

Queen Charlotte Islands—Continued from Page 144.

Sabbath. Metlakathla is also the headquarters of the Bishop of Caledonia, his bishopric embracing the Indians of the Northwest Coast generally.

About fifteen miles further, across Chatham Sound, brings us to Port Simpson, the principal trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company upon the North Pacific Coast. It has been the favorite abode of the Tsimpsheean Indians, one of the most populous and powerful of the native tribes of North America, from time immemorial. When first occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company their village here contained over 2,000 people. They were found living in houses, some of which are still standing, strongly built of great hewn timbers and thick planks split from enormous cedars. Some of their canoes, made from a single tree, are over sixty feet in length, carrying from fifty to seventy-five people, in which they not infrequently make voyages as far south as the Straits of Fuca, and hundreds of miles northward into the waters of Alaska. The situation was the most commanding which could have been selected for traffic with the island and mainland tribes. For several years most of this barter was carried on through the Tsimpsheean, who would not allow the interior tribes to deal directly with the agents of the company, but jealously reserved that privilege for their own people. Port Simpson was then the base of supplies for all the trading posts of this region. The fort consisted of a stockade about twenty feet in height, made from large cedar poles, with watch and shooting towers, enclosing the store, warehouses and quarters of the servants of the company. The village contains at present about 800 Indians, most of whom live in comfortable houses and dress in civilized costumes. They are under the missionary instruction of the Rev. Mr. Crosby and wife, of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Canada. Port Simpson is situated about 35 miles from the mouth of the Skeena, 40 miles from the Nass, 60 miles from the Queen Charlotte Islands, 160 miles from Fort Wrangell and 612 miles from Victoria.

We proceed up the Portland Channel, through which runs the dividing line between British Columbia and Alaska. Into it flows the Nass River, the greatest known resort of the Oolachan. They are a bright, silver-colored fish, smaller than the herring, of most delicious flavor, and so rich in oil that when dried they burn like a candle. In the spring of the year, generally commencing between the 20th and the 25th of March, for about three weeks, they run by the million. The various Indian tribes of this region congregate here by the thousands and catch them in immense numbers. Their oil is a staple article of food and diet among them. The fish are caught frequently a canoe load at a haul, in purse nets about four fathoms long, and piled in bins on the shore. They are then put into tanks made of planks, with sheet-iron bottoms, holding from three to five barrels, and after boiling in water about four hours are strained through baskets made from willow roots and run into red cedar boxes, containing about fifteen gallons each. Sometimes heated stones are dropped into the oil for the purpose of

increasing its keeping qualities. Formerly, before the introduction of sheet-iron boiling tanks by a white man named Snow, the fish were boiled altogether by means of heated stones. When the run of Oolachan is good, each tribe will make about twenty boxes of oil. This season the run is so light and the fish so poor that none will put up over five boxes. The Oolachan are also taken through the ice, sometimes in great quantities. There are two salmon fisheries near the mouth of the river, packing about 7,000 cases of canned and several hundred barrels of salted salmon annually. Upwards of 900 Indians dwell upon the banks of the Nass, within seventy-five miles of its mouth, principally in the villages of Kincolith, Greenville, Kitwunshilth, Kitteeks and Kitlak-damuksh.

NEWTON H. CHITTENDEN.

SALMON FISHING ON THE COLUMBIA.

FROM April till August the Columbia River below Astoria is dotted with the white sails of fishing boats constantly passing between the fishing grounds and the net racks and docks at the canneries. At all times of the day these boats may be seen beating out to the bar or coming in before the wind with a load of fish, though they appear in the greatest numbers just before and after the change of the tide. During the fishing season Astoria is a busy place. At least 3,000 men are added to its population, whose wages, spent with liberality and even recklessness, swell the volume of retail trade, and contribute to the support of many institutions which, if not morally or commercially beneficial to the city, at least do their share toward making things lively.

Salmon fishing is a business requiring both skill and courage. Nearly every year some luckless ones are carried out to sea and lost, and yet their comrades continue to fish on the bar with as much recklessness and as heedless of danger as before. Boats frequently remain out twenty-four hours. Many go out in the night and fish on the incoming tide, returning with their catch when the tide ebbs. This industry has developed to enormous proportions since its inception in 1866. Two boats then represented the fishing fleet, while now there are 1,700 of them on the river; 4,000 cases were packed that year, as against 630,000 put up in 1883. To accomplish this result required 38 canneries, 1,700 boats, 3,400 fishermen and as many hands in the canneries. There are \$2,000,000 invested in buildings, machinery, boats, nets, etc. During 1883 fishermen alone were paid \$1,550,000, and 1,680,000 fish were caught, averaging 20 pounds each. The total value of the season's pack was over \$3,000,000, nearly all of which was paid for labor in one form or another (since the fish represent labor only), the wages being paid in Astoria and chiefly expended there.

The long racks of nets; the process of spreading a net upon them or loading it into the boat; the unloading of the fish at the dock; the interior of the factory, with its many curious machines and busy operatives, and the fleet on the river, are all interesting and curious scenes. Our engravings represent a few of these, from the loading of the net to the shipping of the cases.