



This medal was issued by Charles I. to commemorate the treaty (1636) between the English and the Dutch by which the latter were to pay £30,000 for permission to fish in the British Seas.

THE HERRING;

ITS EFFECT ON THE
HISTORY OF BRITAIN:

BY

ARTHUR MICHAEL SAMUEL

"Le hareng est une de ces productions dont l'emploi décide de la destinée des Empires."—LACÉPÈDE.

"He who draws a fish out of the sea draws a piece of silver."—FRANKLIN.

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JOHN MURRAY

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TO MY CHILDREN; MAY
THEY NEVER FORGET
THE EAST ANGLIA OF
THEIR FATHERS.

TO THE READER

No one who studies national economics of past centuries can fail to be impressed by evidences of the close connection between the foreign policy of England and her national trade interest, though during the nineteenth century that connection was growing looser, and, in the two or three decades just before this war, had begun to disappear. Wool and herring in the period covered by the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries were what would now be called key industries. It was on them our national policy may be said to have largely turned whenever the rulers of England entered upon discussions, peaceful or warlike, with other nations. Further, our political action, whether in respect of domestic or foreign policy, was silently but ultimately based upon that national system of economics which was for the most part represented by the words wool and herring.

Norwich and Yarmouth, the two sister trade-centres of my native county, were so intimately identified with the one and the other that any investigation of the archæology of Norfolk brings the student face to face with these industries in their various aspects; I was

therefore in a position to get together much curious information on these subjects before the war brought other duties. But as the importance of the herring and its influence upon the destiny of Britain do not appear to be widely enough recognised, I have now ventured to gather my notes together and place them in book form for the use of those who may be interested in certain matters brought into prominence by the war.

It will be seen that the subject of the herring has two main aspects: its relation to the food supply, and its influence upon English, and later, British, navigation policy and the early stages of the building-up of our mercantile marine. The relation of the herring to the navigation policy of this country, in other words to our naval supremacy and commercial expansion, has a peculiar interest at this moment because we are once again confronted with a bald demand from Central European Powers expressed by the phrase "Freedom of the Seas" as employed by Germany and Austria and supported by the Papal Note. It is difficult to get at a real definition of our enemies' demand or what lurks behind it. By implication, of course, Britain is charged with violating the principle of the free use of the high seas by all nations in times of peace. What is the meaning of a charge so grotesque? Must not the phrase therefore relate to war rather than to peace conditions?

Britain is an island, notwithstanding aircraft and submarines.

The sea is our frontier, the cradle of our freedom; our national temperament has been created by the sense of security arising from the consciousness that we can, by our command of the sea, frustrate any attempt at invasion, as another nation protects its frontier by a line of forts. History has shown that command of the sea is command of the land; that the sea has always dominated the land; in the words of the economist, List, one of the founders of modern Germany :—

“The Sea is the High Street of the Earth. The Sea is the parade-ground of the Nations. . . . The Sea is, so to say, the rich village Common on which all the economic Peoples of the World may turn their herds out to grass. The man who has no share in the Sea is thereby excluded from a share in the good things of the world; he is the stepchild of our dear Lord God.”

Whatever may be the aerial developments of the future, the seas and the sea communications are to us exactly what land frontiers are to continental nations, and of these truths we must never for an instant lose sight. For those frontiers we fought and conquered in the seventeenth century when the principle involved was covered by the words “*Mare clausum*,” of Selden, as against the “*Mare liberum*,” of Grotius, and the herring fishery was a crucial point in the dispute. The question,

indeed, came to a head a few years earlier, when, in 1602, the King of Denmark sought to prevent the English from fishing in the high seas, and it was one of the last public acts of Elizabeth to instruct her ambassadors to declare that the law of Nature allowed fishing in the sea anywhere, and the using of ports and coasts of princes in amity for traffic and shelter against peril of the sea, unless there was a contract to the contrary. At an earlier date the navigation of the Indian seas had been the subject of bitter dispute between the Dutch and Portuguese, owing to the grant by the Pope to the Portuguese of an exclusive right of navigation within certain boundaries. The Spanish jurists also denied the Portuguese claim to ownership of the seas, and Grotius only carried a similar line of argument further in denying that any maritime State possessed right of dominion of the waters adjacent to its territory. The student would do well to refer to a masterly essay on the whole subject contributed by Sir John Macdonell, K.C.B., to the *Nineteenth Century* for November, 1917.

Until the beginning of the seventeenth century the claims of England, even over the narrow seas, were scarcely insisted upon, and, generally speaking, the policy advocated by Selden in *Mare clausum*, his official reply to Grotius' *Mare liberum*, was kept in abeyance by James I., as the King of England owed a sum of money to his father-in-law, who happened to

be also the protesting King of Denmark. It was Elizabeth not Grotius that first gave support to the doctrine of the Freedom of the Seas in the true and literal sense of the words. But the meaning of the words as used by the jurist is entirely different from that implied by our enemies in 1917. German and Austria are in fact employing the phrase "Freedom of the Seas" in a manner diametrically opposed to the meaning put upon it in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, possibly with the intention of confusing the issue at an opportunity convenient to themselves. Until war was declared in 1914 the high seas were perfectly free to the passage of all in the precise sense of the words "*Mare liberum*," as understood and used by Elizabeth and Grotius and by the French in the time of Napoleon. Now, as far as Britain is at all events concerned, the phrase "Freedom of the Seas" is for the most part endowed by our enemies with a meaning contrary to the original sense. Let there be no mistake about it. It is beyond dispute that the sense in which the words were understood by Grotius obtained till the outbreak of the war, but it seems that since then the expression is intended by our enemies to include their right to sow mines in the seas in time of war, and this view of their case is supported by the reports of the proceedings at the Second Hague Conference in 1907. Our enemies would also force us to

surrender our overseas naval bases. Germany seeks to increase her own sea power and strength of naval attack and, at the same time, to prevent Britain from enjoying the advantages in war time of her membership of and communication with that association of scattered sister States called the British Empire. Germany would thus mean that the freedom of the seas includes the domination of the seas by Germany; she would make the seas free for Germany by dominating them herself. She throws dust in the eyes of the world by ignoring the fact that before the war she, like every other nation, had complete freedom to use the seas outside territorial waters for peaceful purposes. Can she deny it? Germany also means by the expression, according to a recent work by a German publicist, F. Naumann, that she claims the right of entry in peace time into British ports by German ships and German cargoes on the same terms as British ships and British cargoes. Unreasonable as such a demand would be if made in the negotiations for peace, it is none the less a fact that Germany actually enjoyed those very advantages in the ports of the United Kingdom till war was declared in 1914, as a result of the repeal of the Navigation Acts in 1849; indeed, she actually received preferential treatment over our own shipping. For example: German ships were allowed to carry transatlantic passengers to and from England and embark them or dis-

embark them off the Isle of Wight without paying full harbour dues to the port of Southampton. German ships were allowed to carry British mails and to take them up and put them ashore off the Isle of Wight in a way which strained the provisions of British regulations. I made this statement to the President of the Board of Trade and to the Secretary of State for the Colonies at the Colonial Office on April 3, 1916, and it has never been contradicted. When considering, therefore, the disputes of the seventeenth century in which Grotius and Selden were the protagonists, the student must bear in mind that the words "*Freedom of the Seas*," as used to-day by our present enemies, have for Britain an entirely different meaning from that put upon them in the "*Mare liberum*" and "*Mare clausum*" arguments. Such being the case our business is, as Blake said in 1653, to keep foreigners from fooling us, and to remember Selden's observation that the English people are many times in treaties overmatched by them whom they overmatch in arms.

And there are other points to be considered.

The modern gun will carry twenty miles, and as the three-mile limit was presumably based on the range of a gun being under three miles, the limit of what ought to be considered territorial waters has become obsolete, or at all events inapplicable to modern conditions. Again, such questions as the use of sunk mines for coast defence, the submersion of a submarine

within territorial waters and the activities of aircraft high above or only just over the surface of the sea and nearer land than three miles, put a fresh complexion upon the operation of the principle of the three-mile limit, on the definition of the words "territorial waters," and on questions depending upon that definition, such as the herring fishery.

May I express a hope that a perusal of this book will stimulate examination of Germany's continuous wail about the freedom of the seas? It is a fraudulent grievance, but none the less it should be tested and then nailed to the counter as spurious. We do not pay enough heed to what may be roughly described as British Navigation policy; the action of the British Government in trying to force the Declaration of London (1909), on the country just before the war is proof positive of this. The Foreign Office had forgotten that Britain is an island, and the average man cared or knew so little about our dependence upon sea power and communications that, but for the stand made by certain far-seeing public-spirited men and Chambers of Commerce, we should ourselves have done ourselves untold mischief. Germany sees plainly enough that loss of her overseas trade means her ruin. She groans about after-war facilities in our ports and coaling stations, detecting the dangers of her position in the markets overseas, while we have scarcely recognised how full of advan-

tageous possibilities the situation is for us—provided we exercise our national rights in questions concerning mercantile shipping, and frame our foreign policy to support our trade policy. I am firmly convinced that the safest basis of our economic future in relation to our present enemies will be found to lie in a wise attitude on our part towards their after-war sea-carrying trade. The Central Powers must export or perish. A very large part of Germany's pre-war export trade was seaborne. There is also the indispensable need of the Central Powers for the raw productions of the British Empire. These will be seaborne from British imperial ports; they provide a lever of immense power to us.

The policy of Britain which culminated in Cromwell's wresting their sea-carrying trade from the Dutch began with squabbles about the herring fishery, or in other words, about one of our key industries. Apart from recognising the importance of the herring in relation to food supply, an investigation of the history of the herring fishery and its bearing upon the destiny of Britain will, it is hoped, help the reader to compare what happened in the past with the recent demand by the Central Powers for what they call the Freedom of the Seas, whether in time of peace or war, and will, in addition, disclose how vital to their economic existence they consider the question of sea communications.

Many of my notes were made years ago,

without any idea of publication, while I was reading over a wide area for my own private instruction. I am therefore unable to remember or indicate the origin of a number of my observations or to check their accuracy. May I then ask the reader to accept this book on the following terms?—

(a) That I do not profess to be perfectly accurate, although what is herein stated is, so far as lies in my power and knowledge, there or thereabouts correct.

(b) That I acknowledge my indebtedness to innumerable ancient and modern writers for the entire information now presented, and that nothing herein is my original work. Where the knowledge is derived from standard works of reference I have not included their titles in the bibliography. To the unknown author from whom I have taken information and incorporated it in my notes, and to the author to whom I have not given acknowledgment in the bibliography, owing to lack of records of origin, I raise a high altar and pile upon it offerings of gratitude and humble apology.

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This plate shows the master smoker, who keeps up the fire; smokers to withdraw the herring from the brine and put them to drain in baskets; women who string them on wands and hand them to men who hang them in the "loves" (louvres), and men who take them down when sufficiently smoked. The herring are then examined by a man who counts them before passing them to be packed in barrels and rejects defective fish. (From Du Hamel du Monceau. See Bibliography.)

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THE HERRING

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

A YARMOUTH CHANTY.

The farmer has his rent to pay.

Haul, you joskins, haul.

And seed to buy, I've heard him say.

Haul, you joskins, haul.

But we who plough the North Sea deep,

Though never sowing, always reap

The harvest which to all is free,

And Gorleston Light is home for me.

Haul, you joskins, haul.

THIS old chanty, sung by the East Coast fishermen whose chosen instrument is the accordion which they call a "mewsic," conveys an economic truth, a reminder that we do not sufficiently avail ourselves of a harvest which can be obtained merely for the gathering. The Homeric phrase "the unharvested sea" is still too true, and that at a time when the problem of the food supply of these islands is more acute than it has been for a century; though, from causes connected with the war, the harvest is less free than usual. "Joskin" is a jesting name used in East Norfolk to describe men who work on the land in summer, and go to sea "a-fishin'" in the autumn and winter. The world knows no braver men than

our fisher-folk, as their work in lifeboats and in mine-sweeping bears witness. Many of these excellent, industrious and fearless men are total abstainers, and deeply religious. The bulwark of the nation, they have never been more valuable than they are now, and it is the herring fishery, "the fruitful nursery of able seamen for the navy and mercantile marine," which has trained them to be the safeguard of Britain to-day.

The seas around our shores teem with fish. Sir John Lawes once stated that an acre of sea off the East Coast yields as much good food for human consumption as a hundred acres of Northamptonshire grass-land; and the most valuable food to be found in our seas is the herring (*Clupea harengus*).

The market value of the herrings brought in to the Aberdeenshire coast in a single season was stated some years ago to exceed the annual rental of the land of the whole county of Aberdeen, and the North Sea alone produces more fish than all the other fishing grounds exploited by Europeans put together. In 1908 it yielded about 1,000,000 tons of fish, of which more than half (57 per cent.) or 38 per cent. of the whole value, were herrings caught in drift nets. Great Britain catches and brings to its ports two-thirds of all the herrings caught, and nearly all the fish caught with the trawl; yet, although we are the greatest capturers of herrings in the world, we import about 40 per

cent. of the herrings we consume; and that is so although the various fisheries of the United Kingdom provide about 85 per cent. of all the fish eaten in the country, apart from canned fish imported from North America. This astonishing fact is accounted for by the inner workings of the herring trade, and by the varying dates of the herring seasons off the coasts of the different countries.

There are in existence books, pamphlets, reports, Acts of Parliament having reference to the herring, sufficient in number to stock a good-sized library; it is not my purpose, therefore, to attempt to add anything to the exhaustive information already available, nor, indeed, is it within my power to do so. My native Norfolk love for the herring as part of my daily sustenance has led me to make rough notes of historical and other references to the subject that have come under my notice from time to time, while studying the navigation laws, our foreign policy, and the early history of our trade. Additional material came to hand recently after I had been requested to act as spokesman of the Association of Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom on a deputation to the President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Runciman, M.P., and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Bonar Law, M.P., at the Colonial Office, April 3rd, 1916, on the subject of Navigation laws; and again

when a similar honour was allotted to me at the Board of Trade before the President, Sir Albert Stanley, M.P., on May 16th, 1917, on the subject of the Coastwise Trade of Great Britain. On both occasions, at the wish of Sir Algernon Firth, President of the Council of the Association of Chambers of Commerce, I drew up, for the use of Ministers, on behalf of the Association, recommendations as to the future mercantile shipping policy to be observed by Great Britain and the Dominions in conjunction with their Allies, based on the study of the early history of our trade and navigation. The replies delivered by Mr. Runciman, Mr. Bonar Law, and Sir Albert Stanley, and copies of the Memoranda handed to them by me, may be found in the printed Reports of the Proceedings of the Association of Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, April, 1916, No. 619, and May, 1917, No. 631.

The glitter of the herring's livery of green and silver catches the eye all through the records of British commerce and national history. Now that, owing to the German submarine menace, the shortage of food has drawn public attention to the increasing importance of fish, and especially herrings, as part of the national diet, I venture to print my notes in the hope that they may be of some interest to a generation which has, for the first time, come into personal contact with the problem of the national food supply, and more particularly to

show the part played in the history of England by the herring in the development of our trade, the creation of a mercantile marine, a navy, and a Colonial Empire which, rousing the envy of Germany, caused her to plot our destruction. These notes may also enable the student to grasp what Germany means when she talks about the Freedom of the Seas.

Much of the information has been extracted in a somewhat disjointed way, not only from recent essays and reports on the herring, but also from works on political economy, from Acts of Parliament and other indications of the national policy during the twelfth to the nineteenth century, from commercial histories, archæology, and standard works of reference and from old political tracts and pamphlets. I cannot lay claim to any original research. The natural history of the herring has for the most part lain outside my province. I make no attempt whatever to construct a story or to give these notes a dramatic interest. The notes are merely collected and published to provide a record of information in condensed and handy form.

During the year January 1st, 1913, to December 31st, 1913 (if I may be pardoned a personal reference to show a comparison between consumption and supply), I ate 161 herrings in one form or another, but, being a Norwich man, principally as bloaters, and I suppose that has been my average yearly consumption

for the last thirty years or more, making a total of some 5,000 herrings. This sounds somewhat alarming, but as the average roe of a full-grown female herring contains about 35,000 eggs, human consumption is not likely to overtake the fecundity of the fish, even if half the population were to follow my example. In 1881 Professor Huxley stated at Norwich that 2,500,000,000 herrings were taken out of the North Sea and the Atlantic every year, and that over 500,000,000 herrings are contained in *one* square mile of one of the many shoals which approach not only the coasts of Britain, but also those of Scandinavia and the Baltic, and of Eastern North America, every spring and autumn. A shoal usually covers half a dozen square miles, though it may be very much larger; it is often eight or nine miles in length, three or four miles in breadth, and of unknown depth, the fish being closely packed like sheep in a flock moving along a country lane. Allowing about a cubic foot of space for each fish, we may get an idea of the size of such a shoal by imagining an area in London extending from the Albert Memorial to the Tower, and from Westminster Bridge to the Zoological Gardens, entirely covered with herrings, swimming, in compact formation, on one of those migrations which baffle understanding. The search for food is not the complete explanation. Well might Huxley say that the sum total of the herrings that inhabit our seas

surpasses human imagination, and that any one shoal would go a long way towards supplying the whole of man's annual consumption.

The usual size of the East Coast herring is 10 to 11 inches, and its weight when full about 8 or 9 ounces; a herring 17 inches long is, however, on record, but 14 or 15 inches is quite an exceptional size.

SECTION I.—THE HERRING AND ITS ENEMIES.

The "herring"—the word can perhaps¹ be traced back to a Teutonic origin based on "harya" = an army—a shoal; modern German, "Heer" = an army—must not be confused with the sprat, pilchard or whitebait. Some writers wrongly regard the sprat (*Clupea spratus*) as an early stage of the herring and of the pilchard (*Clupea pilchardus*), from both of which it is distinct in kind. Again, whitebait (*Clupea alba*) is a definite species, not merely the young of the herring.² Shoals can be detected by the presence of a whale, of dogfish, and of predaceous aquatic birds, such as gulls, and gannets. Floating on the water over or, if moved away by the tide, near the shoal, is usually what is known as "the spot of oil" given off by the fish.

Whales, seals, porpoises, dogfish, cod, whit-
ing and aquatic birds devour myriads of
herring. Wilson in his "Tour Round Scotland

¹ Skeat is not satisfied with this derivation.

² For a full history of these fishes the reader should consult the pages of Jonathan Couch.

and the Islès" (1842) states that there are 200,000 Solan geese or gannets in the colony of St. Kilda alone, each goose consuming on an average five fish a day. The gannets feed at St. Kilda for about seven months each year, and in that time would, he estimates, devour 200,000,000 herring.

The dogfish, detested by fishermen, however, is probably the herring's worst enemy. He bites the herring in two before swallowing it, destroying more fish than he eats, and even breaking the fishing nets in the violence of his pursuit.

Off the east coast of Scotland dogfish from 24 to 30 inches long are caught. They have rough skins and spikes, and are known as pike dogfish. For trade purposes they might be called "sea-pike." Fishermen say that dogfish chase the herring toward the shore, and, when wantonly destroying their prey, allow the dead fish to drop to the bottom. The Dutch, knowing that herrings, keen of sight and smell, dislike water polluted by dead fish or fish offal, forbade the gutting of herring at sea, and the disposal of the offal near certain herring grounds, as early as the seventeenth century. Yet another cause of pollution can be traced to the large spreads of nets that from time to time get adrift in storms, and are lost; if they are full of captured herrings the fish die in the nets, and their decaying bodies pollute the water. The shoals will leave the

spot, and shun the district for many years. The pollution of water over a large area, owing to decaying fish in lost nets, may be one of the causes for what are called the capricious migrations of herring. It is an established fact that herrings shun waters polluted by decaying fish or offal, and for years instinctively retain their dislike of the district.

Again, if herrings that have been landed are, for any reason, allowed to lie on the seashore and become putrid, the drainage from the rotting fish will gradually reach any fishing ground close at hand in the neighbouring inlets of the sea. If the drainage from the putrid fish is appreciable in volume it will pollute the water and scare away the herring, who will not in many cases return till after the lapse of a long period. The dislike of fishermen to know of, or see, herrings used as manure is undoubtedly based upon a latent human instinct which unconsciously avoids doing anything likely to pollute the waters in which the fish normally congregate.

Yet the dogfish has his merits, and they are all too little recognised. The Americans, following the policy which is associated with the practice of utilising every portion of the pig except the squeal, have turned him to account by christening him "grayfish" and canning him for human consumption, thus at the same time lessening one of the natural causes of pollution of the seas and adding to

the national food supply. The American public, according to the *Fish Trades Gazette* of March 31st, 1917, eat the canned "grayfish" as eagerly as the dogfish eat the herring, and the present demand in the United States is ten times the available supply. It may not be amiss to say that the "grayfish," when canned, provides about the same amount of nutriment as canned medium-grade salmon; the flesh is almost entirely free from uric acid, small quantities of which are present in all meats and poultry, and in most other fishes. The energy value per lb. of British-caught dogfish is 827 calories—a very high value, nearly as high as that of the best parts of salmon, and about the same as the average of beef, veal and mutton. The British dogfish should be called by an attractive name, and eaten; the energy value of its flesh being higher than that of the fresh herring, except the Shetland "mattie," but lower than that of the herring in a preserved state.

Whales, gannets, and dogfish are not the herring's only enemies, since full-grown cod also are believed to feed chiefly on herring. In most years 5,000,000 cod, ling and hake are taken by Scottish fishermen, and allowing the very small ration of two herrings a day, these fish alone would consume over 3,500,000,000 herring in a year. The Norwegian fishermen of Lofoden are said to capture 20,000,000 codfish annually, which on the

same calculation would devour 14,000,000,000 herring; and the calculation is certainly too moderate, since it is no uncommon thing to find ten or twelve herring in the stomach of one codfish.

Beam trawl nets again, if used on hard bottoms, destroy a large amount of herring spawn; but against this it must be remembered that the trawl captures quantities of flat fish which devour the spawn voraciously, congregating on the spawning grounds for the purpose. Every flat fish caught by the trawl is therefore a destroyer of herrings, a worse enemy, probably, than the trawl net itself.

The herring in shoals approach our shores both in summer and winter. The summer shoals spawn near the shore at about Michaelmas, and the winter shoals about Ladyday.

Warm nights with the temperature of the water at about 55° or 56° F. are the best for catching herring, and the milder the night, the better the fish rise. When snow is on the ground the herrings swim near the shore, and the fishermen like to see snow on the hills during the winter fishing. It is probable that among the principal causes for the migration of the herring and the fluctuations of the herring fishery is the temperature of the water, which depends upon the variations of the great oceanic currents that form the Gulf Stream. Herring rise towards the surface in the dark, and till about 1905 were generally caught in

drift nets. About 1905 fishermen from Milford Haven and Fleetwood began to capture considerable quantities of herring by trawling from steam trawlers in daylight from Barra Head southwards to the north-western coast of Ireland. The method was not successful at night. Trawling for herring gradually became general in the North Sea. In 1912 three per cent. of the total weight of herrings landed was captured in trawl nets. Steam and joint stock enterprise have revolutionised sea fishing during the last thirty years.

The direction of the wind seems to have some effect upon the catches of herring. Large catches are not made in calms, or during northerly winds, and the best are made when the wind is S.S.E. Unsettled water is far preferable to clear, as is a green sea to a blue, from the fishermen's standpoint, but a series of violent thunderstorms has been known to frighten the fish away from a district.

The following is a list of the herring fishings with their dates :—

ENGLAND.—East Coast *Spring* fishings at Shields and Lowestoft, but neither is of great importance, the chief fishings being in the late summer and autumn. *July* and *August*: Berwick, Seahouses, Blyth, Shields, Hartlepool, Scarborough, Grimsby, Whitby. *August* to *Christmas*: Yarmouth and Lowestoft, South and South-West Coasts. Yarmouth "longshore" herrings are caught early in September. *October* and *November*: Folkestone and Hastings. *November* to *January*: Torbay, Plymouth, Newlyn,

St. Ives, Port Isaac. *June to August*: Peel and Port St. Mary (Isle of Man).

SCOTLAND.—*January and February*: Stornoway, Campbeltown, Wick, Anstruther, Dunbar, Eyemouth and the Lochs, and some seasons at Buckie, Fraserburgh, Peterhead, and Aberdeen. There is comparatively nothing done in March and April. *May and June*: Stornoway, Castlebay, and Loch Fyne—the latter continuing more or less all the summer. Shetland fishing begins about the second week in June, and of late years it has continued to August. *July and August*: The great herring fishing along the whole of the East Coast of Scotland from Wick to Eyemouth. The chief ports are in the order given, viz., Fraserburgh, Peterhead, Wick, Aberdeen, Montrose, and Eyemouth.

IRELAND.—The summer fishing begins as early as February 1st, but is not general until about April and May. In those districts where the season begins in February it finishes at the end of March, the general fishing closing about July 31st. The autumn herring season opens during the first week of August and continues until the following January. The chief herring fishing ports are: Bantry, Castletown-Berehaven, Baltimore, Castletownsend, Kinsale, Dunmore (May and June), Arklow, Howth, Ardglass, Greenore (June and July). On the Donegal coast at Downings Bay and district the early season begins at the end of April and continues through May and June, and in some seasons there are good fishings in November and December.

The Norway herring season opens about the end of December and continues until about the middle of May.

On the coast of Norfolk very few herrings are caught in January. Towards the end of

February the East Anglian fishermen begin to catch what are known as "spring herring." This fishing lasts through March, April and May. There is little or no fat or roe in the Yarmouth and Lowestoft early spring herring, but the fat of the midsummer herring is so abundant that if it be dissected in water it covers it with oil globules.

The Yarmouth and Lowestoft herrings obtainable at Norwich are usually at their best "full," *i.e.*, four weeks before they shoot their roes in autumn and late spring; the small spring and longshore herrings being the most delicate.

The herring's own diet is not confined to one particular kind of food; it feeds upon small medusæ, on the lesser crustacea, on its own young, on spawn; it is even known to feed on worms and flies, and may frequently be caught by hooks baited with artificial flies intended for other fish.

SECTION II.—PROCESSES OF PREPARING THE HERRING.

It is as bloaters that herring are usually eaten in Norfolk. The Yarmouth bloater is an ungutted, unsplit herring, one-third fresh, one-third slightly salt, and one-third lightly smoked, and, to my taste, is of the right delicacy and quality only in and near Great Yarmouth; bloaters procured anywhere else than





The Place to ma



Red-herrings.



in that town or its near neighbourhood, lacking to my mind, the peculiar excellence of the fish as eaten there. Since, however, the fish begins to deteriorate rapidly in condition and flavour within five days of being taken from the sea, it is obvious that the bloater is not the most economical, though in perfection it is the most delicious, method of preparing the herring.

The word "blöta" in Swedish means to steep, or soak. In Iceland, however, the expression "blautr fiskr" meant soft fish, or fresh fish, in distinction to "harda fiskr" = dried fish, or stock fish, a common food among the Icelanders. The name "bloomer" therefore indicates that the herrings were steeped, or soaked in salt water before they were smoked.

Yarmouth¹ bloomers are prepared in various ways, of which this is perhaps the best:— 29 lbs. of common salt are thrown into 71 lbs. of water in a large vat, forming a solution in which the herring will float. They are, therefore, kept down by wooden battens weighted down with bags of salt, which gradually dissolves and keeps the solution at its proper density. When the fish have become rigid the pickle is run off and the herrings are carefully separated and suspended in a current of air (for, as at the Judgment Day, "every herring must hang by its own head") until they are removed and smoked in "loves" (louvres) for from twelve to eighteen hours, the fuel employed

¹ NOTE.—Yarmouth means Great Yarmouth throughout this book.

being oak wood, beech wood, and turf. The best way to keep bloaters fresh, after treatment, is to hang them in a current of air, but immature fish take the salt badly and will not keep. The process must have been familiar in the seventeenth century, since in Beaumont and Fletcher there is a passage: "I have more smoke in my mouth than would blote a hundred herrings" (*Island Princess*, II. 5). Again in Ben Jonson's "Masque of Augures," 17th Speech, we read, "Why, you stinke like so many bloat herrings newly taken out of the chimney."

The next best form in which this fish should be eaten is the red herring, or unsplit smoked herring, called variously the Yarmouth red herring, high dried herring, ham herring, or "militiaman." This fish is not gutted until it reaches the kitchen. The Yarmouth red herring may be eaten, uncooked, during the months of October, November and December. The skin should be peeled off, the head removed, and the fish gutted and cut across into four pieces, dusted with pepper, and eaten with bread and butter. The hard roe fish is usually the better. The Yarmouth red herring is locally sometimes called a "militiaman"; *per contra*, the vulgar Norfolk term for a militiaman in his red tunic when the writer was a youngster, was "a red herring," much as the red herrings sold by grocers in the south of Scotland are sometimes known as "Glasgow magistrates."

On the ancient arms of Yarmouth appear what are known as “Yarmouth capons,” azure, three herrings argent. At a later date the herrings were dimidiated with lions’ heads, the present form.

It is not, however, to a Yarmouth man that we must go for an adequate, nay, dithyrambic appreciation of the merits of the herring. Thomas Nashe (1567), the satirist, author of “Lenten Stuffe, or the Praise of the Red Herring,” was born at Lowestoft, and the following are extracts, some in the original language, from his description of Yarmouth and its most famous product, the red herring, which is simply the bloater more strongly cured, the pickle having about one-sixteenth of its weight in saltpetre added; when the herring has been cured in this mixture, it must be hung in a current of air for twenty-four to forty-eight hours before being smoked:—

“A towne it is that in rich situation exceedeth many citties, and without which . . . the swelling Battlementes of Gurguntus, a head citty of Norffolke and Suffolke would scarce retaine the name of a citty, but become as ruinous and desolate as Thetforde or Ely.”

“Not any where is the word seuerer practised, the preacher reuerentlier obserued and honoured, iustice sounder ministred, and a warlike people peaceablier demeanourd betwixte this and the Grand Cathay, and the Strand of Prester Iohn.”

“Doe but conuert the slenderest twinckling reflése of your eiesight to the flinty ringe that engirtes it, these towred walles, port-cullizd-gates, and gorgeous

architectures that condecorate and adorne it, and then perponder of the red herringes priority and preualence, who is the onely vnexhaustible mine that hath raisd and begot all this, and minutely to riper maturity fosters and cherisheth it."

"But let none of these scumme of the subvrbs be too vineger tarte with mee; for if they bee Ile take mine oath vppon a redde herring and eate it, to prooue that their fathers, their grandfathers, and their great grandfathers, or any other of their kinne, were scullions dishwash, and durty draffe and swil, set against a redde herring. The puissant red herring, the golden Hesperides red herring, the Meonian red herring, the red herring of Red Herrings Hal, euery pregnant peculiar of whose resplendent laude and honour to delineate and adumbrate to the ample life were a woorke that would drinke drie fourescore and eightene Castalian fountaines of eloquence, consume another Athens of fecunditie, and abate the haughest poetickall fury twixt this and the burning zone and the tropike of Cancer. My conceit is cast into a sweating sicknesse, with ascending these few steps of his renowne; into what a hote broyling Saint Laurence feuer would it relapse then, should I spend the whole bagge of my winde in climbing vp to the lofty mountaine creast of his trophees? But no more winde will I spend on it but this: Saint Denis for Fraunce, Saint Iames for Spaine, Saint Patrike for Ireland, Saint George for England, and the red herring for Yarmouth."

Again :—

"There is plain witchcraft in his skin which is a secret that all tapsters will curse me for blabbing: for do but rub a cann or quart pot round about the mouth with it, let the cunningest lick-spiggot swelt his heart out, the beer shall never foam or froth in

the cup, whereby to deceive men of their measure, but be as settled as if it stood all night.”

And again :—

“ It is to bee read, or to bee heard of, howe in the punie shipe or nonage of Cerdicke sandes, when the best houses and walles there were of mudde, or canvaze, or poldavies entiltments, a fisherman of Yarmouth, having drawne so many herrings hee wist not what to do with all, hung the residue, that hee could not sel nor spend, in the sooty roofe of his shad a drying ; or say thus, his shad was a cabinet *in decimo sexto*, builded on foure crutches, and he had no roome in it, but that garret *in excelsis*, to lodge them, where if they were drie let them be drie, for in the sea they had drunk too much, and now hee would force them doo penance for it. The weather was colde, and good fires hee kept, (as fisherman, what hardnesse soever they endure at sea, will make all smoke, but they will make amends for it when they come to land ;) and what with his fiering and smoking, or smokie fiering, in that his narrow lobby, his herrings, which were as white as whale-bone when he hung them up, now lookt as red as a lobster. It was four or five dayes before either hee or his wife espied it ; and when they espied it, they fell downe on their knees and blessed themselves, and cride, ‘ A miracle, a miracle ! ’ and with the proclaiming it among their neighbours they could not be content, but to the court the fisherman would, and present it to the King, then lying at Burrough Castle two miles off.”

Nashe, in enumerating the excellences of herrings, says :—

“ A red herring is wholesome in a frosty morning : it is most precious fish-merchandise, because it can

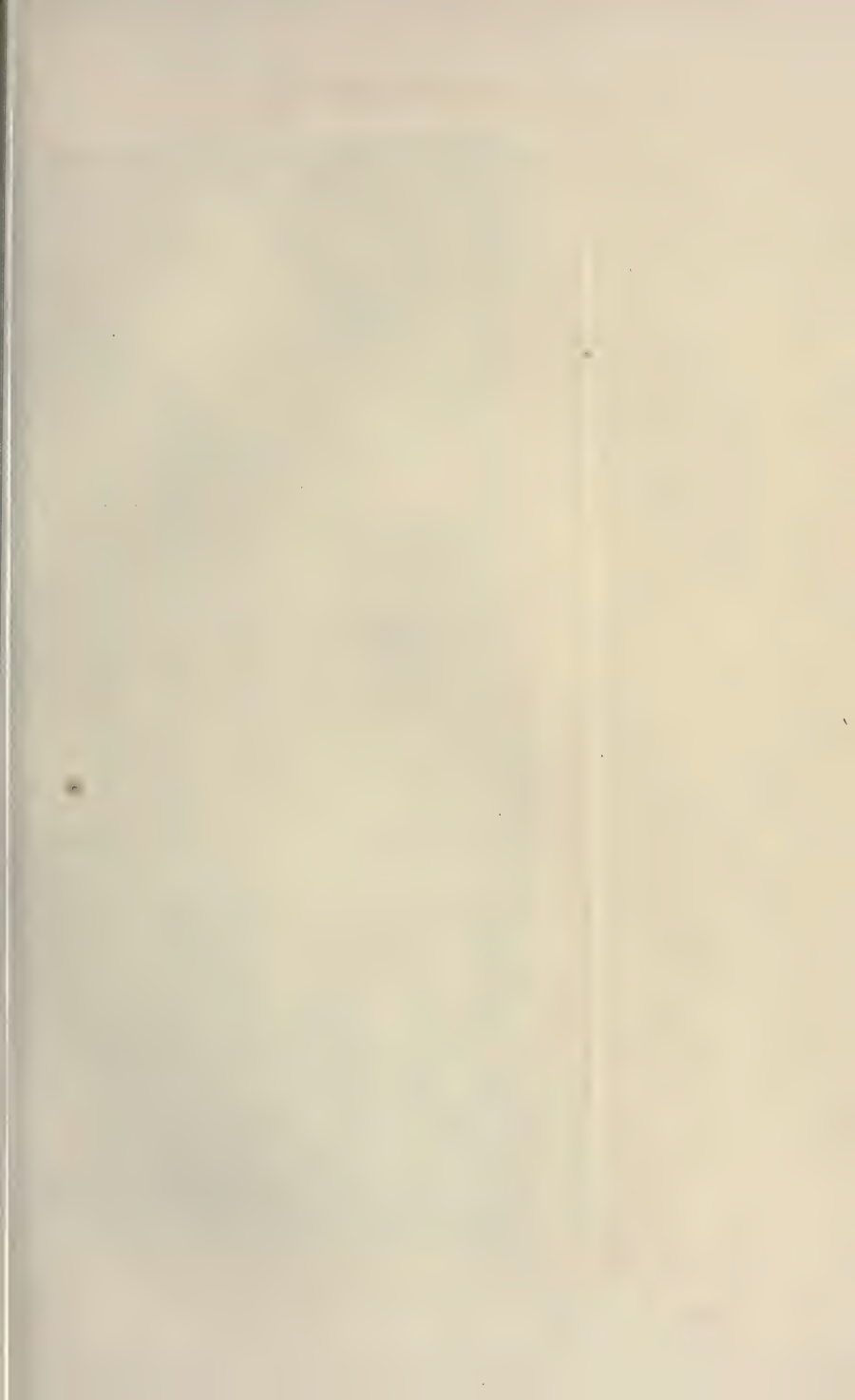
be carried through all Europe. No where are they so well cured as at Yarmouth. The poorer sort make it three parts of their sustenance. It is every man's money, from the king to the peasant. The round or cob, dried and beaten to powder, is a cure for the stone. A red herring drawn on the ground will lead hounds a false scent. A broiled herring is good for the rheumatism. The fishery is a great nursery for seamen, and brings more ships to Yarmouth than assembled at Troy to fetch back Helen."

At the end of "The Praise of the Red Herring," he boasts of being the first author who had written in praise of fish or fishermen : Of the latter he says :—

"For your seeing wonders in the deep, you may be the sons and heirs of the prophet Jonas ; you are all cavaliers and gentlemen, since the king of fishes chose you for his subjects ; for your selling smoke, you may be courtiers ; for your keeping fasting days, friar-observants ; and, lastly, look in what town there is the sign of the three mariners, the huff-capped drink in that house you shall be sure of always."

The kippered herring is lightly salted, dried, split open and gutted and then heavily smoked ; it is a valuable fish food, obtainable all the year round, although to some it is indigestible. Kippers, strictly speaking, should contain no roes.

The word "kipper" is derived from the Dutch "kippen" = to hatch, and is particularly applied to fish after they have spawned. In Holland, the salmon, which is almost worthless in that condition as food if eaten fresh, was

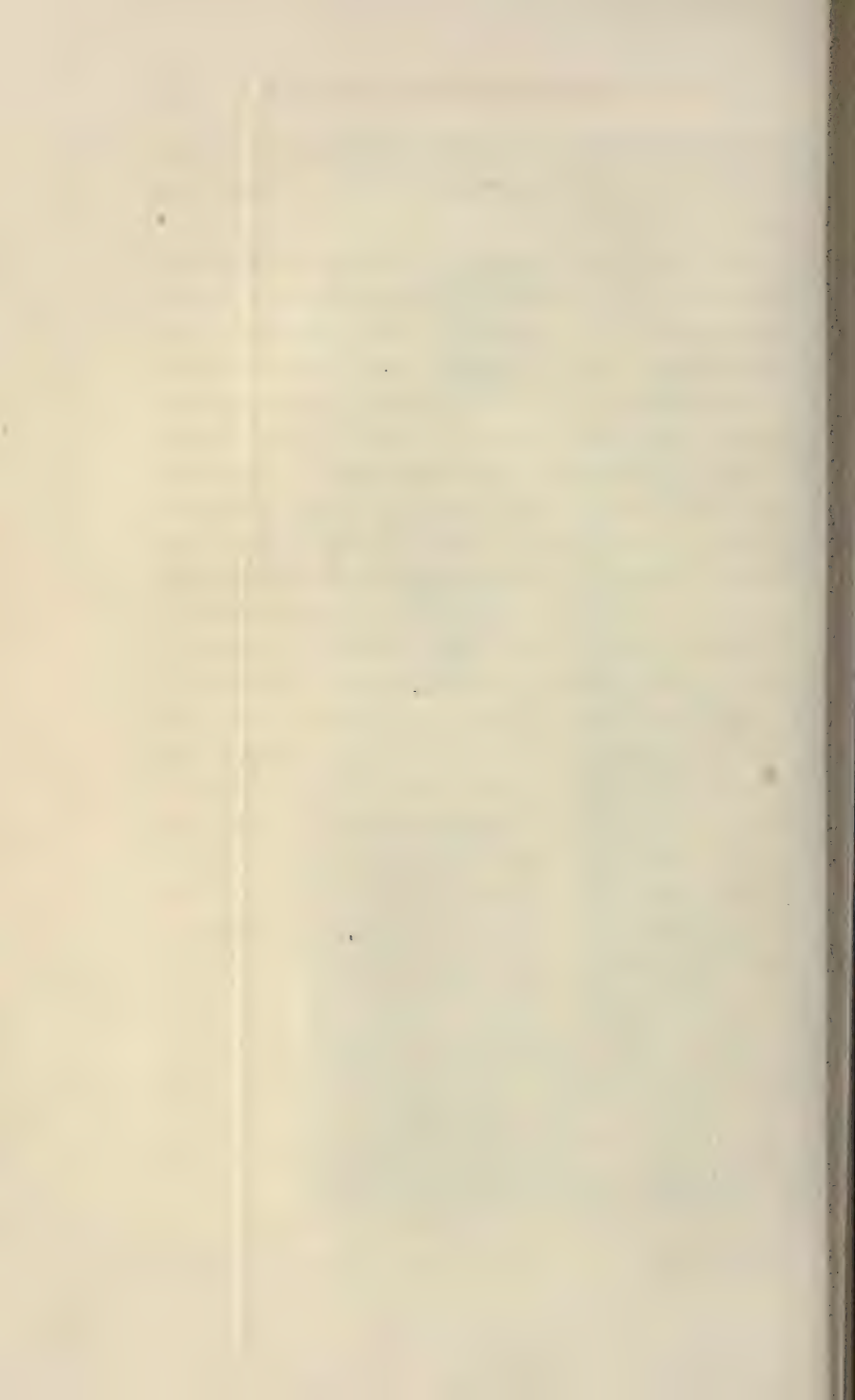




Making



ed-herrings.



found to be good enough when cured, and the word "kippen" soon came to be applied to the cured herring.

The fresh or "white" herring, grilled and served with or without mustard sauce, is well known all over the British Isles, as is also the same fish soured in scalded vinegar and baked in an oven with slices of onion, whole peppers, parsley and bay leaves. The strong palates of our ancestors also relished mustard sauce with the cured fish. John Russell in his "Boke of Nurture" (c. 1450) recommends it as "the metest salte for salt herring." Carlyle heads a chapter in his "French Revolution" "Grilled Herrings," and refers to them as eaten with vinegar and onions and prunes.

On the coast of North America herring roe is eaten as a kind of caviare. The herrings come up to spawn in Norfolk Sound, out of compliment, no doubt, to their relations on the Norfolk coast of England, and the natives lay under water a number of little rods of pine-wood with stones tied to them, upon which the fish cast their roe. When the rods are taken out of the water, covered with the roe, they have the appearance of coral; the roe is then scraped off, and is considered to be a great delicacy, having acquired a pleasing flavour from the pinewood. The process resembles the production of shellac in India.

SECTION III.—SUPERSTITIONS CONNECTED WITH
THE HERRING.

In Banffshire some two centuries ago, when the herring fishing was unsuccessful, effigies of men and women were burnt on suspicion of their having caused a blight on the fishing; and as late as 1855 it was recorded in the *Banff Journal* that the herring fishery having been very backward, some of the fishermen of Buckie dressed a cooper in a flannel shirt with bars stuck all over it, and wheeled him in procession through the town in a hand barrow to bring better luck.

In Norfolk, according to *Notes and Queries*, October 7th, 1865, a queer legend existed that fleas and herrings came together. As an old Cromer fisherman said, "Times is as you may look in my shirt, and scarce see a flea, and then there won't be but few herring. But when you see my shirt alive with fleas, then there is certain to be a good tidy lot of fish." It is also a common belief that herrings desert their ordinary haunts when the boats put out on the Sabbath day.

The fishermen of the Outer Hebrides object to Sunday fishing on other than purely religious grounds. They say rightly that men work better for the week-end rest to body and mind, and that if the herring are allowed to rest on Saturday night, Sunday, and Monday morning, they settle, by being left alone, take confidence,

and come up to the surface better on the Monday night when the fishing is resumed. As the herring dislike noise, and are frightened by the continual disturbance, the idea of a respite or weekly close time over the Sunday is undoubtedly well founded. The Manx, Scottish, and Cornish fishermen engaged in the Manx herring fishery are so strict in regard to Sabbath observance that they remain in port from Saturday morning to Monday afternoon. English fishermen resent the loss of two nights' fishing, and occasionally have attempted to break through the custom. By the Scottish Herring Fishery Act of 1815 herring nets set or hauled within two leagues of the coast on Sundays are forfeited.

On some parts of the East Coast the shoals are believed to be led by a shad, which is then called a "demon herring."

The most interesting superstition on record comes, however, from Dr. Johnson's "Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland." "It is held," says the Doctor, who heard the legend while staying with Macleod, "that the return of the Laird to Dunvegan, after any considerable absence, produces a plentiful capture of herrings; and that, if any woman crosses the water to the opposite island, the herrings will desert the coast. Boethius tells the same story of some other place. This tradition is not uniform. Some hold that no woman may pass, and others that none may pass but a

Macleod." To this may be added the story told by Mr. E. V. Lucas ("Highways and Byways in Sussex," 1904, p. 173): "It was once the custom, I read, and perhaps still is, for these men (the Brighton fishermen) when casting their nets for mackerel or herring, to stand with bare heads repeating in unison these words: 'There they goes then. God Almighty send us a blessing it is to be hoped.'"

Scottish fishermen also quote the Bible as the authority for the herring deserting localities on account of "the wickedness of the people," pointing to Hosea iv. 3: "Therefore shall the land mourn . . .; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away."

The old tenth century historian, Peter Clausson, writing of the famous herring fishery at Bohuslän, says that the fish in his time refused in certain years to visit the coasts of Norway and Sweden, and this is the reason he gives:—

"The herring have disappeared owing to magic, bad men having sunk a copper horse in the sea and thereby driven the herring away from the coast."

The subsidiary cause was "the wickedness of the people," as in the case of the present war, according to certain theories, lay and clerical. In 1549, when the herring fishing began to fail once more, the Government passed a law providing that—

"Since there is danger that God may withdraw his blessing on account of the great sins and vices of inhabitants of the coasts (of Norway and Sweden),

THE "SNEEZE" OF THE HERRING 45

our tax gatherers, each one in his own district, shall see to it that the people in the fishing stations lead good and Christian lives; that there is preaching every Sunday, and people exhorted to lead a godly life, so that God may be moved by the prayers of good Christians to extend his blessing to us also in the future."

There is a belief among fishermen that a herring when caught articulates a sound similar to the word "cheese." This sound is caused by an escape of air from the air bladder, or a movement of the gills. Fishermen, indeed, frequently state that the herrings "sneeze," just as Aristotle says that gurnards "grunt." The gurnard, known off the Norfolk coast as gurnet or latchet, was known to the Greeks as "lyros" and "coccyx," apparently from the noise it was said to make.

Many fish have various forms of utterance attributed to them. On the Norfolk Broads one often hears it said that an old jack pike has barked like a dog, and the same is said of the conger eel.

Red-finned herrings, called "loaders" or "kings and queens," are sometimes caught; they are regarded as an omen of a successful fishing. One of them is then taken out of the nets very carefully, prevented from touching anything made of wood, and passed round the scudding poles as many times as the fishermen desire to get lasts of herring at the next haul.

In 1587 two herrings were caught off the

coast of Norway upon the bodies of which it was thought two Gothic letters appeared. They were taken to Copenhagen, and given to Frederick II., who regarded them as an omen of his approaching death. He consulted certain wise men who interpreted the letters to mean, "You will not fish for herrings so well in future as other nations." Various other learned people, including Professors of Rostock and several of the universities of Germany, were consulted without a more satisfactory interpretation being forthcoming. A French mathematician at Copenhagen is said to have published a large volume dealing with the prophecy, while another person published a work in which he interpreted the omen as meaning that all Europe would shortly suffer a great catastrophe.

As the outcome of a quarrel about some herrings two women were accused of being witches, were tried at the Bury St. Edmunds Assizes in March, 1664, convicted, and hanged. Sir Matthew Hale, the judge, was impressed with the worthlessness of the accusation, but the jury were influenced by the opinion of Dr. Thomas Browne, "the most famous physician of his time," who happened to be in court. This was Sir Thomas Browne, of Norwich ("Religio Medici," "Pseudodoxia Epidemica," etc.). He declared that in his opinion "the devil had co-operated with the malice of the accused." With the exception of the three Exeter witches

executed in 1682 these were perhaps the last persons hanged for witchcraft in England. The blood of these two women was on the head of the author of "Religio Medici"—and only about a handful of herrings.

SECTION IV.—GENERAL REMARKS.

Vast numbers of British-caught herrings "go foreign" (to use the Yarmouth expression) salted and packed in barrels, salt fish being little, if at all, eaten in Britain. On March 13th, 1917, Captain Bathurst, M.P., answering Mr. Watts, M.P., in the House of Commons, stated that the quantity of herrings pickled in brine in Stornoway alone was 75,000 barrels, and, although its export was prohibited, there was no demand in this country for this particular kind of fish, which was very cheap and good food; he himself had eaten some of these very pickled herrings, and desired nothing better.

Of the salt itself more will be said; Professor Hutchinson, some years ago, had a word to say about the connection between unsound salt fish and leprosy, but in these days of ample vegetable supplies we need not think twice about recommending the use of good salt fish for habitual consumption among our fellow countrymen. Sound and well cured, it is as safe as fresh fish, but fish carelessly salted deteriorates easily and quickly becomes unsound, and is held responsible by some

authorities for leprosy in Scandinavia, on the south coast of Africa, and elsewhere. The modern British palate is entirely unused to the taste of salted (pickled) herrings ; it is doubtful whether those who have been accustomed all their lives to fresh fish would eat salt fish, at least until the herrings have been well soaked before use and the strength of the pickle thereby greatly reduced. The proper distribution of fresh fish is therefore all the more important, and, generally speaking, the advantages of cheap, wholesome fish as food have never really been brought home to our working people in our inland villages and small towns away from the coast. This is owing to the want of adequate means of distribution and cheap railway rates, and the failure to preserve the fish perfectly fresh till it reaches the consumer. There should be a system of cold storage to cope with gluts of herrings ; there is no reason why a refrigerator should not be placed in every railway station throughout the country, to be supplied daily with fresh fish so that they could be available for local distribution. This would serve two purposes, placing sound, varied and nourishing food at the disposal of the population in places removed from the sea and at a distance from large cities, and replacing butchers' meat, should it be, as is very likely, as dear and scarce after the war as it is now. It is interesting to recall in this connection that " the opening of new and distant

sources of supply of provisions to the metropolis" was placed first in the list of advantages offered to Parliament by the Board of the proposed London and Birmingham Railway in 1831, and the example might well be followed in the case of the fish supply to-day.

The average total weight of wet fish of various kinds landed in ports of the United Kingdom during the five years prior to the war (1909-13), was about one and one-fifth million tons annually, about half of which was exported and the balance consumed at home, or destroyed. If a calculation be made on the usual basis for reckoning, by adjusting the account to provide for smaller consumption by infants, children and women, and larger for persons of "man-value," the amount of fish consumed by each man-unit did not exceed an average approximate amount of $1\frac{3}{4}$ ozs. per day. That the proportion of fish food consumed per man-unit is relatively small, when compared with the total daily consumption of butchers' meat, bacon, ham, fowls, rabbits, and game, can be easily observed by any private person. If the whole population of the United Kingdom of all ages and both sexes be used for calculating the average at a flat rate, the average consumption is roughly only $1\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. per week per head: one good-sized herring alone weighs 8 or 9 ozs.

About 100,000 tons of fish are annually used in the United Kingdom by the fried fish

shops ; they prepare the fish by methods which add enormously to its food value. Fried fish, potatoes and bread form one of the most cheap and admirable meals obtainable, and nothing could be more nourishing for those who have hard physical work to perform. Fried fish shops in industrial localities should therefore be encouraged, and working people should be persuaded to eat, and taught how to fry fish with oil, butter, fat or margarine in a paste made with meal and eggs. Bradford, with a large population of foreign origin, accustomed to food cooked in oil and fat, has 303 fried fish shops, which in 1916 supplied 5,000,000 fried fish meals, in one year, at an average cost to the purchaser of under $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ per meal.

As to the food value of the herring, another quotation from the *Fish Trades Gazette* of March 31st, 1917, may be of interest. The analyses show that its food value varies much, according mainly to the proportion of fat present. A pound of the flesh of the fresh herring may furnish from 360 to 1,095 calories; even a spent fish may furnish 400 calories. About 30 per cent. of the fish as purchased is refuse and waste, and calculation shows that three moderately large fresh herrings, or four smaller ones, will furnish all the protein and most of the fat required by a man in a day, while two fat fresh herrings may do so in regard to the protein and nearly all in regard to the fat. For instance, the mean of the

analyses of a dozen autumn herrings, averaging 12 inches long and $10\frac{1}{4}$ ozs. in weight, gave 52.45 grammes of protein in the muscles and 7.38 grammes in the roe, and 28.64 grammes of fat in the muscles and 0.84 in the roe. Two such fresh herrings would furnish 119.7 grammes of protein, while the daily requirement is about 100 grammes, and 59 grammes of fat, the daily requirement also being about 100 grammes. The calories would amount to 1,040, or just what is given by 1 lb. of medium fat beef. Smaller quantities of salted or red herrings would suffice, and still less of fried cod. Catholic Europe derives a large part of its animal protein from dried fish; and it ought not to be forgotten that in this country in former days dried and smoked fish were very largely used.

It is also noteworthy that the consumption of meat has enormously increased in the last few generations. In the period from 1853 to 1913 the consumption of imported meat has gone up steadily from 3 lbs. per head to 58 lbs. per head per annum. That the consumption of home-grown meat has also increased may be inferred from the enormous increase in the land under pasture. According to Sir Henry Rew, Secretary to the Food Controller, the annual consumption of meat per head is 122 lbs. in the United Kingdom as compared with 99 lbs. in Germany, 80 lbs. in France, 76 lbs. in Denmark, 70 lbs. in Belgium, and 62 lbs. in Sweden and

Norway. The only country which appears to surpass our own in the consumption of meat is the United States, where it equals 179 lbs. per head per annum. American authorities are agreed that a reduction by at least a half is desirable on both economic and physiological grounds. Fish, then, should replace meat to a large extent in the dietary, especially amongst those engaged in sedentary occupations, and

—	Percent- age of waste.	Price per lb.	Cost per lb. of fish without waste.	Food value for 1s. Calories.
Herring (salted) . . .	18	4d.	4½d.	1,670
Sprat	—	3d.	3d.	1,300
Mackerel	50	4½d.	9d.	899
Herring (fresh) . . .	34	7½d.	11½d.	704
Catfish, rock turbot, or rock salmon (bought skinned and headed) .	22	9d.	11½d.	330
Salmon	23	2s. 6d.	3s. 3d.	292
John Dory (bought skinned and headed)	14	1s. 6d.	1s. 9d.	191
Cod	49	1s. 0d.	1s. 11½d.	166
Haddock	45	10d.	1s. 6d.	165

because in normal times it is the cheapest form of animal protein.

Fish, like meat, is nearly all protein and water, with a variable amount of fat. The most nourishing are those which contain the most fat—namely, salmon and turbot. Next come herring and mackerel, while hake, cod and haddock come last, containing less than 1 per cent. of fat. The food value of 1 oz. of lean beef, 50 to 60 calories, is given by 1 oz.

of salmon or turbot, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. of herring or mackerel. Dr. E. L. Sprigg's table (on p. 52) shows which fish give the best value for money at the prices named.

The herring, the sprat, and the mackerel give much the best value, the salted herring being easily first at 4*d.* a lb., or 2*d.* each for good-sized fish ; at 6*d.* per lb. it is second to the sprat. Two herrings, or three small ones, give 600 calories, and contain $2\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. of protein ; this, when added to that in the ration of bread, gives nearly all the protein which an adult needs in the day.

Salted herrings must be soaked in water three days, the water being changed four or five times each day ; or left in a basin in the sink, with the tap running slowly, for a day or more. They must then be boiled, and are excellent served, failing potatoes, with rice or beans, and margarine or butter. If properly soaked they are also good fried, baked or grilled.

Pickled herrings are used in great quantities in Italy and France. Their goodness consists in their being fat, fleshy and white, and the best fish are large, firm and dry. The most common way to cook the pickled fish is to broil or fry ; but there are other ways of dressing them :—

Baked Herrings.—Soak six herrings in cold water for twelve hours. Dry well with a cloth. Remove the heads and tails. Mix together some black pepper with six pounded cloves, salt, and mustard. Rub the fish well all over. Place them in a baking-tin,

with three tablespoonfuls of salad oil. Cook until tender, turning over now and then. Serve with mustard sauce.

Fried Herrings à la Hoveton.—Soak, clean, and dry as before. Dip in butter and a little salt. Cook in a frying-pan for ten minutes, then add a cup of stock mixed with a large tablespoonful of tomato sauce. Cook for ten minutes longer. Remove from the fire. Arrange the fish in a dish. Pour the sauce over them and serve hot.

Grilled Herrings.—Remove the head and tail. Soak in water as before. Dry the fish, and then soak in milk for two hours. Beat one egg with pepper and salt (good quantity of salt) and a dessertspoonful of chopped parsley; add an ounce of melted butter. Mix well, dip the herrings in the mixture, and roll them in maize or oatmeal flour. Now grill, turning over once or twice. Time for cooking ten to twelve minutes.

The foul, empty, or shotten herring, the last a term familiar from Shakespeare, is also known among the Dutch as “yidel”—empty, *i.e.*, shotten, or have lately spawned. The word “ylen” is also often used, and is derived from the Dutch word “yele (haring)” —lean (herring). But the Dutch poorer classes dislike the fish in this state, though it is wholesome food when it is kippered, and I have heard in the lower quarters of Yarmouth the expression, used by an adult to a child: “I’ll give you mokus and foul fish, if you don’t behave yourself.” The word “mokus” is used by a section of the people of Amsterdam, and on inquiring its meaning there I was told it was a corruption of the Levantine word “markoot,” meaning “blows.”

The word has probably come over to Yarmouth with the Dutch fishermen. Herring full of roe or milt are called by Scottish and Irish fishermen "matties," a corruption probably of the Dutch word "matjes" or "maatjes." These Dutch phrases, now part of the language of the fisherman, prove more conclusively than any document the influence of Holland on the herring fisheries of the world.

One or two other local words may also be noted.

In 1782 the word "cadger" appeared in certain pamphlets to denote a hawker who carried fish into inland parts of the country, selling the fish for money or exchanging it for country produce, such as eggs, butter, poultry, and so on, which were in turn brought back to the towns, and sold. The exchange by hawkers or higglers of summer mackerel for eggs in mid-Norfolk is not uncommon even to this day.

The word "cadger" = hawker (carrier of a pack) has passed into common usage in an unworthy sense, as has the now nearly obsolete word "coshganger," or "cosher" (and to go "coshing") which in East Anglia is used to denote a person who "sponges" upon another by "cadging" a meal. The word "coshganger" is of Irish origin, and was brought over by the Irish cattle drovers who attended Norwich cattle market; it meant a country dweller who declined to perform regular work.

In the *Spectator* (No. 179), of Tuesday,

September 25th, 1711, Addison calls a merry-andrew "a pickled herring."

The fourteenth century word for curing herrings was in Dutch "kaken" = to pack in barrels, "kaecken" or "kaeckjes," whence our word "kegs." The arms of the Dutch settlement of Beuckelzen are two "kaeckmaskens," or knives used in curing herring. Our word "sloop" has the same origin as the Dutch "slabbaert," a small vessel used in the herring fishery.

CHAPTER II

THE HERRING IN HISTORY

As it has been said that the foundations of Amsterdam were laid on herring bones, so in one sense, the Civil War owed its origin to the Yarmouth fisheries, for it was to protect them and the coast trade generally that the expedient of levying "ship money" was hit upon. Nor was the danger an idle one. The Dunkirkers had been scouring the coast for some years, and on one occasion had actually landed at Tunstead, while the North Sea fishing fleet did not dare to sail without an armed convoy.

Out of the English herring fishery, again, grew the mercantile marine and ultimately, through Cromwell's Navigation laws, the British Navy. It is therefore no uninteresting task to trace the herring through history, and to note the events, social and political, connected with it, with an eye kept wryly on the seventeenth century disputes about the Dominion of the Sea. An understanding of those disputes will help us to grasp in some respects the meaning of the expression "Freedom of the Seas," as used by the Germans during the present war.

About the year 240 Solinus described the

inhabitants of the Hebrides as living on fish and milk, and ignorant of the cultivation of grain :—

“Hebrides quinque numero, quarum incolae nesciunt fruges, piscibus tantum et lacte vivunt.”

SOLIN., “Polyh.” c. 25, ed. Paris, 1503.

The Dutch came to Scotland in the year 836 to buy salted fish of the Scottish fishermen, whether herring or not is uncertain, although several writers on the herring fishery assume this statement to prove the earliest date for herring fishing in British waters. Swinden, however, in his “History and Antiquities of Great Yarmouth” thinks that the herring fishing started at Yarmouth soon after the landing of Cedric the Saxon in 495. He states that the Church of Saint Bennet’s was built by Felix, the Bishop of the East Angles, in 647, on the Greenhill, “and a Godly man placed in it to pray for the health and success of the fishermen,” and that men came to fish at Great Yarmouth in the herring season. A second church dedicated to Saint Nicholas, the patron saint of fishermen, was afterwards built in the same place. In 709 mention is made of the herring fishery in the Chronicle of the Monastery of Evesham.

It is stated in the Saga of St. Olaf, dated about the year 980, that Seigurd Sur enabled his bondmen to buy their freedom by lending them what was necessary for the fishing of herring. About the same time, also, a herring

boat going south is mentioned in the Saga of Olaf Tryggvessön. From 960 to 975 the Norwegians fished the herring with large nets in the district near Christiania, and a few years later the abundance of fish was so great that all the coast districts of Norway were swarming with them, so much so that we find Snorro, the Herodotus of the North, in 978, referring frequently to the herring fishery on the coast of Norway and noting the abundance of herring and corn as characteristic of a beneficent reign.

Beccles (which is not very far from Great Yarmouth), at the time of King Edward the Confessor paid as rent or income to the abbey of Saint Edmond 30,000 herring, a number increased to 60,000 in the reign of his successor. A part of Beccles Fen near the river is called "Solfon," which shows that it formed a salt pan for the production of salt for curing herrings. The salt was obtained by the evaporation of sea water. Beccles was originally a fishing town; but after the reign of Henry VIII. herrings ceased to be caught near the town, as the sea was banked out by sea walls near Great Yarmouth.

The abbey of Saint Edmondsbury in the year 1286 expended £25 on herring for the monks during Lent. As a fat ox was purchased for 4s., and as the yearly expenditure of the abbey kitchen on all food, including fish, was £529, the importance of the herring may be easily seen.

The earliest notice of the herring fishery in France is in the Charter of the Abbey of Saint Catherine, near Rouen, about 1030, where it appears that certain salt works near Dieppe were to pay to the abbey five milliards of herring.

There is a reference during the reign of King Macbeth of Scotland, 1037—54, to a Scottish fishery which was the basis of a small amount of export commerce, but the fish are not defined:—

“All hys tyme wes gret plentè
Abowndand, bath on land and se.”

Wyntoun's Cronykil of Scotland.

In Ives' "Garianonum" there is the following note: "Norwiz ancientment fust un lieu de Grand Fishinge. Vide Cart. Alfr. Est-Anglorum. *Epi Sancto Edmundo Mansuram suam in Norwico que annuatim reddit unum lastum de Halecibus. Monast. Ang. Vol. I., fo. 294.*" Ives says that about the time of Edward the Confessor, 1042—66, the sea retreated from the sand at the mouth of the "Aestuary" on which Great Yarmouth now stands; "and then there were two channelles for Shippes and Fishermen to pass and enter into that arme of the sea for utterance of their fishe and marchandizes, whiche were conveyed to divers partes and places, as well in the countye of Norfolke as in the countye of Suffolke, by reason that all the wholle level

of the marshes and fennes, which nowe are betwixte the towne of Yermouthe and the citie of Norwiche, were then all an arme of the sea, enteringe within the lande by the mouth of Hierus (Yare), and this was aboute the yere of our Saviour MXL and longe before."

Yarmouth is mentioned in Domesday Book, 1086, as containing 70 burgesses, "Garleston" (Gorleston) as having three salt pans, the importance of which we shall see later; twenty-four fishermen in Yarmouth belonged properly to Gorleston. The port of Dunwich paid, and had long paid, 60,000 herrings to the King, and that of Sandwich 40,000 herrings annually to the monks.

In 1088 Robert, Duke of Normandy, by a charter to the abbey of La Sainte Trinité at Fécamp allowed a fair to be held for one day while the herring fishing was in progress.

In 1108 Henry I. made Yarmouth a burgh, the annual payment for which was ten milliards of herring.

Herrings were among the articles charged with tolls or duties at Newcastle-on-Tyne in the reign of Henry I. Herrings, like oysters, were then very plentiful, and so highly valued that silver was brought to England from Beame (Bohemia) by way of the Rhine, in exchange for these commodities, and for wool, butter, cheese and cattle.

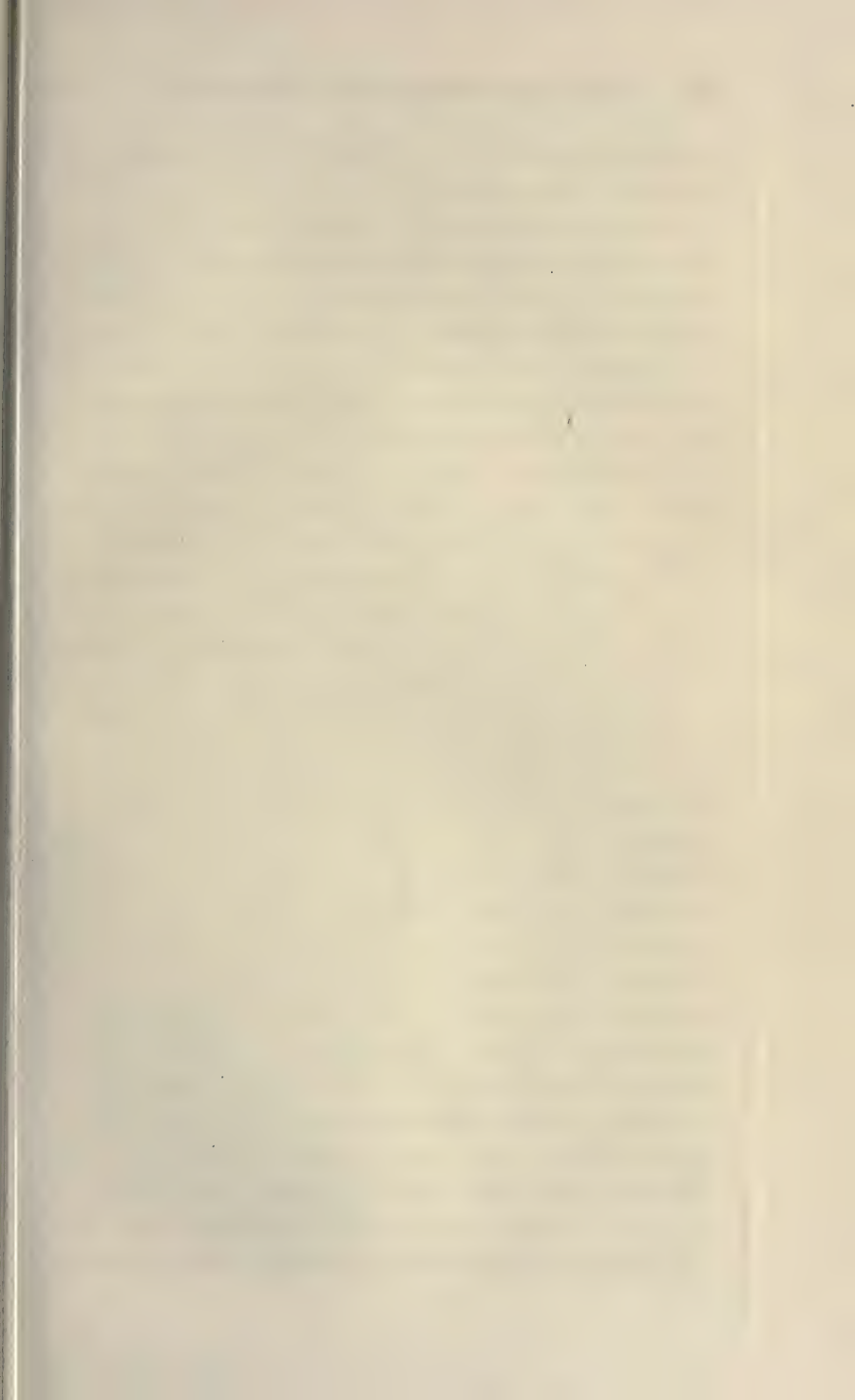
By the charter of King David I. to the abbey

of Holyrood, 1138, the right to fish herring at Renfrew was granted.

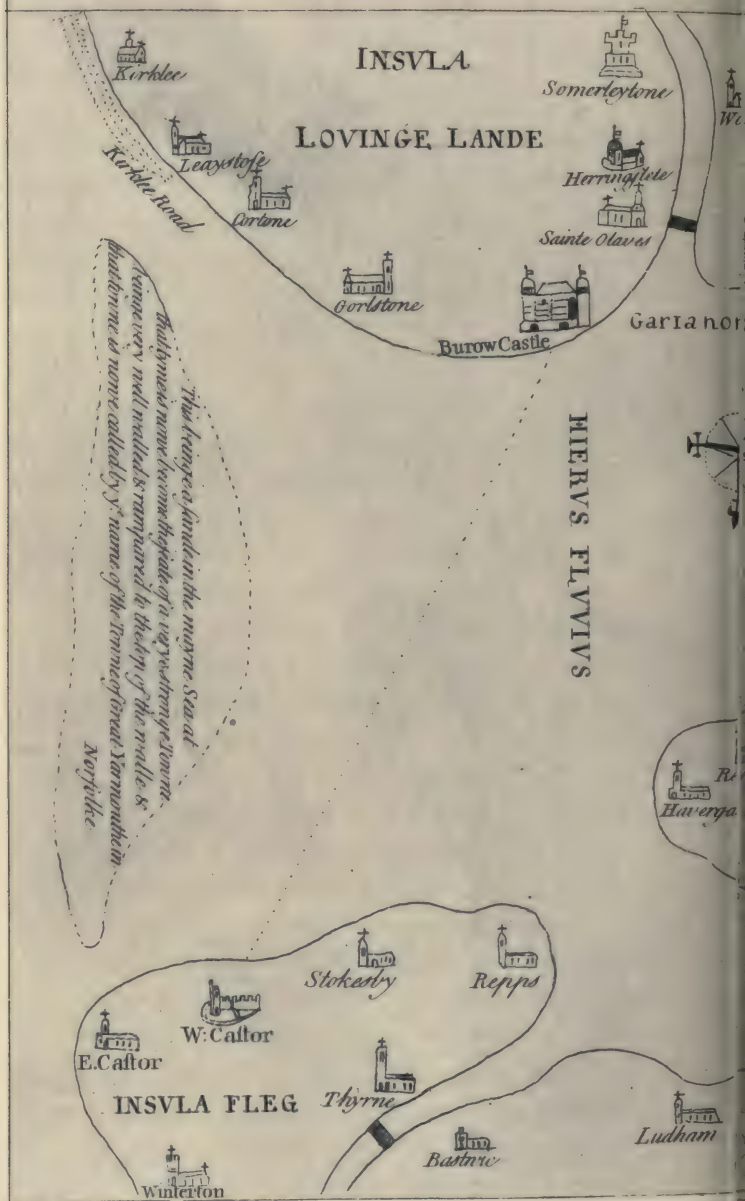
In 1152 William of Malmesbury calls Norwich, which was still regarded as a fishing town, though it had in fact ceased to be so, a "populous village remarkable for its merchandise." The town was rebuilt in this year, made a corporation, and given by King Stephen as an appanage to his son William.

Norwich became a free city by charter, May 5th, 1194. The charter is now in the muniment room of the Norwich Castle Museum; it bears the seal of Richard I. A new charter was given in 1404. The author of this book served (1912-13) as chief magistrate of the City of Norwich under this charter.

In 1153 among the laws of King David of Scotland dealing with commerce was one providing that all goods brought by sea should be landed prior to sale, except salt and herrings, which might be sold on board the vessels. During the same reign the Firth of Forth was frequently covered with boats manned by English, Scottish and Belgic fishermen who caught herring in the neighbourhood of the Island of May. This seems to be one of the earliest records of the herring fishery on the North British coast, but as Scottish subjects on the south side of the Firth of Forth were then called English it is open to doubt whether those whom we nowadays call English went so far from their own ports on



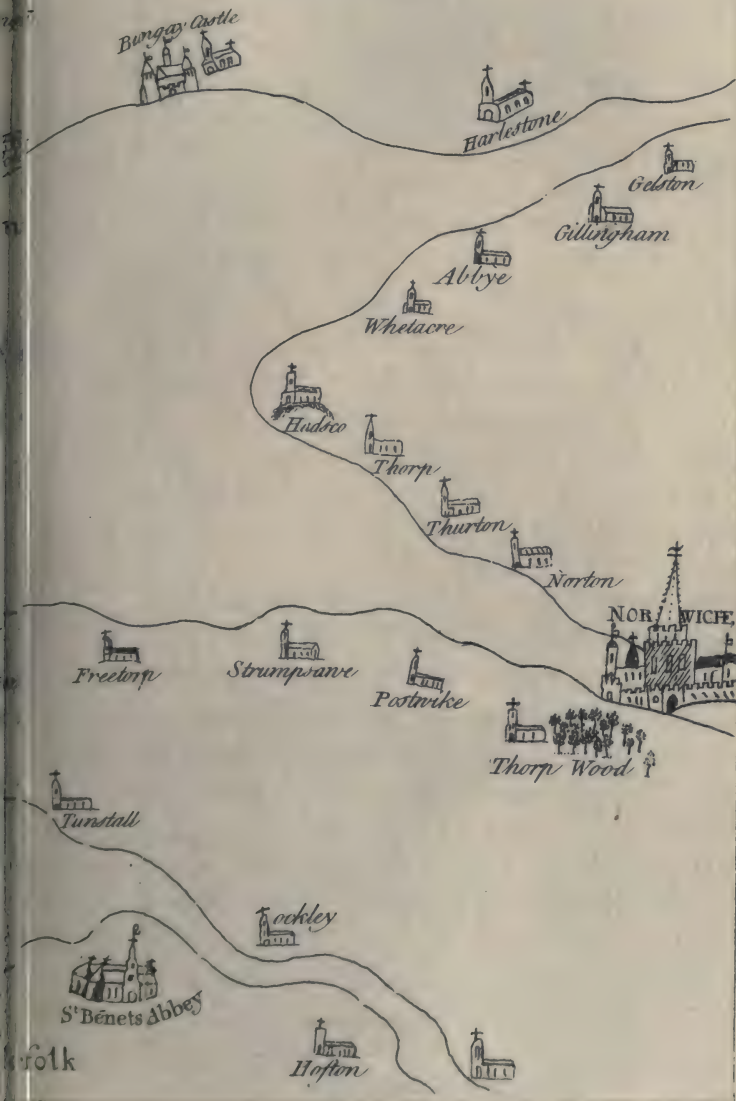
The Entrance of the *HIERVS* or *YARE*, with the course of that River,



the towns bordering thereon AD. 1000.

Ex Antiqua in Pergamen delinatione illuminat.

SVFFOLKE



existence of the town and haven of Gt. Yarmouth; looking south.

(Ives', *Garianonum*.)

fishing voyages to what was at that time a hostile country.

In the reign of Henry II. herring formed part of the revenue of the bishopric of Chichester.

In 1155 Louis VI. of France prohibited his subjects from buying anything in the towns of Estampes but mackerel and salted herring.

If Beuckels (see p. 101) had any merit as an inventor it must have been in the introduction of gutting the herring, since the "Kronikel van Holland" tells us that in 1163 herrings were first fished for in the Meuse, and the first fishery established at Brielle. The fishermen of Zierikzee were the first to fish and pack herrings in barrels; those of Biervliet, where Beuckels was born, the first to make use of a better method of preserving the fish by cleaning the insides; while the fishermen of Zeeland, Holland and West Friesland fitted out small vessels called sabards or slabbaerts and joined in the fishing.

In 1187 Philip II. granted a charter to Liège which records the town's privilege of buying and selling fresh and salted herring.

King John in 1199 created Dunwich a free burgh, for the annual payment of 120 pounds, one mark of silver and 2,400 herring, a great decrease on the payment in kind recorded in Domesday Book.

The earliest notice of the herring fishing of Ireland is about the year 1202, when we read that King John confirmed a donation of herring to the abbey of Connal.

seatic trade in England, the "Almaines" or "men of Almeny" of the old chroniclers, assisting to put down Kett's rebellion in Norwich in the reign of Edward VI.

Herring fishing on the coast of Scania is now almost extinct. The fish with their keen sense of hearing and sight and from their dislike of the noise and movement caused by the traffic in the Sound, have migrated westward. The great whale fisheries of Greenland have had something to do with the change, since, owing to the reduction in the numbers of whales, or to their being chased away by whale hunters, they are no longer there to pursue the shoals of herrings, or frighten them into taking shelter in the Sound.

The main object of the Hansard trade with Denmark, Sweden and Norway was the herring, and this brought many industries in its train. It gave rise to trade in cloth, linen, hardware, wine and beer with the natives of Scandinavia, who were ignorant of handicrafts.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, from July 25th to September 29th of each year the extreme south-western part of the Swedish coast was alive with fishermen and merchants. Temporary taverns were set up by Lübeck tavern keepers, German coopers made barrels for the herrings, and a large trade in imported salt was carried on with Germany. Thousands of men and women were hard at work fishing, salting and packing the herring, as on the

wharves and the denes adjoining Yarmouth to-day.

Lübeck, the most important town of the Hansa League, had for its armorial bearings three herrings upon a plain gold shield; the herring was thus the ensign of the greatest power in commerce and warfare in Northern Europe for at least 350 years, roughly speaking, that is, from 1241 to the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Lübeck sent her fishing boats into the Belt and the Sound, where the herring, in the twelfth century, resorted for the purpose of spawning. By harassing the Hanseatic traders, the Danes in and near the Sound drew upon themselves a war with the League which lasted with scarcely an interval from 1227 to 1249, and ended by permanently crippling the Danish kings.

The migrations of the herrings during that period, and even later till the Dutch dominated the fisheries, in fact determined the whole course of commerce and of politics, in Northern Europe. Just as the Hansa League had depended for a great part of its wealth on the herring, so the Low Countries first began to become commercially prosperous when, during the early part of the fifteenth century the fish began to spawn in the North Sea instead of in the Baltic. Out of the Dutch fishing fleet grew the Dutch mercantile marine, and this came to be of such importance that in Cromwell's time the Dutch owned 16,000 out of the 20,000

merchant ships sailing the seas. Out of the Dutch mercantile marine sprang Cromwell's Navigation laws of 1651; out of Cromwell's Navigation laws grew the British mercantile marine, the nursery of the Navy; out of the repeal of the British Navigation laws in 1849 sprang the German mercantile marine, from which grew the German navy, and, eventually, the German submarine, with the result that we are now short of bread and meat and so must turn again to fish. And this brings us back to the herring, the point from which we started.

The placing of herrings in barrels changed the destinies of Holland, and with them those of the whole world, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Well might Lacépède say: "Le hareng est une de ces productions dont l'emploi décide de la destinée des empires;" well might that wise old monarch, King James I. of England and VI. of Scotland, who saw what the herring had done for the "Easterlings," as the Hansards were called in England,¹ beg his friends to eat fish, and exclaim when the Puritans gave fishing as one of the inducements for their emigration to New England, "Od's fish, my soul, 'tis an honest trade. 'Twas the Apostles' own calling." This story may have been in Marvell's mind when he wrote in his satire on Holland (c. 1653):—

¹ The London warehouse of these Easterlings (whence, some say, our word "sterling"), called the Steelyard, still existed in the lifetime of James I. on the exact spot where Cannon Street Station now stands.

“ How could the Dutch but be converted, when
The Apostles were so many fishermen ? ”

The Hansa League had long been a power in London, the corporation having ceded to the Hansards the defence of Bishopsgate. And all this wealth and importance were based upon the herring, two barrels of which, or a cask of the finest sturgeon, or one hundredweight of Polish wax, were presented by the Hansards annually to the Lord Mayor of London, while fifteen gold nobles, wrapped in a pair of gloves, were given to the alderman who was chosen to judge their disputes within the city boundaries. The League indeed had the power of the purse, and the art of “ peaceful penetration ” was not discovered by the nineteenth century German.

The best money in the Middle Ages was that of Lübeck, and English traders stipulated that they should be paid in pounds of the Easterlings, the pound being a Flemish reckoning containing twenty shillings, and each shilling twelve groats. The pound was an actual pound weight of silver, although in the fourteenth century Lübeck was permitted to coin gold pieces called guilders, resembling the Florentine ducat (“ florin ”) the gold being bought by the Easterlings at Bruges. The “ pound sterling ” of to-day is therefore by origin the Flemish pound of silver of the fineness and quality used by the Easterlings of Lübeck, the most powerful city of the

Hansa League, whose quartered herrings show the source of her wealth, like that of Holland after her, to be the humble herring.

Salted herrings became a medium of exchange and for paying taxes among the Hansard traders, who ousted the Slavs from the herring fishery, and made Wisby in Gothland the headquarters of the trade.

In 1238 the Tartars spread desolation through Poland and Hungary, and from this inundation of barbarism from the East emerge certain facts concerning the herring fishery. As already stated, the herrings, which are capricious in their migrations, had for some time past deserted the Baltic, thus forcing the Frieslanders, who were in the habit of going there for herring, and even the people of Gothland on whose coasts the herring fishery used to be, to come to Yarmouth¹ for their cargoes. But so great and general was the consternation caused to nations in the most remote parts of Europe by the approach of the Tartars, that foreigners, who had been accustomed to come to Yarmouth, were afraid to do so in that year. The Yarmouth fishermen, deprived of their purchasers, were compelled to sell their herrings at home at a very low price, and even in remote inland districts, so that four or five hundred good herrings could be obtained for one penny, a penny being

¹ As the fish caught off the coast of England were used for food in Sweden, they must have been salted for transit.

worth one-twentieth part of an ounce of silver. By the Statute of Herrings, more than a century later (1357), the highest legal price was 40 shillings per last of 10,000 herrings, *i.e.*, twenty-five for one penny; but the penny of 1357 contained much less silver than that of 1238.

The price of herrings is mentioned in the Parliamentary records of Scotland in 1240; they are referred to as dried, as opposed to smoked, or salted; no packings or barrels are mentioned, and no tax or toll was levied on them. In the same year the Earl of Albemarle granted to the monks of Meaux half an acre of land of the burgh of Odd at the mouth of the Humber, on which to build storehouses for herring and other fish.

In 1270 the Herring Fair was held at Yarmouth for forty days, and the barons of the Cinque Ports sent their officers to Yarmouth to keep the peace, as they did till the fair ceased in the eighteenth century, the privilege being productive of more disputes than peace-making throughout the period.

The number of fishermen employed in the herring fishery during this reign is shown by the complaint made by the commissioners engaged in negotiating a treaty with Flanders on behalf of King Edward I. in 1274, that some Flemish armed vessels put to sea and killed 1,200 English fishermen.

In the Edict of Edward I., for the Fair of 1277, there is a passage in Norman French of which the following is a translation:—

“ And we will that they of the City of Yarmouth void dene and strand of old ships and timber where they should arrive and dry their nets except such ships as are being built, or masts which are being dried.”

One Norfolk manor at least had the right to exact herring dues from its tenants, as we learn from an interesting MS. sold at Sotheby's on July 2nd, 1917, dating from about 1590, and entitled :

“ The View of the particulars of the mannor of Shipdam as well of the rents services with other the hereditaments thereunto belonging as of the rightes apperteyneing to the same, not yet in the possession of the Lorde of the saide mannor as followith.”

Shipdam is near East Dereham, Norfolk.

Among the details given we read :—

“ When the Lorde lieth ther, they must not onlie doe those seruices but also make all his cariages of wyne woode *herring*, corne, haie, compace, wasshing and clipping of shepe and all service els to the number of twoe thousande seaven hundreth and fortie daies : ” “ the Lord hath free Bull and free Bore : ” “ There are nowe belonging to the saide mannor manye Bondmen.”

The right is clearly far more ancient than the MS.

In 1285, Robert Durham, Mayor of Berwick-on-Tweed, ordered herrings and other fish to be sold “ on the bray ” alongside the vessel bringing them to port, and forbade the fishermen to carry them ashore after sundown ; any burgess who witnessed a purchase of

herring might claim sufficient for his own use and consumption at the original cost.

In Blount's "History of Strange Tenure of Lands" is a quotation of a clause from the Charter of the town of Great Yarmouth (1286) requiring the corporation to send 100 herrings baked in twenty-four pasties to the Sheriffs of Norwich who were to deliver them to the Lord of the Manor of Carlton. The Sheriffs of Norwich held thirty acres of land by the service of carrying to the King of England, wherever he might be, twenty-four pasties of the fish as soon as they were in season, the herring then, and long after, being regarded as a Royal dish. An illustration of this occurs in a chronicle history of Norwich under the date 1629 :—

"The mayor and sheriffs received a letter from his majesty's secretaries of state, complaining of the quality of the herring pies, which, according to established usage, are annually sent to the king by the corporation, as the ancient fee farm of the city, and continued to this day. This was a fishing town; the lord of the manor of East Carlton is bound to receive the pies, and carry them to the king, wherever he may then be; this manor being anciently held of the Crown under that service. The corporation of Norwich to make and provide the pies, twenty-four in number, containing a hundred herrings, by the great hundred, in good standing pastry, and well seasoned; and they are to be made of the first herrings which come to the city. The complaint set forth, that they were not the first herrings that were taken, according to the tenure—the pies were not well baked—the herrings were deficient in number—

they should be 120, five in each pie ; many of them broken in carriage, etc. The corporation being now lords of the manor of East Carlton, the pies are sent up by the sheriffs of the city annually, and placed on the king's table."

We do not hear of subsequent complaints as to their quality.

Yarmouth was the staple market for the export of herring, and the principal seat of the herring industry during the reign of King John, and William of Trumpington, Abbot of St. Albans, bought a house at Yarmouth for fifty marks in which to store herrings preserved with salt, for the use of his abbey.

After this digression we may return to the herring in history.

A ship fitted out at Yarmouth in 1290 for bringing the infant Queen of Scotland from the Court of her father, the Duke of Normandy, was provisioned with :—

200 Stock fish,
One small barrel of sturgeon,
One dozen lampreys,
Fifty pounds of whale,
Half a last of herrings,
400 fish of Aberdeen.

The " fish of Aberdeen " cost under threepence each, the stock fish somewhat under one penny each, and the half last of herrings thirty shillings. The term " Aberdeen fish " also occurs in the account of King Edward's wardrobe in the year 1290. Were they cod, ling, hake or haddock ?

The people of Grimsby in 1291 complained to Edward I. that the people of Odd forestalled them in the supply of herrings by making false representations about the price, which was forty shillings per last.

In 1294 Eric, King of Norway, allowed the English to come to Norway for herring on the same terms as those enjoyed by the Hansa League. Similarly, in 1295, Edward I. allowed the Dutch to come to Yarmouth to fish for herring. They were also allowed by the King to buy herring at Yarmouth without specific permission, and English subjects were forbidden to molest them.

In 1302 Yarmouth was ordered to furnish ten lasts of herrings for the King's table, and the town supplied many of the religious houses in England with herring.

In 1303 among the weights and measures fixed by authority were :—

25 herrings	equal	1 glen
15 glens	„	1 rees
120 herrings	„	1 hundred
10 hundred	„	1 thousand
10 thousand	„	1 last.

The last at Yarmouth (in 1917) contains 13,200 herring. If they are full herring of average size, they weigh about two and a half tons per last. The word “last” is Teutonic in origin, and meant a load, or burden, of any kind of goods, weighing two tons. A hundred years ago wheat was sold at Yarmouth by the last, as were, at

an earlier date, bricks and wool. The last is the largest unit of a peculiar system of measures, which runs :—

4 herrings equal	1 warp
33 warps	„ 1 hundred (132 fish)
10 hundreds	„ 1 thousand (1,320 fish)
10 thousands	„ 1 last (13,200 fish).

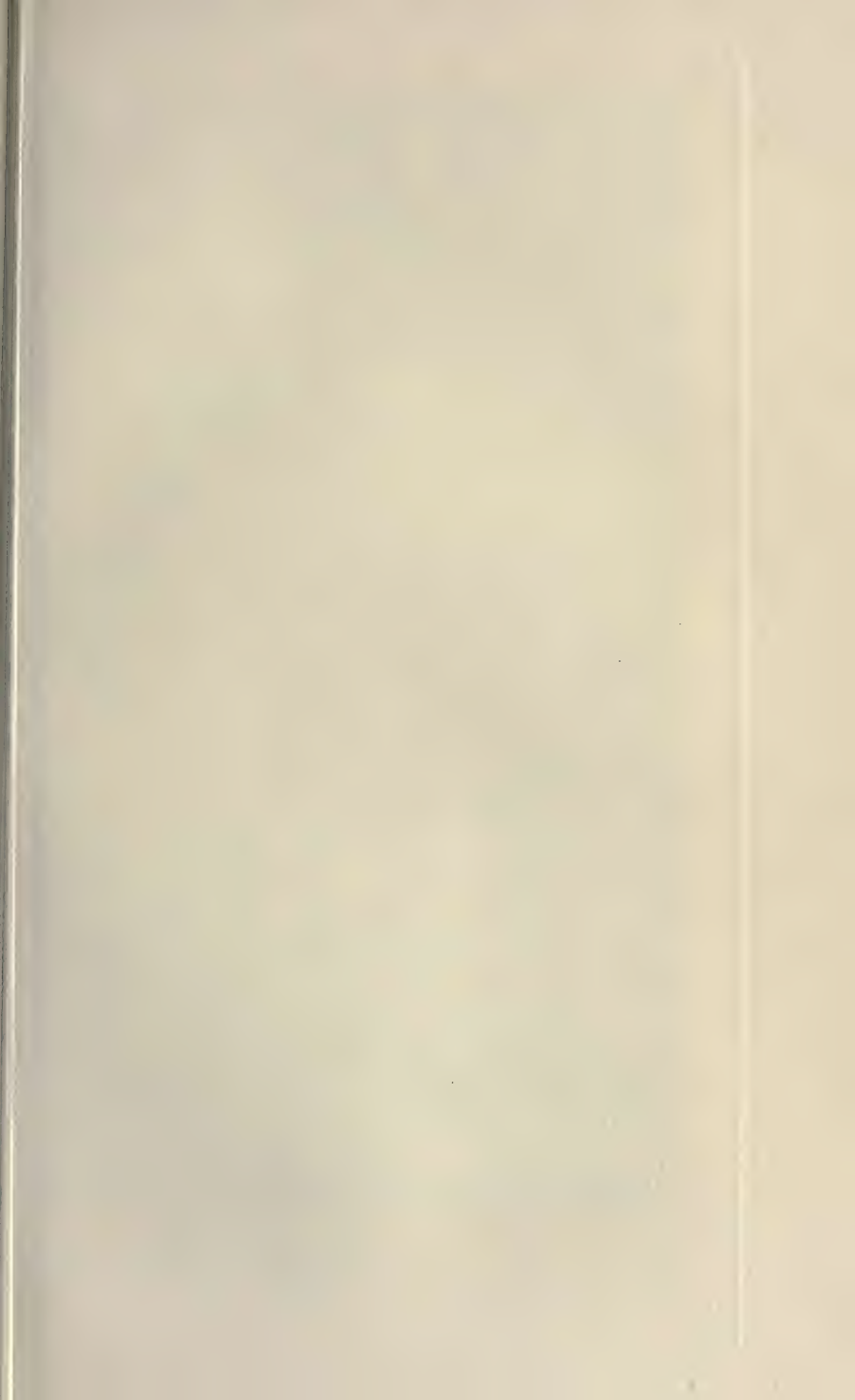
The word “cran,” the more usual modern measure for herrings, is derived from the Gaelic word “craun” = a barrel of 36 gallons, or $3\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of herrings.¹ In Scotland, and at certain places in England and Wales at which the Cran Measures Act of 1908 is in force, fresh herrings are sold by the cran, containing $37\frac{1}{2}$ Imperial gallons. In the Isle of Man and in Ireland, fish is sold by the maze, which contains five long hundreds (one long hundred equals 126). On the east coast of England, in places where the Cran Measures Act is not in force, herrings are still sold by the last.

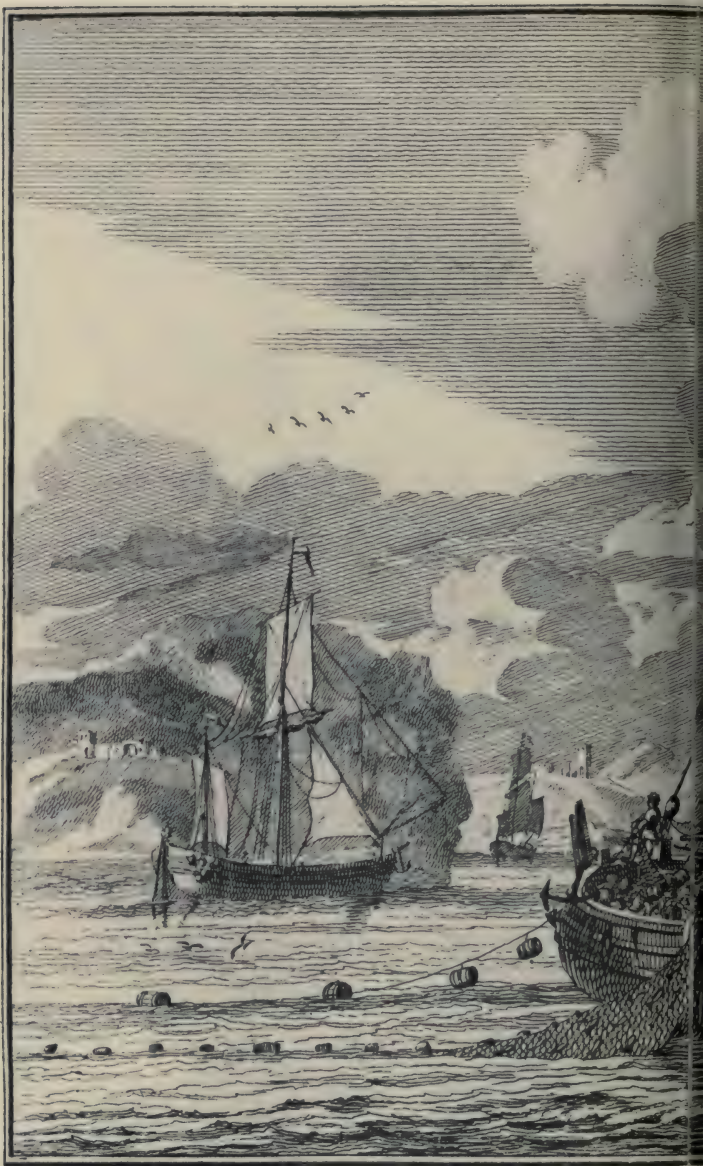
The following is an extract concerning the Charter of Croyland, in 1305 :—

“In the time of Yarmouth Fair, in the 34th year of the reign of King Edward, son of King Henry, William de Ketene, monk of St. Faith, and Reginald de Burgh of St. Peter, brought to the bailiffs of Yarmouth a writ of the lord the King in these words :—

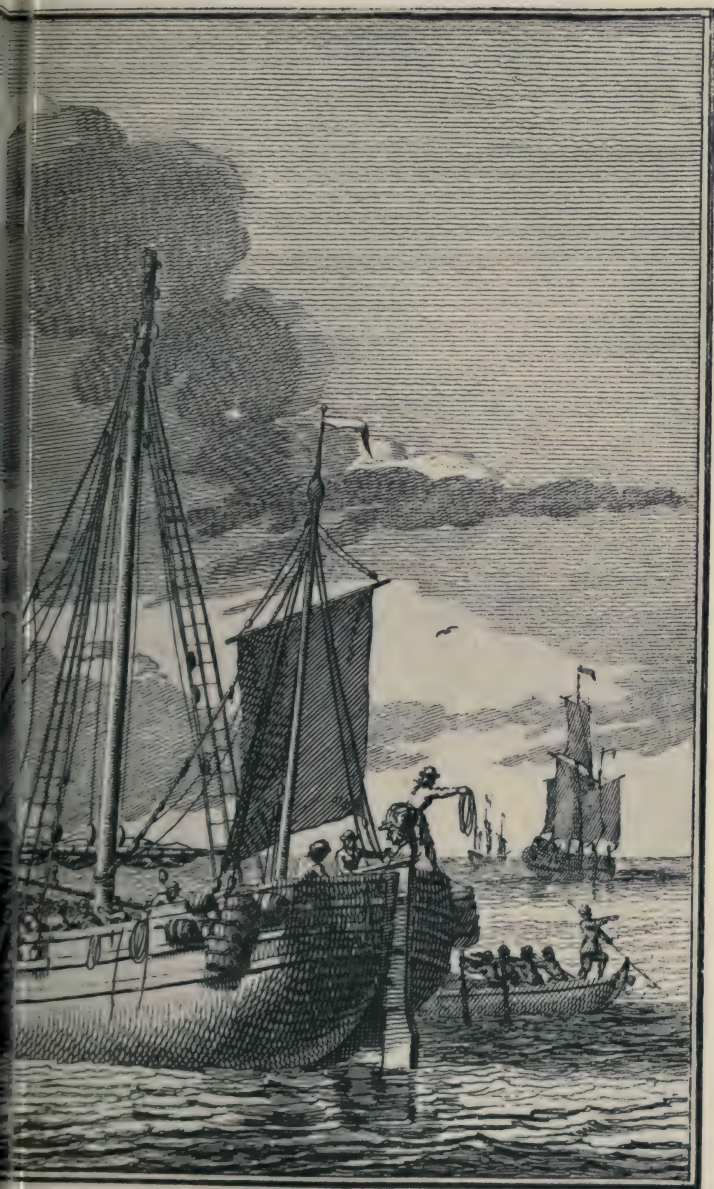
Edward by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, to his bailiffs of Yarmouth, greeting, etc.

¹ A standard barrel contains (1917) $26\frac{2}{3}$ Imperial gallons, and will take between 600 and 1,000 herring according to the class and size of the fish. About 350 pickled herrings weigh 1 cwt. ; if the herrings are fresh, about 280.

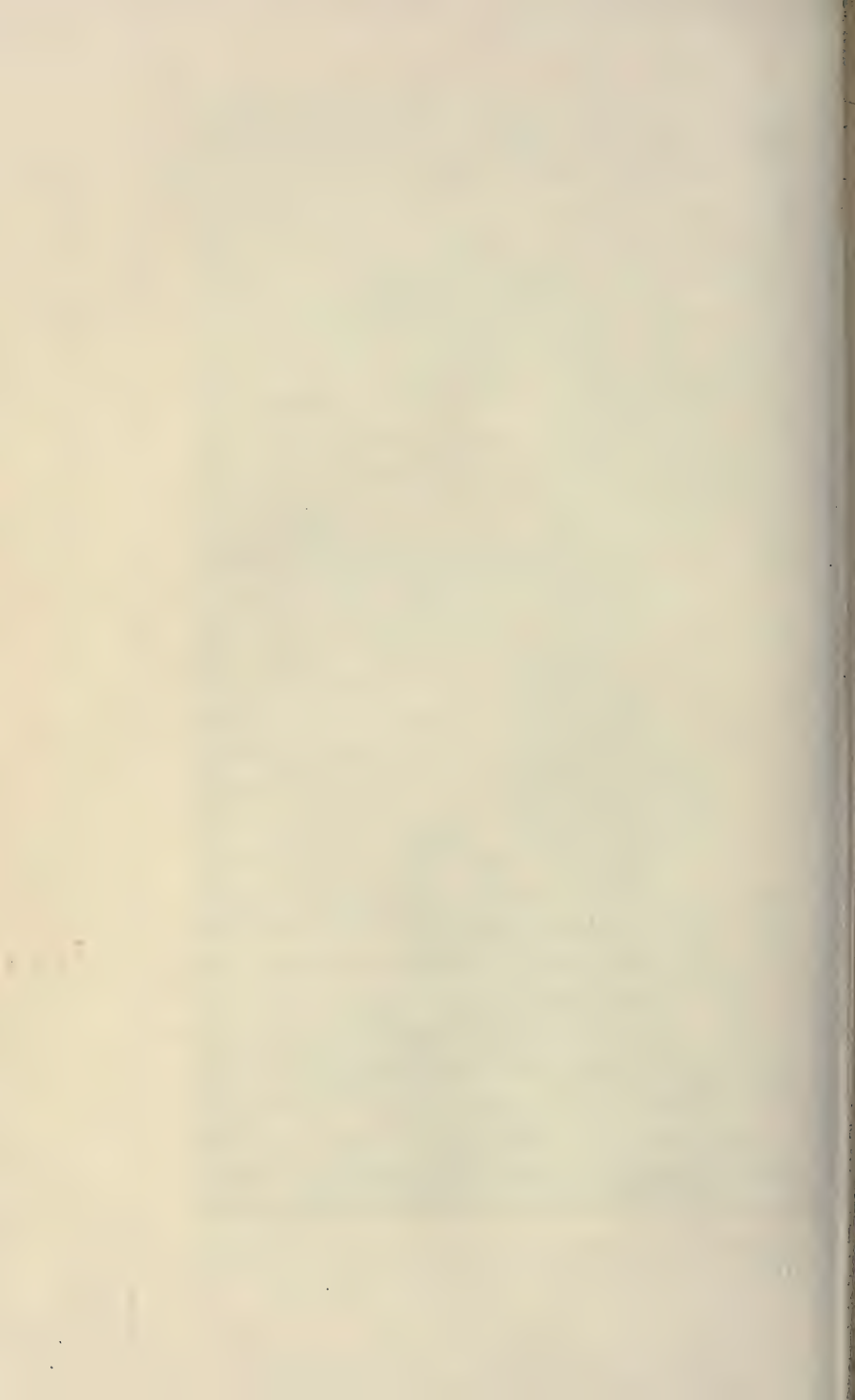




An Hulk or great Hoy



Herring Fishing place.



Witness myself at Newburgh in Tyndale the 30th August in the 34th year of our reign.

By authority of which writ, the aforesaid Reginald had eight lasts and one thousand herrings delivered free of customs—viz, five lasts, and one thousand herrings for the year 34, and three lasts for the year 33—which said eight lasts and 1000 herrings, the aforesaid Reginald swore upon the Holy Bible were the property of the Abbot and Convent of Croyland, and for them were bought and provided, besides twelve pence halfpenny, which the said Reginald pledged for the aforesaid three lasts of herrings for the custom of the year 33, are delivered to the aforesaid Reginald at the request and in reverence of the said William de Ketene, monk.”

A Yarmouth record of the year 1306 refers to the herring fishery. Somewhat later, in the reign of Edward III., a law was passed forbidding any fisherman to give up his trade on account of the regulations being disagreeable to him, and in return fishermen and mariners were exempt from serving in any other capacity than that to which they had been bred up.

In 1338 the same king obtained from Yarmouth 40 lasts, *i.e.*, 480,000 herrings for food for his army in Flanders.

We may judge of the importance of the export trade in herrings in the early fourteenth century from the fact that no fewer than sixty foreign vessels, of which ten were from Lombardy, procured herrings at Yarmouth harbour during the five days from September 28th to October 3rd, 1344.

Complaints having been made that the people of Blakeney in Norfolk sold their fish too dear, it was ordained that all fishing vessels of the town and the adjacent coast as far as Cromer should bring the fish to Blakeney; nor were the fish to be carried out of the vessel till the owner had sold them, and then only in clear daylight. No fish might be sold by secret agreement, and no fishermen might store the fish for sale at higher prices later on, nor might any but a fisherman buy hooks, nets and fishing tackle in the county of Norfolk.

In 1357 was enacted the Statute of Herrings already referred to. The preamble states that the people of Yarmouth made a practice of meeting the fishing boats and buying the herrings at sea, and that the keepers of the lodging-houses assumed the prerogative of selling the herring belonging to the fishermen who lodged in their houses, paying what they thought proper for them, thereby defrauding the fishermen and cheating the public in resale. It was therefore enacted that no fish should be sold until the boat bringing them was moored to land; that the fishermen should have full liberty to sell their fish at Yarmouth between the rising and setting of the sun; that the price of herrings to be cured as red herrings was not to be above forty shillings per last of 10,000; that the pykers—vessels which carried fish between London and other ports—were not to be allowed to buy herrings in Yarmouth harbour

between September 29th and November 11th, or to enter the harbour at the time of the fair, of which the barons of the Cinque Ports were the governors. The lodging-house keepers were allowed to make a charge of 3*s.* 4*d.* upon every last of herrings sold to any other lodging-house keeper, in return for which they were to insure full payment to the fishermen. The people of Yarmouth were prohibited from selling herrings for more than 6*s.* 8*d.* per last above the price paid for them at the fair, and the people of London were not to increase the price by more than 13*s.* 4*d.* Shotten herring were to be sold at half the price of full ones when fresh, and when made red at 6*s.* 8*d.* per last below the rate for full red herring. The pykers were allowed to buy herring from the fishermen of "Kyrky" (near Lowestoft), but the fishermen could only discharge as many herring there as would be sufficient for loading the vessels. The rest of the fish had to be carried to Yarmouth, no other sale being permitted within seven leagues of the town except of herrings of a man's own demesne fishing. The statute also applied to any town in England where herring were caught.

There is no doubt that the statute was passed because the Commons complained to the King that the people of Great Yarmouth "meddled" with the sale of herrings, giving the fishermen as low a price as they thought fit for the fish by means of some tariff agreed upon among

the buyers, and charging the public as high a price as they chose by some similar arrangement.¹ The principle of the statute was not new, since six years earlier, in 1351, a law had been passed imposing pains and penalties upon "forestallers" or "regrators" or "ingrossers" as these early dealers in "corners" were called. The statute was therefore, merely a case of applying a recognised principle to a particular industry and with special reference to a particular locality. A "corner" in herrings existed in Yarmouth, and the statute of 1357 was passed to break it.

The statute cannot, however, have been carried out to the letter. It is on record that in October, 1382, lodging-house keepers in Yarmouth and elsewhere were ordered to desist from their practice of manipulating the prices of herring or any other fish.

Certain modern cynics have recently observed that while trusts, rings and profiteering practised by sellers of commodities have always earned the hatred of the public, labour² rings and trusts, and profiteering by labour—the policy, that is, of compelling the public to pay higher prices for labour in the production of necessities—have never been regarded from the same point of view by the very people who

¹ In the same way, the great joint-stock banks of to-day, by means of a ring, or agreement, fix by advertisement the rate of interest as high or low as they think proper when taking money on deposit from the public in London, while charging for loans rates of interest fixed roughly among themselves.

² See *Saturday Review*, November 10th, 1917, p. 364.

complain of "profiteering" in relation to other commodities. The small shopkeeper and persons paid a fixed salary, such as clerks, however, now complain that the "war bonus" of miners and others providing necessities of life is profiteering just as much as the manipulations of food prices and the like.

We note that in 1379 Newcastle coal was favoured by the Government and taxed at a very low rate, while herrings, and the herring fishery were taxed at the highest rate; also, that in the same year Thomas Cobald bequeathed to the High Altar of St. Nicholas at Great Yarmouth, among other things, a wey of salt, while three years later, in 1382, William Rookhaghe bequeathed to the same church no less than three weys of salt gross. A wey of salt¹ consisted of 40 water bushels or 200 pecks, 5 pecks being the amount of salt required to cure one barrel containing 800 herrings.

In the same year, 1382, Philippe de Mazières states that there were many thousands of vessels, each having at least six persons on board, engaged in the fishing for herring in the seas between Denmark and Norway, that there were, in addition, 500 vessels for packing and gutting the herring, and that there were more than 300,000 persons engaged in the herring fishery.

In the "Annals of Dieppe" there is a record

¹ In the seventeenth century a wey of salt was worth about 40s.

of herring fisheries between the Seine and the Somme in the year 1383.

About the year 1392 Margaret of Sweden, whose country had suffered severely at the hands of pirates known as the Victual Brothers, who professed to supply provisions to that part of the Swedish coast used by the Hansa League for the herring fishery, begged Richard II. to lend her three ships from Lynn in Norfolk for the protection of her kingdom. For three years fishing in the Scania district was non-existent, and contemporary documents refer to the high cost of Lenten food owing to the scarcity of herrings; but by 1400 the Hanseatic fleet had swept the seas of these pirates, among whom, by the way, was a Brother bearing the name of Moltke. Visitors to Hamburg before the war will remember having been shown many models of a ship called the *Coloured Cow* (*Bunte Kuh*); this was the flag-ship of the Hanseatic fleet, whose commander, Simon of Utrecht, Alderman of Hamburg, was foremost in clearing the seas of the Victual Brothers and so enabling the Hanseatic fishermen again to follow their calling.

Although in 1391 no Hanseatic merchant was allowed to sail from a western to an eastern, or from an eastern to a western harbour between Martinmas and Candlemas, herring and beer, however, the two most important exports from the Hanseatic towns, were not subject to these restrictions. The herring as a fasting

dish had to be caught, cured and despatched to its destination before February 22nd, in order that it might arrive before Lent, and a ship laden with barrels of herrings or dried cod was allowed to go to sea on Saint Nicholas' Day, December 6th, but only if laden by that date. The reason for this general prohibition was the risk of winter voyages ; it was thought that to sail after Martinmas was to tempt God. Down to recent times, even, no Greek coasting trader would put to sea between December 6th and January 1st ; during those days the sea was hallowed for new trips.

Among the articles exported from London free of duty to the Duke of Brittany on April 22nd, 1393, were 3 barrels of white herrings and 4 cades (a cade = 600) of red herrings, showing the two methods of preserving the fish in use side by side. Further evidence of the importance of the industry is shown by the fact that provision for the benefit of English and French herring fishermen was made in a truce with France, June 27th, 1402. The first trace of a national navigation policy is to be found during the reign of Richard II.

On August 28th, 1394, Richard II. ordered the magistrates of Whitby to prohibit strangers from carrying away herrings from that town, since the large purchases of foreigners upon the coast of Yorkshire in the previous years had deprived the inhabitants of their food, and caused an inordinate rise in the price of provisions.

About the year 1397 the Fishmongers' Company of London had their privileges defined by charter, and, in the grant, the rights of the vintners to export clothing and herrings to Gascony were carefully saved.

Evidence of our dominion of the sea appears in the year 1402, when the magistrates of Bruges complained to King Henry of severe injuries to their trade, particularly to two fishermen of Ostend and Brielle in Holland, who were taken prisoners by the English while fishing in the North Sea and carried to Hull, though they had lowered their sails as a token of submission the moment the English had called to them.

The English, however, were not usually the aggressors. The correspondence between the British Government and the Hansa League in 1405 contains various complaints of injuries suffered by English subjects; among those enumerated are the grievances of a citizen of London, who had been plundered of 5 lasts of herring in the North Sound, and of four merchants of Yarmouth and Norwich, who in 1394 were robbed of woollen cloth to the value of £666 13s. 4*d.*, which they had put on board a Prussian vessel. Injury had also been done to vessels belonging to the Norfolk towns of Cley, Wiverton and Lynn.

In 1409 the Hansards on their side were complaining that the officers of Southampton had overcharged them two shillings on every

last of herrings; nor was the rivalry confined to the countries already mentioned, since in 1418 a treaty made between Louis XI. and Charles, Duke of Burgundy, provides that the French shall not molest the herring fishers of Holland, Zeeland, Brabant, Flanders and Boulogne.

In the year 1410 a Royal grant of toll was made for paving the streets of Cambridge,¹ part of the funds being supplied by a toll on the fisheries, a large boat of herrings paying fourpence, herrings a halfpenny per barrel, and porpoises one farthing each for this purpose. Porpoises were regarded as a dainty. A porpoise (entered as a "purpos"), costing xx shillings, was presented by the Citizens of Norwich to the Duke of Suffolk in 1536. A porpoise, a peacock "in hys pryde," dobyl-bere and ypocras were served at the banquets given at Norwich on Guild-days at that period by the Guild of Saint George, which was founded in 1324. In 1415, Henry V., at the request of Eric, King of Norway, prohibited the inhabitants of certain towns, among them Gernemouth (Yarmouth), Linn (Lynn), Gippeswick (Ipswich), Cranmer (near Lynn), and Dersingham, from fishing on the coasts of Norway, owing to the English having abused the permission given them in 1294.

The Scots from an early date retained the

¹ Here the Proctors in early days destroyed bad herrings. At the end of the eighteenth century the famous feasts of dons at Stourbridge Fair began with a large dish of herrings.

exclusive right to fish on their own coasts, and in 1410 William, Earl of Holland, was assisting the Dutch to make reprisals against the Scots for having ill-treated Dutch fishermen who had attempted to catch herring on the Scottish coasts. A few years later (1423) the following export duties upon herrings were imposed by King James I. :—

Herrings, per thousand	1d.
Salted herrings in barrels taken by natives, per last	4s.
Salted herrings in barrels taken by foreign- ers, per last	6s.
Red herring cured in Scotland, per thousand	4d.

The fishing was for the most part in the Dee, Tay, Forth and Tweed, the Dutch being the chief buyers. Many ships of France, Flanders, Zeeland, Holland and Almany (Germany), loaded with Scottish herring sailed to the Mediterranean to sell the fish for Lent. By 1447 the fish were known in Rome as Flemish herrings, although most were of English origin, Loch Fyne producing herring in “mair plenti than ony seis of Albion,” the fish having left Inverness, which had hitherto been blessed with “grit plenti.” The Scottish industry seems, however, not to have suffered as a whole from this migration, for we find that in 1474 James III. passed various laws regarding the fitting out of ships, busses, and great pink boats with nets for the herring fishing.

Continuing the history of the Scottish fisheries down to the Union, we find that in 1488, an Act was passed forbidding strangers to buy fish, whether salted or barrelled, except at certain towns where they were to pay duty, and prohibiting them from trading at the "Leuvis" (Lewis Islands).

In 1491 the Act of 1474 was confirmed by James IV., and it was enacted that no ship under 20 tons burthen should go to the herring fisheries.

In 1532 the Scots attacked the Dutch herring fisheries, and Robert Fogo of Leith, with several vessels of war, captured many herring busses upon the Dutch coast, whereupon the property of the Scottish merchants in the Low Countries was seized, and it was not till a treaty was signed between Charles V. and King James of Scotland in 1541, at the proposal of Mary, Queen Dowager of Hungary, that peace was concluded. During those nine years the Dutch were prevented from fishing on the Scottish coasts, and much damage was done to both sides.

The number of herring caught being insufficient to meet the demands of the home and export trades, an Act of Parliament was passed in 1540 limiting the manner and hours of sale, and providing that Scottish needs should be supplied before any herring were sold for export. The price was fixed by the Provost, Aldermen and Magistrates of the towns in which there

were fish markets. The measures by which the fish was sold were also fixed, and the barrels were ordered to be branded with a hot iron, the cooper's mark being set upon each; if any barrels were unmarked the contents were forfeit, half to the king and half to the town.

In 1573 herrings were no longer allowed to be sold at sea, but had to be brought to shore, and sold in "burrowes" only. Those who happened to "slay herrings" had to bring them to free ports to be sold to the king's lieges, the measure of every barrel of herrings to be "nine gallons of the striveling measure."

About this time (1575) red herrings were a very common and therefore little appreciated article of food in Scotland, and the poet Montgomerie complains, in the alliterative metre that England had long outgrown:—

"This is no life that I leid up a land
On raw reid herring reisted in the reik."

These notes on the Scottish fisheries while the northern kingdom was still independent may be concluded by observing that in 1579 King James VI., whose comments on fishing have already been quoted, renewed the prohibition of the sale of fish "except they were landed in Scotland," so that the Scots themselves had an opportunity of buying before the herrings were sold for export. The "slayers of herrings" had to bring them to the nearest "burrowes," or the towns near to the dwellings of the "slayers," and after local

needs had been satisfied the surplus might be salted and sold to strangers and for export. In 1584 a more stringent Act of the same character was passed compelling all Scottish fishermen to bring their catch to certain defined ports. Three years later it was enacted that ships fishing for herring in the North Highlands were, in return for victuals, to bring back one third part of their catch to be sold in the north isles and lochs. A law of 1600 went still further, and prohibited the export of herrings before October 11th altogether, in order that the fish might be available in the public markets of Scotland. But trade jealousy must have been very strong at the time, since much blood was shed when King James VI. endeavoured to increase the fishing stations by taking over the Lewis Islands and establishing a fishing colony among them. Another attempt was made in 1605, but the enterprise was soon afterwards given up.

Returning to the English fisheries, we find the Duke of Bedford sending 500 cart-loads of herring, convoyed by Sir John Fastolf, as food for the army under the Duke of Suffolk, which was besieging Orleans and the neighbouring towns in 1429. The French, who attempted to capture this convoy at Rouvray were defeated, the skirmish being nicknamed the Battle of Herrings. Thus the English soldiers who fought at Agincourt, like the seamen who

destroyed the Spanish Armada, lived largely on dried and smoked fish.

Herrings were at this time carried as food by travellers and were greatly esteemed. In the "Gods of the North," by Oehlenschloeger, Skerner says to the Ferryman :—

"If thou'lt ferry me over the wave,
I'll give thee oat cakes, and herring beside."

Thereupon the Ferryman replies :—

"Thou talk'st like a lord of wealth and power."

A few years later (1437) Irish herrings and Irish gold were among the principal exports from Ireland to London.

When the citizens of Norwich made merry at Christmas in 1444 John Gladman was crowned King of Christmas, and in front of him were carried an allegorical figure representing the month of December, and an effigy of Lent clad in white and red herring skins.

Naogeorgus in the "Popish Kingdome," mentions some burlesque scenes practised formerly on Ash Wednesday: "People went about in mid-day with lanterns in their hands, looking after the feast days which they had lost on this the first day of the Lent fast." Some carried herrings on a pole, crying, "Herrings, herrings, stinking herrings! No more puddings!"

Before the year 1463 persons bringing various provisions to London had been ordered to land them at Queenhythe, but in that year certain

fish, such as herrings, sprats, eels, whiting, plaice, cod and mackerel, were allowed to be unloaded at Billingsgate, and this permission is apparently the origin of the legal fish market.

In 1482 Parliament ordered that herring packed in barrels were to be fish all caught at one time, salted at one time, and as good and well packed in the middle of the cask as at the ends, the magistrates of the different towns being required to provide inspectors to superintend the packing in order to prevent mixed or inferior fish being sold as prime herring.

In 1521 King Henry VIII. appointed Cardinal Wolsey to act as mediator between the Emperor Charles V. and Francis I. of France, and among the terms of the treaty, concluded at Calais in 1521, we read that as the war carried on by the two princes had done grievous damage, and had occasioned many maritime depredations, attacks at sea should cease, and at the approaching fishing season the herring fishers both of the Emperor and the King of France should fish unmolested from the date of the agreement (October 11th, 1521) to the end of the January following, even though there should be war between the two princes in question, while the fishermen of both nations were to be allowed to return home without molestation after the fishing was over.

It is also recorded by the historians that when the Cardinal washed and kissed the feet of

fifty poor people on Maundy Thursday, he gave each twelve pence, three ells of good canvas for shirts, a pair of shoes, and a cask of red herring.

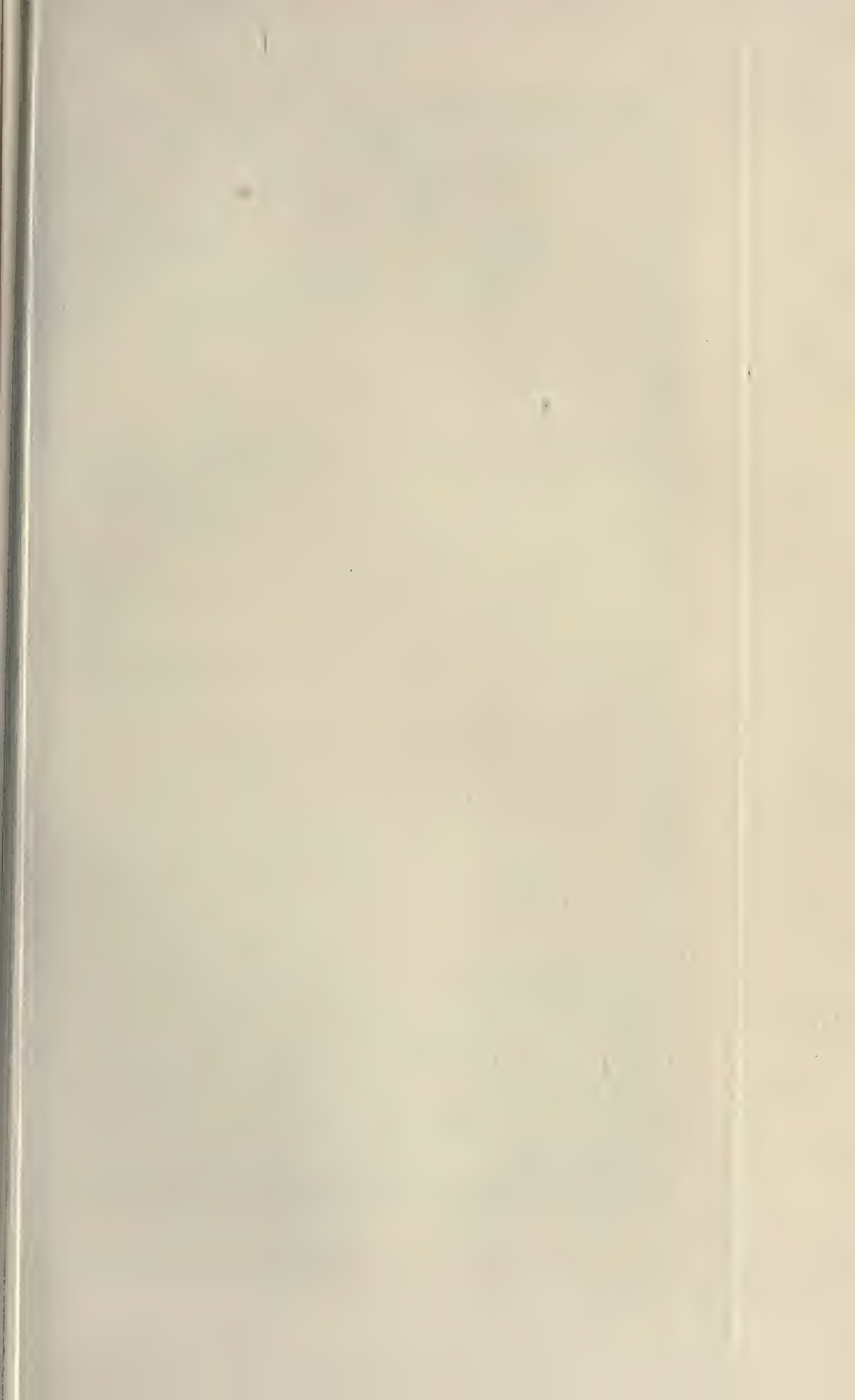
In 1563 a statute was passed containing many clauses for the encouragement of English shipping and seamen in order to support the Navy. Among its clauses is one intended to assist the herring fishery by allowing herrings and other fish caught on our coasts to be exported free of duty, and another, of far-reaching wisdom, providing that no foreign ship should carry any English goods along the coast from one English port to another.

National policy and national trade then went together.

In the famous Household Book of the Percy family the breakfast for the Earl of Northumberland and his lady consists of, among other things, a quart of beer and a quart of wine, two pieces of salt fish, six baconed herrings, four white herrings, or a dish of sprats. "Baconed herrings" are no doubt the high dried red herring; I have heard them called "ham herrings" in the Fakenham district of Norfolk, and ham-cured herrings is a description used by some London fishmongers to-day.

In 1563 Gaspar Seelar, a German, and in 1565 Francis Berty, a Frenchman, were given grants to make salt in England for the fishing industry.

Dr. John Dee in "The Petty Navy Royal"

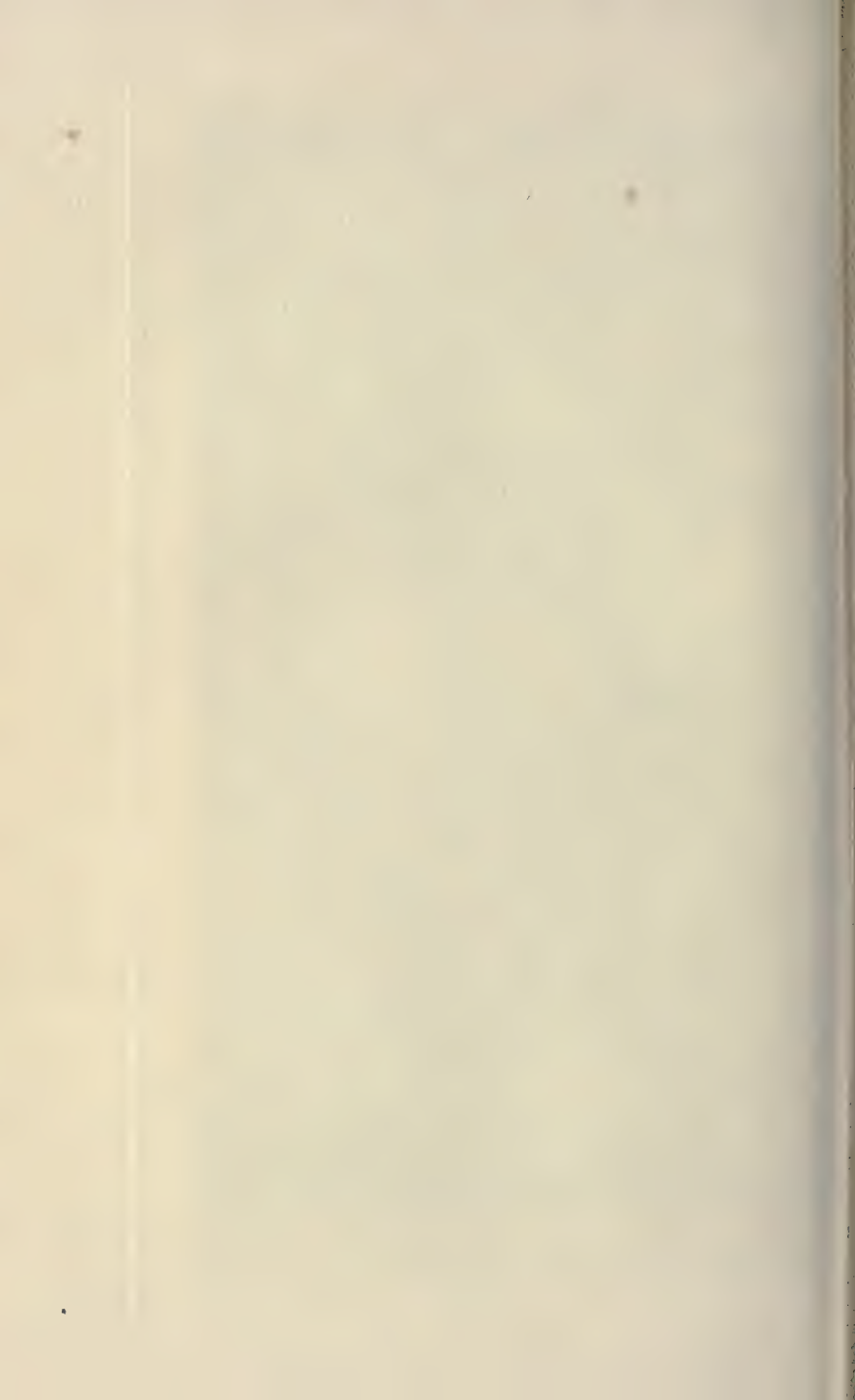




The Herring Bus.



Sail's into Harbour.



(1577), gives 1540 as the date of the beginning of the Dutch herring fishery on the English coast, off Yarmouth. At the same date 300 foreign vessels had fished for herrings near Aberystwyth and the Lancashire coast, and the author estimates that there were then 500 herring busses¹ resorting out of the Low Countries, under "King Philip his domain," and 100 more of French ownership. Dee assisted Robert Hitchcock, author of the "Politique Platt" (1580—91) to rouse public opinion towards building up the English Navy, which was then unable to protect either commerce, shipping, fishing, or to put down pirates, keep off spies, "Catholic traffickers," and the like, so that England was much exposed to attacks by the French, assisted by the agents of Philip of Spain and Mary, Queen of Scots. The privately-owned English vessels which warred against these foreign invaders—pirates as the Spaniards called them, privateers as we should call them now—proved excellent recruits for Drake, and later assisted him in repelling the Spanish Armada; a petty navy born of a fishery protection force and of the herring fishery would, as Dee perceived, form a nursery for the Navy. He therefore supported Hitchcock, who had spoken in Parliament and at public dinners and had published pamphlets for the purpose of enlisting public support for

¹ In 1416 the word "busses" (latterly pronounced bushes), as applied to the vessels used by the Dutch in the herring fishery, first appeared, and was soon extended to those of other nations,

the policy of a strong Navy, and of urging the importance of the naval question to the future of England. One of the arguments put forward was that whereas the merchant adventurers of England were willing to take sporting chances in piratical adventures and in voyaging to America, where the profit was often problematical, they were stupidly blind to the certain profit and national benefit that would accrue from the English herring fishery by strengthening it so as to oust the Dutch and at the same time provide a national Navy. As regards the blind indifference of the merchant adventurers, the truth of Dee's indictment can be verified from another source.

In 1603 Sir Walter Raleigh, with whom the English fisheries were a favourite subject, laid before King James a small MS. essay called "Observations concerning the Trade and Commerce of England with the Dutch and other Foreign Nations." "The greatest fishing that ever was known in the world," he says, "is upon the coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, but the great fishery is in the Low Countries, and other petty States, wherewith they serve themselves and all Christendom.

1. Into four towns in the Baltic, viz., Königsberg, Elbing, Stettin, and Dantzick, there are carried and vended in a year between 30,000 and 40,000 lasts of herrings,

which, being sold but at £15 or
£16 the last, is about. . . . £620,000 0 0

And we send none thither.

2. To Denmark, Norway, Sweden,
and the ports of Riga, Revel,
Narva, and other parts of Li-
vonian, etc., above 10,000 lasts of
herring, worth 170,000 0 0

And we send none to all those
countries.

3. The Hollanders send into Russia
near 1,500 lasts of herrings, sold
at about 30/- per barrel. . . . 27,000 0 0

And we send thither about 20 or
30 lasts.

4. To Staden, Hamburgh, Bremen,
and Embden, about 6,000 lasts
of fish and herrings, sold at about
£15 or £16 per last 100,000 0 0

And we none at all.

5. To Cleves and Juliers, up the
Rhine to Cologne and Frankfort
on the Maine, and so over all
Germany, near 22,000 lasts
of fish and herrings, sold at
about £20 per last (and we none)
is 440,000 0 0

6. Up the River Meuse to Maestrecht,
Liège, etc., and to Zutphen,
Deventer, Campen, Swoll, etc.,
about 7,000 lasts of herrings at
£20 per last (and we none at
all) is 140,000 0 0

7. To Guelderland, Artois, Hainault,
Brabant, Flanders, Antwerp
and up the Scheldt, all over the
Archduke's countries between

8,000 and 9,000 lasts at £18 per last (and we none at all) is . . .	162,000	0	0
8. The Hollanders and others carried of all sorts of herrings to Roan (Rouen) alone in one year, be- sides all other parts of France, 5,000 lasts (and we not 100 lasts) is	100,000	0	0
<hr/>			
Total sterling money . . .	£1,759,000	0	0

Over and above these, there is a great quantity of fish vended to the Straits. Surely the stream is necessary to be turned to the good of this kingdom, to whose sea-coasts alone God has sent these great blessings, and immense riches for us to take; and that any Nation should carry away out of this kingdom yearly great masses of money for fish taken in our seas, and sold again by them to us, must needs be a great dishonour to our nation, and hinderance to this realm."

In 1613 an arrangement was made by which Great Yarmouth was paid 3*s.* 4*d.* per barrel for sixty barrels of white herrings, and 6*s.* 8*d.* a cask for ten casks of full red herring of "one night's death," for the use of the King's household; and in 1614 a farsighted citizen of the same town, Tobias Gentleman, by name, wrote a tract pointing out how great profit could be brought into England by the "erecting, building and adventuring of Busses to sea, a fishing." He estimates the annual value of herring caught

in English waters and sold by the Dutch herring busses at a sum equal to £4,500,000 sterling of our money. He gives the names of boats other than busses used by the Dutch for catching herring in English waters, "Sword Pinks, Flat-bottoms, Holland Toads, Crab-Skuits, and Yevers." The herring caught at this time by the Dutch were sent in large quantities to Rochelle, Bordeaux, St. Malo, Paris and other French towns in exchange for wine, salt, feathers, rosin, woad, Normandy canvas, vitere (glass), Dowlais cloth (dowlas, or coarse linen), and French coin; they were also exported to Norway and Sprucia (Prussia) in exchange for hoops and barrel boards. Tobias Gentleman states that the Dutch considered the profit of the herring fishery so certain that they invested their children's money in the fishing, even trust funds for orphans being placed "adventuring in the Busses." The "yagers" (fish carriers, or ferries) purchasing the herrings from the boats at sea, paid in ready money, or tallies, which tallies were regarded as bills of exchange, and were paid at sight.

The tract also deals with the excellence of the Dutch commercial organisations, especially in the fishing trade, and the slackness of England in commercial matters; it was followed up by "Britain's Buss, or A computation as well of the Charge of a Buss or Herring Fish Ship; as also of the Gain and Profit thereby, by E. S. 1615," in which will be found all particulars

of the building, equipping, victualling, repairing and financing of an English herring buss of 70 tons, a work written to support Tobias Gentleman, and full of curious details, couched in still more curious language, of the herring buss and its equipment. The recognition of Navy and fishery as of equal importance is illustrated by the statement that every man and boy of the crew was to have a gallon of beer a day, the allowance made to the King's ships. The budget, and profit and loss account are added, and show a profit of 75 per cent. per annum, and the adventure was seriously proposed as a joint stock enterprise "like the East India Company."

In 1619 a licence to eat flesh in Lent was necessary, as appears from an entry in the registers of St. Mary Newington for that year, which runs: "I, James Fludd, Doctor in Divinity, and parson of the church of St. Marie Newington, in Surrey, do give licence unto Mrs. Ann Jones of Newington, being notoriously sicke to eat flesh this time of Lent, during the time of sickness *onlye*" (Wheatley and Cunningham's "London Past and Present," Vol. II., p. 505).

In 1621 King James I. issued a Proclamation against eating flesh in Lent, or on other "fish days," from which the following is a quotation of especial interest at the present time:—

"The reasons now assigned for this injunction are or the maintenance of our navy and shipping, a prin-

cial strength of this island, and for the sparing and increase of fresh victuals. The magistrates of London to examine upon oath the servants of all innholders, victuallers, cooks, alehouse-keepers, taverners, etc., who sell victuals, concerning what flesh has been sold by them in Lent, etc., and shall oblige the masters of those houses to give security not to sell flesh-meat in Lent, etc.”

The King strictly commands that :—

“None, of what quality soever, shall eat flesh in Lent, or on fish days, without a licence from the Bishop of the Diocese, or other person empowered to licence : and the like rules shall be observed by magistrates in other cities, and in the country.”

Two years later the King issued a second Proclamation prohibiting for the same reasons the eating of flesh in Lent, and on other fish days.

These proclamations formed part of the wise policy of promoting the herring and other fisheries in order to build up a national Navy which was characteristic of the Stuart Kings, but the compulsory fish days were denounced by the Puritans as “Rags of Rome.”

The first dish which used to be brought to table at that time on Easter Day was “a Red Herring on horseback set in a corn salad.”

Among the patents granted by Charles I. for fourteen years, was one, in 1632, for what is described as :—

“The fish-call, or a looking glass for fishes in the sea, very useful for fishermen to call all kinds of fishes to their nets, sears or hooks : as several calls are

100 THE HERRING IN HISTORY

needful for fowlers to call several kinds of fowls or birds to their nets or snares."

Of its practical value we have found no record.

But the reign of Charles I. is too serious a subject to introduce at the end of a chapter. To appreciate the importance of the levying of ship money in its true light as an expedient for the increase of the naval power of England against the menace of Dutch skippers, we must now turn to the history of the industry in Holland, and see by what means the Dutch had acquired their peculiar position in the herring industry.

CHAPTER III

THE HERRING FISHERY

SECTION I.—THE DUTCH FISHERY.

THE herring fishing off the coast of Scania continued till the early part of the sixteenth century, when the fish, which had failed several times in the fifteenth century, left the coast for good and frequented the Scottish coast, the Irish seas and the shores of the Low Countries. There it was that a Dutchman discovered that improved method of curing, preserving and barrelling the herring which changed the course of European history.¹ Beuckels, Beuckelzon, or Beuckelsen, was born, according to some, in 1347, according to others in 1387, and his discovery, in the opinion of so great an authority as McCulloch, contributed more than anything else to the growth of the mercantile power and wealth of Holland. The eating of butcher's meat being prohibited during two days every week, and for forty days before Lent, the new method was of the greatest importance to the whole Christian world. The Emperor Charles V. bore public witness to this

¹ The salted or preserved herrings to which reference is made in the early documents already quoted were merely herrings packed in or sprinkled with salt to keep the fish from decomposition. Peacock, in the "Misfortunes of Elphin," humorously describes his exiled prince as "the first Briton who caught fish on a large scale and salted them for other purposes than home consumption."

when in 1550 he visited the grave of Beuckels at Biervliet and ordered a monument to be erected in honour of the man who had done so much to benefit his country.

In consequence of this discovery the Dutch for a long period enjoyed an almost complete monopoly of the herring trade. They pursued the fish far beyond their own bays and inlets, right to the British coasts—to Shetland and the Orkneys, to Ireland and to the very mouth of the Thames, in order to get the material for their export trade to Central and Northern Europe. This trade, however, decreased very considerably after the Reformation, when the Fast of the Roman Church was no longer universally observed.

It is impossible to give many particulars about the Dutch herring fishery. To do so would mean writing the history of the Netherlands, of its various provinces, and most of its cities from the earliest times. The material is already available in the admirable essay by A. Beaujon entitled, "The History of the Dutch Sea Fisheries," published in Vol. IX., Part II., of the Fisheries Exhibition Literature, which deals exhaustively with the laws made for regulating the Dutch fishing, why they were made, and what they effected. An examination of this essay will amply repay any one desirous of studying the politico-economic history of the herring from the Dutch point of view.

Every proceeding with respect to the herring

fishery was regularised by the Government of Holland ; its orders were carried into effect by its own special officers. The fishing was allowed to start at five minutes past twelve on the night of June 24th ; regulations provided that every master of every vessel leaving Holland should take an oath that he would respect the orders. Even the species of salt for the curing of different kinds of herrings was, like the size of the barrels, the size and thickness of the staves, the gutting and the packing of the fish, and the branding of the barrels, defined by law, the intention of these regulations, which were not entirely successful, being to preserve the high repute in which herring cured and sold by the Dutch were deservedly held.

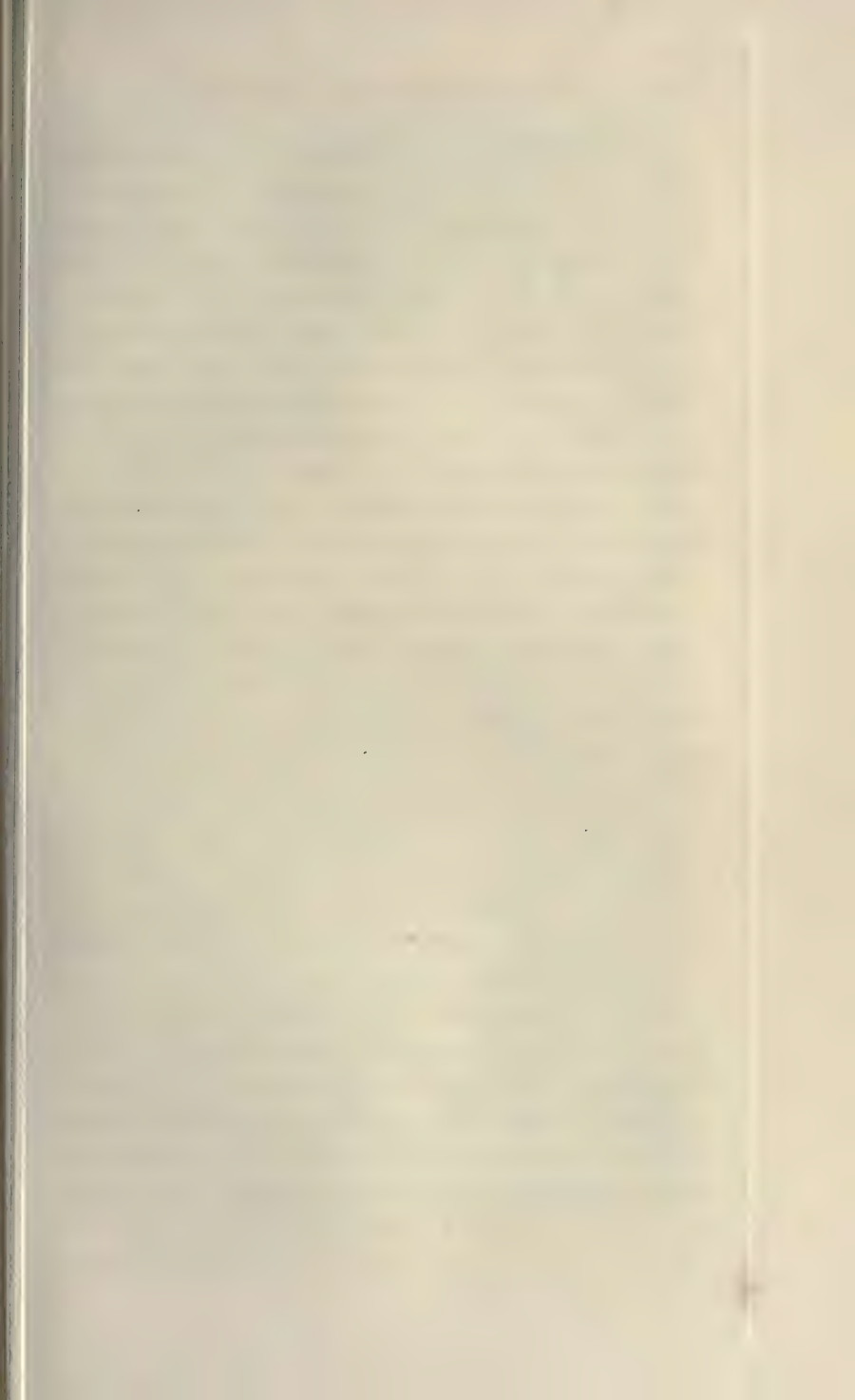
In the Dutch law of 1519, the use of Lisboa salt was not permitted, although in later years only Spanish and Portugal salt were admissible. The refined salt to be used for the purpose was described as "salt sodden from salt" or "moor salt" ; it passed out of use, however, towards the end of the century, and is not even mentioned in the Herring Fishery Laws of 1580. It was a valuable native industry ; the salt was made from a briny turf called *darinck* found in the alluvial ground at the mouths of some of the Dutch rivers, especially near *Zierik-zee*. This turf, which was covered at every tide by the sea water, was dried and burnt, and its ashes, when moistened with sea water, produced a fine grey salt.

So flourishing an industry as the herring fishery was a natural temptation to neighbouring rulers, who from time to time exacted, or tried to exact, a tax on the fish taken on their coasts. In 1541, for instance, the Duke of Burgundy imposed a tax on herring at Sluys; the citizens of Ghent refused to pay, and the dispute resulted in a war in which the burghers were defeated and afterwards had to pay a heavy fine for their contumacy.

Guicciardini in his description of the Netherlands in 1560, referring to the herring fishery of the maritime provinces of Friesland (of which Groningen then formed part), Holland, Zeeland, and Flanders, states that these provinces employed about 700 vessels, each of which made three voyages in the herring season. Each vessel captured on an average 70 lasts of herrings per season; each last contained twelve barrels, of from 800 to 1,000 fish per barrel; each barrel was worth about £6 sterling; so that the value of the year's fishing in these four provinces alone was about £300,000 sterling.

In the first quarter of the seventeenth century the practice of using jag(g)ers, or "vent-jag(g)ers"¹ came into use among the Dutch for distant as well as local fisheries. The busses, being slow boats, had been obliged to sail home directly their cargo was complete, so that the

¹ Pronounced "yagers"; whence the word "yacht." Jager = the German jäger, hunter or courser, and ventjager = wind-racer, yacht.

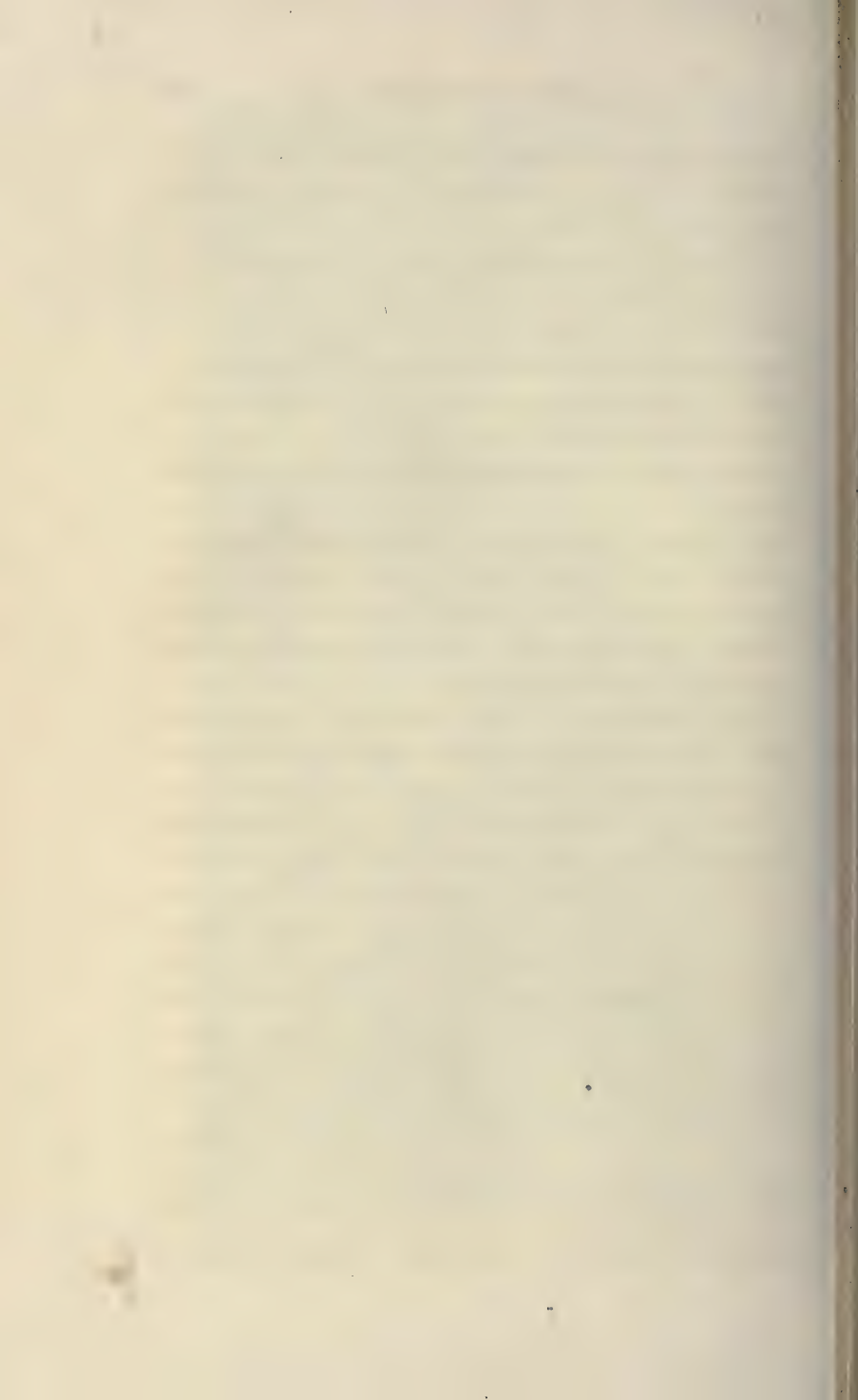




The Herring



Banquet or Feast.



advantage of landing the herring early in the season, when fresh herrings fetched large prices, was lost. In order to secure the advantage of early markets therefore, these ventjagers (fast sailing vessels) used to accompany the Dutch herring fleet, take up the early catches of herrings, and sail with all speed to the Dutch coast. Their place to-day is taken by steam fish carriers which ferry the fish from the vessels on the fishing-grounds to the British ports.

An early reference to these jagers appears in the year 1556, but it only refers to the fisheries near the mouths of rivers. The first Dutch Law relating to the ventjagers at sea appears to be that of 1604.

The eagerness to reach markets early with the first catches of herrings is often mentioned in the records. The herrings, in ordinary circumstances, were conveyed by slow-moving waggons and canal boats, but when the first jagers arrived at the Dutch ports they were met by fast-trotting horses in light gigs, capable of carrying a few barrels of herring only. The fish were then raced to the chief markets, and to have the honour of appearing there first at the beginning of the herring season was regarded as a valuable advertisement.

On the arrival of the first herrings in Dutch cities the town crier announced the New Herring, and flags were hung out of the houses. The Festival of the Herring was to the Dutch as

the Festival of the Vineyards to the nations of warmer climates.

SECTION II.—THE DUTCH AND ENGLISH QUESTION IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

Dominium Maris. Throughout the history of the Dutch herring fishery, and especially that part which deals with the Zuider Zee under the Republic of the United Provinces, whether expressed or tacitly held, runs the doctrine of the Dominion of the Seas. The right to fish all over the open seas, and the question of *Dominium Maris* were the cause of endless disputes and claims by the Dutch, and in an indirect way resemble the claims which the Germans have advanced about the "freedom of the seas" during the present War. But the meaning which the Central European Powers and the Papal Note seek in 1917 to place on the words "Freedom of the seas" is the very opposite to that placed upon them by Grotius.

The question was raised by Grotius in his *Mare Liberum* (1608), his contention being that the high seas were open to all. It was to counteract his influence that in 1635 at the request of Charles I. John Selden again took up his *Mare Clausum*, a work begun as early as 1618 (but at the request of James I. not published for fear of subsequent complications with Denmark), when Grotius was one of the Dutch

commissioners in England at a conference called to decide the question whether an English royal licence was required before Dutch vessels could fish in Greenland waters. The point was no new one. But it was the pivot upon which turned the great decisions of International Law and British naval policy, and on its interpretation ultimately rest the foundations of the British Empire as we now know it.

The English claim was far more ancient than is commonly supposed. As far back as 1295 Edward I. styled himself "sovereign of the sea," but forbade his own subjects to molest the Dutch, Zeelanders and Frisons while fishing off Yarmouth, and in 1384 what may be called the first Navigation Act was passed. Henry VI., however, in 1440 rejected the proposal of the Commons to resume the policy embodied in this Act, 5 Richard II., c. 3.

Two Acts in the reign of Henry VII. in 1485 and 1489, an Act of Henry VIII., 1541, and an Act of Elizabeth, 1593, all dealt with the privileges of English shipping. About the time of the marriage of Queen Mary with King Philip of Spain, the English claim to the sovereignty of the seas was enforced by compelling King Philip's subjects in Flanders to pay a fine and an annual rent of £1,000 for a twenty-one years' lease of the fishing near the North Irish coast, while a similar lease with similar conditions was granted by Queen Mary to "the Company of the old Hans." Foreign subjects

were forbidden to fish in English waters without licences which were granted at Scarborough Castle. With the decline of the English sea power foreigners ceased to acknowledge these claims, and the necessity for purchasing a licence was disregarded.

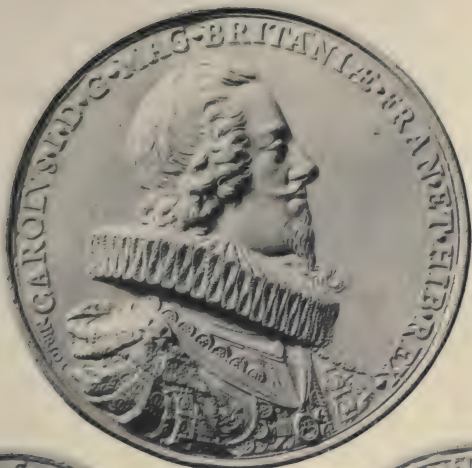
James I., who had a statesmanlike perception of the importance of the subject, appointed a Commission to attend to the same matter in 1622. Charles I. renewed certain old laws for the benefit of English shipping, and announced his intention of subjecting all fishing in British waters to his royal licence and recognisance in the shape of a special tax. By this levy, enforced in the face of protest by the Dutch, 2s. per last for the year was exacted from the Dutch herring fleet, which had been found by twelve British ships of war taking herring in British fishing ground. Next year, fifty-seven Dutch ships of war unsuccessfully endeavoured to prevent the levying of the tax, but the British admiral succeeded in collecting no less than 20,000 florins as licence money.

The claim of the Dutch to fish off our coasts was embodied in the "*Mare Liberum*" of Grotius, although that jurist had in fact never mentioned the Dutch claim to the right of fishing upon foreign coasts, merely asserting in general terms the principle of the freedom of the seas. The English Government, however, as has been stated above, thought it advisable to issue Selden's "*Mare Clausum*" before coming to an

open rupture with the Dutch for the purpose of testing by force of arms the claim to the sovereignty of the "Four Seas."

The treatise, dedicated to the King, was by his command, delivered personally in open court to the barons of the Exchequer by Sir William Beecher, one of the clerks of the Privy Council, and placed among the Exchequer records, where it still remains. Selden's reasoning was based on records and precedents of the titles and claims of the Saxon and Norman kings of England. But it is only fair to remember that in early times there was little or no maritime trade or naval power in existence, except in the Mediterranean, so that the cases adduced offered no real parallel to the conditions of Selden's day, when all the nations whose territory bordered on the northern and western seas of Europe transacted a large volume of trade by sea, and in many cases maintained naval forces to protect it. Nor is it surprising that the claim of one of these powers to the dominion of the seas should attract the hostility of other nations. Charles I. at all events was determined to compel the Dutch to acknowledge this dominion, and as a preliminary built the largest ship of war that had ever been seen in England, *The Sovereign*, of 96 guns and 1,740 tons burthen. A large fleet was also necessary, and Lord Chancellor Coventry was ordered to issue writs to the sheriffs of the several counties

and to the magistrates of the several towns "for assessing and collecting money for fitting out ships of war, for the suppression of pirates, and for the guard of the seas." The ships were to be from 100 to 900 tons burthen, manned with from 40 to 360 men to each ship, the most general size being 500 tons, with 200 men and a commander. Each ship was to be fitted with cannon, small arms, spears, darts and ammunition, and maintained by its respective county for twenty-six weeks of each year with all provisions, equipment, and necessities, together with the same amount in reserve, the expense of a 500-ton ship and crew for the twenty-six weeks being about £8,000. The "ship money" was to be received by the officers of the ships, who were further empowered to provide and fit out from the King's dockyards a suitable ship or ships on behalf of the towns and counties thus assessed. Norfolk provided one of the largest ships, a vessel of 800 tons with a commander and 320 men, a contribution only exceeded in size by that of Devonshire, of 900 tons and a crew of 360. The City of London provided two ships of 800 tons and 320 men, and there were in all forty-four ships, of a total of 11,500 tons, manned by crews numbering 8,610. This imposition of "ship money," therefore, cost the country about £200,000 a year, and was repeated annually till 1639, when the king excused such towns and counties as by their



The larger medal was issued in 1630 to assert the claim of England to the dominion of the sea, as maintained by Selden, and in accordance with instructions given by Charles I. to his minister at the Hague: "we hold it a principle not to be denied, that the King of Great Britain is a monarch at sea and on land to the full extent of his dominions. His Majesty finds it necessary for his own defence and safety to re-assert and keep his ancient and undoubted rights in the Dominion of the Seas."

The smaller medal, 1662, relates to the ill feeling which existed between the English and Dutch soon after the Restoration. It arose from the anger felt by the English at the encroachment of the Dutch herring fishermen into English waters which led to frequent disputes; besides, the Dutch persistently refused to lower their flags to ships of Great Britain in the British Seas.

situation were unable to provide the ships with which they were charged, permitting them to supply instead an assessed sum of money.

Ship money was a tax formerly levied on the maritime towns and counties in times of war, and sometimes commuted by a money payment. In 1628 Charles I. had extended the principle to inland towns and counties to secure the county against the dangers of a French invasion, but the writs were withdrawn in the face of violent opposition. In October, 1634, the tax was levied for the following year in time of peace, and in 1635, as already stated, Selden's treatise was issued to strengthen the hands of the Government. Few people realise the connection of ship money with the herring fisheries, and fewer still have seen that, had its form been constitutional, the policy of Charles I. might have been acclaimed as the forerunner of the great naval policy of Cromwell.

But the ships thus acquired served their purpose, and the King, having forbidden foreigners to fish on our coasts without his licence, was enabled in 1636 to send a fleet which attacked and put to flight the Dutch fishing vessels that had infringed this order, some of them being sunk by the English fleet; many of the rest in a crippled state were forced to take shelter in English harbours. The Dutch agreed to pay Charles I. £30,000 for permission to finish that year's fishing, and to

pay the same sum yearly for the same permission. The gain to the English was, as so often happens, not taken full advantage of, and in 1637—8, when the English fishermen sent herring to Dantzic the fish were so badly cured that considerable loss fell upon the fishermen. De Witt, in his "Interest of Holland," remarks when speaking of this matter, "Whereupon the British changed their former claim upon the whole fishery for that of demanding The Tenth Herring, which the diligent and frugal Hollanders considered to be a claim by the English that the Dutch should catch herring for, and pay tribute to a slothful and wasteful people simply for the right of passing along the coast of Britain."

In April, 1639, however, when Charles I. was at York, on his way to suppress the rebellion in Scotland, he found himself compelled to revoke many of his previous licences, grants, monopolies, privileges and commissions, previously issued, among them one for "gauging red herring," while the question of ship money was decided once for all by an Act of Parliament (17 Car. I. c. 2), introduced by Selden in 1641, and by the Civil War which followed.

The dispute regarding the right of the Dutch to fish in the "Straights" was carried on by Cromwell, but it was soon merged in the larger questions involved in his naval policy, which

ended in a radical change in the status of the Dutch fishery.¹

This policy was embodied in the celebrated Navigation Act of 1651, confirmed nine years later, which gave birth to the British mercantile marine and the British Navy, and settled the predominance of British naval power. It would not be going too far to say that this Act was one of the foundation stones upon which the commercial prosperity of modern England is built. It was the abandonment of the policy for which it stood, by the repeal in 1849 of our navigation laws, that gave Germany the first weapon with which eventually to embark upon the present war by providing her with wealth with which to create her mercantile marine and overseas trade and support the navy now conducting the submarine warfare against this country. The madness which permitted this repeal has quite recently repeated itself when the Government of this country forgot that Britain is an island and endeavoured to fasten upon us the Declaration of London and the policy of a Little Navy; the valuable part played before the war by Mr. Thomas Gibson Bowles, and in a lesser degree by Lord Desborough, and the Council of the Association of Chambers of Commerce

¹ The subject is treated in detail by Beaujon in his "History of the Dutch Sea Fisheries," and briefly explained in a speech, delivered by the author of this present book before the members of the Institute of Shipbrokers, London, on February 24th, 1916, and afterwards published by the Institute as a pamphlet, under the title of "Merchant Shipping as a Weapon against Germany," by A. M. Samuel.

of the United Kingdom, in frustrating this insane attempt should never be forgotten. There is, as a rule, no more thankless task than the endeavour to influence for the public good a field of public opinion in a highly technical and abstruse matter. Those who have studied naval questions, and who know that from Salamis to Trafalgar the sea has always beaten the land, should remember with gratitude and respect the names of those persons and bodies who, in the face of powerful opposition, in the end prevented the ratification by Mr. Asquith's Government of the terms of Sir Edward Grey's criminal Declaration of London. The Association of Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom in March, 1911, made a determined stand against the Declaration notwithstanding the attitude of the Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association. (See their Report presented February 6th, 1911. The views expressed in that Report have been proved by the war to be wanting in foresight.)

Out of the navigation laws, as has been said, grew the British mercantile marine and the British Navy, but while no one would wish for an instant to belittle the Navy, few have a good word for, or even remember the laws which made it possible to build and man, equip and maintain the naval service as we now know it. Few people have even heard of the Navigation Acts, fewer still know that they arose from dis-

putes based upon the visits of foreign vessels in search for herrings off our coasts.

The Act of 1651 provided that no fish should be brought into England or Ireland, or exported from thence to foreign parts, or even carried from one English or Irish port to another, except fish caught by English and Irish fishermen in English and Irish ships, thus dealing a death blow to the Dutch carrying trade, which had till then been a monopoly.

Blake's victories over the Dutch intensified the ill-feeling between the two countries, and ridicule of that "watery Babel" "Holland, that scarce deserves the name of land," came readily to the lips of Marvell, the laureate of the Commonwealth, who overwhelmed the rival land with watery images :—

"Yet will his claim the injured ocean aid,
And oft at leap-frog o'er their steeples played,
As if on purpose it on land had come
To show them what's their *mare liberum*. . . .
The fish oftimes the burgher dispossessed,
And sat, not as a meat, but as a guest ;
And oft the Tritons and the sea-nymphs saw
Whole shoal of Dutch served up for cabillau¹ ;
Or, as they over the new level ranged,
For pickled herring pickled heeren changed."

In 1654 some persons well known in the City of London formed an Association to Capture Herring, the Commonwealth Parliament encouraging the project by granting exemption of duty on the salt and the ships' stores to be used in the fishing. Money was subscribed

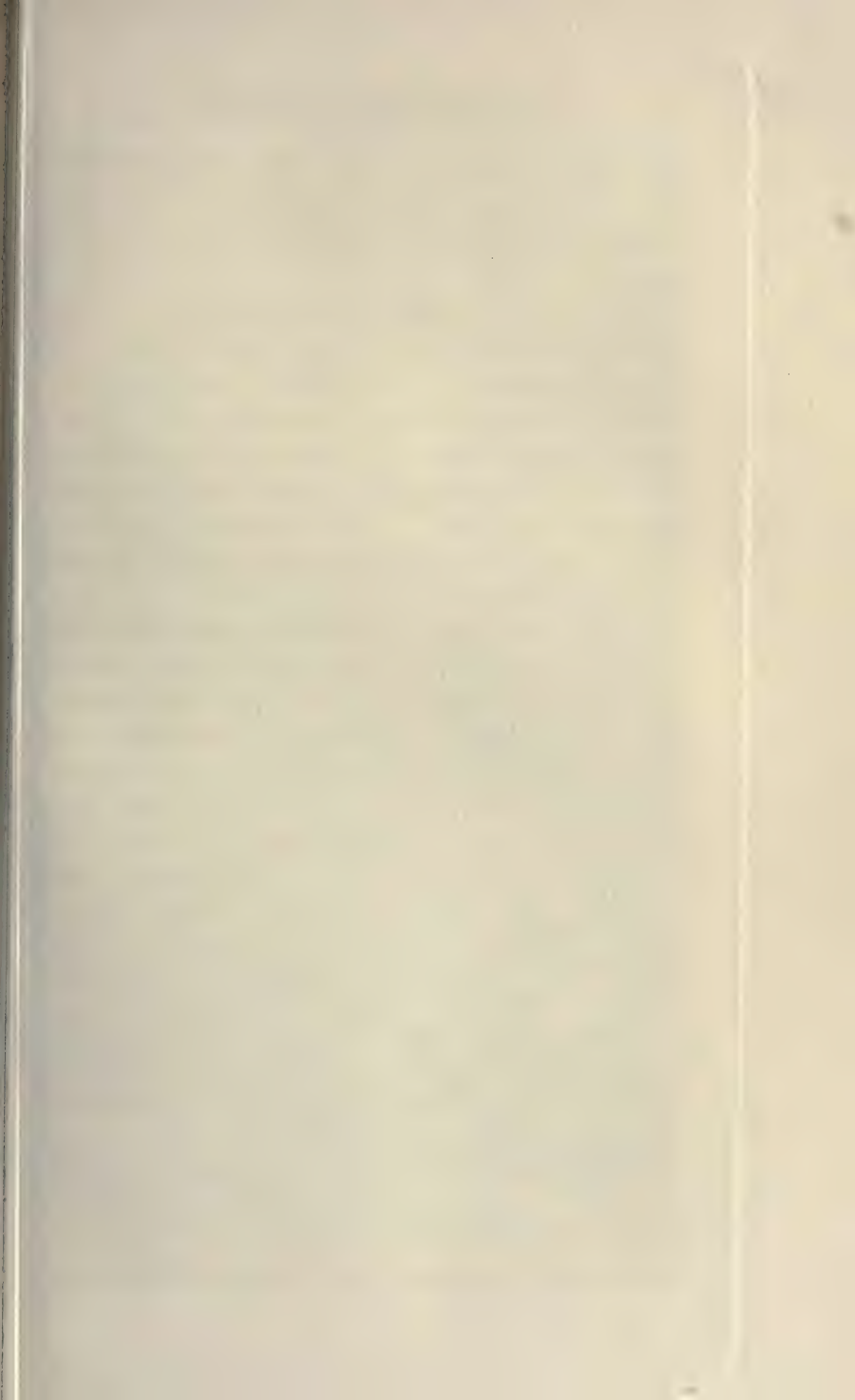
¹ Cabillau = cod. Cf. : "Hooks and Kabbeljaws," names of two political parties in the Netherlands.

in London, but the enterprise, perhaps the first attempt to carry out the suggestions of the anonymous author of "Britain's Buss," was not a success.

In 1661 the Parliament of Scotland, following the English policy in matters relating to commerce, passed navigation laws for the encouragement of native shipping and navigation, as also an Act for founding companies to extend the herring and other fisheries, and granting bounties on the export of fish—a policy that was subsequently carried out on many occasions.

In the same year, Charles II. constituted the Royal Fishery Company of Great Britain and appointed the Duke of York, Lord Clarendon, and others to form a committee or council; the project however, came to nothing, although the enterprise was more free from restrictions than the undertaking favoured by the Commonwealth Government in 1654. The new company was privileged to set up a lottery and to collect funds in all parish churches; taverns, inns and alehouses were compelled by law to buy one barrel of herrings at 30s. per barrel and a duty of 2s. 6d. per barrel was paid to the company by persons who imported foreign-caught herring.

Two years later, by a Statute for The Farther Improvement of Former Navigation Acts, and for the Encouragement of the North Sea, etc., Fisheries, no fresh herrings were

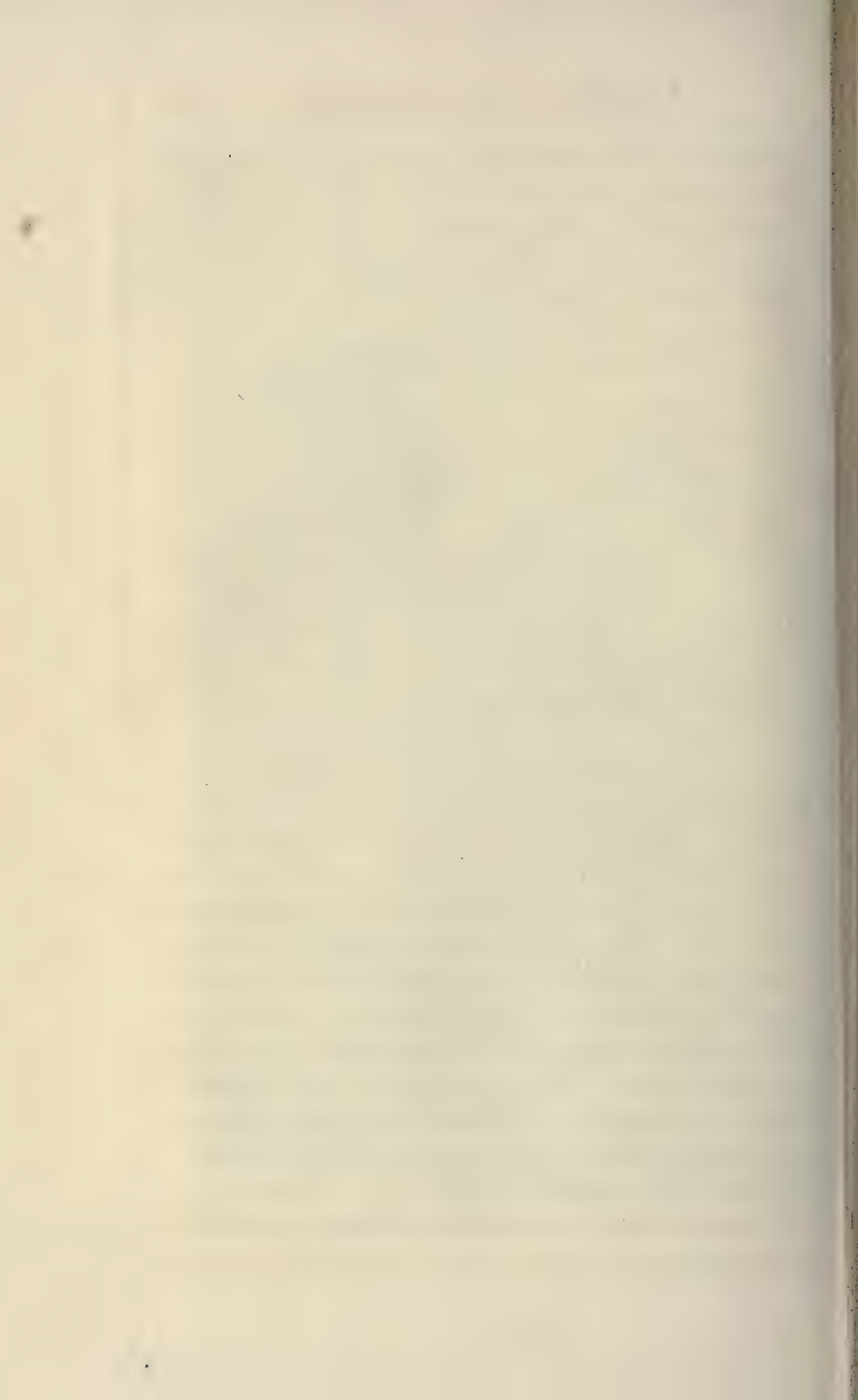




The Hooping &



Herring Barrils.



allowed to be imported into England except in English-built ships, salt for the fisheries of New England and Newfoundland being exempt from its provisions. In the same year two Acts were passed for the encouragement of the manufacture of linen and tapestry—the latter a revival of the famous Mortlake tapestry factories of James I. and Charles I., for the use of which the cartoons of Raphael had been brought to England—the encouragement of the importation of foreign manufactures and the regulation of the packing of herrings. It was also enacted that no ship should sail for Iceland from England till March 10th of each year, this provision being made to protect the fish at breeding time and the newly developed spawn.

A new Company of the Royal Fishery was incorporated in 1677, the Duke of York, the Earl of Danby, and many peers and gentlemen being partners. All the privileges enjoyed by any former Fishery Company were conferred upon this venture; it had power to purchase land, and a bounty of £20 for every dogger or buss built and fitted out was to be paid out of the Customs of the Port of London for a period of seven years. The capital was £10,980, afterwards increased to £12,580, but this was absorbed by the building of seven busses. Some of these, with their cargoes, were captured by the French, who had become very prosperous in their maritime and commercial undertakings

since Louis XIV. had established a fishery to the great harm of its English rival. The remainder of the busses, together with all their stores, were sold off in 1680 on the company becoming embarrassed by debt. Not deterred by this want of success, Sir Edward Abney and others started a fresh company in 1683 under the privileges and immunities of the earlier company's charter; this undertaking also failed,¹ a lamentable contrast to the continued prosperity of Holland, as appears from the pages of "*Britannia Languens*" (1680), where it is stated that the Dutch herring and cod fishery employed 8,000 vessels and 200,000 seamen and fishermen, whereby it gained annually £5,000,000 sterling, and provided employment for a multitude of people.

Pepys' Diary (November 28th, 1662, and July 7th, 1664) contains references to the establishment of the Royal Fishery, to the governorship of which the Duke of York was appointed by the King, and to a charter granted under the Great Seal of England to the Corporation of the Royal Fishery. Pepys was a member of the Council of the Governors of the Corporation. The Corporation was mismanaged, and Pepys was one of the persons appointed to make a report on the affairs of the

¹ The development of the fisheries during the seventeenth century is dealt with at some length by Smith Elder in "*The Royal Fishery Companies of the Seventeenth Century*" (1912). This book also contains a most interesting account of the disputes and discussions that centred around "*Mare Liberum*" and "*Dominium Maris*."

Royal Fishery. He writes in his Diary, October 10th, 1664 :—

“To the office, and there late, and so home to supper, and to bed, having sat up till past twelve at night to look over the account of the collections for the Fishery, and the loose and base manner that monies so collected are disposed of in would make a man never part with a penny in that manner; and, above all, the inconvenience of having a great man, though never so seeming pious as my Lord Pembroke is. He is too great to be called to an account, and is abused by his servants, and yet obliged to defend them for his owne sake.”

Were this an Anthology of the Herring, a work not yet written, extracts from Pepys would supply many pages.

In 1666 came another Act for the Better Encouragement of the Herring Fishery. The importation of herring, “fresh or salt, dried or bloated,” taken by foreigners was prohibited, any person whatsoever being empowered to seize the same, half for his own use, and half for the poor of the parish. This Act, 18 Car. II., c. 2, and two subsequent Acts, 20 Car. II., c. 7, and 32 Car. II., c. 2, are additionally interesting in that they dealt with the question of the importation of provisions from Ireland.

In his “Discourses on Trade” (1670) Sir Joshua Child states that “The Hollanders had a great trade of salt from Portugal to France, and immense fishing for white herring off our own coasts,” and remarks that the Dutch would

probably have captured the trade of red herrings long before but for two reasons: (1) that fish must be brought fresh to land to be cured, as at Yarmouth, which the Dutch could not do because the herring are found near our own coasts, and at too great a distance from their own; (2) that they must be smoked with wood, a source of difficulty to the Dutch, because Holland was not a woody country, and high prices had to be paid for fuel.

“A Discourse of the Fishery, Briefly laying open not only the Advantages, and Facility of the Undertaking, but likewise the Absolute Necessity of it, in Order to the Well-being both of King and People,” by the famous pamphleteer Sir Roger L'Estrange, of Hunstanton, Norfolk, who bore the nickname “Oliver's fiddler,” 1674, deals with the riches Holland has gained from the fisheries, to which she owes all her greatness, and is now “taking from his Majesties Seas no less than Ten Million of Pounds Sterling worth” of herring, cod and ling. L'Estrange urges that we have the advantage of situation, the fish being found upon our coast, and our vessels not being detained by contrary winds, but safe in their own harbours; that the fishery, whether bringing profit or loss, would still abundantly answer the expense; that it is “the only Nursery of Seamen,” and therefore essential to the safety of the nation; and that since fishermen already act as coasting pilots, and had proved indispensable to his

Majesty's fleet in the late wars, they should be officially recognised and their functions extended [since who but they know the banks and shoals upon our coasts?], and that this could only be by increasing their numbers and improving their condition. He refers at the end to the works of Sir Walter Rawleigh and Sir John Burrowes, and concludes by saying that he has said enough to vindicate his assertion of the "Absolute Necessity, as well as the Advantages," of such a policy.

Burroughs (Sir John), or Borough, or Burrowes (a very familiar name in Norfolk in all its variations), *d.* 1643, was one of the most distinguished students of the age. He became Keeper of the Records in the Tower of London in 1623, Norroy King-at-Arms in 1624 and in 1634, Garter King of Arms—in the latter capacity having for several years much personal intercourse with Charles I., of whom he was a devoted adherent. His "Sovereignty of the British Seas" was, like Selden's work, a counter-blast to Grotius, and shows the perception common to the Stuarts and to their wiser adherents of the necessity for a strong fleet. Burroughs' services as a note-taker were of considerable value during the Civil War when conferences were held between the rival parties, and he was happy in the moment of his death, which occurred on October 21st, 1643, before the fortunes of his Royal master had begun to wane.

“A Discourse concerning the Fishery within the British Seas And other his Majesties Dominions. London. Printed for the Company of the Royal Fishery of England, 1695,” gives a bibliography of works on the subject, as follows: “Tobias Gentleman” (whose date is given as 1615); “Britain’s Buss” 1615 (said to have been reprinted in 1630); “Rawleigh’s Observations,” 1618; Gerrard Malynes, A treatise called “Lex Mercatoria,” ch. 47, 1636; “The Seas Magazine Opened,” written by a Person of Honour, 1653; Captain John Smith, “The Trade of Great Britain Displayed,” 1661; “The Royal Trade of Fishing,” 1662; “John Keymor’s Observations,” made upon the Dutch Fishing, about the year 1601, 1664; “The Royal Fishing Revived,” etc., 1670; “L’Estrange’s Discourse” (*q.v.*), 1674; “A Discourse of Salt and Fishery,” written by John Collins, 1682.

The “Discourse” states amongst other things that in the charter granted by Charles II. to the Royal Fisheries all fishermen were “exempt from serving on Juries, or Inquests, at Westminster, the Assizes, Sessions or Elsewhere,” as well as other personal privileges. This company, however, failed, from inadequate support, says the “Discourse,” which goes on nevertheless to estimate the gains of the new company at £1,000 per vessel—“One *half* whereof were sufficient gain for Encouraging the Undertaking; Yea one Quarter,” with which words it ends.

During the reign of Charles II. the Dutch fishermen brought great prosperity to Yarmouth, and Mr. Secretary Coke gives us a vivid picture of an East Coast scene :—

“ Whilst the fishings continue, the Dutch, with above 1,000 sail of busses, besides their jagers and other ships, victual themselves from our shore with bread, beer, flesh and butter, and dry their nets upon the land, especially in a field near Yarmouth, which is two miles in length, and they come ashore sometimes above ten thousand persons, which, besides the victualling of their ships, carry from hence to supply their country both corn, beer and beans in a very great proportion. Yarmouth alone employeth forty brewers for their service.”

Perhaps because of this immigrant population Yarmouth in the seventeenth century was no peaceful place. “ An Act for settling the Differences betweene the Townes of Great and Little Yarmouth¹ touching the lading and unlading of Herrings and other Merchandises and Commodities ” was passed in 1676, and again in 1677, and these Acts recite that there had

“ beene heretofore many differences between the Townes of Great and Little Yarmouth, in the Countyes of Norfolke and Suffolke, or in one or both of them, to the impoverishing of both by mutuall dissensions, the mutual determination of which would tend greatly to the peace of both.”

But whatever encouragement these Acts may have given to the fisheries, the naval

¹ Otherwise known as “ Southtowne.”

policy of Charles II. did English shipping much harm. The Dutch War of 1665 was popular, but the insult of 1667, when the Dutch sailed up the Medway and

“An English pilot too (O shame! O sin!)
Cheated of 's pay, was he that showed them in,”¹

caused an outburst of popular fury against the Dutch that survived to embarrass the sufficiently perplexing position of William of Orange, as ruler of the two countries which had been at each other's throats for the three preceding decades. His closing days must have been galled by the disaster to the Dutch fishing fleet, when in 1702 six French men-of-war attacked it at sea and burnt no fewer than 400 ships, after having sunk the admiral's ship and driven off the three other Dutch ships of war.

That singular person, James Puckle, author of “The Club” (1667 (?)—1724) and grandson of a Mayor of Norwich, took a prominent part in the fishermen's question under William III. He was the promoter of another Royal Fishery of England Company, and in 1696 issued a pamphlet entitled “England's Interests, or a Brief Discourse of the Royal Fishery in a letter to a Friend,” which was altered and reissued under a new title² the following year, a second time altered, enlarged and largely re-written as “England's Way to Wealth and Honour, in a Dialogue between an

¹ Marvell's “Last Instructions to a Painter about the Dutch Wars.”

² For the full titles and other details see the Bibliography.

Englishman and Dutchman," also published in 1697. A fourth version published in 1700 as "England's Path to Wealth" reached a second edition in 1718, was translated into Swedish five years later, and finally—proof of its more than national interest—included among the Somers tracts. Any one desiring to investigate the subject of the herring industry at the close of the seventeenth century should turn to Puckle's curious and vivacious pages.

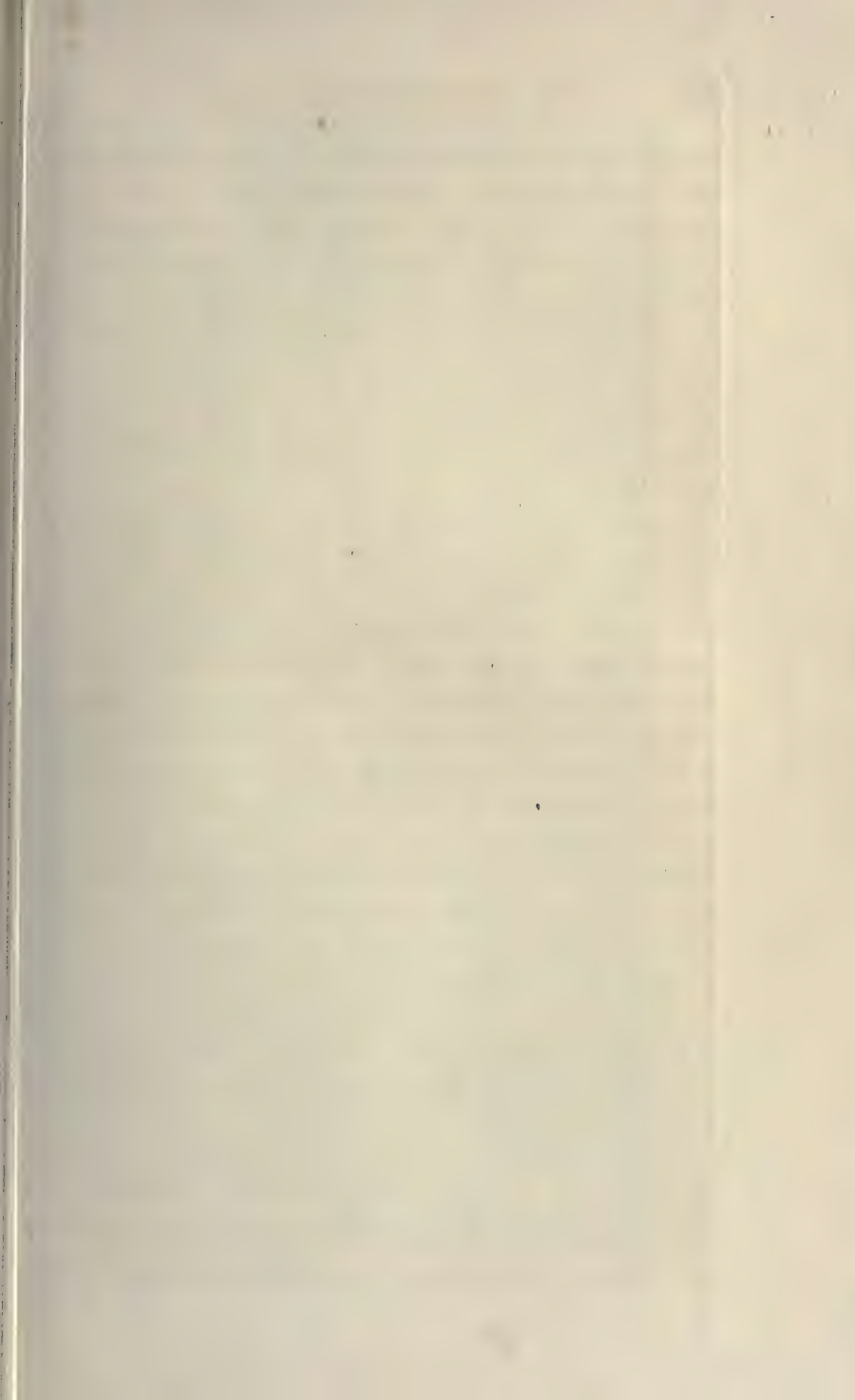
SECTION III.—THE ENGLISH HERRING FISHERY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

In 1704 Queen Anne reorganised the various laws relating to the herring fishery. She permitted the use of all harbours and shores for landings on payment of reasonable dues, did away with the exaction known as "Saturday's fishing," or "a night's fishing," and enacted careful regulations with regard to the quality of salt with which the fish was to be cured. A bounty of £10 4s. per last was given on the export of Scottish herrings, and £24 per last on red herrings. Foreign fishermen employed by British subjects were entitled to the same privileges as British subjects employed by British employers, and various materials needed for the fitting out of fishing boats were freed from import duty. The salt used was not, however, to be of Scottish origin—this was only three years before the Union—nor, on the other

hand, was the importation of English and Irish salt into Scotland permitted. That used in England was to be French Bay or Spanish salt, or "salt upon salt made of foreign salt," and the herring barrels were to be of well-seasoned maple or oak, the latter, as is well known, greatly improving the flavour of herrings, not only when used for barrels, but when burned for the smoking of high-dried herrings.

As an instance of the changing habits of the herring it is recorded that in the summer of 1730 the herring fishermen were surprised that the shoals came south two months before the usual time, particularly in the seas between England and Ireland. Great quantities were taken in July off the Clyde, and off Londonderry, and as far south as the Wexford coast. This alteration in date was not repeated in succeeding years, otherwise it might have changed not only the trade of Lewis and the Shetlands, to which stations the Scottish and Dutch fishermen resorted, but also have deflected the currents of commerce in several of the countries of North-West Europe.

In the month of June, 1738, Duncan Forbes of Culloden took John, Duke of Argyll (Jeanie Deans' Duke), to Tyree to show him that it was possible to obtain herring in this district at that time of the year. They caught 2,000 fine fat herring, and Forbes had some of them split and grilled, with pepper and salt, and others





The Packing of the



Brings into the Barrils.



“nicked” and boiled in salt water¹ for the Duke’s breakfast. The Duke said he had never had herring before for that meal—a point in which, as we shall see, the national habits underwent a remarkable change in the course of the century—but only for dinner and supper. He ate two herrings cooked in each way, however, and was so impressed with the possibilities of the herring as a source of excellent food that he forwarded its interests whenever possible during the few remaining years of his life. Unless the Duke’s experience was very exceptional, a remarkable change must have come over Scottish habits in the next half-century, when herrings were the usual Scottish breakfast dish. In Miss Ferrier’s “Marriage” (1818, but written earlier), the fashionable London beauty who, having eloped with a young Highland soldier, returns with him to the paternal seat, cries out when the Laird laid a large piece of herring on her plate : “What am I to do with this ? Do take it away, I shall faint,” to which the good old aunt replies : “I declare ! Pray was it the sight or the smell of the beast that shocked you so much, my dear lady Juliana ? ”

Returning to the eighteenth century we

¹ Fishermen near Beachy Head have told me that they consider boiling freshly caught herring in salt water the best way to bring out the full delicacy of the fish, and I have found this to be true. The salt water sharpens and improves the palate, very much as a Spanish olive, pickled in brine, improves the palate for wine and tobacco. But the Duke was not brought up on the Yarmouth bloater, or I am confident that he would have preferred one caught just after Michaelmas and grilled, to any other form of herring.—A. M. S.

find that in 1750 was published a very interesting pamphlet, one of our very few sources of illustration at this date, entitled "A Letter to a Member of Parliament concerning the Free British Fisheries," showing designs of herring boats and nets of the period ; the author complains bitterly of the poaching by the Dutch herring vessels close in shore between Yarmouth and Southwold.

Certain of the uses to which herring were put in the middle of the eighteenth century were far from obvious. In 1752 James Solas Dodd (some of whose recipes for cooking herring will be found at the end of this book) recommends their use in febrific cases and for cataplasms, and states that the oil of herrings is "of excellent service in cramps and convulsions." His recipe for making the elixir "ossium halecum" is as follows :—

"Take 10 lbs. of herring bones, dried and grossly powdered, put them in a retort, lute it, and place it in an open furnace—give it a degree of fire every two hours till no fumes are seen in the receiver. Then let all cool, and there will be an oil, a volatile salt, and a pungent volatile spirit, which put in a clean retort, and by fire unite together. Then take eight ounces of this united spirit, and put into cucurbit with two lbs. of rectified spirits of nitre, 1 lb. of diaphoretic antimony, and 4 ounces of volatile salt of tartar, distil and cohobate as often till it is perfectly united ; then add an ounce of oil of nutmeg, and half an ounce of oil of cinnamon, digest in a matrass ten days, and pour off for use, which keep

in a well-stopt bottle; the dose of this is from 4 to 10 drops whenever a high volatile cordial is necessary."

Dodd was, as may be guessed, something of a character. Born in 1721, he spent six years as a surgeon's mate on board a man-of-war, and having set up for himself in London in 1751, next year began as an author with his "Essay towards a Natural History of the Herring," a work written to promote the success of the industry on the lines of the Society for the Free British Fishery. He took a part in the case of Elizabeth Canning, who "whipt three female 'prentices to death and hid them in the coal-hole," turned lecturer, playwright and historian, and at the age of sixty actually embarked for Russia on the strength of an adventurer's promise to make him Ambassador to the Czarina, and returned almost destitute, only to set up as lecturer and actor in Edinburgh. He died in 1804, having left behind him an MS. autobiography from which these particulars are drawn, and the reputation of being "a gentleman of amiable and entertaining manners," and a great frequenter of "disputing societies."

In 1747, according to Vernon, the Dutch still had 3,000 herring boats and 40,000 fishermen employed in the industry, a great falling off, it is true, from the 4,000 vessels and 200,000 men of 1679, but still bringing in £5,000,000 sterling per annum. Eight years later they

were employing no fewer than 152 vessels off the coast of Ireland, while the Scots had only seventeen vessels employing a total of 174 men. The Dutch, in fact, called their herring fishery their "gold mine," and this fishing was carried on entirely on the coasts of Britain. It is startling to find that in 1750 1,100 British fishermen were engaged in Dutch fishing boats, and George Walker, recommending the formation of a company to promote the British fishery, suggests that the King should call home all British seamen for employment in British waters.

One writer of the period makes the useful suggestion that Parliament should employ in the herring industry the crews of ships of war discharged in consequence of peace and that 400 vessels of fifty to a hundred tons each should be provided for this purpose by the State, which was to be a partner in the undertaking.¹

In the circumstances it is not surprising to find George II. in his speech at the opening of Parliament in 1749 making a reference to the English industry and the advantages to be derived from encouraging it. The House of Commons thereupon appointed a committee to look into the matter, and many books and

¹ There are many other pamphlets quoted by Mitchell in his masterly work on the Herring, from page 195 onwards, which should be of great value to those who are turning their attention to the development of this country's resources, and more especially to British fisheries.

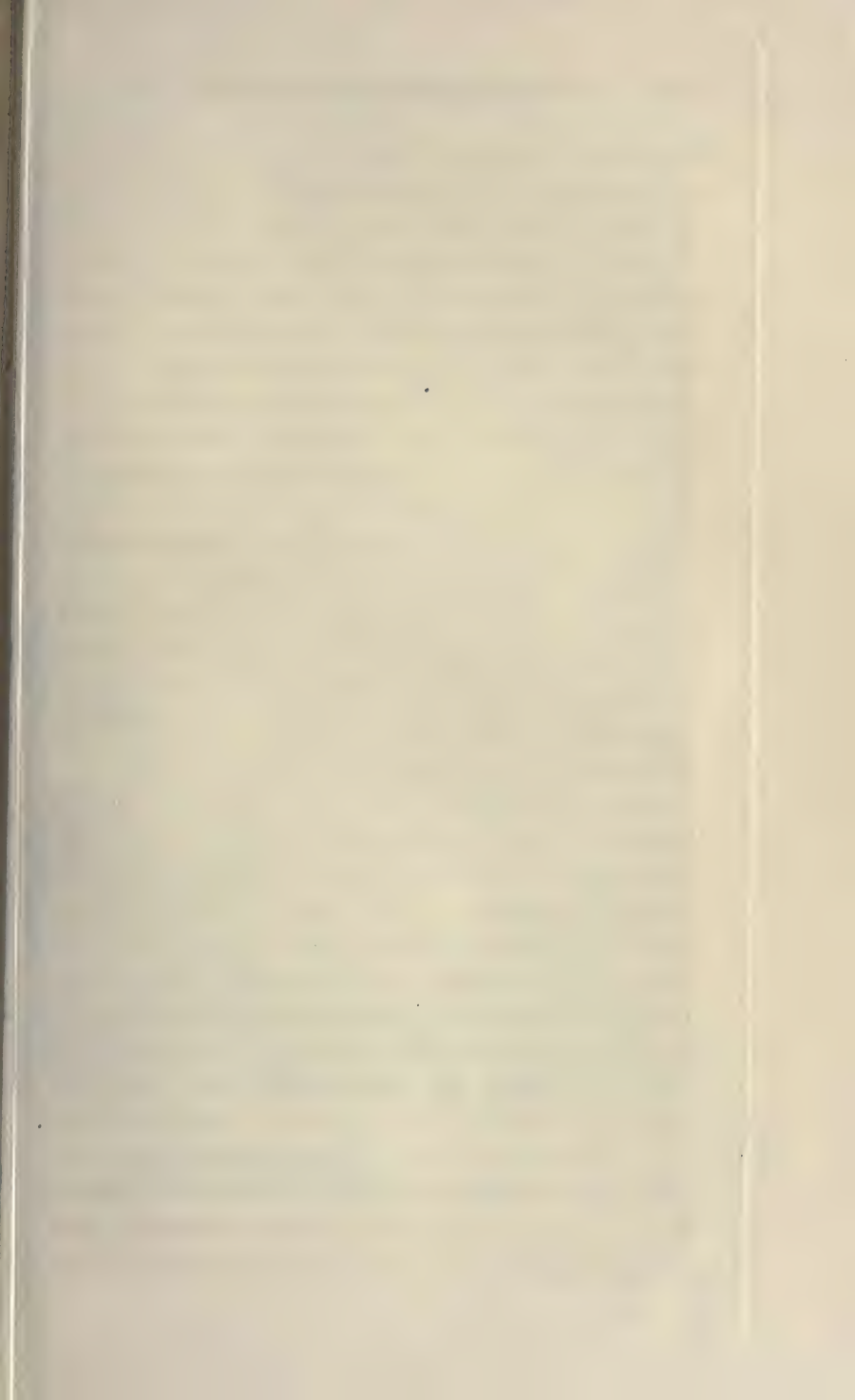
pamphlets were written dealing with the various plans suggested, bitter complaints being made of the salt restrictions imposed by the Act of 1704 which hampered the progress of the fisheries. We shall hear more of these restrictions when we come to the public-spirited appeals of Lord Dundonald.

The attention of the House of Commons being thus directed to the subject, a body of London merchants proposed to form a joint-stock company with a capital of £500,000 provided the Government would guarantee interest at 4 per cent. on the capital. Pamphlets were published advocating that an attempt should be made by Great Britain to win the herring fishery from the Dutch, an Act being actually passed with this object. A bounty was granted spread over a certain number of years and payable to British fishing vessels built in and sailing from any British port and carrying British crews: such vessels were to meet at the Shetlands on or before June 11th in each year, but were not to shoot their nets or wet them before June 13th. They were to continue fishing, following the herrings south till October 1st, or they might meet at Campbeltown in Argyllshire on September 1st, and might continue fishing till December 31st. A journal was to be kept of their proceedings, with a record of the quantities of fish sent to foreign markets in tenders before the vessels came to port and of the numbers of fish brought

into British ports. Each vessel was to carry twelve Winchester bushels of salt for every last of herrings the vessel was capable of holding ; the barrels for the fish were to be new, and each vessel of 70 tons was to have two fleets of nets. There were various other provisions as to the interest on the capital subscribed for the venture, which capital might be provided under the name of a fishing chamber of a city or port. The Royal Charter of Incorporation was granted on October 11th, 1750.

The scheme did not succeed commercially. The gear and vessels were bought at very expensive rates, more people were employed than necessary, and more fish caught than could be sold either in this country or abroad in competition with the better cured herrings in the established markets of the Dutch.

Oliver Goldsmith in his essay "On the Instability of Worldly Grandeur," 1759 (*The Bee*), refers to the British White Herring Fishery Company. He says : "A few years ago the herring fishery employed all Grub Street ; it was the topic in every coffee-house, and the burden of every ballad. We were to drag up oceans of gold from the bottom of the sea ; we were to supply all Europe with herrings upon our own terms. At present we hear no more of this. We have fished up very little gold that I can learn ; nor do we furnish the world with herrings as was expected. Let us wait but a few years longer, and we shall

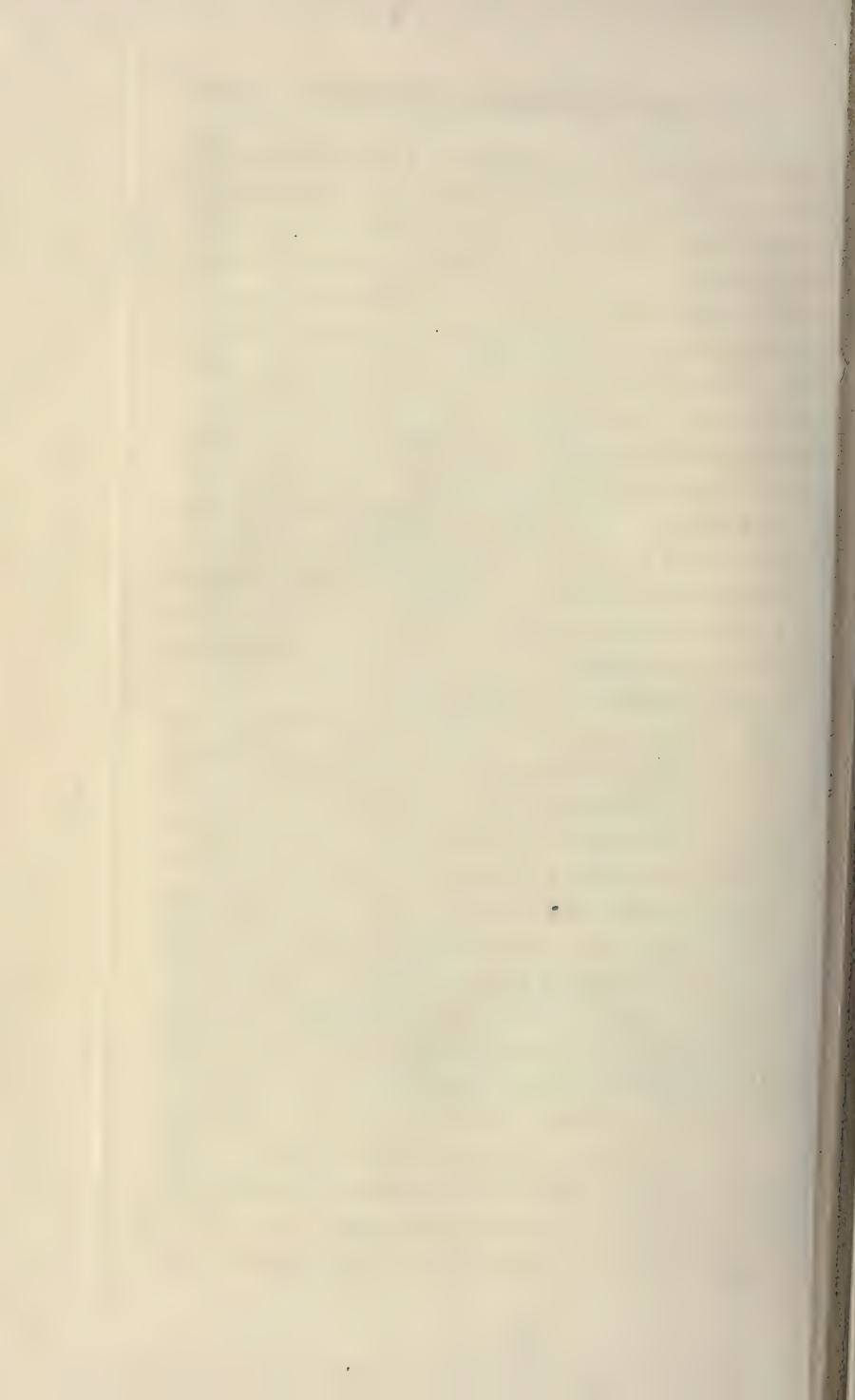




The Mending or Repairing



of the Broken Herring Netts.



find all our expectations a herring fishery." The secretary and laureate of the company was John Lockman, known then as the "Herring Poet." In Hogarth's "Beer Street," 1751, the fishwomen are shown singing one of Lockman's ballads on the herring fishery. The ballad was then exceedingly popular at Vauxhall Gardens. The "Herring Poet" translated many French works, among them the "Henriade."

By Acts of 1750, 1753, 1755, the Government paid a bounty of 3 per cent. on capital subscribed by the Society of Free British Fisheries, but the restrictions as to the modes of using salt and the kinds of salt continued to be a source of difficulty.

A supplemental Act in 1753 varied the amount of the bounty, but permitted vessels to put in to any port in Great Britain or Ireland, between the interval of the Shetland and the Yarmouth fishing, in order to prepare for the latter. The fleets of nets might be of any depth not under five fathoms, but the rendezvous was changed to Kirkwall in the Orkneys, Bressy, Bressay, Brassey or Bressa Sound, now Lerwick Harbour, being often mentioned about this date.

In October, 1771, a bounty of 30s. a ton for seven years was granted to all decked vessels of from 20 to 80 tons of British origin and ownership engaged in the herring fishery. The Statute appointed that the vessels should meet

for fishing at Yarmouth, Leith, Inverness, Brassey Sound, Kirkwall, Oban, Campbeltown and Whitehaven, and the bounty in Scotland was no longer to be dependent upon the production of a particular fund, but to be paid punctually from the whole revenue of the kingdom.

In 1771, although a bounty on the herring fishing was paid in the ports of England, it was stopped in Scotland. Only nineteen busses were fitted out in Scotland in 1770, and in 1771 only four, as against 263 in 1767. The Scottish fishery was thus abandoned to foreigners, who caught large quantities of herrings on the coasts of Scotland and exported them to our own West India Islands as food for the slaves.

Boswell in 1773 perceived the need of "encouragement of men to fisheries and manufactures" in order to introduce a circulation of money, since the absence of small change gave rise to serious inconveniences ("Tour," September 24th, 1773). The theory of Government bounties on the number of herring taken was fundamentally sound; though the bounties were gradually reduced, the system continued in full force till 1821, ultimately ceasing altogether in 1829. But bounties based on tonnage were unsound. "The herring vessels," in the words of one writer on economics, "went to sea to catch the bounty, and not the fish." From 1829 to 1851 the fisheries were unsup-

ported by State encouragement. They were, however, no longer hampered by restrictive regulations, though it was only by the Sea Fisheries Act of 1868 that the Scottish herring fishery was entirely freed of restrictions.

A shrewd observation has been made that all the fisheries that have ever prospered have risen gradually from small beginnings, the number of people bred to them, and the increase of markets keeping pace with the gradual increase in the quantity of fish caught, thus avoiding the waste and want of thrifty management always associated with the peculiar methods and loose organisation of an enterprise carried on by joint-stock companies or administered under State control, even though the undertaking be a monopoly.

The hand of the State being removed, we see from the Report on the Herring Fisheries of Scotland by Buckland, Walpole and Young (1878), that the history of the industry from 1809 onwards, though marked by constant fluctuations from year to year, is, on the whole, a record of continual prosperity. The improvement is the more noteworthy because in the course of a century the export trade in herrings has undergone many revolutions. The Irish demand has decreased, and with the abolition of slavery the export of herring to the West Indies has almost entirely ceased. Steamboats and railways, however, have had an extremely beneficial effect as increasing the area of distri-

bution, though, as already said, there is room for improvement in this respect.

In the year 1773 we see the Scottish herring fleet in illustrious company. It was in the autumn of that year that Dr. Johnson "was induced to undertake the journey," as he himself says, "by finding in Mr. Boswell a companion, whose acuteness would help my inquiry, and whose gaiety of conversation and civility of manners are sufficient to counteract the inconveniences of travel, in countries less hospitable than we have passed." Unfortunately, in spite of their joint eulogiums upon Scottish breakfasts, neither Johnson nor Boswell particularises herring, probably because it was too familiar, though smoked salmon is mentioned, but on Sunday, October 3rd, they got the first hint of a change of wind from "a little fleet of herring-busses passing by for Mull," and therefore left Skye for the Sound of Mull; their vessel "kept near the five herring vessels for some time," but, the wind changing, they were obliged to tack, and finally run for Col.

To Johnson's eulogium already mentioned, "if an epicure could remove by a wish, in quest of sensual gratifications, wherever he had supped, he would breakfast in Scotland," we may adduce a parallel from a quarter at least equally impartial. Peacock, who hated the Scots as he hated nothing but Lord Brougham—and like Johnson he was a good

hater—makes Mr. MacQuedy say in “Crotchet Castle,” in a discussion on breakfasts :—

“ Well, Sir, and what say you to a fine fresh trout, hot and dry, in a napkin, or a herring out of the water into the frying-pan, on the shore of Loch Fyne ? ”

to which the Reverend Dr. Folliott classically and characteristically replies :—

“ Sir, I say every nation has some eximious virtue ; and your country is pre-eminent in the glory of fish for breakfast.”

Going back to the reign of George II. from which the question of bounties led us to violate chronology, we find in the Dutch herring industry of 1750 a melancholy contrast to the English. Ever on the look-out to improve their processes, the Dutch made even stricter regulations concerning the quality of salt to be used for herrings, no Spanish or Portugal salt being permitted in herring casks before the curing master had examined it. Only Spanish or Portugal salt was to be taken to sea for the herring fishing by the vessels of Holland and West Friesland, the use of French salt from St. Martins, Olderdame, the South of France, the West Indies, and other places being prohibited under pain of forfeiture of the catch. After St. James's Day and Bartholomew-tide, however, the fishermen were allowed to salt the fish with fresh salt, boiled with sea water, according to agreement with the City of Cologne.¹

¹ Cf. pp. 103 and 146.

Herring caught at the beginning of the season made large prices. In 1763 two barrels containing 1,600 herring were sold in Shetland at 570 guilders (£52 sterling) per barrel, and 12½ barrels were sold at 460 guilders (£42 sterling) per barrel, making a total of £639 for 12,000 fish, or over a shilling per fish. (See Macpherson's "Annals of Commerce," Vol. III. p. 373.)

But the Dutch were not our only rivals. During the years 1764—5 the Swedes exported from Gothenberg 20,000 barrels of herrings to Ireland, whence they were carried to the British Colonies, which also received a great quantity from the Dutch and Danes by clandestine trade from the Islands of St. Eustathius and Santa Cruz. The years 1770—80 were also successful years for the Swedish fisheries. In one year alone 800,000,000 herrings were boiled down for the purpose of producing oil, the yield being 1,250,000 gallons. It is plain that Thomson's protest had lost none of its force, when he exhorted the British seamen of George II.'s reign to learn

"with adventurous oar
How to dash wide the billow : nor look on,
Shamefully passive, while Batavia's fleet
Defrauds us of the glittering finny swarms
That heave our firths, and crowd upon our shores ;
How all enlivening trades to rouse, and wing
The prosperous sail, from every growing port,
Unchallenged, round the sea-encircled globe,
And thus in soul united as in name,
Bid Britain reign the mistress of the deep."

During the year 1764 the movements of the herring were very capricious. They deserted

the coasts of Sweden, but on the west coasts of Ireland and Scotland, in the words of a writer at the time, "the abundance of these heaven-directed visitors was inconceivably great," Irish fishermen being able to load their boats with a single haul of the nets. Three months of the summer fishing yielded £54 per boat, although the price realised by the herring was exceedingly low, about 10d. per 1,000 during the month of July; the weight of 1,000 herring would be over 3 cwts., the weight of two stoutly built men, or more than an average horse can conveniently carry on its back. Millions of fish were boiled down for oil for currying leather, and millions were thrown away. In seven or eight weeks so many herrings were caught in Loch Hourn that if they could have been brought to market, they would, at the ruling price, have realised £56,000. The captures made during these seven or eight weeks were so great that the stock of salt and casks in the district was entirely exhausted, and fishermen gave up catching any more herring in Loch Hourn, as they were apparently ignorant of how to make oil from the herring, or were unable to extract the oil owing to the lack of fuel. The herring fishing in this part of Inverness was carried on with little knowledge and foresight, and, although the lochs were well stored with herring, the fisher-folk were unable in most years to turn their captures to reasonable commercial profit. The loch was

again visited by large shoals of herring during the year 1767 and 1768, while in 1782 the pressure of the shoals was so great that those nearest the open sea drove many millions of herrings on to the beaches along with other fish of various kinds and larger sizes.

The influence of successful fishing seasons on population may be very marked. In the *Times* of March 28th, 1871, appears a notice connecting herrings and marriages, in which the registrar of Fraserburgh stated that the herring fishery was very successful for the third quarter of the year, and that consequently marriages were 80 per cent. above the average. On the other hand, the registrar of Tarbert reported a bad fishing season for the same quarter, with the result that there was not a single wedding solemnised in his parish, while the registrar of Lochgilphead also stated that the herring fishery was a failure to the loch, and no marriages were solemnised during that quarter. A bad fishing, therefore, may mean no marriages in the fishing villages.

In 1767 the King of Denmark established a herring fishery company at Altona with the intention of fishing the coasts of Shetland and Scotland, whereupon the Society of Free British Fisheries asked that British ships of war should protect the British fishermen from the encroachments of foreigners on the fishing grounds off our coasts, and requested our minister at Hamburg to prevent Dutch herrings

being imported there on easier terms than British, on the ground that it was contrary to the treaty made by the British society with the magistrates of Hamburg relating to the importation of British herrings.

About the year 1770 fishermen from the Norfolk and Suffolk coasts, and especially those of Harwich, complained that the restrictions and duties upon salt frequently obliged them to throw away their catches of fish instead of curing them; the Coast Office charges at London were also a cause of trouble. The Dutch competed with the English East Coast fishermen in the supply of the London market, which by long experience they had attained the art of feeding with such exactness that they were able to keep up a constant and exorbitant price against the consumers.

A similar charge has often been brought, even in recent years, against the British fishing industry. Not long ago it was stated that in order to maintain prices when very large numbers of herring had been caught and brought into port, the fish were intentionally allowed to spoil and then sold as manure. Gluts of fish, and especially herrings, are unexpectedly yielded by the sea from time to time, and it is at such times that the State should step in to secure the uncured fish for rapid transportation in cold storage and distribution as food in remote inland parts of these islands, after treatment by the brine-freezing process.

Premiums were paid in the City of London in 1772 for bringing herring and mackerel to market, and large quantities were attracted to Billingsgate, but only in the course of the autumn season, the competition bringing down the market price of butcher's meat appreciably. Yet in 1775, 341 of the 768 trading vessels which arrived at Hamburg during the year came with cargoes of herring from Shetland, and of these twenty-eight were Danish, two Prussian, two Dutch, and none British.

Great quantities of herrings were normally exported to the West Indies. 23,000 barrels went from Greenock alone during 1777—8, each barrel measuring $31\frac{1}{2}$ gallons and containing from 700 to 900 herrings. In the year 1777 there were nine houses for the smoking of red herring at Dunbar, in which a million and a quarter fish could be smoked at once.

In 1776, owing to the American War, which had an adverse effect upon the British herring fishery, the rate of insurance on homeward-bound ships from the West Indies rose to 23 per cent. At the outbreak of the French War, however, the rate actually rose to 50 per cent. as against 3 per cent. on the marine risks in peace time.

In 1776 the export of salted provisions from Ireland was also prohibited lest the French should obtain Irish provisions for victualling their fleet in the impending war. This embargo had a further adverse effect upon the herring industry.

Between the years 1777—81 the average consumption per annum of red herrings in England was roughly 13,000,000, the average annual consumption of white herrings about 5,000 barrels, each containing about 800 fish.

In 1779 it was estimated that two-thirds of the seamen who manned the shipping of the Clyde, besides a considerable number in the vessels belonging to Liverpool, Bristol and London, and a great number in the Navy, had been bred in the herring industry.

There is a connection between Lowestoft china and the herring fishery. In Chaffers's "Marks and Monograms on Pottery, etc." (1897), it is stated that Philip Walker, proprietor of the Lowestoft Porcelain Works, founded in 1756, "like many others of the gentry, had a boat, which was occasionally engaged in the mackerel and herring fisheries, from 1770 down to the year 1790. . . ." Obed Aldred, another partner, was a member of the firm of Stannard and Aldred, who "had boats engaged in the herring trade from 1769 to 1778, when they seem to have dissolved partnership."

John Richman, another partner, "was an extensive merchant, and employed several boats in the herring-fishery; in 1748 he had four, and more or less up to 1756, when he seems to have discontinued the trade, and probably devoted himself to the interests of the (Lowestoft) porcelain manufactory."

SECTION IV.—THE QUESTION OF PRESERVATIVES.

Ice was not used generally in England as a preservative for keeping uncured fish in a fresh state till 1780, a Scotsman named Dempster being the first to use it for preserving salmon. Its use for packing fresh herrings enables the fish to be converted into bloaters in inland towns, as well as at sea-ports, and thereby greatly enlarges the area in which the preservation of fish can be carried on. Before the eighteenth century the salt question had been a subject for pamphlets and discussion, but the question became a national one when in the year 1784 Lord Dundonald published a pamphlet on the manufacture of salt and its relation to the herring industry. He complained of the little attention paid in Britain to the purity of the salt used—though the regulations, as we have seen, were strict—and of the slipshod way in which the fish were caught and cured. Even now the manner in which herrings in their various forms are offered to the public leaves much to be desired, and, without the fish being unfit for human food, the varieties of qualities and conditions are so marked that the general public is probably hindered from purchasing herrings as freely as is to be wished. Much, however, could be done by insisting that every box of bloaters should be marked with the date of catch, and by educating the public to refuse

a bloater offered for sale more than seven days from the time it left the sea. A bloater bought in London is inevitably a different and inferior article compared with a bloater obtained near Yarmouth or Lowestoft, and it is a fact that in whatever way a herring is to be cured it is of the utmost importance that it should be treated immediately after capture, the delay even of a few hours spoiling its quality, and, indeed, its value as wholesome food.

But cold storage, or brine freezing, may eventually solve all difficulties. The practice of "fortifying" a bloater by increase of the smoking treatment should be discouraged, because although it gives a few days' longer life for travel and sale, it destroys the quality and delicacy of the fish. The question of the salt used in "rousing," "roosing" or sprinkling is of equal importance. Salt produced by boiling or evaporation does not leave pure preservative salt, or muriate of soda, while our common salt is composed not only of muriate of soda or pure salt, but of sulphate of magnesia (Epsom salts), muriate of magnesia, muriate of lime, and sulphate of lime—all these, except the first, being actively injurious to the process of curing. The muriate of magnesia is partly detached from common salt in a liquid state, and, from the liquid, bittern, from which magnesia is made, is formed; a good portion, however, remains with the other injurious ingredients, after boiling or evapora-

tion. This trouble had not been properly dealt with in Britain, whereas the Dutch, who learnt the secret at Cologne, could produce salt of much better quality and purity than the English. Their method was to melt rock salt in pure sea water, taking care to obtain the latter at a great distance from the shore, and in this simple process lay not only the success of the Dutch cured herring, but of Dutch butter also. In modern times, however, chemists have invented processes for the production of British salt of greater purity. This salt has completely superseded Spanish and other salts used by the earlier curers in preference to British salt made by boiling and evaporation.

The analysis of the best "fishery salt" used at the present day is as follows :—

	Per cent.
Chloride of sodium and moisture	98·99
Sulphate of lime	·51
Calcium chloride	·28
Magnesium chloride	·12
Insoluble matter	·10
	<hr/>
	100·00

A curious passage on the English salt industry in the sixteenth century will be found in "Brittain's Bulwarke of defence against all Sicknes, Sornes, and Woundes, that do daily assaulte mankinde. . . . Doen by Williyam Bulleyn, and ended this Marche, Anno Salutis 1562." On folio lxxv of the "Booke of Simples," with which the work begins, we read :—

“Much salt is made in England, . . . in Holland, in Lincolneshere, and onely by a maruelous humer of water, at the Witch (Northwich) far from the sea, and in the North there is salt made at the Shiles (Shields) by Tinmouth Castle. I Bullein the author hereof, haue a pan of salte upon the same water. At Blith in Northumberland is good salte made, and also at sir Jhon Delauals Panes, which syr Jhon Delauall Knight hath been a patron of worship, and hospitalite, most like a famous gentilman, during many yeres, and powdreth no man by the salt, of extorcion, or oppressing his neighbour, but liberally spendeth, his Salte, Wheate, and his Maulte.”

When we return to our historical survey and recall the complaints as to salt duties and restrictions which hampered the industry on every side, we may marvel at the success which the herring fishery managed to attain. The first tax on salt and certain other commodities—*i.e.*, the first excise or inland duty on goods—was levied not by the Stuarts, but by the Parliament of 1643. As in modern Italy, it proved too valuable a source of revenue to be given up, since owing to the extensive salting of meat and fish for use, especially in winter and at sea, the amount of salt used per head of the population was very large.

The number of bushels of salt used in England in the year 1784, the year of Lord Dundonald's first pamphlet, “Thoughts on the Manufacture and Trade of Salt, the Herring Fisheries, etc.,” was 4,200,000, yielding an annual revenue of £700,000, at 3s. 4d. per bushel duty. The

population of England then was about 7,000,000, so that the consumption of salt per head was $33\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. per annum. The population of Scotland at the same date was 1,500,000, and whereas the estimated consumption for household uses, salting fish, meat, etc., was 435,000 bushels on which duty was paid, it was estimated that no fewer than 465,000 bushels from Ireland and elsewhere were smuggled into Scotland every year. Like the "joskins" of our own East Coast, the fishermen on the firths and sea lochs of Scotland were originally half fishermen and half farmers, catching fish during the fishing season, and cultivating their crofts when the fish left the coasts. The salt question, both as regards quality and cost, was of the utmost importance to the herring fishery, and Lord Dundonald appealed to Pitt himself on the subject, deploring the indulgence granted to Ireland by the export of rock salt duty free, and by the trifling duty put upon coal exported to Ireland. This he deemed a political bribe to the Irish to enable them to refine Irish rock salt and supply it at a high rate of profit to Britain.

The favoured position of Ireland gave the Irish manufacturers certain other preferences, in the manufacture of gloves, for example. Salt was used in large quantities in the dressing of white leather, as well as in the making of soap, sal ammoniac, Glauber salts, the manufacture of glass and the glazing of earthenware.

In 1783, as Lord Dundonald pointed out, sea water in the Firth of Forth yielded $2\frac{7}{8}$ per cent. of its weight in salt and cost 1s. 3d. to 1s. 8d. per bushel, whereas at Liverpool rock salt saturated with sea water yielded 23 per cent. of its weight in salt, and cost 6d. or 8d. per bushel. Salt produced from rock salt was, he explains, produced as profitably to the maker as salt made from sea water which cost double the price, eight times the fuel, and eight times the labour. Spanish, Portugal or Sardinian salt is described as much better than French salt or Bay salt, but the finest possible salt might be made in England and delivered to Copenhagen at 1s. as against Spanish salt at 1s. 4d. per bushel. One result of the then existing conditions was an immense contraband trade in salt carried on in France, where 1,700 or 1,800 persons were annually imprisoned and 300 condemned to the galleys for smuggling salt and tobacco into France.

Lord Dundonald also tells us that there had once been 200 salt pans in North and South Shields alone, though in 1784 the number was reduced to twenty. This decrease in the salt manufacture on the East Coast was due to the special advantages offered by the greater power of the sun on the South Coast and to the increasing use of rock salt made on the West Coast, "Limmington," and Liverpool. At Limmington, we are told, sea water was evaporated from shallow ponds and afterwards boiled

down in pans with coal from Newcastle and Sunderland, which coal was liable to a duty of 5s. 4 $\frac{7}{10}$ d. per chalder; Lymmington salt therefore paid double duty, first on the coal, then on the salt. At Liverpool rock salt was dissolved in sea water, making therewith the strongest possible brine. The importation of salt from Northwich in Cheshire (Norwich, as Lord Dundonald calls it) was only permitted in the case of the ports of England and Wales, in Swansea, Holyhead, Lawnmarsh, and such places as were within ten miles of the salt pans; elsewhere its use was prohibited, but it could be exported duty free to Ireland whither coal could be exported at the moderate duty of 1s. 1 $\frac{4}{10}$ d. per chalder. The favourable position of Ireland thus enabled her to supply three-quarters of the west coast of Scotland with smuggled salt, and this preferential treatment is further illustrated by the fact that Irish fishermen were exempt from many of the restrictions imposed upon British fishermen. They could load their boats as they liked, either by capturing the herring, or by purchasing them from other fishermen. The Irish Parliament granted a bounty on the salt used for the herring fishery between June, 1784, and June, 1785, and encouraged the capture of herring by giving bounties to industries which were branches of the herring fishing, and by imposing a duty of 4s. per barrel on imported Swedish herring in 1777, the duty being

raised to 10s. per barrel in 1785 ; this high rate of duty, however, produced much smuggling, a trade popular and profitable even under a Home Rule Parliament.

The English regulations on the use of salt were already strict, but in 1784, to prevent fraud in its use for curing fish, it was made illegal to use foul salt as manure, and fish curers were forbidden to deal in salt. Several alterations were also made in the fishing laws : the herring vessels were excused from making a superfluous voyage for the purpose of assembling at a given spot preparatory to dispersal for the fishery, but might proceed direct to the fishing at any date between June and October ; they were also permitted to use the salt shipped for curing herrings for the curing of other fish, but were not allowed any bounty on their export ; and any fishing boat might purchase fresh herrings from any British-owned vessel, and might put their herring on such vessels to get them to market at the earliest possible moment.

Next year another Act (25 Geo. III., c. 65) imposed a great number of restrictions on the use of salt except for purposes of fishing, but even then the salt was so heavily taxed that it was cheaper to throw the fish into the sea than to salt and sell the herring.¹

¹ Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the State of the British Fisheries ; and into the most effectual Means for their Improvement and Extension. Reported by Henry Beaufoy, Esq., 11th May, 1785.

From the second edition of Lord Dundonald's second pamphlet, "The Present State of the Manufacture of Salt Explained," published on May 17th of the same year, we learn that the Commissioners of H.M. Duty on Salt were by Statute (5 Geo. II.) allowed to license persons to use any building for the refining of rock salt, etc., at each of the following places:—Haybridge, Colchester, Manningtree, Ipswich, Woodbridge, Walberswick, and Southwold. He makes the bold suggestion that all duties and restrictions on the sale of salt should be abolished, the deficiency in revenue to be made good by a hearth tax, the analogy of the "smoke farthing" of Domesday Book.

Nor can it be said that the proposal was untimely, since the report of the Commission already quoted states not only that the restrictions on salt were so serious as to cause the loss of much herring actually caught, but that they had put an end to the cod fishery on the coast of Iceland, which sixty years earlier had employed no fewer than 200 boats from Yarmouth alone. It was the herring fishery, however, that was chiefly affected by the salt duties, since, as we have seen, the law had practically forbidden the use of salt except for herrings, and the subsequent reports presented to the House of Commons in 1785, 1786 and 1798 show the increasing interest taken in the fisheries and a gradual realisation of the fact that prohibitive salt duties in troubled

times tended to impoverish the national food supply.

Returning to Lord Dundonald's pamphlet, we note that he deals at some length with the Gabelle in France, and quotes Necker's observations on the subject, from his "Compte Rendu" of 1781. The Gabelle yielded an annual revenue of nearly £2,500,000 sterling, which was raised in 1784 to £2,750,000 sterling, but Necker regarded this tax with horror, and would have advocated its total abolition, had it been possible to find any commutation tax sufficient to replace it.

The word "Gabelle" is still in use for a salt tax, which, to this day, contributes towards the revenues of China, being pledged to the service of certain Government Loans.

Lord Dundonald also gives us a great deal of information about the Dutch regulations regarding the capture, gutting, salting and curing of herrings, all directed towards the improvement of the herring fishery, and the maintenance of the reputation for good quality in which Dutch-cured herrings were held, and contrasts the regulations in detail with those enforced by British Acts of Parliament.

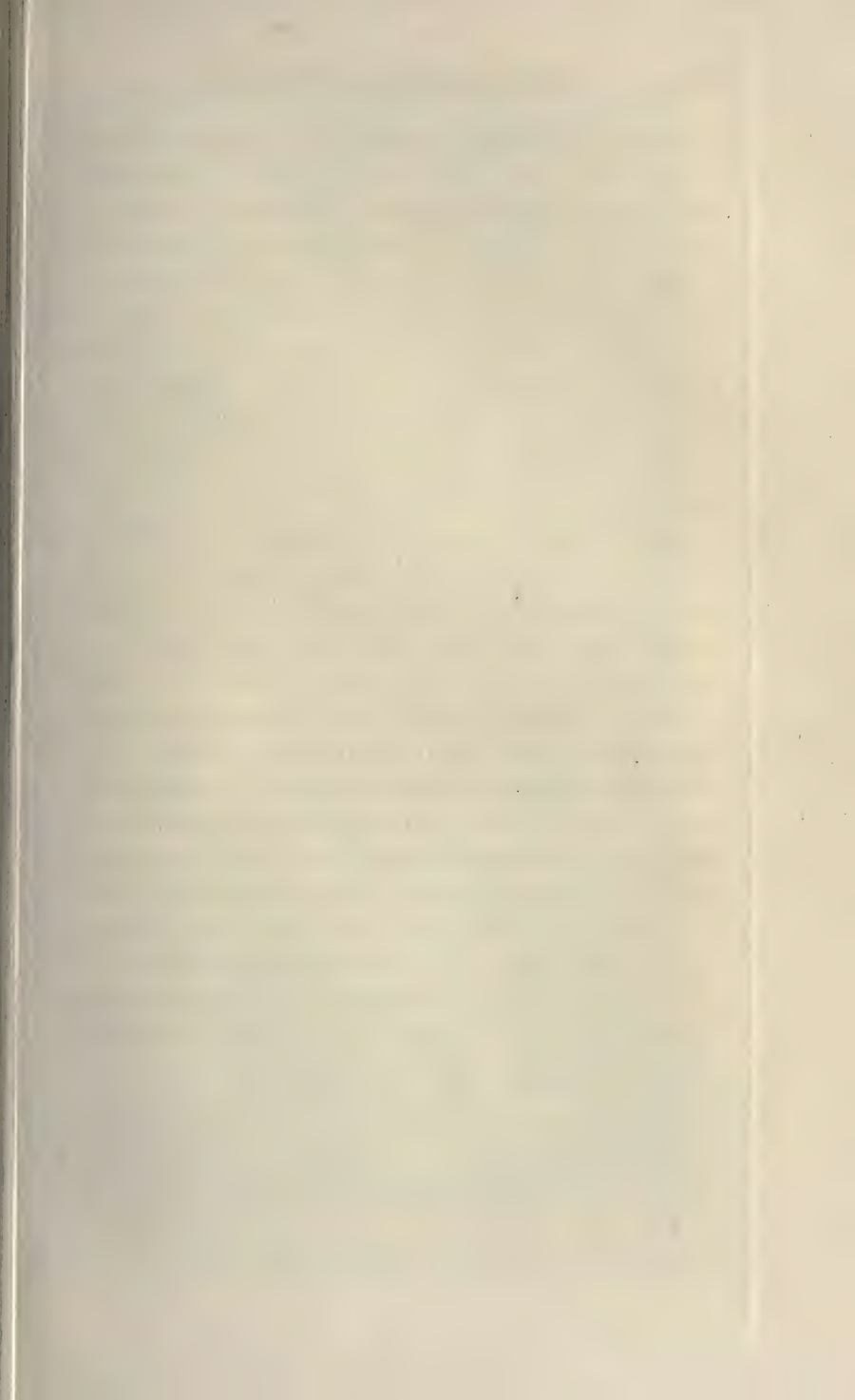
The Dutch regulations aimed at continuing the monopoly so long enjoyed by Holland, but in spite of the care bestowed on these details other countries now retaliated on the Dutch industry and virtually closed their markets to Dutch herrings by the imposition

of heavy customs duties. The Dutch herring trade dwindled therefore, till in 1828 the Amsterdam herring trade presented a petition to the King asking that an order should be issued calculated to create a close monopoly for the sale of the Dutch product, and that the whole of the fishery should be formed into one association worked by a committee with power to fix a minimum price and to regulate sales so as to maintain that price—a trust, in short, of the strictest kind.¹

Lord Dundonald's first pamphlet, which is not even mentioned in the account of him in the "Dictionary of National Biography," was a timely one. In the year of its publication an account by Dr. Anderson; who had been appointed by the Lords of the Treasury to make a report of the herring fisheries on the West Coast of Scotland, was laid before a Committee of the House of Commons² setting forth the number of foreign vessels and men employed in the herring fishery of Scotland during the summer of 1784, the full text being subsequently published as "An Account of the Present State of the Hebrides and Western Coasts of Scotland." His figures as to the number of boats employed are as follows:—

¹ There is one particular point in the Dutch herring regulations which is worthy of notice with regard to the gutting of the herrings. The gills, liver and stomach were the only parts to be taken away, and this was done with the finger and thumb, and not with a knife.

² Three similar Reports were issued in 1785, one in 1786, another in 1798, which are full of curious and interesting information. They may be consulted at the British Museum.

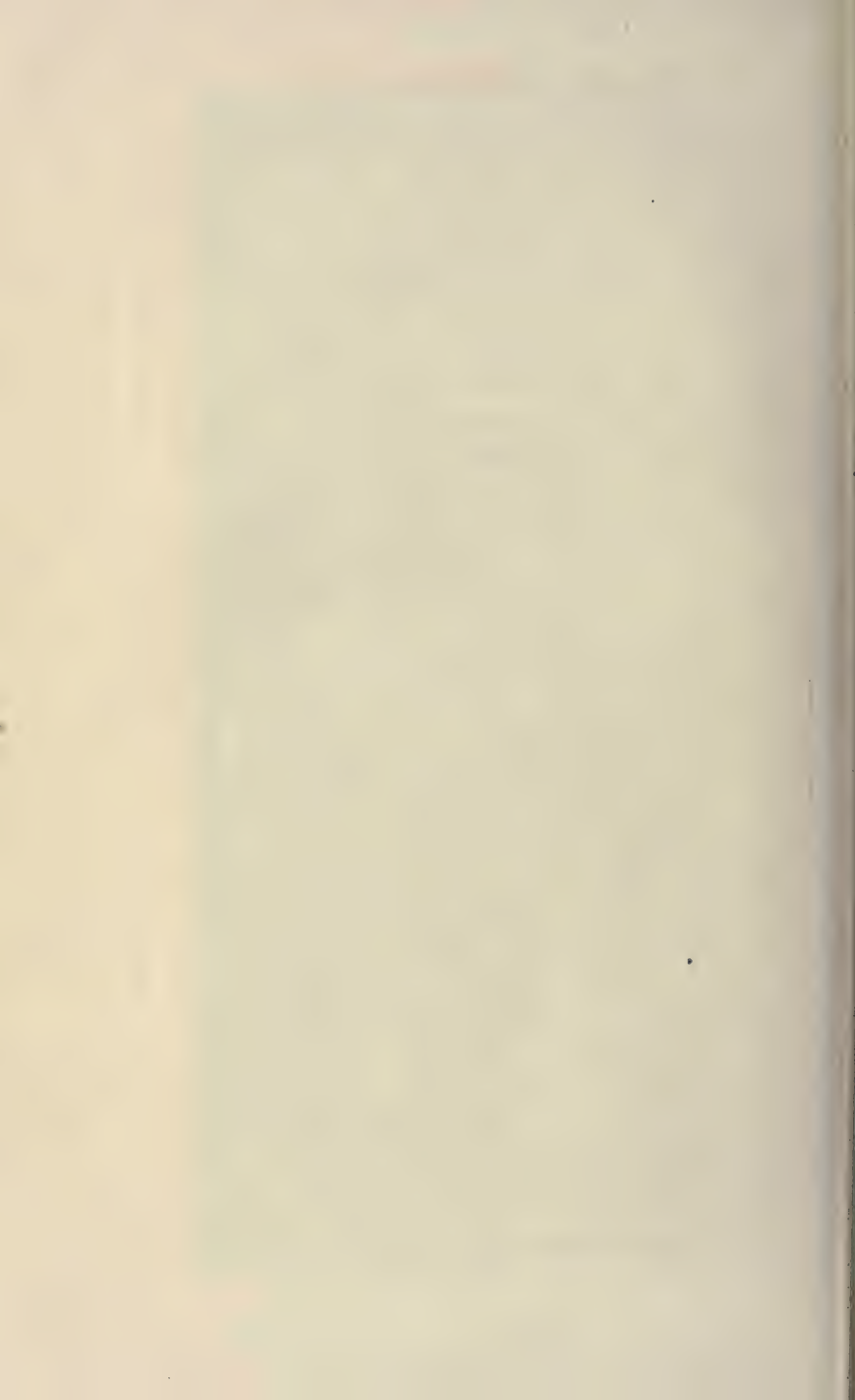




Deep Water, Shore, St.



and other Red-herrings



FOREIGN HERRING VESSELS 155

From various parts of Holland . . .	166	vessels carrying	2,265	men.
Do. Emden (Prussian) . . .	44	do.	616	do.
Do. Hamburg and Altona . . .	29	do.	406	do.
Do. Dunkirk . . .	7	do.	70	do.
Do. Ostend and Newport (Flanders) . . .	24	do.	312	do.
The Danes had also . . .	3	yaggers carrying	24	do.
And the Dutch . . .	2	store ships	72	do.
<hr/>				
275 vessels carrying 3,765 men.				

These vessels assembled in Brassa Sound in Shetland (Lerwick Harbour), paying nothing for anchorage ground, or for the liberty of fishing on the British coasts.

The subject of the fisheries was brought prominently into public notice during the following year, when the winter herring did not appear on the north-west coast of Ireland till December 30th, instead of in the middle of October. They remained only a few days, yet in the course of a fortnight 300 Irish boats, assisted by 400 boats from other parts of Great Britain, captured great cargoes of herring, and sold the fish at high prices, owing to the failure of the winter herrings on the coasts of Scotland and the total failure of the fishing off the coast of Sweden.

An earlier Act, by which the Highlanders of the western coast were forbidden to sell their herrings to fishing vessels, had imposed upon them a grave injustice, and tended to the depopulation and ruin of the villages at the heads of salt water lochs. This grievance was now redressed, and the liberty to sell their catches, when and where they could, conferred a great blessing upon the Highlands. Unable,

owing to the character of the country in which they lived, to engage in agricultural pursuits, they depended on their fishing, but could not cure the fish for want of salt, casks and a market within reasonable distance.

The new Act "for the more effectual encouragement of the British fisheries" (1786) offered an annual bounty of 20s. per ton, to continue for seven years after June 1st, 1787, to every decked vessel of 15 tons burthen, or more, built in Great Britain after January 1st, 1780, and carrying five men for every 15 tons burthen, and one man for every 5 tons above that weight. Every such ship was also to have on board 12 bushels of salt for every last of herrings she was capable of carrying, and as many new barrels made of staves half an inch in thickness, and full bound, as she could stow; also 250 square yards of net (of any dimension most convenient), with proper appendages, for every ton of her burthen; she must sail between June 1st and October 1st direct to the fishing station and there continue fishing for three months, reckoning from the day of wetting the nets, unless she shall have sooner obtained a full cargo, wholly caught by her crew.

A further bounty of 4s. for every barrel of repacked herrings landed at the port of arrival was allowed in the proportion of two barrels and a half for every ton of the vessel's burthen, and of 1s. for every barrel beyond that proportion, the barrels to be counted at landing,

when they were in the condition of sea-steeks (herrings salted and barrelled at sea), and four barrels in that condition were reckoned for three barrels of repacked. As some encouragement to the boat fishery a bounty of 1s. per barrel was allowed for herrings properly salted and cured, landed from open boats. All casks entitled to bounty were to have a distinguishing mark, and also the curers' name, branded upon them on penalty of forfeiture. The Act, however, did little. An official account given in to the Committee of the House of Commons in 1798 shows that in 1787 one vessel of 27 tons, belonging to Ilfracombe, received a bounty of £27 in virtue of this Act, no other vessel belonging to England, and not one vessel belonging to Scotland, having ever received anything at all. Yet for the further encouragement of the deep-sea fishery on the north and north-east coasts of this kingdom, premiums of 80, 60, 40, and 20 guineas were allotted, in addition to the tonnage and barrel bounties, to the four vessels having the greatest quantities of herrings caught by their own crews landed between June 1st and the last day of November in each of the seven years. Further, in order to extend the sale of fish and to provide a cheap and wholesome article of food, the duties, hitherto payable on the carriage of fish caught by British subjects for home consumption, were now abolished, except in the case of fish carried

from Scotland to England, on which a duty to equalise the salt duties was made payable. The bounty of 5s. per ton, given by an Act of 5 Geo. I., on particular kinds of cured fish, was, however, reduced to 3s. Some efforts were made by this Act to lighten the intolerable grievances of the salt bonds, and the revenue officers were prohibited from taking any fees. The bounty of 1s. per barrel was allowed on herrings caught by boats on the coast of Man and landed on that island; and the duties on the importation of herrings thence to Great Britain were repealed.

In the same year the British Society for Extending the Fisheries and Improving the Sea Coasts of this Kingdom was incorporated as a joint-stock company with shares at £50 each. The purpose of the enterprise was to found villages, harbours, and fishing stations on the Highlands and Islands of North Britain for the development of fishing, agriculture and manufactures in that part of the kingdom. It was hoped that these villages would serve as nurseries for seamen for the defence of the kingdom, and so reduce the necessity for emigration.

In 1787 there was a further extension and modification of the Act of 1786, dealing for the most part with the circumstances in which bounties were to be paid. In the reports presented to the Committee of the House of Commons during the ten years 1787—96 it

appears that these amounted to £17,904 10s. 6d., a great contrast to the £27 earned by one fishing boat under the Act of 1786. The money was received by 251 herring boats belonging to Yarmouth, forty-two belonging to Deal, Dover, Rye and Southwold. None of the Scottish boats received the bounty, as they were built in such a way that it was impossible for them to conform with the stipulation that they should stow the six barrels of cured herrings per ton burthen which entitled them to the bounty. Further, the Scottish boats went on much longer voyages than the English, so that much of their hold space had to be filled with provisions; they also carried more boats than was usual with the English vessels, and their owners not unnaturally complained that the bounty, as far as they were concerned, was only waste paper.

In 1787 an association of Yarmouth traders fitted out herring vessels to work under the Act of 1786. Their boats proceeded to Shetland, going so far north that they were hampered with floating ice. They abandoned the usual method of shooting their nets in the lochs and bays, and tried deep water instead, the fish so caught being of excellent quality. They found a ready market and good prices at Hamburg, where they arrived before the early Dutch herrings, and even at Rotterdam. The working expenses of the undertaking, however, and the unsatisfactory way in which the English

Government paid the bounty, rendered the enterprise unprofitable, and it was given up.

In 1795 there were further modifications of the Acts of 1786 and 1787. Inhabitants of the United Provinces who had been employed in catching herrings were allowed to bring their catches into any British port free of duty, and to receive bounties on the export of such fish, on taking the Oath of Allegiance to the King of England, Dutch fishermen being invited to bring their vessels, nets and furniture into England free of charge and to become freeholders of land. Many Dutch fishermen were then prisoners of war in this country, but the hardships of the salt laws, and the want of communication between the fishing villages and the more cultivated parts of North Britain, discouraged them from availing themselves of the inducements offered by the British Government.

In 1799 the British Society for the Encouragement of the Herring Fisheries was empowered to give premiums to persons distinguishing themselves by catching and curing the fish, or in making soap and oil of those that could not be used for food—and they could be reckoned by the million. So great indeed was the number caught around the south-east coast of Scotland at the beginning of the nineteenth century that, although the failure of the Swedish industry led to a corresponding importation of Scottish herrings into

Scandinavia, numbers had to be boiled down for the oil they contained, and a process was invented by which herring and other fish, even in a putrid state, provided materials which, with turpentine, were manufactured into soap.

During the closing years of the eighteenth century and the opening years of the nineteenth this abundance of herring, especially along the northern shores of the Firth of Forth, gave a special advantage to the Fife fishermen in the wide part of the firth. Houses were built in the neighbourhood for curing red herring, and large quantities of salt, and numbers of barrels were collected. A fishing fleet drawn from all parts of England, Scotland and Ireland assembled in the firth to a total of 360 vessels and 1,200 boats, and the shores were covered with numbers of persons engaged in gutting, salting and barrelling the fish, the scene bearing a strong resemblance to that presented by the south coast of Sweden during the prosperous times of the herring fishing there several hundred years earlier.

In the year 1800 the price of bread was very high, as will be seen from the prices ruling at that time :—

	s.	d.	
Wheat . . .	118	3	per quarter
Rye . . .	79	9	„
Barley . . .	67	0	„
Oats . . .	36	6	„
Beans . . .	62	8	„
Peas . . .	67	8	„

The revival of the herring fishery, which produced 500,000 barrels of herrings annually, therefore provided an invaluable supply of cheap and wholesome food at a time when the price of bread was exorbitant. Not only was the south of Scotland supplied, but fast sailing smacks from Berwick carried fresh herring to the London market, some packed in ice and some salted. It was found in London that the latter, when the salt had been washed away from them, were perfectly fresh, and of a quality equal to those usually sold in London, though inferior to those of Loch Fyne and some other parts of the west coast of Scotland. Great quantities of these herring, as well as red herrings, were exported to the West Indies for the use of the plantation negroes, and Stornoway herrings sold in Hamburg at £2 per barrel, while those carried to Hamburg and cured in the Dutch manner actually sold for £5 per barrel. Herrings from Leith, however, only fetched about one-third of that price owing to the inferior methods of curing practised on the east coast of Scotland.

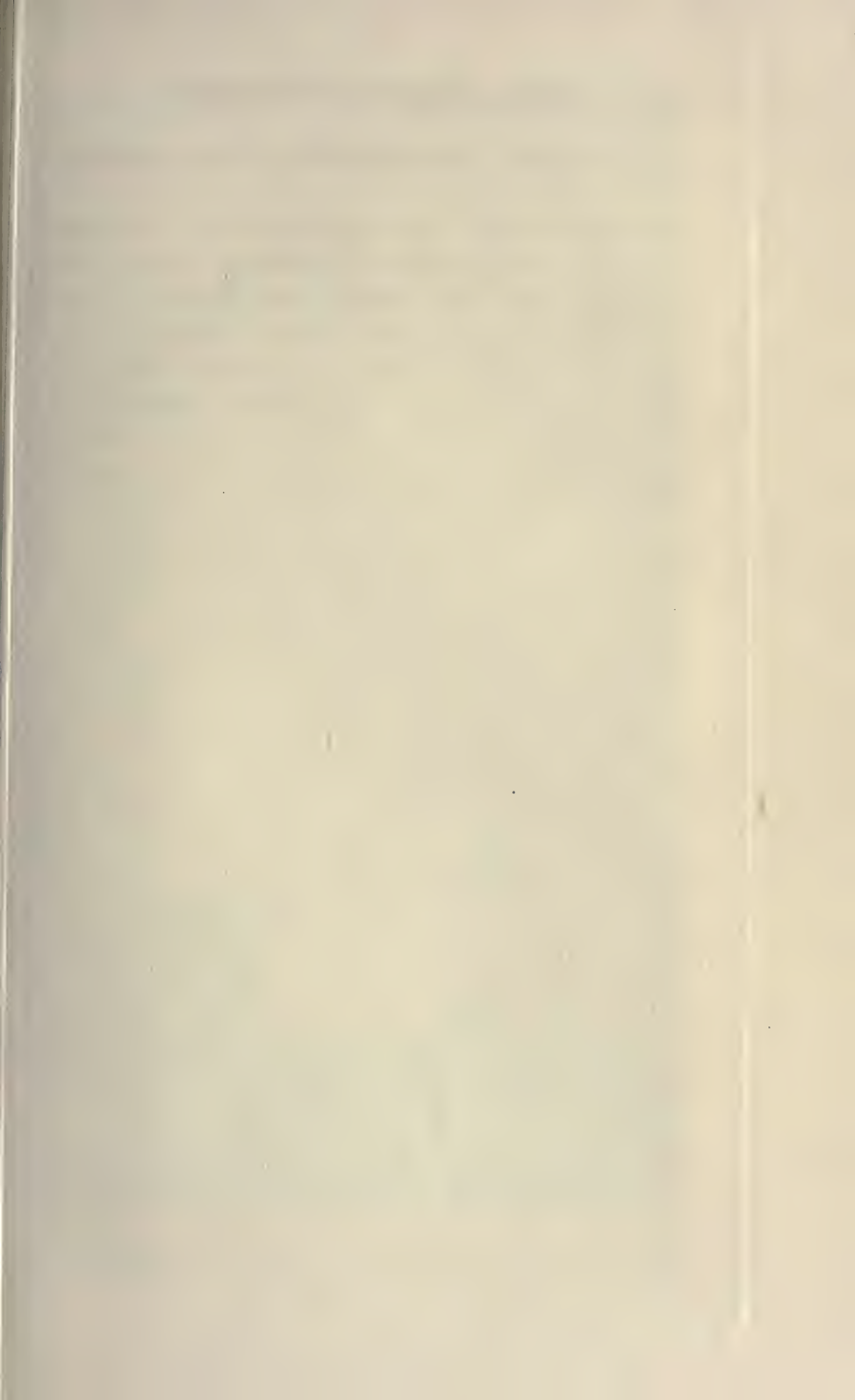
An attempt to develop British fisheries was made by the Society of Arts. In 1805 a reward was offered for "curing herrings by the Dutch method." For some years this does not seem to have had much result, but in 1819 and 1820 two rewards of fifty guineas and £50 respectively were paid to J. F. Denovan, of Leith, for his success in the

“curing of British herrings,” and for introducing them into the market. Two communications in the “Transactions” (1819 and 1820) give an interesting account of the way in which, after many unsuccessful attempts to get hold of the secrets of the business in Holland, he secured the assistance of six experienced Dutch fish-curers, and with their help started to catch and cure herrings on the west coast of Scotland. After a good deal of trouble and various misadventures, he was quite successful in his enterprise, and succeeded in sending to Edinburgh and London cargoes of herrings equal to the best Dutch. The method employed, then as now, was merely, after gutting and cleaning the fish, to pack them in barrels with salt or brine. Many other awards followed, and this was the beginning of the Scottish cured-herring trade, which developed into an important business, and has, of quite recent years, spread to the East Anglian fishing ports. At the present time it is a thriving industry at Lowestoft.

This inquiry is referred to in the well-known chapter on the work of the Society of Arts in the “Microcosm of London” (1808): “The attentions of the Society have been lately directed to the best method of preventing salted provisions from becoming rancid or rusty, to the refining of fish oils, and to other valuable enquiries such as the discovery of a harmless white paint, the use of leadless

glaze, and the manufacture of an indelible ink."

We may fitly close this chapter with the note that the eighteenth century witnessed the extinction after nearly 800 years of the Yarmouth Herring Fair, which lasted from Michaelmas to Martinmas, and caused infinite troubles and disputes, but which emphasised the position of the town as the head of the English herring trade in the eyes of the world.

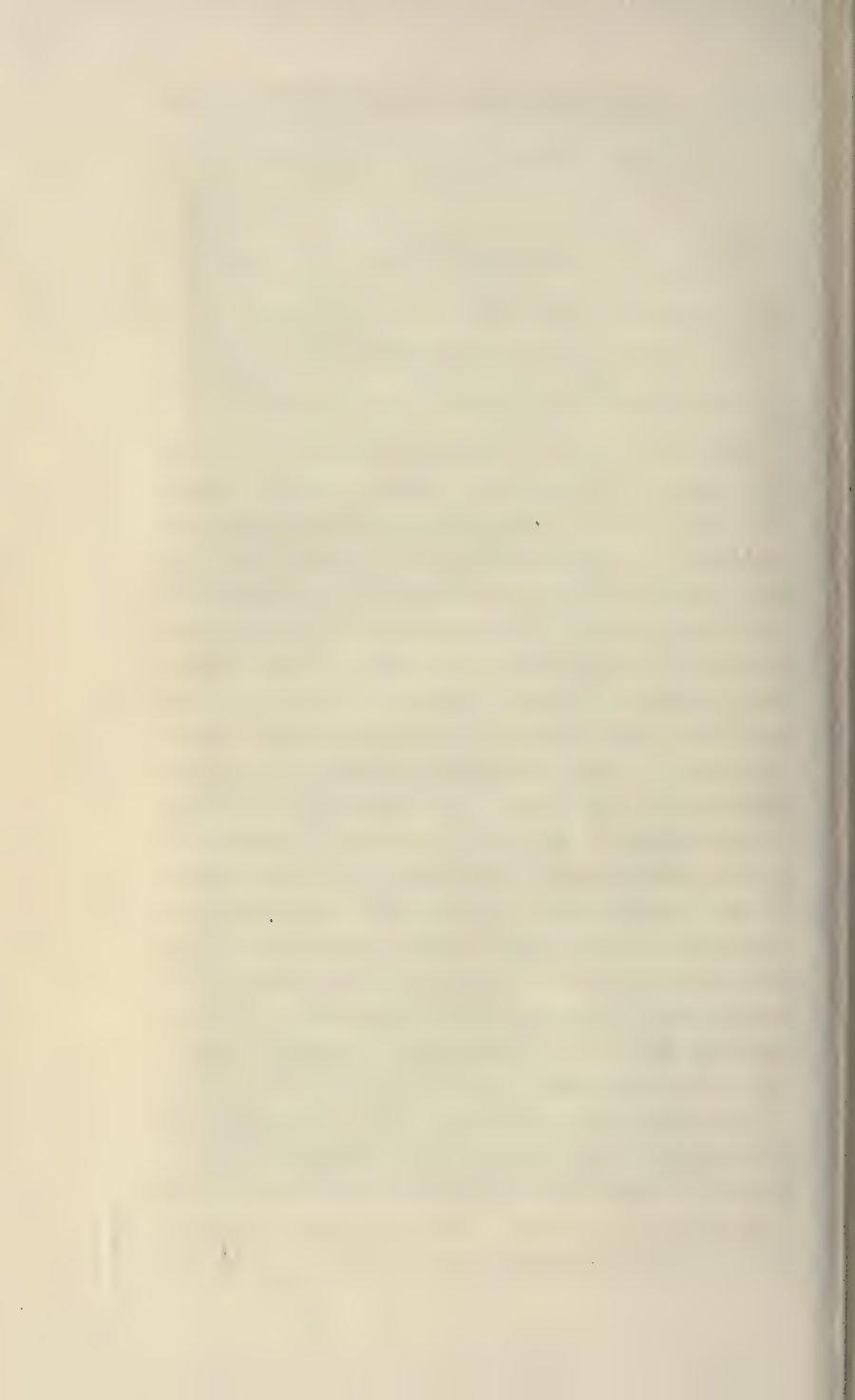




The Selling



the Herring.



CHAPTER IV

THE HERRING INDUSTRY IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

SECTION I.—THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

THE history of the herring fishery in the nineteenth century was, comparatively speaking, uneventful. We have already noticed the cessation of the Government bounties. The chief external events in the fishing world were the Conventions by which the rights of the States of Europe over their territorial waters were defined, those with France in 1839 and 1867, and that with the North Sea Powers, Germany, France, Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands of 1882. The first of these was brought about by the constant quarrels of French and English fishermen over the rights of the English to dredge for oysters off the French coast, and those of the French fishing fleets from Calais, Boulogne and Dieppe to fish off the coasts of Kent and Essex. The findings of the Commission of both nations appointed in 1837 were embodied in the Convention of 1839 and in an Act of Parliament in 1843, but the Convention of 1867 was required to settle the question.

The Conference of the North Sea Powers held at the Hague in 1881 was “not so much to

protect the fisheries as to protect the fishermen from one another—in short, to regulate the police of the fisheries in the North Sea outside territorial waters,”¹ though it incidentally settled for the time the question of the definition of territorial waters, except as regards Norway and Sweden, who objected to the three-mile limit and therefore would be no party to the Convention. After the war the definition of “territorial waters” and the distance limit will present more difficulties than ever, and not as regards fishery questions only.

Before 1860, therefore, there was no important fresh legislation except the Convention of 1839, nor was there as yet any very noticeable development of steam fishing. On the other hand, no serious steps had as yet been taken to study the life-history of the fish; pollution of every description was rife on the coasts as in the rivers, and science had not yet been applied to the question of the preservation and increase of this great source of national food supply, though politics had had their say for centuries. But a change was, fortunately, at hand, and in 1860 a far-reaching step was taken by the appointment of a Royal Commission, consisting of Professor Huxley, Sir John Caird and Lord Eversley (then Mr. Shaw-Lefevre), to inquire into the condition of the British sea-fisheries, the desirability of the methods then in use for fishing, notably beam-trawling, and the value

¹ *Quarterly Review*, 1913, p. 450.

of the existing laws regulating the fisheries. One of the most important witnesses was Frank Buckland, to whose exertions then and in his strenuous after-life the position of the industry to-day is largely due. The report appeared in 1866, and embodied four main conclusions : (1) that the supply of fish upon the British coasts is increasing and can be further increased by legislation ; (2) that beam-trawling in the open sea is not injurious to the industry ; (3) that all existing Acts should be repealed, and "unrestricted freedom of fishing be permitted hereafter" ; (4) that all fishing boats "should be registered and licensed," and to that end should bear letters and numbers by which each should be distinguished.

Two years later, by the Sea Fisheries Act of 1868, the recommendations of the Commission were carried into effect, and the registration of fishing boats was regulated by an Order in Council during the following year.

Buckland's appointment as Inspector of Salmon Fisheries in 1876 had results far exceeding the limits of his official position. The dream of his life had been the improvement of British fisheries and fishermen, and in his visits to seaports and rivers up and down the country he was enabled to add to his exhibition of objects connected with the fisheries at the South Kensington Museum and to pave the way for the International Fisheries Exhibition of 1883. In 1878, moreover, he, with Messrs.

Walpole and Young, was given a commission to inquire into the question of the destruction of the spawn by the use of the beam-trawl and ground seine, which led to the production of his Report on the Herring Fisheries of Scotland and the discovery that little or nothing was known of the habits of our native fish. Five years later, in 1883, a grant to Professor McIntosh of the University of St. Andrews enabled him to erect a marine laboratory and, by studying at close quarters the habits of sea-fish, to carry on the line of research already indicated by Buckland and his colleagues. A similar establishment at Dunbar was started by the Fishery Board for Scotland (which in 1882 had taken the place of the old Board of British White Herring) in 1893, but this was moved to Aberdeen in 1900.

The year 1883, the year of the great International Fisheries Exhibition which was the fulfilment of the dream of Buckland's life, also saw a Royal Commission, with the late Lord Dalhousie as chairman, appointed to inquire into the question of beam-trawling, scientific trawling experiments being carried out at the same time by Professor McIntosh. In consequence of its recommendations fishery statistics for England, Scotland and Ireland were for the first time instituted. In 1886 a Fishery Department of the Board of Trade was created under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act of the same year, one part of its

duty being the publication of an annual report on the sea fisheries ; the administration of the Acts relating to the registration and activities of the fishing fleet was transferred to this Department in 1894.

In 1888, 1891 and 1894 sea fisheries districts were created round the coasts of England and Wales, but the most important Scottish district, the Moray Firth, was, under the Herring Fishery (Scotland) Act of 1889, closed against trawling, a regulation which has led to infinite trouble and to the humiliating result that, since foreign vessels could not be compelled to observe the restriction, a number of English trawlers were transferred to foreign flags to enjoy the same immunity. In spite of this, however, the number of herring, like that of all fish landed in England and Scotland in the last thirty years, has shown a steady increase.

SECTION II.—THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

The early years of the present century were chiefly noteworthy for the extraordinary increase of steam drifters. With a wider scope of action and independent of weather, these vessels have not only greatly increased the average catch, which rose from the then record of 2,000,000 cwts. in 1889 to over 3,000,000 cwts. in 1902—5, but have altered the habits of the fishers, many of whom now devote themselves exclusively to herring, which they pursue at

different times upon the different coasts instead of catching them at one season only and then turning their attention to line-fishing. Steam trawling has also increased in enormous proportions round the coasts of England. A steam drifter will take over a ton of herring with 500 square feet of nets as compared with under half a ton with the same spread of nets if used by a sailing vessel. In 1907, when Holland had only 81 steam trawlers, France had 224, Germany 239, and England and Wales no less than 1,317, the total number of steam trawlers in Germany and Holland in 1905 scarcely exceeding the mere additions to the British fleet in 1906 ("Encyclopædia Britannica," 11th ed., Vol. X., p. 430). In 1904, the value of the herring caught by British trawlers was £1,870,000, while that of Holland in the same year was £575,000 and that of Germany £220,000. Before the war there were, however, distinct indications that the North Sea and the Scottish North Sea ports were being less widely fished than before, since other and more profitable fishing grounds beyond the North Sea were available. When we read, with regard to the North Sea, of "a gross decrease of more than 25 per cent. in 1905 as compared with 1903, and, in relation to the catching power employed, to an average decrease of $2\frac{1}{2}$ cwts. per boat per diem" (*op. cit.*, p. 430), the matter was obviously serious, but any attempt to forecast the

future or to reinstate the North Sea as the foremost fishing ground of Europe is at present impossible, since the effect of the war on the fisheries cannot be foreseen. Mines, submarines, noise, disturbance, incessant patrolling of the waters—all these make the question obscure and doubtful, and it will be some years after peace has been declared before the future policy of the country with regard to her fisheries can take shape. There is also the possibility that the three-mile limit may disappear, to be replaced by a ten or even a twenty-mile limit.

Certain reforms are obviously urgent, but they will be clearer if we consider not only the particulars already given but the statistics of the year 1913 relating to the export trade in herrings as it was, before the present war had upset all calculations and all precedents.

In 1913, then, we actually exported from the United Kingdom cured and salted herring to the value of nearly £5,500,000 sterling, representing about 3,000,000,000 fish, of which Russia and Germany together took nearly 80 per cent., while in the same year we landed in the United Kingdom 3,500,000,000 fresh herring, worth about £4,500,000 sterling. Germany and Russia were our best export markets, these countries taking pickled, but very few smoked herrings, while Italy and Greece took them smoked and salted, but not pickled; the British Colonies and Dependencies took the fish in various forms, including a large number tinned. Germany

took about 1,400,000,000 cured and salted herrings, worth about £2,500,000 sterling, the import duty on pickled herrings bringing in about £100,000 per annum to the German Government. The imported salted herring as such are eaten by the Germans in decreasing numbers, the fish being variously treated : canned, flavoured manipulated herrings, herrings boiled in cotton-seed oil, packed in large tins with vinegar, put in bottles or prepared and packed in small wooden tubs containing a dozen or more fish, and then sold, at greatly enhanced prices as "Delikatessen"; all are popular and profitable methods. Probably half the pickled herring received by Germany from us were re-exported to Russia, while herring from British East Coast ports also find their way through Germany into Austrian Poland, Bohemia, the Balkans, and the Turkish Dominions.

The total number and value of herrings sent by the United Kingdom direct to Russia during 1913 was slightly less than the figures applicable to Germany given above.

For some years before the war the export trade of herring from the United Kingdom to Russia increased very greatly, while that to Germany remained nearly stationary. Coal and herring are in fact our principal exports to Russia, and with the development of Russian railways it should be possible to develop materially the trade in both.

The average value of all herring landed in ports of the United Kingdom during 1913 was 8s. per cwt., that is, about 10d. for every thirty-two fish. Some of these herring after having been exported to Germany were sold tinned, bottled or otherwise "put up," as "Delikatessen" at thirty-two fish for $2\frac{1}{2}$ marks = 2s. 6d., an increase of 200 per cent. on the landed value of the fish, which has, of course, been greatly enhanced by the war. In January, 1917, for instance, my fishmonger in London charged me 10d. for a bloater, as owing to the restricted fishing the supply of bloaters in London was very limited, and on some days almost non-existent. Fresh herrings landed at Yarmouth were bought by wholesale merchants there at 40s. per 132 (about $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. each), on September 27th, 1917. When I was a youngster living at home at Norwich, the usual price for bloaters of the best quality was 3d. for two, and large fresh herring, landed at Yarmouth that same morning, were ten for 1s. If Yarmouth bloaters at their best were to cost 1s. each in normal times many more people would eat them freely. The prime herring in finest condition has but one fault, the extreme cheapness caused by its great abundance; the world rarely appreciates anything easily won, or cheaply procured.

To return to the question of the fisheries in general, the reader may be referred to the article in the *Quarterly Review* (1913, p. 433),

already cited, entitled "The Territorial Waters and the Sea Fisheries," for a summary of the position as it was before the war, and for the reforms which then seemed advisable. The state of the fisheries, the legal position of foreign poachers, the changes in the position of fishing and trawling and in the use of drifters, the strong position of the Scottish and Irish Fisheries Boards as compared with that of the English Board of Agriculture and Fisheries—these are among the subjects dealt with. The position of foreign poachers will be settled by the war; the limit of territorial waters must be increased; the condition of the fisheries cannot be foreseen. But even in these days of stress it is clear that reforms in the administration of the fisheries must come, that foreign vessels must no longer share or steal the privileges of the English fishing fleets as of right, that the scientific study of pisciculture must be carried further, that improved means of cold storage, curing and distribution must be adopted for fish, and that the herring must become more and more a staple article of food, being more truly that which Kingsley said of the salmon, "of all Heaven's gifts of food, the one to be most carefully protected."

We have now traced, in outline at least, the part played by the herring in the history of Britain, and therefore in the building of the Empire. The search for food led to the discovery

of his value in that respect, and this to his value as merchandise which was early perceived by the Hansards, who were glad to exchange other commodities for the invaluable herring; out of the herring sprang the wealth and greatness of the Hansa League till Beuckel's discovery of a new method of curing raised the Dutch, through their fishing fleet, to the rank of the first mercantile nation of the world and gave Holland the first modern mercantile marine. This in its turn led to the struggle between Dutch and English in and after Cromwell's days, and by the passing of the Navigation Act of 1651 and the creation of our mercantile marine, to the rise of the British Navy and to the supersession of the Dutch as the leading naval power; the British Navy and mercantile marine assisted the building up of our Colonial Empire, the possession of the carrying trade led to the expansion of our production of overseas raw materials and the development of overseas trade—this to the envy of Germany, who saw her opportunity in the repeal of the Navigation Acts in 1849; she began to build a mercantile marine and out of it a navy, and to plan a world empire to supersede our own by defeating us and gaining Dominion of the Sea, thereby realising the dream of List of dominating the trade of the world by control of colonial raw products. Hence one of the causes of the present war and its consequences.

Such is the House that Jack Herring built.

APPENDICES

THE following methods of preparing herrings for the table are given by John Solas Dodd, 1752.

TO STEW HERRINGS.

When your Herrings are scaled, washed, and the Fins cut off, put them in a Stewpan, with no Liquor but a quarter of a Pint of White Wine, some Mace, whole Pepper and Salt. When they are half stewed, put in some thick Cream, and a little piece of Butter dip'd in Flour; when that is melted, put in some Oisters with their Liquor; keep them often shaking till the Fish and Oisters are enough, or that the Oisters will break; squeeze in a little Lemon, give them a Scald and pour them into a Dish.

TO POT HERRINGS.

Take any Number of Herrings, gut them and cut off their Heads, then put them in an Earthen Pot, lay them very close, and between every Layer of Herrings strew a little Salt; put in Cloves, Mace, whole Pepper and Nutmeg cut to Bits, not grated. Fill up the Pot with Vinegar and Water, and an Eighth part White Wine; cover it with brown Paper, tie it down and bake it with brown Bread. When cold 'tis fit to eat.

To pot herrings after they are pickled they must lay all Night in Milk, parboil them before putting into the Pot, adding more Vinegar.

TO BAKE HERRINGS.

Take thirty Herrings, scale them, cut off their Heads, put out their Roes, and wash them very clean, lay them to drain four or five Hours, and roll them in a dry Cloth, season them with Pepper and Salt, and lay them at their full Length in a long Venison Pot. When you have laid one Row, shred a large Onion very small and mix it with a little Cloves, Mace and Ginger cut small, and strew it all over the Herrings, and then another Row of Herrings and Seasoning, and so do till all is in the Pot ; let it stand seasoned an Hour, then put in a Quart of Claret, and tie it over with Paper, and bake them.

TO MAKE A HERRING-PYE.

Take your Herrings split, headed, scaled, boned and washed ; then make a good Puff-paste, and lay your Dish or Pattipan, season your Herrings with spice, and lay a layer of Butter and a layer of Herrings, till all is in ; then take three Anchovies, Eel, chop'd small, hard Yolks of Eggs, Marrow, sweet Herbs, a few Oisters, some small Pepper, grated Bread and Nutmeg. Make up the Forced-meat with raw Eggs, into Balls, some round ; lay them about your Herrings ; put butter over all, lid your pye, and an Hour will bake it.

HERRINGS THE SPANISH WAY.

Take the Fish, take away their Heads, Tails, Fins and Guts, and soak them a Night in Vinegar, then wipe them dry, and score them on the Back very deep, then take Thyme chop'd very small, a little Mace and Nutmeg, mix them together and therewith fill the Scotches of the Fish ; then tie them round with a Thread, and lay them on the Grid iron and baste

them with Butter (or Oil if in Lent). Take care the fire is not too hot ; turn them and baste till both Sides are brown ; then when they are ready eat them with this Sauce, dissolve six Anchovies very well with half a Pound of Butter, three Spoonfuls of made Mustard, some Vinegar and a Clove of Garlic chop'd small.

TO PICKLE HERRINGS LIKE ANCHOVIES.

Take fresh Herrings, take out the Bone, and cut the Flesh into long Slices, of the Size of Anchovies, then to one Hundred of these Pieces take Pepper, Nutmeg and Petre Salt, each half an Ounce, half an Ounce of Mace, and half a Pound of Common Salt, beat all fine, and lay your fish in Layers, and between every Layer strew the seasoning, with Four or Five Bay leaves, then boil Red Wine, and pour in hot enough to cover them. Cover the Steam in with a Plate, and when cold tie them down close ; and thus they exceed Anchovies.

TO MAKE HERRING-SOOP.

Take eight large Herrings, skin and boil them in six Quarts of Water : When they are enough take them up, pick off the Flesh and put in the Bones. Take four more Herrings, a Piece of Lemon-Peel, a Bundle of Sweet Herbs, whole Pepper, two or three Blades of Mace, a little Horse Radish, the Crust of a Penny Loaf, and a little Parsley. Cover it close, and let it boil till there is about two Quarts, then strain it off, and add an Ounce of Vermicelly ; set it on the Fire, and let it boil softly : In the meantime get a French Roll, cut a little Hole in the Top, take out the crumb, fry the Crust brown in Butter, take the Flesh of the Fish you laid by, cut it into little Pieces, put it into the Saucepan, with two or three Spoonful of the

Soop, shake in a little Flour, put in a piece of Butter, a little Pepper and Salt, shake them together in the Saucepan till it is quite thick, then fill the Roll with it. Pour your Soop into your Dish; let the Roll swim in the Middle, and send it to the Table.

TO ROAST A BRACE OF HERRINGS.

Take two very large Herrings washed very clean, strew a little Salt hang them on the Spits of a Tin-Oven. Throw away all the water that comes from them for the first Half-hour; then throw on a little Nutmeg, Mace and Cloves, beat fine, and a little Salt; flour, and baste with Butter and Crumbs of Bread. When one side is done turn the other. Then have ready some Anchovy and Melted Butter, some of the Liver of the Fish boiled and bruised fine; mix it well with some Butter and two Yolks of Eggs, strain through a Sieve, and put them into the Saucepan again with a few Shrimps, or pickled Oisters, the juice of a Lemon and a little Red Wine. Pour it into the Pan that you put your Herrings in, and stir all together; then pour it again into the Saucepan, keep it stirring, let it boil, and then serve it up, garnished with pickled Barberries.

TO BROIL HERRINGS.

Scale them, gut them, cut off the Heads, wash them clean; dry them in a cloth, flour them and broil them, but with your Knife score them a little. Take the Heads and mash them, boil them in stale Ale, with a little whole Pepper and Onion; let it boil a quarter of an Hour, then strain it, thicken it with Butter and Flour, and a good deal of Mustard. Lay the Fish in the Dish, and pour the Sauce into a Bason.

TO FRY HERRINGS.

Clean the Herring, fry them in Butter, have ready a good many Onions peeled and cut thin. Fry them of a light Brown, with the Herrings, lay your Herrings in the Dish, and the Onions round, and Butter and Mustard in a Cup.

TO DRESS RED HERRINGS AND CABBAGE.

Boil your cabbage tender, then put it into a Sauce-pan, and chop it with a Spoon ; put in a good piece of Butter, keep it stirring lest it burn. Take some red Herrings and split them open, and Toast them before the Fire, till they are hot through ; lay the Cabbage in a Dish, and the Herring on it, and send it to the Table hot.

TO MAKE A VIRGINIA TROUT.

Take pickled Herrings, cut off their Heads, and lay the Bodies two Days and Nights in Water ; then wash them well, season them with Mace, Cinnamon, Cloves, Pepper and a little red Sanders. Then lay them close in a pot with a little Onion chopt small and strewed between them, then put in a Pint of Claret, and cover them with a double Paper tied on the Pot, then bake them. They are to be eaten cold.

TO STEW HERRINGS.

Take half a dozen large Herrings ; gut them and put a Lump of Butter in the Belly of each of them, put them in your Fish Kettle, pour in half a Pint of boiling Vinegar, then put in a Pint and a half of Red Wine, and a Pint of Boiling Water. Season the whole with Salt, Pepper, sweet Herbs, Parsley and Shallot ; and let it stew slowly, and when ready serve up.

A RAGOUT OF SOFT ROES.

Take some soft roes, and let them lay a little while in Warm Water. Then put in a Stew-pan some melted Butter, Mushrooms, Truffles slic'd, and sweet Herbs; fry it a little, season it with Salt and Pepper, moisten it with Gravy, and let it Stew over a slow Fire. When stewed take off the Fat, and then put in the Roes; let it stay till they are enough, and serve up hot.

A TERRINE OF HERRINGS.

Take your Herrings, gut them, cut off the Heads and Fins, and cut them in long slices, seasoned with Pepper, Salt, and a little fine Spice; place these Slices in a stew-pan, and let it stew over a slow Fire; being stewed, take off the Cover, Skim it well, and pour into it a Ragout of soft Roes. Let it be well relish'd, and serve it up hot in your Terrine.

A PYE OF SOFT ROES.

Take your Roes blanch'd, then lay a Puff-paste Crust at the botton of the Pan, and put over it a Stuffing of forc'd Meat; place your soft Roes over it with Mushrooms and Truffles, season them with Pepper, Salt and sweet Herbs. Lay over them some Butter with Slices of Bacon, cover your Pye with Crust, colour it with Eggs, and bake it. When baked, take it out and open it. Take out the Fat with the Slices of Bacon, pour in a Ragout, and serve up hot.

A PUDDING WITH PICKLED HERRINGS.

Take your pickled herrings, soak them in Water twenty-four Hours. Then take four Pounds of Crumb of a new Loaf, let it be soaked in Cream, and then boiled; then boil your Fish well, bone, skin, and mince them small, and put in your boiled Crumbs with

a Dozen Eggs and Two Pound of Butter. Season it with a little Parsley, sweet Basil, Nutmeg, Shallot, and a glass of Sack. All these things being mixed together, tie them up in a Napkin, and put them in boiling Water, let it have a good colour, and serve up hot.

BOIL'D PICKLED HERRING WITH CARROTS.

Take your large Herrings, soak them well, boil some small Carrots in Water, and throw your Fish cut into slices into it. Your Fish being done, dish it up, and with each Fish two or three Carrots. Take some Parsley wash'd and cut small, which put in a Sauce-boat, and melted Butter in another, and serve up.

N.B. Some put Mustard in the Butter.

A FRICASSE OF ROES.

Take a quantity of soft Roes blanch'd, cut them into Dice; put a lump of Butter in a Stew-pan, and toss it up with an Onion cut small. After that put in your Dice, and give them two or three Tosses; this done, put a little Flour over them, moisten them with a little Fish Broth, seasoned with Salt, Pepper, sweet Herbs, and fine Spice; and let them stew gently. Being done, thicken it with Yolks of Eggs, Parsley cut small, and a Dash of Vinegar, serv'd up hot.

Note. That pickled Roes will do as well steep'd in Water to unsalt them, and omitting Salt in the seasoning.

J. S. Dodd states that "The Herring is likewise endowed with Medicinal Qualities . . . for application to the Soles of the Feet." Dodd gives many ways in which remedies made from herrings can be used internally and externally.

The word Lowestoft appears in Dodd's book as "Loestoff." In the map provided by Ives in his "Garianonum" it appears as "Leaystofe." Its modern local pronunciation is as if it were spelt "Low-stoff." Fifty years or so ago it was pronounced "Lestoff." In Domesday Book it is entered under the name "Loth-Wistoft," a Saxon or Scandinavian name, *i.e.*, the green-knoll (Toft) by the slow flowing stream (Loth).

A GLUT.—Sixty million herrings were landed at Yarmouth in *one single day*, 22 Oct., 1907. One hundred million had been caught but, as there was not enough quay space, incoming boats left Yarmouth and went to Grimsby to unload. One boat brought in a quarter of a million herrings. The price landed on the quay opened at 12s. and fell to 3s. per 1,000 herrings. At 12s. per 1,000 three pounds weight of herrings cost one penny.

In 14 weeks, from mid-Sept. to 20 Dec., 1913, there were landed at Yarmouth 825 million herrings, weighing 157,000 tons, valued at one million sterling landed. The prices ranged from 7s. to 91s. per 1,000. Most of the herrings went to Russia and Germany. Large quantities of smoked herrings were sold to Italy, Greece, Turkey, the Levant and Palestine. The like of the Yarmouth fishing in 1913 had never been known in any other port in the world.

In 1915 120 million herrings were landed at Yarmouth. The average value was 80s. per 1,000; the prices varied from 40s. to 146s. France and America bought largely.

In 1917 only 5,700 tons of herrings were landed in England; average value about 87s. per 1,000, about 2½d. per lb.

STATUTES

THE following are some of the principal Acts of Parliament relating to fisheries and fishing from Edward I. to George I.

- 13 Edw. I., c. 47. Salmon, etc., in defence.
- 31 Edw. III., Stat. 2, c. 1. Herrings sold at sea.
- 31 Edw. III., Stat. 2. Herrings, Yarmouth, etc.
- 31 Edw. III., Stat. 2. Stockfish of St. Botolph, salmon of Berwick, fish and wines of Bristuit, etc.
- 31 Edw. III., Stat. 3, c. 1. Fishery, Blackeney, and the coasts of Satterly, Winton, etc., in the county of —
- 31 Edw. III., Stat. 3, c. 2. Fair at Blakeney, lob, ling, cod, orgies, selling, etc., their nets, etc., Norfolk.
- 35 Edw. III. Buying and selling herrings, Yarmouth.
- 4 Rich. II. Fishmongers' trade laid open.
- 6 Rich. II., c. 10. Fish and victuals to be sold by aliens in London, enforced by Hen. I., c. 17; 14 Hen. IV., c. 4.
- 7 Rich. II., c. 11. Fishers, vintners, and victuallers coming to London to be in the rule of the Lord Mayor and aldermen. 31 Edw. III., Stat. 1, c. 1. (N.B.) repeals the Statutes of 5 Rich. II., c. 4, and 6 Rich. II., c. 11 and 12, touching victuallers in London.
- 31 Rich. II., c. 19, confirms Stat. 13 Edw. I., c. 47, and appoints conservators of it, etc.
- 17 Rich. II., c. 9. All justices of peace to be conservators of 13 Edw. I., c. 47, and 13 Rich. II., c. 9. These conservators to appoint subconservators, etc.
- 2 Hen. IV., c. 15. Penalty on fastening trinck and other nets over the Thames and other rivers; trinckers may fish lawfully.

- 14 Hen. IV., c. 4. Penalty on disturbing aliens selling their fish.
- 22 Edw. IV., c. 2. Salmon vessels, salmon packed, grill packed, herrings packed, sold in barrels, etc., eels barrelled, etc. Length, etc., of barrelled fish, thokes, etc. Tale fish, their length, etc.
- 11 Hen. VII., c. 23. What gaugers, packers, and searchers of barrelled salmon, herrings, eels, etc., are entitled to, with penalty on their offending, etc.
- 31 Hen. VIII., c. 2, s. 2. Penalty on fishing in ponds, etc., against the will of the owners. See Eliz., c. 21; 2 & 3 Edw. VI., c. 6, s. 3. Penalty on admirals taking money, doles, etc., of fishermen or merchants, for licences to pass to voyages for fish, etc.
- 5 Eliz., c. 1. Penalty on fishing in ponds, etc., against the owner's consent.
- 5 Eliz., c. 5. No toll for sea-fish except on Kingston-upon-Hull; penalty on herring or sea-fish, not well salted and packed, and cod, and ling, to be imported loose, and not in barrels.
- 5 Eliz., c. 17. A general provision for preserving of the spawn, brood, and fry of fish, made perpetual by Car. II., c. 4.
- 39 Eliz., c. 10. Exporting of herrings bought in this realm. Customs to be paid by aliens for sold fish and herrings. Penalty on importing or salting bad salt fish, or herrings. See 43 Eliz., c. 9.
- 1 Jac. I., c. 23, s. 3, relates to the taking of herring, pilchard and other sea fish in the counties of Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall.
- 3 Jac. I., c. 11. No weirs along the sea-coast, and penalty on killing, etc., of the brood, etc., of sea-fish, assize, etc., of sea-nets.
- 13 & 14 Car. II., c. 2, s. 36, relates to the exportation of fish into any ports of the Mediterranean.

- 13 & 14 Car. II., c. 28. Penalty on fishing from June to November on the high sea, or any bay, port, etc., of Cornwall or Devon, with any drift, etc., nearer than a league and a half to the shore, etc.
- 15 Car. II., c. 7, ss. 16, 17. No fresh herring, cod, haddock, cole-fish, or grill-fish, from the North Sea, Iceland and other fisheries shall be imported; penalty ship and fish; salted or dried cod, cole-fish, ling, white herrings, haddocks, and grill-fish, imported in foreign built ships, to pay custom.
- 15 Car. II., c. 16. How white or red herrings of English catching are to be packed, salted, dried. Bailiffs of Yarmouth, etc., to appoint packers.
- 18 Car. II., c. 2. No ling, herring, etc., to be imported by foreigners. 22 & 23 Car. II., c. 25.
- 30 Car. II., c. 9. A general provision for preserving the spawn, brood, and fry of fish in the River Severn.
- 32 Car. II., c. 2, s. 7. Stockfish and live eels may be imported.
- 4 & 5 Will. and M., c. 23, relates to private fisheries, etc.
- 10 & 11 Will. III., c. 24, concerning Billingsgate market duties, etc. Assize of lobsters, brought on shore and sold. No fish, except stockfish and live eels, to be imported or sold by foreigners; importation of anchovies, sturgeon, botargo, and caviare also excepted.
- 10 Will. III., c. 25, relates to the fisheries of Newfoundland and the islands adjoining, with the regulations thereof.
- 4 Anne, c. 15. Fishery of the River Stower in Essex and Suffolk.
- 4 & 5 Anne, c. 21. Conservation, etc., of the fisheries of the rivers, creeks, etc., in the counties of Southampton and the southern parts of Wiltshire, seasons, assize of nets, etc.

- 1 Geo. I., c. 18. No herring, cod, pilchard, salmon, ling, fresh or salted, dried or bloated, nor grill, mackerel, whiting, haddock, sprat, coal-fish, grill-fish, congor, nor any sort of flat fish or fresh fish, to be imported or sold in England, that are taken by any foreigners or of strangers' bottoms, except Protestant inhabitants; eels, stockfish, anchovies, sturgeon, botargo, or caviare excepted; assize of drag-nets used at sea, etc. Assize of turbot, brill, pearl, codlin, whiting, bass, mullet, sole, plaice, dab, and flounders, brought to shore, sold or exchanged with penalty. Lobsters and turbots may be imported by foreigners; assize of salmon brought to London, etc., etc., Rivers Dee, Severn, etc.

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