

ter, which is a cheaper, and at the same time a good article, is chiefly consumed by the masses.

The herring export trade has hitherto been pretty nearly concentrated in a few hands in Bergen, Stavanger, and Haugesund; but since the opening of the railway to the frontier, Christiania has begun to engross a large portion of the trade with Sweden.

The method of the capture of the herring is by means of drift-nets and seines or enclosing nets, called also, I believe, trawls. The drift-net boats are manned by a crew of four or five men each, and the usual practice is to carry in each boat 20 to 25 nets. In the northern fishing district there are sometimes only 15 to 18 nets to a boat. The nets are from 60 to 74 feet long, and have meshes measuring about an inch from knot to knot, or 10 to 12 squares to the foot. The depth of the net is between 100 and 150 meshes. Two sets of such nets, of three each, are fastened together, and are called a link. They are kept up by bouy ropes with cork floats, and are sunk by common stones attached to them, either right to the bottom or not, as circumstances require; they are placed out in the evening, and drawn in the morning, remaining all night in the water, drifting with the current.

As much as 40 cwt. of herring may be taken in a "link," and even as much as 20 to 24 cwt. in a single net. Day fishing is likewise practised when the herring are chased by the whale or cole-fish (*Gadus virens*.) A drift net boat has often several links in the water at one time, but in many cases one is found sufficient to load a boat. An ample reserve of nets is always necessary, for the entanglement and loss of tackle and gear is, at times, so considerable that masses of entangled nets are found, so large and compact that several persons can stand on them without sinking.

The drift nets are generally made of common hemp twisted double or triple and tanned with birch or oak bark. I should mention, before quitting this subject, that the average take of a drift net is about 1,000 fish. The seine or enclosing net was used in Norway as early as 1820, since which time it has been employed side by side with the drift net in the herring fishery.

A complete set is composed of three nets, viz:—one large one measuring 100 to 120 fathoms in length and 16 to 20 fathoms in depth; a lesser one of 80 to 100 fathoms long and 14 to 15 fathoms deep; and a still smaller one measuring only 35 to 40 fathoms by seven to nine fathoms in depth. A separate boat is required for each of these nets, (of which the largest must have a tonnage of 80 to 100 barrels,) besides smaller boats carrying a quantity of ropes, tarpaulins, grappels, landing nets, scoops, white painted boards, buoys, &c., and other requisites.—The gang numbers 25 to 30 men, and their complete equipment, with nets, boats, &c., as above described, costs between 1,500 and 2,000 dollars (£337 to £450.) The gang elect from among their number a "leader," upon whose activity and special knowledge depends the success of the seining. It is he who, from the deck of the lodging-boat (which always accompanies the fishermen,) gives the signal of the approach of the shoal, and decides when the operation is to commence, which he wholly directs. The method of using these nets is probably so well known in Scotland that it is unnecessary for me to describe it here; but I may remark that the quantity of fish a seine gang, such as I have described, can take, rarely exceeds 600 to 800 barrels in a day, without extra assistance.

Fishing with seines is more uncertain than with drift-nets, and it frequently happens that owing to stormy weather and other causes, seines catch nothing at all; but, on the other hand, they can be very successful, and there are instances of one single "look" or enclosure containing 20,000 to 30,000 barrels. This uncertainty, however, and the large capital required to fit out a seine gang, limits their use. The relative number of drift net and seine gangs that fished, this year, has already been stated in a preceding part of this Report.

The boats used in this fishery are one-masted open boats, carrying jib, fore and main-sail, and measuring about 30 feet by 10 feet; the depth of hold is from 3½ feet to 4 feet; they are chiefly built for sailing, but carry oars, and are made of fir or pine-wood. Their cost is about £27.

Numerous and animated controversies have taken place on the relative merits of the two modes of fishing, with a view to determine their influence on the future permanency of the fisheries, and on the ulterior quality of the herrings as a marketable article, but the