

fisheries are close to land, or in the shallow seas less than 600 feet deep, where the nutrient elements and the plankton are most plentiful. The areas of these shallow seas where marine life abounds are greatest on the continental shelves which rim the world's land masses. Characteristically, the countries north of the equator have wide sloping shelves and, therefore, 98 p.c. of all commercial fishing is in the northern hemisphere.

Sixty per cent of the world's annual production of fish, which is estimated at about 26,000,000 tons, is taken by six countries—China, Japan, Norway, the United Kingdom, the United States and Russia. Canada ranks next to these and contributes a million tons to the total each year. The wide sloping continental shelf on the Atlantic Coast with its submerged hills or "banks" is considered one of the most extensive and richest fishing grounds in the world. The United Kingdom, the United States and Norway as well as several other countries exploit these fishing grounds. Canada's historic rights in them, however, date back to her earliest colonial days.

The Atlantic Fisheries.—Approximately two-thirds of Canada's total catch comes from Atlantic waters. One-half of this catch is cod which still dominates the deepsea fisheries despite more than four centuries of exploitation. Although the old method of fishing with dories and long lines of baited hooks has largely given way to the modern otter trawler, a large part of the catch is still salted down in the holds of the vessels, to be processed for markets in the West Indies, South America and Europe. Of course many of the Canadian and United States vessels, being closer to home ports, now supply the filleting plants on the Atlantic shore with fresh fish. Haddock, hake, halibut, redfish and flatfish were at one time caught only incidentally by the codfishing fleets and the smaller species, such as redfish and flatfish, were thrown "over the side". Filleting operations resulted in the creation of markets for them and vessels now go to the Grand Banks especially for redfish, haddock or halibut, depending on the season.

Only in recent years has knowledge been gained of the extent of the exploitation of the fishing grounds of the Northwest Atlantic. After World War II, Canada, the United States and several other countries became concerned about the possibility of over-fishing the "banks". Subsequent international discussion led to the signing in 1949 of the International Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Treaty by Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Portugal, Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Spain, all of whom pursue the fisheries in the Northwest Atlantic. Under the treaty, the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries was formed to study the fisheries so that any signs of over-fishing or depletion of the stocks would be recognized should they occur. This treaty marked a milestone in the history of fisheries conservation in that it was the first time a group of nations formally committed themselves to a program of scientific investigation and regulation to the end that fish resources of a vast area of the high seas could be managed and utilized prudently. It was also the first time conservation action had been taken before a crisis had occurred.

Statistics gathered by the Commission have given the world some idea of the enormous yield of fish from Northwest Atlantic waters. The Convention area includes the waters off the west coast of Greenland, off Labrador, Newfoundland, Quebec, the Maritime Provinces and the New England States, to a line east of Flemish Cap. From these waters, in 1952, the ten nations participating in the convention took nearly 3,000,000,000 lb. of groundfish, of which slightly more