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53.—NEW ENGLAND FISHERIES IN SEPTEMBER, 1886.

By W. A. WILCOX.

Mackerel have continued scarce both off the United States and provincial shores. The first of the month found a large portion of the mackerel vessels from the United States in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. Much of the time high winds and rough weather detained them in harbors. Two vessels belonging at Portland, Me., in making Malpeque, Prince Edward Island, in stormy weather, collided and became a total loss; the crews were saved. The fleet received much damage and lost many seine boats. A number of vessels that had secured good fares arrived home and immediately returned, meeting with others coming away with few if any fish.

Among the arrivals during the month are the following from voyages of from one to two months or more spent in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence:

| Name. | Home port. | Barrels of mackerel. |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Schooner Fannie L. Nye | Boston | 80 |
| Schooner Roulette | Philadelphia, Pa. | None. |
| Schooner Lucy W. Dyer | Portland, Me. | None. |
| Schooner William H. Jordan | Gloucester, Mass. | 40 |
| Schooner Canopus (eight weeks) |do | 30 |
| Schooner Henry Friend | Swan's Island, Me. | 40 |
| Schooner E. B. Nickerson | Boothbay, Me. | 50 |
| Schooner Nathan Cleaves | Wellfleet, Mass. | 77 |
| Schooner Carrie G. Crosby |do | 10 |
| Schooner Asa H. Pervore |do | 75 |
| Schooner Edward Rich |do | 10 |
| Schooner Pleiades |do | 40 |
| Schooner Millie Washburn | Provincetown, Mass. | 55 |

This list could be largely extended, but will suffice as showing the scarcity of mackerel during the month. The total amount landed in sea-packed barrels at New England ports from all the fishing grounds was only 21,736 barrels, against 58,196 barrels in September, 1885. Owing to the scarcity and poor prospects of a catch, the market has held firm, and prices have slowly advanced from \$12 a barrel on the first of the month to \$14 at the close, for fish sea-packed. Inspected fish were selling for \$18 to \$22 for No. 1's, \$12 to \$13 for No. 2's, and \$10.50 for No. 3's. Fish caught off the New England shore brought an advance over prices named, which are for mackerel caught in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence.

Shore herring appeared off Wood Island, Maine, on September 15, about the usual time that they are found there. The fishermen have

had a fair catch, and remained there during the month. The herring fleet numbered one hundred and fifty sail, mostly small vessels, averaging three men and six nets each, vessels having from three to twelve nets according to size and number of crew. The average catch has been 100 barrels to a vessel, or total to September 30, 15,000 barrels. The fish have remained off Wood Island much longer than usual. At the close of the month fishermen were watching for them off Cape Ann, but with the exception of a few scattering fish none had been caught. On September 22 and 23, 1885, 1,800 barrels of shore herring were taken in Gloucester Harbor. A few days more will probably find the fish and fleet around the shores of Cape Ann. The herring are of good size and quality and full of roe.

Codfish, halibut, and mackerel, the leading salt-water food-fish, all show a large decrease in receipts as compared with September, 1885. Receipts of codfish at Gloucester from George's and Brown's Banks show a falling off of 1,095,000 pounds; this is accounted for from vessels having fished more on Western Bank, where fish and squid were plentiful, vessels securing good fares landing 1,511,000 pounds, against none from there during September, 1885. The fish from the latter bank were of larger size and better quality than for a number of years.

The total receipts of cod at Gloucester during the month were 2,800,000 pounds less than for the corresponding month last year. The extreme low prices have prevented any cargoes coming in foreign bottoms, against seven cargoes of over 2,000,000 pounds in September, 1885. Off the New England coast codfish have been more abundant than of late years. The shore catch are considered better fish and bring higher prices than those from any other fishing grounds except George's Bank. Some extra large fish were found quite near the coast; one weighing 65 pounds was taken only 3 miles from Eastern Point light, Gloucester Harbor, by Capt. Jewett Wilcox, of Chicago, a summer visitor.

The Grand Banks codfish fleet have nearly all returned to home ports, having secured full fares and met with no serious losses.

Bait has been plentiful on the fishing banks. On Western Bank squid have been very abundant, vessels taking all they wanted, often leaving port without any bait, depending entirely on catching plenty on the fishing grounds, in which they were not disappointed. Weirs and traps at nearly all points located between New Castle, N. H., and Maine ports as far as Southwest Harbor, have at all times had an abundance of herring bait. At Cape Cod the weirs have had a light catch of any kind of fish during most of the month. The traps in Gloucester Harbor have taken but few herring or mackerel.

Halibut have continued scarce. The receipts show a large decrease from those of the corresponding month last year. Vessels that went to Iceland for halibut are returning with only partial fares, caused more from having had unfavorable weather for fishing than from a scarcity of fish.

Hake, haddock, and cusk have been found fairly abundant, the catch off the eastern coast having been an average one.

Trade has improved during the month, large quantities of fish being daily distributed and going into immediate consumption. With the exception of mackerel, prices have ruled very low on all the leading varieties.

Mackerel landed by the New England fleet, in sea-packed barrels, at all ports.

| Time. | 1883. | 1884. | 1885. | 1886. |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| Up to September | 91,209 | 221,440 | 223,152 | 37,803 |
| September 1 to 8..... | 10,004 | 42,319 | 20,434 | 5,502 |
| September 9 to 15..... | 13,193 | 27,331 | 6,435 | 5,507 |
| September 16 to 22..... | 13,566 | 23,008 | 9,235 | 3,267 |
| September 23 to 30..... | 18,074 | 34,327 | 13,072 | 2,460 |
| Total to October..... | 147,036 | 354,025 | 281,348 | 59,030 |

Number and location of fishing vessels from New England ports on September 30, 1886.

| Location. | Object. | No. of sail. |
|---|------------------|--------------|
| Grand Banks | Codfish | 25 |
| Grand Banks | Halibut..... | 20 |
| Danquereau | do | 10 |
| East of Sable Island | do | 10 |
| Between George's and Brown's Banks | do | 15 |
| George's and Brown's Banks | Codfish | 195 |
| Sable Island Bank | do | 40 |
| Off the New England coast | Ground fish..... | 250 |
| On the way home from trips to Iceland | Halibut..... | 2 |
| Gulf of Saint Lawrence | Mackerel | 90 |
| Off the New England coast | do | 125 |
| Total | | 782 |

Receipts of fish at Gloucester, Mass., in September, 1886.

| From— | Fares. | Salt cod-fish. | Fresh halibut. | Salt hake. | Salt had-dock. | Salt pol-lock. | Salt cusk. | Mack-erel. | Her-ring. | Fresh sword-fish. |
|--------------------------------|--------|----------------|----------------|------------|----------------|----------------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| | | Lbs. | Lbs. | Lbs. | Lbs. | Lbs. | Lbs. | Bbls. | Bbls. | Lbs. |
| George's Bank..... | 58 | 1,023,000 | 148,560 | | | | 12,000 | | | |
| Brown's Bank..... | 34 | 1,159,000 | 3,150 | | | | | | | |
| Grand Banks..... | 8 | 162,000 | 241,000 | | | | | | | |
| Iceland..... | 3 | | 800,000 | | | | | | | |
| Banquereau..... | 16 | 100,000 | 361,800 | | | | | | | |
| Jeffrey's Bank..... | 2 | | | | | 20,000 | | | | |
| Bay of Fundy..... | 4 | 74,000 | | | | | | | | |
| Nova Scotia, Cape shore..... | 1 | 45,000 | | | | | | | | |
| Western Bank..... | 30 | 1,511,000 | 2,900 | | | | | | | |
| La Have Bank..... | 4 | | 75,000 | | | | | | | |
| Cash's Bank..... | 1 | 15,000 | 15,000 | 4,000 | | | | | | |
| New England shore..... | 19 | 33,000 | | 60,000 | 56,000 | | | | | 6,000 |
| Do..... | 3 | | | | | | | | 518 | |
| Do..... | 9 | | | | | | | 482 | | |
| Greenland and Flemish Cap..... | 1 | 30,000 | 40,000 | | | | | | | |
| Gulf of Saint Lawrence..... | 30 | | | | | | | 8,983 | | |
| Total, September, 1886..... | 220 | 4,152,000 | 1,277,410 | 64,000 | 56,000 | 20,000 | 12,000 | 9,465 | 518 | 6,000 |
| Total, September, 1885..... | 353 | 6,952,000 | 2,375,000 | 41,000 | | 47,000 | | 26,580 | 3,185 | 12,600 |

September, 1886, additional from small shore boats: 38,000 pounds of hake; 12,000 pounds of cod.

GLoucester, Mass., October 14, 1886.