

salmon exported from British Columbia over 5,000 barrels of salted salmon have also been exported, the demand for the fish thus preserved being steadily increasing. Trout of all kinds abound in many Canadian rivers, and the best are the sea-trout and the salmon-trout. Whitefish and trout fisheries are carried on on a large scale chiefly in the lakes of Ontario. These lakes are properly called great inland seas, Superior covering an area of 31,000 square miles, and Erie, Huron, and Ontario combined, 52,000 square miles. Many rivers empty their waters into these lakes, and these abound in food-fish, the delicacy and flavor of which are well known; salmon-trout, whitefish, sturgeon, pickerel, pike, bass, perch, &c., abound in them. The fishermen of the Canadian lakes use gill-nets and trap-nets, and their vessels are either sailing boats of from 20 to 30 feet in length, or small steamers called fishing tugs, one advantage of the latter being the speed with which fish can be conveyed to railway stations to be transported in refrigerators to market. The produce of whitefish, trout, &c., from the lakes in 1882 was 4,500,000 pounds, sent fresh to market, besides 5,079 barrels of the same fish salted, 9,753 barrels of trout, and 41,380 barrels sturgeon, bass, pike, mukallonge, and other fish, making a total of 56,197 barrels, or a total of 15,739,700 pounds as the marketed products of the lake and river fisheries. There are besides these the river fisheries of the maritime provinces, giving an aggregate value for the fresh-water fishes of the Dominion of \$4,000,000. The paper closes with some reference to the general commercial value of the fisheries, it being claimed that "the fisheries are not only important to us in consequence of the vast amount of wealth that can be drawn from the deep, apparently without diminishing or exhausting its source, but because by this means a body of able and hardy seamen may be found to conduct the commerce of a maritime country during peace and to become its gallant defenders on the ocean in time of war."

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## 220.—ON THE ABUNDANCE OF HALIBUT NEAR ICELAND.

By Capt. J. W. COLLINS.

While in England, in the summer of 1880, after leaving the Berlin Fishery Exhibition, I was told by English fishermen, sailing from Grimsby, that they had often found halibut in extraordinary abundance while fishing for cod at Iceland. I was much interested in these statements, first because Capt. John S. McQuinn, of Gloucester, went to Iceland in the schooner *Mambrino Chief*, in 1873, on a "salt halibut" trip, and failed to get a fare—a result which until now has prevented other Gloucester fishermen from visiting that locality; and second, because I knew that, if halibut are as abundant in the waters around Iceland as they were represented to be by the Grimsby fishermen, Amer-

ican vessels might, by going there, make far more profitable voyages for fitches than they are liable to make on the west coast of Greenland.

Bearing this in mind, and considering it important to obtain as much knowledge of practical value to American fishermen as possible, I took every occasion while in London, in the summer of 1883, to gather additional testimony on this subject, from both the fishermen and vessel owners that visited the Fisheries Exhibition. Several of the latter had once been fishermen. Those with whom I conversed relative to this matter were among the most reliable and intelligent men of the class to which they belong. There was, too, such a remarkable similarity in the statements, each individual telling the same story, of the almost marvelous abundance of halibut about Iceland, that I felt certain that so many experienced fishermen could not all be mistaken or misled regarding a fish with which they are so familiar. Several told me that on some occasions they have been obliged to stop fishing for cod owing to the great numbers of halibut on the banks, since these fish were of no value to them, and actually proved a nuisance by destroying their gear. The Grimsby vessels which go to Iceland are welled smacks—locally known as "Codmen"—that fish with hand-lines for cod and ling, salting their catch until a few days before their departure from the fishing ground. The fish taken during the last two or three days' fishing are put in the well and kept alive for sale at the home port, the salted cod usually being sold at Faroe Islands.

I felt so sure of the correctness of the information I had obtained relative to the abundance of halibut at Iceland, that, while at Gloucester last winter, I called the attention of several parties to the matter, who were either fishermen or interested in the fisheries. Among others, I gave to Capt. John Dago a detailed statement of what I had learned from the English fishermen. In previous years Captain Dago had made several trips to Greenland for fitched halibut, and I have recently learned that, acting on the information I gave him, he has gone to Iceland this summer. Another schooner, the *Alice M. Williams*, from the firm of D. C. & H. Babson, of this city, has also gone on the same voyage. The question of the abundance of halibut at Iceland will be pretty definitely settled by the result of their cruises. Nothing definite has yet been learned of the success of these two vessels, but had they not met with a reasonably fair prospect for making a good catch, it is probable they would have been home before this.

If they meet with good success, a new field will be opened up to the enterprise of our fishermen, which at this time is of special importance owing to the scarcity of halibut on the banks, and the difficulties attending a voyage to Davis Straits.

I shall acquaint you with the result of those experimental trips when the vessels return home and the facts are made available. I have much confidence in a favorable issue.

GLoucester, MASS., *August 16, 1884.*