

Beautiful craft, many of these schooners are. Low-lying; rising finely to the waves; bounding over instead of cutting through them; drawing very little water forward, but a great deal more astern, they will run from 12 to 13 1-2 knots on the wind; and many an exciting race they have from Cape Ann to the Gut of Canso.

The Yankee fisherman, too, is a peculiar being. On shore, in his Sunday's black broad-cloth, with his jewelry prominently displayed, strolling down Cape Ann street with his wife, he is a very different person from what you see on board his schooner, dressed in a yellow oil-skin over-coat, yellow oil-skin breeches, and a yellow oil-skin Sou'-wester (or, *we* should say, Nor'-easter.)

Sometimes the skipper is too smart, and gets to the straits before they open, for in the spring it often happens that a north wind brings down the floating ice, and jams the Gut as tight as any strait in the Arctic regions. But we will suppose him to be fortunate. He touches at Plaster Cove, a telegraph and post station in the Gut, to hear the news and send some home, and then, in company with perhaps a couple of hundred other sail, he presses through into what is called "the Bay." These fishermen have quite a language of their own. We should call this sail from Boston to the Gut, a voyage up the coast. Not so the fisherman, who calls it "down" to Halifax, and "up" to Boston; and our "St. Lawrence Gulf" is, to him, "the Bay," a term we should confine to that small portion called St. George's Bay, just inside the Gut of Canso.

Let me pause one moment to draw your attention to this beautiful strait. Between Nova Scotia, on the continent, and Cape Breton Island—now a part of the Province of Nova Scotia, which stretches far out into the Atlantic, towards Newfoundland—winds this short and convenient passage from the ocean to the Gulf. No wider than the Thames at London, with high, spruce-crowned bluffs on either side, a safe harbor throughout its length, with small towns or villages along its banks, it well deserves the

name it has received, of "The Golden Gate to the St. Lawrence Gulf." For picturesque beauty, few shores surpass it; for the commercial facilities it affords, it is hardly equalled by any other strait in the world.

On the English coast, mackerel are usually taken in drift nets; and, accustomed as I have been to see fish taken in this manner, I was somewhat surprised to find the method practised in the Gulf entirely different.

During the winter and early spring, the American fishermen catch fish called porgies, which are dried and barrelled. Catching bait is an occupation employing many hands, and not a few vessels are devoted to this special pursuit. As I understand it, a piece of fresh porgie, or sometimes a bit cut from the side of a fresh mackerel itself, is best to bait the hooks with; and a quantity of barrelled bait is placed in the bait-mills, of which there are two on each side of the schooner, and which are set going every now and then. The ground bait from the mills (which much resemble straw-cutters) attracts the mackerel, and keeps them in shoals about the vessel, while six or seven men keep busy at the lines, hauling in the fish as fast as they bite at the larger pieces on the hooks. At times this is very rapid work, for the mackerel is a voracious fish; he does not come up and smell the bait, and nibble a little, and then lazily flout it with his tail, like some other fish we no doubt all have been vexed with, but dashes at it boldly, and, alas for his hopes, rashly. He makes at it diagonally, gorges it at once, and no "play" being allowed, he almost instantly finds himself out of his native element. Now and then the crew will catch a deck-full in a few hours; and then, all hands to work, splitting, salting, barrelled, so as to be able to take to the lines again before the shoals of fish make off. The fish bite best, they say, in cloudy weather, sometimes when it is windy; and a fine schooner, with nine lives, was lost in 1866, when I was on the Nova Scotia coast, because the over-anxious fishermen kept at their lines so long as to be at last unable, when the wind stiffened to