

places, secure from predatory birds and small boys, as well as places of refuge to trout which wish to escape the sawdust of the main stream. I have seen trout streams, especially in the pine barrens of northern Wisconsin and Michigan, which were by no means as favored as this Mill Brook, the current being comparatively sluggish, and not so capable of purging itself of sawdust; yet I know of few trout streams in any lumber region where its denizens cannot avoid the sawdust if they will, by withdrawing to the headwaters of or lateral tributaries, provided fishways are supplied to enable them to surmount the dams where the accumulations chiefly occur. What I remark as most singular in the Mill Brook is, that the trout gather most where the sawdust is thickest, both on old mill sites and on sites where mills are running now. I take my best trout right from under the flume of a whipstock factory and saw mill, where the refuse is dumped as fast as it forms.

But I recall to mind a still more striking example of the innocuousness of sawdust. There is in Hampshire county, Massachusetts, a series of three large natural reservoirs, varying from half a mile to two miles in length, which for fifty years have abounded in pickerel, perch, eels and bullheads. It is said that they originally contained trout, but the water is dark and discolored by the drainage of spruce and cedar swamps. At the outlet of the lowest pond once stood a village called Hallockville, which operated a grist mill, sundry sawmills, and what was then the largest tannery in Massachusetts. It was burned in 1846 and never rebuilt, and the dams and foundation walls are now almost destroyed and buried by a new growth of forest. But the sluice and flood stream below are still clogged with the sawdust and tan bark deposited a half a century ago, and the water is black and forbidding, though much broken into swirls and rapids by boulders and ledges. But for the color of the water, it is a most likely-looking place for trout, though it has been tested time and time again without successful results. It has always been maintained, from the date of the building of the tannery, that there were no trout in it. I used to fish it myself when I was a boy. Last summer I took therefrom five small trout with a worm. They had doubtless worked their way up from the Buckland streams below, for they never came through the dam from the pickerel ponds above. Nevertheless the lower streams are occupied by many sawmills and carry their proportion of sawdust, that substance which some of your correspondents maintain is fatal to fish life. I leave your readers to draw their inferences, and trust that Mr. Fred. Mather will feel himself sustained by this testimony of the streams. That gentleman is not apt to make mistakes. He is gray with the experience of years, and that is better than guesswork.

CHARLES HALLOCK.

WASHINGTON, December 29.

## THE SAWDUST QUESTION.

*Editor Forest and Stream:*

I have read with interest the various communications upon the above named subject, and with special interest that of Chas. Hallock, in this week's issue, because he refers to streams and conditions with which I am familiar, and I write from an invalid's room to briefly corroborate the facts stated by him. The adjoining township west of Plainfield is Windsor, a much larger township and containing many more streams and trout streams too. Adjoining Windsor on the south is the township of Peru, where first I saw daylight. This township also abounds in trout streams known as the Hoosac Tunnel Range or Spur of the Green Mountain which cross the western end of the state of Massachusetts. A large portion of these streams have driven sawmills for a century past, and several of them had tanneries on their banks, and the same state of things, practically, as enumerated by Mr. Hallock, has existed there for one-third to one-half a century past to my personal knowledge.

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[Mr. Pierce is editor of "Journal of Fish Culture," Philadelphia, a gentleman of much experience, and has been connected with the National Fish Commission for some time.]

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