

"Of hardly less value than the former is the seal fishery, which could certainly be carried on in winter as well as in summer, many seals being seen on the ice during the former season and in the spring, and thousands of them being observed during the summer and autumn, at the entrance of all the bays and rivers, where they remain almost entirely unmolested. To show the value of this fishery in the Gulf, the New Brunswick official report already cited, brings forward an instance of a schooner engaged in it from Sydney, Cape Breton, having cleared £14,000 within three weeks of her having left that port. Yet at Anticosti, where seals abound more than in most parts of the gulf, this fishery is at present almost neglected; the Americans and others who resort to its neighbourhood, being principally engaged with the still more profitable cod and mackerel fisheries. For the storing and preservation of seal, whale and cod oil, the temperate degree of heat at Anticosti during the summer is particularly favourable.

"At the present moment, the mackerel fishery is the most lucrative one in the St. Lawrence, and is the most extensively pursued; mackerel sell at Boston at an average of nineteen dollars a barrel and at Halifax and Quebec for a few dollars less than that sum. No part of the Gulf abounds with this fish more than the neighbourhood of Anticosti. Many schooners visit the coasts of the latter from the United States, the Lower Provinces, and a few from Gaspe, to carry on this fishery, in which they are very successful, and Mr. Corbet states that the mackerel he has seen in July and August come in shoals so thick and so close to the shore that as many as one hundred barrels could be taken in one haul of the net. A few hours work will thus sometimes pay the whole expenses of a schooner during the season.

"Herrings, as fine as any in the world, are as plentiful about the island as mackerel; but from the wretched manner in which they are cured, they obtain a much less price in the market, and are therefore, comparatively neglected by the fishermen. To make this fishery as valuable as the mackerel, a few of the Dutch North sea fishermen should be engaged, who would introduce their mode of curing, which has long obtained for Dutch herrings the highest price in every market in Europe. By adopting that mode the Scotch fishermen are beginning to compete successfully with the former.

"At the entrances of all the rivers and creeks immense quantities of lobsters are thrown up by the sea; the collection of which and the preserving them on the spot for distant markets, or sending them fresh in vessels containing wells to our home markets, might render this fishery a very profitable one. Kels are also very numerous and very fine, and are often collected by parties of Indians who come over for the purpose from Minzen and who obtain a high price for them from the Americans. Some of the halibut which are found off the coast attain the weight of three or four hundred pounds.

"The caplin, which are now merely used as bait for cod, are so abundant around the island that they are sometimes thrown up by the sea and cover the shore to the depth of two feet. Were they properly cured and exported, they would find good markets in Europe, or oil of an excellent quality could be made from them by the simple process of boiling.

"The number of schooners which resort to the shores of Anticosti from the United States, the Lower Provinces, and the Magdalen Islands, in pursuit of the cod and mackerel is so great that there are sometimes as many as one hundred vessels fishing between the East Point and Fox Bay at one time, all of which are generally very successful. If these fisheries can be so profitable to extensively fitted out schooners (of from 40 to 150 tons), some of which come a distance of fifteen hundred miles, and have to bring every supply including provisions and salt with them, how much more profitable would they become to parties residing upon the island, who would have their supplies upon the spot, and who would carry on their operations in boats? How important also to the latter would become the trade which might be created with the former, the supplying them with provisions, often with fishing gear and with every description of marine stores; and how soon would such a trade lead to more extensive transactions in regard to the purchase of fish upon the spot, and the disposal of it in the best markets, and to a future trade in West Indian, South American, and Mediterranean produce, obtained in exchange for fish, and being in great demand in Canada? It might also lead to the gradual rise at different points of the island of good sized villages, and ultimately of towns. Many large towns in various parts of the world, which are now places of great wealth, have risen from elements quite as slight as these.

"Though all the rivers of Anticosti abound with the finest salmon, few of them are fished to any extent, in consequence of their being but a small number.