to the several fisheries are given under the respective headings.

#### MACKEREL.

According to the newspapers, Professor Baird, the eminent ichthyologist, last year expressed an opinion that the supply of mackerel in the gulf this season would be both abundant and good. Intelligent fishermen, reasoning from observation of many symptoms, as well as from experience of past years, also predicted that fair sized mackerel would be as abundant this year as "tinkers," that is young fish, were last. Science and fisher lore arrived at the same conclusion; both were right.

The immense and rapid growth of the lobster industry is, in a measure, altering the character of the other fisheries. It may even be a matter of thought whether this lucrative lobster fishery is an unmixed benefit in view of the future of the deep sea fisheries, although it brings temporarily to the Province an amount of cash larger than the total value of the mackerel fishery, which, as recently as the date of the Halifax Award, was the main feature of the Prince Edward Island portion of the Bay of St. Lawrence.

In viewing the matter in its different bearings it is to be borne in mind that the practical prosecutors of our shore fisheries are laboring men, either of those who work on their own small farms, or of those who hire; but in either case men who take their surplus labor to the market that pays them best. Formerly it was the regular habit to engage for the season with the proprietors of general fishery stages, there being no other fishing enterprise in which they could engage. The local law recognized herring, cod and mackerel fishing as the fisheries of the Province, and provided protection against arrest, with other benefits, for persons under regular contract to fish. The force required to carry on the sea fisheries was, therefore, always available at the stages in the shape of a recognized body of skilled men accustomed to the work, and that had nowhere else to betake themselves for an engagement during the sea harvest. This force of fishers was apart from the residents along shore who did not come under contract but occasionally fished—if we may be allowed the expression—"on their own hook," and whose quantities caught helped to swell the aggregate of the island returns. The regular boats had three or four men on board. An average for the Province might be set down as 3.5 men per boat. This year the average of men is about the same, but the number of mackerel fishing boats is smaller. A great many men, say one-seventh of the former whole, have withdrawn from the sea fisheries and gone into the lobster service, that is to say at an estimate, rather under than over the mark, seven hundred men, whose catch of mackerel this year at eighty barrels per boat, if so engaged, would have been 20,000 barrels, are missing from other fisheries and have gone into the lobster trade.

As regards the value of mackerel already shipped, or to be shipped, it may be stated that a fixed official rate unchanging from year to year, although necessary for purposes of comparison, does not convey a correct idea of the increase or decrease in the value of a fishery where prices are continually fluctuating with the pulses of trade. On the contrary when prices are low it becomes absolutely necessary to catch more, so as to pay wages and avoid ruin. In such years the computation of quantity at official rates shows a greatly exaggerated value. Last year, for instance, fish were more abundant than ever known but very poor, and consequently an unusual number was taken, yet it is feared that shippers did not have a large margin of profit on finally settling up. This year there seems reason to expect the actual profit on a like quantity will be greater, notwithstanding that fishermen, like farmers, are habitually apt to bemoan themselves on low prices. The American markets for some time have been