

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIFTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

No. 56.

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE making appropriation for the propagation of
fish.

Resolved, That the sum of fifteen hundred dollars be
2 and hereby is appropriated, to be expended under
3 direction of the fish commissioners, for the propagation
4 of fish.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

In 1872, when we entered upon the duties of our present office, the State appropriated the amount of \$3000, for the use of our department. We received from our predecessors in office 25,000 salmon eggs, which were designed for the Androscoggin River. From these we hatched some 24,000 young salmon, which we planted in a branch of the Androscoggin, at Norway. We subscribed to the salmon works at Bucksport, \$400, from which we obtained about 100,000 "ova," barely enough to supply the Androscoggin river—for these things should be done effectively, if at all, if we are expected to show any appreciable good result from our work. Fortunately for us, Prof. Baird, of the United States Commission of Fisheries, came to our aid, and gave us 200,000 salmon eggs, which enabled us this last year, to distribute 300,000 young salmon fry, between the St. Croix, the Penobscot, and Androscoggin rivers; but we will here state, that in our view, to do justice to the work we are engaged in, and to ourselves, no less a number than 1,000,000 salmon fry should ever be turned into such rivers as the Penobscot, the Androscoggin or the Kennebec, at one time, and this repeated every year, for at least five years, on every river it is designed to re-stock. This would be a fair trial, and the most economical in the end. To give a few to the applicants for every river in the State, will prove a most unsatisfactory experiment to all parties. Too much parsimony in seed results in a poor harvest. The salmon fishery this year between Bangor and Oldtown, eleven miles only of the Penobscot River, produced 33,198 pounds, which was sold at the average price of 16½ cents a pound. This was resold in our markets at prices varying from one dollar to twenty-five cents per pound. What factory shows a better dividend at so small a cost? In 1873, our appropriation was increased \$500. We distributed that year the 300,000 salmon fry, which our subscription and the bounty of the U. S. enabled us to obtain, and by our increased appropriation, and again

soliciting and obtaining the aid of Prof. Baird, were able to acquire 450,000 salmon eggs to meet the demands upon us from the people of Maine, to stock their rivers this year. It will be perceived that in no single instance has our appropriation been sufficient to supply more than one-third of the demand made upon us; and in every instance the deficiency has been supplied by aid obtained by us from other sources. It will be likewise seen that a part of every year's appropriation has to be spent in advance, for the year to come; in other words, we this year purchase the salmon from which are to be taken and hatched, the eggs to be used in 1875. We ask the means to do our work well, thoroughly, and according to our views of a wise economy. We think \$5,000 will be necessary to do our work for this year, well and honestly, and to make due preparation for the work the people have already demanded from this department for 1875. To the draft upon such appropriation as shall be made for our use for this year's work, is to be added the means to re-introduce the shad and alewife into the Penobscot, above tide-water, and to their old haunts, and to establish the shad hatching business on a firm basis, for the supply of stock for our rivers, at the mouth of the Kennebec. In 1872 we had but one river to re-stock on our hands. We have now, nine calling for our aid to supply them with young salmon. Surveys for fishways, and tours of inspection are made at the cost of travelling expenses. Our expenditures have always, and will ever be confined to our appropriation, although we have been subjected to complaint, reproach, and misconstruction, when our means have not been adequate to answer all demands made upon us for surveys and visits of consultation.

Respectfully,

E. M. STILWELL,

Commissioner of Fisheries.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, February 25, 1874.

Reported from Committee on Fisheries, by Mr. WHITMORE of Hancock, and ordered to be printed, with accompanying Statement of Facts, on motion of same Senator.

SAMUEL W. LANE, *Secretary.*