

May 17.

THE LOBSTER INDUSTRY.

Game Commissioners Make Report on Cause of Decline.

Deputy Shows How Law Is Being Constantly Violated.

The state commissioners on fish and game have submitted to the legislature a special report on "the lobster fisheries and the cause of their decline." It is a document of some 45 printed pages in which the commissioners review the law of the present day and those of other states and the provinces.

Regarding the evading of the law the commission says:

The schemes for outwitting the deputies and of evading the short lobster law far excel the peculiar ways of Bret Harte's "Heathen Chinee." In general, since to secure conviction it is necessary to seize the short lobsters while in possession of the offender, the illegal lobsters are kept where they can readily be thrown overboard in case a deputy appears. Our deputies have compelled the fishermen thus to throw overboard at least one million "shorts" this year.

In case a deputy does not appear the "shorts" are placed in a sunken bag or car, the location of which is marked by a buoy kept just under the water, or by an inconspicuous floating object which would attract no special attention, such as a bit of wood, kelp, etc., or the bag or car may be hung by a small line over the stern of the boat, or to a boat-mooring, or pile under a wharf. When 50 to 500 "shorts" have been accumulated, these are taken in the night by regular collectors who ply along the shore from Rockport to Plymouth. Some such have been driven so hard by our deputies as to go out of the business, but "there are others."

They have a well organized system of sentinels and spies, who keep track of and report the movements of the deputies. The fines imposed by the judges, even at the maximum, are small when compared with the profits, and usually this amount is reckoned as a contingent expense of the business and is divided among those participating in the profits. Most of these lobsters are marketed as "lobster meat."

The following report from Deputy Burney indicates how the law is evaded during the summer at many places along the shores between Boston and Gloucester:

Commissioners on Fisheries and Game. Gentlemen:—Complying with your request, I make this report of my observations upon the short lobster traffic on the shores of Massachusetts. The enforcement of the lobster law is becoming more difficult each year, on account of the methods adopted to evade it by the lobster fishermen on the north shore.

In the past it was the custom of the fishermen to land their catch; then it was a comparatively easy matter to catch the violators. At present, landing the catch is dangerous, and in some cases a very costly way to dispose of their lobsters. The fishermen have adopted ways of avoiding that. It was soon found that there was a growing demand from the beach houses and hotels along the shore for lobster meat out of the shell. Raw meat soon became too dangerous to handle, and other means had to be found. The new way is an evasion of the law, and it is relatively safe. There are two ways to work it; one is to cut up the raw meat into small cubes, when it is impossible to show to the courts that it is lobster tails; the other is scald the lobsters on board the boats, cut the meat up, and land it in pails and firkins.

There has been but one conviction in my recollection on scalded meat and that was on meat not cut up.

May 17.

One or two instances are sufficient for examples of what happens nearly every day during the summer season. On Wednesday, July 19, I was at Salem Willows. Two boats ran in on the Beverly side and anchored a short distance off shore. I could see very plainly with my glass every move of the men. They were busy for more than a half hour, shocking out and cutting up lobster meat and putting it into firkins. When they had finished, the meat was taken by one of them to the restaurants at the Willows. They were not gone over 10 minutes when another boat came from the Beverly shore and did the same thing.

Tuesday, the 25th of July, off the Magnolia shore, I saw two sloops at anchor, their crews busy "shocking" and cutting up meat. This is something that can be seen almost, if not every day. In past seasons it was common to talk that a man could run down to the nearest beach any morning early and get a mess of shorts. I am asked quite often, "Where are all the shorts? I used to get a mess once in a while, but I can't get them now." I venture to say that where there were hundreds of short lobsters landed every day five years ago, there is not a dozen landed today. Of course there are some men who will take the chances, but they are few. Where a man can sell his shorts off shore to the boats engaged in buying shorts, he will not bring them ashore and take chances. A number of lobster fishermen with whom I have talked say that this is the poorest season they have ever had.

Yours respectfully,
THOMAS L. BURNEY.

May 17

Herring at North Sydney.

Spring herring were sold at North Sydney, C. B., on Saturday to the fishing vessels in port at \$1.50 and \$1.35 per barrel. The price of ice has also dropped, some of the vessels being supplied at \$1 per ton on Saturday.

May 17.

DAILY TIMES FISH BUREAU.

To-day's Arrivals and Receipts.

Sch. Vera, south, seining.
Sch. A. M. Nicholson, south, seining.
Sch. Patrician, south, seining.
Sch. Valentina, shore, 40,000 lbs. fresh fish.
S. h. Catherine Birke, via Boston.

Vessels Sailed.

Sch. Metamora, Cape Shore, seining.

Today's Fish Market.

These prices are based on the last known sales.

Splitting prices of fresh fish: Large Eastern cod, \$1.75; medium do., \$1.25; large Western cod, \$2.12 1-2; medium do., \$1.50; haddock, 85 cts.; cusk, \$1.25; hake, 80 cts.; pollock, 65 cts.

Bank halibut, 6 cts. per lb. for white and 4 cents for gray.

Salt handline Georges codfish, \$4.50 per cwt. for large, \$3.50 for medium.

Salt trawl Georges codfish, \$4.50 for large, 3.50 for medium.

Salt hake, \$1.00.

Salt haddock, \$1.50.

Salt cusk, \$2.00.

Large salt "drift" Georges codfish, \$4.00; medium do., \$3.00; snappers, \$1.75.

Salt trawl bank codfish, \$3.50 for large, \$2.75 for medium, snappers \$1.50.

May 17.

Boston.

Sch. Rita A. Viator, 500 haddock, 25,000 cod.
Sch. Wesley W. Sinnett, 2500 haddock, 1500 cod, 3000 hake, 2500 cusk.
Sch. Mary E. Cooney, 10,000 haddock, 3000 cod.
Sch. Mary Cabral, 8000 haddock, 1000 cod.
Sch. Sadie M. Numan, 2500 haddock, 2000 cod, 15,000 hake, 4000 cusk.
Sch. Mattie D. Brundage, 7000 haddock, 000 cod, 1000 hake, 2000 cusk.
Sch. Walter P. Gouliart, 10,000 haddock, 1000 cod.
Sch. James S. Steele, 9000 haddock, 6000 cod, 1000 hake.
Sch. William A. Morse, 21,000 haddock, 19,000 cod.
Sch. Mary C. Santo, 12,000 haddock, 32,000 cod.
Sch. Fish Hawk, 6000 haddock, 7000 cod, 1500 hake.
Sch. Alcina, 25,000 cod.
Sch. Ida S. Brooks, 10,000 haddock, 1000 cod.
Sch. Frances V. Silva, 7000 haddock, 14,000 cod.
Sch. Evelyn L. Smith, 8000 cod, 23,000 hake, 10,030 cusk.
Sch. Hortense, 10,000 haddock, 9000 cod.
Haddock, \$3.50 to \$4; large cod, \$2 to \$2.25; market cod, \$1.50 to \$2; hake, 60 cts. to \$1; cusk, 70 cts. to \$1.

Mackerel Notes.

There was only one netter at New York early this morning, sch. Blanche F. Irving, with 28 large mackerel.

May 18.

MACKEREL ON CAPE SHORE.

First Fish Taken There on Tuesday.

CAUGHT IN TRAP AT YARMOUTH

Several Seiners at Newport Today with Small Fares.



The Dominion Fish Bureau reports that the first mackerel of the season has been taken. The fish was caught in the Allen Trap at Yarmouth, N. S., on Tuesday, which is four days ahead of the first mackerel taken on the Cape Shore last year.

A special to the TIMES this afternoon reports the following arrivals at Newport, R. I., this noon:

Sch. Lizzie M. Stanley, Capt. Joshua W. Stanley, 40 barrels large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Gertrude, Capt. Frank Perry, 70 barrels large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Cynthia, Capt. Gregory Thomas, 66 barrels large fresh mackerel.

The same despatch also reports that sch. Emerald, Capt. Albert Greenlaw, is also bound in there with a fare of large fresh mackerel.

112
May 18.

SCH. RAYMAH RELEASED.

Boston Craft Was Bonded at Halifax Yesterday.

Sch. Parthia Will Be Released as Soon as Bonded.

A despatch from North Sydney, C. B., says:

"The American fishing sch. Raymah, Capt. Hogan, which was seized off Cape George on the Cape Breton coast on May 8, by the Canadian government cruiser Canada, for fishing within the three-mile limit, was released under \$400 bonds today by the Canadian department of marine at Ottawa. The Raymah is owned by the Atlantic Maritime Co. of Boston. It is also understood that the Gloucester fishing sch. Parthia, Capt. Seeley, which was seized at the same time, will be released as soon as necessary bonds are furnished."

It is thought here that there must be some mistake about the amount of the bond (\$400) and that perhaps it should have read \$4000. It may be, though, that the case against the Raymah was not a very strong one and that instead of a bond, a fine of \$400 might have been imposed and paid. The bonding of the vessel will enable her to proceed immediately with her trip.

May 18.

CLAM PROPAGATION.

Fish and Game Commission Conducting Experiments.

Will Study Best Conditions for Growth of Bivalves.

In an effort to determine the most practical methods of increasing the yield of shellfish, and in an endeavor to ascertain facts in the life history of the edible mollusks so that by the use of such knowledge the production of the shellfish may be largely increased, the Massachusetts commission on fisheries and game, through its biologist, David Belding, is making numerous experiments along the coasts of Massachusetts. In the Lynn district the flats of Pines river, in the vicinity of Oak Island, have been chosen for their adaptability for the work. On Friday and Saturday, Biologist Belding, assisted by J. R. Stephenson and C. L. Savery and Game Warden Thomas L. Burney, of Lynn, thoroughly cleaned a portion of the flats and planted several hundred clams, an inch in length, over which close observations will be kept.

The work as yet is wholly experimental and since last July Mr. Belding has devoted his time to a close study of the life and habits of shellfish under different conditions of tides, currents, etc., that a full and complete knowledge might be obtained before any definite course was followed by the state commission toward increasing the supply of mollusks.

May 18.

It is an admitted fact that the flats of Massachusetts, once very thickly settled with the soft shelled clam, are rapidly becoming barren, and there is not the slightest doubt that wasteful exploiting by the clam diggers has been the chief cause of the destruction of the flats. The flats of Essex, which once bore immense numbers of clams now are practically unproductive, and the conditions appear just as favorable for the growth of the edible shellfish as in former days. As a result of the great decrease, many hundred men, who formerly gained a livelihood by pursuing the life of a clammer, have been thrown out of work, and in addition the future clam supply both as food and as bait, is seriously threatened.

On this account the state commission decided to follow experimental work, with two distinct objects in view; to determine the time that a marketable clam can be produced, and to learn the causes influencing the rate of growth and the condition that cause this rate to vary.

Mr. Belding was engaged to carry on the work, and his familiarity with the subject has already been attested by the success which has attended his work. The oldest clam diggers know nothing about the early life history of the clam, and they are equally as ignorant of the conditions which hasten or retard the growth of the small fish.

Mr. Belding's method of work is interesting, as well as novel, and during the past year over 60 experimental beds have been planted along the South Shore and at Essex, Newburyport, Gloucester, Ipswich and the Parker river at Newbury, on the eastern shore. After searching over the flats until the best possible mud is found, the debris and refuse is cleaned off, and the beds are prepared for the planting. At Pines river three beds have been made, each 1,100 of an acre in size, or specifically 43 1-2 feet. A double set of posts are driven into the mud, one set level with the surface, the other rising four or five feet in the air. The lower posts are used simply as a precautionary measure to allow the finding of the beds if floating ice or other destructive means should break off the higher set of stakes. The clams which are planted are not especially selected, but are usually taken from neighboring flats to the experimental beds, and they are practically of uniform size, one inch in length. Careful account of the number of seed clams planted are kept, and they vary from 100 to 300 per bed, and a record is made of their condition when planted.

After planting, notices are posted forbidding trespassing or digging of the clams, under penalty of the law, and in the majority of cases the clambers have been disposed to accord the game commission every assistance, acting on a realization that the experiments were conducted for their interests.

As the clams continue to grow observations are kept, and it is at least a year before they are removed from the beds, as it takes that period of time for them to attain a size which makes them marketable.

As a result of Mr. Belding's experiments, which bid fair to be most successful it is probable that means will be taken within the near future to insure a greater production of the shell fish which are quite popular in the New England States, and which are always in demand.—Lynn Item.

May 18.

OFF EASTERN POINT.

J. W. Merchant Caught Another Good Sized Halibut.

Mr. J. W. Merchant, the well known Lanesville shore fisherman, caught a 120 pound halibut off Eastern Point this forenoon. A few weeks ago he caught a halibut of about the same size, in the same spot. These kind of fish are not too common along shore here.

May 18.

GOOD FARES 'AT NEWPORT.

Five Seiners Made Market There This Morning.

SCH. ALERT HAS MAIDEN TRIP.

Sch. Monitor Lands Her Second Trip in Three Days.

Evidently there is quite a little body to the mackerel off Cox's Ledge. Following up the trips of Wednesday and yesterday, there are five more trips of large fresh ones at Newport today. The fish are selling at 20 cents each, and the following vessels had arrived up to 10 o'clock:

Sch. Ellen F. Gleason, 77 barrels large fresh mackerel.

Sch. William H. Cross, Capt. Solomon A. Rowe, 16 barrels large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Alert, Capt. John F. Vautier, 130 barrels large fresh mackerel.

A despatch to the Times from its Newport correspondent also states that beside these arrivals, schs. Kentucky and Monitor are bound in with trips.

This is the maiden trip for the new sch. Alert. It looks as though Capt. Vautier intends to stay there instead of going to the Cape Shore. Last year he did the same way and made a big spring's work, getting a net stock of \$7700.

When sch. Monitor arrives, this will be her second trip in three days. Capt. Lyle is a well known East Gloucester resident and his many friends are delighted to see him striking such a good gait. It is reported that on her trip Wednesday, the Monitor stocked in the neighborhood of \$3000.

A despatch to the Times states that sch. Kentucky, Capt. Joseph Smith, arrived with 140 barrels of large fresh mackerel and sch. Monitor, Capt. Joseph A. Lyle, arrived with 70 barrels large fresh mackerel.

The sloop Defender arrived at New York yesterday afternoon with 400 large fresh mackerel which sold at 35 cents apiece.

The fares of schs. Patricia, Diana and Romance sold to Fred Bradley at \$9 per barrel.

Two netters are at New York this morning sch. F. W. Homans, with 300 large fresh mackerel and sch. Louise with 400 large fresh mackerel. Sales at 35 cents each.

May 18

Herring Plentiful at Lingan.

Herring are reported exceedingly plentiful at Lingan, N. S., the water being fairly alive with them, so much so that small boys are amusing themselves spearing them.

Maiden Trip.

The slick looking new sch. Terra Nova of Boston, Capt. John Hickey, which has been rigged and fitted throughout for sea at this port, by S. V. Colby & Son, will sail today on her maiden trip, Cape Shore seining. Capt. Hickey is one of the head liners of the winter haddocking fleet and is not new to seining and his friends hope for him the fullest measure of success in his new craft.

May 18.

MADE BIG RECORD.

Sch. Seaconnet Stocked \$18,000 Winter Market Fishing.

Crew Profit to the Extent of \$700 to a Man.

The little sch. Seaconnet, Capt. Enos Nickerson, which came down here from Boston about a week ago to fit for mackerel seining and sailed for the Cape Shore, has made an excellent record the past winter which will be hard to excel and which won for Capt. Nickerson the honor of being high line of the market fishing fleet the past winter.

The craft marketed her fares at T wharf, Boston, and sometimes made four and five trips in a week, rolling up the splendid stock of \$18,000, while the crew each shared almost \$700 apiece for their season's work, a remarkable record certainly.

Capt. Nickerson was, up to a few years ago, one of the most capable fishermen sailing from this port and since he has been skipper has kept up that good record. He is a hustler who deserves all of his success, and his host of friends hope it will continue.

DAILY TIMES FISH BUREAU.

Today's Arrivals and Receipts.

- Sch. Evelyn L. Smith, via Boston, 28,000 lbs. fresh fish.
- Sch. E. C. Hussey, Rips, 40,000 lbs. salt cod.
- Sch. Grace Darling, Boston, to fit for Rips.
- Sch. Rita A. Viator, via Boston, 25,000 lbs. fresh cod.
- Sch. Rapidan, via Boston.
- Sch. Mary A. Gleason, via Boston, 20,000 lbs. fresh fish.
- Sch. Mary E. Cooney, via Boston.

Today's Fish Market.

These prices are based on the last known sales.

Spilting prices of fresh fish—Large Eastern cod, \$1.75; medium do., \$1.25; large Western cod, \$2.12 1-2; medium do., \$1.50; haddock, 85 cts.; cusk, \$1.25; hake, 80 cts.; pollock, 65 cts.

Bank halibut, 6 cts. per lb. for white and 4 cts. for gray.

Salt handline Georges codfish, \$4.50 per ewt. for large, \$3.50 for medium.

Salt Trawl Georges codfish, \$4.50 for large \$3.50 for medium.

Salt hake, \$1.00.

Salt haddock, \$1.50.

Salt cusk, \$2.00.

Large salt "drift" Georges codfish, \$4.00; medium do., \$3.00; snappers, \$1.75.

Salt trawl bank codfish, \$3.50 for large, \$2.75 for medium, snappers \$1.50.

Boston.

- Sch. Catherine D. Enos, 7000 haddock, 20,000 cod.
- Sch. Maud M. Silva, 12,000 haddock, 2000 cod, 1000 hake.
- Sch. Julia Costa, 10,000 haddock, 9000 cod.
- Sch. James and Esther, 35,000 cod.
- Sch. Teresa and Alice, 7000 haddock, 8000 cod.
- Sch. Flavilla, 9000 haddock, 2000 cod, 1000 hake.
- Sch. Mary A. Gleason, 20,000 cod.
- Haddock, \$2.50; large cod, \$2.50; market cod, \$1.50; hake, \$.75.
- Schs. Catherine D. Enos, James and Esther and Mary A. Gleason will go to Gloucester.

Fishing Fleet Movements.

Schs. Henry M. Stanley, Maxine Elliott and Arkona arrived at North Sydney, C. B., on Monday and schs. Madonna, Juno and Georgie Campbell were here on Sunday.

May 19.

SEINER AT NEW YORK.

Sch. Priscilla Smith Has 25 Barrels Large Mackerel.

Big Fleet of 30 Netters There with Small Trips.

A special to the Times this noon states that sch. Priscilla Smith, Capt. William J. Corkum, of this port, arrived at Fulton Market dock, New York, with 25 barrels of fresh mackerel.

A despatch to the Times from its Newport correspondent this forenoon states that sch. J. W. Bradley, Capt. William Foley, has arrived there with 30 barrels of large mackerel.

The following netters are at Fulton Market, New York, this morning:

Steamer Joppaite, 200 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Gracie Smith, 700 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Olive May, 700 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Arrow, 400 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Freedom, 100 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Herkins, 100 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Leone, 400 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. N. A. Rowe, 300 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Sabine, 150 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Nakomis, 400 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Willie, 300 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Clara C., 100 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Laura Gamage, 300 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. May Hewitt, 200 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Winnie Kane, 200 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Robert C. Harris, 900 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Estelle S. Nunan, 400 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Lafayette, 900 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Sennett, 60 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Georgianna, 480 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Priscilla, 300 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Hester, 300 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Mildred, 60 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Louis E., 120 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Marguerite, 50 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Reliance, 120 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Venus, 230 large fresh mackerel.

Steamer Princess, 300 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Laura Reed, 200 large fresh mackerel.

Sch. Mabel Bryson, 100 large fresh mackerel.

Quite a number of seiners will get away today, among them schs. Patrician, A. M. Nicholson, Harry H. Nickerson, Ralph L. Hall, Emma W. Brown and Terra Nova. They will be about the last of the fleet to go to the Cape Shore.

Up to date about 6000 barrels of fresh mackerel have been landed this year, against 10,000 barrels at this time last year.

Sch. Emma W. Brown of Boston has fitted for seining under command of Capt. Charles Bowers of this city.

Capt. James McDonald is fitting sch. Hat-tie L. Trask for seining.

Schs. Tecumseh and Kineo were at Edgartown on Wednesday and baited with alewives and squid at \$1.50 per barrel.

Sch. Susan and Mary, bound mackereling put into Halifax yesterday for ice.

Reports from the skippers of the seiners who have been at Newport recently with fares are to the effect that there appears to be quite a body of fish off Cox's ledge and vicinity.

113

May 19.

New England's Daring Fishermen.

Every Newfoundlander has the profoundest admiration for these Yankee fishermen,—first, because of pride of class, which makes sailor-men brothers the world over; then, because of the respect for seafaring courage which their exploits evoke in a people themselves renowned for their nautical prowess; and, finally, because of actual kinship, great numbers of the fisherfolk who crew these American fishboats being natives of this "Terranovan isle."

The New England fishing fleet comprises about 400 vessels, crewed by some 6,000 men, and probably one-fourth are New Foundlanders, and as many more Nova Scotians, and the remainder Scandinavians, Portuguese, French and native-born Americans. Probably none, among all those who go down to the sea in ships, follow an occupation so surcharged with hardship and peril, so nerve-racking and strength-snapping, so pregnant with disaster and death, as that in which those men are engaged. The great majority of the fleet operate along the Atlantic seaboard, from the Delaware capes, where they first strike the elusive mackerel, northward past "the dreaded shoals of Georges," with its cusk, hake and haddock, to the famous Grand Banks of Newfoundland the home of the lordly cod. This is an ocean area every mile of which is crossed by steamers great and small,—liners, freighters, trampers and vagabonds, inbound and outbound, on all kinds of courses.

The fishing grounds are often veiled in fogs or swept by storms, during which conditions, or in the gloom of night, collisions are frequent and the racing, towering monsters run down and shatter with their steel clad prows the midget fishing smacks which may lie across their road. Farther north the peril of iceberg and floe is encountered by the schooners which work their way up toward Labrador and then along to distant Greenland for fares of the tasty halibut, which they wrest by sheer luck and daring from the frigid polar seas, facing the menace of an arctic nip amid the floes or a stroke from a ponderous berg as it steals silently past on the breast of the south moving current.—From "From New England's Deep-Sea Fishing Interest," by P. T. McGrath, in the American Monthly Review of Reviews for May.

May 19.

MORE ABOUT BAIT ACT.

St. John's Herald Touches Up Contemporary On It.

In speaking of its contemporary and the bait act, the St. John's, N. F., Herald says:

"The Daily News contends that there is no similarity between the bait act which we enforced against the French and the exclusion act] which we have just passed against the Americans, because the former was not operative upon the treaty coast and the latter is.

"But our m. c. should see that this is merely a question of degree, and must have forgotten, moreover, that even if the bait act did not operate [there, a regulation did which hit our people harder—that which compelled our fishermen to bait French vessels for not more than one dollar a barrel, while American, Canadian and local vessels, the willing to pay double that figure, had to wait idly by till the Frenchmen were satisfied.

"As for the consistency of the present government's action in the premises it is hardly needful for us to discuss that with a writer who ten years ago wrote editorials advising our people to 'take by the ears and throw into the sea' the first Frenchman who interfered with them, and who now terms a legislative enactment "a declaration of war against the United States."