

## 148.—SENDING CATFISH TO EUROPE.

By CHAS. W. SMILEY.

The Fish Commission, through its New York agent, Mr. E. G. Blackford, responded to several European calls during the past summer.

The catfish sent were the *Amiurus nebulosus*, from the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers. This is a great favorite in the Philadelphia market. Mr. Blackford sent them to the care of Messrs. Draper & Wood, at Havre. They are a year old, and will breed within a year or two.

*Germany.*—June 16, 1885, 50 live catfish were sent to the Deutsche Fischerei-Verein, care of F. Busse, Geestemünde, per steamer Ems July 17, Max von dem Borne wrote from Berneuchen that 49 had safely arrived, and been placed in a pond.

*France.*—By steamer *Amérique*, of the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique, on July 18th, Mr. Blackford sent 100 catfish in six cans, consigned to Messrs. Draper & Wood, 79 Rue de Orleans, Havre, France. Of these 50 were forwarded to W. Coleman Burns, of the United States Mortgage Company, 25 Place Vendome, Paris, who wrote, July 7, as follows: "The fish arrived in excellent condition. They are intended for Mr. Ridgway, formerly of Philadelphia, who now owns and occupies the beautiful château of Riequebourg, near Compiègne. I sent the fish to him in charge of an expert, and am informed by the latter, upon his return to Paris, that about 40 fish in a fine state of health and activity reached their new home. Mr. Ridgway writes to me as follows: 'Thierry arrived with the fish this morning. We have just put them into the reservoir, and I hope they may continue as lively as they are now. I cannot thank you enough for the immense trouble you have taken. I am sorry only that you did not see them take their first bath in Riequebourg waters.' I have this day sent Mrs. Ridgway your kind and lucid directions about the management of these fish, and both she and Mr. Ridgway are already well aware that it is to you and to Col. Theodore Lyman that we owe the very great pleasure which we have thus been able to procure."

The other fifty were for the Acclimatization Society of France. The secretary, Raveret-Wattel, wrote, July 29, 1885, in acknowledgment, as follows:

"We have received in perfect condition the *Amiurus nebulosus* that you have had the kindness to send to our society with Mr. Blackford's co-operation. During the passage and in the first three days after their

arrival we lost 9 of the young fish ; but the 41 left are very lively, and I hope they will thrive perfectly well in their new home.

“ We are very grateful for a present which enables us to acclimate a species so valuable as catfish, not injurious to other fishes, and contented with stagnant or muddy waters. It will be, I trust, a good acquisition, and I will not fail to inform you of the results.”

*Netherlands.*—The same week 30 catfish were sent by Captain Taat, of steamship Edam, for the Zoological Garden at Amsterdam. July 7, Dr. C. Kerbert wrote in reply :

“ I have the honor to communicate to you that I have received 30 catfish, in the best condition. I thank you very much for this present. I hope that the catfish will hatch here in the aquarium ; in this case I shall write you immediately. They are the first catfish introduced into Europe. I mean that the experiments in 1882 by Mr. Thomas Wilson at Ghent, in introducing the catfish in Belgium, have produced no results.”

*England.*—June 20 there were sent by the White Star Line 50 catfish to the National Fish Culture Association, South Kensington, London. The success of the shipment was reported by the secretary, W. Oldham Chambers, in his letter of July 10, as follows :

“ I received with much pleasure your letter of the 18th ultimo, intimating that you had sent 50 catfish as a present to this country. You will be pleased to hear that 48 of them survived the journey and were immediately placed by me in the tanks of this aquarium prior to their removal to our fish-culture establishment at Delaford Park. I shall do my utmost to propagate the species in order that this valuable food-fish may be acclimatized in the waters of Great Britain.”

The following notice occurred in the London Globe of July 11, 1885 :

“ Mr. W. Oldham Chambers, F. L. S., director of the National Fish Culture Association, has received from the United States Commissioner of Fisheries a consignment of selected specimens of catfish indigenous to the waters of America. They arrived by the steamship *Britannic*, in perfect condition, all being alive, and apparently none the worse for the voyage, which, considering the time it occupied, is remarkable. These fish are of great economic value, and it is intended to naturalize them in English rivers, where it is considered they would assume a high rank among freshwater fishes. The catfish possesses a peculiar scarcity of small bones, and it is regarded in America as a valuable food-fish. Although this species does not produce a large number of eggs, it possesses an extraordinary instinct for protecting its eggs and young. Pending the removal of the fish to the waters belonging to the association, they will be exhibited to the public in the aquarium at the Inventions Exhibition.”

U. S. FISH COMMISSION,

Washington, D. C., September 10, 1885.