

IV.—ABSTRACT OF AN ARTICLE FROM THE “NORDISK TIDSKRIFT FOR FISKERI,” 1878, ENTITLED “OBSERVATIONS ON FISHERY EXPOSITIONS,” &C.*

BY A. FEDDERSEN.

In a former article, Mr. Feddersen had declared himself in favor of fishery expositions, independent of agricultural or other expositions; not including, however, great international exhibitions, where every branch of human activity is represented. Wherever the fishery exhibit is only an appendix to some other exhibition, it will be neglected and not awaken sufficient interest. In spite of this, there was a good fishery exhibit at the agricultural and industrial exposition in Viborg (Denmark) in 1875, and at Norrköping (Sweden) in 1876. This result was owing entirely to the arduous labors of a few zealous and enthusiastic men. These successes were, unfortunately, not followed up—at least as far as Denmark was concerned—at the Svendborg (Denmark) exhibition, and at the great international exhibition held at Paris in 1878.

There are many who doubt the usefulness of such exhibitions, saying that the practical result is by no means commensurate to the efforts made. It cannot be denied that there is a field for “humbug” in all exhibitions, and that there is a tendency to make a special show for the occasion. But as exhibitions are the order of the day, and probably will be for some time to come, people should not stay away because they are not in every respect as perfect as they might be. The object should be to get the greatest possible good of them and endeavor to keep away from them everything which savors of “humbug,” and surely some good will come of it; new inventions will become wider known and goods of sterling quality will find a larger market. Exhibitions, if properly managed, can certainly be highly instructive. As an instance of this, the Bergen exhibition of 1865 may be mentioned, the beneficial effect of which is felt to this day.

It is probable that the direct benefit derived from fishery exhibitions will be greater than that of other exhibitions, as there will be less chance for mere show. Although great progress has been made with regard to fishing apparatus, there will always be a chance to make them still more effective, so that they can be handled with greater ease, or be manufactured of better and more durable material. In this connection

* Nogle Bemærkninger om Fiskeriudstillinger og andre Fiskeriforhold. Abstract made by Herman Jacobson.

we will only point to the increased use of cotton for fishing apparatus since 1865. And as regards the proper treatment, preservation, utilization, and shipping of the products of the sea, there is still a vast field for improvement. Fishery exhibitions will finally prove very beneficial to fishing legislation, as they will afford an opportunity to competent and practical men to meet and fully discuss this important subject. There is still so much ignorance with regard to this last-mentioned matter, and there are so many different and widely divergent views, that it is extremely desirable, both for the government and those specially interested in the fisheries, to arrive at some well-established principles which may form the basis of suitable legislation. There is, therefore, ample reason to encourage and uphold fishery exhibitions.

As far as Denmark is concerned (and perhaps other countries), it must be said that fishery exhibitions will prove failures unless a strong and direct appeal is made to fishermen and to fish-dealers, as well as to manufacturers of fishing apparatus, to take an active part in such exhibitions. Astonishment has sometimes been expressed that our fishermen do not take a greater interest in these exhibitions; but it should be borne in mind that, with few exceptions, fishermen are very conservative, both as regards apparatus and methods, and that it requires a special effort to stir them up. If this matter were seriously taken in hand by some zealous and energetic men, we would see a great improvement in our fisheries brought about by exhibitions. The better preservation of fish, and the increased knowledge of the best markets for their goods, would certainly be a practical benefit to the fishermen; gradually improved apparatus, boats, &c., will be introduced, and make the fishermen more and more independent. Until this result is brought about, the fishermen should be assisted by the government, which unfortunately has hitherto done too little in this respect. A knowledge of improved methods and apparatus should be spread, practical and theoretical instruction should be given, and money should be liberally appropriated for furthering the fishing interests. Since the fishery exhibition at Svendborg in 1877, and our fishery exhibit at Paris in 1878, were failures, owing chiefly to lack of interest and the entirely inadequate sums appropriated for the purpose by our government, a strong effort should be made to be well represented at the international fishery exhibition to be held at Berlin in May, 1880. As Germany will always be the chief market for our fishing products, this should certainly not be neglected.

In conclusion, the following suggestions are submitted, in the hope that at some fishery congress they may assume the form of definite resolutions:

1. The fishery exhibit at agricultural or industrial exhibitions is abolished.
2. In its stead meetings of fishermen and all persons interested in the fisheries are held annually in different parts of the country, where fishing products, apparatus, &c., are exhibited.

3. From time to time—say every three or five years—larger fishery expositions are held, at which all those nations are represented which fish in the same waters as we.

The government should of course give liberal aid to the fishing interests, and a society should be formed for promoting the fisheries in all their different branches.

