

from George's Bank, landing 3,476,000 pounds of salt cod and 89,130 pounds of fresh halibut; twenty-three arrivals from Western Bank, landing 1,888,000 pounds of salt cod and 31,000 pounds of fresh halibut. There were 185,000 pounds of salt cod landed from Cape North; 160,000 pounds of salt cod and 18,000 pounds of salt halibut from Flemish Cap; 1,099,000 pounds of shore fish, being mixed half cod and half hake and cusk; 575,800 pounds of fresh halibut, caught on the Banks; and 203,000 pounds of pollock, caught with seines off Chatham.

**MACKEREL.**—The mackerel landed during June is as follows: Caught on the New England coast, 12,658 barrels; caught on the Nova Scotia coast with seines, 2,000 barrels. Four arrivals from the Nova Scotia coast brought 136,000 pounds of salt cod and 60,000 pounds of haddock. From the Nova Scotia coast there have been imported to Boston 23,000 barrels of salt mackerel, most of this amount having been caught in weirs.

GLOUCESTER, MASS., *July 2, 1884.*

### 136.—CATCHING ALEWIVES WITH HOOKS BAITED WITH EELS.

By A. R. CRITTENDEN.

[From a letter to Prof. S. F. Baird.\*]

While crossing the bridge over the Medomak River at Waldoboro', Me., this forenoon, I noticed on the bank of the river below some twenty or more boys fishing with rod and line, and evidently having good luck, as about every second some one drew out a fish. The fish looked like alewives, but as I had never known them to be taken with baited hooks I came to the conclusion that they were large smelts. On going down to the bank and investigating I found them to be indeed alewives, and I found the bait the boys were using to be live eels, from two and a half to three inches long, which they hooked in the center of the body, leaving them to wriggle at will. In some cases the hook would hardly strike the water before an alewife would be fast to it. One boy had taken over a hundred, and the others had various stocks. I asked the boys how they learned that they could catch them with eels, and all the answer I gained was that, "the boys told them they could." I found that the river was alive with alewives. Men were taking them with dip nets at the fish-way, in the dam just above the bridge.

I observed that hundreds of young eels were making their way up the fish-way, and when an alewife broke water among them they scattered as though frightened. Possibly this fact led the boys to think they were eating the eels, and were thus induced to try them for bait. The alewives were decidedly frisky, some of them at times jumping several

\* This letter having been referred to Hon. Theodore Lyman, he states "that on Cape Cod alewives are often taken with shrimp bait or with artificial fly."—EDITOR.

inches cut of the water, whether to catch gnats or for mere sport I am unable to say. I remarked to one of the men dipping them that he was taking a good fare, and he replied that what I now saw was not a "flea bite" to what was taken last year, when a man and his son dipped 70,000 from that very place in a single day, he being "high liner" for 1883. This method of taking alewives with eels was entirely new to me, and thinking possibly it might also be so to you I venture to address you in relation to it.

KNOX HOTEL, THOMASTON, ME., *May 10, 1884.*

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**137.—ON THE CULTIVATION OF SOFT-SHELL CRABS.**

**By CHARLES C. LESLIE.**

In our harbor and along our coast are found millions of the common blue sea-crab, and I have for the past two years been considering why it is that, with the number that are to be found here, we cannot get a supply of soft-shell crabs. The same crabs are found along the coast of Maryland and other States adjacent, and yet I have hunted and failed to find many. At one time I found three and at another time four. But in no instance have I found a half dozen, even after hunting a whole day.

I would be greatly obliged to you if you would kindly tell me if there is any artificial way by which I could secure a supply.

CHARLESTON, S. C., *April 24, 1884.*

**REPLY BY PROFESSOR BAIRD.**

If you have the same blue crab (which I presume to be the case) as the one furnishing the "soft-shells" of the Chesapeake Bay, there is no reason why you should not find them in this condition, which is merely their state after the old shell has been thrown off and the new one is being formed.

You might try the experiment of penning up the crabs in a shoal pond, fed by the tide, into which small fish and other marine refuse can be brought by the tide through a grating.

By taking flat stones, bundles of brush, or other substances of a similar character, and laying them over the bottom, you furnish a refuge under which the crabs can crawl. By lifting up these branches from time to time you can find the crabs under them.

This process has, I believe, been actually made the subject of a patent, but the inventor is dead; and the patent, probably, has long since run out.

Of course the defenceless crabs are readily devoured by their stronger relations, and it is therefore advisable to keep them where they can be properly protected from such destruction.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *April 26, 1884.*