

Fish Culture in Canada.*

It was not until 1853, so far as I can ascertain, that any attempt was made upon this continent to artificially breed fishes. Dr. Theodatus Garlick, of Cleveland, Ohio, was the pioneer. He obtained parent brook-trout in Canada, taking them across from Port Stanley in Ontario, to his establishment in Ohio. He was an enthusiast, and his exhibits of young fish, hatched from Canadian trout-eggs, were a feature for many years at Agricultural Exhibitions in the various States bordering on the great lakes. Canada soon followed suit. The initial attempts were, of course, largely experimental. The late Mr. Samuel Wilmot claimed to have originated fish-culture in Canada; but I find the claim to be disputed, and with justification, by a venerable and respected citizen of Ottawa, Mr. Richard Nettle. Stimulated, no doubt, by recollections of famous streams in his native Devonshire, Mr. Nettle, as early as 1856 or 1857, began the incubation of salmon and trout eggs for purposes of artificial stocking, in hatching tanks in the City of Quebec. He disputed the accuracy of the claim frequently put forward on behalf of Mr. Wilmot. The Bishop of Ottawa (Dr. Hamilton) incidentally confirmed the claim of Mr. Nettle in a recent conversation, his lordship informing me that he himself saw the young fish and the hatching arrangements about the time referred to. Mr. Nettle was then Superintendent of Fisheries for Lower Canada. From a report by the late Mr. Wilmot, dated Dec. 31st, 1878, it appears that he commenced experiments in fish-hatching in 1865, eight or nine years later than Mr. Nettle's experiments, and he carried it on as a private enterprise until the Dominion Government took the work over and gave Mr. Wilmot an appointment as a Government official. In 1866 Mr. Wilmot acted as a fishery officer, with authority from the Government of Upper Canada, and on May 30th, 1868, he became an officer under the Department of Marine and

fisheries; but it was not until eight years later (1876) that he became Superintendent of Fish Breeding. For his initial experiments he was paid, in 1869, the sum of \$2,000 by Order in Council.

Thus fish-culture in Canada, at first a private enterprise on a small scale, received a kind of semi-official sanction; but in 1868 it became distinctively a branch of the Dominion Government service, the Newcastle Hatchery, possessed by Mr. Wilmot, being transferred to the Department of Marine and Fisheries. This hatchery, Mr. Wilmot affirmed, in his report dated Feb. 3rd, 1875, "has been the nucleus from which all of the National and State fish-breeding establishments in Canada and the United States of America have taken their rise." Additional hatcheries were soon built, the famous Restigouche Salmon institution in 1872 (twice rebuilt), and the Miramichi Hatchery in 1873. In 1874 the Gaspé Hatchery was commenced, and in 1875 a large mill was purchased at Tadoussac and converted into a fish-breeding establishment, supplanted by a new building later. The work expanded, so that Mr. Wilmot, in Feb., 1875, was able to speak of five hatcheries in Canada, four of them in full operation.

Much interest naturally centres in the Newcastle Hatchery on Lake Ontario, where thirty-five years ago the work commenced. The building, enlarged and improved, is situated on a small stream at the head of a small creek or marsh opening into the lake near Bowmanville, and about thirty-five miles east of Toronto. A sheltered and secluded valley of great sylvan beauty encloses the site, but the work has always been handicapped by its distance, both from good spawning grounds, and from suitable areas for planting the fry. Mr. Wilmot erected the hatchery, as was natural, near to his own residence, and at a time when salmon frequented Lake Ontario, and resorted to the creek in question for purposes of spawning. For

* These extracts are taken from a paper read by Professor E. E. Prince, Dominion Commissioner of Fisheries, before the Ottawa Literary and Scientific Society.