

790. The yield of the fisheries in 1894 was very nearly five times as much as it was in 1869, and the exports were nearly four times as much as in 1868. The proportion of exports to total value in 1869 was 74 per cent, and in 1894, 53 per cent; indicating that a much larger proportion of the catch is now taken for home consumption, owing in all likelihood to increased facilities for interprovincial distribution.

791. Though the table shows that there has been a considerable increase during the period, yet that increase would have been much larger, but for the decline in the catch of some of the principal kinds of fish. In the catch of mackerel, for instance, there has been a most alarming decrease, as the following figures show:—

YEAR.	Total catch.	Annual average.	No. 1 quality.	Annual average.
	Brls.	Brls.	Brls.	Brls.
1850-59.....	1,864,915	185,491	682,637	68,263
1863-72.....	2,454,265	245,426	1,007,345	100,734
1880-89.....	1,618,603	161,860	198,322	19,822
1890-94.....	486,183	97,236	*	*

\* No details.

The catch of mackerel, which in 1892 as compared with 1891, showed a decrease of 44,471 barrels, showed a further decrease of 14,712 barrels in 1893 as compared with 1892, and of 15,764 barrels in 1894 as compared with 1893. This decline is general in all the Maritime Provinces, the Magdalen Islands being the only locality giving an increase.

With regard to mackerel the Inspector of Fisheries of Cape Breton Island says:—

“It is a misfortune that United States vessels are allowed to seine mackerel before the month of August. When mackerel schools strike the coast of Nova Scotia during the latter part of May and the month of June on their way to the spawning grounds, these fish are full of spawn. Tens of thousands of barrels of “spawn mackerel” are captured by United States seining vessels. \* \* \* Should any international agreement be arrived at between Canada and the United States by which mackerel fishing is prohibited before the 1st of July in each year it would be in the interest of this fishery and both countries would benefit thereby in the end.”

The Inspector of No. 2 fishing district says:—

“Along the Guysboro coast there was a good catch of spring mackerel but the fall fishery was a failure, not from scarcity but that the fish, in the language of the fishermen, did not ‘trim near the shore.’ On the western part of Halifax county the spring mackerel kept off from shore and few were taken. It may become necessary in the near future to restrict the catching of mackerel in the spring months; the fish are then full of spawn and not in as good condition as in the autumn months.”

The Inspector of No. 3 fishing district says:—

“The shortage in the mackerel fishery is a serious matter to those who have investments in traps and other appliances. The County of Lunen-