

The Fishing Industry in Canada in 1917

The production of Dominion fisheries during the year increased over \$13,000,000 to \$52,312,044—Compilation of Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

"Fishery Statistics" (1917) has just been compiled by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. It was prepared in collaboration with the Dominion and Provincial Fisheries Departments and contains a statistical survey of the fisheries of the Dominion as a whole and of the provinces, as provinces. A prefatory note on the Canadian fisheries giving a comprehensive view of their national value and world importance, is as follows:

"Canada possesses perhaps the most extensive fisheries in the world, those of Norway and of the British Isles alone disputing the supremacy, whether for excellence or the abundance and variety of their product. The fertility of Canadian waters is indicated by the fact that the entire catch of salmon, lobsters, herring, mackerel and sardines, nearly all the haddock, and many of the cod, hake and pollock landed are taken within ten or twelve miles from shore.

"The coast line of the Atlantic provinces from Grand Manan to Labrador, not including the lesser bays and indentations, measures over 5,000 miles, whilst the sea areas to which this forms the natural basin embrace: the Bay of Fundy, 8,000 square miles in extent; the gulf of St. Lawrence, fully ten times that size; and other ocean waters aggregating not less than 200,000 square miles, or over four-fifths of the fishing grounds of the North Atlantic. In addition there are 15,000 square miles of inshore waters, entirely controlled by the Dominion. Large as are these areas, they represent only a part of the fishing grounds of Canada. Hudson Bay, with a shore 6,000 miles in length, is greater than the Mediterranean; the Pacific coast of the Dominion measures over 7,000 miles long, and is exceptionally well sheltered for fishermen; whilst throughout the interior is a series of lakes which together cover 220,000 square miles, or more than half the fresh water of the globe, Canada's share of the Great Lakes of the St. Lawrence basin alone amounting to 72,700 square miles.

"Of even greater importance is the abundance and general excellence of the product. The cod and the salmon have long disputed the primacy among these, though in recent years the heavy pack and the high price of lobsters has sometimes sent cod to third place.

"The fisheries of the Atlantic coast may be divided into two distinct classes: the deep sea and the inshore or coastal fisheries. Deep-sea fishing is pursued in vessels of from 40 to 100 tons, carrying crews of from twelve to twenty men. The method is that of 'trawling' by hook and line. The bait used is chiefly herring, squid and capelin, and the fish taken are principally cod, haddock, hake, pollock and halibut. The inshore or coastal fishery is carried on in small boats, usually motor driven, with crews of from two to three men, and in a class of small vessels with crews of from four to seven men. The means of capture employed by boat fishermen are gill nets and hooks and lines, both hand-lines and trawls; whilst from the shore are operated trap-nets, haul seines and weirs. The commercial food fishes taken inshore are the cod, hake, haddock, pollock, halibut, herring, mackerel, alewife, shad, smelt, flounder and sardine. The most extensive lobster fishery in the world is carried on along the whole of the eastern shore of Canada, whilst excellent oyster beds exist in many parts of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, notably off Prince Edward Island. The salmon fishery is the predominant one on the Pacific coast, but a very extensive halibut fishery is

carried on in the northern waters of British Columbia, in large well-equipped steamers and vessels. The method of capture is by trawling, dories being used for setting and hauling the lines, as in the Atlantic deep-sea fishery. Herring are in great abundance on the Pacific coast, and provide a plentiful supply of bait for the halibut fishery. In the inland lake fisheries, the various means of capture in use are gill nets, pound nets, seines and hooks and lines."

The total of the product of the Canadian fisheries during 1917 was \$52,312,044, compared with \$39,208,378 in 1916. It is interesting to compare the product of 1917 with that of 1913, the year before the war. By species the statement is as follows:

	1913	1917
Salmon	\$10,833,713	\$17,411,029
Cod (including black cod).....	3,387,109	8,281,029
Lobster	4,710,062	5,654,265
Herring	3,173,129	2,260,606
Haddock	841,511	2,936,719
Halibut	2,036,400	2,066,635
Sardines	676,668	1,910,705
Mackerel	1,280,319	1,333,354
Whitefish	929,962	1,248,006
Smelts	810,392	1,027,555
Hake and cusk.....	490,979	890,265
Trout	682,619	699,950
Pickeral	449,539	650,632
Mixed fish	393,452	505,542
Pollock	187,723	486,195
Pike	372,868	429,396
Tulliheer	63,910	333,686
Clams and quahaugs.....	368,325	222,965
Alewives	62,241	196,482
Perch	72,985	126,723
Oysters	173,753	109,265

Note.—The above table only relates to fish values of \$100,000 and upwards.

The capital invested in fishery operations and the number of persons employed were as follows:

The amount of capital represented in the vessels, boats, nets, traps, wharves, freezers, etc., engaged in the primary operations of catching and landing the fish during 1917 was \$26,560,872. This compares with a total of \$22,639,001 in the previous year.

The number of employees engaged in these operations in 1917 was 75,462.

The capital represented in fish canning and preserving establishments, including canneries, fish and smoke houses, etc., was \$20,366,701, made up of land and buildings to the value of \$6,990,969; machinery and tools, \$3,401,935; stocks in hand, \$6,459,664; and working capital, \$3,514,133.

To the above might be added \$215,552, the value of some 9,492 small fish and smoke houses.

In British Columbia the majority of the laborers in canning factories are employed under the contract system, the contractor engaging and paying his own help, and being himself paid by the factory according to the quantity of fish packed.

The return for 1917 showed that the employees in fish canning and preserving establishments during 1917 numbered 12,572 wage-earners, 8,339 male and 4,233 female. The total wages bill was \$2,808,277, to which \$668,987 must be added on account of salaries. These figures do not include contract labor, which was employed to the number of 3,431 male and 1,207 female, receiving wages to the amount of \$732,587. There were also 214 persons (155 male and 59