

APPENDIX No. 3

herring should be taken probably a couple of weeks before they go close in to the shore. When they go close in to the shore they are ready to deposit their spawn and not in the best condition.

Q. They should be taken when they are out in deep water?—A. Yes, out in deep water.

By Mr. Maclean (Queens, P.E.I.):

Q. That would be out in the Gulf?—A. Yes.

Q. When the herring come in to the Straits of Northumberland it would be too near the spawning season?—A. I am referring particularly to the summer herring. The spring herring are all caught close inshore. It is the medium-sized, plump fish that is chiefly wanted. Now, the net usually used by our fishermen is a little too wide in the mesh for catching the particular fish suitable for this market. I have been trying by various means to get the fishermen to use smaller meshed nets, in order to catch the plump medium-sized fish full of melt or roe.

By Mr. Kyte:

Q. In the Atlantic waters on the southern side of Nova Scotia the size of the herring varies at different points?—A. Yes.

Q. You know that a year ago last summer the run of herring was very small all through?—A. Yes.

Q. Would those herring have been suitable for curing by the Scotch method?—A. Yes, as long as they are under 13 inches in extreme length they are all right.

Q. You are familiar with fishing conditions in Nova Scotia?—A. Yes.

Q. During what length of time are those herring to be caught on the Nova Scotia coast?—A. I should say from the beginning of July till towards the end of August they would be in good condition. After that they begin to spawn and get into poor condition.

Q. Does it cost more to put up a barrel of herring according to the Scotch method than it does to put up a barrel of herring by the ordinary method?—A. In my judgment it costs less, for there is really less work connected with the Scotch method of curing. In the old-fashioned way the fish is split and everything cleaned out, and the fish washed. It really makes an awful mess in addition to involving much more labour. Under the Scotch method less salt is required.

Q. Then it is a cheaper method of curing herring than the old-fashioned method?—A. Yes, the actual process.

Q. Can you understand why it is the fishermen have not adopted that method more generally?—A. One reason is a great many of them have always considered that the fish could not be cured in this way with the melt or roe in them. Of course the curing used to be all done by the fishermen themselves. The merchants on shore could not be induced to try the new method until the war conditions practically drove them into it.

Q. How many seasons did you spend in Nova Scotia in endeavouring to educate the fishermen in this method of curing herring?—A. I spent the seasons of 1904 and 1905 in Nova Scotia, and the seasons of 1906 and 1907 up in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. I think those are the years, but I am speaking from memory.

Q. Did you find that the fishermen took hold of the idea very well?—A. I found them very much prejudiced against that style of curing, as I have already said.

Q. As a matter of fact there were no very marked results following your efforts in that direction?—A. No.

Q. During the years you have named, what methods did you follow in the way of educating the fishermen?—A. Of course we were operating a steamer, drifting, trying to catch the fish in the first place, and we were curing the catches as they came to the shore. The curing operations were done on the shore in local curing places and it was open to any one to come and see what was going on.

MR. G. E. SMART.