

ends of the rib-bones, if still adhering to the fish, should be carefully *cut*, not torn away.

To make sure that the remaining bone will be properly bled, it should be pierced with the knife near the tail; or, if preferred, it may be split down for 2 or 3 inches from the point of separation.

*Cleaning.*—The black lining of the stomach should next be removed, and any rags of fish or skin which may be visible should be carefully cut away. The fish should then be washed thoroughly, a hand-brush being used both inside and out. The bone should receive special attention, to make sure that the blood is thoroughly removed.

*Pressing.*—After washing, some curers press the fish for a couple of hours. This may be done very easily by laying the fish on a bench with boards and weights above them, the object being to drain off the water and any remaining blood from the fish. Other curers, again, object to pressure being applied, on the ground that it makes the fish look thin.

*Salting.*—The fish should then be salted into vats. Good second fishery Liverpool salt is usually considered best for this purpose; but if a soft cure is desired, Spanish salt is sometimes preferred. In either case the fish should be completely covered with salt, and the salting should be regular, otherwise the fish are apt to have a spotted appearance when cured. The actual quantity of salt necessary will, however, depend to some extent upon the length of time that the fish are likely to be kept before being sent to market, and this can only be learned thoroughly by practical experience. Cod which are to be kept for some time should be salted more heavily than fish that are to be disposed of at once. Three-quarters of a hundredweight of salt may be considered sufficient to cure a barrel of cod.

In salting, the fish should be laid in pairs, face to face, just as kippers are packed. If laid otherwise, there is always a risk that the inside of one fish may be discoloured through contact with the pigment or natural colouring-matter of the skin of the fish next to it. Extra salt should be added to the top tier; and, as the fish make their own pickle, weights should be put on them to keep them down.

*Drawing, Washing, and Paring.*—After lying in the curing-vat for not less than forty-eight hours the fish should be drawn out of the pickle. During this process they should be well washed, either in their own or in fresh-made pickle. As each fish is washed it should be laid on the bench in such a position that the pickle will drain from it. After they are washed the fish should be taken one by one and carefully *pared*. The anal fins should be neatly cut away, and any rags of fish or skin that may have been left about the sides or shoulders should be pared off, so as to leave the fish perfectly clean and well trimmed.

*Packing into Barrels.*—If they are obtainable, birch or other hardwood barrels are preferable to fir. The latter may impart a flavour of the wood to the fish; the former will not. The packer should lift and handle the fish carefully, so as not to damage them. The best way is to grasp the tail of the fish with the right hand and the shoulder with the left, the skin of the fish being downwards. The fish will thus fall into a partial fold and allow