

Upon a recent visit to Cape Breton, I observed vast numbers of American Hake (*Phycis chuss*, Walbaum) 3 in. to 4 in. in length, hovering around the wharves at the various harbours which were included in my tour. Like most species of the genus *Phycis* the American Hake retains when adult extremely elongated ventral fins, which, as already stated, are characteristic of the young or the advanced larval condition of many of the family *Gadidae*. These long fins of the hake are of an opaque white colour and they are used in a most unexpected and interesting way. The little fish were observed by me foraging about the weed-covered piles, moving over sunken logs, and all the time nibbling zoophytes and other food upon the stones at the bottom. Thousands of them could be observed, each stretching forward a large pair of white hands, so to speak, with long fingers probing amongst moss and weeds. These, which I have described as white hands, with slender fingers, were nothing more nor less than the huge hind pair of fins $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch in length (in fishes about 3 inches long), and instead of being allowed to hang downward or backward as is usual in fishes, these ventral fins were turned so far forward as to extend along each side of the head. They exactly resembled a pair of chalk-white hands. It was an odd sight to see schools of these dark coloured infant fishes feeling about amongst the weeds, and actually creeping up stumps and piles under water, by means of these actively moving limbs. M. H. Perley in his account of the fishes of New Brunswick says of the hake: "It has one barbule under the chin; the ventral fins are simple rays, divided or forked, one of the divisions longer than the other." The rays or rods, forming each fin, are three in number, and united by a fin-membrane for a short distance, beyond which the rays are separate and free, like attenuated fingers, capable of considerable varied movements. These fins appear indeed to have wholly changed their original purpose and in the young stages of the hake are no doubt sensory organs, and used like fingers in feeling for food. A minute histological study of these fins would no doubt show that the sensory nerve supply is unusually largely