

REPORT

OF THE

JOINT COMMITTEE

OF THE

SEVENTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

STATE OF IOWA,

APPOINTED TO VISIT THE

STATE FISH HATCHING HOUSE,

LOCATED AT

ANAMOSA.

DES MOINES:
R. P. CLARKSON, STATE PRINTER,
1878

REPORT.

To the Seventeenth General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

Your committee, appointed to visit the State Fish Hatching House at Anamosa, respectfully report as follows:

On the 5th day of February, 1878, we visited the Hatching House, situated about three miles from Anamosa, in Jones county, on a beautiful twenty acre tract of woodland. The house is a substantial two-story frame building, forty by twenty feet in size, and supplied with water from a large ever-flowing spring just at the foot of the bluffs to the north of the building. The water is conducted in pipes to the hatching troughs in the basement of the building, from whence it flows to the outside of the building into four reservoirs, four by seven feet square, and about five feet deep, where fish one year old and older, are kept. The hatching troughs are mainly about one foot wide by one foot deep, and thirty feet long. These troughs are divided into different apartments and each division alive with an uncountable number of the finny tribe, varying in size from one to two inches. Besides the millions of this size, more or less, as near as your committee was able to ascertain, consisting principally of Lake Trout and California Salmon, there were several other troughs containing eggs of Land-Locked Salmon, Brook Trout, etc., in less numbers and in less stages of advancement, a few not yet out of the egg, and others with the egg or food sack still attached to them. As far as your committee was able to learn, there were still on hand at the Hatching House, about 1,800,000 young fish, including all the different varieties, while there has been distributed in the different waters of the State, in the past two years, full three and one half millions of fish and one hundred thousand eels.

The care of the young fish is almost exclusively exercised by Mr. G. F. Slocum, who has made such pets of the larger ones, that they will eat from his hand and allow him to handle them with scarcely an effort to escape. Double the number of fish could be cared for, and successfully handled, with but little or no extra expense if additional room was provided.

Your committee, after a thorough examination of the hatching-house, and the methods and plans of caring for the fish, believe that everything about the premises, is conducted economically, and to the best interest of the State and advantage of the fish.

The twenty acres of land connected with the fishery and belonging to the State, is a beautiful tract of woodland, affording an abundance of firewood for all purposes connected with the fishery, and for the use of Mr. Slocum and family, who reside in the second story of the building. The garden spot cultivated by Mr. Slocum is the only part of the tract not yet covered by the native forests. The narrow ravine below the hatching-house is beautifully calculated by nature for the formation of a succession of small ponds, which, if thought best by the State, could be used with great advantage, in growing to a much larger size than the present room will permit of, the different varieties of fish now necessarily distributed during the first few months of their existence. Thus far, not a fish from the hatching-house has ever been eaten by the Commissioner or any other person, nor a fish sold. The three and one-half millions distributed throughout the State have been handled without cost to any private individual, and deposited in the running streams and lakes of the State, but principally in the lakes, and a few in ponds prepared by private enterprise.

Until the numerous dams across the various streams of the State are provided with appropriate fishways, and the law against seining properly enforced, it is the opinion of your committee that the State would hardly be justified in any very extensive attempts to stock such streams with fish, and especially with what are known as migratory fish—those that are supposed to make annual or periodical trips to salt water.

As to fishways, your committee beg leave to call attention to one invented by your Commissioner and constructed upon an entirely new principle, of which the right to use is offered to the State and its citizens free of charge. It is constructed on an entirely new principle, something in the shape of a spiral stairway, but in such a manner that for every eight inches rise the fish have a body of comparatively still water, five by seven feet square and twenty inches deep in which to rest. It is so constructed that the entrance is at the foot of the dam where it can easily be found by the fish. The top is protected from any floating ice or flood-wood, and yet will always be open for free passage of fish. This fishway has been adopted by the State of Michigan for use in that State, and in the opinion of all who have examined it, is the most practical fishway yet invented.

By reference to the last biennial fish report, the members of the general assembly will see that in 1876, a trip was made down the Mississippi at the small expense of about \$450.00 for boat and engineer, and at \$363.60 for additional labor, from which one and three-fourths millions of small fish native to our waters, were secured and distributed throughout the State. The trip was made in about six weeks, the fish immediately distributed, the expense ended, and in the opinion of your committee was the best investment made with any portion of the funds, and should be the main points encouraged by the State in any future continuation of the fish culture enterprise.

The books of the Commissioner were thoroughly examined and found in the best of shape. All expenditures were itemized, showing to the last penny each item of expense, and duplicate copies of every bill filed with the Auditor of State, where they can be examined by any person interested to know exactly where the fish money has been expended. The questions furnished the different visiting committees, as per concurrent resolution, were cheerfully answered under oath, by the Commissioner, and so far as the same affected the duties under his charge, are in substance, or in full, herein given:

Ques. 3. What amount of appropriations by the State?

Ans. Three thousand dollars in 1874; and \$8,750 in 1876.

Ques. 4. What amount from any and all other sources?

Ans. None.

Ques. 5. What number of acres belong to the institution?

Ans. Twenty.

Ques. 20. What amount of labor is employed by the institution; for what purpose, and what its value?

Ans. The Commissioner, salary \$1,200 per annum. G. F. Slocum, Superintendent of Hatching House, salary \$600 per year. Gets his firewood off the premises, cutting it himself. E. R. Shaw, salary \$30 per month while employed; was employed nine months during 1876, and eleven months in 1877. There was other labor employed at the Hatching House during 1876, to the amount of \$436.05; and in 1877, to the amount of \$55.25.

Expense of steamboat down the Mississippi in 1876, for labor outside of cost of boat and engineer, was \$363.60. Total expenses of catching and distributing the 100,000 eels taken in 1876, was \$440.52. Rent of office for Commissioner per year, \$18.

Ques. 27. How is the clothing of inmates obtained; is it made in the institution?

Ans. The inmates are all naked.

Ques. 31. What is the capacity of the institution?

Ans. Four millions of fish.

Ques. 43. Have you vouchers for all your disbursements.

Ans. Yes.

Ques. 44. What amount of funds are now on hand?

Ans. None. February 1st, the State owed about \$400 for Commissioner's salary, Superintendent's salary, clerk hire, other labor, fish spawn, etc.

Ques. 48. What are the real necessities of this institution for this biennial period?

Ans. Ten thousand dollars.

Upon request of your committee, the Commissioner has furnished a statement of what, in his opinion, would be a fair compensation for the next two years, as well as an estimate of the expense of desired improvements for the same length of time.

Salary of Commissioner, two years.....	\$ 3,000.00
Salary of two men, two years.....	2,400.00
Necessary expense and improvements.....	500.00
Lumber and foundation for barn.....	300.00
Traveling and incidental expenses, for propagating and distributing native and foreign fish	5,000.00
Arrangements for hatching Lake Trout, White Fish, and summer spawning fish.....	1,000.00
Engraving, lithographing, printing, and other expenses of furnishing working plans for fish-ways and models for same.....	800.00
Total.....	\$13,000.00

Your committee are unanimous that Iowa's Fish Commissioner, Mr. B. F. Shaw, is the right man in the right place, that he understands thoroughly the business committed to his care, that he keeps a true and accurate account of all funds in his charge, is faithful to his duties, but we are not of the opinion that this is the time for enlarging salaries, or making any improvements further than is absolutely necessary for the actual wants of the institution. As to what are its actual wants to be in accordance with the best interests of the State, and as to how large an appropriation to recommend, your committee are not unanimous, and therefore desire to state only facts with but few opinions, leaving the General Assembly to be its own jury and fix its own price upon the value of fish culture in the future.

W. H. GALLUP,

Committee on part of the Senate.

E. B. HOAG,

S. H. MALLORY,

Committee on part of the House.

ELEVENTH BIENNIAL REPORT ·

OF THE

BOARD OF CURATORS

OF THE

State Historical Society

OF IOWA,

TO THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE.

1877.

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R. P. CLARKSON, STATE PRINTER.
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