

## COLUMBIA RIVER SALMON IN THE EAST.

The royal Chinook salmon, which is esteemed so highly as a food fish in Oregon and Washington, has of late been shipped in considerable quantities to Chicago and other eastern cities, where it has also been accorded a flattering reception. The main, and in fact the only, difficulty in the way of its general use in the eastern markets is the high price at which it must be sold. By the time a salmon is placed in the market stall for sale the price has reached a point about ten times the amount of the original investment. This is caused by heavy express charges and the expense of packing and handling in quantities of less than carload lots. A number of Chicago fish dealers were visiting Oregon and Washington recently looking into the salmon business, and the probabilities are that Chicagoans will soon be enabled to get the royal Chinook from the markets of their city at as reasonable figures as they can now procure the fish from the great lakes. In an interview on the subject, one of the dealers said: "Anybody who so far has ordered salmon from Portland, Tacoma, or Seattle has had to pay \$8.50 in express charges for every 100 pounds of fish. Bought of the fisherman, the price was from three to four cents a pound, so that the cost of transportation from Puget sound or the Columbia river to the point of consumption alone amounted to almost three times the original price of the fish. Add to this two or three cents a pound profit that was made by middlemen in handling the fish and it will be seen that the salmon had cost the dealer fifteen cents a pound when laid down here in Chicago, of which eleven or twelve cents were outside of the price of the fish in the first place. Add to this fifteen cents of expenditure for the ice for preserving it, the risk taken and the ordinary profit necessary for the retail dealer in conducting a successful business, and it will be readily understood why it is that the salmon has hitherto not been sold for less than twenty-five cents a pound. During my recent tour of investigation along the coast of Oregon and Washington, where the salmon is caught in enormous quantities—thousands and thousands of tons, in fact—I became convinced it was quite feasible to change all this. My plan is to buy direct from the fisherman, and ship the fish here in carload lots—by refrigerator cars, of course. Thus I will do away with middlemen's profits for one thing; but the largest saving effected will be by the greatly reduced cost of transportation, for on that item alone I shall save about \$6 for every 100 pounds of fish. These refrigerator cars will bring the fish here just as quickly as it has ever been brought, for the cars will be attached to the express trains and brought right through. The difficulty, of course, is getting carloads together." Heretofore the greater part of the expense of shipping salmon has been caused by the large amount of ice necessary for preserving the fish on its long journey, the ice weighing as much, or more, than the fish itself. Usually the shipment has to be repacked before reaching its destination, which causes an additional charge by the transportation companies. By the use of refrigerator cars and the shipment of large quantities at one time the same amount of ice required for a single 100 pound box when shipped alone will serve to preserve a much larger quantity of fish, and the rates of transportation will be changed from express to freight charges, which will also make a very considerable difference. Should arrangements be made for carrying out the project of large shipments, there is no doubt but a lively demand will be created for this choice article of food. The season for the genuine Chinook has now closed, and in its stead the silver side salmon is being shipped. This fish is not so desirable as the royal Chinook, though it is perfectly healthful and a good table fish. Many complaints have been made recently by eastern parties that they have been imposed upon by some unscrupulous shippers, in that they have had an inferior article palmed off on them as the genuine Chinook salmon. This is much to be regretted, as the fame of the fish has traversed the entire globe, and any deception practiced by shippers can only result in curtailing or destroying what might otherwise grow into a business of immense proportions. The dog salmon, which it is claimed has been substituted for the Chinook, is a fish utterly worthless for any purpose, and is dangerous to the health of any person using it. Immense numbers of this kind of fish line the banks of the tributaries of the Columbia at this time of year, where they have been thrown by the action of the water after having exhausted their vitality, lost their color, become covered with sores, and are only waiting for death to end their miserable existence. The flesh of this fish is soft and flabby, tasteless, and of a pale pink color, while the genuine Chinook in its season is a deep, bright reddish color, and its flesh is firm, oily and rich. Persons who have never seen or used the genuine article and know nothing of the fish seasons are easily imposed upon, and as the dog salmon does not meet their expectations in any particular they become prejudiced against the entire salmon family. From a business point of view alone this practice is reprehensible, and unless it is stopped some action will necessarily need to be taken by the legislatures of the two states to prevent it. The salmon industry is one of the largest and most important in the northwest, and the fact of the product being superior to any other has established its reputation throughout the world; and it is certainly a very short-sighted policy for anyone dealing in salmon to send out these worthless fish disguised under the name of the royal Chinook, even though they do secure a few cents more profit on their shipments. Their gain is

only temporary, while the damage they do is lasting and tends to break up the business entirely.

The city council of Chehalis, Washington, is considering a proposition from a local company for supplying the city with water and electric light. The water company asks for a thirty-year franchise, and twenty years are asked for the light company.

The water supply is to be taken from the Newaukum river, mains to be laid through the most populous streets, with pipes leading therefrom to distribute the water through the entire settled portion of the city. Not less than twenty fire hydrants are to be furnished by the company, at a rental of \$100 each per annum for the first twenty and \$75 for each additional hydrant. The company agrees to furnish water free of charge for the use of the city hall, city fountains, city parks and squares, for hydrants for public drinking purposes, for public schools and for flushing sewers.

Electric light poles shall not be less than thirty feet high above the ground, and ten or more lights of not less than 2,000 candle power each are to be erected within three months, a rental of \$12 per month for each light to be paid. Incandescent electric lights are also to be furnished, and the company agrees to furnish gas within twelve months after a written demand being made for it by the council. With the introduction of these enterprises Chehalis can lay claim to being one of the foremost cities in the state.

The Fairhaven & Southern railroad, up the Skagit, has been graded five miles above Sedro, and the work of grading and tracking thirty miles more will begin soon. Three miles above Sedro the coal mine branch starts, and a large force has been at work on that for some time. Within the past few days 100 additional men have been placed on the work, and about 200 more are needed. This spur is about four miles in length, and will be completed in about fifty days so that trains may run over it, and then the product of the coal mines will begin to come out in vast quantities. This work and that of the thirty additional miles up the Skagit, with the building of the branch to Seattle, will employ several thousand men, and when the connection with the Canadian Pacific at New Westminster is completed, which will be within a few weeks, there will be lively times in and about Fairhaven.

It is estimated that the total output of logs on the Elokom river, in Wahkiakum county, Washington, this season, will amount to about 15,000,000 feet. The timber is of excellent quality, a large proportion of the lumber being clear and free from knots. There are five logging camps on the creek employing about eighty men and sixty-six cattle. The capital invested in the business is over \$40,000. This has been an exceptionally good season for logging. From the first of July up to the first of October, work has progressed almost uninterruptedly. Logs are in steady demand at from \$5 to \$6 per thousand feet, Portland and Astoria mills taking the bulk of them.

The prospects of the Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern railroad being completed into Anacortes within the next month are very flattering. The work is being pushed as rapidly as the labor at command will permit, and should the rails arrive from the east on time the road will undoubtedly reach its terminus in November. The superintendent of the line has issued invitations to railroad officials and prominent capitalists to accompany him on the first train running from Seattle to Anacortes, and the chamber of commerce of the latter place proposes to make the day memorable in the history of the town by celebrating the event in splendid style.

The largest shipment of bridge timber ever sent out of the state of Washington by rail was recently shipped over the Northern Pacific railroad by the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company to the Keokuk & Hamilton Bridge Company, of Keokuk, Iowa. The shipment consisted of between 175,000 and 200,000 feet of timber and filled twenty cars. The timbers were of unusual length, two cars being required for their proper storage.

Work has been commenced on grading the site for a large foundry and machine shop at Fairhaven, Washington. The works will occupy an entire block of ground, and will be capable of turning out all classes of work. Tacoma parties are inaugurating the enterprise.

Polk county, Oregon, will pay taxes for 1890 on property valued at \$2,832,980. Indebtedness and exemptions foot up \$1,505,800.

Steps are being taken in Yamhill county for the purchase and maintenance of a county poor farm.