

I found at anchor the French brig-of-war "Meleager," and two empty merchant vessels, lying with their topgallant masts down, and hatches locked. Their crews to a man were fishing.

Besides these, there was a small English schooner, the "Mariner," bound, and belonging to St. John's, with a cargo of salmon.

The French have two rooms in Croc, on opposite sides of the harbour. When they return home for the winter, they leave them in charge of two Irishmen, named Hope and Kearney, only removing the canvas coverings of the stages.

They also leave some of their boats behind them, turning them over on the beach, and thatching them with spruce boughs, in the same manner that our own migratory fishermen do theirs on the coasts of Labrador, to protect them from the weather. Their establishments are conducted upon the same principle as our own; and, although their arrangements evince a better system of discipline, I do not think that the same energy is displayed by their fishermen in the prosecution of their employment, nor does it appear to me to be so thoroughly performed; I mean that, to my inexperienced eye, the fish neither seem to be so well cleaned, split, boned or cured.

The two rooms in Croc employ between them 30 seven-quintal boats and 130 men, 100 afloat and 30 shore men (as they are termed) in the establishments; six of these boats were exclusively occupied in catching caplin and herrings for bait, and were manned by crews of eight men.

Their fishing this year commenced the 5th June, and is considered good in point of quantity, although the fish are unusually small. The catch has been, to the present date (July 27), 7,000 quintals, and they anticipate 6,000 more before they close. They use seines principally, but they also fish with lines.

Caplin had struck in very early, and in great abundance; they were now beginning to disappear; replaced by herrings.

Croc is by no means a first-class fishing station. Rouge, St. Julian's, Goose Cove, Creminillere, Braha, Oruirpon, besides others in the vicinity of Cape St. John's, all harbour more vessels, and send forth a greater number of boats.

The French coast fishermen do not receive so large a bounty as their countrymen engaged exclusively on the Banks. The risk and expense attending their occupation is much less, and, consequently, the insurance lower. The coast fishermen sail from France in vessels of 150 to 200 tons, laden with salt, and containing their entire fishing equipments, comprising men, boats, nets and provisions. When they arrive at the destined harbours, they moor their vessels, re-roof their last year's establishments, land their goods, lock up their vessels' hatches, and commence fishing. If the season prove prolific, traders connected with the planters will, perhaps, once or twice during the season, carry away the produce of their good fortune and industry, preserving a sufficiency to freight their own vessels back to France.

The French north-east coast fisheries are prosecuted, perhaps, with greater vigour, and have increased more rapidly than those to the southward.

This year there were upwards of 11,000 fishermen employed between Cape Ray and Cape St. John's, showing an increase of 1,500 men within two years.

I had great difficulty in collecting information, not only from the superintendents of the rooms, but also from the naval officers; they evinced, I thought, great jealousy in their answers to my questions.

The northern and southern fisheries are opposing interests; the former are conducted by houses at Granville, St. Malo, Pampot, Bennick, Havre, Nantes and St. Brieux, the latter by merchants of Dieppe, Bayonne, and, in one instance, in connexion with a St. Malo house, of the name of L'Huiller.

I met at the table of the Captain of the French brig-of-war two superintendents of rooms; they had originally been masters of bankers; they appeared to be men of energy and substance, and possessed very considerable general information. They spoke with pride of the sailors their bankers produced, and of the hardships and dangers they were exposed to while fishing on the banks, and that to deprive their country of these fisheries would be to lop off the right arm of her maritime strength.

I found, during my stay, the climate dry, the winds light, and in the harbour, notwithstanding the proximity of eight or ten icebergs, the temperature mild and agreeable, but outside the air was damp and chilly, even with a clear sky overhead.

Sailed for Belle Isle (North), and observed, on my way there, one brig in Fishshot Cove;