General Business.

FALL GOODS.

THE Subscriber begs to call attention to his supply of

STAPLE WINTER GOODS,

—IN—

BLANKETS,
FLANNELS,
TWEEDS,
WINCEYS,
COTTONS,
YARNS, &c. &c.

ALSO:—His usual well-assorted stock of

HARDWARE.

English & American Glassware,

—INCLUDING—

Lamps, in great variety, Decanters, Tumblers, Port, Sherry and Champagne Glasses.

A large Stock of IRON. Cut and Wrought Nails' Spring Blister and Cast Steel.

IMPROVED COOKING STOVES,

to burn wood or coal.

HALL AND PARLOR STOVES.

FOR BUILDERS,

A quantity of

SEASONED PINE LUMBER,

Spruce and Hemlock Boards,
Birch Plank, from 1 to 5 ins. thick,
No. 1 & No. 2 Sawed and Split

Pine and Cedar SHINGLES.

F. J. LETSON,

WATER STREET.

Chatham, 22nd Nov., 1876

NEW STORE.

THE Subscriber would beg leave to intimate to the inhabitants of Chatham that he has opened a shop in the place lately occupied by C. O. Ericson, where he will keep constantly on hand—

Dry and Pickled Fish,
Corned and Fresh Pork,
Corned and Fresh Beef.

GROCERIES—in Tea, Sugar, Soap, Tobacco, etc.

And having imported a Sausage Mill from the U. States, I am prepared to fill orders for

SAUSAGES,

in large or small quantities, at the lowest possible rate.

STEPHEN WHITE.

WANTED.

A Competent Carriage Blacksmith.

☞ GOOD WAGES PAID. ☜

Apply to the Subscriber.

WM. SIMPSON.

Chatham, Jan 22, 1877.

MANCHESTER HOUSE.

NEW GOODS.

Ex S. S. Peruvian and Austrian.

Seal Brown French Merino;

Black Matalasse Mantle Cloth;
Indigo Worsted Coating;
Black, Seal, Navy and Cardinal Silk Velvets;
Black, Seal, Navy & Cardinal Corded Ribbons;
BUTTONS, in Black, Navy and Seal, in great variety;
Ladies' Black Cloth Mantles;
Black Fur Trimming;

A few Promenade Fichues and Scarfs, in Cardinal &c., VERY CHOICE.

W. S. LOGGIE.

NOTICE.

APPLICATION will be made to the Legislature of this Province, at the next meeting for an Act authorizing the erection of a Boom and maintenance of the same at the Mouth of Barnaby River, in the Parish of Nelson, in the County of Northumberland, for securing and rafting of lumber brought down said River, and levying and collecting fees for booming and rafting such lumber.

RICHARD HUTCHISON.

Douglastown, 3rd January, 1877. 6 y 25.

Holiday Goods!

X'MAS & NEW YEAR.

I AM OFFERING DURING THE

HOLIDAY SEASON,

an attractive assortment of

FANCY GOODS,

CONSISTING OF—

Gold, Silver and Plated Articles,

SUITABLE FOR PRESENTS for either

LADIES OR GENTLEMEN.

WATCHES AND CHAINS,

LADIES' JEWELRY,

GENTS' JEWELRY,

FINE MEERSCHAUM PIPES,

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

ETC., ETC., ETC.,

In great Variety and at Prices in keeping with the Times.

ISAAC HARRIS,

Chatham, Dec. 7th, 1876.

HURRAH FOR HOLIDAYS!

Oranges and Apples.

(Per Steamer to Halifax.)

Cases and Boxes Valencia RAISINS and FIGS.
Oranges, Wholesale—$5.00 } During Holidays.
Retail—40c. per doz. }
Also—3 doz. Clipper Sleds, for Boys;
5 " Assorted Sleds, for Children;
1 " Upholstered Sleds for young ladies;
Also, low for Cash during X'mas Holidays.

100 Bbls. APPLES;
50 Bags, 20 lb. each, Pastry Flour;
Graham Flour (retail);

50 brls. Spring Extra Flour,

(Assorted Brands.)
10 " OATMEAL;
20 " CORNMEAL;
20 Boxes and half-boxes Raisins;
10 " " Valencias & Seedless do.;
1 Brl. Currants
10 Bxs. Candied Lemon, Orange and Citron Peels;

Glasgow Apothecary Company's Extracts,
in Lemon, Citron, Nutmeg, Rose, Celery, Peach, Cinnamon, Vanilla, Peppermint, Orange, Cloves.

SPICES.

in Cloves, Mace, Nutmegs, Caraway, Allspice.

SAUCES:

in Worcestershire, Tomato, Mushroom & Anchovie.

ALSO:—
Ground Rice
Tapioca,
Sago, Cocoa,
Chocolate,
Corn Starch,
Almond Nuts,
Hazel Nuts,
Scotch Confectionery,
Crocks,
Preserved Ginger,
Dundee Marmalade.

Canned Mackerel, Lobsters and Oysters.

PICKLES,—in Chow Chow, Walnut and Mixed.
Cayenne Pepper, Mustard, White Pepper.

Chests & Half-Chests TEA,

(In Black and Green.)

CRUSHED AND PULVERIZED SUGARS.

Allow for Cash.

WM. WYSE.

Chatham, Dec. 8, 1876.

BUSINESS NOTICE.

The "MIRAMICHI ADVANCE" is published at Chatham, Miramichi, N. B., every THURSDAY morning in time for despatch by the earliest mails of that day.

It is sent to any address in Canada, the United States or Great Britain (Postage prepaid by the Publisher) for $1.50 A YEAR, or 75 CTS. FOR 6 MON.—the money in all cases, to accompany the order for the paper.

Advertising.

The advertisements in this paper are placed under classified headings.

TRANSIENT RATES.

$1 per square, or inch, for 1st insertion,
35cts. per square, each time, for all insertions after the first.

LOCAL COLUMN, or reading matter advertisements 20% more than above rates.

LOCAL, COMMERCIAL AND YEARLY RATES.

In order to secure the advertising patronage of business men and others on the North Shore—and to give them the benefit of a large circulation in the Counties of Northumberland, Kent, Gloucester and Restigouche, Bonaventure and Gaspe, their advertisements will, on arrangements being made therefor, be taken at CONTRACT SCALE RATES, which are as low as those of other weekly papers in the Province.

The "MIRAMICHI ADVANCE" having its large circulation distributed among communities engaged in Lumbering, Fishing and Agricultural pursuits, offers very superior inducements to advertisers.

Address

Editor 'Miramichi Advance," Chatham, N. B.

Miramichi Advance.

CHATHAM, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1. 1877

Fish!

This is a fish and lumber country, which accounts for the fact that our columns have been lumbered with fish matters for the past month. The general reader may turn up his nose at the scaly manner in which we fill the space usually devoted to matter of wider interest, but the discussion we are carrying on is one of importance to a very large number of our local readers, and we believe it will have the effect of furthering the interest of an industry which is of great moment to the people of the North Shore. The Department at Ottawa has, from time to time, been put to no little trouble and inconvenience in making and unmaking regulations connected with the fisheries of this and adjacent counties and, from the developments of every day, we are convinced that the gentleman who holds the office of Inspector for the Province has failed in the duty of placing in the hands of his superiors data which would enable them to make regulations based on a due regard, on the one hand, for the right and privilege of the people to fish, and on the other, for the protection of the fisheries. It is, perhaps, too much to expect that one man should be able to master the question, and the unstable regulations that have been made from time to time since Confederation are, doubtless, the result of the mistakes and misconceptions which have naturally grown out of the Inspector undertaking too much. The frequent changes in regulations and the dissatisfaction of the Inspector, on the one hand and of the fishermen, on the other, show that a better understanding of the question in all its bearings should be had. If the Department will cause special enquiries to be made by some person or persons who will gather all the evidence possible from both officers and fishermen—treating the latter a little better, and their statements as entitled to more respect than the character given to them by the Inspector will warrant, and the former like men as liable to error as other mortals—we believe it will be enabled make regulations which will be more permanent than those which have caused the dissatisfaction now existing. It is not a small matter for men who are generally far from well-off to go to expense to follow their avocations within the provisions of regulations which, with the next tide of official caprice, may be wiped out to give place to others requiring new facilities at new expense, and it is because we desire to secure better administration in this respect that we are now giving so much of our space to the discussion of points bearing on a matter involving such important issues.

The Incorporation Meeting.

Owing to the Masonic Hall being engaged for Monday evening last, the meeting of Ratepayers to consider the proposed bill of Incorporation had to be postponed. It is now appointed to take place in the Masonic Hall on Saturday evening, commencing at *seven* o'clock.

Statute and Regulation.

The *Globe* made a mistake last week in pronouncing an Amendment made last winter by the Legislature in the Common Schools Act, a "Regulation" of the Board of Education, and it took occasion to berate Dr. Rand as being the instigator or what it endeavored to show was a very recent and obnoxious change. The *Telegraph* pointed out the *Globe's* error, but the latter took the *expose* of its ignorance in the matter with very bad grace and is working itself up into a great fury about it.

"THE TARANTULA," which will be found on our fourth page, is the subject of a sketch by George J. Forbes, Esq., of Kouchibouguac, who has gained quite a reputation as a magazine writer. He "crossed the Plains" before there was a mile of railway west of Missouri and we hope he will favor our columns further with some of the interesting experiences of those earlier days when so many went westward to the land of gold.

THE INDIANS.—Hon. Richard Hutchison, who has given the subject a good deal of attention, writes a letter which appears in this issue of the ADVANCE, suggesting a plan for the education of the Indians of the County. It will occur to any person who gives the matter any thought at all, that there is no reason why Indians should be excepted from the general educational policy of the country, and we hope the subject will be followed up in such a way as to secure to them the boon advocated by our correspondent.

OVERSEER HICKSON has joined the corps of writers who are seeking to keep up the misunderstandings which have arisen in respect of the smelt fisheries through the official efforts of the Inspector, himself and others. We expect him to stick to his official representations, however unjust they may have been, but he should remember that if he is found to be now sinning with his eyes open, it will be much worse for him than making statements at variance with the facts when he took much for granted that was told him by interested parties.

CONTENTS.—Owing to pressure of original matter this week we are obliged to use all four pages to accommodate it. On the first page will be found an editorial article, "Official Reasons and Real Reasons" and correspondence. On the fourth are the lists of parish officers for Derby, Glenelg, Hardwicke, Ludlow and Nelson, and an original sketch by Geo. J. Forbes, Esq., of Kouchibouguac. The second and third pages are more fishy than they would be were we to consult our own taste, but if we dose the patient we are treating well now, it may save both ourselves and our friends a good deal of trouble hereafter.

THE "ADVOCATE" says it has been fishing for nearly a quarter of a century. As it is only about ten years old the statement is rather good. It says smelts are now spawning; that is precisely what we said three weeks ago, and we are glad to find it coming round to our opinion in the matter. It thinks also that the Department should give the *larger mesh* a trial during the remainder of the season. That means that the nets purchased at a cost of from $30 upwards since a year ago, shall be laid aside and like sums be invested by the fishermen in new nets, as an experiment, with a probability of their being forbidden altogether through the efforts of the Inspector, Overseer Hickson, the *News*, *Advocate*, *et al.*

The Inspector of Fisheries' Second Letter.

In the ADVANCE of fourth ult. we referred to steps which had been taken by the Inspector of Fisheries for New Brunswick and others for the disallowance of the use of bag-nets in the prosecution of the smelt fisheries and for the prohibition of bass fishing in Napan, Black River and the other Lower Miramichi waters, where that industry is allowed in the Spring by order of the Department of Marine and Fisheries. Our articles dealt to some extent with the habits and conditions of Bass and Smelts, as they have been observed in Miramichi waters, with the manner in which they were taken and the uses they had been put to, etc. From the facts, as we understood and presented them, we made certain suggestions. Those bearing on the smelt fishery were for the prohibition of the capture and use of that fish for any purpose other than as an article of commerce, or food, and the making of regulations as to size of mesh of bag-nets, the distances they should be set from bridges and each other etc., while those bearing on the Bass fishery were in favor of the continuation of the rights now enjoyed by the Napan, Black River and other lower Miramichi people — all backed up by reasons which seemed to us, good and were based on an equitable regard for the proper protection of the fish and the interests of the fishermen. Our objects were simple, and lest our readers may be led to lose sight of them in the mystification and bogus points of Natural History with which the Inspector now labors to conceal them, we will re-state them. We desired simply to check the Inspector in his attempts to cause unnecessary restrictions to be placed on the prosecution of the smelt fisheries at Bathurst and Miramichi, and on bass fishing at Napan and Black River, and along the shores of the Miramichi in the near vicinity of those rivers. The week after our articles appeared, on the day we usually go to press, we received a long letter from the Inspector of Fisheries, in which he presented a well laid scheme for the demolition of our facts and suggestions. As his letter was a flat denial of what we had advanced as facts, and he attributed our position to interested motives and ignorance, we felt it was our duty to defeat the evident motive with which, at the latest possible moment, he placed his letter in the hands of the editor—viz., that it might go to the public, but more particularly the Department with its statements unchallenged — and defend and strengthen what we had already advanced. The Inspector's letter, therefore, appeared in the ADVANCE of 18th inst. together with our comments upon it. Finding that his bold assumptions and dogmatic rulings on matters in which he is but an imperfect and slow-plodding student, were treated as their superficial character deserved, he waited again until Monday afternoon of last week, when he presented himself at the office of the ADVANCE with a five column letter, just as the editor was leaving for Bathurst, and was accompanied by Officers Hickson of Bathurst and Hogan of Newcastle. When he was informed that so long as his name was appended to his letter it should appear in the next paper, although the editor would have opportunity neither to read nor reply to it that week, he strongly advised its perusal on the ground that it was so overwhelming in its refutation of our position, so necessarily personal and, generally, so able, that if he were editor of the ADVANCE he would not—if he wished to retain the confidence of its readers—publish it. The letter was hastily glanced over and sent to the composing room, the editor who, according to the Inspector, was to be crushed by it, went to Bathurst, the proof was read by Mr. Venning, himself, and the editor really read it for the first time in last week's ADVANCE. So far, therefore, as that letter was concerned the Inspector gained the advantage he sought and was permitted to run riot against us through our own columns unopposed. Having now read the letter of the Inspector we are absolutely astonished at the character of its contents. We will, therefore, proceed, as briefly as possible, to rescue the real points at issue from the matter with which he has surrounded and endeavored to involve them, and deal with them as the interests affected require.

Having brought against us the charge of using personalities the Inspector promises that his remarks shall be as little personal as possible and, thus, paving the way for vulgarity which mars a letter which any penny-a-liner, much less an important officer in a Government Department, ought to feel ashamed to write, he proceeds to make his first point which is as follows:—

"In the very first sentence of your remarks you appear to show but little *real* knowledge of *facts*. I am *not* Inspecor of Fisheries for Nova Scotia, nor have I been since February, 1875, when an Inspector was appointed for that Province."

We presume that when Mr. Venning was relieved of the Nova Scotia portion of his Inspectorship the Department did not, for several reasons, notify the whole world of the change, so while congratulating Nova Scotia, upon the Government's action in affording her relief, we claim that our little error, caught at by the Inspector like a straw by a drowning man, was a natural one and, in any case, there is nothing in the point raised which affects the matter at issue. The Inspector says:

"You say you have been *two years* acquiring information on the subject of the fisheries of your river."

We said nothing of the kind. The only excuse the Inspector can give for so positive a misrepresentation is the following:

[From "Advance" editorial 18th inst.]

"For more than two years we have found it necessary, in the discharge of self-imposed duty, to oppose views entertained or acts done by both the fishery authorities and the fishermen, themselves, and because we have criticised both as we thought right, we have had our motives misunderstood, and that being so, what there was of reason and right in our utterances was lost sight of to a great extent."

The Inspector reiterates his former denial that he stated he had stopped bag-net fishing for smelts at Bathurst altogether and says that the conversation on the subject was between himself and Mr. Crocker. He says:

"I felt that I knew more about the matter than Mr. Crocker possibly could from a short reconnoitering visit to the place, and I told Mr. Crocker very decidedly that I differed entirely from his opinion, and that if any influence of mine could stop them, it should be used to that effect. I appeal to Mr. Crocker and Overseer Wyse to attest the substantial correctness of this plain statement."

The Inspector's "feelings," as above stated were, no doubt, as he portrays them, but it was not until after he told the writer of this article, in presence of Mr. Crocker, that he had stopped the use of bag-nets in Bathurst altogether, that the conversation between the Inspector and that gentleman took place. In fact it was that statement by the Inspector that caused his discussion with Mr. Crocker. Overseer Wyse was seated in his sleigh a short distance off and took no part in the conversation, which, Mr. Crocker says, was as we now state it. What the Inspector means by "a short reconnoitering visit," when Mr. Crocker said he had been engaged in fishing with bag nets at Bathurst for two months previous to the conversation alluded to, we leave the gentleman who feels that he knows so much to explain.

The Inspector next endeavors to impress upon the minds of his readers that he did not misrepresent the facts when he gave out that the smelt fishing grounds of Bathurst harbor were of a very limited extent. In our remarks on his former letter we said:—

"The fact that a few bag-nets are used in so large a place as the area covered by the smelt fishing grounds of Bathurst harbor, does not prevent hook and line fishing by those who either hold Mr. Vennings high opinion of its enjoyments and profits, or are too poor to provide themselves with nets." * * * and the Inspector of Fisheries must, therefore, advance some stronger argument against bag net fishing than the fact that the extremely poor cannot afford to indulge in it."

He is now driven to a point on which he is forced to speak of a matter which is familiar to all the people of Bathurst, at least, and he writes as follows:—

"I am not aware that I said anything about the "pleasures" of fishing for smelts with hook and line; perhaps you will point out the passage, but you *assume*, (as indeed you do most things throughout your whole three columns) that I have not made out a case against the bag-nets, and then you go on to show most conclusively that you know *just nothing at all* about the peculiarities of Bathurst Harbor. [Hickson tells me that *since that time* some nets were moved to the Harbor.—W. H. V.] The bulk of the smelt fishing in Bathurst was done in the Basin formed by the confluence of Middle and Little Rivers *above* the Bridge which separates it from the Harbor. In this basin, at low tide, the ice rests on the bottom, and only the channels of the two rivers, which are very serpentine, have, at that time, any water. As the tide rises, the ice floats, and with the tide come the schools of smelts, which are caught along the edges of these channels; the bag-nets were in some cases, just as at Napan, in the middle of them, the simple bag-netters pretending to think they complied with the law, by taking the *third of the channel*, out of the middle of it, and leaving the *two thirds*, which the law says must be kept clear, one at each end of the net, until the officer enlightened their *ignorance*. The large area "covered by the smelt fishing grounds of *Bathurst Harbor*," exist only in your vivid imagination and I confess I am a little surprised at your *courage* in thus drawing upon it, when you ought to have reflected how easy it is to convict you of utter want of correct knowledge on the subject. As these bag-nets were set all along the channels, and the hook and lines can catch them *only in the channels*, perhaps you may *now* comprehend, how much chance they had, when the beg-nets were in use! So far from the smelt grounds in Bathurst being large or extended, they are, in reality, very restricted indeed, and the hook and line can take them in quantities quite as large as they should be taken. You think I have displayed a "misplaced and mistaken solicitude" for the poor people of Bathurst. I am very glad to inform you that in this mistaken solicitude I am joined by the Minister, who has very judiciously ordered the discontinuance of all bag-nets there, and he has done this after a most fair trial, and actual experience of their working, and this decision was not arrived at from my report alone, but from those of Overseers Hickson and Mowat, both experienced officers of many years standing in the service, and who were more familiar with our fisheries before you were born, than you will ever be in all your life, unless you take more pains to learn the truth than you appear to have done in this branch of them."

The italics in the above quotation from the Inspector's letter are all his own and even the most casual of our readers, will we think, agree with us that the whole paragraph is peculiarly worded while some of its sentences might as well be left out. We will explain to our readers, however, that the Inspector has, personally, told a number of his friends that he had made certain representations to the Minister in reference to Bathurst Harbor and it must, therefore, be borne in mind that while he publishes his misrepresentations in a newspaper and thus braves public knowledge and public opinion, he consoles himself with the thought that he may be credited at Ottawa and, to use a trite phrase, "save his bacon" in that important quarter. What the Inspector means by the words he has placed in brackets we do not know. They refer to nothing that we have said and we can only explain them on the theory that they are meant to give color to something written editorially in the *News* and intended to awaken "the sleepy one" at Ottawa, or to emphasize some of the statements of "Roving Special" of the same paper, who, by the way, the Inspector says he wishes he could come across [ahem!]

We say, in plain English, that when the Inspector endeavors to make his readers or the Department believe that what he calls the Basin, above the Bridge, forms even one tenth of the area comprising the smelt fishing grounds of Bathurst Harbor and does it after—according to his own statement—he had thoroughly examined into the subject personally at Bathurst, he is guilty of one of the boldest attempts to practice deception that we have ever known in a public officer. Simple contradiction is not sufficient to meet such a gross misrepresentation of facts. It is well known that the channel of the harbor *below* the bridge, as well as "the Basin" has been fished the present winter and if proof of the fact be needed it can be obtained by the Department. The holes through which the fishing was done are yet in the ice to speak for themselves, even if the fishermen, who once had their lines and bag-nets in them, were as thoroughly destroyed as is the industry which ceased to exist when the Department acted upon the Inspector's ill-considered advice. These proofs as well as the evidence of any honest man, who is familiar with the facts will show that the area of the smelt fishing grounds of Bathurst Harbor are, at least five miles in length and of varying width, and yet the Dominion Inspector of Fisheries for the Province of New Brunswick subverts the facts, tries to make it appear that those who speak on the evidence of their eyes are witnessing falsely or ignorantly, and he declares in fact, that the interests of the fisheries are endangered because one bag-net to every mile of channel was used. Why does he not present the facts as they are, and say that one man with a seine, in the earlier part of the season, blocked the channel and bagged large and small smelts alike in a manner and in quantities that should have secured punishment that would have made him smart for his greed? Why did not officer Hickson, who says this same person buried the small and unmarketable smelts to hide his scandalous work from the public, bring him to book?

It seems, however, that official duty was not to be done then, but when the simple-minded *habitans* were instigated to raise a cry against the five bag nets subsequently brought into use, because they confounded them with the seine and its destructive work, those who were seeking to strengthen their political influences—banded with others determined to keep "the outsiders" away,—found it easy to secure official aid in working an injustice upon the general interests of the place. Speaking of the extensive area of the Bathurst harbor smelt fisheries last week to officer Hickson the writer was told that if the bag-nets were not prohibited there might be three hundred of them fished there at one time and he wanted to know if such a state of affairs would not soon destroy the fishery. If that officer advanced such ideas at that time it is reasonable to assume that they are a fair sample of the intelligence with which he would advise the Department on the subject. Let our readers pause, for a moment, to imagine Overseer Hickson's "three hundred bag-nets" fishing in Inspector Venning's "Little Basin" and then reflect upon the incalculable damage to the very existence of the smelts for all time which would be done by *five* bag-nets (and that is exactly the number used in all Bathurst Harbor this winter) on smelt-fishing grounds where the local officer is afraid three hundred of such nets might be set if the use of them were not prohibited altogether. We pass over the absurdity of the idea that the fishermen would ever use fifty, much less three hundred bag-nets in Bathurst harbor, to note what an intelligent officer, determined to know only his duty, might have done. If he were afraid that three hundred bag-nets would be fished he might have made an estimate of the number that could be used without endangering the fisheries. The Department, advised by him, might have issued regulations limiting the number of bag-nets, accordingly. It would be the Overseer's duty to select or approve a number of stands equal to the number of nets allowed and issue licences therefor to those who first applied, or if more applied at one time than there were stands for, set the licences up at public competition. This might have been done, for the Fisheries Act of 1868 says:—

"Fishery officers may determine or prescribe the distance between each and every fishery and shall forthwith remove any fishery which the owner neglects or refuses to remove and such owner shall be, moreover, liable for a breach of this Act and for the cost and damages of removing the same."

Such regulations as we have suggested, together with the provision of the Act, would have enabled the Overseer to have prohibited fishing in the Basin altogether if he felt justified in doing so.

But the principal grounds on which the Department acted in "limiting the catching of smelts in Gloucester to the hook and line"—which means much more than the prohibition of bag-nets—was the statement that large numbers of small and unmarketable smelts were taken with those fit for market and that the former were destroyed. We believe this part of the business was too much at varience with the facts for the Inspector to become responsible for stating it, so he managed to give color to it when it was published by that handy friend of his "Roving Special" of the *News*. We are satisfied however, that only about two per cent of the smelts taken by bag-nets in Bathurst harbor were too small for shipment, and nearly all these were gladly obtained by the people of the town and used as food. Overseer Hickson told the writer, just before he went to Bathurst last week, that it was said at that place that these small dead smelts had been thrown back into the holes in such quantities as to pollute the waters and drive the other smelts away, but that officer appeared to forget that a dead smelt especially when frozen, will float with a buoyancy as great as a piece of ordinary wood. As the ice at the sides of the holes extends from one and a half to three feet down under water forming box-like walls, our readers can form their own ideas of the character of such stuff as the following which, if not written by Mr. Venning himself, has been sanctioned by him as true:—

"If he [Overseer Hickson] is far enough off to give them five minutes, up comes the net, contents are emptied out of the bunt the small ones, which of course are all dead in less than one minute, *are shuffled back into the holes*, and when Hickson's dot-and-go-one racer reaches the place, the *wiley* men, with their tongues in their cheeks, and a knowing wink at each other, remark —"a very poor haul this time, Sir; fish not running to-day."

Of course "poor Hickson," who is represented by this same friend of the Inspector as having "a hired man to spell him" in watching these five bag-nets in the Inspector's little Basin, could not see these frozen and dead smelts if they were floating on the water as shuffled in; but perhaps he or the Inspector will tell us that dead smelts sink, as did a prominent Gloucester politican now at Ottawa in Wilbur's Hotel, Bathurst, who also said that when he telegraphed the Minister urging that if the bag-nets were not prohibited the smelt fisheries would be ruined, he did it on representations made to him by others and he really believed that these dead smelts were thrown into the holes, where they sunk as Captain Cuttle would say, "down, down—Derry down."

The Inspector, feeling that his own knowledge and oracular assertions failed to be convincing, called in Overseer John Mowat, as a witness on the question at issue. We will let that officer's opinions go for what they are worth. He and the Inspector, in this matter are *arcades ambo*—bound to stick to each other, and officer Mowatt displays a feeling which is creditable to him as a matter of *esprit de corps*, although his opinion is not entirely reliable. It will occur to the reader, however, that the Inspector confers a left-handed favor on officer Mowatt by calling in any report of his as evidence in support of his own crude and swaggering declarations, for if the chief officer of the Fisheries Department in New Brunswick is so unreliable as the Inspector is known to be in this matter, what is to be expected from the subordinate, especially when writing for a specific purpose, under the inspiration of one who can suffer no man, to differ from him without incurring his lasting and vindictive displeasure. The Inspector says:—

You deny that Herring and Mackerel eat "smelts." I said they feed upon the *fry of smelts*, which, however, I hazard nothing in saying *you never saw*.

Those who do not know how reckless the Inspector is when cornered in matters involving the character of his wonderful and exclusive knowledge of fish-lore, would imagine, after reading the above, that we had made a mistake in reference to what he wrote. Fortunately for him he did not *write* that he had absolutely prohibited bag-net fishing in Batnurst; he only articulated it on the crisp air at Napan, and but for our witness would be able to eat his words with tolerable success, but in the matter above quoted he says: "*I said they feed upon the fry of smelts.*" Turning to his letter we find that the following is what he said:—

The vast quantities of spawning smelts destroyed *for the purpose of impoverishing the land*, is depriving the deep sea fishes, such as the Cod, Mackerel, Bass, Haddock, Pollock, Herring and others, of the food that brings them to the coasts. As food producers for these fish, the smelts are of far more value than as a fertilizer, and their wholesale destruction will most assuredly be followed by the failure of the outside fisheries."

We only wonder that instead of endeavoring to wriggle out of what he wrote, the Inspector does not stick to it that herring and mackerel *do* eat smelts and *prove* it by calling in some other officer's report on the subject, written especially for the occasion.

Without going particularly into the other points connected with the smelt fishery in the Inspector's letter just now, we will pass on to the question of the Napan and Black River Bass fishery. In our comments on the "first fact" in his former letter, we said:—

On the 24th May 1875, when the question of extending the season for bass fishing in the lower Miramichi waters was being discussed, the writer, accompanied by one of the best angling sportsmen of the Miramichi, proceeded to Napan and brought to Chatham about twenty bass out of a hundred or more which were taken in that river with a seine. The writer opened and carefully examined seven of the largest fish, which averaged five pounds weight each, and not one contained ova. Four contained milt, but it showed no sign of ripeness, being firm and comparatively small. Our enquires among those engaged in the bass fishery in Napan, together with our own experience, therefore, lead us to the conclusion that breeding or mature fish are scarce in Napan in May.

Here is the Inspector's rejoinder in full:

"To this I rejoin, that your own words confute you. You opened five fish and not one contained ova. The reason was as I stated, *the fish had spawned*, because, had they not done so, the spawn would have been in them. Well, having just spawned, they were *spent fish*, and very poor food as I said. Four males contained milt, a certain proof that *they had not* yet milted, thus proving incontestibly, by your own showing that the Napan fish are in the very act of procreation, which is just what I said. To convince you, if such a thing is possible with so "positive" a man as yourself, here are the roes of two bass, taken this morning from fish weighing between 4 and 5 lbs. caught last night in the North West. Now just examine them, and tell me what state they will be in on the opening of navigation. You pretend to know so much about it, just bring along old and experienced Bass fishermen from Napan, and let us hear their opinion on the matter. I sent two similar ones and a whole Bass by mail last week to the Minister. He can judge quite as well as you or your Napan folks, and he will have the assistance of Mr. Whitcher to guide him, than whom there does not exist in Canada a man better informed on this subject."

The Inspector, no doubt, thinks the above a clincher, but we hope to succeed in showing its utter worthlessness. Before we had read the proposition in connection with the Bass roe test, we were honored with a visit from the Inspector, who was accompanied by Overseer Hickson. After endeavoring to impress upon the editor of the ADVANCE how little he knew about either fish or fishing, he displayed two bass roes and asked him how near ripeness he judged them to be. The editor informed him that although he had seen bass roes very near ripeness he had never seen the ova spawned, and he was then catechised by the Inspector as to his ideas of its color and general state, which ordeal being over, he was asked for his judgement in reference to the state of the roes exhibited. He said he thought they would run at least four months before being ripe for spawning. The Inspector laughed contemptuously at this and placed the roes with great gravity in the hands of Mr. Hickson and, after delivering a homily on that officer's superior knowledge in the matter, propounded the solemn question as to its condition. Mr. Hickson, with the air of a man who never saw either the Inspector or those identical roes before, took the latter in his hands and delivered his opinion in a way that reminded us of Jack Bunsby; and the opinion was that ripeness would have been reached in three months. At this the Inspector granted defiance, assured us of his strong personal regard and undying solicitude for the fishermen of his native county and left. We have since been told that he toted those unfortunate roes about in different places in the hope of finding some fishermen who would corroborate the opinion of *Fidus Achates* Hickson, but with disappointing results, and that when one of the oldest fishermen of Napan told him they would not be ripe for four and a half months he told him that he was a d——d fool and was told in return by the unpretentious old man, whose opinion he sought and treated so rudely, that "if he had said mackeral and herring fed on smelts he might think he deserved the name!" This rude and farcical conduct of the Inspector in his search for knowledge is not overstated. It is true and if he denies it we shall establish it as such beyond the possibility of doubt. The Department he represents cannot, gain either respect, credit or influence by such means and the sooner it instructs certain of its officers to hide their rudeness and incapacity from those who, if they fail to recognize the former are quite capable of detecting the latter, the better it will be for itself and those of the people whose interests it doubtless desires to protect. Perhaps if the writer, who is represented as so very ignorant, some of our old fishermen and even a fishery officer or two, were to go, together with the Inspector, his roes and his writings before the Minister and Mr. Whitcher, the Inspector might more fully appreciate the difference between sturdy experience and his own shallow *abnormis sapiens*. His assumption that the writer opened spent fish in May 1875 and did not know they were spent, is only amusing. The estimates made by the Inspector of the quantities of Bass caught in Napan are inexcusable in their exaggerations although the blame is not his alone. He says:—

Gathering courage as you advance in your blundering, you have the temerity to charge me with "making a statement at variance with the facts, as they are known by hundreds of persons best acquainted with them." I now again advisedly state that over 9 tons of Bass, all of them spawning fish or those that had spawned, were taken in Napan and Black River last Spring from the opening of navigation to the 25th May. Of course I know what the *returns* were, because they were first sent to me, as Inspector, and by me to the Department at Ottawa; but then I know further—what you do not know, or if you do you choose, for the sake of "making the worse appear the better reason" not to tell your readers—that not one man in Napan made an honest statement, but all gave short returns to evade the paltry tax of one tenth of a cent per lb. on their catch. And I bring before you Overseer Wyse, who collected the tax, as witness to the statement. In his official letter to me dated 12th June 1876, he says:—"I can safely say 80,000 lbs. of Bass were taken, and of that quantity 70,000 lbs. were seined." And I bring Overseer John Hogan, whose name is a synonym for honesty and truthfulness wherever he is known, to testify that to the best of his knowledge and belief the 6½ tons you admit as being caught, found their market in Chatham Douglastown, Nelson, Newcastle, and Bathurst. So that, if Messrs. Loggie or Morrison really did freeze the most of 6½ tons, it proves two things:—1st that much over 9 tons were taken as I stated. 2nd, that these gentlemen did a most dishonest thing if they put upon the markets of the U. S. spent and spawning fish, pretending that they were in good condition as food and if the same dreadful slaughter is allowed this coming Spring, I shall consider it my duty to send circulars to all the leading fish dealers of my acquaintance, and I know most all of them personally, in Boston and New York, to be on their guard against any further such dishonest dealings.

Before proceeding to deal with the "facts" of the above we call upon the Department to note the threat which the Inspector makes respecting circulars, for his official position would give a weight to such documents where he is not otherwise known.

We regret that Officer Wyse should be so thoughtless as to have forwarded the above figures officially and also that his letter to the Inspector, which has been shown to us, makes serious charges against the honesty and general character of the fishermen interested. Officer Wyse admits to us that the figures are erroneous and he ought to settle the other matter with the men whose good name he has injured. We are enabled to produce some evidence on the condition of Napan Bass in the Spring as well as on the subject of the catch last season. It has been sent to us, unsolicited on our part, by men whose evidence will go quite as far as that of the Inspector! It has all reached this office since Friday last and we are obliged to those who sent it. Here it is:—

MR. EDITOR:—I fish seine No. 1 at Napan with Mr. Samuel Coulter. I judged my catch of Bass in May last at two tons I sold them in Chatham and to Messrs. Loggie & Anderson, Burnt Church. I never saw a spent bass in May.

ALEX. MCKNIGHT, Napan.

NAPAN, Jan. 26th.

D. G. SMITH, Esq., SIR:—The quantity of Bass I caught in seine No. 2 Napan last May was 3,943 lbs., over and above a few pounds sold in Chatham by the piece. I do not know the weight sold in the latter way. Messrs. Morrison & Co., got no bass in Napan last May. I have been living in Napan over thirty years and I have been in the habit of opening bass every Spring in May, but I never met with a spent bass. I have been salmon fishing for a number of years and have caught bass *not spent* in my salmon nets in June. I have caught them in July. These were spent fish not fit for use. No kind of spent fish is fit for use. What I have said above I am ready to attest to at any time if required. I remain yours,

ALEX. MURDOCH.

To the Editor of the Miramichi Advance.

SIR:—We fished with Alex. Murdoch's family, with seine No. 2. In this fishing we have done, we never saw a spent bass in May. Loggie & Anderson got from us 1,545 lbs. of bass; we have sold the same quantity in the Chatham Market. We sold no bass in Newcastle, Douglastown or Nelson. How could Mr. Venning say that there were nine tons of bass taken in Napan last winter, when there was not 50 lbs. taken. Mr. Morrison did not buy any bass last Spring in Napan, and Mr. Venning should be careful how he makes wild statements.

Yours truly, PHILIP & C. BRIMNER, Napan.

To the Editor of the Miramichi Advance.

SIR:—I fish seine No. 3, at Napan, I caught about 2 tons of bass last Spring. Part of them I sold in the Chatham markets, and the remainder in this settlement. Loggie & Anderson got none of my fish. Mr. Morrison got no bass out of Napan in the month of May, and I never saw a spent bass in the month of May. I will bet Mr. Venning $20.00 that he cannot produce a spent bass caught in Napan in May. Now Mr. Editor there is a chance for Mr. Venning to make some money.

GEORGE MCKNIGHT, Napan.

Napan, 26th Jan., 1877.

MR. EDITOR:—I came to this country in 1816 and followed fishing for a nnmber of years. At one time I owned two seines, one for bass and one for gaspereaux, and during that time I split and salted a good many bass and never found a spent bass caught in May. I have found an odd spent bass caught in my gaspereaux seine near the last of June. I am now 66 years of age and not interested in fishing, either directly or indirectly, as I have not caught a fish of any kind the last 12 years. I have lived in Napan the last 60 years.

I am, dear sir, your obt. servant,

JAMES MCKNIGHT.

A point in the above that should be noticed is that the Napan people sent bass only to Messrs Loggie and Anderson's freezer at Burnt Church and not to that of Messrs. D. Morrison & Co., also, as some of our friends informed us. In referring to that part of the subject we said most of the Bass caught in Napan were sent to Messrs. Loggie & Anderson *or* Morrison's establishments. We put it in that way because we were really under the impression that but one of the two firms obtained Bass in Napan and we have now the proof that our opinion was correct. This proves that the quantity sent to Burnt Church was even smaller than we claimed.

The three seines mentioned in the above communications are all that are owned or fished in Napan and there are some "set' or gill nets which took perhaps 1500 lbs. We, therefore, believe that the whole catch of bass in Napan in May last was only about nine tons, while, as Messrs. Brimner say, not 50 lbs. were taken there last winter, notwithstanding the Inspector's ridiculous assertion that nine tons were taken during that time. If the Inspector will still pretend to believe that nine tons of *breeding* bass