

94.—EELS AND EELPOTS IN NORWAY.*

Every one who has carried on eel-fisheries with eelpots knows that he must get up early in the morning to take up the eelpots, as otherwise the eels slip out again. In order to prevent this, John Knudsen placed in the upper side of the eelpot a movable door or lid, which opens inside by the least pressure of the eel against it, and closes again by its own weight after the eel has passed through the opening. This lid is made of the same material as the eelpot, namely, of thin willow branches, and the necessary weight is given to it by pieces of lead rolled round the branches. The principle is not new, but is applied in different kinds of traps used for catching land animals. Among fishing apparatus used in the water it is applied in DeCaux's lobster-trap.

Comparative experiments were made near Tysnæs last summer in order to test Knudsen's eelpot and the one generally employed. The two kinds of eelpots were placed side by side and supplied with the same kind of bait. During one of these experiments the eelpots were left untouched for two days, and when taken up Knudsen's eelpot contained thirty-seven eels, while the other was empty. One of the advantages of Knudsen's eelpot is this, that it will catch eels of any size, while large eels do not go into the common eelpots, because the branches composing the neck are pretty close together, making it difficult for a good-sized eel to squeeze through. Large eels, therefore, keep out of these eelpots. Knudsen has received a premium of 50 crowns [\$13.40] for the model of his eelpot from the Society for the Promotion of the Norwegian Fisheries, so that it became the property of this society.

Of late years small quantities of salted eels have been shipped from Norway to Hamburg, where they are smoked. Before the eels are salted, as much as possible of the slime adhering to them should be removed. The eels are dropped alive into a salt-brine, where they die at once. They are opened from the head to the vent, washed in seawater, and finally drawn through the hands or through a roll of bast, which retains the slime. Finally they are salted down in barrels. A somewhat larger quantity of salt is used than in salting other fish. If they are to be kept for any length of time, they should, after from eight to fourteen days, be relaid in one-eighth barrel of salt, and some new brine should be added.

Eel-fisheries are not carried on in Norway to any great extent. During the sprat-fisheries eels are often found in large masses outside the nets. Even if the fishermen did not eat them, or sold them fresh, they might secure some little additional income by salting them. When salted and properly treated, they are always sure to find a market.

* "Johan Knudsen Haraldseidvaags Aaleteine." From *Norsk Fiskeritidende*, vol. iv, No. 2, Bergen, April, 1885, p. 154. Translated from the Danish by HERMAN JACOBSON.