

FISHERIES.

Salmon packing on the Columbia river was brought to an end for the year by the beginning of the close season, the first of August. The pack is the largest known and yet, owing to the competition having raised the price paid fishermen for the salmon beyond a reasonable figure, the profits will be small. There were thirty-eight canneries in operation and 1,700 boats in the river. The twenty-four canneries located in Astoria packed 420,000 of the 630,000 cases and paid \$1,110,000 of the \$1,550,000 paid out to fishermen. The large pack and the fact that the run of fish in July was very great, are pointed to as evidences that the supply of salmon in the river is not becoming exhausted. To achieve this result a greater number of boats, larger nets and more assiduous fishing were necessary, and it is pretty certain that the proportion of salmon running in April, May and June, the ones which go to the headwaters and become the chief propagators, that escaped the miles of meshes spread for them, was very small. In examining the following table it must be borne in mind that nets are now more than twice the size first used, and that seines and fish traps catch many that are there credited to the boats. It will be seen that the price paid for fish has steadily advanced while the market value of the canned goods has declined. It will be also seen that in spite of the increase in the size of nets, the number of boats and the skill of the fishermen, the average caught by each boat has largely decreased. All these things point to the necessity of a propagating establishment; for with an increase in the run of fish will come a decrease in the number of boats necessary to be used, an increase in the average per boat, with a necessary decline in the price paid for fish, and consequently a safer margin for the packer to work upon. The table is very suggestive. The figures are approximated for convenience:

Year.	Pack. Cases.	No. of boats.	Average per boat. Cases.	Price per case.	Cost of fish. Cents.
1869	4,000	2	2,000	\$16 00	15
1867	18,000	15	1,200	13 00	20
1868	28,000	25	1,120	12 00	20
1869	100,000	35	2,857	10 00	20
1870	150,000	50	3,000	9 00	20
1871	200,000	75	2,666	9 50	20
1872	250,000	100	2,500	8 00	22 1/2
1873	250,000	125	2,000	7 00	25
1874	350,000	250	1,400	6 50	25
1875	275,000	300	917	5 00	25
1876	450,000	400	1,125	4 50	25
1877	450,000	450	1,000	5 20	25
1878	400,000	550	836	5 00	25
1879	400,000	750	640	4 60	50
1880	530,000	900	588	4 80	50
1881	550,000	1,200	458	5 00	60
1882	545,000	1,500	363	5 00	75
1883	630,000	1,700	370	5 00	90

Estimating that one fish will fill eighteen one-pound cans and that four dozen cans make a case, it will be seen that 1,680,000 salmon were caught this year, or an average of 988 fish per boat as against an average of 8,000 per boat in 1870.

Although the fishing season has expired by statutory limitation on the Columbia, it is still open at other points on the coast and in some places where the run of fish is late, it is just beginning. The pack in British Columbia will probably be smaller than last year, but new canneries in Alaska, on Puget sound and at other points, will all serve to swell the total pack of the coast beyond that of any previous year.

The total value of fish taken in British Columbia in 1882 was \$1,842, 675, showing an increase of \$388,353 over the previous year. Had the valuation been as high as in 1881, the total would have reached \$2,000,000. Fishing operations in the province give employment to 5,215 men; the value of canneries is \$402,000, and of boats, etc., \$220,670.

IDAHO.

Boomerang, on the line of the O. S. L. near the mouth of the Payette, consists of about half a dozen new board structures. It is waiting patiently for the boom that is expected to follow the appearance of the iron horse.

There is yet good government land to be homesteaded in Camas prairie, or to be purchased at \$1.25 per acre. It is a fertile grain region and a good country for an industrious man. A railroad to connect it with the outside world will be built ere long.

At Moscow the Columbia Elevator Company is constructing an elevator with a capacity of 250,000 bushels of grain. It will be finished in two months, and will be prepared to hold a portion of the immense wheat crop of that region until the railroad is completed, probably by the end of December. Grain will be handled in bulk.

A new town is to be laid out on the Oregon Short Line on Boise river, in Dixie valley, which may, perhaps, be the terminus until spring. The Boise Statesman says: "Dixie valley is a fine agricultural section, and the location of the depot at that point will enhance the value of land in that neighborhood, and we are glad to see the people of that vicinity benefited. The time will come when all the land from Snake river to Boise City will be irrigated and settled from ten to fifteen miles back from the river, and a town at this point will be one of great importance. Until water is taken out of the river and carried down over this land it can not be settled, and the growth of the town will depend in the main on the present settlers along the river bottoms."

The county of Washington, of which Weiser City is the county seat, was organized in 1879, with a population of 800 and a taxable property list of \$130,000. The present population of the county is about 1,800, and the taxable property has increased to \$350,000. In 1880 the county seat was located at this point, Mr. Solomon Jeffries donating to the county five acres of land for the erection of county buildings and other purposes. During the summer of that year the town was laid in blocks of five acres each, with streets 100 feet wide, and in 1881 building really commenced, most of which has been done within the past eighteen months. The present population of the place is about 250. There are three stores of general merchandise, two drug stores, three hotels, two blacksmith shops, two jewelry stores, three livery stables, one large establishment dealing in saddles, harness, hardware, etc., two stores dealing in stoves, tinware, etc., six saloons, one brewery, one large flouring mill, with a capacity of fifty barrels per day, a good school house, a commodious hall, a court house and jail, and many smaller buildings

and enterprises. A look at the country between the town and Snake river reveals the fact that there are here some 25,000 acres of the most fertile land in Idaho, immediately contiguous to the place, and that all this land can be irrigated and made productive. The Oregon Short Line traverses this large tract, and passes within three-quarters of a mile of the town. A large canal, thirty feet wide at the surface, has been commenced nine miles from town. This canal will suffice for the irrigation of most of the districts of land mentioned. The intentions of the originators of this enterprise are not precisely known here at present, but the prosecution of the enterprise and its early completion is an absolute necessity, and can not be long deferred. The only subject of adverse criticism that can be found here is the rather too intense solicitude of the people about the immediate growth of the town, and a seeming disposition to underestimate the importance and the necessity of distributing the water of Weiser river over the broad and fertile expanses of land, upon the improvement and cultivation of which the healthy growth and permanent prosperity of the town must in the main depend. Above the town the Weiser river and its tributaries, and the Little Salmon, with their numerous large valleys and districts of fine land extending to the northeast a distance of one hundred miles, are all directly tributary to this place, which must, from its location, be the supply point and center of trade for the entire region. In addition to this, the Warrens mining district in Idaho county and the Mineral and Heath districts in this (Washington) county are also naturally tributary to Weiser City. A place thus supported by almost incalculable agricultural and mineral resources, and furnished with the facilities of railroad communication east and west need be under no apprehension about the future. How often have many of us passed through this basin on the stage or by other conveyances, seeing nothing but the broad expanse of sage desert, and desiring only to get through it as rapidly as possible. Now that we can say without exaggeration that it is the seat of a future empire, and one of the most important and most promising localities of the northwest, we learn to look at it with other eyes and take in all its beauties and advantages. Though what the people here call the town is scattered over quite a large area, Weiser City proper, so far as the name and the strength of position are concerned, is confined to the original tract donated to the county, and upon which the county seat has been located. The distance to the line of the railroad is inconsiderable, and can not materially affect the value of property in the neighborhood of the county buildings, as this is the point first reached from the valley above and the place where all the county business will be done.—Boise City Statesman.

Years ago thousands of men traversed the wilderness on their way to British Columbia and the mines of Fraser river and Cariboo. The majority of them returned disgusted, though the mines have been constantly worked with good results. The prospects this year in Cariboo are brightening. Several good quartz ledges are being developed and placer mining is increasing. So revolves the wheel; there may be another excitement about the same region one of these days.