

STATEWIDE FISH LAW MEANS MUCH TO NORTH CAROLINA

Federal Government Glad Now to Help Make Fishing a Great Industry, Since Protection Is Assured For Its Efforts—Many Good Things In Store.

(W. E. YELVERTON).

Washington, D. C., March 13.—Eastern North Carolina will be the finest fishing ground in the United States for several species of highly desirable and valuable fish if the promised co-operation between the State authorities and the national bureau of fisheries is realized. This is the prediction of Dr. Hugh M. Smith, commissioner of fisheries, whose delight at the final passage of a State-wide fish law by the North Carolina Legislature is unbounded.

All that North Carolina needs to do to secure the complete cooperation and assistance of the Federal government in the fishing interests of the State is to enforce its new laws impartially and completely, according to officials of the national bureau. The North Carolina streams and sounds will be stocked with the kinds of fish best suited to the territory and if given protection will add immeasurably to the State's resources and prosperity.

Three Essential Things.

The three essentials to bringing about ideal conditions in the State's fish industry are summarized by Dr. H. F. Moore, who is in charge of the bureau's division of scientific inquiry:

(1) Uniform and efficient enforcement of the law throughout the State in the interest of the State as a whole rather than in the temporary interest of the fishermen.

(2) The eventual enactment of laws giving the greatest liberty to the fishermen consistent with the interest of the fish supply.

(3) Greater cooperation between the State and the Federal government, particularly in the planting of fish and in the protection afforded the plants.

No Hatchery on Pamlico.

The most immediate plans of the fisheries bureau are concerned with the establishment of a fish hatchery in the mountain region of the State and in the stocking of the waters in and about Pamlico sound with fish. At present officials of the bureau do not contemplate the establishment of a fish hatchery in the Pamlico region as they say there is no suitable place where sufficient spawn can be found and that these waters can be easily stocked from the Edenton hatchery.

Congressional action is necessary before a new hatchery can be established, but there is no prohibition on stocking streams or other waters anywhere in the State with fish from existing hatcheries. The bureau has heretofore refused to stock a number of streams in the State with fish because no regulations for their protection in some cases were enforced, while in many cases where regulations were enforced the laws were not of sufficiently broad scope to be effective.

Thorn in Flesh Removed.

This state of affairs has caused a coolness between the bureau of fisheries and some of the North Carolina Congressmen, who were refused fish for stocking streams and other waters in their districts. Hereafter there will be no such trouble if the State-wide law is enforced.

Special laws which have been enforced for several years in the Albemarle Sound region have shown results sufficient to vindicate them completely, according to Dr. Smith. This region had its greatest fishing season in 1913, according to the bureau's records, showing that the fishermen were in the end benefited most by the enforcement of the laws. The prospect for shad and herring fishing in this region, according to Dr. Smith, is the best in the country, certainly better than the outlook on Chesapeake Bay.

"The Maryland and Virginia people seem unwilling to protect their fish," says Dr. Smith, "and fishing on the Chesapeake has gone from bad to worse."

Salt Water Hatchery in View.

Many improvements in the fisheries biological station at Beaufort have been made during the past year, and the bureau will inaugurate soon a new and important experiment in the propagation of marine species there. The Federal government has no marine hatcheries now south of New England, but if the Beaufort experiments develop well and means that are feasible a salt water hatchery on the North Carolina coast in the next few years is not an improbable forecast.

Locate New Fishing Grounds.

Another important activity in the near future will be a further survey of the waters off the North Carolina coast with a view of locating, charting and marking additional fishing grounds. The United States fisheries steamboat Fish Hawk has already made some valuable surveys and has located a number of fishing grounds previously unknown. Even after these have been located and charted they have not been widely available owing to the fact that they are out of sight of landmarks. One of the largest of these grounds has been recently

marked with a buoy and others will be marked within the next few months.

The blackfish, or sea bass, is the principal fish taken in these off-shore grounds. They are of large size and the grounds can be fished in winter when the supply is small and the catch valuable. Motor boats find no difficulty in making the trip to and from the grounds, the principal drawback being the lack of buoys or other marks locating the grounds.

Dr. Pratt a "Live One."

The bureau of fisheries officials have almost a personal interest in the passage of the North Carolina law, for they have co-operated for several years with the legislators who have attempted to get fish legislation. Dr. Moore has several times accompanied legislative committees in trips through the North Carolina waters where fishing conditions were observed at first hand. They knew, too, of the efficient and tireless work of Dr. Joseph Hyde Pratt, of Chapel Hill, in the interest of the law. Dr. Smith speaks of him as "a live one," and is most enthusiastic about his work in science as well as his connection with roads movements.

Dr. Smith Tells of Fight.

An interesting history from the viewpoint of outsiders of the fight in North Carolina for fish conservation laws is contained in the last annual report of Dr. Smith. It is an effective argument for a State-wide protective law and gives the scientific facts on which pleas for such a law were made. The extract is as follows:

"The history of the fisheries of North Carolina is similar to that of most other communities in which the regulation of the industry has been in obedience to local demands, prejudices, and jealousies rather than based on broad principles having in view the interests of the State as a whole and a proper regard for the future welfare of both the fisherman and the consumer. There was at first a gradual increase in the yield, owing to the growth of markets and the improvement of means of transportation, the demand thus stimulated resulting in an increase in the number of persons and the quantity of apparatus employed. For a period this increase in the intensity of the fishery had no very conspicuous influence on the apparent abundance of the fishes, the effects being further obscured in the view of the fishermen by an increase in the unit price of the products, due to broader markets. Eventually, however, the decrease in the fishes began to manifest itself in the catch, and this was most conspicuous in the more desirable and higher-priced species like the shad. From 1880, the earliest year for which data are available, the catch of this species gradually increased under the operation of the factors just mentioned, but after attaining the maximum about 1897 it declined rapidly and in 1904 had sunk to the level of 1880. Essentially the same conditions obtained with respect to other species, although the catch of food fish as a whole was well maintained because many of the cheaper fish, justly or unjustly regarded as inferior, which in the earlier period were but little utilized, at a later date came into greater demand and found a market which the fishermen could supply with profit.

"About the time the decrease in the shad became critical and was imposing a serious decrease in the profits of the fishermen, an inquiry was instituted by the Bureau of Fisheries which demonstrated that the most important, if not practically the sole, cause of the decrease was the excessive use of fishing apparatus of all kinds, fished promiscuously in the inlets, channels, and sounds so as to effectually block the passage of the shad and other anadromous fishes to their spawning grounds.

The Vann Law Helps.

"Moved by a consideration of these facts, the Legislature of North Carolina, in 1905, passed an act, popularly known as the Vann bill, which prohibited fishing in certain of the inlets leading from the sea to the sounds, and restricted the use of pound nets in the upper part of Pamlico Sound and all of Croatan, Roanoke, and Albemarle Sounds to certain prescribed zones. As amended in 1909, this law now preserves from all nets a strip of varying width extending from the ocean inlets to and up the rivers discharging into Albemarle Sound.

"There is thus created a broad avenue in which the shad and other anadromous fishes may travel without obstruction from the sea to their spawning places in the rivers. The effect of this has become increasingly apparent and perhaps may be illustrated best by the history of the operations of the Bureau's hatchery at Edenton, N. C., at the end of Albemarle Sound. The station was established in 1889 for the utilization of the eggs from shad resorting to the spawning beds in Chowan River and the adjacent parts of the sound. Its first year of effective operation was

1901, when 75,400,000 eggs were taken. In 1902 the take fell to 37,987,000, and by 1905 the number of eggs secured had fallen by stages to 6,748,000. In 1906, the year in which the Vann bill became effective, 25,643,000 eggs were taken; in 1909 the take was 59,685,000; in 1913 it had risen by rapid stages to 138,912,000, and even this number could have been exceeded if the capacity of the hatchery at that time had permitted the eggs to be handled. The season of 1914 showed a temporary decline owing to unfavorable weather conditions.

"The shad fishery in Albemarle Sound in 1913 was generally said to be the greatest for many years, if not in the history of the locality. The facts are a vindication of both rational legislation and shad culture. The hatchery was ineffective so long as the fish were prevented from reaching the spawning beds where ripe eggs may be obtained, but as soon as an unobstructed way was opened by the enforcement of a reasonable law, its operations could be conducted on a scale sufficient to warrant expectation of economic results. The effects of the heavier plants of recent years are in turn manifested both in the increase in the product of the fishery and in the number of eggs obtainable.

"Fortified by the conspicuously good effects which followed the passage of the Vann law, the friends of fishery conservation in North Carolina have been endeavoring to have its essential features extended to all maritime parts of the State, and the movement to that end has been supported and aided by the Bureau. In 1906 a canvass of the shad fisheries of the State was made by an agent of the Bureau, and practically every year since then an assistant has been detailed to assist and advise in the campaign which has been waged. Although the desired legislation has not been enacted, each year has shown a greater willingness of the fishery interests of most parts of the State to break away from the ineffective and pernicious system of county control and special local regulation, and to adopt the broad principles of State administration, without which no effective laws can be drafted or enforced."

ATTACKED BY WILD MOTHERS.

Five Children Rescued From Savage Abode in Georgia Hills.

Atlanta Constitution.

The strangest part of this strange tale is that it is not a fictional story of the remnants of a primeval race in a strange and distant land, spun, perhaps, by the weird fancy of a Jack London, but that it happened in the civilized land of Georgia. It is the experience of Robert S. McCord, of the Georgia Children's Home Society, as told by himself.

He brought to Atlanta the other day from the hills of Floyd county four small children—the youngest four and a half and the eldest nine years, and he placed in a public hospital another suffering from sciatic rheumatism and the loss of a toe.

This is the story:

There came to Mr. McCord reports of two mothers and five children living in destitution verging upon savagery in an unfrequented section of Floyd county. With the sheriff of Floyd county Mr. McCord went to investigate.

Back up in the hills they found the home—a crude arrangement of tattered tent cloth, logs, and mud, built by the hands of the two mothers who lived there with their brood of five.

The older of the mothers was just in the prime of her years, but already bent with the toil of a lifetime. The younger was only sixteen years, her child being about four years old.

The children, clad in meager stretches of cloth, skittered, like chipmunks, in and out of the gaping holes of the improvised structure. Their mothers squatted near an open fire burning several feet distant from the hut under a battered tin boiler in which all their food was cooked.

The jargon of the mothers was so illiterate that it was barely intelligible. When it was understood that the newcomers were there for the purpose of carrying away the children, the mothers went mad with rage.

The eldest snatched away from him the child Mr. McCord was leading by the arm to a big automobile that stood in the roadway. She flew at his throat, screaming incoherently. The other members of his party were a considerable distance away. The younger mother snatched from inside the crude hut a single-barreled shotgun, and leveled it upon the association officer. The sheriff struck the gun from her hands before it was discharged.

The officials were compelled to subdue both women before the children could be safely removed.

Land Case Nonsuited.

(Special to The News and Observer.)

Elizabeth City, March 13.—The case of C. P. Weston against the John L. Roper Lumber Company, which was to have been the big suit of Camden Superior Court this week, came to an end abruptly, when Judge Whedbee ordered it nonsuited. The plaintiff was suing to recover possession of about a thousand acres of timber land, being lots numbers one and four in the New Lebanon estate, which lies between the Virginia line and the Dismal Swamp Canal in Camden county.

NEW YORK HARBOR CLOSELY WATCHED

Warships of Uncle Sam Are Eyeing All Craft That Pass in and Out

(By the Associated Press.)

New York, March 13.—The destroyers Drayton and McDougal, two of the fastest in the navy, arrived here today from Guantanamo to help preserve neutrality regulations. They will stand guard in the lower harbor as a warning to ships of belligerent nations that they cannot leave this port on other than peaceful missions.

Their arrival follows close upon a conference here yesterday to discuss the general neutrality situation, at which Collector Malone, Rear Admiral Usher, commandant of the Brooklyn navy yard, Captain Earle, of the gunboat Dolphin, and Captain Carden, of the cutter Mohawk, were present. The two latter vessels also are assigned to neutrality duty.

Mr. Malone deprecated today reports that the neutrality situation here was "critical."

"There is no critical situation," he said. "It is true that I had a conference with President Wilson last Thursday night at his request, but it was on a department matter. I did not, as stated, represent to the President that the neutrality situation in this port was critical."

As an example of the vigilant watch maintained, the Mohawk fired three blank shots as the Standard Oil steamer John D. Archbold was passing through the narrows on her way to Baton Rouge. The steamer apparently did not observe the Mohawk's flag signal. "I want to board you," The shots quickly brought her to a stop, a navy tug went alongside and later the steamer was allowed to proceed.

KAISER'S HOUSEHOLD ON SHORT RATIONS, TOO

No More Receptions or Five O'Clock Teas and Staff of Servants Reduced. Paris dispatch to London Daily Chronicle.

A diplomat of a neutral power who has just arrived from Berlin discusses the rigid severity of life that prevails at the court of Prussia. There are no more receptions, no chatty "five o'clocks" in the afternoon, and the number of domestic servants has been reduced to a minimum. The effect of the general scarcity is beginning to be felt in the royal household as elsewhere.

The Empress has left the Royal Palace with its vast and deserted apartments which gave her profound depression. She has betaken herself to Mon Bijou, which is a conglomeration of several pavilions in old Berlin. She has for entourage only two ladies of honor and two chamberlains. From time to time the Kaiser makes a brief appearance at the Court. On such occasions he makes it his business to see that the necessities of the food regime are being strictly followed, and in consequence the mode of life at the Court has undergone a radical change.

"Meals are modest to a degree. The Empress Augusta Victoria's breakfast consists of a cup of tea and one plain boiled egg. Lunch at mid-day consists of soup, a single serving of meat and some fruit. For dinner she has soup, a single dish, and a plate of vermicelli or macaroni. Potatoes are served in their jackets, as peeling them in their raw state is regarded as a waste of good edible material. The Kaiser never tires of recommending the virtues of war bread, and he likes the members of his suite to nibble it in public."

HYDRO-POWER CONVENTION.

Tri-State Body To Meet at Asheville in June.

Asheville, March 13.—The entertainment committee of the local board of trade has been advised that June 16, 17, 18 and 19 have been named as the dates for the annual convention of the Tri-State Water and Light Association. The executive committee of the organization has selected W. F. Stieglitz, of Columbia, S. C., the first president of the association, as manager of the convention and he is preparing to visit Asheville within the near future with a view to completing preparations for the approaching annual meeting.

Asheville was selected as the place of holding the 1915 convention at last year's gathering and the water and light men of the Carolinas and Georgia will gather here in large numbers for the approaching event. Various speakers of prominence will have important places on the program, which will be announced within the next few weeks, it is expected.

A striking illustration of the desire for education in Formosa is furnished by the fact that the English Presbyterian mission is founding a high school in Tainan which will cost \$60,000. Toward this sum \$30,000 has been contributed by non-Christian Chinese.