

to be soaked in many changes of water for at least 48 hours before the brine is sufficiently removed to make it at all palatable, and even then there is always a peculiar flavour attached to it, a flavour engendered during the process of sun drying, which is far from pleasant. Fortunately for Newfoundland, however, no better method of preserving cod has been adopted to any extent by other countries, and it is still almost the only class of fish that can be taken far inland in hot climates; nevertheless, it is a precarious trade, as its prosperity depends on the will of the Church of Rome, and were the fasts of that Church abolished, I am afraid that the demand for this product would immediately and rapidly decline.

When one considers that over 50,000 tons of this dried codfish is exported annually from the Colony, equal to 100,000 tons weight of fresh fish, it seems a pity that some method of cure cannot be devised which would suit the English market; and I feel convinced that in experimenting and searching for such a method of cure, the Newfoundland merchants must look for the future development of this trade. There is an ever increasing demand for fish amongst the working classes of Great Britain, the seas around our coasts cannot supply sufficient for the demand, and if means can be devised for bringing the fish either fresh or cured in an inviting and palatable manner from Newfoundland, it is amongst the teeming millions of the Mother Country that the Colony will find her best and surest market.

The next in importance of the industries of Newfoundland is the Seal Fishery. This is carried on by a fleet of some 22 steamers, varying in size from 250 to 700 tons register; they sail for the ice-fields on the north-east and west of the island on the 15th of March, and are usually all in port again within six weeks from the date of sailing; each steamer carrying a crew of from 150 to 300 men. The seals are of two kinds, the "Harp" and the "Hood," of which the latter is the larger, and the former are in the greatest quantity. They are found in large masses, called locally "patches," on the fields of drift ice, the old seals coming up on the ice to give birth to their young ones, which fall an easy prey to the men from the steamers. These young seals are killed when they are about a fortnight or three weeks old, a blow on the head from a gaff being sufficient. As soon as they are killed they are immediately "sculped," that is, the fat and skin is removed, while the carcase is left upon the ice. The fat inside the skin varies from one-and-a-half to two inches in thickness, and this, with the skin, weighs from 40 to 50 pounds. The annual catch of seals numbers from 200,000 to 250,000; the fat is made into oil, which in the year 1890 was exported to the value of £69,934, while the number of skins exported that year amounted to 221,388, of a total value of £46,101. Both skins and oil are for the most part exported to England, the skins being used for the manufacture of the finer kinds of leather. This industry is considered of great importance in the colony, as it employs some 15,000 men, who