

## 155.--HATCHING LOBSTERS IN NORWAY.\*

By G. M. DANNEVIG.

[From a letter to Prof. S. F. Baird.]

If the question was as to whether it would pay to catch the lobsters for hatching purposes, hatch the eggs artificially, and liberate the fry immediately after hatching, I should answer that it would not pay, as the lobsters themselves can do the hatching much better than the best of human inventions. If after the hatching we could rear them for at least six weeks, then I think it would pay; for, although the losses in the apparatus are heavy, I believe they would be still larger in nature. But the immense number of eggs attached to the lobsters that are brought to the market, which naturally would be destroyed, should be hatched and the fry reared for a short time, if possible, as either hatching alone or hatching and raising is better than destruction.

During the summer I have been experimenting here in hatching lobster eggs. I began work in the latter part of June, and the first eggs hatched on June 26. I have worked with only a small quantity of eggs, as the question was rather to find the best methods for working on a large scale next summer. By an accident to the supply-pipe only about 500 of the fry were left, but the possibility of the work was clearly proved. The largest of the fry is now about nine weeks old; they have molted five times, and measure about 21 millimeters in length and 3 to 4 millimeters in breadth across the broadest part. They seem to be healthy, and are very lively, and of greenish-gray color. I still feed them on the soft parts of crabs.

I do not kill the lobsters, but simply get the spawn from the fishermen and exporters. I scrape it off with a small teaspoon, and very few of the eggs are injured. They are rather heavy, and consequently I give them a pretty strong current from underneath, just sufficient to keep them slightly moving. I have used unfiltered water this summer, but advise the use of filters, as the lobster eggs, being mostly in clusters, are very apt to become covered by the impurities in the water. The temperature in the water has been from 11° to 14° Réaumur, and the specific gravity from 1.021 to 1.025. The time necessary for hatching depends entirely on the state of the eggs when taken from the parent, and the eggs from the same individual will not hatch at the same time, but will differ as much as from three to four weeks. The apparatus used is one invented by myself for the purpose, and is connected with the apparatus used in hatching salt-water fishes.

FLODEVIG, near ARENDAL, NORWAY, August 26, 1885.

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\* For a previous letter on this subject see F. C. Bulletin, 1885, p. 280.