

"The Provincials had become highly alarmed at the expansion of this fishery and trade, jealous of its progress and clamorous at its endurance; they, therefore, of late years, have repeatedly memorialized the government in England, respecting the fisheries carried on by the Americans, while the whole body of Scottish adventurers, whose trade both in imports and exports, and control over the inhabitants, it curtailed, have turned out in full cry and joined the chorus of the colonial governments in a crusade against the encroachments of the infidels, the disbelievers in the divine authority of kings, or the rights of the provinces, and have pursued their objects so assiduously that, at their own expense, as I am informed from a respectable source, in the year 1807 or 8, they stationed a watchman in some favorable position near the Straits of Canso, to count the number of American vessels which passed those straits on this employment: who returned nine hundred and thirty-eight as the number actually ascertained by him to have passed, and doubtless many others, during the night or in stormy or thick weather, escaped his observation and some of these aggressors, have distinctly looked forward with gratification to a state of war, as a desirable occurrence, which would, by its existence, annul existing treaty stipulations, so injurious, as they contend, to their interests and those of the nation."

"The Coast and Labrador Fisheries are prosecuted in vessels of from 40 to 120 tons burthen, carrying a number of men, according to their respective sizes, in about the same proportion as the vessels on the Bank Fishery. They commence their voyages in May, and get on the fishing ground about the 1st of June, before which time bait cannot be obtained. This bait is furnished by a small species of fish called *capling*, which strike inshore at that time, and are followed by immense shoals of codfish which feed upon them. Each vessel selects her own fishing-ground, along the coast of the Bay of Chaleurs, the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Straits of Bellisle, the Coast of Labrador, even as far as Cumberland Island, and the entrance of Hudson's Bay, thus improving a fishing-ground reaching in extent from the 45th to the 68th degree of north latitude.

"In choosing their situation, the fishermen generally seek some sheltered and safe harbor, or cove, where they anchor in about six or seven fathoms water, unbend their sails, stow them below, and literally making themselves at home, dismantle and convert their vessels into habitations at least as durable as those of the ancient Scythians. They then cast a net over the stern of the vessel, in which a sufficient number of capling are soon caught to supply them with bait from day to day. Each vessel is furnished with four or five light boats, according to their size and number of men, each boat requiring two men. They leave the vessel early in the morning, and seek the best or sufficiently good spot for fishing, which is frequently found within a few rods of their vessels, and very rarely more than one or two miles distant from them, where they haul the fish as fast as they can pull their lines, and sometimes it is said the fish have been so abundant as to be gaff or scooped into the boats, without even a hook or line; and the fishermen also say that the codfish have been known to pursue the capling in such quantities, and with such voracity, as to run in large numbers quite out of water, on to the shores. The boats return to the vessels about nine o'clock in the morning, at breakfast, put their fish on board, salt and split them; and after having fished several days, by which time the salt has been sufficiently struck in the fish first caught, they carry them on shore and spread and dry them on the rocks or temporary flakes. This routine is followed every day, with the addition of attending to such as have been spread, and carrying on board and stowing away those that have become sufficiently cured, until the vessel is filled with dried fish, fit for an immediate market, which is generally the case by the middle or last of August, and with which she then proceeds immediately to Europe, or returns to the United States; and this fish, thus caught and cured, is esteemed the best that is brought to market, and for several years previous to that of 1808, was computed to furnish three fourth parts of all the dried fish exported from the United States."

The following statements to be found on page 219 of the work were furnished to Mr. Adams by a person, whom he qualifies as a very respectable Merchant, who dates his letter Boston, May 20th, 1815:

"My calculation is, that there were employed in the Bank, Labrador and Bay fisheries, the years above mentioned, 1232 vessels yearly, viz., 584 to the Banks, and 648 to the Bay and Labrador. I think the 584 Bankers may be put down 36,540 tons, navigated by 4,627 men and boys, (each vessel carrying one boy,) they take and cure, annually, 510,700 quintals of fish; they average about three fares a year, consume, annually, 81,170 hhds. salt, the average cost of these vessels is about \$2,000 each; the average price of these fish at foreign markets is \$6 per quintal; these vessels also make from their fish, annually, 17,520 barrels of oil, which commands about \$10 per barrel, their equipments cost about \$900, annually, exclusive of salt.

"The 648 vessels that fish at the Labrador and Bay, I put down 48,600 tons, navigated by 5,832 men and boys; they take and cure, annually, 648,000 quintals of fish; they go but one fare a year; consume, annually, 97,200 hhds. of salt. The average cost of these vessels is about \$1600; the cost of their equipments, provisions, etc., is \$1050; those descriptions of vessels are not so valuable as the bankers, more particularly those that go from the district of Maine, Connecticut and Rhode-Island, as they are mostly sloops of no very great value; most of these vessels cure a part of their fish where they catch them, on the beach, rocks, etc., and the rest after they return home; several cargoes of dry fish are shipped yearly from the Labrador direct for Europe. The usual markets for these fish are in the Mediterranean, say Alcant, Leghorn, Naples, Marseilles, etc., as those markets prefer small fish, and the greatest part of the fish caught up the bay and Labrador are very small. The average price of these fish at the market they are disposed of is \$5; these vessels also make from their fish about 20,000 hhds. of oil, which always meets a ready sale and at handsome prices, say from \$8 to \$12 per barrel, the most of it is consumed in the United States.

1232 vessels employed in the Bank, Bay and Labrador fisheries, measuring.....	tons	85,140
Number of men they are navigated by.....		10,459
Number of hhds. salt they consume.....		178,370 hhds.
Quantity of fish they take and cure.....		1,158,700 quintals.
Barrels of oil they make.....		37,520 barrels.

"There are also a description of vessels called jiggers or small schooners of about 30 to 45 tons that fish in the South Channel, on the Shoals and Cape Sables, their number 300, they carry about 4 or 5 hands, say 1200 men and take about 75,000 qtls. of fish, annually; consume 12,000 hhds. of salt, and make about 4,000 barrels of oil; their fish is generally sold for the West Indies and home consumption.

"There are another description of fishing vessels commonly called Chebacco Boats or Pink Sterns; their number 600; they are from 10 to 23 tons, and carry two men and one boy each, say, 1,800 hands; they consume 15,000 hhds. of salt, and take and cure 120,000 quintals of fish, annually. These fish also are wholly used for home and West India market, except the very first they take early in the spring, which are very nice indeed, and are sent to the Bilbao market in Spain, where they always bring a great price; they make 9,000 barrels of oil; these vessels measure about 10,300 tons.

"There are also about 200 schooners employed in the mackerel fishery, measuring 8,000 tons, they carry 1,600 men and boys, they take 50,000 barrels, annually, and consume 6,000 hhds. salt.

"The alewife, shad, salmon and herring fishery is also immense, and consumes a great quantity of salt.

Whole number of fishing vessels of all descriptions.....		2,332
Measuring.....	tons.	115,940
Number of men navigated by.....		15,059
Salt they consume.....		265,370 hhds.
Quantity of fish they take and cure.....		1,353,700 quintals.
Number of barrels of oil.....		50,520 barrels.
Number of barrels of mackerel.....		50,000 barrels.

"There are many gentlemen who assert, and roundly too, that one year there were at the Labrador and Bay, over 1,700 sail beside the bankers; but I feel very confident they are much mistaken, it is impossible it can be correct."

Then Mr. Adams gives the authority of his approbation, at page 233, to the following statements from "Colquhoun's Treatise on the Wealth, Power and Resources of the British Empire," 2nd Ed. 1815,

"The value of these fisheries, in table No. 8, page, 36, is estimated at £7,550,000 sterling.

"New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, from being both watered by the Bay of Fundy, enjoy advantages over Canada, which more than compensate a greater sterility of soil. These are to be traced to the valuable and extensive fisheries, in the Bay of Fundy, which, in point of abundance and variety of the finest fish, exceed all calculation, and may be considered as a mine of gold—a treasure which cannot be estimated too high, since with little labor, comparatively speaking, enough could be obtained to feed all Europe." pp. 312-313.

"Since the trade with the United States has been so greatly obstructed, the produce of the fisheries in the British colonies thus encouraged by the removal of all competition, has been greatly augmented; and nothing but a more extended population is required to carry this valuable branch of trade almost to any given extent.

"It will be seen by a reference to the notes in the table annexed to this chapter, that the inhabitants of the United States derive incalculable advantages, and employ a vast number of men and vessels in the fisheries in the river St. Lawrence, and on the coast of Nova Scotia, which exclusively belong to Great Britain. The dense population of the Northern States, and their