

48.—NEW ENGLAND FISHERIES IN JUNE, 1885.

By W. A. WILCOX.

During the past month about all of the vessels following the fisheries have been engaged in their work, and a number of new vessels have been added to the fleets. The location of the fishing vessels at the end of the month was as follows :

316 sail, mackerel, scattered from No Man's Land, on the southwest, along the New England shore and George's Bank ; 50 sail of the fleet off the Nova Scotia shore as far east as Canso.

133 sail, cod and halibut, on Grand Banks, longitude 49° to $54^{\circ} 25'$, latitude $43^{\circ} 15'$ to $46^{\circ} 35'$.

45 sail, cod and halibut, on Western Banks, longitude $59^{\circ} 25'$ to $62^{\circ} 30'$, latitude $42^{\circ} 55'$ to $44^{\circ} 30'$.

92 sail, cod and halibut, on Banquereau, longitude $57^{\circ} 12'$ to 60° , latitude 44° to 45° .

175 sail, cod and halibut, on Brown's and George's Banks, in longitude $65^{\circ} 30'$ to 69° , latitude 41° to 43° .

15 sail, codfish, off the Nova Scotia shore, in latitude 43° to $43^{\circ} 25'$, longitude 65° .

225 sail, ground fishing, off the eastern shore of New England.

11 sail, halibut, off the coast of Greenland and Iceland.

6 steamers, taking whales off the New England coast.

Total, 1,012 sail, 6 steamers.

The general result of the work of the month has not been satisfactory or profitable. Codfish have been abundant on George's and Brown's Banks, over half the total receipts of the month having been from there, mostly from the latter. During the latter part of the month, from want of good bait, the catch was much reduced. The catch of halibut on these banks has continued light.

On the Grand Banks fish have been reported scarce. On June 7 and 8 a severe gale badly damaged a number of vessels, sending them into St. John's, Newfoundland, for repairs, but no vessels or lives have been reported lost from the New England fleet. On the Western Banks codfish have been abundant and vessels arrived home with full fares. The shore fleet in Massachusetts Bay have had a fair catch ; but almost continual fog has much interfered with the catch to the eastward, and vessels from there have come in with small fares. Mackerel, lately so abundant, have been found only in small lots of from two to five barrels, although vessels have constantly cruised for them from Block Island and George's Bank to the Bay of Fundy. Many vessels are returning from the month's work empty, and others come back with

small fares of mostly medium-sized fish. During the latter part of the month a small fleet secured good fares in Chedabucto Bay, Nova Scotia. The fish were mostly of good medium size, with a few large fish among them.

The first mackerel seen about Prince Edward Island this year were a few of small size and poor quality, taken by the island fishermen during the last week in June.

The close of this month ends the weir fishing for mackerel both on the Massachusetts and Nova Scotia shores. The catch by weirs has been very small in both sections, being the lightest for years at Sandy Point, Cape Cod. Mackerel in their migrations northward seem to have avoided their former usual route near shore.

Trap and net-fishing near shore have taken few fish of any kind, scarcely any squid. Herring have been seen in great numbers off shore, but only a small amount has been taken in traps. The scarcity of herring and other fish used for bait is particularly noticeable, being felt along the entire New England coast and also in the provinces, the only places that reported plenty of herring being the Magdalen Islands and Prince Edward Island.

The following are newspaper clippings in regard to Gloucester vessels:

ICELAND FISHING.—A letter from Isafjord, Iceland, says that the schooner *Carrier Dove* was the first vessel to arrive at the fishing grounds. She made the passage in twenty-three days from Liverpool, N. S. She left Gloucester April 15. The snow and ice cover the mountains, and the snow is 25 feet on a level. The harbor is entirely frozen over, and the entire coast is surrounded by heavy ice. Reports say it has been the hardest winter ever known in Iceland. The cattle all perished and the fish are reported scarce.—*June 15, 1885.*

GLOUCESTER VESSELS DAMAGED IN A STORM AT GRAND BANKS.—The recent storm at Grand Banks was one of the worst known for forty years, and many Gloucester vessels fishing there have sought the harbor on the coast of Newfoundland to repair damages and make good the losses sustained by the gale. Those already reported are as follows: At St. John's, the schooner *Henry Wilson*, Captain McKinney, was overtaken by the storm in latitude $44^{\circ} 30'$, longitude $51^{\circ} 21'$, and parted her cable, losing about 40 fathoms, with her anchor and all of her fishing trawls. She also sprung a leak, her bulwarks were stove, and everything movable, except her dories, was swept from her decks by the heavy seas, which made a clean breach over her, including about \$100 worth of oil. She has been on the banks about eight weeks, and has about 1,200 quintals of fish. The crew are safe and well. Captain McKinney reports having spoken a Maine schooner which had lost five dories, and had her jibs blown away. The *Elizabeth Foster*, of Maine, was also spoken, and she reports having seen a schooner lying near her

during the storm, which suddenly disappeared, and, it is thought, foundered. The Henry Wilson, during her passage into St. John's, reports having passed through a quantity of wreckage, consisting of planks, dories, &c., and saw a St. Peter's vessel with her bow stove in and sails blown away. The Henry Wilson, while entering the harbor, struck on the rocks in the Narrows, where she remained fast for about two hours. She sustained but little damage, and has been docked for repairs. The schooner J. H. Higgins, Captain Stevens, of this port, from Flemish Cap, has also arrived at St. John's for repairs. The gale struck her while at anchor in latitude 46° 40', longitude 45° 10'. She went adrift and lost all her fishing gear. Three of her dories were stove and her foresail was split. She left here April 6 and had 130,000 pounds of codfish and 6,000 of fitched halibut. The crew are all well. The schooners Spencer F. Baird and H. A. Duncan, both of this port, are at St. John's with loss of fishing gear, the former with loss of anchor and six hundred hooks, and had her jib-boom carried away, and the latter had her decks swept and foresail split. A number of Beverly vessels are at St. John's, more or less damaged by the gale, among them being the Sarah B. Putnam, Captain Larkin, and the D. A. Wilson, Captain Foster. The gale struck the former in latitude 45°, longitude 52°. Her bulwarks were stove and her decks swept, but fortunately without much loss. She sailed from Beverly April 14, and has about five hundred quintals of fish. The crew are all well. The D. A. Wilson had a narrow escape from colliding with a French bark, which broke adrift, and Captain Foster only saved the schooner from foundering by cutting her cable. She had her decks swept by a heavy sea and lost four dories and had her bulwarks badly stove. She will repair and refit and return to the Banks. A great deal of apprehension is felt by owners here for the remainder of the large fleet of fishermen from this port not yet heard from, but it is hoped that the above disasters will cover the losses; yet the large quantities of floats seen upon the Banks causes much anxiety for the rest of the fleet.—*June 23, 1885.*

Receipts of fish at Gloucester, Mass., June, 1885.

From—	Fares.	Codfish.	Halibut.	Pollock.	Hake.	Cusk.	Mackerel.
		<i>Pounds.</i>	<i>Pounds.</i>	<i>Pounds.</i>	<i>Pounds.</i>	<i>Pounds.</i>	<i>Barrels.</i>
Brown's Bank.....	152	4,469,000	73,900	.....	.....	.....	.....
George's Bank.....	70	1,297,000	78,500	.....	40,300	32,000	.....
Western Banks.....	19	1,351,000	52,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
New England Shore	45	709,700	4,300	109,000	73,500	71,500	.....
Grand Banks.....	80	100,000	923,300	.....	.....	.....	.....
N S Cape Shore.....	4	285,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Banquereau.....	2	30,000	65,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Bay of Fundy.....	1	1,500	7,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Mackerel trips.....	76	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	6,626
Total.....	899	8,243,200	1,204,000	109,000	113,800	108,500	6,626