

TORONTO, January, 1891.

Dr. G. A. MACCALLUM,

*Chairman of the Ontario Fish and Game Commission.*

SIR,—I have the honour to transmit herewith a Preliminary Report on the Fish and Fisheries of Ontario.

Your Commission had originally intended to collate the information received in answer to a series of questions distributed to persons interested in the subject throughout the Province. The answers, however, appeared to indicate that a Preliminary Report containing a synopsis of what has already been published in regard to it, with descriptions and figures of the species of fish occurring in Ontario, would tend not only to render more precise the replies to future investigations of your Commission, but also to awaken a widespread interest in the whole matter. In preparing this synopsis I have been chiefly indebted to the publications of the U. S. Fish Commission, which has with great liberality furnished the illustrative plates, but I have consulted, where necessary, the Dominion Fishery Reports and the Reports of the Ontario Crown Lands Department, as well as other available sources of information.

The first section of the Report deals with geographical considerations likely to affect the distribution of the various species of fish occurring within the waters of the Province, the heights above sea-level, depths and temperatures being indicated where possible.

This is followed by a short account of the natural history of fish sufficient to explain the technical terms used by Ichthyologists in distinguishing the various species. Attention is called to the desirability of the extension of our knowledge as to the conditions of life of our food-fishes.

The third section furnishes a detailed account of the natural history of the species of fish reported from the Province, special attention being given to those of economic importance.

Thereafter the statistics contained in Dominion Reports and the legislative enactments of the Dominion Government as far as these affect Ontario are summarized, and the adequacy of the close seasons fixed considered.

A short account of the apparatus employed in catching fish and the methods of preparing them for the market follows, succeeded by a discussion of the causes of and remedies for reported decreases in the catch of fish.

Finally the problems are indicated which would occupy the attention of a Permanent Fish Commission for the Province of Ontario.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Yours respectfully,

R. RAMSAY WRIGHT.