

unusually rich field for the United States for over a quarter of a century, but it seems as if the sleepy old Hudson Bay Company was waking up recently and would make some efforts to monopolize this district to its own advantage hereafter. It is principally a whaling ground, although considerable trade in furs has been done with the Eskimo. We have eleven years of statistics, with about fifty voyages, that have averaged \$27,420 per voyage, an immense profit for such little 100-tonners as engage in the business. Altogether \$3,000,000 may not be outside of the amount we have been benefited by this little sag end of the Arctic.

The Hudson Bay Company has a steamer running from Hudson's straits to London direct, engaged solely in conveying fresh salmon to the London market, the ice for keeping this fish fresh being picked up anywhere from a convenient iceberg or field of pack-ice. The cargoes realize about \$20,000. Every river and rivulet of this country is swarming with salmon and trout, and this "infant" industry is bound before long to be a full grown man. The Arctic part of Hudson's Bay also furnishes an extensive fishery for porpoises, as high as 200 being caught at a single haul, they being allowed to come into an inlet that is left dry when the tides recede, their outward progress being barred by an ingenious system of trap nets across the narrow entrance.

Recently American vessels have been prospecting the valuable fishing grounds off the barren Arctic shores of Iceland, and fares of fletched halibut averaging \$15,000 to \$20,000 per voyage are becoming common, the catch being easily made and the supply apparently inexhaustible. The Danish government is not so harsh in its rules as those enforced by our Canadian cousins, and generally it is better ground than those occupied on

our banks. Says *The American Naturalist*, over two years ago: "It is evident that within a few years the American off-shore halibut grounds will be so depleted that the fresh halibut fishery on our coasts will be abandoned. We shall then derive our chief supply from the waters of Greenland and Iceland, where several vessels go each year to bring back cargoes of salt 'fitches.' Halibut will come into our market only in a smoked condition, and the species will be as unfamiliar in our fish markets as it is in those of the old world."

While speaking of Iceland I shall briefly refer to a new industry (or old one renewed); I allude to the fact that the Icelandic government have successfully attempted the growth of barley in their barren Arctic colony. It was known to have been successfully cultivated from the year 870 down to the middle of the fifteenth century, and then, for some reason, it was stopped; many of the advocates of the theory that the cold of northern climates has increased within historic times, quoting this as an argument, when an investigation showed that the more profitable cattle raising had only supplanted it. Icelandic barley matures in eighty-nine days, and as this season can be depended upon almost always on that island, it now remains with the Icelanders to avoid the famines which have devastated their land and made people think that it is slowly becoming uninhabitable. This is of considerable indirect importance as assuring food to a country with such valuable fisheries, for it is a good principle of political economy, that if a country has even only one of the great staples demanded by mankind—and certainly the fisheries are included high upon this list—and means of distributing it at reasonable rates, its future success is assured, for it can always depend on a permanent revenue to purchase such staples as