

**117.—NOTES ON THE ENGLISH HERRING FISHERY OF 1882.\*****By THOMAS SOUTHWELL, F. Z. S.**

The herring voyage of the past year has been characterized by extremes, both of catch and prices; the weather has also been extremely unpropitious, a succession of severe storms having proved most disastrous both to life and property; but during intervals of fine weather very large catches have been made, by the Yarmouth boats especially. The spring voyage from Yarmouth is never of any importance; last year it yielded 197 lasts of 13,200 fish, as compared with 236 lasts in 1881; but the Lowestoft boats fill up the time from March till the end of May, when the mackerel season commences, in fishing for herring. The spring of 1882 produced 1,793 lasts, against 2,797 lasts in 1881; the prices, too, as a rule, were very low, in some instances as low as 4*d.* per 132, and repeatedly not more than 7*d.* or 9*d.*, whilst 2*s.* 6*d.* per 132 appears to have been considered a good price. In the spring of 1881 prices ruled much higher, 12*s.* to 18*s.*, and in one instance 19*s.* per long hundred having been given. One of the reasons assigned for the low prices is that very few French boats were fishing for cod, and therefore the demand for herring for bait was much less than usual; a reason very significant of the value of these spring fish. Upon the whole the Lowestoft spring voyage may be considered to have been very unsatisfactory, many of the boats having scarcely paid their expenses.

It will be seen from the table below that herring are present in the North Sea during the whole year; and although at all times more or less gregarious, it is only during the spawning season that they congregate in the vast shoals which frequent the shallow waters around our coast; the so-called "migration" being simply the gathering together, for the purpose of reproduction, of the scattered parties which, although at greater distances from the shore, and in greater depths of water, are still permanent inhabitants of the sea.

During the months of June and July a few fish are taken, and a larger quantity in August; but it is not till September that the autumn fishery commences in earnest. From that time to the end of the year the boats are busily occupied, and the fish wharves exhibit an animated scene. There were about 50 more Yarmouth boats engaged this year than in 1881, and about 200 Scotch boats also used the port. Very large deliveries were made early in the season, and at one time the Yarmouth delivery reached about 5,000 lasts in excess of the same period of the previous year; but a succession of heavy gales, towards the end of the

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\* A paper read before the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society, March 27, 1883.

season, reduced this excess to about 450 lasts; whereas the Lowestoft men, who seem to have lost all spirit towards the end of the season, and were making very small catches at a time when the Yarmouth men were doing well, ended with a deficiency as compared with last year of some 2,346 lasts (representing, at £15 per last, a money value of £35,490), not to mention loss of gear from stress of weather and Ostend trawlers. Prices, as usual, fluctuated from £5 to £36 per last, according to quality or supply.

The following table will show the results of the year's fishery from Yarmouth and Lowestoft. As the spring, summer, and autumn voyages merge into each other, and any division must be arbitrary, I give a continuous monthly record for the whole year. For the Yarmouth return I am indebted to Mr. H. Teasel, jr., the corporation accountant, and for Lowestoft to Captain Massingham, harbor-master at that port.

*Return of herring landed at the Yarmouth and Lowestoft fish-wharves in 1882.*

Seasons.	Months.	YARMOUTH.			LOWESTOFT.		
		Lasts (13,200).	Thousands (1,320).	Hundreds (132).	Lasts (13,200).	Thousands (1,320).	Hundreds (132).
Spring	January						
	February						
	March	31	1	5	212	4	2
	April	162	4	1	1,567	5	9
Summer	May	4	2	8	13	7	6
	June	6	6	0	14	2	2
	July	33	4	1	10	9	4
Autumn	August	938	6	5	102	2	1
	September	3,238	4	2	210	2	1
	October	7,833	5	5	2,914	9	4
	November	3,920		1	1,582	2	4
	December	986	1	5	440	7	8
		17,154	7	2	7,000	8	1

#### 118.—SCOTLAND FISHERIES AND APPARATUS.

By **JOS. JOHNSTON & SONS.**

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

Recently, at the London Fisheries Exhibition, we had a conference with your people about the method of using the purse-seine in the waters of the United States, and would be obliged if you would send us your History of the Mackerel Fishery and the United States Fish Commission Bulletins. We are interested in all kinds of fishing, being tenants of salmon fisheries, chiefly on the sea-coast of Scotland, which rent at £9,000 per annum. We are also interested in all sea fisheries, such as herring, cod, ling, halibut, &c. We are now building two steamers, each 116 feet long, to fish with beam-trawl and purse-seines, the latter being quite new in this country, but we are to make a trial of it

MONTROSE, SCOTLAND, August 17, 1883.