

taken to avoid cutting too deep, as this would cause the fish to spread open, which would diminish its value in the market.

When taken out of the bins and cut, the fish are thrown into the boilers, which are large pots, of which each establishment has five or six. These pots have the form of sugar-boilers, with broad rims, and contain from one hundred to one hundred and fifty gallons.

They are built in a row, in rude walls of stone and mud, about two feet apart, and have sufficient space beneath them for a large fire. The workmen stand on the walls to fill and empty the pots, and have within reach a platform, on which the fish is put after it has been boiled.

It requires two men to attend each pot, who relieve each other, so that the work may go on night and day. They are provided with skimmers and ladles, as well as fire-hooks, hoes, and shovels.

No water is put into the pots, for the fish yield moisture enough to prevent burning.

The boiling occupies from twenty-five to fifty minutes, and the fish remains about an hour on the platform to drain, after which it is taken to the house, and laid to a depth of four inches upon the lower batter. Thence at the end of twenty-four hours it is removed, as has been stated, to the upper batter, where it is thoroughly dried in the course of three or four days. Before it is taken on board ship, it is carefully picked, when the damp pieces are separated, to be returned to the batter. It is stowed in bulk, and when fit for that purpose should be as hard and dry as chips. Great care must be taken to preserve it from moisture.

In the process of drying, it loses two-thirds both of its weight and bulk, and when cured resembles a smoked sausage. In this state it is sold by the picul, which brings from fifteen to twenty-five dollars.

Captain Eagleston had collected, in the course of seven months, and at a trifling expense, a cargo of twelve hundred piculs, worth about \$25,000.

The outfit for such a voyage is small, but the risk to be incurred is of some moment, as no insurance can be effected on vessels bound to the Feejee Group, and it requires no small activity and enterprise to conduct this trade. A thorough knowledge of the native character is essential to success, and it requires all possible vigilance on the part of the captain of the vessel to prevent surprise, and the greatest caution to avoid difficulties. Even with the exercise of these qualities, he may often find himself and his crew in perilous positions.

In order to lessen the dangers as much as possible, no large canoes are ever allowed to remain alongside the vessel, and a chief of high