

and return. The vessels, built by native hands, remain at sea sometimes for months at a time, and, in the hands of sailors who have no superior, seldom come to grief. When they return, the fish are taken on shore, salted and dried by the men who caught them, and reshipped to large dealers at Halifax. The West Indies are the chief markets for this product; no cod fish in the world stands the tropical climate like that cured by Nova Scotia fishermen.

Lobstering is another distinctive industry. In 1871, there was only one lobster cannery in New Brunswick, and one in Prince Edward Island; today the canneries number over 500 and give work to over 6,000 people; 60,000,000 lobsters is a normal catch. The difficulty of enforcing regulations as to the capture of undersized and spawning lobsters offers a constant problem in connection with the output, but a decline is now thought to have been arrested. Oysters, once plentiful everywhere, are now found in somewhat diminished quantities. The canning of sardines, which are young herrings and not a distinct type of fish, in New Brunswick is second only to lobstering.

The fishing population of the Maritime provinces is a specialized and stable industrial class. The coast-wise fisheries are operated from April to November, except in sheltered districts; and though the larger vessels work all winter, several thousand men are available for a time each year for other employment. This they find about the small plots of land which the most of them own or occupy, in the lumber camps of New Brunswick, or in the collieries of Nova Scotia. A few from Lunenburg and other centres engage in the West Indian trade. Apart from restrictions of weather and close seasons, the prevailing method of paying the men on shares has a further tendency in years of low catches or prices to drive them into secondary occupations.

In view of the various disabilities attaching to the industry, an Act of the provincial legislature of Nova Scotia was passed in 1905, which provided for the organization of fishermen's unions or "stations" throughout the province, in affiliation with a central body, to meet annually for the discussion of common problems such as transportation facilities, the cordage supply, prices, methods of catching and curing fish, etc. Several successful conventions have been held. In New Brunswick similar legislation has been enacted. The larger interests, it may be added, look to a future in which the present scattered hamlets of fisher-folk will be swept into a few large communities, centralizing their energies, as in England and Scotland, at ports where facilities for landing the fish are greatest and market accommodation most extensive.

Inland Fisheries.—The Great Lakes and tributary waters of the St. Lawrence are a second great division of the Canadian fisheries. Whitefish, trout, pickerel, and lake herring are the most important commercial fishes of Ontario, though pike, sturgeon and coarse fish yield a fair return. The Quebec inland fisheries are comparatively unimportant. The story of the Great Lakes fisheries is one of reckless early depletion and subsequent slow recovery from restocking. Single hauls of 90,000 whitefish were once common; in the Detroit river the fish used to be driven into pens where they were captured or died by the hundreds of thousands, and were used later as fertilizer. All this reaped its reward in barren waters and a demoralized market. The season on the Great Lakes lasts from six to eight months, and though fishing through the ice is followed by many, a large number depend on miscellaneous employment between the seasons. Moving westward, lake Winnipeg, lake Winnipegosis, lake Manitoba and the smaller lakes to the north and east furnish most of the fish products of Manitoba. Whitefish