

widely throughout the world. On the Continent of America the interest is, perhaps, greater than elsewhere. Nearly every State in the adjoining Republic is now aiding the work by public grants, and by the appointment of Fishery Commissioners, &c. Very pleasant rivalry exists among the several States as to which shall be most successful in redeeming the waters from previous barrenness, and supplying their populations with an edible food which is so generally prized by the people for its delicacy and wholesomeness. Nor is the Dominion of Canada behind in advancing this important industry of propagating fish by artificial means. This is evidenced by the many establishments now in full operation, which, for numbers, capacity, and completeness, are not equalled in any other country. This desire to increase and multiply a valuable article of food and commerce is further evinced in the efforts which are being put forth by one of the most distant provinces of this Dominion, where hitherto it had been considered, from the vast number of salmon that migrated up its rivers, that the supply could never be exhausted. With the unlimited demand, and the very great efforts that have been put forth to supply it, the unrestricted slaughter of the salmon in the Fraser River, in British Columbia, is creating considerable alarm, as it is seriously affecting the extensive traffic in this source of wealth. This feeling has caused a public expression to be given by the people of New Westminster for an application to the Dominion Government for a grant to erect a salmon-breeding establishment upon a large scale on the Fraser River. This application will no doubt be laid before your department, and will receive that consideration which its importance demands. A suggestion is, however, here offered—that, whilst heartily acquiescing in the wish of the inhabitants of British Columbia in having a salmon-breeding establishment to assist in retaining the stock of fish that at present exists there, it is of equal necessity also that a policy for the preservation and protection of fish, by setting aside close seasons for their natural reproduction, should be stringently enforced.”

No. 2.

The CHAIRMAN, Southland Salmon Commissioners, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Dun Alister, Wyndham, 9th January, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt last week of your letter of 11th December, informing me that the salary of Curator of the Southland Salmon Ponds will be paid for the present financial year, but it is not probable that it will be possible to include it in the estimates for any further period. I have also received to-day a telegram from Mr. Cooper, inquiring whether a lease for the land upon which the ponds are situated has been completed.

The question of the continued maintenance of the ponds being thus opened up, it may be convenient to refer to their past history and management for a few years. About twelve or thirteen years ago the Southland Acclimatization Society acquired a lease of this land; then, at a considerable expense, formed these ponds; sent to Tasmania and obtained ova of salmon, trout, and brown trout; reared them successfully; subsequently obtained a further supply of ova from the same source and with similar results. The Society was most anxious to naturalize salmon, but, having no adequate funds, it sought to obtain a tract of land as an endowment the sale of which would enable it to endeavour to obtain salmon ova from the mother-country. The Provincial Council of Southland was applied to, but difficulties arose which obstructed any grant from that quarter. Then an endowment of 2,000 acres was obtained for this purpose by the Act of 1869. The administration of this land was vested in trustees. The Society gave the use of the ponds, and for a time bore a part of the expense, but gradually the management came entirely under the control of the trustees. Their proceedings were fully reported when, in 1876, this fund was exhausted. Then the Superintendent of Otago, Mr. Macandrew—who, sharing in the desire to naturalize the British salmon, had always given his hearty co-operation—and the Provincial Government continued the attempt to introduce salmon, aided from time to time by votes of the General Assembly. Part of the ova were on each occasion sent to the Southland ponds, the trustees agreeing to continue their management. After the provinces were superseded the General Government repeatedly obtained and sent to the Southland ponds ova of the *Salmo salar* from the United Kingdom, and of the Californian salmon from the United States, appointing five gentlemen to act as Commissioners in the management. In 1876 the Society made over the ponds to the Government, which thereafter sent thither to be reared most of the ova it imported. In the following year the Commissioners learned that the lease of the ground had expired, and, receiving the sanction of the Government to obtain a fresh lease, they gave instructions to have one prepared; but some uncertainties about the legal tenure caused a long delay, and when the difficulty was solved the owner became involved in the ruin that extended from that of the City of Glasgow Bank, the result being that no lease has been completed.

I am now informed that the property will shortly be offered for sale, and an opportunity thus offered to acquire in fee-simple the section on which the ponds have been formed.

The ponds are in excellent order, having been cleaned out and lined the summer before last. Some repairs are required on the houses, and the breeding-boxes require renewal, the cost of which, together with repairs to the fence, would, by the estimate of the Curator, be fully covered by a sum of £25. Even now the ponds, &c., are in good working order, and the above small outlay will place all the accommodation in the most efficient state.

If the Government desires to secure beyond a doubt the naturalization of *Salmo salar*, it may be requisite to make one or two further importations of ova, in which case, or, in event of fish-breeding from any imported ova, it has at its command the services of an officer whose experience as Curator for the last twelve years specially qualifies him to conduct the management, and breeding-houses and rearing-ponds altered and improved from time to time, as defects became disclosed and remedied.

The importance of the interest, and its high prospective value when established, may be inferred from reading the reports of the large sums realized by the annual leasings of the salmon fishings in the Scottish rivers, and of the large exports of preserved salmon from California. The Government has now under its control all the appliances necessary to foster this nascent source of future wealth, and