

parts of the country to be served as rations for other Indians or disposed of? A. Every lake in that northern country, no matter how small, is apt to contain white fish, and in every large lake they exist in great quantities. Lake Manitoba, Winnipegosis, Winnipeg and all the smaller lakes around abound in these fish, and in the tens of thousands of lakes in the wooded Laurentian country, which stretches between the great lakes and Hudson's Bay, fish can be had in abundance. The whole of that country is dotted with lakes, and every one of these contains whitefish—often even a lake not more than a few acres in extent contains large whitefish. The reason is that the waters are cold. In lakes of the same size in this region the water would be too warm in summer and the whitefish would die; but in the north the waters are cold and there is abundance of food for them, and hence the small lakes often contain fish as large as you get in the large lakes.

Q. Are the Committee to understand, that if an Indian suffers from want of food, it is because of his own improvidence? A. Yes, entirely.

Q. Can you tell us what an Indian family could do with a sufficient quantity of sturgeon twine and hooks in a district where sturgeons are abundant? A. I think if they were taught to be provident—if the chiefs, or the missionaries, or the Hudson's Bay officials, or others, were to instil into them the necessity of being provident, with an outfit such as you speak of, they could supply themselves with plenty of food for a winter.

Q. Sturgeon or white fish? A. Sturgeon can be caught with hooks, but white fish cannot. The Indians catch them in the winter with nets set under the ice.

Q. Are whitefish entirely vegetable feeders? A. I have never found in their stomachs anything but confervæ, small algæ, vegetable substances that grew in the lakes.

A. Is that the case with the sturgeon? A. No; the sturgeon, in these northern waters, lives apparently on small mollusks. There is a little bivalve called *cyclas*, which is about the size of a pea when it is shut, and globular in shape. It is full of nutritious tempting-looking meat. They are white and translucent looking, and you get them in the stomachs of the sturgeon in large quantities. They are as good as oysters.

Q. Can you give us any other fish that are not predatory in the sense of destroying other fish life? A. The sturgeon and whitefish do not. The lake trout does. It is a good fish but it will eat other fish and all the other fish which the Indians catch, as far as I know, would be apt to prey upon smaller fish if they could get them. Suckers do not, but they are not very good eating. The Indians do eat them when they can get nothing else.

Q. Are the Committee to understand from this that you would advise, in filling up depleted lakes with fish, that these two varieties should be chosen in preference to the jack-fish, which is in the habit of gorging himself with other fish, as you know? A. The sturgeon is perhaps the best fish of all for the Indians. It takes the place of meat and bread. It approaches more nearly to meat than any other fish?

Q. What is the greatest weight that you have known a sturgeon to be caught? A. Well, I should say fifty pounds would be a large one—six feet in length—sturgeons four and five feet are often caught.

*By the Honorable Mr. Turner :*

Q. Is the flesh of the sturgeon like the flesh of any other fish? A. It is more solid.

Q. Is it not more like beef than other fish? A. Yes.

Q. How do the Indians cure it for use? A. They dry it and smoke it. They cut it in slices or strips for that purpose.

Q. Neither sturgeon nor white fish are predatory on other fish? A. No, sturgeon live principally on small shell fish.

Q. Are not the small shell fish fit for food? A. They are, no doubt, but it would require a handful of them to make a mouthful. They catch sturgeon in the north with fish bait, but I have never known them to pursue other fish and prey on them.