

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

By S. J. MARTIN.

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

MACKEREL.—During the past week there have been 42 arrivals with salt mackerel. They landed 8,000 barrels mostly No. 4 mackerel. They average about 1,500 to the barrel. There were a few large ones. Last week small ones were plenty from Thatcher's Island to Cape Cod. Vessels coming from the eastward report plenty of small mackerel as far as Matinicus. Four vessels from the bay of St. Lawrence brought 1,390 barrels, and reported mackerel plenty October 5 and 6. They caught as many as they could take care of. I think there will be three vessels from Gloucester go down to the Nova Scotia coast after mackerel. The prospect for large mackerel is poor.

The mackerel from the Bay of St. Lawrence were of good quality and sold for \$14 a barrel without being culled. Large No. 1 mackerel have sold for \$23 a barrel; No. 2 for \$14 a barrel; No. 3 for \$10 a barrel; and there is no sale for No. 4.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *October 14, 1883.*

Pollock and cod have been scarce this fall. Forty sail of small craft which were out two days on the pollock grounds, came in with 2,000 pounds. There are no sperling this fall, so that most of the boats will use nets.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *October 28, 1883.*

MACKEREL.—The mackerel-catchers are all at Provincetown. There are plenty of small mackerel in Barnstable Bay. Vessels make good hauls when there is a chance to get out. The weather has been bad for seining the last fortnight—wind northeast, with thick weather. Small mackerel were seen schooling on Middle Bank last night. We have got 13 sail of mackerel-catchers in the Bay of St. Lawrence, and 15 sail have gone down to Cape Breton Island after mackerel. There were plenty of mackerel schooling off Sydney, C. B., last Tuesday. Some vessels made good hauls. Schooner Edward Webster, Capt. Solomon Jacobs, and schooner Warren I. Crosby, Captain Carroll, went through Canso last Thursday, bound for the Bay of St. Lawrence, after mackerel.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *October 28, 1883.*

GEORGE'S COD FISHERY.—The vessels that go to George's after codfish have done well. There have been three arrivals this week, with 40,000, 45,000, and 54,000 pounds of codfish, respectively. The time gone was fourteen days. They used squid for bait.

SQUID.—Squid are plenty on George's, on Cashe's, and in the Bay of Fundy. They are plenty on the whole coast from Grand Manan, Bay of Fundy, to Middle Bank. Vessels that have come in from Le Have Bank and Brown's Bank say there are plenty of squid on all the fishing banks of the Nova Scotia shore. A few have been caught off the mouth of the harbor.

HALIBUT FISHERY.—The vessels that go after fresh halibut have done well. There have been three arrivals this week from the southwest part of Grand Banks, with 65,000, 55,000, and 68,000 pounds of fresh halibut, caught in 140 fathoms of water.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *October 28, 1883.*

MOVEMENTS OF MACKEREL.—When the mackerel came on the coasts of Massachusetts and Maine the large mackerel came first, and passed to the eastward. Then came the small ones, which also passed to the eastward. The latter came up inshore this fall. Boston Bay was full of them all the time during the month of October. The large mackerel were farther off shore. They came across Cashe's. A few of them were caught at Chatham. Some of the vessels which have come in during the last two days saw mackerel on the northeast part of George's. Those mackerel came out of the Bay of St. Lawrence. They come up the Cape shore as far as Cape Sable, then strike across to the northeast part of George's, and work southwest the whole length of the bank; how much farther I don't know. When they went to the eastward they went down the whole length of George's Bank, went across to Cape Sable, and followed down the whole length of the Cape shore. Some of them went through the Straits of Canso. Some of them went down as far as Scatarry Island, and then took a westerly course in the Bay of St. Lawrence. Some of the large mackerel went up by the island of Saint Paul and were not seen afterwards. Some vessels which were on the Labrador coast after herring saw large mackerel there. According to the last reports from the Nova Scotia shore there are plenty of mackerel there working westward.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *October 31, 1883.*

MONTHLY SUMMARY.—The amount of fish landed at Gloucester during the month of October was as follows: Shore mackerel 24,091 barrels; mackerel from the Bay of St. Lawrence, 4,343 barrels; herring, 5,335 barrels; cod from George's Bank, 956,000 pounds; halibut from George's Bank, 11,900 pounds; cod from Western Bank, 1,403,000 pounds; halibut from Western Bank, 9,400 pounds; cod from Grand Banks, 2,133,000 pounds; salt halibut from Grand Bank 13,400 pounds; fresh halibut, 696,000 pounds; Greenland halibut, 90,000 pounds; pollock, 588,000 pounds; hake, 36,000 pounds; cusk, 22,000 pounds; haddock, 23,000 pounds; fresh cod, 12,500 pounds; mixed dried fish by freight from Maine, 10,550 quintals; pogy slivers, 170 barrels; cod oil sold here, 95 barrels; cod imported from Nova Scotia, 700 quintals.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *November 4, 1883.*

MACKEREL FISHERY.—The shore mackerel fleet all hauled up. There has been a large falling off in the catch of mackerel from last year. There have been 218,000 barrels taken this year against 378,000 barrels last year. There are 13,000 barrels on the wharf to-day; last year at this time there were 45,000 barrels. There are fifteen sail of vessels on the Cape shore after mackerel. A dispatch came last night from the schooner Charles C. Warren stating that they caught 270 barrels of large mackerel last week in Margaret's Bay, 35 miles to the westward of Halifax; also one from schooner Warren J. Crosby stating that she caught 300 barrels of large mackerel last week at Sydney. There is no news from the rest of the fleet. They are catching mackerel in nets all along the Nova Scotia shore.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *November 11, 1883.*

A REMARKABLE HAUL OF MENHADEN.—A dispatch to the Boston Herald under date of November 9, 1883, says:

"The menhaden steamers George Curtis and Vista of the George W. Miles Company brought in over 1,000,000 fish last night. Value, \$5,000. This news is enough to fire the heart of every menhaden fisherman with joy. It is a most remarkably large haul, particularly for this time of the year. The fish now are fat and unusually fertile in desirable material."

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *November 11, 1883.*

VESSEL STATISTICS FOR 1883.—The following are the numbers of vessels and of men engaged in different branches of the Gloucester fisheries during the year 1883:

Mackerel fishery, 122 vessels, manned by 1,708 men.

Grand and Western Banks fishery, 111 vessels, manned by 1,333 men.

George's Bank cod fishery, 75 vessels, manned by 825 men.

Fresh halibut fishery, 22 vessels, manned by 318 men.

Shore fisheries, 56 vessels, manned by 448 men.

Greenland halibut fishery, 5 vessels, manned by 70 men.

There are, in addition, 25 small boats, with one man to a boat.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *November 11, 1883.*

GALE ON GEORGE'S BANK.—They have had a hard time on George's. November 12 and 13 it blew a hurricane. Vessels arrived to-day with decks swept, sails torn, bulwarks gone, and cables and anchors lost. I think the worst is to come. Some of the haddock vessels arrived with the loss of dories and other damage.

MACKEREL FISHERY.—Two vessels arrived last night from the Bay of St. Lawrence; schooner Fannie Belle, with 425 barrels of salt mackerel; and schooner S. R. Lane, with 200 barrels of salt mackerel. There are five more to come from the Bay of St. Lawrence, and there are eight still on the Cape shore.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *November 18, 1883.*

MACKEREL.—Four vessels from the Bay of St. Lawrence brought 1,180 barrels of salt mackerel. On the 9th of November the schooner Charles C. Warren caught 250 barrels of mackerel at one haul of the seine in Margaret's Bay, Nova Scotia. There are three more vessels coming from the Bay of St. Lawrence with 300 barrels of mackerel each.

That will end the mackerel fishing for this year.

GALE.—Fears are entertained for the safety of four haddock catchers which were on George's Bank in the gale of November 12-13. Haddock are plenty on George's Bank, but there has been no sale for them for the last three days. There are five vessels here with haddock to sell to the slitters at three-quarters of a cent a pound.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *November 25, 1883.*

SUMMARY.—I send you the amount of fish landed at Gloucester during the month of November. Shore mackerel, 6,572 barrels; mackerel from the Bay of St. Lawrence 3,787 barrels; mackerel caught on the Nova Scotian shore, 551 barrels; George's cod, 1,168,000 pounds; George's halibut, 34,400 pounds; Western Bank codfish, 211,000 pounds; Western Bank halibut, 7,900 pounds. Fish caught in cod gill-nets, 1,330,000 pounds codfish, 174,000 pounds pollock. Haddock caught on George's landed at Gloucester 495,000 pounds; shorefish, 21,300 pounds; hake and cusk, 3,000 pounds; haddock, 4,000 pounds; codfish, 18,000 pounds; pollock, 49,000 pounds. Codfish caught in Bay of Fundy, 51,000 pounds.

Fish on freight from Maine, 5,450 quintals hake, 500 quintals codfish, 40 barrels of herring. Fish imported from Nova Scotia, 667 quintals codfish, 10 barrels of mackerel. Fish caught in cod gill-nets landed at Rockport and Portsmouth during the month of November, 183,000 pounds.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *December 3, 1883.*

COD AND HALIBUT.—The vessels from George's Bank all brought in good fares of cod. They found plenty of squid on the bank all the fall and until last week, when the squid disappeared. None of the halibut fishers returned last week and the price of halibut was high. All that the George's vessels brought in sold at 20 cents a pound.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *December 16, 1883.*

MONTHLY SUMMARY.—I send you the amount of fish landed at Gloucester during the month of December. George's codfish, 610,000 pounds; George's halibut, 22,000 pounds; fish caught in the cod gill-nets, 1,120,000 pounds; fresh halibut, 230,000 pounds; mackerel, 140 barrels; haddock, 230,000 pounds; cusk, 15,000 pounds; pollock, 3,000 pounds. Fish imported from Nova Scotia: 472 quintals of cod, 100 quintals of pollock, 50 quintals of hake, 22 barrels of oil, 600 quintals of hake on freight from Maine. Smoked herring from Eastport, 5,000 boxes; frozen herring from Grand Manan, 300 barrels. Fish caught in

cod gill-nets landed at other ports during the month of December 300,000 pounds.

GLOUCESTER, MASS, *January 1, 1884.*

HERRING.—There were three arrivals from Grand Manan with frozen herring. Herring are selling at \$1.50 per hundred.

There have been three arrivals from the banks with 20,000 pounds of fresh halibut the last three days. They sold for 2 cents a pound by the cargo. The George's vessels find fish scarce. Five vessels are bound home from Newfoundland with a full supply of frozen herring.

VESSELS.—Gloucester will have 50 sail on George's after codfish. There will be 5 vessels more engaged in fresh-halibut fishing this year than there were last year. Four new ones will be added to the fleet which goes south after mackerel.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *January 15, 1884.*

HERRING.—Four cargoes of frozen herring arrived this week from Grand Manan. The herring are very plenty at Fortune Bay. The whole fleet of 32 vessels is coming home with full cargoes.

HALIBUT.—There have three vessels arrived from the banks this week with 90 pounds of fresh halibut, which sold at 8 cents a pound by the cargo.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *January 20, 1884.*

MONTHLY SUMMARY.—The amount of fish landed at Gloucester during the month of January, 1884, was as follows: Salt cod, brought from George's Bank (48 arrivals), 817,000 pounds; fresh halibut from George's Bank, 150,300 pounds; shore fisheries with cod gill-nets, 843,000 pounds; fresh halibut from Banks, 177,700 pounds; herring from Grand Manan, 2,620,000 by count; herring from Newfoundland, 3,714,000 by count; salt herring from Newfoundland, 420 barrels; haddock from George's Bank, 93,000 pounds; salt mackerel from Canso, Nova Scotia, 500 barrels.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *February 1, 1884.*

HALIBUT.—The vessels fishing on the eastern part of the George's Bank are doing well. They catch from 3,000 to 6,000 pounds of halibut on a trip. The halibut bring a good price. The average result of a trip to George's Bank is 18,000 pounds of cod and 3,000 pounds of halibut.

HERRING.—From St. John to Eastport in the Bay of Fundy, herring are plentiful. The inhabitants of Newfoundland say they have never seen this fish so abundant. The thirty-six sail of vessels at Newfoundland are coming home with full cargoes of frozen herring, each of which averages 650 barrels. Twenty-eight cargoes of frozen herring brought from Grand Manan average 350 barrels each. Fifteen vessels more are at Grand Manan loading. Herring sell at 75 cents per hundred here.

The catchers find plenty of haddock on the George's Banks. They caught 40,000 pounds in one day last week. Halibut are scarce.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *February 3, 1884.*

SUMMARY.—During the past week the amount of fish landed here has been as follows: Fourteen arrivals from the Banks, with 290,000 pounds of fresh halibut; nine arrivals from George's Bank, landing 140,000 pounds of salt fish and 45,000 pounds of halibut; 305,000 pounds of codfish brought in by the vessels using cod gill-nets; six arrivals from Newfoundland with 2,930,000 frozen herring; one arrival from Grand Manan with 250,000 frozen herring. There were 75,000 pounds of haddock landed last week; 400 barrels of salt herring were brought in from Newfoundland. The weather is bad for frozen herring. The wind has been to the eastward for the last eighteen days, with fog and rain. Some of the vessels will lose one-quarter of their cargo by wet weather.

HADDOCK.—Haddock are very plenty on George's and full of spawn. The haddock catchers in five days made trips averaging 50,000 pounds to a vessel. The netters are doing well; they land the most of their fish at Portsmouth and Rockport.

PRICES.—All kinds of fish were low. Haddock sold for 1 cent a pound, halibut for 6 cents, fresh cod for 2½ cents, and frozen herring for 60 cents a hundred.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *February 18, 1884.*

WEEKLY SUMMARY.—During last week there were 15 arrivals from George's Bank, landing 379,000 pound of salt cod and 34,500 pounds of fresh halibut. Vessels using cod gill-nets landed 340,000 pounds of large cod at Rockport and Portsmouth. There were 2 arrivals from the Grand Banks with 70,000 pounds of fresh halibut. There was one arrival from the Western Banks with 4,000 pounds of salt cod, and 16,000 pounds of fresh halibut. There was one arrival from Newfoundland with 375,000 frozen herring; also one arrival from Grand Manan with 220,000 frozen herring. Schooner David A. Story made a trip to Newfoundland in twenty-one days, the quickest time on record. Nine vessels are due from Grand Manan with frozen herring. Some of the vessels using cod gill-nets have hauled up for the winter, three of them having used up their nets. Haddock are reported very plenty on the western part of George's Bank. There has been so much haddock in the Boston market that it sold for 1 cent a pound all last week.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *February 24, 1884.*

MONTHLY SUMMARY.—The summary of fish landed in Gloucester during the month of February is as follows: Fifty-two arrivals from George's Bank aggregated 1,131,000 pounds of codfish and 169,000 pounds of fresh halibut. There were four arrivals from the Western Bank aggregating 75,000 pounds of salt cod and 54,000 pounds of fresh halibut. There were 183,000 pounds of cod taken by the gill-nets in

Ipswich Bay. These were eighteen arrivals from Grand Banks with 471,000 pounds of fresh halibut. There were also nine arrivals from Newfoundland bringing 3,615,000 frozen herring and 400 barrels of salt herring. There were two arrivals from Grand Manan with 570,000 frozen herring and one arrival from Halifax with 120,000 frozen herring. There were two arrivals from George's Bank with 110,000 pounds of haddock.

VESSELS.—There were 48 boats engaged in the cod gill-net fishery, most of which landed their catch at Portsmouth and Rockport. The gill-net fishing will continue in Ipswich Bay during this month. The cod caught on George's Bank are small and come from the western end of the Bank. They are full of spawn.

PRICE.—The price of fresh fish this week has been high. Fresh cod sold for 4 cents a pound, fresh haddock for 3 cents a pound, and fresh halibut sold for 21 cents a pound. The price of salt fish remains the same as last week. Frozen herring sold at 60 cents per hundred.

GLoucester, MASS., *March 3, 1884.*

VESSELS.—During the coming week there will be about 20 vessels starting south after mackerel and 15 of the Grand Bank fleet will start this week. Last week 45 vessels arrived from George's Bank with good fares. There was a heavy gale there February 28 and 29. The wind blew a hurricane from the northwest. All the vessels that have arrived are more or less damaged, and fears are entertained for the safety of the rest.

Last week there were 3 arrivals with frozen herring from Grand Manan. Six more are on the way, which will close the herring business for this winter.

The cod gill-netters have not done much this week on account of the rough weather.

The vessels fishing on George's Bank caught their fish on the western edge in 28 and 30 fathoms of water; some of them had to cut their cables to avoid collision. Some had their decks swept of bulwarks, dories, and all. Two men were washed overboard. Haddock are plenty on the western edge of George's Bank. Four vessels arrived in Boston with 75,000 pounds each, which sold at 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents a pound, and was the result of two days' fishing.

GLoucester, MASS., *March 11, 1884.*

COD.—During the past forty-eight hours 13 vessels have arrived from George's Bank with an average of 30,000 pounds of cod to a vessel. These were caught on the western edge in water from 20 to 30 fathoms deep. The fish weigh about 12 pounds each. Two vessels from George's brought 60,000 pounds each while 2 vessels from Western Bank report no fish.

The mackerelers are getting ready to go south; 2 sailed last Saturday and 6 to-day. By this week Saturday 25 vessels will have gone south. Haddock continue plenty on George's Bank. There are 25 cargoes i.

Boston averaging 45,000 pounds to a vessel. The price is low, only 1 cent a pound to-day.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *March 17, 1884.*

COD.—The vessels from George's Bank brought in good fares last week, aggregating 1,142,000 pounds. Most of these fish were caught in shoal water from 15 to 18 fathoms deep. The fish are of medium size, and full of spawn. Vessels that went to the Western Bank report the water very rough and fish scarce.

PRICES.—There were no fresh halibut landed last week. The price was 20 cents a pound. On Thursday fresh halibut sold for 22½ cents per pound. The codfish from gill-nets sold for 1½ cents per pound, and haddock for three-fourths of a cent per pound.

SOUTHERN MACKEREL.—During the week 35 mackerel-catchers sailed for the south, and 10 more will sail next week. There will be 75 vessels in this fishery this spring. Two more vessels have been lost on George's Bank, one fishing for haddock and one for cod. The loss occurred in the gale of February 28–29. The George's vessels find some squid in the stomach of the cod, and also small mackerel 7 inches in length.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *March 23, 1884.*

SUMMARY.—During the past week there have been 25 arrivals from George's with good fares. There has been no fresh halibut landed for 14 days, though some of the vessels have been gone 7 weeks.

HERRING.—There have been 6 arrivals from Western Bank mostly with slim fares. There has also been 5 arrivals from Grand Manan with frozen herring, the last being the schooner Margie Smith, which arrived March 27. That closed the frozen-herring trade.

There are now 54 vessels in the south after mackerel. Last night we had a hurricane which drove some vessels ashore. The snow in some places is a foot deep, and the thermometer went down to 30° F.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *March 30, 1884.*

MONTHLY SUMMARY.—The total amount of fish landed at Gloucester during the month of March was as follows: Codfish from George's Bank, 3,468,000 pounds; halibut from George's Bank, 69,370 pounds; cod from Western Bank, 286,000 pounds; halibut from the Western Bank, 48,900 pounds; fresh halibut from the Banks, 70,000 pounds; haddock from George's Bank, sold to be split on the wharf, 365,000 pounds; frozen herring from Grand Manan, 2,263,000 by count. There was also received by freight from Maine 600 quintals of dried mixed fish. The schooner Reaper also brought from Maine 1,600 boxes of smoked herring. The cod gill nets have taken in March 1,137,000 pounds of cod. The boats, 18 in number, engaged in this fishery are doing well. Those that have used up their nets are fitting out for the spring fishing. There will probably be good fishing in Ipswich Bay all this month.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *April 3, 1884.*