

## 23.—NEW ENGLAND FISHERIES IN FEBRUARY, 1886.

By W. A. WILCOX.

During the first week in February the weather was unfavorable for fishing, yet the few arrivals brought good fares. During the week the schooner *Carrie D. Allen*, of Provincetown, the only three-masted vessel in the mackerel fisheries, sailed for Lisbon, Portugal, having been sold to parties there to engage in the Grand Banks cod fisheries. She took out 2,950 quintals of codfish, 2,000 quintals of which came from the Provinces, and 950 quintals were bought at Provincetown.

The codfish fleet fishing in Ipswich Bay number 17 sail of gill-netters and 30 sail of trawlers; and the catch has been of good size, averaging 23 pounds each; one-third being female fish mostly with spawn. The amount of codfish landed at Rockport and Portsmouth during the first week by 17 sail of netters was 204,000 pounds; by 30 sail of trawlers, 600,000 pounds. A much smaller number are at present using gill-nets, on account of the damage and losses by the severe storms of late, but those that are using them are doing well. Cod and haddock are abundant on George's Bank. All vessels from there bring in also a considerable amount of halibut. A large body of fine codfish is also found in Ipswich Bay. A large fleet, mostly from Gloucester, has been engaged in these fisheries, and the vessels have secured good fares quickly and returned.

On February 11, fifty-two sail, mostly from George's, arrived at Boston with over 2,000,000 pounds of fresh cod and haddock. Seldom, if ever, had as much fresh ground-fish arrived during 24 hours. With the large receipts, prices fell from \$2.50 to 60 cents per 100. Twenty-four sail also arrived at Gloucester from the same fishing-grounds, landing 700,000 pounds of salt codfish. The heaviest rain-storm for years came about the middle of the month, over 6 inches falling during 48 hours. During the storm the schooner *Lizzie H. Haskell*, of Gloucester, returning from a haddock trip on George's, went ashore on Plum Island and soon went to pieces. The schooner *Mary E. McDonald*, of the same port, returning from Fortune Bay with a cargo of frozen herring, went ashore at Port Jolly, N. S., and soon filled and went to pieces. With the many fishing vessels lost, it is seldom that one is reported as lost by fire; but the record for this month shows one such, the schooner *Anna D.* She sailed from Gloucester on February 17, the next day arrived on George's, and while the crew were busy baiting their trawls a fire broke out from the fore-castle. As the crew were unable to handle it, they soon took to their boats and were picked up by the schooner *Clytie*, which was fishing near them.

The month closed with little satisfaction to the producers or dealers.

Fish have been plentiful, too much so, the demand being only moderate and prices of all kinds of fish being too low for any profit.

The mackerel fleet are making ready for the season's work, while the almost universal desire is that no mackerel be caught before June, thereby protecting the spawning fish and giving time for the old stock to be worked off and the new to improve in quality; yet, if no prohibitory law is passed, probably nearly as many vessels will engage in the early southern catch as of late years.

The leading receipts at Gloucester during the month as compared with the corresponding month last year show a large increase, being as follows:

| Years.    | Fares. | Cod.                        | Halibut.                  | Haddock.                  |
|-----------|--------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1885..... | 77     | <i>Pounds.</i><br>1,093,900 | <i>Pounds.</i><br>310,700 | <i>Pounds.</i><br>216,000 |
| 1886..... | 146    | 2,143,000                   | 927,800                   | 146,000                   |

*Receipts of fish at Gloucester, Mass., in February, 1886.*

| From—                           | Fares. | Codfish.       | Halibut.       | Haddock.       | Frozen herring. |
|---------------------------------|--------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
|                                 |        | <i>Pounds.</i> | <i>Pounds.</i> | <i>Pounds.</i> | <i>Number.</i>  |
| George's Bank .....             | 52     | 1,365,000      | 134,800        | 146,000        | .....           |
| Brown's Bank .....              | 6      | 270,000        | 24,000         | .....          | .....           |
| La Have Bank .....              | 5      | 45,000         | 58,000         | .....          | .....           |
| Grand Banks .....               | 21     | .....          | 711,000        | .....          | .....           |
| Ipswich Bay, trawl .....        | 23     | 264,000        | .....          | .....          | .....           |
| Ipswich Bay, nets .....         | 16     | 190,000        | .....          | .....          | .....           |
| Fortune Bay, Newfoundland ..... | 11     | .....          | .....          | .....          | 4,810,000       |
| Bay of Fundy .....              | 12     | .....          | .....          | .....          | 8,097,000       |
| Total.....                      | 146    | 2,143,000      | 927,800        | 146,000        | 7,907,000       |

**24.—A GOOD FISHING GROUND IN THE SOUTH INDIAN OCEAN.**

**By CHARLES ENDICOTT.**

Several years ago I was in a ship bound to China, and one morning we made St. Paul Island, in the South Indian Ocean [latitude 38° 43' S., longitude 77° 38' E.]. We sent a boat in and loaded it with fish of a superior quality in a very short time. Here the water is perfectly alive with them. In hauling up one a thousand would follow it to the surface; and I think a vessel could be loaded with them in a very short time, and make the voyage in from six to seven months. In view of the many disasters to our fishermen and the terrible loss of life off the North American coast, I suggest this as a new fishing ground. The suffering and exposure would be much mitigated, and the general dangers would be nothing in comparison to those of the Grand Banks. The time to start would be in the autumn, as in our winter months they would find it summer there and pleasant weather.

SALEM, MASS., December 11, 1885.