

INTRODUCTION OF SEA-FISH.

Marine Fish-hatchery and Biological Station,
Portobello, Dunedin, N.Z., 27th October, 1905.

SIR,—

In reference to your letter of the 26th ultimo (M. 2493/1905), and the request for a three-monthly report, I shall be glad to do what I can in the way of keeping the Minister of Marine informed of the work being done at the hatchery; but, as stated in my letter of the 19th ultimo, we have no secretarial assistance whatever, and these things take time to prepare.

I observe by yesterday's paper that Mr. Ayson leaves the colony to-day for America to receive and bring over ova. My Board would suggest that while in the States he be instructed to make inquiry and report as to the possibilities of introducing to these southern waters any of the fine food-fishes of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, especially the striped bass.

A letter has been written to Doctor Fulton, Scientific Superintendent of the Scotch Fishery Board, to undertake a series of experiments with the view of ascertaining how long the hatching of the eggs of turbot and of herrings can be retarded. This research he was about to undertake for me some years ago, but the shifting of the station from Dunbar to the Bay of Nigg, Aberdeen, changed the whole plan of the Scotch Board's operations. The cost of the experiments was estimated as not exceeding £8. I have been informed by the United States Fish Commissioners that eggs of cod and of winter flounder can be retarded for forty-five days. If the time, as regards cod, turbot, or herring can be extended to fifty days with certainty, it ought to be possible to bring ova of one or other of these fishes to the colony by direct steamer.

No detailed report of the station has ever been circulated for public instruction. I propose to write such an account for the Otago Institute, together with reports of the scientific work attempted and accomplished by Professors Benham and Chilton, Mr. T. Anderton, the Curator, and myself. This, if printed, would bring the scheme before a very large circle of readers in the colony, from Auckland to the Bluff. The spreading of this knowledge would enable our Board to approach the various acclimatisation societies for grants in aid with much greater prospect of success than is the case at present. We could also arrange to get a couple of hundred or more copies separately printed for distribution. I question, however, whether the Council of the New Zealand Institute would agree to print so large a pamphlet, unless the Fish Hatchery Board paid a contribution towards the cost. I would therefore ask whether the Department would aid by a special grant, say, not exceeding £20, so as to enable us to get this report printed.

I believe, myself, that it would be money well spent. In connection with the work being done at the hatchery at present, the Curator is busy studying the hatching and development of the common flounder. He has great numbers of eggs and larvæ in the hatching-boxes just now, and has already liberated in the bay over 260,000 young fry.

The Secretary, Marine Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

GEO. M. THOMSON, Chairman.

SIR,—

3rd November, 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, and, in reply, to state that Mr. Ayson will be instructed to make inquiry when in the United States as to the possibilities and advisability of introducing into the colony any of the fine-food fishes of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, especially the striped bass.

The Minister has authorised a grant not exceeding £20 towards the cost of printing the account of the station which you propose to write for the Otago Institute on the understanding that about 200 copies are printed separately for distribution, some of which should be supplied to this Department.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE ALLPORT, Secretary.

G. M. Thomson, Esq., Chairman, Marine Fish-hatchery and Biological Station, Portobello, Dunedin.

COPY OF TELEGRAM sent to L. F. AYSON, Esq., Chief Inspector of Fisheries, Auckland, 16th November, 1905, by SECRETARY, Marine Department, Wellington.

WHEN in United States please make inquiries as to the possibilities and advisability of introducing into colony any of fine food-fishes of Atlantic and Pacific coasts, especially striped bass.

Marine Fish-hatchery and Biological Station,
Portobello, Dunedin, N.Z., 13th November, 1905.

SIR,—

I beg to inform you that I have by this outgoing San Francisco mail communicated with the manager of the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company, London, and with Dr. E. J. Allen, Director of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom, in regard to the shipment of live lobsters to New Zealand.

All arrangements have been left in the hands of these gentlemen, and we anticipate that the first shipment will be made by one of the first vessels on the berth at London for Port Chalmers direct.

The Marine Fish-hatchery Board would esteem it a favour if you would inform the High Commissioner for the colony of the projected shipment. Dr. Allen may be put to some slight expense in procuring the lobsters and in sending them up to London by a suitable man; and if those expenses could be reimbursed in London we would at once pay them here on learning the amount from you.

I trust this experiment will prove successful, and that ere long we shall be able to count the lobster as among the animals naturalised in the colony.

G. Allport, Marine Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

GEO. M. THOMSON, Chairman.