

135.—NOTES ON THE FISHERIES OF GLOUCESTER, MASS.

By S. J. MARTIN.

[From letters to Prof. S. F. Baird.]

MACKEREL.—The following Gloucester vessels arrived at New York yesterday with good fares of small mackerel, which sold at \$1 per hundred, namely: Schooners Golden Hind, 80 barrels; E. L. Rowe, 90; Henri N. Woods, 60; Electric Light, 70; Ethel Maud, 125; J. E. Garland, 100; Goldsmith Maid, 80; Martha C., 100; Addison Center, 80; Henry Dennis, 100; also schooner Elsie Smith, of Portland, 150 barrels.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *April 4, 1884.*

SUMMARY.—From April 1, 1884, to date there have been fifty arrivals from George's Bank with an average of 18,000 pounds of cod and 400 pounds of halibut to a vessel; twenty arrivals from Western Bank with small fares averaging 23,000 pounds of salt cod and 7,000 pounds of halibut to a vessel; and twelve arrivals from Grand Bank with an average of 31,000 pounds of fresh halibut to a vessel.

MACKEREL.—The mackerel fleet has not done well, the catch being small. Some of the vessels were ten days in getting to market, and their cargoes had to be thrown away, as the mackerel were spoiled. It takes from 800 to 1,000 mackerel to fill a barrel. The greater part of the mackerel has been caught 30 miles southeast of Hog Island. Gloucester has eighty sail engaged in the fishery. Most of them bring their mackerel to market fresh.

The weather out south has been rough up to the present time. Nineteen seine-boats have been lost and some vessels have been badly damaged.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *April 13, 1884.*

SUMMARY.—Last week there were forty-two arrivals from George's Bank with light fares, averaging 14,000 pounds of salt cod and 300 pounds of fresh halibut to a vessel; twelve arrivals from Western Bank, averaging 35,000 pounds of salt cod and 5,000 pounds of fresh halibut to a vessel; and 3 arrivals from the Banks with fresh halibut.

HALIBUT.—The number of vessels engaged in halibut fishing is larger than last year, there being an addition of four vessels each from Gloucester and Portland. Mr. Samuel Pool, of the Atlantic Halibut Company, of Gloucester, Mass., is at Halifax buying halibut and shipping them to Boston.

HERRING.—Herring appeared on the coast on April 15, and were schooling from Race Point, Cape Cod, to Thatcher's Island, going east. A school of small mackerel was seen 4 miles southeast of Chatham on

April 15. There were twenty-five vessels in New York with fresh mackerel, three-fourths of which were small and sold as low as \$1 per thousand. Some of the mackerel caught were so small that the fishermen threw them away. Three fares that were carried in last week were large fish and sold for a good price.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *April 20, 1884.*

SUMMARY.—Last week there were eighteen arrivals from George's Bank, averaging 13,000 pounds of salt cod and a few halibut to a vessel; seven arrivals from Western Banks, averaging 45,000 pounds of salt cod and 3,000 pounds of halibut to a vessel; three arrivals from the Banks, averaging 28,000 pounds of salt cod to a vessel; and four arrivals from the shore grounds, with average fares of 5,000 pounds of mixed fish to a vessel. There were 15,000 gallons of cod oil brought from Nova Scotia by freight last week for Gloucester parties.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *April 27, 1884.*

MONTHLY SUMMARY.—The number of pounds of codfish landed at Gloucester during the month of April, 1884, was 2,000,000 less than April, 1883. The fishing at Western Bank this year was a failure. The amount of fish landed at Gloucester during the month of April was as follows: George's Bank cod, 1,862,000 pounds; George's halibut, 59,240 pounds; Western Bank cod, 1,216,000 pounds; Western Bank halibut, 169,000 pounds; Grand Banks halibut, 538,000 pounds; shore cod, 172,000 pounds; haddock, 220,000 pounds; frozen herring, 160,000 pounds; fresh herring, 25 barrels; salt herring, 433 barrels; mixed fish by freight from Maine, 500 quintals; and 533,000 pounds of large cod caught in nets in Ipswich Bay. There were 15,863 gallons of cod oil landed from Newfoundland.

POLLOCK.—Two schooners arrived at Gloucester this morning with 70,000 pounds of pollock. These fish were caught with seine 4 miles from Chatham, and were the first fish of the kind caught this season.

MACKEREL.—Schooner Henry Dennis arrived from the south with 280 barrels of mackerel, the first that have been brought here this season. Captain McClain thinks the prospect fine for a good catch.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *May 4, 1884.*

SUMMARY.—During the past week there have been twenty-seven arrivals from George's Bank with small fares of 12,000 pounds of codfish to a vessel; five arrivals from Western Bank, averaging 35,000 pounds of codfish to a vessel; five fares from the Banks, averaging 20,000 pounds of fresh halibut; and six arrivals from Chatham, aggregating 200,000 pounds of pollock, caught with seines.

MACKEREL.—The outlook for the mackerel fishery is hopeful, the others dull. Two vessels arrived from Boston yesterday, one with 300 barrels and the other with 400 barrels of mackerel. Mackerel sold yesterday for \$6 a barrel, and last Monday for \$8.50 a barrel.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *May 11, 1884.*

SUMMARY.—During the past week there have been sixty-three arrivals from George's Bank, with small fares, averaging 13,000 pounds of salt cod and 400 pounds of halibut to a vessel; five arrivals with fresh halibut, averaging 40,000 pounds to a vessel; twelve arrivals with pollock, aggregating 455,000 pounds; and nine arrivals with salt mackerel, landing 1,374 barrels. Seven arrivals from the shore fisheries landed 140,000 pounds of mixed fish. The pollock were caught with seine from 3 to 4 miles off Chatham. The first mackerel that were caught last year this side of Cape Cod was on May 18. On May 14 of this year 20 barrels of large mackerel were caught with seine.

HERRING AND SALMON.—There have been 70 barrels of herring caught in traps, and 1 salmon, weighing 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, caught in a trap at Kettle Island.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *May 18, 1884.*

BLACK GROUPER.—I will send you Monday morning for identification a strange fish,* said to measure 5 feet in length, but actually measuring over 6 feet. The fish when seen was on its side, with its side fin at the surface of the water, and was thought to be a sunfish. It was easily captured. No one of the hundreds of persons who have been here to see the fish have been able to identify its genus and species. I hope to hear from you concerning its identity.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *May 18, 1884.*

The strange fish was caught 20 miles southeast from Block Island. The fish when seen was on its side with side-fin and tail in motion. When seen the men thought it was a sunfish; they rowed up to it in a dory, threw a harpoon into it, and towed it alongside the vessel, where it was taken on board and put in the ice-house. The fish was caught Thursday, May 15, schooner *Carrie E. Parsons*, Capt. Albert Greenlow. There is no expense on the fish except the box. The Atlantic Halibut Company gave me the ice.

The captain asked me if I could get him the history of the mackerel fishery and one of the last bulletins. If you will send them to me I will forward them to Captain Greenlow when the vessel is in. I am glad the fish was in good order when it arrived in Washington.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *May 25, 1884.*

SUMMARY.—During the past week there have been thirty-nine arrivals from George's Banks, landing an aggregate of 980,000 pounds of codfish; thirteen arrivals from the Banks, aggregating 220,000 pounds of fresh halibut, and 980 barrels of salt mackerel landed by ten vessels. There have also been landed during the past week 70,000 pounds of haddock, 75,000 pounds of shore fish, and 198,000 pounds of pollock.

* Identified by Dr. T. H. Bean as *Epinephelus nigritus*. Weighing 300 pounds. (See his statement, page 240.)

HALIBUT.—The vessels fishing on George's Banks are doing well. There are thirty-one vessels engaged in halibut fishing. Gloucester has a large fleet in the business. Fresh halibut sold last week at 3½ cents per pound.

MACKEREL.—Ninety sail of the mackerel fleet are off Chatham, where large mackerel, full of spawn, are caught. Five hundred barrels of mackerel that were caught in weirs were shipped from Nova Scotia last week. The mackerel that are caught at Nova Scotia are also large. The first mackerel caught in weirs at Nova Scotia last year was on May 20 against May 16, this year. Most of the vessels of the southern mackerel fleet are at home. They did not make large catches. The 340 barrels of herring caught in traps last week were sold to the fishermen for bait.

MENHADEN.—The following extract is from the Boston Daily Advertiser, of Friday morning, May 23, 1884:

“A correspondent says that Mount Hope Bay and Taunton River have been visited by a tremendous mass of menhaden, the like of which has not been reported for a long time. They came unexpectedly, as few had been noticed till recently. This irruption of menhaden may, perhaps, account for the sudden departure of the scup. They abound all over the bay, but generally move in immense schools, one of which was playing around the piers of the iron railway bridge, and made the river below the bridge, in some places, almost solid. Captain Springer, an old fisherman employed at the draw, estimated the school at the bridge to contain 1,000 barrels at least. Capt. C. C. Winslow, who passed up from below with the fishing schooner Penekese, reports that Seconet River, below the Stone Bridge and Gould Island, is almost solid with menhaden.”

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *May 24, 1884.*

SALMON.—A salmon weighing 21¼ pounds was caught in a trap at Kettle Island on May 21.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *May 24, 1884.*

MONTHLY SUMMARY.—During the month of May there were one hundred and sixty-two arrivals from George's Banks, landing 2,724,000 pounds of salt codfish, and 82,000 pounds of halibut; thirteen arrivals from Western Bank, landing 1,120,000 pounds of salt codfish and 69,420 pounds of fresh halibut; twenty-six arrivals from the Banks, landing 594,000 pounds of halibut; and twenty arrivals with 436,000 pounds of shore fish, one-fourth each of cod, haddock, hake, and cusk. There were also the following arrivals: Twenty-six arrivals with 1,055,000 pounds of pollock; twenty-eight arrivals with 3,780 barrels of salt mackerel.

There were 392 barrels of herring and 132,000 pounds of haddock caught in traps in the harbor last month. The pollock were caught with seine off Chatham. In May of last year 500,000 pounds of cod-

fish were landed from Cape North, while none have been landed this year, the ice preventing the vessels reaching the cape. There were 2,000,000 pounds of codfish landed during the month of May last year, against 1,000,000 during the same month of the present year.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *June 4, 1884.*

CODFISHING.—During the past week most of the George's fleet did well, the thirty arrivals having average fares of 23,000 pounds of salt codfish. The vessels which went to Cape North for codfish did not catch any in consequence of the ice lasting until the fish had left.

Two striped bass, one black bass, and four porgies were caught in traps in the harbor last week. Two barrels of squid were also taken out of them this morning.

MACKEREL.—Mackerel are coming in slowly, only thirteen arrivals landing 1,705 barrels last week. Three hundred barrels of small mackerel were sold to be canned. Small mackerel extend from Block Island to Portland. The small mackerel on this coast, some larger than last year, when they were classed as number 4, are large enough for number 3. A few large ones have been caught in the traps in the harbor. The school of large mackerel that was seen on the southern coast did not strike this coast, but went in an E.N.E. direction, across the southeast part of George's Banks to Cape Sable. From Cape Sable they took an easterly course down the coast of Nova Scotia. A large amount of mackerel has been taken in the weirs at Yarmouth and Cape Sable, whence 2,400 barrels of fresh and 800 barrels of salt mackerel have been shipped by steamer to Boston. The mackerel have been caught as far east as Cape Canso, Nova Scotia.

There are sixty sail of Gloucester mackerel-catchers after the large mackerel on the Nova Scotia shore. They will follow the mackerel to the Bay of Saint Lawrence.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *June 8, 1884.*

SUMMARY.—During the past week there have been thirty-seven arrivals from George's Banks, averaging 22,000 pounds of salt codfish and 400 pounds of fresh halibut to a vessel; ten arrivals with averaging fares of 24,000 pounds of fresh halibut to a vessel; eleven arrivals from the Western Banks with 70,000 pounds of salt codfish to a vessel; nine arrivals with averaging fares of 22,000 pounds of shore fish; nine arrivals with mackerel, caught on this shore, but mostly small, landing an aggregate of 2,277 barrels, and five arrivals from Nova Scotia, landing 820 barrels of large mackerel. There have also been 300 barrels of mackerel imported from Nova Scotia.

MACKEREL.—We have sixty sail of mackerel-catchers on the Nova Scotia coast, and they extend from Cape Sable to Cape Canso. Some of the vessels have done well, but all of them were late in reaching the Nova Scotia shore. A large body of mackerel passed to the eastward before the arrival of the vessels. The first mackerel caught at Cape

Sable this year was on May 14, and on last year June 12. Mackerel have been going by Cape Sable for four weeks, and are still passing. A large body passed down the Nova Scotia shore. Contrary to the expectations of the fishermen, the ice did not prevent the mackerel from entering the Bay of Saint Lawrence. In 1846 the ice was so late in leaving the Bay of Saint Lawrence that the vessels could not get to the Menhaden Islands before June 1. The catch of mackerel that year was very large.

To-day I went on board of the schooner *Lizzie Jones*, which arrived from Cape North, Cape Breton Island, and ascertained from the captain that on June 9 the ice came down 8 miles from the shore. He says there were large schools of mackerel between the ice and the shore. The Nova Scotia vessels which go to the Magdalen Islands to set their nets for mackerel arrived there June 10, and found plenty of mackerel at Pleasant Bay. Some mackerel were taken from traps at Prince Edward's Island on June 11. Most of the mackerel fleet will go to North Bay; some of them are now at Cape North. There are no large mackerel on this coast, and the vessels will not catch small ones, as there is no sale for them.

The schooner *Chocorua* arrived from the southeast part of George's Banks, and reports plenty of mackerel schooling in 45 fathoms of water.
GLOUCESTER, MASS., *June 15, 1884.*

SUMMARY.—During the past week there were landed at Gloucester 1,296,000 pounds of cod; 95,000 pounds fresh halibut; 120,000 pounds of hake, haddock, cusk, and pollock; 2,018 barrels of mackerel, caught off Newfoundland; and 740 barrels of mackerel from Nova Scotia, caught in weirs.

MACKEREL.—Large mackerel are scarce here, but small mackerel are abundant from Block Island to the Bay of Fundy. Most of the mackerel fleet has gone to the Bay of Saint Lawrence, though but few fish are caught there as yet. Three vessels have just arrived from the Nova Scotia coast with salt mackerel. Captain Jones says that the fishermen around Halifax say that they never before saw so many mackerel pass down the Nova Scotia coast as this spring. Captain Jacobs thinks that the lateness of the ice in the Saint Lawrence has caused many of the mackerel to go to the Newfoundland coast.

Squid are abundant, the weirs being full of them at North Truro. The George's Bank fishermen use them for bait. Dogfish are plentiful. Four fares of small mackerel arrived to-day, three fares being from the Nova Scotia coast. The small mackerel are hardly worth catching. They sold yesterday for \$3.25 a barrel, including the barrel. Large No. 3 sold for \$9 a barrel, including the barrel (worth about 80 cents).

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *June 22, 1884.*

MONTHLY SUMMARY.—The amount of fish landed at Gloucester during June is as follows: There were one hundred and forty-five arrivals

from George's Bank, landing 3,476,000 pounds of salt cod and 89,130 pounds of fresh halibut; twenty-three arrivals from Western Bank, landing 1,888,000 pounds of salt cod and 31,000 pounds of fresh halibut. There were 185,000 pounds of salt cod landed from Cape North; 160,000 pounds of salt cod and 18,000 pounds of salt halibut from Flemish Cap; 1,099,000 pounds of shore fish, being mixed half cod and half hake and cusk; 575,800 pounds of fresh halibut, caught on the Banks; and 203,000 pounds of pollock, caught with seines off Chatham.

MACKEREL.—The mackerel landed during June is as follows: Caught on the New England coast, 12,658 barrels; caught on the Nova Scotia coast with seines, 2,000 barrels. Four arrivals from the Nova Scotia coast brought 136,000 pounds of salt cod and 60,000 pounds of haddock. From the Nova Scotia coast there have been imported to Boston 23,000 barrels of salt mackerel, most of this amount having been caught in weirs.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *July 2, 1884.*

136.—CATCHING ALEWIVES WITH HOOKS BAITED WITH EELS.

By A. R. CRITTENDEN.

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

While crossing the bridge over the Medomak River at Waldoboro', Me., this forenoon, I noticed on the bank of the river below some twenty or more boys fishing with rod and line, and evidently having good luck, as about every second some one drew out a fish. The fish looked like alewives, but as I had never known them to be taken with baited hooks I came to the conclusion that they were large smelts. On going down to the bank and investigating I found them to be indeed alewives, and I found the bait the boys were using to be live eels, from two and a half to three inches long, which they hooked in the center of the body, leaving them to wriggle at will. In some cases the hook would hardly strike the water before an alewife would be fast to it. One boy had taken over a hundred, and the others had various stocks. I asked the boys how they learned that they could catch them with eels, and all the answer I gained was that, "the boys told them they could." I found that the river was alive with alewives. Men were taking them with dip nets at the fish-way, in the dam just above the bridge.

I observed that hundreds of young eels were making their way up the fish-way, and when an alewife broke water among them they scattered as though frightened. Possibly this fact led the boys to think they were eating the eels, and were thus induced to try them for bait. The alewives were decidedly frisky, some of them at times jumping several

* This letter having been referred to Hon. Theodore Lyman, he states "that on Cape Cod alewives are often taken with shrimp bait or with artificial fly."—EDITOR.