

THE HARVEST OF THE SEA

INTERESTING AND USEFUL TO THE FISHERMEN OF THE COLONY

SMOKED FISH

PROFESSOR PRINCE, Head of the Canadian Fisheries Department, recently contributed to The Canadian Fisherman a very interesting article which has much in it which our fishermen might avail of. Our attempts in the smoked fish line have been, for the most part, failures. We get smoked salmon occasionally; but it is smoked as black as a lump of coal and is as hard as a stick. We have abundance of salmon; but our people have not learned the art of curing them properly.

Last season we discussed in this column the folly of importing smoked salmon. The imported article sold "like hot cakes" simply because it was attractive and toothsome. We have not seen any local Haddies on sale; but here too there is a possibility for some enterprising fish dealer to make a profitable investment. We have seen repeatedly advertisements of New York "Finnan Haddies"; but why we should import such a commodity seems almost beyond comprehension.

"Everybody knows," says Professor Prince, "of the famous finnan haddies of Scotland, the delicate salted and smoked haddock first prepared at Findon, Aber-

deenshire, and hence styled "Finnans," or "Finnaans" by most people. It is claimed by epicures that the best quality of these fish are still those which are produced in the North of Scotland; but it cannot be denied that in England, and in recent years in Canada, finnan haddies of great excellence, have been produced and placed on the market.

The Canadian finnan haddie, as put up recently under the direction of Miss Patterson, of Toronto University, during the summer of 1915, were declared to be equal to the Scotch product. Digby, Canada, and Halifax are now putting up an article which compares very favorably with the old country product. We ask, if such things be possible in the Province of Nova Scotia, why cannot we go and do likewise."

The Scotch method of preparing finnan haddies is as follows:—The fish (which must be perfectly fresh) are gutted, the head removed, and the fish split down the back. An extra cut behind the backbone on the right hand side, is always made, exposing the thick muscles of the back, and facilitating the process of curing. The split fish are then placed in pickle for half an hour. They are then taken out and drained when they are ready for smoking. Rows of fish are hooked by the shoulders on sticks and placed in the smoker in tiers one above the other; and exposed to dense smoke for five or six hours.

The Canadian method is somewhat different:—

The fish are split on the belly; and no cuts are made along the backbone. The smoking is done by burning hardwood, usually beech or birch, and the smoke is not so dense as in the Scotch method. The fish are smoked for a much longer time, from fifteen to eighteen hours. The Scotch method is preferable, as there is less liability that the fish will go bad should they be kept for any length of time.

In the production of finnan haddie Miss Patterson tells us that there are at least seven important features requiring attention, namely, delicacy of flavor, saltiness, dryness, color, texture (flakey or friable), keeping quality, moisture, and absence of blood or offensive discoloration.

Very large quantities of Canadian haddies are found in the grocery stores throughout the Dominion. They are packed in a very attractive package, each packer displaying his own special mark. The packages weigh from 15 to 20 pounds. This alone is an attractive feature; and the fish are not so liable to go bad or heated in transport.

In smoking salmon our fishermen, first, give the salmon too much salt; and then the smoking process is by no means calculated to give the fish either an attractive color or flavor. The "Norwegian" salmon which have been offered for sale in our local markets are a most attractive fish. We could easily provide our own markets with smoked salmon, were we simply to follow a decent method of

curing it.

We outlined a process in this column some time ago; and were it followed there would be no need to import smoked salmon. The fish should be split on the belly side, slightly salted, or pickled; then dried, and smoked from two to three days. The smoke-house should be removed at least fifteen feet from the smoke box (fire place) as salmon will get soft in the smoking process if there is too much heat. The writer has smoked salmon of the highest possible flavor by using peat moss.

This can be procured nearly everywhere in the outtharbars; and we ask our readers just to try the experiment.

If fresh salmon cannot be procured, pickled salmon can be smoked by "watering it for at least 36 hours, allowing it to dry in the sun, if possible for part of a day, and then treated as the finnan haddie is in the smoking process." It will not, of course, be as toothsome as the fresh-smoked article; but it will be quite palatable, and will afford even those of epicurean tastes with a decent meal.

Miss Patterson is about to publish a report on the smoking experiments which she conducted at St. Andrews, New Brunswick recently; and when it is procurable, we hope to be able to give it in this column in extenso.

There is an ever-increasing market for smoked fish products; and even locally there should be a good demand for them.

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Pinchard's Island, Bonavista Bay, February 26, 1916 (Editor Mail and Advocate)

Dear Sir,—Kindly allow me space in your highly esteemed paper to put forward a few remarks re the doings of the F. P. U. members here and to show the public that we are not all sleeping but are alive to the principles of the Union and our noble President.

We held our annual parade here on the 22nd inst and it proved a decided success in spite of the many obstacles which we and the union in general have to contend with. The day being fine we assembled in the school room and from thence we proceeded to the Church where we listened to a most instructive address from the Rev. J. T. Hiscock. The subject of his discourse was "Love" from the text "A New Commandment I give unto you that ye love one another."

He spoke to impress upon his hearers that if we could not love our neighbors who we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen? After leaving the church we paraded around the Island and then back to the school room where we partook of the good things provided for us by the ladies. Tea being over all kinds of amusements were indulged in until late at night or the early hours of the morning, when all wended their way to their homes well pleased with the success of the day. A considerable sum of money was obtained which goes toward the erection of a Union hall.

We hold our weekly meetings here in a store belonging to Friend William Green, and on the 25th inst. we were favoured with a visit from our M.L.A., Mr. Robert Winsor accompanied by Friend Tobias Howell from Newtown. All were pleased to have them with us, and the meeting being opened our Chairman asked Mr. Winsor to address us; which he did in such forcible language as to give credit to the speaker. He defined the benefits, aims and objects of the F.P.U., saying at the same time, that while the Union has done miraculous work it could not stem the tide of persecution without loyalty and self-sacrifice, noting that if a thing is not worth a little sacrifice it is worth nothing. He urged the members to hold up their end of the plank and not to mind the persecution of the out-

side world, for said he, the time is coming and is not far hence when we will have to be union or non-union. Greater and more honorable deeds will be done when we get power at the next election, said the speaker.

Mr. Winsor said the Union is a great factor in making the fishermen independent, viz—by running their own business by taking shares in the companies of the F.P.U. He pointed out to us that it was our own fault if we did not derive benefit from the Union along the fishery and produce lines since President Coaker is unwilling in his efforts to warn people of every needful thing. Along these lines the speaker engaged the attention of his audience for over two hours, and after asking the members to take shares in the F.P.U. Companies he took his seat amid the applause of all present.

Friend Howell then addressed us and proved himself to be an able exponent of union principles.

We are determined to stand by Coaker, our noble President, and may God give him strength to carry on the great work that he has begun. We are working amidst great difficulties but are determined to win.

Wishing the Union and President Coaker every success.

Yours truly, SAND BANK POND.

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