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SALMON FISHING ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER.



NE of the great industries of the Pacific coast is that of preserving fish by salting, smoking and canning, as well as that of extracting oil. Leading in importance is the salmon, followed by the cod, halibut, dog fish and other smaller varieties. The cod fishing is confined to the Alaskan banks, the seat of the industry being San Francisco, though extensive banks of the excellent fish known as "black cod" were located this season off Queen Charlotte islands, by a Victoria vessel, and many fish caught and brought to market. The halibut industry is just beginning, the fish being caught off Vancouver and Queen Charlotte islands by vessels making their headquarters in Puget sound. Oil is made from the livers of dog fish, at Skidegate, on Queen Charlotte islands, and on the mainland the oolsehan, or candle fish, is pressed into oil or dried. All other forms of fishing industry combined do not equal, in extent and value, that of the salmon, which is carried on along nearly every important stream entering the Pacific, from the Sacramento, in California, to the Yukon, in Alaska. Canning is the usual form of preservation, though large quantities are salted and smoked for the market, and by the Indians dried in the sun for winter food.

Leading all other streams in the quantity and value of its pack, is the Columbia, followed in order of importance by the Sacramento and Fraser. Of late years the Alaska pack has been coming to the front, and the indications point to that region as the seat of the most extensive salmon canning interests in the world in a few years, because of the multitudes of salmon that run in its waters, and the low cost of conducting the business. At other points in Oregon besides the Columbia, salmon canning is carried on, such as Coquille river, Coos bay, Yaquina bay and Tillamook bay; and in Washington, Gray's harbor and Puget sound add their quota to the total output. In British Columbia, various rivers and inlets north of Fraser river combined pack a greater number of cases than Fraser river itself. The total pack of the present season on the Columbia was three hundred and sixty thousand cases, being little more than one-half that of 1883, the highest previously made, which reached a total of six hundred and twenty-nine thousand cases. The total of British Columbia for the present season was one hundred and fifty-six thousand five hundred cases, of which Fraser river furnished forty-one thousand six hundred. As the season at other points is not yet closed, the totals can not be given.

A great many distinct varieties of salmon are found in Pacific waters, some of which are of such a superior quality as to enhance the reputation of that favorite fish, while others are of no commercial value. By far the best flavored and best adapted to canning is the one which has rendered the Columbia river brands the leading ones in the markets of the world. Happily, too, its distribution is great, and its numbers apparently unlimited, as it runs in countless throngs in the Sacramento, Columbia, Puget sound rivers and streams of British Columbia, Alaska, Kamtchatka and Asia. This is the Quinnet, the largest of the salmon family, reaching a maximum size of ninety pounds, and averaging from sixteen to twenty-