

3. ECONOMIC LIFE

The principal productive activities of Newfoundland are fishing, the manufacture of pulp and paper, mining and lumbering. Newfoundland does not meet its own food requirements and imports essential foods such as flour and pork products as well as staple foods from tropical areas.

Fishing

Since the foundation of the colony fishing has dominated the economy and created the character of Newfoundland. In terms of dollars the industry is not the most important in the island today, but it still employs the greatest number of people.

In 1938 fishermen made up roughly 25,000 or 8.2% of the population. This percentage is slightly less than the percentage engaged in agriculture in Canada in 1938.

It is worth noting by way of comparison that 22,000 are currently employed on defence projects. A substantial proportion of them are Newfoundlanders.

The principal fish engaging the attention of Newfoundlanders is the cod. Three systems of catching and curing are followed:

(1) The Shore Fishery

This may be described as a subsistence system carried on by households. The capital required is not great and the catching and curing are performed by a fisherman and his family. Shore fisheries employed 19,164 men in 1938 - the largest proportion of fishermen. The catch of shore