

exploration and others followed; the result was the opening up of the Spanish and other southern grounds. In 1907 the price was still low, but the quantity was large and there were also some soles in the hake catches to add to the profit. Great trawler fleets for this fishery grew up in the west, and one fleet moved from Ireland. In this year the Press began to take an interest, with the result that in the next years hake entered into the 'prime fish' category, and the trawlers, while catching less, made better profits. The absence of fishing during the War stopped any decline in this and all the fisheries of the west Atlantic, our hake trawlers being mainly located in the eastern Mediterranean for mine sweeping. However, western Europe was quite alive to the problems, and the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea came together again in 1920. Hake was a major subject for discussion and inquiry, and the statistics were greatly improved. These show a steady strong demand especially for small hake, and the price far exceeds that of the related cod and haddock.

Withal there is a disturbing loss in catch which has to be stopped, while due attention must be paid to the sufficiency of breeding fish. Any young fish brought to the deck from the trawl are dead owing to the decrease of pressure affecting their air bladders. It is impossible to close grounds in the high seas, and the trawl owner must not take a cynical line—perhaps because he is getting old and thinking of retiring—in resisting the examination of his actual method of catching. The writer remembers nearly thirty years ago a series of conferences in the greater fish ports, where the size of the mesh of the trawl was always discussed. About twenty years later, the matter was considered by the British Fisheries Association, which ought never to have been killed or allowed to die. It was contended that a larger mesh to the trawl would allow many of the smaller, less marketable and much less valuable fish (per pound weight), to escape, while the trawl would clear itself of much of its 'rubbish', move more easily over the bottom, this securing more fish, and would arrive on the deck with its catch less bruised and in better condition for market. It was confidently anticipated that the industry would make its own experiments, but its psychology was antagonistic. Its energies were largely directed to new grounds, to be discovered near British coasts by the Ministry, or to fishing in greater depths, where there cannot be food to support a rich fish fauna, or to proceeding farther afield, in this latter alone (west of Greenland) success being achieved. The industry improved its trawls, but it never, so far as the writer knows, made any scientific experiment with its trawl mesh.

Now the Ministry, acting through Messrs. Davis and Hickling, have done the industry's work, as in these lectures all may read. They have by most ingenious means proved that, with a larger mesh, the smaller hake escape from the trawl while it is actually on the bottom, its contents experiencing no change in pressure and remaining alive. At the same time it is shown that the market value of the catch is slightly increased. The remedy suggested for the hake is the application of this, for a larger mesh would allow an immensely greater proportion of the young fish to continue their growth, and this in a few years should increase the breeding stock, while meantime the fishery after readjustment should be more profitable. It is possible that on certain grounds there would be a lesser catch of soles, but usually in trawling one fish dominates the plan of each voyage, the profit of which depends upon it.

The above work of the Ministry is applicable to the haddock, cod and many fish, and its scientific staff are to be heartily congratulated upon it and many other lines of applied science. Biologists should know the Ministry's work, for it is the most important ecological work being carried on from Great Britain to-day. They should examine its results, so that their expressed ideas may be considered views which may help to form public opinion, not merely expressions against State action that scientific men often lightly express. Furthermore, it would pay the industry to reprint this little book in a cheap form and place it in the hands of every trawler man, for there is no doubt that education makes for efficiency in this as in all other trades. The fishing industry, it must never be forgotten, is a basal industry, essential to Great Britain as a maritime power.

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Plato's Theory of Knowledge:

the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* of Plato translated with a Running Commentary. By Prof. Francis Macdonald Cornford. (International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method.) Pp. xiv+336. (London: Kegan Paul and Co., Ltd.; New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1935.) 15s. net.

It would have been a real treat for philosophers to have a genuine study of Plato's "Theory of Knowledge" by Prof. Cornford. As it stands, however, the title of the book is misleading as it offers no more than an excellent translation of the "Theaetetus" and the "Sophist" with a running commentary. The latter will be found most useful and inspiring by all students of Plato's philosophy, for it aims at discovering what Plato really means and how the arguments of these two dialogues are related to the rest of his work.