

222.—THE OYSTER INDUSTRY OF THE WORLD.

By G. BROWN GOODE.

[Abstract of a paper read before the American Fishcultural Association.]

The oyster industry of the world is seated chiefly in the United States and France. Great Britain also has a few natural beds still remaining, and a number of well-conducted establishments for oyster culture which are supplied with seed oysters from continental oyster parks. Canada, Holland, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Norway, and Russia have also oyster industries, which are, however, comparatively insignificant, and in the case of the last two countries hardly worthy of consideration in a statistical statement.

Recent and accurate statistics are lacking except in two or three instances. A brief review by countries, in the order of their importance, was presented. The oyster industry of the United States was shown to employ 52,805 persons and to yield 22,195,370 bushels, worth \$30,438,852, and that of France in 1881 employed 29,431 persons, producing oysters valued at \$3,464,565; the industry of Great Britain yielded a product valued at from two to four million pounds sterling; Holland was shown to have a considerable industry in the province of Zeeland, and to have produced native and cultivated oysters to the value of \$200,000; Germany has an industry on the Schleswig coast valued at about \$400,000, while the products of other European countries mentioned were too insignificant to deserve a place in this brief abstract. An estimate of the total product of the world was presented as follows, the figures being given in the number of individual oysters produced:

United States	5, 550, 000, 000
Canada	22, 000, 000
Total for North America	5, 572, 000, 000
France	680, 400, 000
Great Britain	1, 600, 000, 000
Holland	21, 800, 000
Italy	20, 000, 000
Germany	4, 000, 000
Belgium	2, 500, 000
Spain	1, 000, 000
Portugal	800, 000
Denmark	200, 000
Russia	250, 000
Norway	250, 000
Total for Europe	2, 331, 200, 000

The oyster industry is rapidly passing from the hands of the fishermen into those of oyster-culturists. The oyster, being sedentary, except for a few days in the earliest stages of its existence, is easily exterminated in any given locality, since, although it may not be possible for the fishermen to rake up from the bottom every individual, wholesale methods of capture soon result in covering up or otherwise destroying the oyster banks or reefs, as the communities of oysters are technically termed. The main difference between the oyster industry of America and that of Europe lies in the fact that in Europe the native beds have long since been practically destroyed, perhaps not more than 6 or 7 per cent. of the oysters of Europe passing from the native beds directly into the hands of the consumer. It is probable that from 60 to 75 per cent. are reared from the seed in artificial parks, the remainder having been laid down for a time to increase in size and flavor in the shoal waters along the coasts.

In the United States, on the other hand, from 30 to 40 per cent. of all the oysters consumed are carried from the native beds directly to market. The oyster-fishery is everywhere carried on in the most reckless manner, and in all directions oyster-grounds are becoming deteriorated, and in some cases have been entirely destroyed. It remains to be seen whether the governments of the States will regulate the oyster-fisheries before it is too late, or will permit the destruction of these vast reservoirs of food. At present the oyster is one of the cheapest articles of diet in the United States, while in England, as has been well said, an oyster is usually worth as much as, or more, than a new-laid egg. It can hardly be expected that the price of American oysters will always remain so low as at present; but, taking into consideration the great wealth of the natural beds along the entire Atlantic coast, it seems probable that a moderate amount of protection will keep the price of seed oysters far below the present European rates, and that the immense stretches of submerged land along our coasts especially suited for oyster-planting may be utilized and made to produce an abundant harvest, at a much less cost than that which accompanies the complicated system of culture in France and Holland.

223.—BRIEF NOTES UPON FISH AND THE FISHERIES.

By CHAS. W. SMILEY.

[Mainly extracts from the official correspondence.]

FISH-CULTURE IN OREGON.—Mr. B. F. Dowell, writing from Jacksonville, Oreg., August 30, 1884, says: The yearling trout at my ponds near East Portland are from 6 to 8 inches long, and those hatched this spring from 1 inch to 1½ inches long. I now have about 7,500 lively fry. All are doing well. Two of my neighbors have commenced rais-