

**59.—THE SARDINE CANNING INDUSTRY OF EASTPORT, ME.****By N. H. KEMP, and others.**

[A petition to the Secretary of the Treasury.]

Whereas by the expiration of the Washington Treaty of 1873 on the 1st day of July next, an important industry, which has originated since its ratification, and which is purely local to this border town of Eastport and the adjacent town of Lubec in the State of Maine; and whereas by such termination of treaty with the Canadian Government this said industry, which is the packing and canning of American sardines, is threatened with utter annihilation, we, the undersigned owners of factories at Eastport and Lubec, Me., respectfully beg to represent as follows:

(1) The industry of packing American sardines originated in this town of Eastport ten years ago, and there is invested in it at the present time capital of not less than one million of dollars, of which a large proportion is in factory buildings, machinery, fixtures, tools, and implements.

(2) There are eighteen factories in Eastport and four in Lubec, now wholly engaged in and dependent on this industry, and employing several thousand operators, partly former residents of these said towns, and partly people from other parts, drawn hither by the necessity of the factories for help.

(3) Many of these people have settled here and acquired real estate, trusting in the permanency of the industry.

(4) The towns of Eastport and Lubec have no resources for business except fish, the canning of American sardines forming the most prominent feature of their occupation. Of the fish used they receive fully two-thirds from provincial waters, being situated on the border.

(5) The fish used in this industry are small herring which have no other commercial value. Before the era of this industry they were applied to fertilizing purposes only.

(6) The provincial waters in the vicinity of these said towns abound in them and furnish an inexhaustible supply of the kind required in the sardine business, while, owing to local conditions, but a small proportion is obtainable from American waters.

(7) The fish are brought in fresh, and owing to their delicacy are of such perishable nature that they must be put through the process of canning without delay.

(8) The fish are in best condition from July until December, and are

prepared after the manner of French sardines, affording a palatable, cheap, and wholesome food product, in great demand throughout the United States and an article of export to Europe.

(9) It is therefore at the opening of the season for canning fish when the said treaty terminates.

(10) A large and valuable amount of material is used in this industry, which greatly benefits other business in and out of the State of Maine.

Now, if from any cause this well-established and generous business should fail, it would be an irreparable loss to the undersigned and their employees, to these towns and other sections of the country.

While our Government has at no time derived a revenue from the importation of these small herring, it has on the other hand profited indirectly and largely by this industry from duties on tin plate and pig tin, of which articles it is estimated the industry requires from \$150,000 to \$200,000 annually, with a steadily increasing demand.

Under the tariff which will take effect on July 1 next, and which provides a duty of 50 cents for every 100 pounds of fresh fish imported into the United States, except on fresh fish for immediate consumption, it becomes a question whether these small herring, which but for this exclusively local industry have no commercial value, shall be considered dutiable, or whether, forming as they do the base and necessity of this important and growing enterprise, an exception shall be made in its favor and for its maintenance; furthermore, as nothing will save these very perishable fish for food purposes except prompt canning, we respectfully beg to submit whether this may not be considered tantamount to immediate consumption.

In the event that a duty should be exacted on the fish in question it would grievously cripple, if not utterly annihilate, the American sardine industry, which even now is, and for a year past has been, suffering from the general depression of business. Compared with the cheapness of these fish, the specific duty of 50 cents per 100 pounds is exorbitant to the last degree, being far in excess of the ordinary cost of the fish. But a duty of 50 cents per 100 pounds imposed on the gross weight means to the factories a duty of 66½ cents on the net weight, for in trimming the fish for use a loss in weight of not less than 33½ per cent is experienced.

The market value of American sardines having been established and regulated by the cost of the fish, this charge would inevitably result in driving American sardines from our own and foreign markets, in favor of foreign industries, and would entail heavy losses to factory owners, and inflict untold misery on a large number and worthy class of American citizens.

Now, therefore, in consideration of the facts stated above and in view of the imminent danger which threatens these communities, your petitioners earnestly pray that you will instruct the collector of this port

to permit the importation of the designated fish, for the purpose stated, free of duty, and that you will give this matter attention at your earliest convenience, considering that but a few weeks intervene now, and if not passed upon before the 1st of July, it will seriously affect the interests and welfare of these communities.

EASTPORT, ME., *May 28, 1885.*

#### 60.—YOUNG TROUT DESTROYED BY MOSQUITOES.

By C. H. MURRAY.

[From a letter to Prof. S. F. Baird.]

In the middle or latter part of June, 1882, I was prospecting on the head-waters of the Tumichie Creek, in the Gunnison Valley, Colorado. About 9 o'clock in the morning I sat down in the shade of some willows that skirted a clear but shallow place in the creek. In a quiet part of the water where their movements were readily discernible, were some fresh-hatched brook or mountain trout, and circling about over the water was a small swarm of mosquitoes. The trout were very young, still having the pellucid sack puffing out from the region of the gills, with the rest of the body almost transparent when they would swim into a portion of the water that was lighted up by direct sunshine. Every few minutes these baby trout—for what purpose I do not know, unless to get the benefit of more air—would come to the surface of the water, so that the top of the head was level with the surface of the water. When this was the case a mosquito would light down and immediately transfix the trout by inserting its proboscis, or bill, into the brain of the fish, which seemed incapable of escaping. The mosquito would hold its victim steady until it had extracted all the life juices, and when this was accomplished, and it would fly away, the dead trout would turn over on its back and float down the stream. I was so interested in this before unheard-of destruction of fish that I watched the depredations of these mosquitoes for more than half an hour, and in that time over twenty trout were sucked dry and their lifeless bodies sent floating away with the current. It was the only occasion when I was ever witness to the fact, and I have been unable by inquiry to ascertain if others have observed a similar destruction of fish. I am sure the fish were trout, as the locality was quite near the snow line, and the water was very cold, and no other fish were in the stream at that altitude. From this observation I am satisfied that great numbers of trout, and perhaps infant fish of other varieties in clear waters, must come to their death in this way; and if the fact has not been heretofore recorded it is important to those interested in fish-culture.

DENVER, COLO., *July 22, 1885.*