

various species containing more sap and slimy matter than older mature wood of larger growth, there may be increased danger to the fisheries from the development of the pulp industry in this aspect of the matter. The towing and floating of large saw-logs down rivers and over famous fishing grounds in the great lakes has long been a source of complaint amongst Canadian fishermen. These logs, some of huge dimensions, often remained for months in the water, and a large amount of organic matter must have been extracted and permeated the adjacent water. In some cases, especially in the case of hemlock, these pollutions are poisonous in the extreme, and certainly the bark and slimy fibrous debris, scraped off the 'sticks' in their voyage on the water, must be regarded as seriously injurious. The International Commissioners referred to this in the Report in 1896, saying:—

'Among the minor causes to which we may attribute the failure in the whitefish and trout is the deposition of bark from the rafts of saw logs which are constantly being towed across the bay and north channel from some of the larger rivers, especially French River and Spanish River, to the milling ports on the Michigan side of Lake Huron. The grinding of the logs against each other in the booms sets free the fine inner bark which settles on the bottom, forming a thick covering. When this happens to occur on the spawning or feeding grounds of the fish there can be no doubt that a serious injury is caused.

Some of the inshore spawning grounds are said to have suffered from the saw-dust and other mill refuse which has been carried down the streams from the mills; but little injury can have been done in this way, as many of the spawning grounds are offshore or remote from the neighbourhood of the mills, and of late years the regulation prohibiting the letting adrift of this refuse has been well observed. The fishermen seem to have been careful about the disposition of refuse fish and fish offal and have generally landed it on the rocks. As the shores of the bay are not extensively settled other pollutions cannot have occurred.'

These observations confirm the views of the fishermen, who had for many years made their complaint to the Dominion Government, and in 1893 stated their case to the Special Commission, which visited the great lakes in that year, and reported upon this abuse, and on other fishery matters in those waters. One of the witnesses said, speaking of Georgian Bay and the North Channel:—'There are eight different streams and each one used for the floating of logs. The French River, I am told, passed even more logs than the Spanish, and my opinion is that the bottom of the whole lake from Georgian Bay to Mississauga is teeming with bark. It is eighteen miles across to the Manitoulin, and rafts pass in three different directions, so that the bark is spread every way. This bark in the course of time rots and forms into a kind of slime and fish will not stay on that ground. There were five skiffs fishing from here four years ago, since then they have left, as fish got so scarce, and in a very short time I believe there will be no fish at all.

'On September 26 of this year I had thirty-six pieces of net utterly destroyed by this bark. Each piece of net was 180 yards long, and was loaded so heavily with bark as to break the web', and, amongst the additional evidence, it was stated by a prominent firm on the northern shore of the Lake Huron waters, that this abuse was the most serious that the fishermen had to contend with, special stress being laid, however, upon the injury done to the nets. It was stated that bark and the soft wood on the logs which has been found to be very plentiful in the water since the exportation of saw-logs has taken place, is injurious. The stuff rubs off by the motion of the logs while being towed across the bay to the United States, or elsewhere, or even from the rivers when brought down to the saw mills. The rafts are very large, and great damage is done to the meshes of the nets. This is very injurious to the fisheries and clings to the meshes of the nets. It is much more injurious to gill-nets than pound-nets. If these logs are allowed to be towed over our waters, this difficulty will increase, and the prospects for any improvement in the fisheries will not be very encouraging to the fishermen. If the present fishing laws had been in the past carried out as fully as they have been in the past two seasons, and the evils spoken of, and the saw log difficulty were overcome, then fishermen it is claimed would become prosperous again, and would increase