

## 49.—STOCKING THE STREAMS OF MONTANA WITH FISH.

By Governor JOHN SCHUYLER CROSBY.

[Letter to Prof. S. F. Baird and reply of the latter.]

I have great pleasure in laying before you a copy of a joint resolution of the legislature of this Territory as follows:

COUNCIL JOINT RESOLUTION in relation to the fish interests of Montana.

*Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Montana, That his excellency John Schuyler Crosby be, and is hereby, requested to communicate with the United States Fish Commissioner, with a view to having the streams of the Territory stocked with fish, and also for the purpose of calling their attention to the obstructions in the Clark's Fork of the Columbia River, which prevents salmon from ascending it into the Territory of Montana, and which obstruction can be removed at small expense.*

Our water-courses are many thousands of miles in extent. Our laws for the preservation of fish are very strict. Our people are deeply interested in the subject-matter of your Commission. We shall aid you with all our heart and thank you gratefully for helping us to stock our streams and rivers. I believe a better opportunity for conducting your experiments on a great scale to most useful ends is rarely offered than by this Territory and a people entirely interested in the matter.

I have the honor to ask you to send at the proper season an agent of your Commission to this Territory, with such supply of spawn or breeding fish as may seem to you proper. Every facility to carry out the end proposed by the resolution transmitted will be given you.

I earnestly indorse the desire of the legislature that the obstructions on the Columbia River (Clark's Fork) may be removed and permit the salmon to reach the thousands of miles of unobstructed water above.

HELENA, February 17, 1883.

## REPLY BY PROFESSOR BAIRD.

Since the receipt of your letter of the 17th ultimo, informing me of the joint resolution in relation to the fish interests of Montana, I have concluded to send one of our most competent experts to make an examination of the Columbia River for the purpose of learning how best the great fishery interests of that stream can be preserved, and will instruct him to place himself in communication with your excellency while making the examination. We will be glad to avail ourselves of your kind offer of assistance.

I would suggest that it would not be amiss if you would cause to be

made a careful survey of the obstructions at Clark's Fork to which the resolutions refer. A topographical map of the stream about these obstructions would enable us to advise how best the obstacles to the ascent of fishes can be surmounted. A record of the temperatures throughout the year of some of the principal lakes and rivers of the Territory would be important information for enabling us to advise you as to what varieties of useful food-fishes these waters will best sustain.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *March 2, 1883.*

**50.—ON THE IMPROPRIETY OF DEPOSITING WHITEFISH MINNOWS OFF THE HARBOR OF CLEVELAND, OHIO—FISHING FOR SAUGERS.**

**By Dr. E. STERLING.**

[Letter to Prof. S. F. Baird.]

There is not a place on all Lake Erie so illy adapted to the successful planting of whitefish as off this harbor. To begin with, there were never 500 pounds of this fish taken by seine, gill-net, or in pound since my remembrance, and I have known gill-nets to be set from 1 to 3 and 8 miles out and pounds innumerable, by experienced fishermen, and the above is near the result. A whitefish taken in this way is a rare occurrence. In the second place, since the almost fishing out of the blue and wall-eyed pike, the "sand pike," "sauger" (*Lucioperca canadensis*), have increased in such numbers that scarcely any other fish can exist. To give you an idea of their numbers, many fishermen make a business of furnishing boats, bait, and tackle to the thousands of citizens that can only enjoy fishing at home. On any day in season, spring and fall, you will see from fifty to one hundred small boats, carrying from three to thirty persons, busily pulling in this little sauger. One Sunday last May I counted, off the river mouth, extending each way a mile or more, 125 small boats, filled with men, women, and children, all fishing. At a low estimate there were nearly 400 at this sport. A low average for each person would be ten fish, making the catch for the crowd 4,000 saugers. This fish can be taken almost as readily through the ice, but few undertake it, owing to danger and exposure. This fishing for saugers has been going on for 15 years or more and still they do not diminish, in fact they are on the increase as well as the black bass. After the crib and water construction, twenty-five years ago, the "sauger" was quite scarce here, as it is at most points on the lake. Why it should have increased here in such numbers I am unable to explain. It cannot be the extirpation of other carnivorous fish, for they have been cleaned out alike the lake over, but in no place followed by an increase of the "sauger."

\* This article was called forth by the U. S. Fish Commission making a deposit of a million young whitefish off the harbor of Cleveland, Ohio. The selection of a place was intrusted to Mr. F. N. Clark, who makes reply on page 349.—C. W. S.