

# THE GLEANER:

AND NORTHUMBERLAND, KENT, GLOUCESTER AND RESTIGOUCHE  
COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL.

Old Series] NEC ARANEARUM SANE TEXTUS IDEO MELIOR, QUIA EX SE FILA GIGNUNT, NEC NOSTER VILIOR QUIA EX ALIENIS LIBANUS UT APRES. [Comprised 12 Vol.

NEW SERIES VOL. XII.

MONDAY EVENING, MARCH 7, 1853.

NO. 10.

## THE FISHERIES.

### THE FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MIRAMICHI FISHERY SOCIETY.

The salting should be always carried on in the vats, tubs, or troughs, which should have covers. But whether the fish are to be so cured, or by that inferior mode called *B u* they should be regularly laid in layers on their backs, one over the other, each layer being carefully spread over with a sufficient quantity of salt, 45lbs. to 50lbs. Liverpool Salt per Hundred Weight of dried fish being about sufficient. Over salting is frequently practised to increase the weight of the fish, but nothing is more fallacious. Not only is the sap thus extracted, and the fish made lighter, but as the drying advances they become encrusted with salt, which falls off at every handling; whilst the fish are so greatly deteriorated as to be rejected as salt-burned, or taken at a very reduced price. If the fish be salted, when fresh off the hook, they will take in no more salt than will perfectly cure them, however much may be given them; but if they are not fresh, by giving them too much salt, they will get salt-burned.

After the fish are drawn from the tubs they should be well washed, and the pickle brushed out in the sea, or in the salt water, and then they should be built up in a long pile on a stony beach, taking care that each fish is placed in a sloping direction; that is to say, with its head higher than its tail, so as to allow the salt water to be well dripped out of them. They may remain in this state for a day or two before they are laid out for the purpose of drying.

By far the best mode of drying fish is that of flakes.—These should be constructed at top with a platform of cross bars, placed six inches asunder, on which the fish are to be laid, this method is far superior to any stony beach whatsoever. The great advantage of the flake is that it preserves the fish clean, and owing to the current of air passing underneath, the drying process goes on simultaneously below as well as above, and it prevents all chance of the fish being sunburnt, blistered or scalded, when first laid out, as frequently happens when they are placed on a hot stony beach in very hot weather. In all cases whether the flake or the beach be used, great care should be taken not to expose the fish to a powerful sun for the first four days and that they be not dried too hastily, otherwise they will heat, become brittle and loose from the skin, and appear as half roasted, and so be unsaleable. At first they should be laid on their backs, but towards night they should be laid back upwards, in small heaps, which ought to be increased in size as the fish get harder; and during the process of drying, the fish may be laid with their back or belly alternately upwards, as occasion may point out.

As they require firmness, frequent turning is advantageous, and as the heaps become enlarged, stones or weights may be placed on them to facilitate pressing which imparts to them a smooth and compact surface. When the fish are about half-dried or so, it will then be easy to tell whether they have got too much salt, and if so, the skin side should be laid up to the sun, during the heat of the day, for future drying, which will draw the salt from the surface of the fish side, and tend to make them appear a fine greenish color.

When the fish are gathered together in heaps in the evening, they should be carefully covered with matting or canvas, during the night, as well as when damp weather prevents their being laid out. After a fortnight drying the fish should be put into a pack or steeple for the purpose of sweating; and they ought to be allowed to remain in that state for 12 days, carefully covered; after which they should be laid out to dry for a week; and then after sweating them a second time for four or six days, two or three more days of drying should be sufficient to complete them. But of course this must all depend on the state of the weather; and according as that may be favorable or otherwise the whole time employed in curing them may average from six to eight weeks. The pining and sweating of the fish is a most important part of the cure, and must be extremely well attended to, for if they are not properly sweated before they are housed they will soon get rotted, slimed, discolored, and unsaleable.

After the fish are properly sweated, pined and finished, they should be housed, but never in a warm day, or warm from the beach or flakes. They should always be collected in a cool state, either in the evening or morning, and with this precaution, always provided that they have been properly pined and sweated, they will keep for a long time without being slimed or mited; care being taken to have the air excluded from them by proper covers, and by their being put into a tight cellar or other similar place. Many curers in England, when packing their fish in their stores, after being fully dried, lay a small quantity of straw between each layer of fish. This tends to draw the surplus salt from the surface of the fish—prevents them from getting slimy or mited, and very much improves their color.\*

### MACKEREL.

**CAPTURE.**—The catching of Mackerel, although believed in this quarter, to be a critical and difficult operation, is after all, as described by experienced persons, a very plain and simple business. The vessel should proceed to the fishing ground with the trail out; so soon as a Mackerel is caught the vessel should instantly be hove to, or the larboard side.

The Baiter should stand in midship, with his bait box outside the raffrail, and with a tin pint, nailed to a long handle, he should begin to throw out bait; while every man should stand to his berth. If Mackerel be found, the foresail should be taken in, and the mainsail hauled out with a boom tackle. The fishing operation now begin.

The line should be hauled through the left hand with the right, and not hand over hand as is done in codfishing, for if this latter mode be adopted, the fisherman is sure to lose his fish after it breaks water. When the fish is near coming in care must be taken by leaning over the rail, to prevent its striking against the side of the vessel, catching the line quick, close to the fish, with the right hand unhooking, it with a sling into the barrel. With the same motion the gig should be sent out, in a line parallel with the birth of the sender. Dispatch is necessary, lest a mackerel taking one line, become entangled in another. Each man should fish with two lines, in a blowy weather about seven fathoms long. In calm weather the gigs are lighter than in heavy weather, so that an eye should be spliced at the end of the line for the purpose of lengthening or shortening it at pleasure. There are two other lines used called fly lines, with smaller hooks, when the mackerel are shy they will frequently take these, in preference to the others. The fly lines are only three fathoms long. When the Mackerel cease to bite, the fishermen should use the *Gaffs*, and work with these until the fish disappear, but the gaffs should not be used while the lines are out, as they would become entangled and cause great annoyance and loss of time. No man should be allowed to quit his birth, to pick up fish that may miss his barrel and fall on the deck, until the fishing is over.

The utmost care must be taken to dress the Mackerel quickly, as of all fish they are most easily tainted. When the fishing is over for the time, the master or mate should count the Mackerel, and put down in a fish book prepared for the purpose, what each man has caught. Then the Crew should go to dressing and splitting.

The splitter should wear a mitten on the left hand, to keep the fish steady to the knife, which should be previously sharpened and ready. Two men should gib the fish, having mittens on to prevent the bones from pricking their hands.

One man should hand the Mackerel to the splitter, while the rest draw water to fill the barrels in which the fish should be put to soak. The Mackerel should be put into the soak barrel back up; shortly after the water must be shifted, and the fish washed out for salting.

The Salter should sprinkle a handful of salt over the bottom of the barrel. Then he should take the fish in the right hand, one by one, roll them in salt, and place them skin down in the barrel, until he come to the top tier, which he should place skin up, covering the top with salt.

Herrings or small Mackerel are said to be the best bait that can be used. These should be ground in a bait mill, by the watch at night. In the absence of a bait mill, the fish may be chopped up with an axe or hatchet, or scalded with boiling water in a barrel or tub.

When a fleet of vessels are fishing together, it is not unusual for them to run a head each of the other, and in this position draw the fish toward the shore. There they anchor, and put springs on their cables, which is done by taking a strap outside the hawse-hole, fastening it to the cable, then hooking it to a tackle and hauling aft, at the same time paying out the cable. This brings the vessel broadside to the wind or current, and the fishing goes on. When moored in this manner, boats may fish with the same success as schooners.

This is described as the whole system of Mackerel fishing, British and American. And it can require nothing beyond experience, enterprise and energy, to carry it on successfully in our waters.\*

### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

There are yet several topics connected with the Fisheries, to which—if space permitted—the Board would willingly direct attention. But as this report has extended far beyond the limits originally contemplated, they shall content themselves by adding only one or two general remarks.

In the very able Report of the Fisheries of the Bay of Fundy, by Moses H. Perley, Esq., (1851,) which has been laid under heavy contribution in preparing this Report, it is remarked that the advantages which have arisen from the careful inspection of Herrings in Scotland, and the great confidence given by the official brand affixed by the officers of the Report of British Fisheries, to Scottish herrings in foreign markets are almost incredible. Before the establishment of the Fishery Board, the total quantity of herrings cured in Scotland, amounted to about 90,000 barrels, which have been increased by the Board's exertions to about 600,000 barrels; while the mode of curing, assorting, and putting up, or preparing for various markets, had been improved in at least a similar ratio.

In consequence of the full reliance placed upon the official brand in Scotland, Barrels of Herrings are transferred from hand to hand on the Continent, with the utmost confidence, and that to the most distant parts of Europe. In 1849 it was represented to the Fishery Board, by the most influential Merchants of different Cities on the Continent, that the large Commercial dealings in which they engaged with Great Britain for herrings, are undertaken and maintained, upon the faith of the Government Brand, and that nearer Markets would be resorted to, but for this attestation of quality stamped upon British Herrings.

Now, as it is a notorious fact, that two parcels of Fish which are of equal size and quality when taken, will, from the difference of cure alone, command very different prices in the same Market, it is surely as clear as noon day, that not only the *knowledge* but the *practise* of the best modes of curing &c., must be of the most essential importance to the Fisherman, himself, as well as the place from which the article is to be exported, and surely when it is understood, that it is not extra expence, but only a little additional attention that is necessary, to produce this superiority of excellence in the Fish Cured, and that all the attention required may be easily given in the course of the operations described in this Report. It is to be hoped that next season, such a thorough change may take place in our money losing mode of catching, curing and preserving, Herrings, Codfish and Mackerel, as may ultimately raise Miramichi Cured Fish, to a rank second to none caught in these Provinces, or even the American States.

And it is the unfeigned wish of the retiring Board of Directors, that the Miramichi Fishery Society, growing yearly in influence and utility, may prove the honored instrument of accomplishing this most desirable consumation.

JAMES CAIE, Secretary.

## EUROPEAN NEWS.

**THE FRENCH NAVY.**—No less than twenty ships of the line are now building in the French dockyards, and for the greater number of them screws have been ordered. In addition to these there are 18 frigates and fifteen other vessels of different classes building, which are to be all propelled with screws.

It is not generally known that Captain Ericsson tried his caloric principle twenty years ago, at Mr Laird's yard, Birkenhead. The experiment, however, was not successful, in consequence of the engines getting too dangerously hot.

**STEAM FOR THE ARCTIC REGIONS.**—Capt. Maguire, who commands the depot ship *Plover*, lying at Point Barrow, to the north of Behring Straits, has urged upon the Government the importance of sending out a screw-steamer to keep open, efficiently, a communication with Point Barrow, sailing vessels being too slow and unwieldy.

**RAILWAY OVER THE ALPS.**—Letters from Genoa state that the emulation of the inhabitants of Savoy was excited by the projected railway for uniting Genoa with Lyons, via Turin and Chambéry, from which they expect to derive considerable advantage. The chief enigma of professional men was the crossing of Mount Cenis. One proposition was to make use of the cascades which fall winter and summer from the lake on the summit of Mount Cenis as a motive power for driving the carriages up the steep. A Sardinian engineer, named Mans, had invented a machine for perforating the mountain, but the tunnel, it was thought, would be too long (4,000 metres) to admit of proper ventilation. A considerable step towards the solution of the difficulty had been made by the discovery of a place where the mountain might be pierced by a tunnel of only 1200 metres.

**LORD ELDON.**—A commission *de lunatico inquirendo*, touching the state of mind of the Earl of Eldon, was held on Saturday, at Shirely-park, near Croydon, his lordship's residence, by Mr Commissioner Winslow and a jury. From the evidence adduced, it appeared that up to June, 1851, Lord Eldon had performed all the duties of his station in the most satisfactory manner; but in that year, it is thought from close study, his health gave way; on the 4th of June, 1851, it became necessary to call in Dr. Sutherland, and from that time Lord Eldon had been incapable of managing his own affairs. The characteristic description of the unsoundness of mind was, not prevalent delusions, but a partial dementia exhibited in great incoherence of conversation, occasional evanescent delusions, and considerable excitement.

The death of Lady Eldon in November last, rendered the present inquiry imperative, as up to the time of her death she had managed the property of her husband, and had also managed him with great affection and tact. The evidence of Dr. Sutherland, Dr. Forbes Winslow, and Dr. Tyler Smith conclusively proved that Lord Eldon was of unsound mind. A deputation from the jury visited him, and no doubt remained on their minds as to his unfortunate condition. They returned a verdict accordingly.

**LIFE AT CREMONA.**—The Genoa Corriere Mercantile, of the 13th instant, quotes the following letter from Cremona:—“Our Province is infested with robbers and assassins.—Every night robberies are committed in the houses, and aggressions on the roads and in the streets, by armed bandits.—A few days ago Dr Braga was attacked and robbed at noon-day, at Santa Maria, within a mile of the Cremona. His life is still in danger. His servant was left for dead on the ground, dreadfully stabbed with knives. The stage coach was stopped and plundered between San Martino and Marcara. Nineteen armed assassins forcibly entered the house of M. Paternieri de Caminata, near Casalmaggiore, and carried off a considerable amount of property.”

Notice has been duly given that application has been made for a charter for a projected company, which, under the title of the “Chartered Bank of Canada,” proposes to carry on banking and exchange business with British North America.

The reports of the melancholy death of Dr. Leichardt, the African explorer, and his companions, have proved but too well founded.

\* Report of British Fisheries.

\* Perley's Report on the Fisheries, 1851.