

~~traffic is not of infinite importance to these hitherto neglected districts.~~

~~I feel that though I have not at all adequately treated my subject, I need not labour the point of the economic value to Ireland of the Tourist Movement. We, who are interested in it, do not claim that it is a panacea for all the ills that Ireland is supposed to labour under, but we do claim, if it is true that the benefactor of his country is he who makes two blades of grass to grow where one grew before, that we, whose endeavour it is to bring over here and properly cater for the Tourists, are in our own way acting up to that beneficence, and that while in no sense claiming the name of philanthropists, we are showing that there is an asset, as yet imperfectly recognized, which tends towards the wealth of the country and that in advertising that asset we are practically producing the proverbial two blades of grass.~~

~~I have purposely omitted dealing with the advantage from an educational point of view of encouraging the stranger to come within our gates, because the discussion of this point of view might bring me perilously near the border of politics, which cannot be entered upon in the proceedings of this Society.~~

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7 — *Salmon Fisheries in Ireland and the Report of the Irish Inland Fisheries Commission.*

By H. D. CONNER, Esq., K.C.

[Read Friday, 17th May, 1901.]

THE object of this paper is to bring before this Society the importance of the salmon fishery to the country districts of Ireland, to give an outline of the conditions essential to insure its prosperity, and to summarize very shortly and necessarily inadequately the highly valuable report recently presented to the Lord Lieutenant by the Commission appointed to inquire into the state of the Inland Fisheries of Ireland, and presided over by Lord Justice Walker. Now, in reference to the importance of the salmon fishery in country districts, it is a trite and hackneyed remark, which probably has been many times repeated in this room, that the fact that Ireland is not, and possibly can never be, a manufacturing country on a large scale, makes it all the more vital that every nerve should be strained to develop any natural advantages that the country possesses, and to encourage wealthy Englishmen to come to this country, and to spend in it their superfluous riches, which they are only too anxious to do, on the mere condition that they can be assured of a moderate amount of really good sport. Now, I be-

lieve that, taking it all round, good salmon fishing on a river in Ireland causes an expenditure of money in the district, which to anyone, except an ardent fisherman, appears quite out of proportion to the actual number of fish brought to bank by the fishing tenant, and further that this expenditure benefits a number of persons, and is distributed in directions that renders it even more valuable than that which takes place in other branches of sport, or in the ordinary tourist traffic. To illustrate what I have just said I will take as an example a very moderate salmon fishing that I know, producing about fifty spring salmon in the first four months of the season—say, from the 1st of March to the 1st of July, and I will show the difference that the letting of such a fishery with a fairly suitable house may make to the district where it is. For such a fishing and house as I have mentioned the owner will get probably a rent of £150 for the Spring season of four months, for which he will provide the fishery, the furnished house, and a few other advantages in the way of supplying vegetables, etc. The house, except for the fishery, would, in the majority of cases, be unlettable, and would be rapidly going the way of all flesh, that is to say, the way of all unoccupied houses in Ireland. To obtain the rent it must be kept up, which means the employment of local tradesmen and labour from time to time throughout the year. The owner must also employ a water-bailiff or two to look after the water during the summer and close time, and generally the result is that, a country house, which otherwise would be in decay, has money and labour expended in connection with it throughout the year. But now see what the fishing tenant does for the district. He, and probably some members of his family, or if a bachelor, two or more friends, come to reside, each angler employs an attendant, obtained locally, meaning, at least, three men in constant employment for the fishing season. He either brings his own horses and carriage, or as is more generally the case, has the local outside car in constant employment, taking the anglers to their beats on the river, or ferrying visitors, etc., to and from the nearest railway station. The rich Englishman is lavish in his ideas of the number of servants necessary for his comfort, and brings with him, at least, five and often up to ten, and if he has horses, twelve or more servants of various kinds, who live on a scale quite unknown to the mere Irish household, and consume an amount of meat and provisions generally, that causes the ideas of the village butcher and shopkeeper to expand in an extraordinary degree. The expenses of the household all flowing into the pockets of the local inhabitants are very large, and it is positively surprising what an effect is produced in a poor district by even one rich man residing there for a few months. The local people soon discover that it is their interest to have better and suitable goods, which, having once obtained, they easily

find a market for. The butcher, who formerly killed a lean cow once a fortnight, attempts to procure a better class of meat, and finds that he has markets for it hitherto undiscovered. Where no car existed for hire, one soon appears, and once obtained continues permanently. The little district is absolutely improved, and from what cause—a few salmon, whose intrinsic value as an article of food, is £25, or so. One salmon for the angler is worth to the country more than twenty caught in a stake net. Salmon, as a mere article of food, can never, owing to its price, be anything more than a luxury to be bought by the well-to-do. So far as the country is concerned, angling is what brings money into it. Fifty salmon for the angler may mean £500 for the country. A witness, whose evidence was adopted by the Fishery Commission, stated that every salmon caught by him cost him about £7 10s., and I am sure that this was not the slightest exaggeration. So much as to the advantages to the country districts of Ireland from the encouragement of angling. Now, let us see what is required in order that the salmon may increase and flourish in our rivers and estuaries. In order that the situation may be clearly understood it is necessary to indicate the requirements of the salmon and the nature of its migrations, when the essentials for the full development of the fishing will at once appear. The salmon is a migratory fish, which can only exist by passing from salt water to fresh, and *vice versa*. All salmon are bred in the upper waters and the tributaries of the larger rivers, when a few inches in length they make their way down to the sea, and from that time forward, during the remainder of its life, the salmon every year spends the major part of its existence in passing up and down the river, to and fro, between the sea and the upper waters; in fact, salmon are passing either up or down the river at all times of the year. During the spring, summer, and autumn they are passing up, and, during the winter and early spring, they are passing down. Fresh water is no good to salmon without access to salt water, and *vice versa*. The first thing to be noticed, therefore, as an absolute essential, is, that at all times of the year, there should be an open passage right along the course of the river from the upper spawning grounds to the sea. Every year the old fish must go up to breed in the river, and the young ones come down to grow large in the sea before ascending. If at any one point, between the tidal waters and the breeding grounds, a barrier is made which obstructs the free passage of the fish, the stock of fish in that river is necessarily diminished, and gradually annihilated. At the place where the fresh water meets the salt, the whole stock of fish in the river must pass, at least, once in their lives, either coming down or going up. This particular spot may indeed be called truly the lock and key of the river. Shut up this and not one salmon can reach the upper waters to perpetuate its species.

The great point to be noticed, and one which it is almost impossible to get sufficient importance paid to—where the making or administration of the fishery laws are concerned—is, that the entire river from source and tributaries to the sea is, so far as regards the purpose of maintaining and catching fish, a *unum quid*, one and indivisible. The whole area of water is merely a vehicle in holding the fish which traverse it in all directions, nearly at all times of the year, for one purpose or another. If access to the breeding grounds is cut off, the whole stock perishes, and no fish are caught either in the upper or lower waters, if the fish are imprisoned in the upper waters and cannot get down to the sea, they also perish. The public may catch what they can in the tidal portions; the riparian owners can catch what can be caught in the portions of the river belonging to them. But each part of the river is inseparable from and dependent on the other, both must equally contribute to the required result, namely, the supply of fish to the whole river and estuary. If, at any point, the water is disconnected by a barrier, and divided into several compartments, without means of communication, migratory fish cannot exist. The result of such a state of affairs is well described in a judgment of the English Commissioners of Fisheries, from which I have taken the liberty of largely quoting, and they describe the result of the absence of means of passage for fish as follows:—"A paralysis ensues, and all members of the river alike decay, the riparians suffer, and the public in the estuary equally suffer. This is, however, to be taken with this further distinction. If the riparian owner, next to the tidal flow, erects a barrier, he having the key of the position, may destroy the whole stock of fish in the river and estuary, for all the breeding fish must pass his door. They cannot breed below him, and, if they are to breed at all, they can only breed above and beyond him. After breeding, before these can be caught, or are worth catching, they must first go back to the sea. As to the other riparians further up the river, it is with them a question of degree, the further up each is situated his powers of doing mischief by erecting barriers are proportionately less, for there is always the chance, according to the size and nature of the bed of the river, that some portion of breeding ground between him and the sea will be left accessible to the fish, and to that extent the stock of fish will be kept from annihilation. The gradation of mischief and corresponding loss follow the geographical situation on the river, nevertheless, the whole river, including the estuary, is *unum quid*, and must be so viewed before a just estimate of the respective rights of parties interested can be formed. The running water must be a continuous medium, open at one end towards the sea and stretching considerably inland at the other end, so that the interests of the public are inseparably mixed up with those of the body of riparian proprietors. The river and

its rights are most nearly analogous to a common, and each riparian proprietor can take his commonage only within the limits of his own land, yet the public have the right of commonage at one end." This end being the all important one of the estuary. A free and uninterrupted passage is the first and great essential for salmon, and, without it, there can be no abundance either in tideway or upper waters.

The next great essential is the protection of the breeding fish in the upper waters during the close time. The nature of the salmon is to seek for the purpose of spawning the gravel beds on the upper portions of the river; in fact, as far up as the depth of the streams will allow it to go. It is obvious that, when dispersed over large areas of shallow waters, enormous damage can easily be done by the destruction of the breeding fish. In order that the stock may be kept up, effective protection is absolutely necessary, and it cannot be too strongly put forward that, to ensure effective, or any protection, in the spawning season, the co-operation of the parties interested in the upper reaches of the river is absolutely necessary, and that such co-operation can only be obtained, if during the open season some reasonable share of fish is allowed to attain to the upper waters, and become the subject of angling. If, as has been known to be the case, owing to weirs or excessive or illegal netting in the estuary, the only fish allowed to attain the upper waters are those which run up the river in the autumn when full of spawn and valueless for angling purposes, it is perfectly obvious that the upper proprietors cannot be expected to take the least interest in the preservation of fish, the produce of which is never allowed to return up the river when of the slightest value to them. They cannot be expected to act (as well put in one of Scott's novels), as "clucking hens to hatch the fish," which, when produced, the men having the key of the river proceed to catch and sell. Allow some reasonable proportion of fish to get up the river in the open season, and the anglers who get the benefit will use their best endeavours to protect during the spawning season. Give them nothing and they will view with equanimity whatever destruction may take place on the spawning grounds. From the earliest times it has been recognised that, when the two things—(1) free passage, (2) protection during spawning time, hang all the law and the prophets of salmon fishing. The Scotch, keen in this as in all other matters, have always insisted upon these essentials. So long ago as 1175, by a statute in the reign of William the Lion, it was provided—"This is the King's assize of waters, made at Perth, on the Wednesday before the feast of St. Margaret's that the midstream is always to be free to the extent that a swine of three years old, well fed, cannot touch either side with his head or his tail." The Scotch have taken care of their fisheries, and have reaped, and are reaping, the benefit in the vast sums spent by anglers in that country.

Now, the history of salmon fishing in Ireland may be divided into four periods:—1st That prior to about the year 1819, when Scotch weirs, or stake nets, were introduced into Ireland. Before the introduction of these engines, salmon seem to have been extremely cheap, and very abundant in all rivers, except in such as were closed by some ancient fishing weir devoid of a free gap. The next period was from 1819 to 1842, during which illegal engines sprang up all over the rivers and estuaries, and the owners of weirs enhanced and strengthened them, until, in 1842, the banks of nearly every estuary were dotted over with stake nets, and the mouths of several important rivers closed by fishing weirs destitute of a free gap. The result of this was, of course, the rapid deterioration of the fisheries, and it was evident that something should be done. What actually was done was comprised in the legislation embodied in the Fishery Act of 1842, which was supposed to consolidate, amend, and improve the fishery laws. That this Act did consolidate them, admits of no doubt, as all the previous fishery Acts, of which there were a number, were repealed. Beneficial amendments in procedure were no doubt made, but the improvements in the actual law, made by the great Act of 1842, were highly dubious. Prior to that Act the majority of the fixed engines, which had been established, were undoubtedly illegal, the Act of 1842 had the effect of legalising great numbers of those engines then existing, and, what was worse, enabling new ones to be set up. There were supposed to be restrictions, but, as will be seen, they were wholly nugatory. The provisions as to free gaps in weirs proved almost valueless. Matters went from bad to worse, and prior to the passing of the Act of 1863 the salmon fisheries had been reduced to a very low ebb, indeed. In 1863, as the result of the Report of Select Committee of the House of Commons, an Act was passed enabling the Inspectors of Fisheries to order the removal of fixed engines, which had been erected in defiance of the provisions and restrictions of the Act of 1842, and providing for the enforcement and maintenance of free gaps in fishing weirs. This Act of 1863 proved beneficial to the fisheries generally in the highest degree, such fixed engines, as were grossly illegal under the existing law, were removed, and free gaps were opened in weirs which had from time to time been so enhanced and closed by being converted from brushwood and timber into stone and mortar, that no fish could possibly either get through or over them. During the commencement, and for a large portion of the period from 1863 to the present time, which I may call the 4th period, there was a great improvement in the take of salmon generally, both in the estuaries and weirs, and also in the fresh water, the result, as must be admitted, of the improved conditions under which the salmon had the chance of passing up and down, to and from, the breeding grounds.

As time went on, however, as always happens with Acts of Parliament, the enforcement of which is left to the energy of individuals, or to local bodies, like Boards of Conservators, formed of discordant elements, and sadly lacking in funds, weak points in the armour of the fishery laws were discovered, and made the most of; and in recent years, though, as is always the case with fisheries, there have been ups and downs—the inland fisheries have been undoubtedly on the down grade. The necessity of arresting this decline at the earliest possible moment will become more apparent when it is stated how the funds available for the enforcement of the fishery laws are provided. Up to the time of the establishment of the Department of Agriculture, the State really did nothing, except supply the salary of the Inspectors of Fisheries, and the only available funds for protection were the licence duties received by the Boards of Conservators, which funds increase if the fishing is good, but rapidly decrease when it is bad, so that the more necessity there is for funds the less money there is available. If there are a succession of bad years the licences taken out decrease, bailiffs have to be taken off, and prosecutions cannot be instituted, so matters rapidly go from bad to worse.

A few years ago a number of gentlemen, interested in the development of Ireland and its prosperity as a tourist resort, met together to see what could be done in the matter, and took action in various ways. Amongst other things, they appointed a committee to take up the subject of the salmon and trout fisheries, and that committee went to work, and obtained a quantity of valuable information from Boards of Conservators and individuals interested in the fisheries, and from this beginning was developed the idea of holding a conference of persons representing the various Boards of Conservators in Ireland. A conference which took place and of which a number of meetings were held, the result being the sending of a deputation to the Lord Lieutenant to urge upon the Government the necessity of legislation and administrative action, if the interests of the fisheries of Ireland were not to be entirely disregarded. His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant heard the deputation most fully, and was able, either at that time or shortly afterwards, to announce that he had appointed a Commission to inquire into the condition of the Inland Fisheries of Ireland and the Laws relating thereto. I cannot pass by the results obtained by the action of the Fishery Conference, without referring to the exertions of one person in particular, the Earl of Mayo, who devoted an enormous amount of time and trouble to the subject, and without whom, I believe, there would have been no Fishery Commission. Nobody, I believe, could find fault with the *personel* of that Commission. The consent of Lord Justice Walker to act as chairman was particularly fortunate, and under his supervision and with the assistance of the most able scientists,

and after hearing an immense body of evidence from all parts of Ireland, the Commission presented to the Lord Lieutenant a most able and practical report. The recommendations contained in this Report, which would appear to be of an extremely moderate character, would, if carried out, go very far indeed towards restoring the salmon fisheries of Ireland to something like the condition in which every true friend of Ireland would wish to see them.

I shall now endeavour to summarize the findings of the Commission, and passing by a number of minor alterations and technical amendments in the existing statutes, the necessity for which is not seriously disputed, and which need not be noticed at length, the recommendations made in the Report, may be classed under those relating to—

- (1) The free passage of fish.
- (2) The protection and enforcement of the law.
- (3) The establishment of fish hatcheries.
- (4) Scientific investigation.
- (5) The establishment of a Department of Fisheries.

As to No. 1—namely, the provisions necessary to insure the free passage of fish—the Report first deals with that important provision known as the Weekly Close Time. From very early times there has been fixed in all portions of the United Kingdom a certain period of the week within which it is illegal to disturb or prevent the passage of fish up the river or to take them in any way other than by rod and line. This time in Ireland has for many years been fixed as from 6 a.m. on Saturday morning to 6 a.m. on Monday morning, and has not been subject to any variation by by-law or otherwise, no matter much circumstances may vary in any particular river. The Commission found that in the case of rivers which had long estuaries the present weekly close time was not long enough to enable the fish to pass through the estuary, the result being that in the upper portion of the estuary there was really no weekly close time, the net proprietor there being able on Monday morning to intercept all the fish which had been coming up from the previous Saturday morning. To meet this obvious defect they recommend that the Fishery Authority should be at liberty to alter as occasion might require the weekly close time in any particular river or estuary, or to extend it by any period not exceeding twenty-hours. It would appear that the present invariability of the weekly close time gives an unfair advantage to the net proprietor who happens to be situate on the upper end of the estuary, and the suggested powers to be given to the Fishery Department seem highly reasonable. The next recommendation in the Report relative to the free passage of fish deals with the subject of shooting nets entirely across the river so as to deprive the fish of any open channel which can really be used while the nets are being drawn, the present provisions in the Fishery Acts

relative to this are general and of such a vague character that breaches of them can rarely be made the subject of prosecution, and to meet this the Report recommends that wherever practicable the space to be left for the passage of salmon during the shooting of the net should be defined, and that the Fishery Authority should have full powers to regulate the length of nets to be used in any particular place, and also the manner of their use so as to prevent overlapping. There may be difficulty in some places in carrying out the recommendation as to defining the space within which nets are to be used, but I believe that there can be no question that the Fishery Authority should have the amplest powers of prohibiting in narrow channels the use of nets of such a length that they can only be usefully employed by being shot practically from bank to bank. Dealing with the subject of netting in fresh waters, a procedure which does not commend itself to sportsmen, and from the point of view of the general public benefit is certainly not to be encouraged, the Report very truly points out the danger of allowing fresh-water netting to nullify the benefits which arise from the restrictions and regulations laid upon fixed engines in the estuary, and suggests that provision should be made to ensure a clear passage being left for fish, the extension of the weekly close time for nets in fresh waters to sixty hours, and that henceforth riparian owners should not be allowed, without the written licence of the Fishery Authority, to begin netting on portion of the river where no netting has been in the habit of taking place. I believe that the injury done by netting in fresh water is out of all proportion to the number of salmon taken, and that the restrictions proposed in the Report are in the highest degree moderate. The recommendations of the Commission in relation to the Queen's Gap (or should it be called the King's Gap?) in fishing weirs, and as to fish-passes in mill-dams, are of considerable importance. At present, although the Acts of Parliament lay down in the strongest terms that in every fishing weir there shall be a free gap, it by no means follows that the gap is of any use, so far as allowing fish to pass up the river is concerned. From a recent decision of a majority of a Court of the King's Bench Division it would seem to follow that if the gap answered the requirements of the Inspectors of Fisheries in 1864, although the course of the river had changed so that not a drop of water runs through it now, the law could not be invoked successfully, and further, that if the Inspectors thirty years ago made a mistake in the situation or locality of the gap, the public are helpless for all time. This state of things requires a remedy, and the Report suggests a triennial inspection of free gaps by the Fishery Authority so as to insure that the positive requirements of the Acts may be carried out, and that there may be at all times what there always should have been—an efficient free gap in every fishing weir extending across a river. As to fish-passes

in mill-dams, under the Fishing Act of 1842 every dam constructed since 1842 was found to have a fish-pass, but by some strange oversight in the drafting of the Act no summary remedy was provided for breach of its provisions in that respect, with the natural result that they were often not observed. The Report recommends that this oversight should be rectified, and that the fish-passes should be subject to inspection in the same way as free gaps. I now come to the second head in my summary of the recommendations, namely:—Production and the enforcement of the law. This is a subject in respect of which it is difficult to speak with patience of the action of the Irish Executive Government in recent years. The Fishery Acts are Public Acts passed for the benefit of the public and the country generally, and having only in a minor degree the effect of giving or preserving private right, and in the original Fishery Act of 1842, and in several subsequent Acts, the coast-guard are designated as a body proper to be employed in enforcing the provisions of the Acts. It is perfectly idle to try to enforce the law in the estuaries of Ireland without co-operation on the part of the coast-guard, who are on the spot, have boats, are supposed to know the coast, and, as is obvious to the most casual observer, have always one of their number patrolling outside the station with a telescope. The Acts provide that a copy of every Fishery By-law should be posted at the Coast-guard Station, but the authorities apparently forbid them to do anything whatever effective to assist in its enforcement. They may, indeed, if they think fit, report to the Conservators any breach of the fishery laws which forces itself on their observation; but, further than this, if they choose to do it, they do *nothing*. What the view taken by the Admiralty is cannot exactly be discovered, but as far as can be ascertained it is this—that Ireland is in the nature of a savage country, and that to do anything active to enforce the law might offend the susceptibilities of the aborigines, and lead them to decline to furnish information to the coast-guard in time of war. The Report of the Commission finds that the interests of the public require that the powers given by law to the coast-guard should be exercised, and in this, I should imagine, everyone—including, it is to be hoped, the Admiralty—will agree with them. Somewhat similar considerations apply to the Constabulary. They are specially authorised and empowered, by Act of Parliament, to enforce the close seasons for salmon, and for many years they did so, but for some extraordinary reason the authorities are disinclined to allow them to do so, although they are, from time to time, employed upon most miscellaneous duties, having little relation to the keeping of the King's peace, such as collecting Census papers, and, I believe, distributing to the peasants poultry supplied by the Congested Districts Board. Why they should not be directed to enforce the close seasons admits of no reasonable explanation. It has nothing to do with private rights; the salmon is then the property

of nobody, and it is for the public interest that the breed should not be destroyed. The Commission is most emphatic in its condemnation of the short-sighted policy of preventing the police from enforcing a most important branch of the law, and are strongly of opinion that the public interest requires that it should be made part of the duty of the Constabulary to assist in the protection of fish during the close season. Under the head of "Protection" come also some suggestions of the Commission as to amendments of the law with a view to making the present law more effective as regards poisoning rivers with lime and spurge and flax and factory pollution. In order to meet the breaches and evasions of the law at present taking place during the close season, and the sale of fish illegally caught during such season—which practices are rendered more frequent by the fact that the close season varies in each district, and that, therefore, there is during most of the year *some* locality in which the fish *may* have been legally caught—the Report suggests the adoption of an ingenious plan, which has worked with the greatest success in England and Scotland, by which persons consigning salmon for sale are bound to enclose with the fish a certificate showing when, where, and how the fish was captured, and the name and address of the sender. This certificate has to be signed in presence of a witness, and, if false, can generally easily be proved to be so, while it affords protection to the *bona fide* consigner from having his fish seized on suspicion.

The subject of "Fish Hatcheries" is such an important one, and has been dealt with so exhaustively by several writers—notably, Mr. Moreton Frewen—that I shall only refer briefly to the recommendations of the Commission on the subject. It is contended by the advocates of fish hatcheries that a far larger proportion of the *ova* are hatched and survive under the treatment of artificial hatchery than when deposited by the salmon in the natural state, and open to many accidents and to the attacks of a multitude of enemies. That hatcheries have been a success in America and Germany cannot in the face of the official reports of the American authorities be disputed for a moment, but the Commission were evidently desirous to prevent the success of hatcheries being used as an argument for permitting the protection of the natural spawning grounds to be neglected, and deprecate strongly any suggestion of the kind. The Report fully recognizes the beneficial effect of fish hatcheries, and recommends that they should be encouraged in every way, and that a central hatchery in each province in Ireland should be established out of funds to be provided by the Fishery Authority. With respect to scientific investigation into matters relating to the salmon fisheries, the Report observes on the fact that up to the present any funds forthcoming for the purpose have been largely contributed by the Royal Dublin Society, and insists on the obvious duty and obligation of continuous scientific investigation into all matters

affecting the fisheries. The Commission suggests the adoption of a scheme outlined by Mr. Ernest Holt, the scientific adviser of the Department of Agriculture, by which a record could be kept in any desired river of the number and character of the fish ascending and descending, and they point out the advantage that would probably be derived from the acquisition by the Department of a river to be used for experimental purposes. The necessity of proper collection and examination of statistics of the capture of fish is also dwelt on, and the Commission suggest that the Fishery Authority should be furnished with accurate statements of the number of fish actually captured by each person fishing under licence, such statements, of course, to be treated as confidential.

As regards the Supreme Fishery Authority, the Commission believe that the government of fisheries should not be relegated to being merely a branch of the Department of Agriculture. They are of opinion that the importance of the fisheries merits the establishment of a Board with the same position and powers as the Department of Agriculture. While fully agreeing with this recommendation, I am perfectly confident that the establishment of the Board of Agriculture, and the changes thereby made in the administration of the Fishery Department, will not be attended with any injurious results. On the contrary, I believe that the larger powers possessed by the Board, including that vital point, a certain amount of command of the sinews of war, will prove of very great benefit to the fisheries, and I look forward hopefully to the future of the fisheries, provided that some steps are taken not to allow the exhaustive and able report of the Commission to remain a dead letter. Within the limits of a paper it is impossible to do more than give an outline of the most important recommendations of the Commission. I have said nothing in reference to their findings, in reference to the decline of the fisheries. That was patent from the first, and but for its existence, in fact, the Commission would never have been appointed. I trust that every one who has any interest with the Government and Parliament will try and bring influence to bear to get the very moderate recommendations contained in the Report carried into effect, and I am confident that the adoption of these recommendations would have results of a most far-reaching character.

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