

Marine and Fisheries—Fisheries Branch.

The hatchery is in good order and repair for the coming season's work. I have also added ten new cans for carrying the fry to the stock already on hand. This will greatly facilitate the work of distributing next spring.

The Canadian Fisheries Exhibit and hatchery still continue to prove a great source of interest to large numbers of visitors. The number of visitors who registered for the year being over 24,000, an increase of 2,000 over that of the previous year.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN WALKER,

In charge of Ottawa Hatchery.

11. SELKIRK HATCHERY, MANITOBA.

SELKIRK, 22nd December, 1898.

To PROF. E. E. PRINCE.

Dominion Commissioner of Fisheries,
Ottawa.

SIR.—I beg to submit herewith the annual report of the operations at the hatchery at this place for the year 1898.

In making this report I am, of necessity, dependent on such information as has been obtainable, as I became responsible for the work of the hatchery only on my appointment as officer in charge upon the first of October last.

Mr. Charles E. Page, who had the care of the ova under the late officer in charge of the hatchery, and who occupies the same position now, informs me that in the fall of 1897 about thirty millions of whitefish eggs were obtained and placed in the jars. These were put through the hatching process with the result that about nine millions of fry were successfully hatched out. The previous season the hatchery was not operated, and in 1896 only about four and a half million eggs were obtained, and these were shipped to British Columbia. In 1895 the officer at the time reported that twenty-five millions of eggs had been placed in the incubators, and he stated that not over nineteen millions of fry resulted. The nine millions of fry resulting from last season's hatchery operations were allowed to run down the off-take pipe of the hatchery into the Red River, and when the number of angles in this outlet is considered, and the rapidity of the flow of water which passes down, it is clear that quite a number of the delicate fry must have sustained more or less injury, and the water into which they passed could not be suitable as it is far too shallow to be favourable for successful planting. My instructions sent from Ottawa after my appointment were, of course, very late, and no preparations had been made at the hatchery up to that time. The season was unusually early and the weather the roughest and most unfavourable experienced in this district for many years, and it would not have been surprising had I failed, as many experienced parties predicted I should, in getting an ample supply of eggs. I succeeded, however, in securing as large a quantity of eggs as has gone into this hatchery in any former year, but not without suffering many privations, and after exerting most strenuous and determined efforts.

I made arrangements with Messrs. Coffey and Norton to procure parent fish with pound-nets in Lake Winnipegosis, on the condition that the coarse fish taken were to be retained by them as pay. It proved a most unprofitable venture for them, and they lost considerably by it. It was the only arrangement that appeared to me possible to make in view of the late date when instructions reached me to obtain ova by means of pound-nets. I found that the net owned by the department was not in fit condition for use, as portions of it were quite rotten, and the firm mentioned being the only one I could find with that sort of net not in use, and Lake Winnipegosis the only lake in the province in which the men had any experience in pound-net fishing, or in which parties engaged in the fishing industry were willing to undertake the venture.

By the 15th October I had boats, nets, &c. &c., all ready for a start, but owing to the heavy snowfalls, hard frosts, and gales of wind, operations were carried on with great difficulty. We got about thirty millions of eggs, all taken between the 20th October and 1st of November, but owing to our tug getting stuck on the sand bar at the