

2.—The Canadian Fishing Grounds.

The fishing grounds of the Dominion of Canada are perhaps the most extensive in the world. On the Atlantic, from Grand Manan to Labrador, the coast line, not including the lesser bays and indentations, measures over 5,000 miles. The bay of Fundy, 8,000 square miles in extent, the gulf of St. Lawrence, fully ten times that size, and other ocean waters comprise not less than 200,000 square miles, or over four-fifths of the area of the fishing grounds of the North Atlantic. In addition there are on the Atlantic sea-board 15,000 square miles of in-shore waters controlled entirely by the Dominion. Large as are these areas, they represent only a part of the fishing grounds of Canada. Hudson bay, with a shore 6,000 miles in length, is greater in area than the Mediterranean sea; the Pacific coast of the Dominion measures 7,180 miles in length and is exceptionally well sheltered; whilst throughout the interior is a series of lakes which together contain more than half of the fresh water on the planet, Canada's share of the Great Lakes alone amounting to over 34,000 square miles, a total which of course does not include lake Winnipeg (9,457 square miles), lake Manitoba, and others of even greater area.

Still more important than the extent of the Canadian fishing grounds is the quality of their product. It is an axiom among authorities that food fishes improve in proportion to the purity and coldness of the waters in which they are taken. Judged by this standard, the Canadian cod, halibut, herring, mackerel, whitefish and salmon are the peer of any in the world. It is possible, therefore, to state that by far the most valuable fisheries of the western hemisphere, if not of the globe, belong to Canada.

It will be seen from the above that it is impossible to deal with the Canadian fisheries in the aggregate; they are those of a continent rather than of a country, and are of corresponding diversity. Omitting the tremendous Hudson bay and peri-Arctic region, which extends from Ungava to Alaska and which is known to contain a number of valuable food fisheries in addition to its whaling grounds, there are roughly the following divisions of the Canadian fisheries:

Atlantic Fisheries.—These were the first Canadian fisheries in point of time and until 1918 they remained the most important for aggregate value of product. Cod, halibut, haddock, hake, herring, mackerel, lobster, oyster, seal and white whale fisheries are included. The estuarian and inland waters of the Maritime provinces and of Quebec are sometimes considered as distinct; if they are added, the list of products would embrace the salmon, the shad, the gaspereau (alewife), the smelt, the striped bass, the tom cod, the trout and the maskinonge. Conditions are fairly uniform throughout these fisheries, which are commonly divided into the inshore and deep-sea fisheries. Of the former (which employs seven-eighths of the fishermen) those from one to five miles out are frequented by boats, usually motor driven, carrying from two to four men each, and those twelve to fifteen miles out by larger vessels carrying from four to seven men. The fish are largely taken with gill nets, hand lines and trawls. Haddock, as well as cod, is a staple product; during the spring and summer it is split and salted, but the important season comes with the autumn, when the fish are shipped fresh or else smoked and sold as finnan haddie. The deep-sea fisheries are worked by vessels of from forty to one hundred tons, carrying from twelve to twenty men, operating with trawls from dories. Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, is the leading centre for the "bankers," with the Shelburne district second. Twice a year the fleets set sail for the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, touching the Canso Bank and other well known grounds as they go