

therefor is unavailable because of the want of legislation, respectfully request Hon. Martin Maginnis to use his best endeavors to obtain such legislation as may be needed.'”

On the 20th of April, 1880, Mr. Frank H. Woody, of Missoula, Mont., wrote as follows:

“At a recent meeting of the Rod and Gun Club of Missoula, Mont., a committee, consisting of Lieut. Col. George Gibson, U. S. A., Hon. W. J. McCormick, and the undersigned, was appointed to communicate with you in reference to the removal of certain falls in the Columbia River, in order that salmon might ascend the headwaters of said river. These falls are situated in either Washington or Idaho, the exact location of them being unknown to the committee. The last regular session of our legislature appropriated \$1,000 for the removal of these obstructions, but Governor Potts holds that the money cannot be used for that purpose until the Government of the United States grants permission for the removal of said falls. Now, what our club desires in the premises is this: That you, by some means, if practicable, procure the necessary permission for the removal of said obstructions, if you upon making the necessary inquiries find that such permission is necessary. I write this at the request of Colonel Gibson, who is chairman of the committee.”

#### 80.—SUPPOSED OCCURRENCE OF SAIL-FISH, HISTIOPHORUS.

By Capt. WILLIAM M. BARNES.

[From a letter to J. T. Brown.]

The Pacific Ocean has been my cruising-ground for nearly thirty years, and several years have been spent near the line, from the South American coast westward to the Salomon Islands. My first and only sight of the *fish* was, I believe, in 1876, near Chatham Island, one of the Gallipagos group. We were perhaps 10 miles from the island, and were passing to windward of it, when our attention was attracted by an unusual object a mile off. Looking at it with a glass we saw the fin of some sort of a fish, having the appearance of a sail. As nearly as I now can tell the sail was all the time above water, just as if it had been the sail of a low boat or canoe, and continually rolling from one side to the other just as if it had belonged to a boat that was running before a small swell. The sight was so interesting that we tried to make a near acquaintance with this sort of craft, and I dropped down my first officer with his boat to catch the stranger. The mate put up his sail and ran down to the fish, which all the while had been sailing slowly toward the island. Just before the boat was within striking distance the fin disappeared, and a few minutes after it was up again a little way from the boat. My mate attempted a second time to get the boat within striking distance, and again the fin disappeared. After making a num-

ber of attempts with the same result the mate gave up the chase. The fish\* then went leisurely on his course down toward the island, and we went off another way on ours. I have often mentioned this incident to whalers who had spent years in cruising along the line, but have not met one who had seen anything similar.

I have heard of a "sail-fish," and supposed that this must have been one of that species, whatever that may be. Also, I had on board an edition of Chambers' Encyclopedia, which described the "sail-fish" as a kind of shark.

Last winter I was running to westward along the line in the Pacific and in February was at "Ocean Island," or "Paanopa," a small lone island 40 miles south of the line, in east longitude 170°.

There we were boarded by several canoes, and from one I procured parts of a fish that possibly may have been of the same kind as the one at Chatham Island. But this was some kind of a fish with a bill. Now we quite often see a kind of bill-fish, but never with such large dorsal fins as these. I imagine that this must have been a small specimen. I brought home the parts I was able to procure. The bill is twenty inches in length, cut off close to the head. I have only a part of the dorsal fin, and not in good condition. The longest spines are thirty inches long, and there is a little more than three feet of the fin. The membrane between the spines is badly torn. This membrane is quite thin. There are also two pectoral fins.

Now, this may have been quite a different fish from the one I saw first, but it struck me as being a smaller one of the same kind, and I have quite a curiosity to ascertain what is known of similar fishes.

NASHUA, N. H., *January, 1882.*

#### 51.—FITTING OUT WITH COD GILL-NETS.

By S. J. MARTIN.

[From a letter to A. H. Clark.]

Most all the Ipswich Bay fleet are getting cod gill-nets; there are ten that I know of from Gloucester. They have got some at Swampscott, some at Portsmouth. Some of them are having their nets 2 fathoms deep and 75 fathoms long; I think that is an improvement in shoal water. The nets have made a great stir here. Joe Simpson, Frank Maker, and Bill Coas, net-makers of Gloucester, are at work on cod gill-nets. Some of the vessels won't get their nets till the last of February. There are ten vessels that will average twenty-four nets to a vessel. Average length, 60 fathoms. That is for Gloucester alone.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *January 28, 1881.*

\* Dr. T. H. Bean says of this: "It seems highly probable from Captain Barnes' description that the fish was a *Histiophorus*. The genus is found in the region referred to."—EDITOR.