

SCARCITY OF BLACKFISH—MORTALITY OF CODFISH.**By CHAS. C. LESLIE.**

[From letter to G. Brown Goode.]

For the past four or five years we have noticed the scarcity of blackfish in the summer, and especially this summer. The smacks here have not made their expenses for the past two months. I have just seen Capt. S. M. Corker, one of our expert blackfish fishermen, who has been in the business for thirty years. He tells me that he has never seen them so scarce as they are at present, and that in former years the fishermen were accustomed to catch enough to pay expenses during the summer. Captain Corker also tells me that about June 1 a vessel came into this port, and, according to the statement of her captain, she sailed through acres of codfish, floating belly up, between Hatteras and Cape Henry. The fish were not dead, but very weak.

CHARLESTON, S. C., *June 29, 1882.***SHAD FISHING ON THE SAINT JOHN'S RIVER.****By JOHN H. OSBORN.**

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

The past winter was very poor; the river was quite low and everything favorable for a good run of shad. I fished from January 12 until February 25. This is my sixth and last winter on the Saint John's. Our average catch nightly was 13 during January; during February it was 20. We had a good many northeast winds and many very cold nights, both of which stopped shad from running.

Several fishermen on the lower river have quit the business. Messrs. Melton & Tote, the largest fishery near Jacksonville, running 30 nets, did not pay expenses. Shad sold in Palatka and Jacksonville for 50 cents apiece. We sold a 1 we could catch at Sanford and Orange City. Could have sold ten times as many if we could have caught them. In the winter of 1876 I caught, on an average, 200 shad per night, with a 300-foot net, 20 meshes, 2½ inch mesh, rigged 3 meshes to a 5-inch span. Shad have gradually decreased since, and last winter I fished a 400-foot net, 25 meshes deep, 2½ inch mesh, rigged to 3 meshes on a 4-inch span. My net was rigged to catch fish and she did catch them, except shad, from a 5-inch herring up to 40 pound catfish and gars.

SORRENTO, FLA., *June 5, 1882.*