

JARED C. WESTON, a native of Nova Scotia, a fisherman by occupation, and resident of New Westminster for several years, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Well sir, have you any statement to make in regard to the fisheries of this province, or kindred matters?—A. I would rather if you would ask me questions, sir.

Q. Well, if you have any particular point—A. I would prefer speaking on that afterwards.

Q. Very well. What do you think of the effects of throwing large quantities of offal in the river?—A. I don't think it interferes at all with the fish.

Q. But with regard to health and from a sanitary standpoint?—A. Well, as regards myself, I cannot complain about drinking water, but I know that lots of fishermen have been in hospital as a result of drinking the water, and have had typhoid fever, &c.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Water from near the canneries?—A. Oh, anywhere from the mouth up.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Do you find much offal lodged about?—A. Yes; I find lots, and get it in my nets.

Q. Where do you fish?—A. In the sockeye run, down at the mouth of the river.

Q. Do you notice the offal in shallow water?—A. No.

Q. What effect has it upon your nets?—A. I don't know as it has any. It may make them dirty.

Q. Do nets in that condition prevent fish entering them?—A. No; a man washes his net often—in fact, every chance he gets.

Q. Then, on the whole, it is not injurious to fish entering the river?—A. No; I don't think so.

Q. Well, then, as to health—what effect do you think the offal has?—A. I think it injurious.

Q. And some diseases may, in your opinion, such as typhoid fever, be brought about by this offal being thrown into the river?—You say some fishermen have been sick?—A. Yes; several have been in hospital.

Q. What are your views as regards the limitation of nets?—A. As regards canners and freezers I would like to see them get no more than one license each, also salters; but fishermen who work their own boats, I believe every British subject should get a license who requires one.

Q. Then all *bona fide* fishermen, being British subjects, should get licenses?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. With regard to the close season, what are your views?—A. Well, I think it just as good as it is with the exception that if rules are made, I would like to see it started at 12 o'clock on Saturday to Monday morning at 6. That would give canners a chance to clean up, and if they were getting too much fish, they could stop their boats.

Q. Then you are quite of the belief that Sunday should be kept wholly both in the interests of morality and the interests of the fisheries?—A. Yes.

Q. If the close season is established at those hours, the canners would adapt themselves to the circumstances, would they?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. What about an annual close time—you know in Nova Scotia there is an annual close season?—A. I left home twenty years ago—there was not much talk of salmon fishing there then.

Q. But what is your view here as to an annual close time?—A. Well, I should think when the salmon are ready to spawn, fishing should be stopped, say from the 25th of August up to 25th September, or end of September.

Q. Would that give an annual close time sufficient for the protection of the fish?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. What come in after the end of September?—A. Cohoes, and we are not allowed to fish for spring salmon through the winter.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. Are the spring salmon in the river in the winter?—A. Well, I think so. I have known Siwashas to catch steel-heads along in January for their own use up river.

Q. You have never taken any yourself?—A. No, sir.

Q. You think it advisable that some restriction should be placed on the excessive fishing at the mouth of the river, do you not?—A. No, sir, I don't.

Q. But the boats congregate there very largely, don't they?—A. Well, yes, they are pretty thick, but if the boats are too thick to catch fish they go farther up the river.

Q. If the boats were lessened in number, would not more fish go up the river?—A. Well, I don't know but it would be that way.

Q. Is the exact mouth of the river where netting is carried on, very narrow—more there than farther up?—A. Yes; I think it is. Still, the salmon go in with the tides all over the sands. Canoe Pass is also a big fishing place and fishing goes on right out to the edge of the Gulf.

Q. What number of meshes do you say you fish?—A. Forty meshes. I have not had the pleasure of owning a net yet. I have applied for licenses but never got them.

Q. How many years have you been here?—A. Six years—I have applied for three years.

Q. What excuse did they give you?—A. Because I never had one before. I could have had one in 1888, but I put it off too long, and then the licenses were limited.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Are you aware of any men getting licenses who were not fishermen?—A. Yes; lots of them. I don't call Mr. Port or Mr. Vienna fishermen no more than the cannery are. Also a man named Miller from Washington Territory—he is a stranger and should not get one.

Q. Do you know of any others?—A. Well, I have only heard of others.

Q. Any saloon-keepers?—A. I have heard of them. I heard that Brennan, of the Cleveland Hotel, got one.

Q. Mr. McNab, can you tell us anything about this?

Mr. McNAB.—No one of the name of Brennan got a license last year.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. Then I understand the proportion of licenses issued to persons like yourself and others would amount to 60 out of 580—that is what you complain of, is it not?—A. Yes, sir; I don't see how Mr. Port and Mr. Vienna get ten licenses. I don't think Mr. Port entitled, because the ten licenses are laid off when the fish come in heavy, and then in the sockeye run after the spring salmon are over, it will take but one or two boats perhaps to keep his establishment going.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. What does he do with his fish?—A. He sells them to the cannery.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. But is he not a freezer?—A. He has not frozen any fish to my knowledge during last year, and I have been working for Mr. Port for two springs, and to my knowledge he don't freeze any fish.

Q. Did you fish for him during the sockeye run?—A. No, sir; I would not work for him.

Q. Did he freeze any then?—A. No, sir. Mr. Port paid 8 cents for fish and Mr. Ewen was paying 20, so Mr. Port sold his to Mr. Ewen. All the freezers are the same.

Q. What is the difference between a spring salmon of about twenty pounds and a sockeye of from seven to eight pounds weight—that is, the difference in value?—A. Oh, it would be considerable. A spring salmon is worth all the way from 50 cents to \$1.25. They are often scarce.

Q. What is their usual size?—A. From fifteen to thirty pounds, on an average about twenty pounds generally.

Q. And with your experience in fishing, what would you say is about the average weight of the sockeye?—A. Some are small, some large, I never weighed them.

Q. Were you fishing in 1889?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. In 1890? That was a large year I think, was it not?—A. 1889 was a big year.

Q. What was 1890?—A. A good season.

Q. What was the average of fish that season?—A. I could not say—they were larger than in a big run—I should think they were about eight pounds.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. You never weighed any?—A. No, sir ; I never did or saw one weighed.

Q. Do you know how many cans an eight-pound salmon would make? Four or five cans?—A. I should think it would make four cans anyway.

Q. And then if it made four or five cans the balance would be offal?—Yes, sir.

Q. Is all that thrown away?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. But as a matter of fact you don't know how many cans a fish would make—you don't really know?—A. No, sir ; as a matter of fact I don't really know, I have heard say they make that number.

Q. Is the run of sockeye salmon later in the season than formerly?—A. I don't know that it is.

Q. Not later than three or four years ago?—A. No, I don't know that it is.

Q. How long did you fish this year?—A. Fifteen or twenty days.

Q. How late in the season for the cannery?—A. To about the 15th or 20th of July.

Q. And how late the season before?—A. 25th August, I think. I am not certain exactly. Our cannery shut down earlier than most of the rest on account of the tins being exhausted.

Q. Well, now, what about the Indians getting licenses?—A. I think they should get licenses, too, if they pay for them and can furnish their own boats and nets the same as white men, but not apply for a license and then get the cannerymen to pay for it.

Q. How are you going to avoid that?—A. Let him show his license, the inspector is on the river.

Q. The boat you fished with, was it under a boat license belonging to Mr. Port?—A. Not this summer. This summer I fished for a man named Boutillier.

Q. Is Boutillier here?—A. No, I think not ; his partner was here this afternoon.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. About this typhoid fever, are you quite sure it comes from the water?—A. Well, I think it was from that—my partner was sick and I considered it was from that.

Q. Did he die?—A. No, sir.

Q. Where did he live, in town or on a scow?—A. Oh, he lived in good condition, he was all right. I can tell you the fishermen on this river, if they can afford it, like to live well.

Q. Do many fishermen live in scows?—A. Yes, sir ; a good many.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Where do they bring the scows at night?—A. Always in some place right close to the edge of the water.

Q. And if there is any impurity in the water he is sure to get it?—A. Yes, he is sure to get it.

Q. And yet you live there, you think it a proper place for men to live?—A. Well, we have nowhere else.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. How did you fish your boat this year?—A. On shares, I got 10 cents, divided between myself and partner, or 5 cents each.

Q. What was the market value of fish?—A. Well, I have heard it was 15 cents.

Q. When you got only 10 cents?—A. Yes.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. What were salmon fetching that were sold to Mr. Bontillier by other people?
—A. I don't know.

Q. Did you think you got the full value?—A. No, sir; I thought he was getting 20 cents while I was getting but 10.

Q. Well, is this a regular practice for freezers and salters who get licenses and hire men like you, to then go and sell the fish to the canners and give you only a share?
—A. Yes, sir.

Q. If you had a boat of your own what would you have got?—A. Twenty cents.

Q. Have you seen dead salmon floating down the river?—A. I have seen a few in August.

Q. These salmon, in your opinion, would they be salmon that had been wounded or weakened and had then died—do you think they had been injured before death?—A. Well, I could not say. I think they had spawned, because they looked thin and narrow, but then we don't stop to investigate dead fish.

Q. What about these white salmon—the spring salmon are both white and red, are they not?—A. We get a few and salt them for our own use if the market don't take them. They will take them if you will give them to them for nothing.

Q. Who does that?—A. Mr. Port and Mr. Vienna.

Q. And so they take the red salmon and pay you for them, and the white salmon they only take for nothing?—A. Yes.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Do you not think the white salmon a good fish?—A. Yes; I prefer them to the red.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Are they caught more or less all summer?—A. Yes; all summer.

Q. And are they marketable?—A. Not the white.

Q. Are there more of white than red?—A. Yes; often they are more plentiful.

Q. And you give them away?—A. Yes; often to Siwashas and others.

Q. Do you know any cases where white salmon were caught and thrown away?
—A. No, sir; I would salt them before throwing them away. I would like to say that I think, on account of canners having so many licenses, that we fishermen should be given the preference on the river. Siwashas or white men should have first chance, then freezers, salters and canners, for as long as you issue twenty licenses to canners, when the big run comes the canners can get fish enough with their own boats and then they do not want the outside fishermen.

Q. Then the canners become monopolists?—A. Yes; we are prevented from earning our living.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. That is only during the big runs?—A. Yes; but if salmon continue as they did this year, it will be two or three years out of four.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. But is this not opposed to the prevailing theory?—A. Well, we have had good runs in consecutive years.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Would twenty boats be sufficient to supply the canners last year?—A. Yes, sir; the canner I fished for had twenty boats and three outside licenses, and then we had to shut down because we got too many fish. We had to lay off thirty-six hours in the middle of a week, that is thirty-six hours in the whole fishing season.

Q. What was the capacity of the cannery you worked for?—A. I have no idea—it was Ladner's cannery.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Do you think the canners should have any licenses?—A. Well, if there are British subjects and resident fishermen enough to take up all, they should have none, or perhaps one each. They make lots of money, let them buy their fish.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Then you consider they should depend upon the fishermen for their fish?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Would you think it unfair to give the canners ten or fifteen licenses? They would depend upon the fishermen for the rest of their fish if they required more.—A. Well, I don't object to the canners if the fishermen get their licenses, but I want to see the fishermen get their licenses first. The workingman on the river should get the first chance. Very nearly all the fishermen who get licenses stay here all the year round and they spend their money here, while, on the other hand, I know some canners who don't spend a cent. They spend it away elsewhere, and according to the amount they make the fishermen spend much more money in the country.

Q. But don't the canners spend a large amount of money—don't they pay wages to the people employed inside the cannery?—A. Yes; it is true they do, but you know very well where the money that is paid to Chinamen goes—that does not do any good to the country. Then many of them get their supplies from outside, they don't spend much money here for them.

Q. What do you mean by "supplies"?—A. Well, the fishermen get all their food and supplies from the canneries during the season, and the canners get most everything from Victoria and even from San Francisco—these things are not got from resident people here.

Q. But do you not consider that the canners put capital—a good deal of money—into the canneries?—A. Well, when a man makes \$90,000 in one season and—

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Are you prepared to state that on oath?—A. Oh, no; I am not, but I know it—it is pretty well known around here.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Oh, but we cannot take hearsay evidence.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, sir, is there anything further you wish to say?—A. No, I think not—we want to get licenses, that is the great trouble.

HARRY NELSON, a native of Norway, a fishermen, nine years in British Columbia, and a resident of New Westminster, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, sir, what have you to represent?—A. I have made two applications for licenses—this year and the year before last, but could not get any license.

Q. What was the reason given you for that?—A. Because I had not had a license before.

Q. Whom did you fish for?—A. For Mr. Ewen last year, and the year before for Mr. Harlock.

Q. On what terms?—A. On shares this year.

Q. And you are not satisfied?—A. No, sir; I am not.

Q. Why?—A. Because during the sockeye run others who have licenses sell to the canners and get all the benefit—they get 20 cents for their fish while I get but 4 cents—8 cents between me and my partner. Mr. Port sells his fish all to the canners.

Q. Did he not freeze them?—A. No, sir.

Q. Then these licenses Mr. Port gets he only uses during the run of spring salmon, and then in the sockeye run he sells to the canners and employs you at 8 cents a fish?—A. Yes, sir.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. Then your views would be that the outside fishermen should get the licenses?—
A. I think that every fisherman who is upon the river for two years should get licenses. I think they should be all taken from the canners and Mr. Port and Mr. Vienna and such others.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. But does not Mr. Vienna keep a fish market?—A. Yes, but he can buy all his fish from outside fishermen.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Well, now, what do you think as regards this offal?—A. I think it very injurious to the water. We have to drink it and it is very unhealthy. It is all very well to say many little fish eat it up, but I know the heads and tails get into the fishermen's nets—I have caught lots of them, and the stuff stinks awfully—a man cannot get within a mile of it with any comfort.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. What do you do with it?—A. Oh, I chuck it away again.

Q. And where does it go?—A. Oh, the tide takes it out.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Then you do think it injurious to the health of the inhabitants?—A. Yes, sir, I do. Cases of typhoid fever are plentiful down the river.

Q. Are there any cases above?—A. I don't know.

Mr. Higgins.—Well, but there is typhoid fever in Victoria and other places, in fact everywhere.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Where do you live? Do you live on a scow?—A. I live in a scow, yes.

Q. Where do you usually put it?—A. Oh, at different places along the river.

Q. Then you have the benefit of all injury in the water?—A. Yes, sir.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Have you ever had typhoid fever?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was it from drinking Fraser River water?—A. No; I would not say it was from that.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Now, what do you think of the Sunday close time?—A. I think the fishermen should have all Saturday and Sunday—that leaves half a day to fix the net in and generally clean up, and leaves Sunday for a holiday.

Q. Have you seen many dead fish floating down the river?—A. Yes; plenty of them in the middle of August.

Q. Where do you think they would come from?—A. Mostly from the canneries—chucked overboard—they get too many fish on hand and chuck them away; then of course, there are a few fish dropped from the nets.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Did you ever see fish thrown off a cannery wharf?—A. Yes, onetime at Laidlaw's cannery. Last year I saw a Chinaman chucking fish over from a scow.

Q. Were there many?—A. Well, I saw about a hundred—I don't know how many more there were before I came up.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. What day of the week was that?—A. On a Friday.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Why did he throw them away?—A. Because they wanted fresh fish.

Q. What depth net do you fish with?—A. I use sixty meshes. It depends on the depth of water—thirty-five meshes at the mouth of the river—some use fifty, but then fish have plenty of show to go up. Most of the fishing is done in slack water, and the fish have a good chance to go up in the strong water.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. Well, have you anything further to tell us?—A. No, I think not, sir.

THOMAS HOOD, a native of Newfoundland, a fisherman, and resident of New Westminster for two years, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. Well, sir, we will be pleased to hear what you have to say?—A. I have been only two years on the river and I have but little experience in this fishery, though I have been a fisherman.

Q. Have you had a license?—A. No, sir.

Q. Why not?—A. I was told all were taken up. I fished two years by contract for a cannery, using their boat and net and license. Last year fish averaged 15 to 20 cents to those with their own licenses, but I could only get six and a half. I have a home here and a family, and I came here to try and better myself as a fisherman; hearing reports of this country I left Newfoundland to come here. I might show you, gentlemen, these references given me before leaving Newfoundland and which will perhaps vouch somewhat for my character and standing. (Mr. Hood here handed in letters of reference from Messrs: Munro and Bishop, of St. John's, Newfoundland, dated 18th February, 1890, and from G. W. R. Herlei of Bay Roberts, Newfoundland, and which testified very highly to Mr. Hood's ability and standing as a fisherman and master mariner.) After the Chairman's perusal of the above letters aloud,

Mr. WILNOT.—Certainly, Mr. Hood, those references speak very highly of your ability and dexterity both as a fisherman and mariner. It does seem hard that such a good fisherman should not have been able to get a license.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Do you know of any who got licenses whom you would consider were not entitled to it?—A. No, sir, I am but two years here, but still I consider that a number of licenses have been granted that should not have been. It is very hard and unjust that only fifty licenses should go to whitemen who are fishermen out of 580. It is right that the cannerymen who have gone to great expense should get licenses, but they should not have the control of everything. You can see how I stood last season, it is very plain—I could not get a license myself and was forced to take just whatever the cannerymen liked to give. I have my own boat and net and have been raised a fisherman.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. Did you catch many spring salmon?—A. No; I only fished for sockeyes.

Q. What number did you take in your boat?—A. 4,300.

Q. For which you got 6½ cents?—A. Yes.

Q. What was about their average weight?—A. Six to eight pounds.

Q. Did you fish the year before also?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Were the fish larger then?—A. They were not as large as in '90.

Q. Have you any idea how many cans the seven-pound fish will make?—A. I don't know.

Q. What do you think of this offal that is thrown in the river in such quantities?—A. I don't think it does much harm—the force of the water going down this river takes it out quickly.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. Have you seen any in the bays and sloughs?—A. No; I fished at the mouth of the river; I have not seen the shores farther up.

Q. Do you think there is too much fishing at the mouth of the river?—A. Oh, I don't think so, sir. There is plenty of room away over to Point Roberts, and plenty of room for the fish to come in.

Q. But if less boats were fishing there more fish would come up, would they not?—A. Oh, no; I don't think any injury is done.

Q. What do you think of the Sunday close time?—A. Well, I don't fish on Sundays; but upon that point I would not like to lay down the law for others.

Q. But do you not think Sunday should be kept?—A. Yes, I think so. For the two years I have fished on the river I have not fished on Sundays, and I always found I got as many fish on Monday morning as the others who fished on Sunday night. I have done the same on the Grand Banks, and have had a schooner alongside me that fished on Sunday, while we did not; but it is a fact that we invariably got just as many fish in the long run as she did.

Q. Then you consider that there is a special Providence that favours the good fisherman?—A. Well, it certainly looks something like that. (Laughter.)

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. If the men commenced fishing at 6 o'clock on Monday morning, how soon could the canneries commence work?—A. About noon, I think; if there were plenty of fish running.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. You think it is not necessary to have six hours in advance to prepare to fish—that is, they could just as well commence fishing at 12 o'clock Sunday night as at 6 o'clock Sunday evening?—A. Yes, I think so.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. You could not induce them to give you more than 6½ cents for your fish?—A. No, sir.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Do you pursue any other calling than fishing?—A. I work wherever I can get work, and whenever I can get it, with pick and shovel, anything in fact.

Q. Have you anything further to lay before us?—A. No, sir.

WILLIAM DINNEAR, a native of Australia, a fisherman by occupation, and resident of New Westminster since 1882, was duly sworn.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, sir, proceed.—A. Well, I wish to say that I have been fishing on the Fraser River for four years, and have applied for licenses but have never received one.

Q. Why did you not get them?—A. I was notified by letter in 1889 that the whole number was issued, and if more were given out I would be notified.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Were you ever notified?—A. No, sir; I never was. I did not apply last year because I thought I would be notified; but I have never received any information on the subject. This is the letter I got from Mr. Mowat, saying that I would be notified. (Handed in letter, which was returned by the chairman after reading.)

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Have others who came in the country since you did get licenses, and who applied after you or after the date of this letter?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Were they residents of the place or were they from other localities?—A. Well, I think one or two in particular were foreigners, but I believe they afterwards took out their papers; I think they were Italians—at least one was.

Q. What was the other?—A. I am not sure what he was.

Q. You think they took out papers—naturalization papers?—A. I think so.

Q. Whom did you fish for?—A. I was fishing on shares. Last season I fished another man's license; he was blind and he asked me to take his license and fish it, and he gave me an order for his license on Mr. Vienna.

Q. What did you give him?—A. I gave him 1 cent a fish up to 2,000, and 1½ cents for all over that number.

Q. Then you sold your fish for whatever you could to the canneries—what did you get?—A. Ten cents.

Q. Then you realized 8½ and 9 cents?—A. I divided fair with my partner after taking the cent and cent and a half out.

Q. Could you have sold at higher prices if you had had a license?—A. I could have, yes.

Q. Then why did you not sell these at the higher price?—A. Well, because I made an agreement with the blind man to give them to a certain cannery and they only gave 10 cents per fish.

Q. Did this blind man pay for the license himself or was the money advanced by the cannery?—A. I think the money was advanced to him.

Q. How many fish did you catch?—A. About 3,000.

Q. What was about their averaged size and weight?—A. I should say six and a half pounds—some perhaps went seven pounds.

Q. What do you think of offal being thrown into the river—do you think it injurious?—A. I think it is injurious to fish at times when the water becomes slimy and dirty.

Q. What do you think of it from a sanitary stand-point?—A. I don't think it healthy—I think it causes a good deal of sickness.

Q. What sort of sickness do you think has prevailed?—A. It causes fever—typhoid, I think. I have known of a few cases, not many. Then we all have to boil the water before drinking it, unless we are out in our boats and cannot help ourselves.

Q. Do you live in a scow or on shore?—A. On shore.

Q. And do you see offal lodging in the bays and sloughs?—A. Very often.

Q. And is the smell disagreeable?—A. Yes, very often.

Q. What do you think of the Sunday close time?—A. I think it very good—it gives a rest to all and lets the fish go up.

Q. What do you say about the limitation of licenses?—A. Well, I think if there is any limit to licenses, fishermen should have the preference and should have one license each.

Q. The Indian also?—A. Yes, I think so.

Q. And would you object to canners having a fair proportion of the licenses?—A. I object to them having a monopoly, but I think they should have a fair proportion.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. In your opinion, what constitutes a fisherman?—A. Oh, a man who can make or mend his net and who fishes.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. A man who bought his net would be a fisherman too, would he not?—A. Well, I mean a man who understands how to fish—I don't think a man who simply buys a net would be a fisherman.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. But supposing he bought his net and fished for years, would he not be a fisherman?—A. I don't think so unless he could mend or make his nets.

Q. How many fishermen are there who can mend their own nets?—A. Oh, perhaps a hundred.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. You don't know that, do you?—A. Well, I would not take an oath to it, but I think it would be about the number.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. But there are many men perhaps who have followed fishing all their lives and yet cannot make a boat or mend a net—now, don't you consider them as fishermen?—A. I think all these things should be taken into account.

Q. How many years is it since you came here?—A. I came here in 1882.

Q. Were you a fisherman in Australia?—A. No, sir.

Q. But you are now?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Then when you first came here you would not have been entitled to a license as a fisherman?—A. No.

Q. Then you see there was a time when you were not a fisherman, though, perhaps, fishing on the river, however, I see what you mean—you mean by a fisherman not only a man who fishes, but also thoroughly understands all the practical details of the business?—A. Yes, sir, that is it.

Q. Well, now, have you anything further to tell us?—A. No, sir.

WILLIAM EDWARD DEVINE, a native of England, a fisherman, and resident of the Pacific coast between the Columbia, Sacramento and Fraser Rivers, since 1862, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. We shall be pleased to hear what you have to say on the question of the fisheries, Mr. Devine?—A. Well, I merely came here to assist my brother-fishermen, as I think we have a good chance now to speak before you gentlemen. I think it has been a piece of injustice from the first go off, that poor men who make their living on the river cannot get licenses, and I know old fishermen who are here now, have applied several times, but could not get any license.

Q. Have you had a license?—A. For the last three years I have had, sir. You see, sometimes we go north—we go up to Skeena and Rivers Inlet and the Naas, and we happen up country and take chances. We say, if the Fraser is bad, we will go to the Skeena or Naas, and we think they will be good, and when we come back again our license here is gone—we would be off the list and no license would be granted, and other men come in and get licenses. Of course, the more goes in the better for the country; but those men who pass their time in physical labour and depend entirely upon fishing for their living, should get a license.

Q. When did you fish on the Skeena last?—A. I never fished on the Skeena. I said some of us do. I went to Rivers Inlet, but lately have stuck to here so as to save my license.

Q. You have fished on the Columbia and Sacramento?—A. Yes; I have fished in all of them; but for the last ten or twelve years I have remained here.

Q. What number of fish do you take?—A. The year before last I took 10,000.

Q. You must be a good fisherman?—A. Well, no. I was right at the door or mouth of the river, and I fished away out beyond the lighthouse, and these fish are better than those up river.

Q. How long do you think they are coming from the mouth of the river to, say, up here?—A. Well, I cannot say; but on the Sacramento we have marked the chinook and known them to be five weeks making thirty miles. We put our initials on the skin to see how fast they would travel.

Q. Was that in tidal water?—A. Yes; all tidal water.

Q. How wide was the river where this was done?—A. Well, about six or seven miles. When the fish are coming into the river you can stand in a boat and see them waiting around before they go up. I don't think that fish go suddenly out of salt water into fresh. Of course they come in to spawn. If I have two nets, I always put in the

two. On a cold day never put in your net in shallow water, but on a warm day go on the sand. The deeper the water the warmer it is. In warm weather you will always see fish play well on the sands, and I have had them alongside my boat for an hour at a time.

Q. You say you have caught 10,000 in one season?—A. Yes; but others got more than me. I was sick just from drinking the water of the Fraser River. Some men turn in 1,000 fish in one night.

Q. To whom do you sell?—A. The Gurry Point cannery.

Q. What did you get for your fish?—A. Ten cents each; if any more was given, we would get more.

Q. Should fishermen who get licenses be British subjects?—A. Yes; to a limited extent.

Q. What do you mean by that?—A. Well, I would give the licenses to men who are really fishermen and make their living by fishing.

Q. Well, suppose all were really fishermen?—A. Oh, well, you can overfish a river, but the Fraser is not, and I think the hatchery has been of great benefit. Common sense tells any one that, when for the last three years we have had great runs.

Q. Then you are satisfied that overfishing will bring about depletion?—A. Yes, certainly. Sawdust and other matters will also hurt the fish. I was in Oregon when they made the first laws for fishing, and I know they thought all such matters were very hurtful.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. What about the Indians?—A. Well, they are certainly fishermen and should get licenses the same as any one else.

Q. Suppose 200 Indians applied, would you give them all licenses?—A. Well, no, sir.

Q. Well, then, how many should be given?—A. About one-third to the Indians and the rest to the whites.

Q. Why restrict them to one-third?—A. Because we have made the country what it is—we taught the Indians how to fish—that is, to fish with any degree of success for commercial purposes—they were fishing with spears and grip-nets, and all sorts of odd-fashioned arrangements when first I came to the country, and all their knowledge of first-class work they have gained from us.

Q. How many licenses then would you give the canners?—A. I am not in a position to say, but I would allow a fair number.

Q. Would you say twenty or twenty-five?—A. Oh, gentlemen, I would say, use your own judgment.

Q. But we want to hear what you think in the matter?—A. Well, in the first place I would give actual fishermen the preference—then the older fishermen should have the preference—we built the country up and taught the others how to catch fish; they should have the preference among the fishermen.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Would it make the boats too numerous to give each of the fishermen a license?—A. I think, sir, that it would not be overdoing the thing if each fisherman who is a fisherman should get a license, and then give to the freezers and canners, for certainly they are a benefit to the country and we would not be getting what we are if they were not here. No bartering of licenses should be allowed.

Q. In regard to the offal, what do you know of its effects?—A. I am positive it is injurious in a sanitary way. We have to drink that water, and in the dark when we take up a dip, we dip up guts of fish, and that is a nice drink I can tell you. (Laughter.) I have taken many a swallow of it to my sorrow. It is all very well for people to say the current takes the offal all out to sea, but when you come to take in your nets and find fish-guts and muck of all kinds, and then when you come to wash your net I can tell you it is not quite eau de cologne. (Laughter.)

Q. Then you know that the entrails, &c., do get into your net?—A. I am positive, because every fisherman knows that we are always picking out muck of all sorts, then we have to boil our water before we can use it.

Marine and Fisheries.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Where do you live ?—A. Down at Steveston, when fishing.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. But do you think that what is dangerous to man is dangerous to fish ?—A. Well, we have an example right over in Vancouver. There used to be a great number of herring there, but since an oil refinery was established there and they were allowed to run their offal into the water the herring have disappeared—therefore, I think it hurts the herring. It is believed that the offal must do harm. In regard to trout, I think it is very injurious to salmon, because the trout follows the salmon and often feeds upon their eggs and then there is no better bite for a trout than a salmon head. The Indians in many places get a little pole and put on a hook, and they will beat any London fisherman that ever threw a fly.

Q. Do you think salmon themselves eat their own eggs ?—A. I am almost positive they do not, and I think that is not a correct theory.

Q. Then you think the depositing of offal is both injurious to man and to the fish ?—A. I am positive it is injurious to the human family, and am almost sure it is to fish, and if I was betting I would bet ten to one it was, though of course it would increase the expenses of the cannerymen to have to look after it, and I would not like to add to them—they have enough to contend with already, but I think the Government should take up the matter and prevent it from going into the river, for no one wants to drink salmon guts, or if they do I am not one of them.

Q. You say you got 10,000 fish—if you had not been at the “door” and had been kept in the “room” as it were, more fish would have come in, would they not ?—A. Well, I don't know. The fishermen would be too close and it would be a cause of much contention and trouble. It is bad enough now—sometimes you might as well have your net in your bed-room. (Laughter.)

Q. Then would you think it advisable, in the interest of the fishermen, that certain restrictions should be placed on fishing at the mouth of the river ?—A. Oh, no ; I think it does not stop fish from coming in. We are distributed away off—some three miles.

Q. What do you think of the close season ?—A. I think the way things have been a good plan—it gives the cannerymen a chance, also the fishermen and the fish.

Q. If the fishing commenced at 12 o'clock Sunday night, would you not have enough fish for Monday ?—A. Well, but who is to tell when the fishermen will put out under that arrangement, but now when all put out when the flag drops at 6 o'clock, it is quite fair.

Q. What do you think of the annual close season ?—A. I think we should fish all the year round. Each kind of fish has a certain time of coming in and fish are always going up. There is one thing I would wish to speak about—the reason we want the licenses is this. Now there are canneries on this river the owners of which say “we can do without you,” “we don't want independent fishermen,” and if the canners are allowed to have all the licenses they want it will ruin us and we will have to pack up and go to Alaska or elsewhere, and if the canners can get Japanese or Chinamen to fish for them, why it takes the bread right out of our mouths.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Chinamen don't fish but Japs do—are there many of them employed ?—A. Yes ; English employs nothing else, I think, now.

Q. What are they paid, do you know ?—A. About four cents a fish.

Q. Do they work in the cannery as well ?—A. No, sir, they only fish. They put four men in a boat and pay them 4 cents a fish ; it is starvation wages even for them, but they will stick to it like glue. The little Japs are most persevering fellows.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Are there many fishermen go out to fish at the mouth of the river ?—A. Yes ; the majority of us white men go out, though many contend that as many fish are caught up the river as down at the mouth.

Q. How many meshes deep is your net?—A. Sometimes thirty to forty meshes for sockeyes, for spring and cohoes we use deeper.

Q. The fish swim deeper?—A. Yes; they swim deeper.

Q. Do you think you keep many fish out by putting your nets at the mouth of the river, do you frighten them off?—A. No, sir; the fish have every opportunity to get up.

Q. Do you think that fish finding net after net in their way would go away?—A. Well, no; anyway that is not what they find at the mouth of the Fraser, there is plenty of room for them to pass up. Some years ago a boat coming from China struck a lot of fish 300 miles away which it was supposed had been stopped going into the Columbia River, but there the nets are ever so much thicker, you could walk from cork-line to cork-line.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. This you say is at the mouth of the Columbia?—A. Yes, sir; others here could tell you the same and it is quite likely they would stop the fish to a very great extent. It is often supposed that the fish after trying vainly to get in, get disgusted and go away, and are thus deflected from their proper river.

Q. Yes; it must have a bad effect in that way. Well, have you anything further to say?—A. No, sir; I don't think I have anything further.

THOMAS SHEAVES, a native of Newfoundland, a fisherman, and resident of New Westminster for five years, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, sir, have you any statement to present to us?—A. I have been fishing for three years on this river; about eight months in each year.

Q. Had you a license?—A. No, sir.

Q. Why?—A. Well, older fishermen were given the first chance.

Q. And you fished for other people?—A. Yes.

Q. On shares?—A. Yes; in the spring of the year.

Q. What other way did you fish?—A. Well, I bought my own net and fished on shares for the license.

Q. What was the license fee?—A. \$5.

Q. You have been fishing for the canneries?—A. Yes, last year. I made an agreement, but I had my own boat.

Q. The person you fished with had got a boat from the cannerymen?—A. No; he got a license direct from the office.

Q. You want to get a license yourself?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Well, would you not want some one to help you?—Yes, sir.

Q. Should there be a limitation on the number of licenses issued on the river?—A. No.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. If every fisherman had a license, would it not be necessary for them to hire a man to help them?—A. Yes; but not necessary that that help should be a fisherman—any one can pull a boat.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. What about the licenses for the canneries?—A. I think they should be limited.

Q. Could you say what number would be necessary for an ordinary cannery?—A. I could not say.

Q. Well, what do you think about the disposal of this offal in the river, do you think it injurious?—A. Well, I have been drinking water here for eight years and have felt no injury. I do not think it injurious either to fish or man.

Q. Does it get in your net?—A. A very little.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. Where do you fish?—A. Near the mouth of the river.

Q. How about the Sunday close time—do you think that correct?—A. It suits me all right, and I think it correct as at present.

Q. Your principal complaint is, then, that you cannot get a license, though you applied for one?—A. Yes, sir; I think I should get one. I have nothing further to say.

JOHN STEVENS, a native of Greece, though now a British subject, a fisherman, and resident of New Westminster since 1882, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, sir, what is your special complaint?—A. I have had a license for six years past, but I want to see justice for the fishermen. The last three years the canneries have had control and fishermen have had no rights at all.

Q. How do you make that out?—A. Because few fishermen are enabled to dispose of fish, because the canners get all they want with their own licenses, and I think the canners should get a less number of licenses and the fishermen more.

Q. Well, but how does that affect you if you have a license?—A. Well, my friends have applied for licenses and could not get any, and I think they should be able to get them. The markets, freezers and salters have too many licenses and don't use them themselves. If I get a license I use my own boat and license, but these people are different, they let out their license and buy fish at just what figures they like. Mr. Port gave 3 cents a fish and then sold them to Mr. Ewen—he didn't freeze any fish at all.

Q. Have you any ideas as to the effects of the offal?—A. I think it has a bad effect upon the health of people. I don't think there is a man upon the river who drinks water that does not think it injurious.

Q. Do you think it is injurious to the passage of fish?—A. Well, I think in salt water it stops them from coming in, for if you throw a dead herring where herring are the herring will go away.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. What is the difference between fish that are dead or have died in great numbers and the offal that is thrown in, both are equally bad, are they not?—A. Well, the only thing I know is that the water is bad—my wife had typhoid fever last year.

Q. Had you a doctor attending here?—A. Yes; I had afterwards a doctor from Vancouver—you see at first there was no doctor near and it was four or five days before I got one from Vancouver.

Q. Did he give any opinion as to the cause of the fever?—A. Yes; he said drinking the water was the cause of it.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Where do you live?—A. I live on a scow.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Do many fishermen live on scows?—A. Yes; most of them live on scows on the river. There are about fifteen or twenty scows near Ladner's Landing—here there are twelve or fifteen.

Q. Do you not think that way of living is injurious to health?—A. I don't think so.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Well, I wonder you are not all dead—living in that way and drinking that water!

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. What do you think of the close season—the Sunday close time when fishing is prohibited?—A. I think it all right. I would rather commence on Monday morning than on Sunday night.

Q. But you see the canners say they want fish for Monday morning?—A. Yes; of course, that is the reason.

Q. Do you ever get offal in your net?—A. Yes; I have got heads and guts and tails in my net when fishing at Canoe Pass, but not when fishing in the main river. I have got sixty or a hundred heads in one net many times.

Q. Have you seen any dead fish floating down the river?—A. Well, it is very seldom—you see them sometimes.

Q. Have you seen sockeye red going out of the river?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. In what season was that?—A. In September.

Q. Have they done spawning then?—A. I have caught them with spawn in their bodies at that time.

Q. Did they look as if they were hurt?—A. No; just red.

Q. What about the white salmon, have you caught them?—A. I have caught quite a lot in the month of August.

Q. What is done with them?—A. Most fishermen salt them down or sell them to the Indians—we cannot do much of anything with them.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Are they not a better fish than the sockeye?—A. Yes; they are, but we can get no market to speak of for them.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Are any being caught now?—A. No, not now; they are not caught in the spring.

Q. When do you catch them?—A. Generally in August.

Q. Yes; well, I think, sir, we have gone over most of the questions on our list—have you anything further to say to us?—A. No, sir, nothing further.

The Commission adjourned at 10.30 p.m., to meet on Monday, 22nd February, 1892, at 10 a.m.

NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C., 22nd February, 1892.

Third Day's Session.

The Commission assembled in the Court-house at 10 a.m.

Present:—Mr. S. Wilmot, presiding; Mr. Sheriff Armstrong, (Mr. Higgins had left for Victoria the day previous) and Mr. C. F. Winter, secretary.

The Chairman called the Commission to order, and invited any person present desirous of giving evidence to come forward; whereupon

DAVID MELVILLE, a native of Scotland, a fisherman and resident of New Westminster for three years, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Have you anything to lay before the Commission or would you prefer that we should ask you questions?—A. Well, gentlemen, what I wanted to say was that I have been three or four years in the country and have tried three or four times to get a license but have never got one.

Q. What was the reason given you?—A. I was told I could not get one, the licenses were all given out, and that I was a new-comer.

Q. Do you know of any persons who have got licenses since you came to the country?—A. Yes, I know of parties who got licenses since I was refused and who came in at the same time I did.

Q. What are the names?—A. George Harkness is one—(after a pause) I know of no others.

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Q. He came into the country after you, did he?—A. No, at the same time, but he did not apply for a license until after I was refused.

Q. What year was that?—A. In '90. I applied in '89 and in '90, and in '91, and he got a license after I made application.

Q. Well, sir, what further have you to say?—A. There are lots of men about the canneries who have licenses but don't fish them—they work in the canneries.

Q. Who fishes under their licenses?—A. They hire them out and are paid 12 cents, and they pay 8 cents to the persons hiring them—that is for the fish they catch.

Q. Are you satisfied that a man who has a license and fishes it himself would get 20 cents for his fish?—A. Yes, he would.

Q. Or would two men fishing on shares—would they get 20 cents?—A. Yes, last year I got 20 cents. We got 20 in some places, at some places 15, and some places 12½—we got 20 cents from Ewen & Co., and 12½ from the syndicate, but I had to buy my license.

Q. What do you give for a license?—A. \$20.

Q. Then you were actually as well off as if you had a license of your own?—A. Yes, last year, but not the year before.

Q. Do you think it beneficial to fishermen and the canneries that licenses should be bartered and sold?—A. No, I think that the men who get the licenses should do the actual fishing, and be actual fishermen.

Q. Have you any other special complaint?—A. Yes, about the freezers, who get licenses but don't use them.

Q. What do they do with them?—A. They sell them to the canneries. Mr. Port had ten and he sold them to the canneries—he didn't fish them himself—he paid 3 cents while he was getting 12 cents for the fish.

Q. Did Mr. Port do any freezing last year?—A. Port is no freezer.

Q. What is his business, then?—A. He ships some fish fresh in the spring, and sells to the canners in the summer.

Q. Does this matter you refer to about not freezing fish refer to last year?—A. He froze fish the year before last, but he threw them away.

Q. Why did he do that?—A. They were not properly frozen.

Q. How many were thrown away?—A. Some 500 or 600.

Q. Were they all, too, fish that had been caught that season?—A. Yes, they were sockeye salmon.

Q. With your knowledge of the freezing business, how many boats with ordinary fishermen do you think it would take to supply that freezer?—A. The way they use them two boats would be too many, one boat would be enough.

Q. To supply a freezer of the magnitude of Mr. Port's?—A. Well, a boat will catch say 500 salmon.

Q. But the freezer's capacity might be 5,000?—A. Yes, but he has no freezer at all.

Q. Have you any other special remarks to make?—A. Well, there are some Japanese who have got licenses.

Q. In what year?—A. In '89, I think.

Q. Any since?—A. No, not to my knowledge.

Q. Was this after you applied for license?—A. No, they got them the same year.

Q. Do you know these Japanese—had they worked in a cannery for a long time?—A. I don't know.

Q. Then it is a custom is it, which prevails considerably that people get licenses from the Government officer, but do not use them and sell them to others for profit?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. And some are not fishermen at all?—A. Not at all.

Q. Now, as regards the offal, what do you think of its effects from going into the river?—A. I think it has a bad effect on other rivers.

Q. Do you know that the offal all goes into the river?—A. Yes, it all goes into the river.

Q. What effect do you think that has as regards fish?—A. I think it must have a bad effect on the fish.

Q. And what effect has it on the human family?—A. It must be as bad for man as for the fish.

Q. Do you know of any cases of sickness resulting from drinking the river water?—A. Yes, I do know of some.

Q. What disease did the parties have, do you know?—A. Yes; typhoid fever.

Q. The persons having this fever—were they immediate residents?—A. Yes, they were fishing at the mouth of the river.

Q. Were there more than one case?—A. I know of one—he is a partner of mine.

Q. Did he recover?—A. Yes.

Q. Do you know of any others?—A. No, I have heard of others, but I don't know.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. How do you know that drinking the water was the cause?—A. Well, it got the blame of it anyway.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Is there an impression amongst the fishermen that the water causes sickness?—A. Yes, that is the impression.

Q. Do you know of this offal being used in any way upon the soil—as manure or guano?—A. It is used for oil down the river.

Q. How far down the river?—A. About nine miles down.

Q. How do they get the offal?—A. It is taken there in scows.

Q. Is it an expensive method, do you think?—A. No; I think not. The scow is shoved under the cannery, the offal falls in and then the steamer takes it away.

Q. Is this done largely or generally, do you know?—A. Well, an addition to the factory was made last year, and they are going to build another.

Q. Then the business is improving?—A. Yes.

Q. Would that factory consume all the offal?—A. It would take but two canneries to supply the present factory now.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Two to supply it all the time?—A. Well, I don't know that it would—two would supply it in the sockeye run.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. How many scows were there employed in taking the offal from the canneries to the factory?—A. Six scows.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. How many barrels of oil were made last summer, can you tell us?—A. No; I don't know that.

Q. Do you know what disposition they made of the offal from the oil factory?—A. No; I don't know. I never saw them throw it in the river.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Do you ever use it on the land?—A. No.

Q. How many men are there engaged in this oil factory?—A. Three.

Q. And how many men are there engaged on the scows?—A. There are two men on the steam-boat; they will manage the scows too.

Q. Are these scows and steam-boats kept occupied all day doing this work?—A. No; just a short time each day.

Q. What distance was the farthest away cannery from the oil factory?—A. About one and a half to two miles.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Who empties the scows at the factory?—A. The factory men do that.

Marine and Fisheries.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. What class of men are these that are engaged on the scoops?—A. Well, it is a Frenchman that has the factory down there, and he employs French labour.

Q. Have you any idea as to their wages?—A. No; but I think they get about the same as what fishermen make.

Q. What do the fishermen make?—A. Boatmen get \$2 a day; netters get \$2.25.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Are there many white men employed in fishing?—A. Oh, about 100 or 200 altogether.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Then the business you seek is to get a license and then hire a man to help you, is that it?—A. Yes.

Q. Do the canneries employ many white men?—A. No; they get Siwash and Kootchie; inside it is squaws and Chinamen; only about five or six would be white men out of about 100 altogether. The most I have seen in a cannery is 120 or 130; I was one year in a cannery.

Q. How many white men do you say out of this number?—A. Six; all the rest are Chinamen and Kootchie.

Q. Have you any idea of the daily pay of a squaw or "Kootchie," as you call them out there?—A. About \$1 a day.

Q. And what do the Chinamen get?—A. Well, some are hired by contract; you see a boss Chinamen takes a contract to put the fish up in the cans, and he employs others; they get about 48 cents a case, or about 1 cent a can.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. What labour does this include?—A. Everything; they make the cans, clean the fish, put them in the tins, put on the labels, and in fact do nearly all the inside work connected with the fish.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Do the Chinamen do the more important work with the retorts?—A. No; a white man does that.

Q. The boss Chinaman does not furnish the labels, does he?—A. No.

Q. Nor he does not furnish the boxes?—A. No; but he puts them into the boxes ready to go away.

Q. What do you consider the average weight of the sockeye running in the river?—A. From six to eight pounds; seven would, I think, be a good average.

Q. Have you seen the process of cutting up the fish in the canneries?—A. Yes.

Q. Are the heads and tails cut off?—A. Yes.

Q. How many cans would a seven pound fish make?—A. About five.

Q. Then the rest would be offal?—A. Yes.

Q. During the season of a big run of fish will they make more cans to the fish or less?—A. They will make less; they then take more off the head and tail.

Q. When fish are scarcer they will make more cans and less offal then?—A. Yes.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. I think you said the canneries ought to have a certain number of licenses each?—A. Yes.

Q. A small number?—A. Yes; about four or five each.

Q. You think every *bonâ fide* fisherman who applies should get a license?—A. Yes, if he does not hire it out—he should fish himself.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Would you give licenses to all?—A. Yes; all British subjects and residents of the country.

Q. Have you any knowledge of the effects of saw-dust in a river?—A. No; I don't see much of it—I don't know much about that.

Q. There are quite a number of extensive mills near here, are there not?—A. Yes, but they have burners; they don't throw their saw-dust into the river.

Q. But are there any small rivers running into the Fraser on which saw-mills are?—A. I don't know.

Q. Then altogether you think the canners should get four or five licenses and every British subject and fisherman should get one?—Yes.

Q. What do you think about the close season for the preservation of fish?—A. I think fishing could be done up to Saturday at noon, but Sunday should be kept as a day of rest for the fishermen: we could start at 12 o'clock midnight.

Q. What about an annual close season—were you a fisherman in Scotland?—A. I was.

Q. Did you fish there on Sunday?—A. No; not at all.

Q. There are no canning establishments there though?—A. No.

Q. Well, what do you think of an annual close season?—A. I think the fish are all up by the time fishing is done here.

Q. Do you think the fish are all up in October?—A. Yes.

Q. What is it they are fishing for then?—A. For cohoes, but we don't count them.

Q. Have you seen many dead salmon floating down the river?—A. Not many—I have seen some.

Q. What kind were they?—A. I have never seen spring salmon—I have seen sockeyes but not in very great numbers.

Q. Have you ever seen any going down from the beds?—A. Oh, I have seen one or two, but not in great numbers.

Q. Have you seen any going down with spawn in them?—A. I have seen them in August with spawn.

Q. Do you think they all die after spawning?—A. No; I have caught them at the mouth of the river after they have spawned.

Q. What state were they in then?—A. Lean, weak, emaciated fish.

Q. It is the same elsewhere. Take places in Scotland and you will see the same thing after the spawning season?—A. Yes; lots die on the spawning beds in England. I have seen hundreds going down in the spring of the year afterwards.

Q. I am asking these questions because the opinion prevails in this province that fish all die, and my object is to endeavour to find out if this is correct, because I consider it quite contrary to nature. Do you know anything about young fish, parrs and smolts?—A. I never heard of them here—I have in the old country.

Q. What is a parr?—A. A young salmon.

Q. And a smolt and grilse?—A. Still larger salmon.

Q. Have you ever seen any parrs, smolts, or grilse coming down this river?—A. Well, the sockeye is the same as the grilse in the old country.

Q. What as—in size and weight?—A. Yes; in everything.

Q. Then grilse in Scotland weigh from six to seven pounds?—A. Yes; you get them up to ten pounds. They are young salmon and the first may be coming up to spawn—the next year they are salmon.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Then the sockeye you think is the same species of salmon?—A. Yes; they look the same salmon. I don't think there is any difference between spring and sockeye salmon, except one is larger than the other.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. And you think the sockeye the grilse or young of the larger salmon?—A. Well, it looks like it.

Q. Have you ever heard in Scotland that the grilse are finer fish than the full-grown salmon of the same species?—A. I have not heard that—the meat is the same.

Q. If a three pound grilse what would it be?—A. Well, it would not have reached maturity.

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Q. How do you distinguish parrs from smolts?—A. By the spots on the body.

Q. And when bars cross the body transversely, what do you call it then?—A. It is salmon then, or rather a parr.

Q. Have you ever seen these grilse here?—A. No, sir.

Q. Are smolts found in Scotland at the mouths of rivers?—A. Yes; they work down river and stay in the estuary awhile and then go to sea.

Q. Do you think this would apply to this country if it was looked into?—A. Yes; it might.

Q. And if small-meshed seines were used at the mouths of rivers these fish would be caught and it would be very destructive, would it not?—A. Yes, of course, if too many fish were killed.

Q. Then you have a sort of idea that the sockeye might be as the grilse is towards the larger salmon?—A. Well, it looks like that—it resembles the salmon anyway.

Q. Can you discern the male from the female in catching sockeye, before cleaning them?—A. Yes; you can tell by the heads.

Q. The male's is more elongated?—A. Yes.

Q. Have you ever seen any some distance up river when far advanced in spawning?—A. No; but they have a big hook on the nose which they have not when they come in first.

Q. And this hook; on which fish is it?—A. On the male.

Q. Is the hook on when he is in?—A. No.

Q. Is there any remarkable difference takes place in the female from the time she comes in until she has spawned?—A. No; there is no change.

Q. In regard to the spring salmon, do the same appearances show on them?—A. In the fall of the year the male has a large hook on his jaw.

Q. Is it the same in Scotland?—A. Yes; it is the same all over.

Q. There is an identity between the salmon in both Scotland and the Fraser?—A. Yes.

Q. There is another fish here, the steel-head, what are they?—A. Well, we have some in Scotland—they are called bull trout—they are in the Tay and Tweed.

Q. What distinguishing marks are there between the trout and the salmon in Scotland?—A. Well, they have straight tail, straight up and down—the salmon is forked in the tail—the head is larger here in the steel-head.

Q. Do bull trout in Scotland grow as large as salmon, and do steel-heads grow as large as salmon here?—A. About the same.

Q. Then there is a great identity between the steel-head and the bull trout of Scotland?—A. Yes.

Q. Well, I must say sir, with very much pleasure, that your views as regards fish and fish-life are identical with those of the most learned persons everywhere on the subject. Now, with regard to the next run of fish after the sockeyes, you have what are called humpbacks; what do you think of them?—A. Well, I don't know, I never saw them before.

Q. Why are they called "humpbacks"?—A. Because there is a hump on the male's back.

Q. Is this hump seen on him at sea, as well as in the rivers?—A. Yes; I have caught them so.

Q. Well, you must remember that Atlantic and Scottish salmon come in without a hook on their snouts and that they afterwards get them—do you not think it possible that the humpback at sea may not have the hump on him, but when in the river it grows upon him and distinguishes the male from the female?—A. Well, it might, but I cannot say about that.

Q. What about the cohoes—they come later again, don't they?—A. Yes, sir; they are spotted something similar to spring salmon, and are a good eating fish when red meat and fit for canning.

Q. Is it canned?—A. No; it is not needed because they get plenty of sockeyes—but if the sockeyes are scarce they would can them.

Q. If cohoes or humpbacks are caught in the nets for catching sockeyes, what is done with them?—A. The cohoes are canned, but the humpbacks are given away to the Siwash.

Q. Then the spring salmon which are first caught are all alike in colour of meat, are they?—A. Well, no; not altogether—some are white but not many.

Q. Are there more white than red in the after part of the season?—A. Yes.

Q. Are these white and red salmon distinguished by any marks that you can tell them by when taking them from the net?—A. No; you must cut them open before you know.

Q. Are numbers of white salmon thrown away?—A. Yes; some are thrown away, some are salted.

Q. Are they as good fish to eat as the red?—A. I don't think so.

Q. Where do you fish—at the mouth of the river or the upper part?—A. In the sockeye season I go down to the mouth of the river.

Q. About Gurry Bush?—A. Yes; and away outside.

Q. How far outside?—A. Sometimes out to the lighthouse.

Q. About four miles out?—A. Yes.

Q. How wide is it across the river from Gurry Bush?—A. About three-quarters of a mile.

Q. At what tide?—A. At low water.

Q. Does it get wider farther out?—A. Yes; but about a quarter of a mile out the water gets narrower.

Q. It is better fishing from Gurry Bush out?—A. Oh well, all about there is about the same.

Q. Are the fish congregated in the pass beyond Gurry Bush?—A. Yes; at low water.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. You say you go out four miles?—A. Yes.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. What is the object in going out there?—A. Well, because the fish are easier caught there.

Q. Would it not be as beneficial if the fish were allowed to come up?—A. Well, it would be, but you have to go out to get clear of the other fishermen.

Q. What mesh do you use from Gurry Bush out?—A. Forty and thirty meshes deep.

Q. And in the river farther up?—A. Fifty and sixty meshes—the water is deeper inside.

Q. With a thirty mesh net when being swept to get fish, will the lead lines nearly touch bottom?—A. Yes; they very nearly touch the bottom.

Q. Then when fish are coming along, with 150 fathoms of net in length and thirty meshes deep, it would sweep all along both top and bottom?—A. Yes; but there is lots of room for the fish to get in for all that.

Q. But would not there be lots of other boats and would not the nets almost form a fence across?—A. Yes; virtually they would.

Q. In your experience and with your knowledge of netting, do you find the fish strike the upper or the lower parts of the net?—A. Oh, they strike it everywhere. The most are caught about the centre.

Q. Then if a net was twenty meshes instead of thirty, more fish would escape, would they not?—A. Yes; for there would be no net to hold them—certainly more would escape, but when a fisherman is fishing he wants to catch fish.

MR. ARMSTRONG here showed witness a map of the mouth of the river and channel and asked him if the channel was filled up with nets?—A. No.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. How many boats have you seen at one time fishing out beyond Gurry Bush towards the lighthouse?—A. Oh, about 300.

Q. The fishermen go there in preference because the fish are easier taken is that it?—A. Well, no; we go there to get clear of one another.

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Q. But is it not because you would catch more fish there than you would up the river?—A. I never fished up the river.

Q. What number of fish is your average catch a day?—A. About 900 in a big run. The average would be about 400 or 500, speaking generally.

Q. What would be your gross catch in a season?—A. I have caught 12,000.

Q. What do you get each for them?—A. Six cents; the owner of the boat gets four—ten cents in all for each salmon.

Q. What was the marketable value of the fish?—A. Ten cents. Cannery have paid twenty—they paid twenty last year.

Q. Do you think the great number of nets at the mouth of the river would have the tendency to prevent fish from making their regular migration up river?—A. If you catch them there they cannot go on up the river, that is certain.

Q. Do you think a lot of boats and nets at the mouth of a river would turn fish away?—A. No, sir; nothing would prevent the salmon from going up when he comes for that purpose, except the catching of them.

Q. Do you ever get offal in your net down there?—A. Yes; heads and tails—sometimes lots of them.

Q. What condition would they be in—would they have a nice flavour? (Laughter.)—A. (Laughing) Yes; some of them were so.

Q. Do you get offal in considerable quantities?—A. Sometimes lots, and sometimes we don't get any.

Q. Is offal injurious to a net for taking fish?—A. I don't know.

Q. In Scottish rivers is not slime and refuse matter injurious?—A. Slime is, but no offal goes into the rivers there.

Q. Is not there slime here in the rivers?—A. Yes.

Q. Then slime and offal combined should be bad for the nets, should it not?—A. Yes; but the water is colder here.

Q. Do you paint your nets or colour them in any way?—A. We bark them here; they are mostly tarred in Scotland.

Q. And what twine do you use?—A. Oh, 8-10, about the same as in Scotland.

Q. Then the salmon net is the same as in Scotland as far as the twine is concerned?—A. Yes.

Q. And what mesh do you use?—A. Six inch mesh.

Q. And what in Scotland?—A. Three and a half for seine and six for drift net—extension measure.

Q. You state that you have caught salmon that have been spawned out?—A. Yes; I caught them down the river.

Q. Are you sure they were spawned before you caught them?—A. Yes.

Q. When?—In August, in the latter part.

Q. You are quite sure they had spawned?—A. Yes; quite sure.

That will do. I may state to you, sir, that though your views may differ with those of many fishermen here, still they agree with the views of the best authorities generally as to the habits, &c., of salmon.

Mr. Peter Burrill here rose in the audience, and addressing the Chair, accused Mr. Wilmot with putting questions to witnesses in such a way as to elicit certain answers, and protested against the continuance of such a practice. He was called to order by the Chairman, who also directed the secretary to erase from his note-book the remarks made by Mr. Burrill as they were offensive.

The Commission adjourned at 11.50 a.m., to meet in the Court-house, New Westminster, at 1 p.m.

Afternoon Session.

22nd February, 1892.

The Commission assembled at the Court-house, New Westminster, at 2 p.m. and proceeded to business.

Present :—Mr. S. Wilmot, in the chair ; Mr. Sheriff Armstrong, Mr. C. F. Winter, secretary.

Dr. H. M. COOPER, of New Westminster, a medical practitioner and resident of New Westminster for nine years, stated his desire to give evidence, and was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Well, sir, we are prepared to hear your statement?—A. I wish to give some evidence regarding the effects of this offal in the river. I have been requested by parties interested to come and give evidence in this regard. The offal, I think, does not, when thrown into running water or cold water, have any effect upon the health of the community along the river or watercourses, and it is by no means the cause of the serious fevers which are along there, for they come from another source altogether and not from decaying animal matter, but from the upper surface of the soil and subsoil of the country—vegetable decomposition. Even the excreta from towns where there are diseases is purified almost as soon as it reaches the river, that is a flowing river. That is according to all the latest investigators on the subject. The German investigation on the subject found that what they called the pathyogenic (!), germs that is the origins of disease, when put into river water soon lost their power and disappeared, and they also investigated in regard to the typhoid bacillus and the *cojus vibrio* (!)—animal matter—and found that although they were capable of development in sterile water, they could be kept in that for some time, but disappeared rapidly on being put into river water.

Q. This is from other authorities, not your own, doctor?—A. Yes, from Cross—"German Commission for Investigation," and is this: "It thus appears that the bacteria of water alone, that is what belongs to all water, have certain power of their own, and that they will destroy outside organisms in running water in a given time."

Q. That is, that water has a tendency to cleanse itself?—Yes ; of anything that may be brought into it—that is the function of running water. I know this for a fact from my own experience. Now take the Susquehanna River—we found in Plymouth and Kingston and places where the water was kept in reservoirs, the people had fever, while in towns where the people took the water from the running river they had no fever.

Q. But would the pollution resulting from excreta be more injurious than that from offal?—A. Oh, yes ; for instance, take meat—it may be eaten in a partially decaying state and yet not produce disease. Taking animal matter in itself does not produce disease. People eat maggots in cheese, and then many English people leave their game until it is almost bitter before it is eaten.

Q. But would you, as a medical man, recommend that?—A. No.

Q. Would you advise it?—A. No ; but it is a matter of taste.

Q. Is not meat more healthy when sound than when decomposed?—A. Yes, and fish is better.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Meat decomposed—is it not poisonous?—A. No ; there may be poisons in the meat, but the mere fact of decomposition does not make it poisonous.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. But does not its decomposing state draw to it such atmospheric parts as would create poisonous matter?—A. Perhaps in the first stages of decomposition. There are persons whom the finest lamb will poison almost dead.

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Q. Small things are compared with large, *vice versa* large with small. A body of water with decomposing matter put in—would it be as healthy for man or beast?—A. If a running stream it would not be affected. If in cold running water it would not be affected.

Q. But any animal inhaling that water, or fish, inhales more or less putrid or decomposing matter, vegetable or animal—now would it not be affected?—A. I do not think that animals are affected in that way with it, because you will find them around among the worst decomposition that we can have; people who work among it have no more diseases than other people—butchers are as a rule, a healthy class, and they have no more sickness than people living in the cleanest habitations. Then you will find that scavengers in the big cities are around among filth and yet seem to be very healthy.

Q. Then our sanitary needs are no use?—A. Many of them are not.

Q. But if the air is contaminated it must be more or less injurious?—A. Yes, the air; but decomposing matter in itself is not injurious or deleterious to health—as a matter of fact vegetable life lives upon it.

Q. Is it not a fact that the higher orders of fish frequent the more pure and limpid water?—A. Oh, yes.

Q. Salmon frequent pure and limpid water?—A. Yes; they do not frequent any stagnant or impure water.

Q. Then as salmon are a fish whose habits prompt it to always enter more pure or limpid water than those waters that are contaminated, it must be more or less injurious?—A. Yes; if there are any poisonous or deleterious matters in there decomposing.

Q. But if any extraneous matters are thrown in, would it not affect them?—A. Well, it would be food for them.

Q. For the higher orders or the lower?—A. Oh, for the lower.

Q. But if anything is put in this pure and limpid water, would it not affect the quality of the water? If even slightly injurious to fish must it not be injurious to the human family, who are of a still much higher order in the scale of life?—A. Well, we don't know in what way it would affect them.

Q. Then, sir, your conclusion from your own personal knowledge, whether the depositing of offal into the Fraser River in such immense quantities as it is—seven or eight million pounds per annum—do you think it injurious to animal life?—A. I don't think so.

Q. Do you think it beneficial?—A. No; but I think it less injurious than it would be under any other circumstances.

Q. Taking a standard would you put it on the side of being more injurious or more beneficial?—A. I don't think it has any effect in running water.

Q. But if the water is coming backwards and forwards, what then?—A. It is always in motion.

Q. But if lodgments are made along the shore what is the effect?—A. If in warm water, or in water that is standing, it might be injurious.

Q. A large portion of the river—in bays and sloughs—would be water of that description, would it not?—A. Well, I don't think it would be injurious to the surrounding country; but if the people have to drink it, then it might be injurious.

Q. Then if persons are compelled to drink the water it might be injurious?—A. Yes; in shallow water.

Q. In regard to the occupation of fishermen whose residences are principally on scows along shallow waters—in drinking that water, they would come in contact with what would be injurious, would they not?—A. Well, most of them have to be out on the stream, but I find that these men do not suffer as much as those on the land.

Q. Then the people on land suffer more than the fishermen, do they?—A. Yes; but it does not come from the water—it is from the soil and the subsoil.

Q. Have you anything further you desire to state?—A. No; nothing more than that I was asked to give my opinion as to whether this offal going in the river was deleterious or not.

Q. Very well; have you any knowledge of the Ontario Department of Agriculture—would you think them a good authority? A good authority in connection with an opinion as to the effects of this offal?—A. Not unless they had a scientific investigation.

Q. But if the Department of Agriculture has certain medical men would not that make their authority good?—A. Yes; I think so.

Q. Have you read an article in the "Colonist" of last Saturday regarding fish and offal?—A. No; I don't think I have.

Q. I will just read portions of it to you. Have you ever heard of Professor James?—A. Yes; I have heard of him.

Q. Well, he was detailed to analyse certain portions of good salmon and herrings, as well as the offal from these fish—all from the province of British Columbia. These samples were sent to him and he seems to have devoted much time and attention to the matter as he gives a long and apparently careful analysis of them. I will just read his conclusions:—

"Conclusion: From the consideration of the whole question, I am of the opinion that the manufacture of the refuse into a fertilizer, is strongly to be recommended, because:

1st. It will thus utilize a by-product that otherwise is a total loss.

2nd. It will prevent the water from becoming contaminated.

3rd. Its proper management must tend towards a more healthful surrounding.

4th. Its return to the soils of the farm will partly offset the waste of our cities by sewerage carried to the lakes and rivers.

5th. If properly handled it will pay well.

From the great importance of this question to the health of the community, the welfare of the fishing industry, and the progress of agriculture, I have endeavoured to reply at this length."

Are these sound conclusions from a scientific man?—A. No, sir; the scientific men of France used theirs as fertilizers—they tried it—but their last instructions were to take it to the sea, for if left on the land the decomposing matters and substances go into the soil. I think where people make a mistake is that it will make a good fertilizer, because on land like we have here the innocent part will be left on the land, but the drainage, &c., will take the more dangerous parts away and carry it down to the rivers.

Q. But if utilized by being manufactured into something, would it not prevent waters from being contaminated into which it would otherwise be put?—A. Well, that would depend upon the conditions of sewage, &c., for I consider it would be far more injurious if left on the land than put in the water.

Q. But would it not tend to a more healthful surrounding, if utilized?—A. Well, perhaps it would; but I know in France they have ordered that it should not be so utilized. I don't think it would have any effect on the health of the community, no matter how much offal was thrown in. As to agriculture and fertilizers, I think the experience in France is a good guide.

Q. Do you belong to the Board of Health of New Westminster?—A. No, sir.

Q. Do you know that the Board of Health has petitioned about this?—A. Yes; but we also have other things that have been petitioned against.

Q. Are they a good authority?—A. Well, yes; they ought to be.

Q. Would not a Crofter immigration be useful to this country?—A. Yes; I think so.

Q. Well, I see that inducements have been offered for Crofters to come to this country, and one of the inducements is that they can catch plenty of fish, and a company is being formed to utilize the offal. In this connection, if you will permit, I will just read you a short extract from an article in the *Victoria Daily Times*, of the 21st February, 1892. The article touches upon the whole subject of the Crofter immigration scheme, and after explaining that the fish caught will be shipped in the cold storage system, &c., it goes on to say:—

"In addition to this it is understood the company will be prepared to cure fish by a variety of processes, extract fish oils, and manufacture fertilizers, &c., from the offal. So that all kinds of fish procurable will be utilized and there shall be no waste. The reader will at once perceive how these two branches of the scheme will work into each other, and the whole tend to the development of the deep-sea fisheries of the province, thus establishing a new industry, the possibilities of which are as boundless as 'our great sea farm.'"—A. I don't object to that at all.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. Well, with the above, and the Government stating that the offal of fish is unhealthy and hurts the water, it surely shows a tendency to prevent its going into the water?—A. There are a number of inducements held out in that way and it might induce parties to make money out of it, but what I am contending is that animal matter put in a river is not injurious, but if put on the soil then it becomes injurious, and when the water sinks down on our soil there is typhoid fever there, but when it rises such all goes away again.

Q. Then you do not agree with the views put forth by Professor James, nor with the Provincial authorities on the matter of the Crofters?—A. No; I think there are several remarks made there for the interest of parties and made to suit them. I will just read you a few extracts from "Keating, on the history of diseases." Dr. Cooper then read several extracts from "Keating's History of Diseases," vol. I., p. 444, relative to the origin of typhoid fever, the transmission of the typhus bacillus, &c.

Q. Have you formed your views, Dr. Cooper, from those books or from your own personal experience and knowledge?—A. Oh, from my own personal knowledge; I only used these books to show what they think in other countries.

Q. Then you disagree with the authorities of the whole civilized world who are trying to keep the rivers pure? Have you any further evidence you wish to give?—A. No; I simply wished to say that I believe no diseases come from offal in rivers; however, I would say that there is one thing that will prevent fish going up a river and that is saw-dust; that will prevent them from going up right enough.

Q. You are aware that saw-dust is thrown into the river and that it is injurious?—A. It is thrown in the inlet and on the sound, and I am sure it hurts the fish; I think the fish dislike contact with it.

Q. And if it settles on the bottom it will prevent vegetable growth, will it not?—A. Yes.

Q. And you think it injurious?—A. I am positive of that.

Q. Well, sir, is there anything further you would wish to urge?—A. No; I think I have stated what I wished to, namely, that I do not consider that the throwing of the offal into the river is injurious to health.

Mr. WILMOT.—Very well, sir, that will do.

EDWARD BONFIELD, a native of Ontario, and resident of New Westminster for five years, and a fisherman, was duly sworn. He had also been a fisherman on Lake Erie, in Ontario.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, sir, what do you wish to state in connection with the Fraser River fisheries, or any of the other fisheries of British Columbia?—Well, I came here on the recommendation of an immigration agent, and through the circulation of pamphlets stating that fishermen were in great demand in this province. When I came here I found they were not at all in demand, in fact there was no demand. When I tried at the canneries for employment they told me they employed Siwashas. The next year there was a limit put upon the number of licenses. I applied for a license but could not get one. When I went to a cannery for a boat and net I was told again, "We intend to employ Siwashas this year and work at different schemes; we intend to put a double shift on and work day and night; we will employ men by day's work this year." The year before they had put most of the boats on a certain percentage of fish in payment. I managed to get employed by getting in that fall on an outside license. We were given to understand when these licenses were given out to individual fishermen that it was a sort of recompense for the rest of the licenses being given to the canners.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Tell what you know yourself; we don't want what you understand.—A. Well, we read in the papers about it. The following year after that I applied for a license again. This is the fourth year I have applied, but so far have been unsuccessful.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Have other persons who applied after you got licenses?—A. They have.

Q. Do you know why?—A. Well, either they got them through influence or friends.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—There you go again—you don't know that, you "think."

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Did any of these people tell you why? Why they got their licenses in preference to you?—A. No.

Q. You have been a fisherman, you say?—A. I have.

Q. How do you work?—A. Here I have been employed by the day, on shares, and in different ways.

Q. A share as a fishing boat was what?—A. One-half.

Q. If you had a license of your own would you have double?—A. No; I would have to give another man one-half.

Q. What value do you get for fish—what per share?—A. We get 5 cents each.

Q. Who owned the license?—A. My partner owned the license; he was one of those that applied since.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Do you think the canneries should have a certain number of licenses each?—A. Not an excessive number—they have too much of a monopoly of the business now. I don't see why they should have any.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Why not?—A. Because they can buy of the fishermen at reasonable rates.

Q. You say they have a monopoly now—suppose the canners had no licenses granted to them, could not the fishermen form a monopoly against the canners?—A. No; they have no other market for their fish—they are obliged to sell to the canneries.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Do you think every fisherman who applied should get a license?—A. No; I think that would be detrimental to the best interests of the river.

Q. How many do you think should be issued?—A. Well, the present number is very good—it is about as many as can be accommodated on the river without the fishermen getting in each other's way.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Then you think five or six hundred quite ample for the capacity of the Fraser River?—A. Yes.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. How many qualified white fishermen are there on the river?—A. That I am unable to say.

Q. Do you think there are enough fishermen on the river now to do all the work necessary?—A. I don't think so at present.

Q. Then how would the canneries be supplied if they got no licenses?—A. There are Indians and others; but if the white men could not do the work for the canneries, the balance of the licenses might go to the canners.

Q. Then you think, if licenses were given to all individual fishermen, the canneries would get abundance of fish for their canneries?—A. I think so.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. And should it include all British subjects?—A. Yes; all British subjects who want them.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. What is your experience or views with regard to the offal being thrown into the river?—A. I think it injurious in a way.

Q. In what way?—A. It floats down and injures the nets—in some localities it is very nasty for the people on some of the sloughs. It is injurious in all other parts where I have been. I remember at Port Ryerse—a large fishery was carried on at Long Point and the offal was scattered over the land, with the result that an epidemic became prevalent and popular opinion placed it on the offal being thrown on the land as the real cause.

Q. Have you found the water offensive for use?—A. Well, not in the river—not to the taste.

Q. What other injury, then?—A. In washing up on the shore and lying on the land, especially in the sloughs.

Q. What do you think of the close season?—A. I think the close season as at present is of no use; it is principally for the sockeye salmon that it is carried out.

Q. I mean the Sunday close season?—A. Oh, I think that very beneficial to both fishermen and canners, as it gives them rest and allows them to clean up for Monday.

Q. What as to the fish?—A. It lets them get up and is beneficial.

Q. What as to an annual close season?—A. It is of very little use, in my opinion.

Q. Are the runs of fish in this river regular every year?—No, they are not, though they are more regular the last few years than they used to be.

Q. And do the runs seem better of late years?—A. Yes, they seem to be.

Q. Can you give any reason for that and the greater regularity of the runs?—A. Well, there may be some natural cause—for instance, high water comes up soon some years.

Q. Do you think there has been any artificial cause—do you think the hatchery has been any benefit?—A. Yes; it has been beneficial in other places, why not here?

Q. And do you think that more hatcheries should be started?—A. Yes; I think it would be better to have more.

Q. Where do you fish in the river?—A. Oh, I fish in all parts.

Q. Where do you get the best luck?—A. Well, from the Gurry Bush out is the best fishing place. The mouth of the river has generally been used because it allows better scope for the fishermen's boats.

Q. Then do you think 500 boats enough to sustain the fishery?—A. Yes; I think so. If there were any more they would be crowding each other.

Q. How many boats have you seen out beyond Gurry Bush?—A. Oh, from two to three hundred.

Q. Do you call the mouth of the river from Gurry Bush down to Pelly Point?—A. Well, I call the mouth of the river outside of Gurry Point, including the sand flats. There are several channels and some are accounted very good.

Q. What effect would it have on the river above Gurry Point up to New Westminster if fishing were not so largely carried on outside of Gurry Point?—A. I don't think it would make much difference.

Q. Don't you think more fish would come in?—A. Well, more might come in, but the boats would be so crowded they would be in each other's way.

Q. But if more fish come in would it not be beneficial? Would it not be beneficial to the river?—A. Well, yes, of course.

Q. What size of net do you use—that is, how deep?—A. Thirty, forty and fifty meshes.

Q. How many fish a day do you catch as a rule—say, during the last three years?—A. Oh, four or five hundred would be about the average.

Q. About how long do the sockeyes run?—A. About six weeks.

Q. Then you catch about twelve or thirteen thousand in a season?—A. No; I never caught as many as that. I never caught more than seven, eight, or ten thousand in a whole season. There is one thing I would like to say, and that is, that I believe it would be a very good thing if fishermen were allowed to catch sea trout.

Q. Are they not allowed to catch them now—I don't think trout fishing is forbidden by the law on the subject?—A. Well, I never could get any information about it.

Mr. WILMOT—(referring to the Fishery Regulations for British Columbia).—Well, here are the regulations regarding trout fishing—I will read you what it says:—

"Section 2. Trout Fisheries. —No one shall fish for, catch or kill trout from the 15th October to 15th March, both days inclusive, in each year: provided always that Indians may, at any time, catch or kill trout for their own use, but not for the purpose of sale or traffic."

This would, however, I presume, be subject to the first section of the regulations for the province, for the capture of these fish, for section one says:—

"Fishing by means of nets or other apparatus, without leases or licenses from the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, is prohibited in all waters of British Columbia."

—A. But I mean sea trout. They have the same habits as salmon.

Q. Well, but these sea trout, as you call them, are like the young salmon—only that the one remains in salt water while the other is in fresh water. Fishing is prohibited from the 15th October to the 15th March. Well, sir, is there anything further you desire to state?—A. No, sir, I think not.

MURDOCH McLAUCHLIN, a native of Scotland, a fisherman, and resident of New Westminster for two years, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. I notice that a great many of you who come forward give in your occupation as fishermen, but will not that be only for a short time?—A. Well, if you have a license you can make it last all the year round. I have been a fisherman all my life and was a fisherman in Scotland before coming here.

Q. Have you anything to suggest upon the questions before this Commission?—A. Well, about these cannery licenses—the licenses that were granted last year to new canneries, but no fish were put up, while the licenses were used.

Q. Do you know the number of licenses that were used?—A. I don't know the number, but I know the canneries—Mr. Ewen's, Mr. Laidlaw's, Mr. Wadham's and Mr. English's, all new canneries last year, but they never canned a fish in any one of them—two of them I don't think have the smoke-stack on them yet since the sockeye run was over.

Q. These buildings—are they good, sound, substantial buildings?—A. No; I don't think so—they were put up in my estimation simply to get licenses. I have no doubt there would have been canning in Mr. Ewen's only that there was so many fish last year and he put all his up in his old cannery. Also, the people who hold licenses to salt and freeze, they sell their fish to the canneries in the sockeye season—they use their licenses in the spring fishing, but sell their fish to the canneries in the summer. We don't think this is fair at all, because to a man with ten licenses it is worth \$10,000 to lay aside in the house and do nothing else.

Q. Why do you not think it fair?—A. Because they get licenses and fishermen cannot get licenses—we came to this country purposely to fish—we are real, actual fishermen, and yet we find we cannot get leave to fish—we certainly think it very unfair.

Q. What induced you to come to this country?—A. Why there were pamphlets distributed all around our place at home stating that this was a great country for fishing, farming, &c.

Q. Have you tried farming?—A. No; that is not in my line—fishing is my line. I was brought up a fisherman.

Q. You have fished, though, here, have you?—A. Yes; for Mr. Ewen.

Q. Did he furnish you with boats and tackle?—A. Yes.

Q. What remuneration did you get per day or did you fish on shares?—A. We fished on shares.

Q. How much did you get?—A. Five cents. The syndicate only gave 12½, Wadham gave 15 and Mr. Ewen gave 20.

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Q. And you got five?—A. Yes; of course the other man in the boat got five, too.
Q. Then the price paid was 10 cents a fish?

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. And the other 10 cents went for the boat and net?—A. Yes.
Q. And do you think you could do better if you had a license—would you not have to get a boat and net?—A. Oh, that does not mean so much.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. How many fish did you catch?—A. 5,000.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. How long were you fishing?—A. From the 9th of July to the close of the season on the 25th August.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. Does the proprietor of the cannery board you?—A. No; we board ourselves.
Q. Have you formed any opinions as to the effects of this offal—the effects of throwing it in the river in such immense quantities?—A. Yes; I think it injures the fish and also the men fishing in the river.

Q. Why do you think it injures the fish?—A. Because the offal gets rotten and the water cannot be pure. If it was slow water I don't think the salmon would come into the river at all.

Q. What effect do you think it has upon man?—A. Well, I don't know.

Q. Have you ever been affected?—A. Yes; I have had diarrhoea through it.

Q. And you attributed it to the water?—A. Yes; because I never had anything at all the matter with me until the sockeye season, and then I had to boil the water before using it.

Q. Does the offal affect the nets?—A. Yes; it rots them to a certain extent.

Q. How does it rot them?—A. The slime and stuff gets on the nets and rots them and makes lots of labour for us in cleaning them.

Q. Does it affect the people living along the river who drink the water?—A. Well, I cannot say that—I only know about myself, though fever was prevalent all along.

Q. Does the offal lodge in the bays, sloughs, &c.?—A. Yes; and when the tide goes out the stench is frightful.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do you think the canneries ought to have any licenses?—A. No, I don't think so—canning fish is one industry, and catching them is another.

Q. Do you think every fisherman who applies should have a license?—A. Yes.

Q. Are there fishermen enough on the river to do all that is necessary?—A. Yes, quite enough—give the licenses to the fishermen and the canneries would be as well supplied as they are now—it would be more expensive though, I suppose, for the canners.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. In what way?—A. Well, the way they fish now they pay two Indians who fish all day and then two others take the boat and fish all night and one gets \$2.25 and the other \$2.50 in both shifts.

Q. Do you see many fish floating down the river dead?—A. Yes; a great many of them, principally sockeyes in the latter part of August.

Q. Are those fish that come down from the upper part of the river, or are they injured in the river?—A. I think they are fish that have been injured in the net. Many after getting in the net struggle and get out, but they are more or less injured.

Q. Do you think all fish that come up the river to spawn all die after spawning, or do they return to the sea?—A. Oh, they return to the sea.

Q. What evidence have you of that?—A. We have caught them down the river after they have spawned.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. What time in the year do you catch them ?—A. In the latter part of August.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. When do you knock off fishing ?—A. At the end of the sockeye season, the 25th August.

Q. Then you cannot say what quantity of fish that have been spent by spawning above—pass down the river ?—A. Well, the next month you see is closed—probably they all pass down in that month.

Q. Then you think it an error that all fish that come up die ?—A. Some die—many of them—but many return to the sea.

Q. You fish with the usual depth of net ?—A. Yes ; between 30 and 40 meshes outside the river and from 50 to 60 meshes inside.

Q. Is there any further matters you would like to represent to us ?—A. No, sir.

Mr. WILMOT.—Very well then—that will do, sir, thank you.

Mr. WILMOT.—I may mention, Mr. Armstrong and gentlemen, that it may be considered on the part of outsiders and on the part also of others here, that it is useless to ask the same questions from all parties that come before us ; but these are the matters at issue between the canners and the fishermen, and the department wishes to get all the information possible—that is the reason why I repeat the same questions so often to the different witnesses. It may be a matter that may cause parliamentary discussion and therefore the Government is anxious to get all the information possible. I speak in this way from my stand-point and view of the case, and I wish you will understand my reasons for doing this.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Oh, yes ; I quite understand—that's all right.

Mr. J. E. LORD, of New Westminster :

I would say that this discrimination in license fees bears very harshly on fishermen. Why should we on the Fraser River be called upon to pay \$20, while only \$5 is paid for a license on the Skeena and other rivers ?

Mr. WILMOT.—When we adjourn from here we will hear from the people on the Skeena, I hope, and they may tell you very good reasons for paying only \$5.

Mr. LORD.—But the tariff should be general ; does it cost more to control the fishermen on the Fraser River ?

Mr. WILMOT.—In my experience it does, sir.

Mr. LORD.—Well, I may call your attention to the fact that if trouble arose on the north-west coast it would take a man-of-war and hundreds of dollars, whereas you could manage things on the Fraser with a couple of policemen.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—I object, Mr. Chairman, to this man addressing you in this way, if he has nothing new ; he has spoken, and has been before us previously, and if he has no new points I think he should not be heard.

Mr. LORD.—Oh, well, I will sit down ; I merely wanted to show that I considered there was an unjust discrimination, that's all.

Mr. WILMOT.—Yes ; we cannot have persons addressing remarks from the audience

JOHN PETERSON, a native of Sweden, a fisherman, and resident of New Westminster for eleven years, was sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Well, sir, what have you to state ?—A. My trouble is I cannot get a license.

Q. Had you a license before ?—Yes, I had a license before, but for three years now I have been unable to get them.

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Q. Was any reason given for this?—A. Well, I went to the Skeena River, and when I came back here I could not get one.

Q. Were you told that?—A. Mr. Mowat told me all the licenses were out, and that I could not get one.

Q. Since that you have been fishing in what way?—A. Fishing for the canneries on shares.

Q. In the same way as others who have been here?—A. Yes, sir; about the same.

Q. Do you think that all British subjects of the country who are fishermen actually should get a license if they want it?—A. Yes; in preference to all canners, fish dealers and freezers.

Q. Why would you debar canners and freezers?—A. Because they could buy all the fish they wanted from the fishermen without having licenses of their own.

Q. Would they have to pay more for their fish under these circumstances?—A. Yes; to a certain extent they would.

Q. And you think the fishermen would get more?—A. Yes; they would get more.

Q. And the canners would have to pay more?—A. Yes; because they could not hire Indians.

Q. Then you think one license sufficient for each fisherman?—A. Yes, sir; one boat, one man, one license.

Q. And the average number of fish taken by you—would it correspond with the evidence you have heard just before—400 fish to a boat, a day?—A. No, sir; my average was less; some years they are very numerous and some less.

Q. But take an average; say the last three years?—A. Oh, well, about 300 a day for the best part of the season.

Q. You got for those 10 cents each?—A. Yes, sir; but only one year out of three—in the other years we got a little less. Twenty cents for salmon has only been this last year.

Q. Well, persons fishing alongside of you, what prices would they get?—A. Some 12 to 15 and 20 cents a fish.

Q. What did they pay for fish other years?—A. I have fished for 5 cents and furnished my own boat and net. Ten cents was the highest for years, and 20 cents is the highest price known on this river.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Then when fish were only 10 cents—when two of you were fishing you would only get 2½ cents each?—A. No; we got 6 cents—3 cents apiece, and the canner got 4 cents.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. What about the offal that is thrown in the river—do you think it injurious or otherwise?—A. I think so—I think it hurts the fish and the water and is unhealthy.

Q. What are your views as to the weekly close time?—A. I think it good till six o'clock Sunday.

Q. How do you view that from a moral standpoint?—A. Oh, I am not very religious myself—I consider Sunday over at six o'clock in the evening.

Q. Some people think it over at daylight in the morning?—A. Oh, well, they probably have a night view of the question.

Q. Do you think the fish are increasing or decreasing?—A. I think them as good as when I first came here.

Q. Do you think the hatchery has done any good?—A. Yes; I think it has been good.

Q. Have you been fishing at the mouth of the river?—A. Yes; during the sockeye run I have fished there.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. It is the easiest place to catch fish, it is not?—A. Well, there is more room for boats.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. The great majority of the fishing is done at the mouth of the river during the sockeye season, is it not?—A. Yes.

Q. Have you made any observations regarding the red and white salmon?—A. Yes, a little.

Q. Are both used in the markets?—A. No; canners don't use the white at all, and fish markets and freezers will not take them, unless they cannot help themselves.

Q. What is done with them?—A. Fishermen salt them a good deal but some may be thrown away. I would suggest about the freezers—they are holding ten licenses and they don't use them—they sell their fish to the canneries and don't put them in their freezers. I can prove this, and I think if the licenses they absorb were distributed among the actual fishermen it would be a great deal better.

Q. Then you consider it unfair that freezers should be given ten licenses and not use them but sell them to the canneries?—A. Yes, sir, I do.

Q. Is there anything further you would like to state?—A. No, sir.

PETER BIRRELL, a native of Scotland, but for thirty-two years a resident of British Columbia, a salmon canner and resident of New Westminster, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Well, sir, have you any statement you desire to make?—A. Well, I would rather answer any questions you may wish to ask.

Q. Well, sir, one of the most important questions is this offal question—what are your views?—A. Well, I believe that it is not deleterious at all, neither to health, either of fish or human life, so long as it is deposited in the channel of the river.

Q. You think it not injurious?—A. From my observation I have not seen any ill effects, and I believe it is thoroughly impracticable to do away with it without materially affecting the industry. I have tried in a small way to burn some of it and took a day's work in the cannery to make the trial, and the one day was very offensive, but I did it with the object of using it as a fertilizer, but it was not good as a fertilizer—it killed some of my trees.

Q. You think it not injurious if put into the water, but injurious if put on the land?—A. Yes; without using proper judgment.

Q. Do you put up your views as against practical men and scientists of approved worth?—A. Well, I had some of that. So far as heads of fish are concerned and the men who have only a knowledge of fish on the east coast, they don't know much of our fish out here.

Q. Do you know it is a fact that offal is not allowed to go into the rivers in other places?—A. Well, I don't know it as a fact, but it is different from out here. This is a very large body of water and there is a strong current, and in the old country it is thickly inhabited, and it is very desirable to keep the water as pure as possible. As people do here I don't see where it has been offensive, except in the immediate vicinity of town. If there is no suitable place where discharged, the cannery takes it to places where the small fishes can feed on it. I am sure that the offal does not get but a few hundred feet from the cannery before all the offal is devoured by these small fish, and the heads and tails are devoured by the seals. At my cannery, and, I believe, near all the canneries, there are large numbers of sturgeon, and I know Indians go out with a line and get any numbers of them.

Q. Do seals come up to your cannery?—A. Oh, yes; the seals come right up the river.

Q. To any extent?—A. Well, not as much here as in some rivers on the coast, and they dispose of the larger offal—the heads and tails, because I have never heard of any heads being found down at the mouth of the river from any of the canneries.

Q. Then you don't believe the evidence given by persons here that they have taken heads and tails from their nets?—A. I don't believe it to be true, except in some cases where persons have been salting fish, and a good deal of offal is got in shallow water.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. You are engaged in the canning business?—A. I am engaged in the canning business.

Q. What cannery?—A. The British Columbia Packing Company.

Q. One of the syndicate?—A. Yes.

Q. Of what capacity is that cannery?—A. Well, I have put up 26,000 cases in one season.

Q. But the average, say for the last three years?—A. About 15,000 cases. The last three years, a little less than that.

Q. Is yours of the same capacity as others, excepting Mr. Ewen's?—A. Yes, excepting Mr. Ewen's. His is a little larger. Mine is about as the others.

Q. Well, the fish that are caught daily are brought in—the heads and tails are cut off—how are these disposed of?—A. It has been disposed of in this way. In the early years of the canning industry we just let it run into the water, and it was very deleterious when it became putrid and floated in to the sides of the river, but this year we have made arrangements to dispose of it in the channel of the river, and at my cannery, by adopting this mode, no one had been annoyed from offal from my place. The offal used to float there, but I have made provision for that, and no one can have a word to say from offensiveness or on account of the offal going there, for it does not interfere with anyone. Of course, where I am situated, there is no one but myself anyway, and it was offensive, only I made arrangements for disposing of it in this way.

Q. Your fish are caught, brought in and put in the cannery—their heads and tails cut off and entrails taken out, and the offal shoved into the water?—A. Yes; but we have deep water.

Q. Then if the offal falls down it does not fall into the channel of the river, does it?—A. Well, where my cannery is there are two channels.

Q. Do not canneries stand on piles?—A. Yes; most of them are.

Q. And are the piles numerous?—A. Yes; they are generally eight by ten, sufficient to hold up the building.

Q. And the offal is thrown down amongst these piles?—A. Generally, but they are making provision now to take it all into the current. Of course where there is no current it piles up, but in the channel it goes right off.

Q. Can you run a hopper out from your buildings to the channel?—A. Yes; in most of them, I believe.

Q. And you think it would be injurious in the shallow waters and where it could not get away, but if thrown in the channel it would not be injurious?—A. Quite so—I think so from long observation and experience.

Q. And do you build canneries in channels or deep water?—A. We always like to get them in a channel or deep water because steam-boats must load our fish, &c., and we must have plenty of water for the boats to come alongside, &c.

Q. During past years have you conveyed the offal in scows out to the deep water channel, or allowed it to run into the river?—A. This last year I have conveyed it by spouts and it was perfectly effective.

Q. Then the conclusion you come to is that offal is not injurious if put into the channel, and it is injurious if in shallow water?—A. Well, not to fish life—I don't think it is, because there are myriads of decomposed fish that come down the river—I don't think it injurious to fish life or any life.

Q. But I suppose you know corporate boards in towns always consider it a nuisance?—A. Well, I suppose so—you know a cannery is not an eau de cologne factory (laughter), and amongst people it is not well liked.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do you think any disposition could be made of that offal in any other way than by putting it in the river?—A. None other—you must put it in the river.

Q. Do you not think it might be made into oil and fertilizers?—A. Well, I have examined into that thoroughly. Mr. Lawson and Mr. McDavin have a good deal of money in an oil refinery at Vancouver, and have sunk a good deal of money getting all modern appliances for pressing out oil and drying refuse of fish for fertilizers. I met

them in New York and they asked me to investigate the thing, and I did so as far as I could. I made inquiry and got acquainted with most of the oil factories in Massachusetts. I told them conditions here were very different, and told them I did not think they could possibly make a success of it. I took some time and spent some days in looking up this drying process. There they use artificial heat for drying it, but the difference is, this fertilizer brings \$33 a ton in England—it can be cured to ship across to England from the eastern sea-board, but it is impossible to cure it here to ship to England—the ship would have to be abandoned before it got to England. The people of the company even got the president, a Frenchman, to come out and I met him here and he thought they ought to succeed in doing it, but when they took into account the difference in climate and the distance to ship the product, they abandoned it. Then Joe Spratt took hold of it and they spent several thousands of dollars in it, but it all was given up. Joe Spratt put a good deal of money in it and he had to give it up, and what was the result? All the refuse had to be dumped into the water, and all that had the effect of poisoning the water at English Bay, and really I think that drove the herrings out of the inlet—I cannot say for certain, but I really believe that did;—of course Burrard's Inlet is a big difference to this river.

Q. Do you know the unfortunate way in which you cannerymen stand by the law? You know there is a law on the Statute-book of the Dominion that you are liable to fine every time you throw offal into the river. Now you know no Government, either Provincial or Dominion, has the right to say the law shall not be carried out. Now, any man can go before a magistrate and complain of it and have you fined for it every time!—A. Well, you would have to stop the industry. I quite understand that about the law, but this industry is a very important one and gives employment to many persons on this river.

Q. Well, you should take some steps to get this law repealed?—A. Well, we have taken steps, but the department has been very remiss in complying with the suggestions we made—that is our opinion out here.

Q. Well, I think the department has been very lenient as the law is. Here is the position you are in. Any man whom you may offend can go and have you fined every day you do it?—A. Well, it is a farce about the offal being an injury to the fish.

Q. Well, but there is the law?—A. We have been fighting to remedy the matter and have sent a delegation to Ottawa to have laws formulated to suit the industry and the welfare of all parties concerned. This delegation came back here and gave the balance of people engaged in the industry—gave us to understand that everything was going to be put all right, and that those gentlemen who conduct matters in the department were quite in accord with them in their opinion, but when the rules came out they were very different—they were ridiculous, and in fact we could not carry on our business. Then I went to our members and an Order in Council was passed rescinding it, and then we put offal in the river for our own comfort, and at a meeting the other day we agreed to make provision to put it in deep water.

Q. Of course the Governor in Council has power to make rules and regulations in reference to the fisheries, but the Governor in Council has no power to rescind the Act. They can make rules and regulations under the Act, and the Act says you may be fined?—A. Well, if Mr. Wilmot had remained here—when the telegram from the department came asking if it was convenient for him to come now, I was in Victoria. I said no, we could leave this thing till the fish were running and get Mr. Wilmot, for we know Mr. Wilmot is quite an authority on fish—eastern fish—and we could disabuse his mind on many points regarding our fish, but they wanted these rules made for the commencement of the fishing.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—But, Mr. Birrell, this Commission is not here to carry out Mr. Wilmot's views or my views—we are here to go upon the evidence.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. I believe I heard you say you have made arrangements to put the offal in the deep part of the river—why, did you not put it there before?—A. Yes; we have made arrangements to do it.

Q. Then you think it injurious otherwise?—A. I think it not injurious to fish life, but it is offensive to people in the immediate vicinity.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. But this was acknowledgment of canning people that offal was offensive and that by putting it out in the river you would overcome that offensiveness?—A. Quite so.

Q. You say your establishment employs many people?—A. Yes.

Q. How many are employed in your establishment?—A. About ninety.

Q. How many of the ninety are actual settlers and *bona fide* people of this country—how many white men?—A. Well, not many—about six or seven—sometimes more—sometimes ten.

Q. And the rest are what?—A. Chinese and Indian women.

Q. Then do you think you employ the real *bona fide* people of this country?—A. Yes; we employ the lords of the soil, respectable Chilliwaks. (Laughter.)

Q. Now if half of the people were respectable white people would it not be better for the country?—A. Well, if we could get them.

Q. You don't get them as long as you can get Indians and squaws at lower prices?—A. Well, I don't know.

Q. You stated that offal going into some bay near here drove the herring away?—A. Well, in English Bay the offal was the offal of the oil factory—not heads and tails of fish.

Q. Then you think there is a difference between that offal and the offal here?—A. I will tell you—the factory was a failure. They filled it full of this refuse and it spoilt on them. They got unlimited numbers of herrings and they pressed them for the oil and the refuse was dumped in. I don't know how many times they filled up their factory and tried to make it into a fertilizer and failed. Then the lands here don't want any fertilizer—the farmers would not use it.

Q. You put up 15,000 cases of fish, principally sockeye—what was the average weight of these fish?—A. Well, nearly eight pounds, probably a little less—between seven and eight.

Q. Then in going through the process with an eight pound fish you would make how many cans?—A. Well, they would average but little less than five-four and a half to five cans.

Q. Then three and a half pounds goes as offal?—A. No; not so much as that for this account, because there is always more fish in a can than a pound—generally an average of not less than eighteen ounces.

Q. You put that in for shrinkage?—A. No; not at all, but you take any can of fish and you will find they go over a pound, many twenty-one ounces—then the can, solder, and all, weighs three and a quarter to three and a half ounces.

Q. Then do I understand you to say the canners put in upwards of 60,000 pounds overweight in packing 15,000 cases?—A. Well yes, I think, as a rule. They may not average that—of course we are very careful and always do our best to have the full weight in. They don't all average that, some may be a fraction less in size or in depth, but I think my cans as a rule will average an ounce or two more or less over the pound. Then some of course are short, but we try our best not to have any less in the tins because there is reclamation then and a loss to the packer.

Q. Then you give 60,000 pounds overplus?—A. Well, about that.

Q. Have you ever thought of the quantity of offal thrown into the river from the canneries working on the river?—A. Oh, of course it must be very great.

Q. Between seven and eight million pounds of offal?—A. Well, I suppose it may be—I never figured on that.

Q. You read a report that was published—a report of an inspection of this river two or three years ago, did you not?—A. Well, I read some report—yes.

Q. If that report makes just exactly these figures you are now stating, it is pretty nearly correct, is it not?—A. I should think so, yes.

Q. As I first concluded from your remarks, you think it is not injurious if thrown into the channel of the river, but injurious or offensive if put in shallow water?—A. Offensive? Yes, if allowed to remain near the banks where there is no current.

Q. Would its offensiveness be so much as to cause miasmatic air?—A. Well, it would not be nice, I know.

Q. Would it be a preventive to some good, sound, wholesome men settling there?—A. Not in near my cannery. It would be uninhabitable, I believe, if the refuse of the cannery was buried within half a mile from any cannery, and as a matter of fact the oil factory at Burrard Inlet, it was so offensive to the people there that the people burned it—burned the factory up. I was through the town about a year before they burned it up and the offensiveness was very great.

Q. If you were living in the neighbourhood where such bad smells were created, you would help in the same thing?—A. Well, I am not an incendiary.

Q. But you would not like it?—A. No, I would not like it.

Q. You made some remarks as to the canners going to Ottawa. Are you aware that suggestions were carried out at their instigation?—A. It was said so.

Q. Have you read the reports of the department?—A. Well, I used to, but I don't get them now.

Q. You think the report made in regard to offal thrown into the river by an officer of the department was not correct?—A. Well, if the officer reported it was put in the channel of the river it would not be deleterious to fish life or offensive to anybody. I concur in that, and I think so does everybody.

Q. What about the limitation of nets?—A. Well, I think it is necessary that each cannery should have 25 nets for the proper conduct of their business. Those who have a capacity for more and wish to do so can buy fish from outside boats.

Q. You put the canners on the same basis, but if one has an excess in capacity he could get from outside boats?—A. Yes.

Q. What about fishermen?—A. Give them a net and license each.

Q. As many as applied for them?—A. No, I am different from some of the cannerymen in that regard—I believe it would be well to fix a limit. I believe that is very desirable to encourage men who follow fishing at present on the river—they do nothing else and make their living on the river. These men are very useful in supplying the markets with fresh fish which it does not pay the canners to put up. These men, if there is no protection, the result will be—they don't make much out of the spring fishing, they make very little over net and boat, &c., but they depend almost entirely upon the prices they get during the sockeye run—the result will be, if everybody goes into the river, even if they get 15 cents, they will have to abandon the fishing, because they cannot make enough to keep them at that business all the year round. The trouble is, that there are many foreign fishermen during the sockeye run and if they come in the fish will cost too much, and few by each man will be caught.

Q. How many licenses should your cannery get?—A. Twenty-five.

Q. You want all the rest of the canneries to get twenty-five?—A. Yes; I think all should get twenty-five.

Q. What chance would ordinary fishermen have if all the canneries on the river got twenty-five each?—A. Well, there would be enough outside fishermen to supply the local demand.

Q. Then you think the local demand enough for outside fishermen?—A. There would be little, if any, work for them from the cannery.

Q. In an abundant season how many boats would supply your cannery with 15,000 cases?—A. Oh, that would altogether depend upon the abundance of fish.

Q. Yes; but on an average?—A. I think twenty-five on an average.

Q. Fifteen would not supply you at all?—A. Oh, no.

Q. Would twenty-five fully?—A. Yes.

Q. Then if the cannerymen had twenty-five boats there would be no work for outside fishermen at all?—A. Not at all; some canneries some years ago used the products of double that number.

Q. Well, but I am putting you all down at twenty-five; would not the result be no chance for outside fishermen to sell fish?—A. No; it would not be the result, because if I engage outside fishermen it is customary for outside men to make arrangements to take fish beforehand.

Q. Yes; if the canneries had not enough boats of their own?—A. Oh, no. Excuse me—on one occasion I gave nine men a contract to supply me with fish. Well, fish

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came in very abundant that year—I took the fish from those nine boats—I never refused one, and because I got more fish than I could handle I withdrew my own boats.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Was not the reason because you had a contract?—A. Yes.

Q. Would it not be different if there was no contract?—A. Well, I have always done this, even if I had outside boats I have always taken a fair share of fish from them.

Q. Would you give a fair number of licenses to freezers or salters?—A. Well, it is not for me to say that. It is my opinion that these so-called freezers are not freezers at all; they are the same as outside fishermen. These can get ten licenses each, and they speculate with them.

Q. Would you give them more than one license?—A. These men who have a trade in fresh fish to be put up in broken ice, these men ought to have licenses, but ten is an excess—more than they use. Mr. Vienna follows that business entirely; I think he ought to have three or four licenses; I think that would be quite sufficient. The other places are the same.

Q. The freezers you think are about froze out?—A. Are about froze out. (Laughter.)

Q. Do you think curtailing the number of licenses to be issued on the river puts a commercial value on them?—A. Which?

Q. On the licenses—more than what would be if every fisherman who applied got a license?—A. I don't clearly understand you.

Q. Does it not make them more valuable? For instance, we have it here that as high as \$50 has been paid for licenses; after the canneries got their number only a few were left, and consequently they brought as high as \$50?—A. Well, I should say that would establish a commercial value, if it is sure they were sold for that price.

Q. Well, do you think it would be any injury to the fisheries generally if every British subject got a license?—A. Well, I think it would be injurious to the cannery people because so few fish would be caught in the boats it would not pay them, and the same for the single fishermen, because few fish would be caught each.

Q. But would it be injurious to the fisheries interest if every British subject got a license who paid for it?—A. Well, I really think it would not; I am not prepared to give an opinion, but I don't think it would.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. You say that with twenty boats you have taken 15,000 cases?—A. No; I don't say that; I had twenty licenses, but I might have twenty outsiders as well.

Q. Still, twenty boats have produced for you 15,000 cases; well, there are twenty-two canneries on the river—multiply 15,000 by 22 and we get 330,000 cases with twenty-two canneries. Now, 330,000 cases are greater than you had on the Fraser River?—A. But there are canneries that have not operated yet.

Q. Yes; but we are not putting them in; only the twenty-two who operated. Now, if you get twenty-five boats it will give you 412,500 cases; the consequence would be you almost double the catch you have had any time; now, would you buy a single fish from outside fishermen?—A. Well, but you are taking the supposition that there will be a good year every year.

Q. I take your own average.—A. Well, but these last couple of years have been fairly good.

Q. Well, according to your own statement, in 1890 you had 13,116 cases (report Board of Trade, 1890, p. 52). Now, if you had twenty-five boats you would have your factory filled with as many cases as you had any of these years; now, would you employ an outside boat?—A. Of course we would; we have to arrange before the fishing commences, and if fish are not abundant we don't get fish enough to keep us going, then we lay off our own boats.

Q. And with twenty-two canneries you would employ 132 white men, and all the rest would be Siwash and Chinamen, and not a single white man to run your canneries?—A. Oh, but there are a great many men employed outside of direct work in the canneries. There is coal and wood to be got, &c.

Q. But I put this because we have had extravagant requests from fishermen here who wanted to get all the licenses, and now you say the fishermen should not have licenses?—A. No; I don't say that.

Q. Well, that is the English of it.—A. No; excuse me.

Q. But if you have twenty-five boats it is more than you want?—A. No; it is not more than I want, because if there is plenty of fish I will have to withdraw my own boats.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. But we have before us that it takes \$5,000 to build a cannery, and you get \$25,000 gain by not employing outside licenses.—A. It is not the case.

Mr. WILMOT.—Perhaps you should not make these remarks as yet, but we get so conflicting statements. Here we see where good men come to the country and then they cannot get a license to fish.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. And here is a man who gets ten licenses and lets them out and walks around town with his hands in his pockets and a good fisherman cannot get a license to fish. Now, don't you think that should be regulated?—A. Yes, certainly, and time and time again I have urged it that freezers have got an undue proportion of licenses. I acted for secretary of the board fourteen years ago, and I know that.

Q. Do you know of any influence brought to bear by those people to get licenses?—A. No; I don't know; I have heard, but I really cannot say.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—It seems there has been unfair influence brought to bear by someone or somebody.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. And in taking down this evidence it would be wrong for us to do so, that either cannerymen or fishermen shall have all the licenses, so we have to take both sides. I think that the cannerymen should have a sufficient number of licenses to enable them to independently carry on their business without being overrun by the fishermen, but I also think the fishermen who are good men should not be debarred from their fishing too. A.—Well, those are my sentiments; but I wish to say a word or two about the way Mr. Wilmot has been taking evidence and putting questions. Some of the men who have given evidence are very good men and have been on the river some time, others have not; but the way the questions were put was particularly to bring out the views of these men from an eastern standpoint. We think highly of your views on eastern matters, but we don't think much of them on points here.

Q. Well, I think when intelligent men come forward, I ask questions as I think correct?—A. But I think you should not eulogize men who come forward. It has this tendency: it elicited and got evidence from men who have little or no experience. There are some here who had, but most of these men quite agree with you about the habits and methods of the fish, but these men have had no experience here.

Q. But you had experience in Scotland, had you not?—A. Well, perhaps; but there are men who have given evidence here who cannot tell the familiar dog-fish from a sock-eye. It will have this effect—I don't think they do it intentionally. It has this effect: here is the preponderance of evidence establishing matters which we know to be erroneous, and it will militate against this industry.

Q. But I am simply endeavouring to gain knowledge. There was a time, years ago, when people didn't believe electricity could drive a car, but knowledge has brought it out?—A. Yes; I know that.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Well, but if we allow you the same privilege to rebut this evidence, you cannot complain—you can put in any evidence to disprove what has been said—you should not complain if we allow you to do that.

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By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. What do you say about the close season?—A. The present close season is correct, for this reason: if you stop the boats from going out at 6 o'clock on Sunday, it will be impracticable to carry it out. As soon as it gets dark all hands will go out into the river, especially the single men—over and above all that, we want a supply of fish for Monday. Generally, there are only thirty days fishing, and many of these days we are short of fish anyway.

Q. But, if nine-tenths of the population think the Sabbath should be kept, it does not follow that one-tenth should make a profitable business out of it. However, you think the Sunday close time right now?—A. Yes.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. But what do you think of a change—from 12 o'clock Saturday to 6 o'clock Monday morning?—A. Well, you see we would not be able to get away with the fish, and would have to work on Sunday to put fish up.

Q. Do you work at night?—A. Not if we can avoid it.

Q. Do you think it would be too long close time from 6 o'clock Saturday morning to 6 o'clock Monday morning?—A. Too long a close time? I think so. I would object to that for this reason: the run only lasts for six weeks, and there are only twelve days when there is any quantity of fish, and in a good year we are fully handed only in ten or twelve days, and the result would be we would not be able to get up enough fish to recoup us, and as soon as fish cease to run, then it does not pay to put them up.

Q. Would you make a division on Saturday—say 9 o'clock?—A. No, I think not—for to be able to do a day's fishing we must start early in the morning—if an unlimited number of nets all right, but we cannot get them.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Why not start at daylight Monday morning?—A. We want fish to work at on Monday—all people, trades people and any with interest in British Columbia, with the exception of Missionaries, will back the cannerymen up in that respect.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. We have too many fishermen who don't agree with you.—A. Such as they were—new-timers and come from Scotland and have been fishing here only a few years. These men may change their mind in a few years, especially if they have any money in business.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Proprietors of canneries are generally very well off and can go to church if they like, while fishermen cannot—as his 'read and butter depends upon it.—A. Well, no canner will object to a man going to church—he is not working in the afternoon—you see there is a close time from 6 o'clock on Saturday morning up to 6 o'clock on Sunday afternoon, and surely that is a long time. But there is a bad effect in the way you ask questions.

Q. What about the annual close season?—A. Of course, I believe in that, because there is no fish to be had.

Q. Very generous! Can you account for larger runs than usual the last few years? Do you give credit to the season or to any artificial aid at all?—A. I give the credit to the season—it is a matter of chance more than anything else. I give credit, of course, to the hatchery, but since the hatchery was established it has been of very little use, owing to the remissness of the department in not supplying the inspector here with sufficient labour to look after it properly, and one of the reasons it was asked for 14 or 15 years ago, was to allow people who put their money in this industry to find out about the salmon in the river, and of course, when established it was established under the rules of the department, under a paid officer, but this officer has been left without knowing what he was to do—they did not allow him to employ hands until it was too late in the season. He had no opportunity to get spawn off the healthy fish.

Q. There is no season in which the hatchery was not filled to over-flowing with eggs of fish. The reports from various officers are that it was filled too full with eggs!—
A. Yes, I believe that, but filled from fish not in the best condition.

Q. Oh, I cannot say that—cannery men say they want eggs from the sock-eye!—Yes, but they don't go to get them in time.

Q. But I suppose you know you cannot get eggs before they are ripe!—A. I think they could have got them earlier.

Q. You believe the hatcheries are good though!—A. Yes, if properly conducted, and if sufficient appropriation is made to look after them.

Q. Big salaries!—A. Yes, the men were paid very small salaries and everything was done in a niggardly way, and the result has been very unsatisfactory.

Q. The object when this hatchery was originally started was to breed the quinnat salmon, but cannery men said "no, they are not numerous enough—we want the sock-eye," and the government took every means to get the sockeye; but from evidence brought up at this commission, it seems that if "quinnat" were bred the majority would be white and red and thrown away as useless. Now your first run of sockeye is in July!—A. Yes.

Q. Well, we have been collecting eggs for a number of years and we never get them until the end of September or October!—A. This is the run of fish that I would want to take the spawn from, but you take the tail end of the run, and all know that the healthiest and most robust are the first that go up.

Q. But you have to wait until they are ready to spawn!—A. Well, we know this—the inspector complained very much—the late Tom Mowat—matters were always delayed too long—and two lines from the department would have done it.

Q. Oh well, you know if all complaints were gone into we could not think of attending to them. Now, have you anything more to say!—A. No; I think not.

Q. We are much obliged to you for your evidence!—A. You are welcome. By the way, a friend of mine, Mr. Laidlaw, asked me to say that he was not very well, and he would like to put in a statement.

MR. WILMOT.—Oh yes; let him put it in—we will put it on record.

MR. BIRRELL.—Very well, thank you.

J. C. ARMSTRONG, a British Canadian, a resident of New Westminster, and living in British Columbia since 1858, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, sir!—A. I merely wish to remark about the spawning grounds. I have been up and down the river—my impression is, if up at the Harrison River, at one place, the Government would employ an Indian or whiteman a month at certain seasons to let little salmon out; it would increase salmon more than the hatchery, at a very small expense. I have been there myself and I have seen the little salmon in the two little creeks where they go out, and when the water recedes they get dammed up, and the salmon remain there in millions, because they cannot get out.

Q. Then how hemmed in, sir!—A. This all gets flooded and the little salmon that are able to swim, rise, and the river drops quickly and they cannot get out.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. The water goes down and they cannot get out!—A. Yes; I have taken a stick and let many of them out.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. You have been up there and seen them, they were salmon!—A. Yes; I was with Mr. Mowat.

Q. What time of the year was it when you saw them there!—A. Along about the first of May or June.

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Q. What size would they be?—A. Well, some could run around, but others hardly had the egg absorbed.

Q. Some you say only an inch and a half long and some with the sack on yet?—A. Yes.

Q. Were these naturally-bred fish or deposited?—A. Yes, naturally-bred fish. If you will dig down you will find the spawn there now—the water comes in and then dries up and the little salmon die. They were so plentiful that years ago the Indians used to get a stick and put it in and get the spawn and dry it for their Christmas pudding or something of that sort. Another thing—about the trout—I have seen the salmon as they came in to spawn followed by great numbers of those trout who go in to eat the spawn. The trout are the same as a pack of wolves after sheep.

Q. Well, one view is that Providence has provided things very well, and nature provided these spawning beds up there—but the most destructive animal to salmon and the young fish is man himself and not those creatures whom Providence has put there?—A. Well, I have seen as many salmon between Yale and Spencer's bridge as the cannery put up in a whole year.

Q. What about salmon dying up the river?—A. Well, I don't know, I have come through a great many of them, probably acres of them.

A. Do you see live ones?—A. No.

Q. They were underneath—you seldom see the live ones, they would be underneath—it is only the dead ones you see. Well, I am sure we are very glad to hear your report and if our officer here will take up the matter and report upon it, I hope it will be attended to. We thank you for your information.

THOMAS LADNER, of Ladner's Landing, a native of England, a resident of Ladner's Landing, in British Columbia, since 1858, a salmon cannery proprietor, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Withnot :

Q. Well, Mr. Ladner, have you any statement to make or would you prefer being questioned?—A. I am quite willing to answer any questions you may ask.

Q. What about the offal?—A. Well, my views in regard to offal are that it does no injury to fish whatever.

Q. What has it to do with the human family—their comfort, or health?—A. Well, speaking personally, I live right in it, and I don't know that it has injured me much. I don't think that it injures anyone; it causes a little stench sometimes, which, if the dead fish went, it would be more use.

Q. You think it offensive?—A. Yes, in certain localities as regards smell; but it is not injurious to fish or the human family generally.

Q. Are you a believer in science, or have you seen the authorities put forward by the Department of Agriculture, Province of Ontario?—A. No; I have not.

Q. Well, here is a statement from an Ontario Government official who has analysed offal of fish, and says—

"From the consideration of the whole question, I am of opinion that the manufacture of the refuse into fertilizer is strongly to be recommended, because:

"1st. It will thus utilize a bye-product that otherwise is a total loss.

"2nd. It will prevent the waters from being contaminated.

"3rd. Its proper management must tend to a more healthful surrounding.

"4th. Its return to the soils of the farm will partly offset the waste of our cities by sewerage carried to the lakes and rivers.

"5th. If properly handled it will pay well.

"From the great importance of this question to the health of the community, the welfare of the fishing industry, and the progress of agriculture, I have endeavoured to reply at this length."

—(Victoria, B.C., *Colonist*, 20th Feb., 1892.)

MR. LADNER.—Who is the authority?

MR. WILMOT.—The authority is Professor C. C. James, Professor of Chemistry in the Chemical Laboratory of the Ontario Agricultural College, at Guelph, Ont., who has analysed offal of cod fish, dog-fish, cannery refuse from salmon and herring. Those are his conclusions.

A. They are right in some ways and in others wrong. As a fertilizer we don't want it here—then you must take into account the cost attached to it—what costs \$1 in Ontario costs \$10 here.

MR. WILMOT.—Then the Provincial Government proposes that a syndicate be formed for the utilization of the offal and waste in connection with the proposed fishing operations of the Crofters to be brought out here for settlement. I will read you an extract from the *Victoria Daily Times* of the 21st February. After explaining the leading details of the scheme, the article goes on to say:—

"As it is understood, an English company is in course of organization with a capital of a million sterling, for the purpose of purchasing the fish from the boats of the Crofters as soon as caught, and transporting them through a cold storage system on steamers and cars to every important market on the continent. In addition to this it is understood that the company will be prepared to cure fish by a variety of processes, extract fish oils and manufacture fertilizers, &c., from the offal. So that all kinds of fish procurable will be utilized and there shall be no waste. The reader will at once perceive how these two branches of the scheme will work into each other, and the whole tend to the development of the deep-sea fisheries of the province, thus establishing a new industry, the possibilities of which are as boundless as 'our great sea farm.'"

MR. LADNER.—That is a good idea, I only hope that they will do it—they are quite welcome to all the offal on the Fraser River without buying it.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Would you deliver it to them?—A. Yes; we would deliver it to them. --

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Then you think it offensive?—A. Not universally an offensive thing—only once and awhile you smell it.

Q. Does it lodge?—A. Oh, a little—heads and tails.

Q. Is not that the largest portion?—A. No; I think the entrails the largest portion.

Q. It depends how much you cut off?—A. Yes.

Q. You think it not detrimental to fish—is any other substance detrimental to fish? Would saw-dust be injurious?—A. Yes; I think it would be injurious if it got in the gills, otherwise I don't think it would.

Q. Do you think from your knowledge, that saw-dust or any description of offal, if strewn on beds where eggs are laid by salmon would be injurious?—A. I suppose it would.

Q. How about the limitation of nets—what are your views? Under the present rule the cannery are entitled to twenty boats each and the fishermen in number to take up 150, while cannery 350.—A. Well, if you take it on the basis of my opinion, I would allow fishermen to buy all the licenses they wish, and I think cannery should have at least twenty-five nets each. Every British subject and resident of the country should be intitled to get one boat and cannery not less than twenty-five.

Q. Now, Mr. Ladner, I cannot help but refer to the figures, as in the case of Mr. Birrell; but do you advocate an unlimited number of cannery?—A. Yes; any person who wants to put up a cannery, let him do so.

Q. You are more liberal than many others?—A. Oh, I don't know, I don't advocate a monopoly of the cannery at all.

Q. Then you think cannery should have twenty-five licenses and fishermen have an unlimited number—one each?—A. I do.

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Q. There are twenty-two canneries on the river?—A. Yes.

Q. Are others to be erected?—A. Possibly.

Q. At twenty-five boats each and twenty-two canneries it would bring a product of 15,000 cases for each cannery in excess of any one year you have fished this river?—A. Well, I don't know how you make that out.

Q. Well, you see, if twenty-two canneries at twenty boats each are required to produce as many cases as have been produced?—A. On what authority do you place the boats at twenty? There would be outside boats would there not? Then the runs vary—you base your figures that they catch so many fish every day.

Q. No; I base my figures on an average of 15,000 cases, and that is the average of all the canneries except Mr. Ewen's?—A. No; I have put up more than that. I work according to the market. If it justifies me in packing 25,000 cases, I will do it.

Q. Then you think Mr. Birrell not correct?—A. I disagree with him in that respect.

Q. Then twenty-five boats would always, with fair runs of fish, supply your factory?—A. But I say they would not.

Q. What would you say that twenty-five boats would produce daily with an ordinary run of fish?—A. Well, when you speak "daily" you cannot form a basis of opinion on daily catches, because, some years there are large runs and some small.

Q. Well, take 1889 or 1890?—A. Well, say 1890. In the day you were here twenty-five boats would supply a cannery. That day was the only day I saw so many fish on the Fraser River.

Q. The fish came to meet me then. (Laughter)?—A. Yes, sir; but you cannot base an opinion on 25 boats, because you cannot take the run of a big year—there is only a few days in the year when the big run happens—some days they will be fifty to a hundred to a boat and even 300, and I have got 400 to the boat, but that is an exceptional thing. You cannot base an opinion on that—I am speaking of twelve years' experience now.

Q. Well, you say you would be satisfied with twenty-five boats?—A. No, I would not. I say I would be willing to work on a basis of twenty-five boats and obtain the balance of fish I require from outside boats, because twenty-five would not supply my cannery, either in a large or small year.

Q. How many boats did you run last year?—A. I think it was twenty and some outside boats.

Q. And your pack was 12,700 cases?—A. If that book shows it (referring to departmental report in Mr. Wilmot's hands), that is it.

Q. Then you think you could not keep your cannery running satisfactorily with under twenty-five boats?—A. Not with twenty-five boats—I take a basis of twenty-five, and what I require over and above that I get from outside boats—now one year I used thirty boats.

Q. Do you think you could overfish the river?—A. No, I don't think so.

Q. Would a thousand boats affect it, or 10,000?—A. Well, in reason they would, but our fishing is done in tidal water almost entirely. I saw a case in point where they brought in an average of 150 fish to a boat, and next morning they don't bring ten fish to the boat, and that was the whole length of the river, and that satisfied me that fish come in and stay in one day—they get beyond all chance of being caught. Fish have plenty of chance to get up river.

Q. What is your idea as to freezers and market-men?—A. Well, my idea is they have an over-supply of boats, because they use them during the sockeye run. In the spring run and fall run they require boats, of course, but during the sockeye run they don't use the number of boats they get.

Q. But if a freezing establishment is put up with the view to employing capital and men to work it and can put up an equivalent to 15,000 cases, should not the industry be encouraged?—A. Certainly.

Q. Don't you think they would be equally beneficial?—A. No; canneries employ more labour, and thus are more beneficial.

Q. But canneries employ Indians and Chinamen?—A. Oh, I differ; I employ 20 whitemen in my cannery; canneries differ.

Q. But in putting up an equivalent to 15,000 cases of canned salmon the amount of labour would not be so great as the amount of labour required in canneries?—A. No, of course not.

Q. But the whole fish would be taken; none would be thrown away?—A. Well, it might not be thrown away here, but it would be thrown away somewhere else. I don't know whether they gut them or not, but this must be thrown away somewhere.

Q. What about the heads and shoulders and tails?—A. Oh, well, we don't throw away as much as all as we are represented to do.

Q. What is the average weight of the fish you take?—A. About 7 or 8 pounds.

Q. These were perhaps a little larger than usual when I was there?—Oh, about an average; in a good run they are smaller. That run when you were here was exceptionally good, and only lasted for one day.

Q. How many cans do you make to a fish?—A. Between 4 or 5 cans.

Q. Then fish weighing 8 pounds will give you 5 cans and 3 pounds offal?—A. Yes.

Q. You have read the statement of an individual in a public document, have you, that an 8 pound fish would make 5 cans and 3 pounds thrown away as offal?—A. Well, I will tell you, Mr. Wilnot, that I was so disgusted when I saw that cut in the report that I did not read it. That is the honest truth. I was so disgusted with that cut I wouldn't read it.

Q. But the actual figures are correct?—A. Well, according to that cut there was more than half the fish thrown away.

Q. You have good eyes, have you not?—A. Yes; very good.

MR. WILNOT.—(Showing cut in report, Department of Fisheries, 1890, p. 66). Does that cut show more than half the fish thrown away?—A. Yes, it does, provided you take the entrails out. The cuts should be shown nearer the head and tail.

Q. But the facts are that three pounds of offal are taken from an eight pound fish?—A. Oh, well, the facts are just as I state them.

Q. Then you contend the canneries should have twenty-five licenses—that every man should have one, and that as many canneries as like to should go in the business?—A. Yes; and as regards freezers—I think they should have enough to conduct the business, but I don't think freezers should have licenses to traffic in.

Q. Do you think canners should have licenses to traffic in?—A. No.

Q. Is it ever done?—A. I never heard of it being done.

Q. What is the custom of canners employing outside fishermen?—A. Pay them so much each for their fish.

Q. Is it the habit of canners to do somewhat similar to what freezers do, namely, apply for ten boats and then when they cannot use them sell them to others?—A. The nets should not be used as nets for freezers when issued to canners—it is proper they should be used for the purpose for which issued.

Q. And the same should apply to canners?—A. Of course.

Q. Do you think a settler or farmer should fish at a small fee for his own use?—A. Yes; or what is more, if he chooses to fish he has just as much right.

Q. But the fee is different?—A. Oh, well, in that case, yes.

Q. Well, these things I have put to you are just the very laws as they stand on the Statute Book?—A. But I want twenty-five licenses and unlimited licenses to outsiders.

Q. Would you give them in the same way to Indians?—A. No; I would not.

Q. Why?—A. Because I don't think them capable.

Q. Do not canneries employ great numbers of Indians?—A. Yes.

Q. Are they not capable of doing their work?—A. They are capable in a way; but it does not make much difference—they should be allowed every privilege possible. We claim in British Columbia the Indians are self-supporting, but they should not have same privileges as whitemen.

Q. What about the close season?—A. I think the close season as at present is correct.

Q. That is what you practised last year?—A. Yes.

Q. What about an annual close season?—A. I think there should be an annual close season.

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Q. What time would you say for that?—A. From 1st March to 25th August as open time—nets not less than 5½ inches.

Q. And the close period from?—A. And from 25th August to 25th September nets should not be less than 7½ inches—we have then spring salmon running in the fall.

Q. Do you can them?—A. Yes; sometimes.

Q. Are some white and red?—A. Yes.

Q. What do you do with them?—A. Give them to Indians.

Q. Are none thrown away?—A. I never saw any.

Q. From 25th September what then?—A. From 25th September to 1st November, nets should be of not less than 5½ inch mesh. My reasons for this is that in early spring we catch the spring salmon and of course that requires large mesh and we don't require small meshes nets until along in July. Well, I put it 5½ because you can use as much larger as you like, but you must not use smaller.

Q. Five and three-quarters is the established mesh—from 1st November, what do you do then?—A. Well, we don't fish—not after that.

Q. And you would have a close season but no fish?—A. Oh, there are fish, but we don't catch them.

Q. Then you are willing to give a close season for fish when you cannot get or use them?—A. Well, we give two days throughout the fishing season now.

Q. Can you assign any cause for the good runs in the last few years?—A. I think the hatchery is a decided success.

Q. And is it your view on behalf of the fisheries of the country, there should be additional ones built?—A. It is, I think there should be one on the head waters of the Fraser and on the head waters of the Thompson.

Q. What fish would you breed?—A. The sockeye—I would advocate big salmon, only that you are just as liable to hatch white ones as red ones. It is very hard to tell them when you take them out of the water—you can tell them though—experienced fishermen can tell them.

Q. Would they prevail at any season except when they are spawning?—A. Well, I don't know, perhaps so.

Q. Where is the fishing carried on principally in the river?—A. From the mouth of the river to Stave River.

Q. Where is the mouth of the river?—A. From Garry Bush to the opposite Point—I consider that the mouth of the river proper, but not for fishing—the principal fishing is carried on out on the sand heads and from New Westminster down.

Q. What would be the proportion of boats that would be fishing from Garry Point outwards?—A. It is pretty hard to say—I don't think half of them. I have never taken it into consideration.

Q. Therefore, there is really not a greater but equal proportion of fishing carried on outside of the mouth of the river?—A. Yes, I think so.

Q. And do you think any interference with fishing outside the mouth proper would not be countenanced by cannery or anyone else?—A. I don't think they would countenance it, because little harm can be done. They very often catch more fish above Westminster than we do at the mouth of the river. All the nets you could put at the mouth of the river would not stop fish going up.

Q. Then you think the present limit for fishing on the Fraser River is correct?—A. Tidal waters up to Sumas.

Q. No, I may state the Dominion Government has agreed to establishing the boundary at Pitt River bridge and at Hammond on the main river, for commercial fishing?—A. I don't know anything about the Pitt, but I don't see why fishing should be stopped at Hammond—they fish at the mouth of the Stave River.

Q. For commercial purposes?—A. Yes, they bring them down to the canneries.

Q. The idea is to allow fish that have passed the gauntlet of your nets to go free up to the spawning beds, (showing diagram of proposed limits for fishing on Fraser River, report, Department of Fisheries, 1890, p. 77.) now, you go generally to the mouth of the river—you would not seriously object to the lines laid off there?—A. Yes, I would not mind as regards Pitt River, but I think fishing should be allowed up to the Stave

River. The limit should not be lower than Stave River. I think the present limits are all that is required—they have been the limits for years and there is no reason for changing it.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. What do you consider the present limits?—A. Up to Sumas.
Mr. WILMOT.—I don't think so.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Why would it not do to make the weekly close season from 12 o'clock Saturday to 12 o'clock Sunday night?—A. Well, there is a great number o' reasons—the principal is if the close time is 12 o'clock at night we would not get one-third of our boats out fishing and the consequence would be we would lose all day Saturday, all day Sunday and all day Monday—three days each out of five weeks.

Q. Well 12 o'clock Saturday to 6 o'clock Sunday?—A. No; that would not do—we would have to work on Sunday and that would cost us double—over-time is double time. If that is to be it would be just as well that all consent for people who will not work on Sunday not to work.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. If you commenced fishing on Sunday at 12 o'clock midnight, could not fishermen be enabled to get fish for next morning?—A. No; they could not catch sufficient quantities—we would not get one-third of the boats to work.

Q. Then Sunday close time amounts to nothing?—A. Oh, no; Sunday closes—it closes equally in the majority of people's opinions here.

Q. But if you break Sunday at all, is it not as bad to work a part as all of it?—A. That is a matter of opinion. Now, we have only a few weeks in the year, and I consider it a greater sin when these things are given us if we don't take care of them.

Q. We have in evidence that some fishermen will not work on Sundays?—A. Well, perhaps they are christians like Mr. Wilmot, and others are christians like me. (laughter). I think it would be a great injustice to make the Sunday law any different—all persons can do as they like—some persons' conscientious scruples should not rule the others.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. But you say you could not get all the boats out if they went at 12 o'clock Sunday night?—A. Because they will not be over half a shift—they say so sometimes in the day time—we could not get our men to go out fishing—some might go but some would not.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Have you anything further to say?—A. Yes; when your Commission is sitting in Victoria, I would like you to call upon Mr. Smith, who can give you very good information on spawning grounds and the way the Indians are taking the young fish—they take them out, he says, in waggon loads. He could give you very good information.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Yes; we will endeavour to get him when we go there.

Mr. D. H. PORT, who had previously given evidence, presented himself before the Commission and stated his desire to make a few explanations in view of statements made by different witnesses. He had not thrown large quantities of fish away, but may have thrown away forty or fifty, but that would be all. He also had sold some fish to the canneries and considered the fairest limitation would be in the close time and not in the limitation of boats. He had not bartered licenses or sold them, but had worked them on shares—the fishing materials being supplied by him and arrangements made with the fishermen.

The Commission adjourned at 6 p.m., to meet at the same place at 10 a.m., on the 23rd February, 1892.

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NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C., 23rd February, 1892.

The Commission met in the Court-house at 10 a.m.

Present:—Mr. S. Wilmot, presiding; Sheriff Armstrong, Mr. C. F. Winter, secretary.

At the request of Mr. P. Birrell, and upon permission of the Chair, the secretary read over a portion of his notes of evidence given by Mr. Birrell the day previous, and about which that gentleman was in doubt. Mr. Birrell expressed his satisfaction with the record.

ALEXANDER EWEN, of New Westminster, a native of Scotland, twenty-eight years resident in British Columbia, a salmon canner and proprietor, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Will it be as well to commence by asking questions, or will you give a statement?—A. Oh, just as well to ask questions.

Q. Well, the first matter of importance is the offal question. Will you state concisely your views as to what you think on this matter—what are your views?—A. My view on the subject is that offal does no injury to salmon—it has no injurious effect upon them.

Q. Not injurious to salmon?—A. No; nor to fish life of any kind. It has been a question that has raised a great deal of agitation here, but on the whole Pacific coast it has always been put in the rivers and waters—on the Columbia River, on which there is a great deal more fish put up than here, and on the Skeena, and I cannot see any effect during the twenty-eight years I have been fishing here. The salmon are as plentiful now as they ever have been. I think the first year I was in the country salmon were scarcer than ever I have seen them since. Five or six years after that we had one summer when they were very scarce.

Q. Then you think it is not injurious to salmon or fish life of any kind?—A. No; that is what I think.

Q. What do you think as to health, or looking at it from a sanitary point of view?—A. Well, I have seen no effect that it has had, and I have been working at it myself and sometimes employed a good many men, and there is very little sickness that I have seen around any of the fishing establishments.

Q. Then you don't think it injurious from a sanitary point of view, to anyone?—A. To no one working around the canneries—I have used the water and everyone around has also done so—white men, Indians, and Chinamen, and as far as I know it has never been filtered around my place.

Q. It is filtered in some places?—A. I don't know.

Q. Is it usual to take it right out of the river, or do you boil it?—A. When making tea it is usual to boil it, but not for drinking.

Q. Do they drink water there?—A. Yes; we are often forced to drink it, of course.

Q. But as a usual custom is water used for drinking?—A. Yes; as a general custom it is used the same as in the city for all culinary and other purposes.

Q. Drawn directly out of the river at the canneries?—A. Yes; at the canneries.

Q. So you are under the impression that it is not injurious to fish, man, or beast?—A. Well, I am under the impression that it is not so—there are waters in stagnant sloughs that are not fit to drink, but there is such rank vegetation there.

Q. This water in the sloughs—is its condition brought about by offal?—A. No offal can get there—it is flat land—offal does not affect it there. It is a great trouble on flat land for farmers have to go to the river to get good water.

Q. Is the water saline up at your cannery?—A. No; it is always fresh water.

Q. Now, as you are a practical man here and of large experience, have you ever made any attempt to dispose of the offal as the law requires?—A. No.

Q. Were you aware all this time that you were open to heavy penalties?—A. No, I never thought about it—there is no use of anticipating anything bad—it was never put in force. Of course if it had been put in force I would have had to do the next best thing.

Q. You never looked forward to having it done?—A. No; I never bothered about it.

Q. Have you in connection with other canners lately thought it advisable to put offal out in the channel of the river?—A. Well I think it is put in the channel in most cases. The canners will always do anything that will satisfy the people as far as we can comply with it, but at the same time I don't think it would be any material benefit.

Q. Are canneries erected in the channel of the river?—A. Well, they are not in the centre of the river, but they deposit offal in deep water and in a current as deep as in the channel, unless you go to pick out some deep places in the channel.

Q. Is the channel sometimes so strong as to require considerable steam power in a ship or tug so as to stem it?—A. No; the average current is about four miles an hour. It may be more at low water and according to the strength of the tide—it may be on the sand heads as much as seven and eight miles an hour.

Q. Then there is considerable current in the middle of the river—is the current similar where the canneries are built?—A. Yes; the same current—from four to six miles an hour.

Q. Is it a fact or not that some canneries are built so that they almost touch the banks of the river?—A. Well, they are all built in that way—some may be built in not so much current.

Q. But all are more or less built so that a portion is over the water on piers and part on the land?—A. Yes, the building; but they are all built so that we clean the fish all over the water, and in a great many places the banks of the river are almost perpendicular—you are right in deep water at once.

Q. You know that the law was, offal shall be disposed of otherwise than by putting it in the river—what suggestion could you make as to its disposal?—A. Well, I don't know any way it could be done.

Q. Is it cast down in such immense quantities?—A. Yes, the only way I think it could be done, would be to put it in scows and take it right out to the middle of the Gulf, but that would be an impossibility, because the expense would be great and one-half the time it would have to be put right on the fishing grounds, especially when the sea was running, and powerful boats would be needed to take it out.

Q. Would that be beyond the lighthouse?—A. Oh, yes; five or six miles below the lighthouse.

Q. Is fishing carried on out beyond the lighthouse?—A. Yes.

Q. They get along very well with small boats there?—A. Yes.

Q. Then a steamer could carry it out?—A. Yes, but at great expense, and it would be a matter of consideration for me whether I would do without catching salmon at all.

Q. Do not some canners send offal to the oil factory at a distance?—A. Yes, some do—I have smelt it (laughter)—still I don't think it any benefit. They may extract some oil from it, but this offal again goes into the river.

Q. Is the oil establishment still running?—A. No, it can only run for two or three weeks.

Q. But it ran last year?—A. Yes, and I think the year before.

Q. Do you know what they do with the oil they make?—A. No, I expect it is exported from the country—there is dog-fish oil—that is exported.

Q. Do they make dog-fish oil there?—A. No.

Q. It has been running two or three years?—A. Yes, but not running to any extent.

Q. If the establishment was larger they could handle more offal?—A. Yes, but that would be no benefit, their offal is still going into the river—(i.e. the offal from the oil factory).

Q. Then you think anything extracted from the offal would not take away any of the injurious effects?—A. No, I don't think it would—they only take a portion of the

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oil from it, they don't do it all and a great deal of money has been spent in British Columbia in trying to make this oil business a success and they have brought men from New York, but it has failed.

Q. A good deal of English capital has been invested in canneries here, has it not?—A. Yes, I believe so.

Q. Do you not know it to be so?—A. Well, there is a good deal of this money in the business, but many people here still retain their money in it, too.

Q. Do you not think that if the law was enforced these capitalists who have invested money in the cannery would not go on with the oil factory and prevent the offal from going into the river?—A. Well, I don't know that.

Q. But would these people not carry out the law and extract oil?—A. Well, I don't know anything about it—my opinion is, that if I was in that position I would stop work.

Q. Do you mean to say that the canneries would stop if offal was prevented from going into the river?—A. Yes, as far as I am concerned. Give me the fish for nothing and make me comply with the law and I would not touch it.

Q. Have you made calculations on that?—A. Well, I have made calculations, and I know what the cost of the steamer would be to carry the offal to the factory, and I know it would be greater than the cost of our fish—then the other way, that is putting it into the Gulf,—the only means that I can think of, and I know if that was done in a reasonable way we would go into it, but no matter how we did it we would find it a greater nuisance than that complained of.

Q. Yet the cannery are willing to carry offal out in scows to the channel of the river?—A. I don't know anything about that.

Q. Do you belong to the Cannery Association?—A. No, I don't—in fact there is no association.

Q. Do they not have meetings and make rules, &c.?—A. Well, there was an association a few years ago, but it is broken up.

Q. Before they went to Ottawa?—A. Yes; I think so—I am not particular in remembering dates.

Q. Do you know the cause for breaking up the association?—A. Well, I don't want to say—I don't think it would do any good to tell you—people disagree, you know.

Q. Do you know on what they disagreed?—A. Well, greatly on this question of licenses.

Q. Were some wanting more licenses than others?—A. Well, those are questions it is useless to ask, for I speak only for myself.

Q. Then your opinion is it would be injurious to the canneries to be compelled, as the law directs, to consume offal otherwise than by putting it in the river?—A. Well, I consider it would be unnecessary expense, and I cannot suggest any way that would lessen the expense to do this and which is not necessary.

Q. But suppose a higher authority said it was necessary, what then?—A. Well, I would have to do it or stop working.

Q. And you think if that was the case, it would be very injurious to you?—A. Not to me wholly, but to the industry.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. But you know what is the law if you throw offal in the river, and the Government as a government have no power to change that law?—A. I don't know if they have power or not.

Q. No; they have not. An Act of Parliament cannot be changed except by another Act which supersedes it. Now, you stand, as cannery, in this way—anyone can go before a magistrate and complain of you throwing that offal in the river, and you could be fined up to \$100 for every day and every time you do it. Now, would it not be better to do something to get out of that position?—A. Well, we have been trying to do all we could.

Q. Well, but you have done nothing, but a few cannery have started an oil factory?—A. Well, but it is not a success and then most of their offal goes again into the river.

Q. Are you aware they have tons of it there and have not thrown any of it into the river?—A. I am aware tons of it have gone into the river.

Q. But you stand in that position still and liable to be fined \$100 every day and every time you throw it in?—A. Well, if you put it at \$100 a day, in a good run it would be the cheapest way we could get out of it.

Q. But it would be \$100 every time you put it in?—A. Oh, well, I might make another suggestion—that if the Government put that in force it might be the best thing for the country. I rather think if any people are doing evil, it is within the province of the people to stop it. If it is wrong, they are the governing authority. I am aware of the position we are in.

Q. And some day some one will come forward and lay complaint?—A. I know it.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. You say there were tons of offal went in the river from the oil factory. Can you tell how much?—A. Two tons or over.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Do you think it as injurious as the offal of fish, or worse?—A. Well, I would consider it was more so. They take the oil away from it, and the oil, you know, is pretty good food. Lots of people live a good deal on it—the water goes down smoother (jokingly).

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Now, about 200 tons of offal are thrown away from each establishment on an average. Do you know how many establishments sent offal down to this factory?—A. No; I have heard two, but I cannot give definite information. You ask Laidlaw or Wadham, and they will tell you.

Q. You think it a hardship that the Government should insist upon offal not being thrown into the water? I think you said no other countries interfered with this?—A. I don't know of other countries.

Q. I will show you what other countries do : In the State of Washington there is a penalty of from \$50 to \$250 exacted from persons throwing deleterious substances in streams?—A. Well, that is observed something like it is in British Columbia.

Q. Then in the State of Oregon there is a penalty of from \$100 to \$500 for persons putting in deleterious substances?—A. But I beg your pardon—they all allow offal to go into the river, and don't consider it one of the nuisances. That is their reading of the law.

Q. The law applies throughout all the Dominion that offal shall not be thrown into the water, nor upon the Atlantic shores where fishing is carried on, and fishermen have applied for that because, they say, where offal is thrown in, fish gradually disappear. I merely mention that to show that the Fraser River is not alone where a law regarding offal is in force. In England, and in Sweden and Norway, it is not allowed?—A. I fished for over twenty years in England and Scotland and there was no such law to my knowledge.

Q. But probably since you came away the waters became defiled and depleted, and it became necessary to make this law?—A. As a rule, there is not the amount of offal thrown into rivers there as here, and it is utilized in various ways; but I have seen great quantities thrown outside of harbours into the water.

Q. But you don't seem willing to do even that here?—A. Well, but when it cannot be carried away, it is put into the harbour. This happens two or three days during the herring fishery.

Q. Are you aware at Burrard Inlet there was a factory there and the quantity of offal, &c., thrown in has driven herring away?—A. Well, herring have gone away, as they have in several places, but there is a city there now and other things. The herring came into tidal water to spawn upon rocks, old logs, &c., but the saw-mills and sewerage have destroyed vegetation, &c.,—the saw-dust from wood when it lodges upon the mud changes it—it gets black as coal tar and very offensive, and it was these causes that stopped the herring—they had nothing to spawn upon.

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Q. Was saw-dust so plentiful as to cover the body of the harbour?—A. Well, it became very plentiful, and there is a city there now. The herring have disappeared from many places on this coast.

Q. I suppose you know there are many places in the Dominion where salmon have wholly left?—A. I don't know about other parts of the Dominion.

Q. But if you were told it was so and they left from such causes, would you not think herring disappeared from similar causes?—A. Well, fish disappear as civilization comes in.

Q. Do you not want civilization to come because the salmon will disappear?—A. Oh no; but I want people to have fish while they can—they are as plentiful as ever they have been.

Q. And you think offal not injurious to fish life, or in any way?—A. Well, not to fish life—I am not a scientist.

Q. You heard articles read yesterday about these matters?—A. Yes, I heard something, but I did not get a full knowledge of it.

Q. Then you defer to practical men and scientists and medical men who say it would tend to a better surrounding if not put into the water, and they then say it will pay well, &c.?—A. Well, let them try it—practical experience is often different to theory.

Q. Then you think the remarks falling from these men are not correct?—A. No, I would not say that, but I do not think they are correct as regards here—it has not yet been shown that it is injurious here—the fish are as plentiful as ever they have been.

Q. But fish were scarce when you came here first?—A. They were at first, yes.

Q. You had smaller appliances then?—A. No, just the same—there were just six or eight nets, or ten then.

Q. Now there are about 600?—A. Yes, but we were catching then ten and twenty salmon in a day.

Q. But how many now?—A. Well, in some off years that is the average we catch now.

Q. What is the cause of their being more plentiful now?—A. But I don't say they are more plentiful—as plentiful as ever, not more plentiful.

Q. What do you think of the effect of artificial breeding here?—A. Well, I have not seen anything from it that has shown anything to give an opinion upon—it is altogether in an experimental stage yet. The artificial breeding of salmon I don't think has been anything of a success—anything as I have heard or read about.

Q. You think it no success anywhere?—A. Well, I have never heard of it. I have seen artificial breeding about fifty years ago. I have been round the coasts of Scotland marking the smolt when they were leaving. The first year I was here I saw many smolts but have not seen them since. They can be seen very well; the water is crowded and you can see them. We were fishing with same mesh as used in Italian seine for catching oulachs, and in catching these we got a number of smolts or young salmon—there was not a great number. Then I take a great interest in salmon—I have been catching salmon for the last fifty years.

Q. Do you think saw-dust injurious to rivers?—A. I don't think saw-dust injurious to salmon. When they come in here they are forcing their way through anything—they get beyond us in twenty-four hours.

At 11.35 a.m. the Court room, being required by His Honour Judge Boles for the trial of a pending case, the chairman declared the Commission adjourned until 1 o'clock p.m., Mr. A. Ewen to return at that hour for further examination.

Afternoon Session.

WESTMINSTER, 23rd February, 1892.

The Commission reassembled in the jury room, Court-house, at 1 p.m. Present: Mr. S. Wilnot, in the Chair; Sheriff Armstrong and Secretary Winter. The examination of Mr. A. Ewen was continued.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. We got as far as the ofal question, I think?—A. I have one bit of correction of my remarks to make. There is a Canners' Association in existence yet. It is not confined to cannerymen, but, in common, most prominent men in the province belong to it. It is not a Canners' Association alone, but takes in salt fish and others as well. Its headquarters are in Victoria. There are a number of cannerymen in it, and others besides.

Q. Cannerymen and fishermen, is that it?—A. Yes, anybody. It is open for you to be a member, if you like. The fee is \$50.

Q. Will you advance the fee? I might get information from it more than here? (laughter)—A. Oh, well, if you are disposed to put your money in it, you would see. And then there is the question of my having only one cannery—the question was put to me several times. I have two, but it never came into my head; but I don't look upon it as more than one.

Q. Both fully equipped and ready for work?—A. Yes; ready for work but I have never operated in the new one. I could not get fish enough to do anything with it. I got the licenses, but used the boats for the one establishment. I could not get either fish or men to work it.

Q. What is the capacity of your factory?—A. Oh, I don't know. In the one that I worked I put up over 2,000 cases a day.

Q. The annual output has been equal to that?—A. This last three or four years it has been about 25,000 or 30,000 cases—taking the past three or four years.

Q. What is the ordinary average pack—yours is the largest by far, is it not?—A. No; I don't know that it is much larger than others.

Q. You do more business than others?—A. I have been doing more than others.

Q. What is the average pack of theirs, have you any idea?—A. Well, the statements are different every year in the Dominion blue-books, and the statements are made here from the Board of Trade.

Q. What capacity should a cannery be to allow it to obtain the usual supply of licenses?—A. I don't know.

Q. Should a cannery be established with a capacity of using ten boats, but yet get twenty?—A. Well, that is a question that no person can calculate upon—it depends upon what fish you get. You may begin, and wish to put up forty or fifty cases a day, and get boats for it, but after the run begins, you may have to take off half of the boats and then this large catch is only for a few days—ten days or two weeks as a rule—that you can get more fish than you can cure. The rest of the time you don't get such a supply; perhaps not near as many as you want.

Q. What do you think the number of boats should be for a cannery—what the outside limit?—A. Well, I should like to have at least forty. Last year I got fish from over sixty.

Q. Then the outside limit should be forty?—A. Yes; I don't care what limit it is, as long as the limitation is on the whole river. It was placed, I believe, two years ago, when the department put the limit at twenty or twenty-five boats, and the \$20 license fee, but it was with the understanding that the river should be left open.

Q. Then the canneries were to be unlimited in licenses?—A. Not particularly the canners—we had reason for that on account of labour.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Limited to what?—A. To twenty-five—it was on account of labour, but outside of that we tried for the river to be unlimited.

Marine and Fisheries.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Then you as a body of canners wished the river to be open without limit?—A. Yes; that was what we asked for; but then they raised the licenses, but still kept the limitation on.

Q. But the object now is to know as near as possible what is a fair division of licenses. You were willing to say then that twenty-five should be a fair proportion to the canners and fishermen unlimited?—A. Yes; but I would be willing for that yet, and the reason we want that quantity is on account of the Indian labour. It is impossible to put up a large quantity of fish in that time, unless you have Indian labour.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Do you think each cannery should have the same number of licenses?—A. Well, if licenses were unlimited to outside parties, I see no necessity of one cannery having more than another—no real necessity; but if the river was limited it would be unfair to give them all the same number of licenses.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. But your view in a few words means this—you are of the impression that it would be best for canners to be limited to a certain number?—A. No, I don't say it would be best—but it is making no material difference.

Q. But should canners get licenses not exceeding twenty-five and outside fishermen get all they want?—A. Yes, I think it would do, but it would not be satisfactory if the same limitation was kept up.

Q. And would 25 boats be sufficient for canners to run establishments with a pack of 15,000 cases?—A. No it would not.

Q. How many would it take to do it?—A. It would depend on the season. Between thirty and forty boats. They might not use all during the heavy run.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Could you give us an average?—A. It is impossible to give an average. The real reason that you want to have those boats of your own and get Indian fishermen as they bring their families around and you have Indian women and boys, and some of the men, not fishermen, to work in the canneries, and when this extra fishing comes on you can take off your own boats and get off to work in the cannery. There are not so many Chinamen as there were, and Indians, these last few years, are more pliable and will work in the cannery when they see there is a rush. Three or four years ago they would not do this, but now they are more pleased to work when they get more wages in the cannery, and they will work during that period when salmon is so plentiful. This is the real reason why we would like to have these licenses, or rather that I would.

Q. You found last year forty licenses necessary to run one cannery?—A. Yes; I run between sixty and seventy boats and they didn't get near supplied. There was more fish come than we expected. I took off a number of Indians and limited men who were fishing down for a day or two till we got over the run, it only happened one or two days somehow like that.

Q. And you think it necessary to have that number of boats every year?—A. Well, we would like to have that privilege. This year I had a lot of boats and gave them to persons who could not get a license—some took them on shares—that is the great trouble many of the best fishermen could not get a license.

Q. But you would like to get forty?—A. Yes; but out of that forty I don't fish myself more than fifteen or sixteen.

Q. The rest you let out?—A. Yes; I give them to good men.

Q. Do you get fish cheaper that way?—A. Well, it just depends—sometimes you get them cheaper.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Have you an idea of the gross number of boats fished on the river in 1890.
A.—No.

Q. The limit was 500—how far did it exceed that number?—A. I don't know. I never knew it exceeded that at all.

Q. Are you not aware it exceeded that number by forty or fifty?—A. Well, I don't know—I heard so—I believe there were some licenses came out after the others were taken up.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. You would be willing to do with these licenses if the river was thrown open to all *bona fide* fishermen to get licenses?—A. Yes ; and I think it an impossibility to over-fish the river under the present system as fished, as you are confined to gill-nets and limited to tidal waters.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. What is worse than gill-nets, then?—A. I don't know of anything worse that could be applied in this river, for fish that enter the Fraser River are beyond the reach of the fishermen and protected after they enter the river, the water is cold and the fish swim fast and they go right past us, you may say the same day they are at the sand-heads they are at Yale, the difference of time, you can hardly distinguish it.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. You say under the limits they could not be decreased?—A. Well, under the regulations we can only bar one-third of the river.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Is that observed?—A. Well, yes it is, I think.

Q. It is something like the offal, perhaps?—A. Well, I don't know, you would want a steamboat, perhaps, to have it perfectly observed.

Q. Well, you say you cannot adhere to laws, or won't adhere?—A. Well, I maintain these laws are framed without consulting the peculiarities of the river. It is impossible to over-fish the river with the loose drift-net—the river is wider in one place than another, and your net is drifted at three and four and five miles an hour, and you get in places where you cannot use it.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Do you think the fishery in danger of being exhausted, if all fishermen get licenses?—A. No ; I don't think there is any danger.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Then how did the fishermen come to the conclusion about the limitation of 350 and 150?—A. Well, that limitation was asked for for a number of years, and I don't think I was in favour of it any more than now.

Q. It was at the instigation of the canners?—A. Well, I don't know as it was at their instigation altogether—reports were taken from the Board of Trade, and I think that it was the Board of Trade that sent these representatives—the Board of Trade of Victoria.

Q. Do they rule the fisheries of the Fraser River?—A. No ; but they may have a word to say—but there were representations made that were not wholly correct. It was correct in this way, they showed that the pack was much less than years before.

Q. Because of scarcity of salmon in the river?—A. They attributed it to that, but it was not so ; the canneries were running so low because the markets were so over-supplied there was no demand for them.

Q. But we don't want the markets, we are talking of fish?—A. Well, I tell you it was not scarcity of fish ; the people here have been suggesting things to the department, but this thing of over-fishing the river has been pressed upon the mind of the Government, and it is that which has hampered the industry here.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. But you ask for a limit of 500 boats, to be divided among cannery and outside fishermen; then twenty boats was the limit for cannery—now you want twenty-five or thirty—therefore fish must be getting scarcer?—A. Those are not facts.

Q. I merely mention this to show that there must be some cause now why you ask for twenty-five or forty?—A. I dispute the facts.

Q. But if you require twenty-five or forty nets now to do work which you did with twenty, there must be a scarcity of fish?—A. But this suggestion never came from this association; I don't know what private individuals have done, but I don't know as it has ever been stated that twenty boats were quite sufficient.

Q. Then you do not agree with the general opinions of the association?—A. In some I do, but in this I do not. They might have been satisfied with twenty licenses in these last few years, if the river was left unlimited.

Q. Well, it is just simply this, all they were entitled to was twenty licenses?—A. Last year was the first time it came down to twenty licenses; the year before I had thirty-eight or thirty-nine.

Q. You think it necessary to have a greater number of licenses than twenty to carry out your work?—A. Yes; because the industry is getting greater all the time, and more going into it. Fish are just as plentiful as ever they were, but more capital is going into the business every year.

Q. Do you think anyone should put up a cannery who likes?—A. Well, it is all right—there should be no restriction.

Q. Then factories should be unlimited in number, the outside fishermen should be unlimited in number—then what about the limit of licenses to cannery?—A. They should be unlimited—if they were I might not take ten or twenty licenses, but I want the privilege of doing it to get Indian labour around my cannery—the whole object is really to enable us to get the Indian labour.

Q. You consider the fishing should be thrown open to all—as many canneries as people like to build and all fishermen to get licenses?—A. Yes; it means virtually throwing the river open.

Q. Then you don't think too much fishing can hurt the river?—A. No; it has never done so yet, and I don't think if it is thrown open there would be more fishing done.

Q. No matter how much fishing is done you cannot injure the river?—A. Yes; there is nothing to show injury yet—it might be over done perhaps, but keeping in view the present modes of fishing and the limitation that we cannot go beyond the tidal waters, it is not at all likely, but when these limits are on you cannot over-fish it—you may get some years when it is easier getting supplied up the river, that it may be profitable to fish higher up and especially now when they are working the cold-storage system and shipping fish all over the world.

Q. Then you think that a wholesale throwing open of the river would not be injurious to the river?—A. No; under present laws it would not be. The fish in twenty-four hours are beyond our reach—the river is alive with them.

Q. Well, the next matter is, are the fish pretty much the same every year?—A. Some years they are larger and some smaller, but there is not much difference—some years when there is a heavy run they are smaller.

Q. What average—seven or eight pounds?—A. Thereabouts.

Q. Do you put more than one pound in a can?—A. As a rule—sometimes there is less—when you are canning you cannot weigh them all and the light ones come back to the cannery's loss—they would average about eighteen or nineteen ounces to the tin.

Q. How many cans do you get to the fish?—A. Well, it will run between four and five.

Q. So with an ordinary sized fish you can four or five cans and the rest is thrown away as offal—of an eight pound fish there would be four of meat and three of offal?—A. Yes; sometimes you may get them larger or smaller—I don't know exactly the proportion—I have weighed them but I have not gone into the thing so close.

Q. Have you any idea of the quantity of offal going into the river in any one year?—A. No.

Q. Would you be astonished if I told you it was many million pounds weight?—A. No; but it has been very much exaggerated.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Yes; to get more licenses?—A. Well, I was under a bond for \$40,000, and these twenty licenses cost me \$16,000, which was money throw away for no use.

Q. But men say you made \$25,000?—A. Well, I knew I threw that away; it is impossible to tell you what you make or what you lose in the season.

Q. I want you to give an average; surely you can do that?—A. Well, not very well; in the past five or six years the canneries have made from 10 to 20 per cent upon their investments; they might have made 10 per cent; last year there is a great possibility there was 20 or 30 per cent loss.

Q. Well, we want to know what it costs in order to know if any incumbrances should be put on the canneries?—A. But incumbrances are put on as the offal and the limitations that are put on.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. But this—the offal—is not an incumbrance, because the law has never been put in force?—A. But we are afraid that it will be.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. You see, as the law stands at the present day, you are liable to a fine if any person lays complaint before a magistrate, and if you want us to recommend this matter to the Government we must get figures to know?—A. But if this expense is put on us we will have to shut the cannery; this offal question is the most serious question put against us.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. But you have never had any trouble?—A. No; but we expect to.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. But we must have figures to show?—A. Well, let the Government put the law in force and let them see how it will act; then they will see if it will be beneficial to the country; I am not speaking personally, but for the province and the industry. I might speak the other way if I spoke personally, not only on offal but everything else.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, Mr. Ewen, have you anything else to lay before us?—A. No; I will give way to someone else.

ALBERT FADER, of Vancouver, a British Canadian, a resident of British Columbia for three years and nine months, and a fish dealer, was duly sworn.

Mr. FADER.—I represent now the British Columbia Fishing and Trading Company, limited.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Have you anything special to lay before us?—A. Well, about the close season; I don't quite understand that the close season means outside of the Fraser River or not.

Q. It is applicable all over British Columbia?—A. Well, I think it would effect the salt water fishermen.

Q. They are fishing where?—A. Anywhere in salt water; I mean outside of rivers, on the coast; there are lots of salmon taken by hooks, and some by gill-nets, and it is for local trade and also for some trade shipments to the mountains; I think it would effect the trade generally.

Marine and Fisheries.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Do you think the canneries a benefit to the Indian population of the province ?
—A. Well, I believe they are ; it is work the Indian naturally likes to work at and they get good wages and whole families work at it. If the Indians departed from working at that, I think there would be nothing for them but to go back to reservations and let the Government feed them. There are a great number of them, and if the Indians were not here we could not put up our work like we do.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Are Indians and Indian women employed exclusively ?—A. No ; not one-half or one-tenth—the most are Indian boys, their ambition is to be fishermen. I find now the Indians are only too willing to get in the cannery and work there as long as there is work for them. We want to get everyone to work in the cannery during the run of fish as long as we can get fish, but if we cannot get fish we put them out to fish again.

Q. Suppose the Fraser River clear limpid water—would you catch more fish with a gill-net or seine ?—A. Well, it would throw the gill-net fishing into night work, because you would get very few in daylight, and it would allow the salmon to congregate in shoals together and with seines you would get more fish at less expense. I believe in fishing with a seine in clear water where you can see it would be the best way, but in muddy water you cannot use it so profitably.

Q. Then a seine is a more destructive engine than a gill-net ?—A. Well, you will find in British Columbia more seines than gill-nets ; they throw the seine out into the river, stretched out, and watch for fish going up. It is a question of economy which is best to do.

Q. What do you think of the close season ?—A. Well, I think the present rule for the weekly close season is as good as can be made—from six o'clock Saturday morning to six o'clock Sunday night.

Q. Do you think it would be injurious to your interest to extend the time to twelve o'clock Sunday night ?—A. Yes ; I would rather have it to six o'clock Monday morning than twelve o'clock Sunday night, but if you make it twelve o'clock Sunday night, make it begin at twelve o'clock Saturday noon.

Q. Well, I think your views are correct ; from the moral point of view what do you say ?—A. Well, look at the great trouble you will have getting the boats out ; the people would have to be around in the evening if you made it twelve o'clock Sunday ; it would evade the carrying out of the law and be very disagreeable.

Q. I think your views very correct that fishing might commence on Monday morning ?—A. The question is whether would the Sabbath observation be beneficial, and it is a question for the Government ; it is the first time that I have heard it advocated by the Government to take Sunday.

Q. Well, I think you will find statutory enactments that work shall not be done on Sunday—emanating from both the Provincial and Dominion Governments, if I am not mistaken ?—A. Well, I don't know that.

Q. You think then the Sunday close time all right ?—A. Yes.

Q. What do you think of an annual close season ?—A. Well, an annual close season in British Columbia, and the Fraser River particularly, it would be very hard to keep—we have so many different kinds of salmon here.

Q. Do you have a close season now ?—A. Yes.

Q. When ?—A. When fish are done ; they make a close season for themselves. When the canneries commence they fish for a very short portion of the season, but the great difficulty is, we have five different kinds of salmon here and they don't all run at the same time. There are fish caught in the river that should not be caught.

Q. What are they ?—Well, there is the early spring salmon, the sockeye, the hump-back, and everything else.

Q. You say the spring salmon should not be caught ?—A. At certain seasons.

Q. What seasons ?—A. Well, after they are down in condition and are not good food.

Q. When they have spawned ?—A. No ; before they spawn.

Q. When would that be?—A. In the latter part of August and early part of September.

Q. Then they should be preserved in August and September?—A. Well, sometime about that.

Q. They are running the whole season through?—A. No; but you will get them after that, but not plentifully. At that time you will be catching the sockeyes, but they are not good.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. What time should you not catch the spring salmon?—A. Well, about the middle of September.

Q. For how long?—A. Until the following spring, April.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. What would you consider a proper close season for sockeye?—A. Well, they run until the middle of August.

Q. And until when should they not be caught?—A. Well, not until the first of next July again.

Q. The next most valuable fish is the coho, is it not?—A. Well, yes; it is the next best commercial fish.

Q. Should they have a close season?—A. All should have close seasons.

Q. What for cohoes?—A. Well, I cannot think of these things all at once—well, they come in along after the latter part of the spring salmon, about the 15th September, and they hold out longer than any run we have, except it be the spring salmon.

Q. Then, the close time for spring salmon would cover cohoes, too?—A. Well, you might make it for cohoes all the year, excepting two months, beginning the middle of September—September, October, and the first two weeks of November—this is the time you have them in good condition, but you cannot fish for one without catching the other.

Q. Well, but you could pitch them away, as you do with white salmon?—A. Well, that is what is done with them all.

Q. Have you any objection to the present limits for fishing in the Fraser River. Do you agree to a stoppage of fishing from Garry Bush out?—A. No; it is from Garry Bush out that we have the greatest area of fishing ground.

Q. The best fishing ground?—A. Well, you have a larger field to work in there.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. Well, suppose a mile from Garry Bush outwards was prevented from being fished, what effect would that have?—A. The fishing is not done altogether in the channel—the fishing is done nearly from Point Roberts to Point Grey, going outside as far as they can get fish to work with, as there is a larger area of ground.

Q. You think it injudicious to shorten the limits of the river?—A. Yes; I don't think the present limits interfere with anyone much.

Q. Then, the present limits are all right?—A. Yes, I think they are about right.

Q. The present limits extend up to Sumas. The recommendation now is that it be shortened down to Pitt River and Hammond, the present regulations say "tidal water," now this is with a view that it will prevent in the future more canneries being built up to the Sumas, where fish would be annihilated, and so the department says we will shorten up the distance down to Hammond and Pitt River.

Q. Now, Mr. Ewen, who, in your opinion, should get licenses. Should everybody get licenses, if British subjects?—A. Yes; let any man, even not a British subject, we have the same privilege with United States citizens, for fishermen can go down to the Columbia River and fish. (Voice from the audience.) No; it cannot be done.

Mr. EWEN (continuing.) If the limitation is kept on I should certainly say only British subjects should get licenses because when a limit is put on they work into parties hands who are not as deserving as others.

Marine and Fisheries.

Q. Do you think the transfer of licenses correct, and is it right to barter them?
—A. Well, I don't know whether right or not—I have no objection—it perhaps would not be fair, but it would allow the fish to be caught in the country.

Q. Otherwise is it just that a man who comes to this country to settle cannot get a license should others barter them out to him?—A. No; that is not justice, but I maintain if the limit is taken off no harm would be done.

Q. Well, Mr. Ewen, we have had a long discussion with you—unless you have something else to say we are quite satisfied?—A. Well, have you been doing anything about the sea fisheries? There are a number of fishermen who are more acquainted with salt water fishing than with fresh water fishing on the Fraser River—it has not been touched upon. There has been a discrimination of licenses here in British Columbia that has not been fair.

Q. Do you think a man on the Fraser River should pay twenty dollars and a man on the Skeena or Naas pay only five dollars?—A. No; I don't think it fair.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Should fishermen with boat and net pay the same price as cannerymen?—A. Yes; and when this twenty dollar license fee was suggested, and I believe I was one of the principal ones for doing it, it was intended the fee should be the same.

Q. Do you think the license fee should be the same all round?—A. Yes; I think it should be the same—there is more competition here and less on the Skeena and other rivers. I think the canning industry should be hampered as little as possible; there has been a great deal of canned salmon put up for a number of years and the consumption is not equal to the supply, and it has been done for the purpose of forcing it on the world, but people are going away from eating canned goods rather than taking more of it, and I think it not wise to hamper the industry. Here we should not be too much cramped—we have Alaska and other places to compete with, and British Columbia would be shut out of the market altogether if you hamper us too much.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Would 500 boats catch more than 100?—A. Oh, yes; I suppose so.

Q. Now, if you gave unlimited fishing here to everybody would it not increase the catch?—A. Well, I don't think it would increase the catch nor increase the number of boats fishing on the river—that is my belief—but it would make it satisfactory to everyone employed in the industry. People would not take more licenses than they require, if free to all. I might not want ten licenses, if plenty outside, and certainly I would not put up a great quantity of salmon unless I could sell them.

Q. But if another Government allows the Alaska fishermen to bring their fisheries to an end as fast as possible, should we not husband ours here?—A. I don't know what it is in Alaska, but I know the Columbia River is similar to the Fraser River and salmon are as plentiful as ever they were.

Q. Yes; but the United States Government are instituting means whereby they shall not be fished as much as possible?

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. You say that if the fishing business here is hampered you will not be able to compete with the industries of other countries. How are we to know that unless you give us figures as to cost of putting up a case of fish, &c. It has been stated here that you can afford to put up a cannery for \$5,000, and by getting twenty licenses can make \$25,000—how are we to know if that is correct, or that you are hampered?—A. Canneries that are up here, already in existence, and under present regulations, cannot work up to their expenditure.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, how is it you build additional canneries every year?—A. Well, I built an additional cannery last year because I got cornered.

Q. How so?—A. Well, it has been exaggerated—how much blood is there in a fish? Then there is always more or less water inside them—well, all these things should be taken into consideration—it is a good deal of guess work with anyone.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Do you think there is half a pound of blood in a fish?—A. Yes; I should think so.

Q. Then that should be deducted from the offal?—A. Yes.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. Would you be astonished to hear that you had put 3,373,012 pounds of offal into the river in 1889?—A. I don't know.

Q. Well, how do you say the figures are exaggerated?—A. Well, take the quantities of fish, and I am sure it is exaggerated.

Q. Well, but take the fish caught—they made so many cans, and the balance would be offal, would it not?—A. Yes; but it is all guess work—you know the number of cases made, but you cannot tell how many fish you put into them.

Q. Well, but you say your fish average so and so and you make so many cans?—A. Well, in some cases you make more—some seasons you don't average eight fish to the case. The way to do is to bring it right through, one season with another.

Q. But when you state public prints are exaggerated you should be able to prove it?—A. Well, it is taken from report, not from observation.

Q. It is taken from your own reports?—A. Well, we don't get them.

Q. Don't you sell your cans by so many numbers?—A. By so many numbers, but that does not represent the whole work—you cannot get it unless you go down and see it.

Q. About saw-dust—you think it injurious to the river?—A. I don't think it injurious to salmon—the saw-dust between here and the mouth of the river—because salmon don't lie here—they are not in any pools—they are passing hundreds of miles beyond them.

Q. But, you must remember this Commission is not dealing solely with the Fraser River, but with all matters regarding the fisheries of British Columbia—now do you not think saw-dust injurious?—A. If it lodges on the spawning grounds, undoubtedly.

Q. How can you prevent it lodging on the spawning grounds?—A. Well, in British Columbia I don't think it could get on the spawning beds unless it ran up-hill. It is not proper to put it in streams where it can lodge upon spawning grounds, but I am not so rabid as to say that it should not be put into streams where it does not do injury.

Q. But it might be injurious in one stream and not in another?—A. Well, I think it would be injurious in all streams, because where there is saw-dust it hurts the spawning.

Q. What are your views as regards fishing with seines?—A. Well, fishing with seines is the only way that has been attempted to fish in salt water inlets and bays as yet—they could not work them in the Fraser River.

Q. But as compared for destructive qualities—the gill-net and seine?—A. I don't think either very destructive—you could not use a seine in the Fraser River. I expect what you want to get at is that seines take all the young fish that are unfit for food.

Q. Do you think they do?—A. No, I don't; but I never had much experience with them—I never saw any young fish.

Q. But if a seine is hauled around the coasts of creeks and rivers, is it more injurious than a floating net?—No; I think both equally the same. It is not injurious, it is only a mode of catching them; if fish have to be caught either is good—it is a question which is the cheapest way of catching them.

Q. Then if both are alike, all your gill-nets are seines?—A. No, they are not; you require smaller mesh for seines—it is for catching fish without gilling them. When our fish are coming plentifully they are striking the nets everywhere. If it was clear water in the river you could not catch them with gill-nets.

Q. Then it is muddy water that gives the opportunity of getting caught in gill-nets?—A. No; but it makes them cheaper in that way. We could not catch them with gill-nets if the river was clear on the shoals, &c., and the muddy water makes it unprofitable to work seines.

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Q. Well, sir, you think then that any close season would affect trade in relation to catching fish on the coast?—A. Yes; I do.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do you mean weekly or annual close season?—A. The annual close season.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. You think it injurious to enforce the weekly close season?—A. I think the present law in that regard very good.

Q. In your capacity do you represent canners?—A. No, sir.

Q. Simply the ordinary fishermen on the coast?—A. Yes; we have fishermen from whom we buy and we have a steamer in the deep water fishery. We applied for licenses to go on this river last year but could not get them, and we think ourselves entitled to ten licenses as well as freezers to allow us to compete with them in eastern markets.

Q. At present you have no licenses?—A. No, sir; and our trade is hampered accordingly.

Q. What fish do you deal in?—A. All kinds, halibut and salmon principally.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do you get many cod?—A. Yes, several; but there is not much demand for them just now.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, as regards this deep-sea fishery the license would not apply?—A. No; but I am speaking of salmon in salt water, and talking of seine fishing in rivers—in clear water—now, that is the only way you can catch fish in the rivers up the coast. The rivers there are just as clear as can be and salmon will not gill at all.

Q. Have you any information from other parts of the world?—A. Yes; I came from Nova Scotia—the Atlantic coast.

Q. Are you not aware they fish in these limpid waters with gill-nets?—A. Yes; but salmon is a leading fish; at the mouths of the rivers they play around for several days and will not get across over twenty feet—if they strike a net they sheer off from it. I have tried a trap the same as we use in the east and I have not caught a salmon in the trap.

Q. Do you know Bay des Chaleurs or Bay of Fundy?—A. Yes; I know the Bay of Fundy, but they have very swift tide there; the water is not very clear and runs rapidly.

Q. You think the Pacific water more clear than the Atlantic?—A. Well, I don't know as it is.

Q. But the salmon act differently?—A. Well, you know our fish in the east will come and stop for nothing, but here it is different—salmon will fly around in coves and creeks after the small herring; the water is very full of small bait and they will not mesh as they will in the east. I have tried it in all ways, and as I say brought out a trap-net, but we could not catch them at all.

Q. But the last witness says fish cannot see and run into anything?—A. That is in the Fraser River—that is right.

Q. But in Great Britain they catch salmon in gill-nets?—A. I know, and on the Atlantic we do the same.

Q. But here you must use a seine?—A. Yes; I have been up the coast pretty often and could name several rivers I have been into and in which it would be no use to set a gill-net at all, they would not mesh.

Q. Therefore you think that to prevent seining at the mouths of rivers would be injudicious to you and the people you deal with?—A. Yes; in clear rivers.

Q. But we cannot distinguish one as a dirty and one as a clean river?—A. Well, you can easily find out—there are very few dirty rivers.

Q. Therefore it would apply generally?—A. Yes; there are not over three or four where you can gill salmon.

Q. Do persons who fish for you haul seines in the rivers?—A. Well, we have not bought any yet from seines.

Q. Then why are you giving evidence of the inability to catch salmon with gill-nets?—A. Well, we have tried gill-nets—I am speaking now of the river from Alert Bay where gill-nets have been tried time and time again and never with success—it is a limpid river and I have been up it, right up to the lake. Now on a river like the Fraser River you would not want a seine because the salmon gill.

Q. If they used the seine here would not they catch more fish than with the gill-net?—A. Well, yes, I think they would—if your seine took the bottom, of course, they would.

Q. But a seine generally does take the bottom?—A. Yes, of course—the Fraser River I am not so well acquainted with, but in smaller rivers I know that is the only chance to catch them.

Q. The seining you propose—is it on the river proper or on the coast?—A. At the mouth of rivers.

Q. Just where fish congregate to go up to spawn?—A. Well, of course, they have to come there to get in the rivers.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Are they large rivers—how wide at the mouth?—A. Some rivers 200 feet. I should say from 200 to 300 feet.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. And you draw the seine within that 200 feet and you take in all the river?—A. Well, a seine drawing on each side would take in—well, all the mouth.

Q. How many meshes in the bag of the net?—A. Well, it runs from five up. It just depends where you fish. Seines would run from ten to twenty feet deep.

Q. And what length?—A. Twenty to thirty and seventy-five fathoms.

Q. The lead lines always dragging on bottom and the corks on top, forming a bag as you draw it in?—A. Yes.

Q. What mesh do you use?—A. From two to four inch.

Q. Do you catch sockeyes there?—A. Well, those fish are caught in one river there. The only river we seine for the cannery is the Minkish. I don't know if any are used north of that or not.

Q. Have you been present when seines are drawn?—A. Yes; I have been present.

Q. What fish are caught, principally?—A. Sockeyes during their season. I have not been present when drawn—

Q. What other fish?—A. I have seen small fish—herring, flounders, and anything coming within the compass of the net would be brought in.

Q. What sizes of salmon?—A. Well, about the same size as on the Fraser River.

Q. Seven to eight pounds?—A. Yes.

Q. Are not smaller salmon, from two to three pounds, caught there?—A. No; I never heard of any.

Q. How are small salmon exposed on the markets for sale—are they caught in seines?—A. I don't know.

Q. Have you any on your stalls?—A. Well, a few are brought to me by fishermen.

Q. What time of the year are they brought?—A. I have seen them last March—some in February, a few—I never saw many on the market.

Q. Or you don't know how many are caught with seines at the mouth of rivers?—A. I don't think many at any time of the year. I think small salmon come in when no one is fishing.

Q. You catch herring?—A. Yes.

Q. And colachans?—A. No; the meshes are too big, and then it is only in a few rivers where the colachans are.

Q. What is the size of herring caught?—A. Small—eight to ten inches.

Q. Then the net would catch small salmon of eight or ten inches?—A. Yes; it would.

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Q. And if small salmon or trout were going in or out the mouth of these rivers, they would be caught?—A. Yes.

Q. What do you mean by trout?—A. I mean river trout.

Q. Do you know small salmon from trout?—A. Yes; I know them, but they never draw for herring at the mouths of rivers with inch mesh.

Q. Do you mean inch extension measure?—A. Yes; extension mesh. Two to four inch are generally used in the mouths of rivers.

Q. And would four inch catch salmon?—A. Oh, no; there are very few seines used on the coast.

Q. But they may grow to a great extent and create injurious results?—A. I don't think they would be an injury in deep water fisheries.

Q. Then if the use of seines were forbidden at the mouth of rivers, could they not catch salmon farther away?—A. No, sir; you see there could be no salmon taken at all in these rivers, unless taken by a seine.

Q. Why?—A. Because they will not gill.

Q. But why should seines be drawn at the mouth of rivers?—A. Well, I will show you. See here—(here witness drew a pencil diagram on paper, to illustrate his meaning, and presented to the Chairman.)

Q. But it would not catch more fish that way?—A. Oh, yes; of course it would; but parent fish have plenty of chance to get up the river. You see, it takes, say, three hours to throw the seine, and then they have the whole night for getting up.

Q. You never throw the seine at night?—A. Well, I never draw my seine at night. I cannot see that the fishermen up north can make a success of fishing there for salmon without seines. It is impossible for them to do it.

Q. Well, that was the way in all other places—in England and Scotland, &c.?—A. But do you not know that an Englishman gave away part of our country because the salmon would not take the fly (laughter). Well, that was the way when I came out here. I put down my trap and could not understand why I could not catch any salmon. I have set a gill-net for 250 miles up the coast, and I have set a trap up as far north as Cape Scott (north-western part of Vancouver Island), and never caught a salmon with either of them. Salmon will not lead here, sir.

Q. And you say salmon always run to the east?—A. Not here; they run every way. I said on the Atlantic coast they run east, but here they do not.

Q. But suppose a north and south river—what would they do?—A. Well, this is what I mean (illustrating his meaning by pencil diagram on paper). I have had trap nets and consider nets and salmon on the Atlantic coast quite different to the ones here.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do you think salmon knows its native river?—A. I do; and they go to that river and no other, because I see there is a little difference between the salmon here and the salmon north. You notice some difference between the Fraser River salmon and the northern salmon.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. No matter then whether the river runs from east, or west, or north, he would go in that river?—A. Yes; but our mackerel do the same thing; they follow down the American coast. As regards fishing for salmon, though, on our coasts here I think I am pretty correct as far as my experience goes from the way we have had our nets set, &c.

Q. Well, then, if salmon all go to their native rivers—and which is an admitted fact everywhere—and a river is 200 yards wide at the mouth, hauling a seine for 200 yards at the mouth of the stream, would it not interfere with the migration of salmon going up that river to breed?—A. Yes; to a certain extent; I don't believe that every salmon that goes in the river spawns.

Q. Why should they leave their feeding grounds and go up rivers if not for some purpose?—A. Well, they follow the flock.

Q. Then if an old fish went up and didn't feed, and went to breed, she would take the smaller ones and they would wait until she was through and then come back?—A. Well, I believe so; of course I have not had the same experience here as in the east to have the same knowledge of salmon, but as far as I know I have given you my experience.

Q. As salmon all frequent their native stream, and at annual periods migrate up that stream, any extra fishing at the mouth of a river would prevent the family going up then, would it not?—A. Of course it would thin them out to a certain extent, but I think there are plenty of chances for enough to get up to spawn, outside of them.

Q. What is the width of the mouth of the river you have reference to?—A. It is quite narrow; there is a lake further up.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do fish get up to the lake?—A. Oh, yes; they get up to the lake; I have seen Indians coming down from the lake with dog-salmon which they have dried for their own use. Now, I know a place where we have taken fish out where the river strikes the canyon, perfectly black with salmon, but they went no further, and came back; they are not merchantable salmon, but very good salmon.

Q. Are these cohoes or humpbacks?—A. They are not just exactly humpbacks; the flesh is like the humpback, but they are different to sockeyes and cohoes.

Q. Have you steel heads there?—A. Yes; there are steel-heads.

Q. Then these rivers are practically the same as those down here?—A. Yes; practically much the same.

Q. What is the usual average mesh of gill-nets there?—A. Five and seven-eighths.

Q. This is used for gill nets?—A. Yes.

Q. You use seines with three and four-inch mesh?—A. Yes; I have seen them with three and four-inch mesh.

Q. Yes; equal to two-inch mesh; would not this be more likely to take salmon than five and seven-eighths-inch mesh in a gill-net?—A. Certainly, it would.

Q. And it would not only catch more salmon of the same size, but smaller ones too?—A. Well, no; I have never seen any small ones in these northern rivers.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, but one must destroy more than the other—one floats on the surface and the other drags on the bottom all the time, thus a seine must be more destructive than a gill-net, taking one of each?—A. Oh, yes; if you take one of each, but here is a river with 200 boats in it and here one with one seine in it.

Q. But would not a seine be more destructive than a gill-net?—A. I would sooner take my chances with a gill-net if the water was muddy.

Q. Are not all rivers in these parts more or less muddy in certain seasons of the year?—A. I think it is likely they are in certain seasons of the year, but salmon may not be in those rivers at that time.

Q. What time do salmon generally enter the rivers there?—A. Well, the rivers north have salmon earlier than the rivers here.

Q. But the rivers you speak of?—A. I am not talking of one river, I am speaking of several rivers, because I know of several where we would operate if allowed.

Q. In what season would you operate?—A. The latter part of July and August.

Q. Is that the period when the fish are running up river?—A. Yes; they make the river about that time.

Q. Is this the sockeye?—A. No; we don't fish for sockeye—we want big spring salmon for shipping east; they don't suit for canning—they have been tried but were not thought well of.

Q. You want seines for catching spring salmon?—A. Yes; I wish you to understand me—we have not caught any, but we desire to do so.

Q. Then you want the use of seines, to be permitted at mouths of rivers to catch salmon?—A. Yes; in rivers with clear water. There are rivers up north that are gravelly bottomed rivers and seines don't effect them and it would be wrong to have the

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river only to catch fish with gill-nets like in the Fraser River. I have seen several rivers up north, of course I have not stayed there every day to see, but from all the information we could gather from Indians and inhabitants we understand it was all clear water.

Q. Have you anything further, sir?—A. The reason that makes me speak of the salt water fishing is this seining is an industry for catching fish that cannot be caught otherwise owing to the physical peculiarities of the streams. Then these salmon are not fit for canning but would be a valuable fish if we could place them on the market; I think they will be a profitable fish for sale. We have not tested it but we intend to test it and think these privileges should not be stopped. We have been making a study of the coast before commencing operations.

Q. Do you understand that the same thing has occurred in other parts of the country? And you have left it to better yourself in this country?—A. No; I did not come here with that intention solely. In the Fraser River there is no need of seines, gill-nets do their business there, but in clear rivers with salmon it only lets the fish die off and no one gets the benefit of them at all—they come there and breed and die off.

Q. Do they die off?—A. Well, I understand that a salmon dies always at four years old.

Q. Do you see fish coming down after spawning?—A. Oh, yes; I have seen dog-fish coming down after spawning.

Q. Many persons think that all fish die that go up the Fraser River?—A. Well, a great many die anyway.

Q. Do you adhere to the close season up there?—A. I don't think they fish on Sundays up there—not for salmon.

Q. What do you think about the license fee?—A. Well, that is a pretty hard question for me to answer.

Q. You only pay \$5 up there?—A. Well, of course, I am not in the cannery business, and it would not be right for me to interfere in the cannery's business.

Q. But we want all the evidence we can get?—A. Well, I think we are all trying to get licenses as low as possible, if we get them at all.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Mr. Chairman, this room is very close and the atmosphere oppressive, we have a large number in here and the room is not large, and I would move that we adjourn for 15 minutes.

Mr. WILNOT.—Very well, it is rather close here, this Commission is adjourned for 15 minutes.

Intermission.

The Commission resumed business at 4 p.m.

Mr. FADER.—Mr. Chairman, before you proceed with a fresh witness I would like to be allowed to state that I think fishermen holding salt-water licenses should be allowed to come inside of the boundary to the banks of the sand heads, and persons with fresh-water licenses should not go beyond half way to the straits.

CHARLIE CAPLIN, a Siwash, Chief of the Musquam Indian Band, was duly sworn. Being unable to speak English sufficiently well to give evidence, Mr. John Rose acted as interpreter, and was sworn to translate correctly the questions put to the witness and his replies.

The witness handed in the following note to Mr. Commissioner Armstrong by way of introduction:—

“W. J. ARMSTRONG, Esq.,

“DEAR SIR,—The bearer of this is the Tioe of the Musquam Indians and wishes to express his grievance to you with regard to getting fishing licenses, &c., for himself and his Indians.

“He seems rather excited, and, if possible, I wish you could give him a hearing.

“Yours respectfully,

(Signed)

“JAMES WISE.

“New Westminster, B.C., 23rd February, 1892.”

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, what is it the chief wants?—A. (After being interpreted.) He wants to tell you that it is about licenses—there are lots of Indians on the same ranch as himself and they can't get licenses.

Q. How is it they cannot get licenses?—A. He says he don't know what is the reason, but it has been for lots of times—some Indians get licenses, but he could never get one.

Q. Ask him how many Indians get licenses?—A. Ten Indians get licenses on his ranch.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Ten Indians of his tribe?—A. Ten only.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Where do they fish when they get licenses?—A. They fish always on the North Arm of the Fraser.

Q. What do they fish with?—A. With gill-nets, the same as whitemen.

Q. They follow the same regulations as are given by the department for whitemen?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do they pay the same fee?—A. Just the same, sir.

Q. Do they fish for their own use, or for sale to canneries?—A. They fish for sale to the canneries.

Q. Are there many other Indians besides these ten who fish for the canneries, without licenses?—A. Ten more fish for the canneries without licenses.

Q. How do they fish without licenses?—A. They work by the day, sir.

Q. Do any work on shares?—A. They always work by the day.

Q. What usual price per day do they get?—A. \$2 for a net-man, and \$1.50 for a boat-puller.

Q. The principal grievance is then that more Indians cannot get licenses to fish on their own account?—A. He grumbles also about the depth of the nets; he thinks they are killing salmon too fast down at the mouth of the river.

Q. Does that apply to canneries and fishermen as well?—A. Well, he says it is not right that one should be deep and the other shallow fishing in the same waters.

Q. What kind of net does his ten Indians fish with who have licenses?—A. Twenty-five mesh-nets; generally thirty is about the run.

Q. How many meshes deep are the nets that he says are too deep?—A. Most of the whitemen use fifty-mesh nets.

Q. They don't generally work in the same waters as whitemen?—A. Oh, yes; all fish in the same waters.

Q. They fished in the north arm of the Fraser?—A. Yes.

Q. All the ten Indians fished there?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. How far do they fish out from the mouth of the north arm into the Straits?—A. About a quarter of a mile from the mouth, off the Island.

Q. From Sea Island? How far out from Sea Island do they fish?—A. They go out about two miles from the island.

Q. What would be the average of salmon caught by each Indian in a season?—A. Last summer one of them caught 5,000 during the season.

Q. Would all be sockeyes?—A. All sockeyes.

Q. Is not 5,000 a large number?—A. Yes; quite a large number.

Q. They would not average that?—A. No, sir.

Q. What do they get per fish?—A. \$15 a hundred last year, and \$10 a hundred the year before.

Q. Do they fish for any special cannery?—A. Mr. Todd's and Mr. Munn's

Q. Where are their canneries?—A. Mr. Todd's is on the north arm, and Mr. Mann's on Sea Island.

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Q. Are there any others on the north arm besides these?—A. There is a new cannery going up there.

Q. Todd's and Munn's are close together, are they?—A. No, sir; they are some piece away, but they fish together. Mr. Munn's is on Sea Island, and Mr. Todd's on the north arm.

Q. Where is the newly built one?—A. On Lulu Island.

Q. Then does this Indian think that these deep nets are too destructive to salmon?—A. That is their idea; all the Indians think they are too deep.

Q. Ask him if the nets drag near the bottom?—A. Yes; they do.

Q. Do you know the difference between a seine and a gill-net?—A. Yes; but seines are no good for salmon in the Fraser.

Q. Ask him if the working of deep gill-nets has practically the same effect as seines?—A. Oh; these both kill the salmon the same.

Q. Ask him if the salmon are scarcer or more numerous now than years ago?—A. He says they are nothing now to what they were when he was a boy.

Q. What reason does he give for that?—A. He thinks the nets are too long and it stops the salmon from going up and has a tendency to kill them all.

Q. What does he think the salmon goes up the river for?—A. He knows well what they come in for—they come in to lay their eggs up the rivers and he doesn't want to see them killed off.

Q. Does he think the amount of fishing now, if continued, would seriously injure the river fish?—A. He thinks it will in course of time if the long nets are kept going—it will destroy the salmon in time.

Q. Has he seen many dead salmon far up in rivers or in lakes?—A. Yes; he has seen lots of dead salmon up the creeks, some floating, some half-dead, &c.

Q. At what season of the year would he see them floating and half-dead?—A. He could hardly tell that, sir, they go by the moon—he says he don't like to see the salmon killed and thrown into the river after caught.

Q. Ask him whether he knows if a large number are thrown into the river?—A. He thinks all fishermen do it—when fishermen have a great quantity and cannerys cannot take them, they throw them overboard.

Q. Is it true that fish not adapted for the canneries are given to the Indians?—A. Yes, sir; all they require and can take away.

Q. Are the quantities so large that Indians cannot take them away, and are the rest thrown away?—A. If it is not good the Indians will not take it but throw it away.

Q. To what extent, so far as numbers go, has he seen thrown away at one time?—A. If very plentiful they do it, but if not very plentiful they take care of them.

Q. Has he seen as many as a boat-load thrown away at any one time?—A. He has seen them thrown from a boat, but they are generally on the wharfs.

Q. What does he call a boat-load?—A. Oh, he says he does not see the fish thrown in—he sees them in the water.

Q. Does he think that injurious, and the offal, does he think that injurious to fish or to Whitemen?—A. He thinks it injurious to the salmon because the siwashes never throw the guts, &c., in the water because the salmon will not cross the deposits of offal in the river.

Q. How does it effect the water for the Indian or whitemen to use?—A. He thinks everybody on the Fraser River will get sick if it is continued to be thrown in the water.

Q. Would it be wise on the part of the authorities to prevent offal going into the water?—A. He thinks it would be good if they were not thrown in.

Q. Has offal created any sickness or disease amongst the Indians?—A. He says he thinks some of them get sick by drinking the water.

Q. About the early run of fish called spring salmon do they catch them principally for market, or all sockeye?—A. They don't fish generally for spring salmon.

Q. Ask him whether as a tribe do they consider the spring salmon or the sockeye the best for their own use?—A. They would rather have the spring salmon for their food than the sockeye—some Indians will not look at the sockeye to eat—they don't like them.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Ask him whether before the canneries were established here or the big fishing business commenced, they caught sockeyes to any extent at all, or preferred catching the other salmon for their purposes?—A. They always catch spring salmon for their own use.

Q. Ask him if he thinks it right to prevent fishing on Sunday?—A. He thinks fishing on Sunday should be stopped.

Q. Is it right for the licenses when obtained by companies or others, that they should be re-sold or bartered to the Indians or any one else?—A. I can't make him understand that sir.

Q. Oh, well ask him what time in the year do the spring salmon spawn up the rivers?—A. Towards the fall.

Q. And the sockeye and the spring salmon, do they all spawn at the same time?—A. Yes; he thinks they spawn about the same time.

Q. Do cohoes and humpbacks spawn about the same time as the others?—A. Yes; he has seen lots of those up the river spawning at the same time.

Q. Then does he think that all salmon go up river to spawn at or about the same time?—A. He thinks they do spawn about the same time.

Q. Could he answer what month. A. No; they go by moons—I could not calculate that.

Q. Are Indians of the belief that all salmon die and none return down?—A. He thinks they never return—about one-half stay in the river swimming about until they die—he thinks some return to the sea again.

Q. Has he ever seen any salmon going down the Fraser River or the North Arm a long time after the fishing season was over?—A. He does see salmon going down, and he thinks about half of them go down to salt water after they have spawned.

Q. Ask him that again to be sure?—A. Yes, he has seen them lots of times going down, and about half, he thinks, goes down.

Q. Have Indians applied to pay for licenses? Do all want licenses?—A. Yes, they all want licenses.

Q. Would they make more money than fishing for canneries or otherwise?—A. Yes, they would make more money with a license.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Have the ten who have licenses, have they boats of their own?—A. Yes, they have.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. And fish independently?—A. Yes; they buy nets from the canneries.

Q. Can they make their own nets or boats?—A. Oh, yes; there was no one else here years ago but the Indians.

Q. How many are there of his band?—A. 34 belong to his ranch—that is, able-bodied Indians.

Q. Do they consider it safe to fish directly at the mouths of rivers?—A. He thinks about one-half the salmon are caught in that way.

Mr. WILMOT.—Have you anything further to ask, Mr. Armstrong?

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—No; I think you have covered all the points.

Mr. WILMOT.—Tell him we are much obliged to him; that will do. We are obliged to you, sir, for your services as interpreter.

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FRANK WRIGHT, of New Westminster, a native of Ontario, a fish dealer and exporter, living in British Columbia for six years, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Well, sir, what have you to state?—A. Well, I have been in the fish business about four years in the province, about two years in New Westminster, and there are two opposition markets here and one had ten licenses.

Q. What do you mean by opposition markets?—A. People engaged in the same business as myself. I represent Wright Brothers.

Q. And the other firm?—A. W. H. Vienna, there is another market, too, Mr. Lord.

Q. Do you send fish away in ice?—A. In ice.

Q. Where are the markets you send to?—A. New York and Boston, and Manitoba and the eastern provinces.

Q. What may have been the extent of business in any one year?—A. Well, we have been so handicapped by not getting licenses that we have practically no business.

Q. Do other companies get licenses?—A. Port gets ten and Lord gets two but we get none, we applied for them and engaged boats and nets and went to great expense last year in telegraphing to Ottawa for licenses, but could not get them.

Q. Do Lord and Vienna—do they fish practically themselves?—A. Well, they do fish some of their own boats—we depend principally on the spring run of fish—the others are not so good for export—we depend principally upon these, though not wholly.

Q. What other fish do you get?—A. Sockeyes, but they don't do so well.

Q. Sockeyes are used wholly in the canneries?—A. It is used also in the home markets.

Q. Do you catch spring salmon when sockeyes are running?—A. No; we get them later in the season, but not so good then.

Q. Why are they not so good?—A. Because there are more spent fish among them.

Q. What do you mean by "spent" fish?—A. Oh, fish that have spawned.

Q. What season of the year does this take place when they are spent?—A. Well, just after the coho run—about the 1st of September.

Q. When these are brought to you to purchase do you find others that are not spawned and eggs still in their bodies?—A. Oh, yes; a great many have been in brackish water so long they get soft and flabby.

Q. Well, now, in regard to these licenses that other persons engaged in the same trade as you—one has ten and the other two—you think they have a superiority over you?—A. Why certainly, when fish begin to run we cannot get any and they had a monopoly for outside boats.

Q. And you were handicapped in this way?—A. Yes; we should have the same licenses, as we are in the same business.

Q. How many licenses would satisfy your trade?—A. Five; we only applied for two, but I think five would be about right.

Q. If you had five licenses would you practically use the boats yourself?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. But you could not use them all unless you hired them out?—A. Oh, we have unlimited market and capital and would use them by our own men.

Q. On shares?—A. No; not for spring salmon—perhaps for sockeyes.

Q. Would you withdraw boats in the sockeye run?—A. Well, it might pay better if other parties were doing the same.

Q. Do you salt fish at all?—A. No; we deal in salt fish, but we never put any up as yet.

Q. Have you made any observation in connection with offal thrown in the river—whether it is injurious in one sense or another?—A. Well, I don't think it does a great deal of harm, yet it cannot do any good.

Q. What is your view in regard to the limitation of nets to canners and ordinary fishermen—do you think all applicants who are British subjects should get licenses?—A. I think every man who has a boat and net of his own should get a license, but he should be a British subject and a resident.

Q. And that they should be unlimited?—A. Yes.

Q. In regard to canning or other industry, should any be injured or their licenses fixed, what do you think?—A. I think twenty boats quite sufficient for canners.

Q. What is your view regarding the close season, namely that Sunday should not be used for fishing?—A. I think the present close time very good.

Q. You are aware six hours of Sunday is at the present time utilized for work—what do you think of that?—A. Well, the sockeye run only such a short time, they would have no work on Monday if they did not start till six o'clock Monday.

Q. Have you had anything to do with the coast fisheries or sea fisheries independent of the Fraser River?—A. Yes; I have, when I was in Vancouver I dealt in salt-water fish—in the drying and exporting of cod-fish and other salt-water fish.

Q. What was the result?—A. Halibut pays well but not cod-fish.

Q. Have you any opinion with regard to benefits accruing from artificial breeding here?—A. Yes, I think the present hatchery is a decided success—I think there should be a hatchery also to breed the first run of spring salmon. This export business is just in its infancy now—it is only, you may say, two year old—the largest export last year was ninety cases, that is 720 salmon, and we pay one dollar a piece for them on the river—that is \$720 a day to the white fishermen.

Q. The value of the sockeye is what?—A. It averages from 10 to 20 cents.

Q. What is the usual weight of the dollar salmon?—A. It averages from fourteen to sixteen pounds.

Q. And the average sockeye?—A. Seven to eight pounds.

Q. You ship the whole of the spring salmon away?—A. Yes.

Q. Do you clean it at all?—A. No.

Q. Everything is shipped?—A. Yes.

Q. You sell them at so much each?—A. No, we sell by the pound.

Q. What might spring salmon bring you per pound in the New York or Boston markets?—A. The first run brings 25 to 30 cents.

Q. Have you ever shipped any sockeye to these markets?—A. Yes; but they come late in the season, and the first run strikes the markets when there are no other fish there. When you send sockeye the lake fish are in the markets and you get very little for them.

Q. What would sockeye fetch?—A. From eight to fifteen cents per pound.

Q. Then is it a much more profitable business to fishermen on the river at such prices to catch and dispose of spring salmon than sockeye—the ordinary fisherman, I mean?—A. Well, I don't really know; it depends a great deal on the run; sometimes they run forty spring salmon to the day, and 400 or 500 sockeye a day, so it would be about the same thing; the average spring salmon caught would be six to twelve a day.

Q. What colour is the spring salmon?—A. Red.

Q. All red?—A. There are some white ones, but very few on the first run; they come in after the sockeye.

Q. How about the quality?—A. The white are not marketable fish.

Q. Are they marketable later on in the season?—A. They sell here at the first run.

Q. Your object then is all the way through, that you who are engaged in the business of fishing here, should be placed fairly on the same basis as others engaged in the same work?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have you any suggestion you would like to make?—A. Yes; I would like to make a suggestion as regards trout. There are two different kinds; one follows the salmon and destroys spawn, and the only time they are valuable is during the close season. They are most valuable in the market from September to March, and I would like to have the season open from the 1st September to 1st March.

Q. Would that not be the very time when spawning?—A. No; they don't spawn until after that; I think they spawn in April.

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Q. How do you know that?—A. Because I have examined them and found eggs in them then. They are caught extensively then, but they get discoloured and slimy. I don't think there is anything else about which I wished to speak.

MR. ARMSTRONG :—We are much obliged to you, sir, if that is all.

JOHN B. MARQUETTE, a native of Ontario, six years in British Columbia, and a resident of Mission City, B. C.—a trader and exporter of fish, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. Do you follow the operations of a trader and exporter?—A. Yes ; I am both a trader, salter, and exporter.

Q. Where is your place of business?—A. At Well's Landing—about two miles above Mission Station. I have not been able to obtain a license.

Q. Have you fished on a license lately?—A. I have fished on other men's license.

Q. You have applied for licenses?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was any cause given why you should not get one?—A. One time I was informed my application was in too late, although put in in the month of January.

Q. What number of licenses did you apply for?—A. For one.

Q. And in your business as a salter, would one be sufficient?—A. I ought to have from two to five.

Q. Then any work you have carried on, it has been depending upon getting your fish from other parties?—A. Yes ; I got the use of other parties' licenses and furnished boats and men.

Q. Did you have to pay anything in excess of the licenses fee?—A. One I had to pay twenty dollars fee and another I had to pay more for—the one I got for twenty dollars was for only part of the season.

Q. What was the amount you paid for the other?—A. Thirty dollars.

Q. What was the man doing from whom you bought the license?—A. He has been carrying on business for some years and sold out to me—his warehouse and outfits, &c.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Where do you fish?—A. Right at Well's Landing, at a place called Nicomen Slough.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. The fish that you catch in this lake—what are they like?—A. I never fish in a lake—it is in the main Fraser.

Q. Do you find the quality of the fish there as good as at the mouth of the river?—A. I don't see any difference.

Q. What quantity would a boat get there fishing in a day?—A. Oh, last year's run was not very good. We would get from five and six to eighteen and twenty—sometimes more and sometimes less—that was spring salmon—I have caught over eleven hundred sockeye in eight hours. Some sockeye I shipped and others I salted.

Q. Where did you ship the sockeyes?—A. To Montreal.

Q. Did you find a ready sale?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. How did they sell compared with spring salmon?—A. Not as good—they don't take as well.

Q. You don't freeze them?—A. No ; we pack them in ice.

Q. Is the demand large for these fish, below there?—A. Yes, sir ; I had no trouble in finding plenty of markets for mine.

Q. Have you tried the American market?—A. I have shipped to New York—that is the only place in the States I have shipped to.

Q. Have you anything to say about this offal question?—A. That is a thing I know nothing about.

Q. You shipped your fish whole?—A. Yes ; except those we salted.

Q. With them did you do like the rest?—A. Yes, we threw it in the river.

Q. Is much fishing done there?—A. Not a great deal.

Q. How is it done up there—by whom?—A. Oh, Indians, half-breeds, and white people.

Q. But the catch is comparatively small?—A. Yes, there are not many employed in the fishery.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Do you think you could catch as many there as farther down?—A. No, I don't think so—not as many as at the mouth of the river.

Q. It has been stated, though, that fish when they get in the mouth of the river, leave the same day?—A. That is not my opinion.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Have you any theory as to how rapidly they migrate up river?—A. Well, I think spring salmon takes longer to get up than the others—I don't think they go over twenty miles in a day.

Q. Have you ever observed that they travel more at night than day time?—A. Yes, I have, and I think they travel more at the turn of the tide than at any other time.

Q. Are there any saw-mills near you?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do they throw their sawdust and rubbish in the river?—A. No.

Q. What do they do with it?—A. Well, there is no saw-mill near my place. There is one at Langley and one on Silver Creek—but then this is not on the creek—it is near it, but on dry land.

Q. What do you think of the effects of sawdust if thrown in the water?—A. I think it is very injurious to fish.

Q. Have you anything to say as regards the limitation of the number of nets?—A. I think that *bona fide* dealers and fishermen ought to get licenses.

Q. In what proportion—all alike—one license?—A. Well, no sir; I think a man who is shipping is entitled to more licenses than an ordinary fisherman. I think a man who has nothing more than boat and net—he should not have as many licenses as a man carrying on a large business—still, I don't think it a good plan to grant licenses to everybody, unless a *bona fide* fisherman and owner of his own boat and net.

Q. Would you allow foreigners and others?—A. Well, I think that all should be British subjects and residents for some time before they apply for licenses.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. What do you think of allowing farmers licenses at a cheap rate for their own consumption?—A. Well, there is an obstacle to that—the farmer cannot go and buy a boat and net as cheap as he can buy the fish, however, I think the most of the farmers' licenses are proper.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. But, if he wants to get a stock of fish for his own use?—A. Oh, well, I think he should be able to get that without a license, but if there was a licensed man there he should buy fish from him, but if he gets a boat and net of his own, he should be allowed to catch fish for his family by all means.

Q. What number of licenses would you say for Canneries?—A. Well, that is something on which I am not posted. They should, I think, get licenses according to their size and capacity.

Q. But if all of the same capacity, what would be a fair average?—A. Well, if every British subject and fisherman got licenses, I think the cannerymen would not fret whether they had one or three dozen.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. On the same ground the exporter would not either?—A. No; on the same ground he would not.

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By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. On the principle of two or five licenses being sufficient for your demand, you think in what proportion should licenses be granted to canners?—A. I think twenty a reasonable limit.

Q. Do you think the present close season right?—A. Not exactly; I think we should fish week days and keep the whole of Sunday.

Q. Have you taken any notice of the effect of artificial breeding of fish on this river?—A. I have, some.

Q. What do you think of the system of hatching by artificial means on the river?—A. A good thing and a success, to a certain extent.

Q. Would it be much more successful if largely increased?—A. I think it would, and be beneficial to the province.

Q. Have you taken notice of dead fish in the river to any extent?—A. Yes, I have seen a great many.

Q. In what season?—A. September and October.

Q. What is your theory as to the cause of death?—A. Well, they get up in small lakes and shallow waters and they fight and kill one another—I have seen the greatest quantity in Harrison Lake.

Q. Do you think all fish that go up river die?—A. No; I don't—I think very few of the spring salmon die, you will see very few of them dead—more of the sockeye and humpbacks.

Q. They are very numerous both in going up and dying?—A. Yes; I may say I think white salmon is made so by being longer in the river. I have cut them open on the back and the first half inch would be perfectly white and farther in and around the back-bone would be perfectly red.

Q. And white salmon of the spring species, would you call those fish in good condition or otherwise?—A. Early in the season spring salmon are in good condition—I think they remain in the river all winter, having gone up in the autumn of the previous year. I have seen them caught in nearly all the months of the year by the Indians.

Q. Then you think white salmon is really red salmon in the sea, and it changes its colour in the river—do you think it is the same as the sockeye?—A. Yes; but sockeyes stay in a shorter time—the coho turns white, too, and the humpback is always of a lighter colour, and the dog fish are red when they first come in.

Q. What about the steel-head?—A. Well, I never saw one white-fleshed, and I have seen them caught in every month of the year. The principal time for them to spawn is, I think, in March and April, after which they are spent fish and very poor.

Q. Are you of the opinion that these fish, too, have gone up the year previous and would be in best condition just previous to the commencement of this spawning time you speak of?—A. Yes, and they must have come in in January and February.

Q. You have seen them, too, opened?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. And as many eggs as the spring salmon?—A. No; I think not.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. What is your opinion as regards the limit for fishing—it is now tidal water—should it be reduced any?—A. Well, there is no fishing that I know of done as far up as tidal water—tidal water goes to Harrison River.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Oh, no, the tide never goes above the rapids at Miller's Landing?—A. Well, I have been told it does. Sumas Lake is tidal water is it not.

Q. Yes, but that comes in below?—A. Well, I have been told that they have three inches of tide at the mouth of the Harrison River.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. How far does the ordinary fisherman fish up river to supply fish to the canneries below?—A. None above Well's Landing.

Q. Then are boats engaged in fishing all the way up from New Westminster to take fish down to the canneries?—A. Well, at certain places—many places are not good fishing grounds.

Q. And where it is good fishing grounds?—A. Well, there is fishing there.

Q. Is there anything further you would wish to state?—A. No, I think not.

Q. Have you anything further to ask Mr. Armstrong?—A. Mr. Armstrong, no, nothing more.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Very well, that will do.

The Commission adjourned at 5.58 p.m., to meet again at the same place at 10 a.m., the following day.

NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C., 24th February, 1892.
Fifth day's Session.

The Commission assembled in the Court-house and was called to order by the chair at 10 a.m.

Present:

Mr. Wilmot (presiding), Mr. Sheriff Armstrong, Mr. C. F. Winter (Secretary.)

MARSHALL M. ENGLISH, of New Westminster, a native of the United States, though residing in New Westminster for the last 15 years, engaged in the salmon canning business, indirectly representing the local board of management of the Anglo-British Columbia Canning Co., representing eleven canneries in British Columbia, was duly sworn.

Mr. WILMOT.—Have you any statement to make?

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. You represent eleven canneries, Mr. English?—A. Yes, sir; two up north and nine on this river.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Do you wish to submit anything?—A. Not at present. The canning industry on this river is a big one and no two years are alike—there is a rotation of four years, and the number of boats that will answer for one season will be very much out of proportion in another. I think the cannerymen should have at least 25 boats and have it made a fixture, and not changed from one year to another.

Q. Not less than 25, and it should be a fixed number?—A. Yes, not less than 25 and a fixed number—we are handled differently by the department from year to year.

Q. Would you advocate all and every cannery to get twenty-five?—A. Well, I don't know as you could do anything else.

Q. No restrictions?—A. Well, it would rest with the department. I would not recommend one way or the other—I don't think that those who have been in business for a number of years should suffer for the building up of others.

Q. Then that would be, no new canneries would be allowed?—A. Well, that would be at the disposition of the department—it would make no difference if we were not cut down for building up others—if a limitation on the river, then those who established the industry should be protected first.

Q. Would twenty-five licenses do that?—A. Yes; with outside licenses, they should, I think.

Q. But, would twenty-five licenses, if permanent, sufficiently protect you?—A. Well, while it would that far, I don't think twenty-five licenses enough for any cannery.

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Q. But a sufficient protection?—A. Well, it would be a protection, of course.

Q. Are the companies that you have acted as agent or manager for wholly on the Fraser River?—A. No, sir; two on the Skeena and nine here.

Q. What is the capacity of these canneries generally—in ordinary average seasons?—A. Well, I think that all of them are capable of 25,000 cases and upwards.

Q. And would twenty-five licenses give to these canneries sufficient fish for 20,000 cases?—A. No, sir.

Q. Would it give them 15,000 cases?—A. No, sir.

Q. Would it give them 10,000?—A. On an average I don't know that it would—it might. Now, as an illustration, I packed in two canneries this year, the Phoenix and another and with twenty boats packed about 7,000 cases. I don't think twenty-five boats would average over 10,000 cases. Take four years ago, I packed, with twenty-seven boats, 4,000 cases—that was in 1888; in 1889 I had about thirty-five boats and packed something over 20,000 cases, in 1890 I had thirty-two boats and packed between 14,000 and 15,000 cases, I am speaking of my own property all that time, in 1891 I packed about six or seven thousand.

Q. Do you recollect how many licenses you had in 1890?—A. In 1890 I think I had twenty licenses, and twenty-four in 1889—the additional boats were got from outside. We always used outside boats, even when the river was open—the average number of boats fished by the canneries was about forty.

Q. How many in 1889?—A. Twenty-four were allotted me in 1889.

Q. Twenty the standard, and four allotted to you?—A. No; the balance was proportioned *pro rata* to capacity.

Q. Then you got four *pro rata*?—A. It was only the one year. The Government increased the number in 1889. They tried to make the limitation on the basis of capacity and gave Mr. Ewen thirty-nine boats and the British Columbia cannery were allotted twenty-four.

Q. That was nineteen over the twenty, and you got four over the twenty?—A. Yes; some got eighteen, some got twenty, it was worked up on the basis of what each cannery had packed for so many years.

Q. In 1889 then you had twenty-four licenses?—A. Yes; twenty-four—I think I used thirty-two or thirty-three boats.

A. And your pack was 20,000 cases?—A. Something over 20,000.

Q. Who is "English & Company"?—A. That is my cannery.

Q. I see two names here (B. C. Board of Trade Report, 1890,) "English & Co.," and "The Phoenix Packing Co.?"—A. I am connected with both of them.

Q. Well, that is one and the same thing?—A. Well, I never called it the "Phoenix" Company—it was in the hands of W. D. Coleman for a year or two, and I think they called it the "Phoenix" Company—the brand was the "Phoenix" brand. English & Co., worked from 1877 to 1884, inclusive, then we came in again in 1888, 1889 and 1890. In 1882 I operated over here, right opposite the city.

Q. In 1889 your pack was over 20,000 cases?—A. Something over twenty thousand in 1889—four licenses over the standard number.

Q. In 1890 you say you had twenty licenses—and how many outside boats did you get?—A. I think I had eleven or twelve.

Q. And your pack?—A. Something about 14,000 cases.

Q. Is that a fair average?—A. You take the four seasons and I think it is a fair average.

Q. For the eleven establishments you are now manager of?—A. I think so—I think any one would pack over 20,000, if they had more storage room they might pack 25,000. When the river was open we fished forty boats, we always took outside boats and employed outside fishermen besides the forty of our own—what was the position? We in many cases furnished them with gear, boats, &c., and took payment out in fish.

Q. Were you fishing in 1877?—A. Yes; I packed then about 25,000 cases—there was then only five canneries on the river.

Q. What number of boats did you use then?—A. Well, I don't say we had forty boats and upwards and I could not say how many we had besides, we also had a trap in

the river which the department made us take up. We also took fish from Harrison River and the Yale.

Q. How late did you fish in the Harrison River?—A. Up to September, we followed the fish up after they left here.

Q. What condition were the fish in then?—A. Harrison River fish were very good, the Yale fish were not so good.

Q. Were the fish then in appearance very large as regards spawning?—A. No; but towards the last many would begin to get discoloured and then we moved down the river.

Q. You fish as long as you could for the sockeye and then when you found you were not catching them as numerous as you wanted you followed them up the Harrison and Yale?—A. Yes; but we didn't catch very many, we could not get them down from there.

Q. That is now prevented?—A. Yes; I think it a good thing, too—there was no profit in getting them up there. We bought fish from Indians at \$4 a hundred or whatever we could get them for, once a steamer brought down thirty thousand.

Q. All caught by Indians in dip-nets?—A. Yes; in the eddies.

Q. And in 1877 you had 25,000 cases, how many fish to the case then?—A. About the same as now.

Q. What do you call a general average?—A. Well, it is according to the season, the average one season with another would be ten or eleven fish to a case. I packed one season—I think in 1884—the run was a light one and fish averaged ten or eleven to the case.

Q. That is a case of forty-eight one pound tins? Forty-eight pounds?—A. Yes, sir; sometimes they run more and some less—last year they would take fourteen to the case in the early part of the run.

Q. But the general average would be from ten to eleven to a case?—A. I think so.

Q. The average weight of fish then would be between seven and eight pounds?—A. Well, I think about seven or under.

Q. Because most of your brother canners have stated they run from seven to eight pounds?

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Did you ever weigh the sockeye?—A. No; I do not think I ever did. I have weighed most of the other kinds, but we would not weigh a sockeye unless an extra large one.

Q. But if a person stated they weighed about eight pounds would he not be about correct?—A. I should think the sockeye would average seven pounds or so. A man could pick up ten fish that would weigh eight and a-half pounds, and then they might not weigh only four.

Q. Were fish small in 1890?—A. Fish were small that year.

Q. In 1889?—A. They were smaller—in 1888 they were larger—they are always larger in an off year.

Q. What was the great year?—A. 1877, 1881, 1885 and 1889—1882 and 1890 were exceedingly fine years also.

Q. They don't give you credit for fish in 1885?—A. No; we did not pack in 1885.

Q. Why?—A. Well, we could not get anything for them.

Q. It was not because the fish were not there?—A. Oh, no.

Q. What about the Wellington Packing Company?—A. Well, they are capable of packing over 20,000 cases—they generally pack 25,000.

Q. Well, they never packed that many, except in that one year?—A. What did they pack in 1889?

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. They packed 20,000 then?—A. Yes; I thought so.

Q. But in 1886 11,000; 1888, 7,000; and in 1889, 20,000. Do off years generally average about the same thing?—A. Yes; as far as I know—1889 and 1890 were good, and 1881 and 1882 were fairly good.

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Q. How do you account for "off" years?—A. Well, I don't know; I have thought about it, but the more you think about it the less you know about it; it occurred before I came to the country, and I have talked to Indians and they say it occurred before they were boys.

Q. Does this apply to all the rivers of British Columbia?—A. Well, I think the Skeena is different.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do you think fish are not as early as before?—A. Well, I don't know; there is no change. In 1882 they came in on the 1st of July, and in 1877 on the 20th and 22nd of July.

Q. What time last year?—A. Near the end of July; the last two or three years they have been late, but whether it is the general rule or not I cannot tell.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. Then what years do you say were off years?—A. 1883 and 1884; 1885 was a good year; 1886 was a very light year for a second year, and 1887 and 1888 light years.

Q. Do you recollect what 1882 was?—A. 1882 was a very heavy year for a second year, and 1885 should have been the next big year.

Q. The biggest year was 1882?—A. No; but fish ran up longer. 1881 was a good regular season. I ran two canneries in 1882 myself.

Q. Well, take 1886, 1887 and 1889, about the same number of canneries were running then?—A. No; I think there has been an increase; I don't know that there was an increase in 1887 and 1888. 1886, 1887 and 1888 were off years.

Q. 1885 was a good year then?—A. 1885 was an excellent year, but the canneries did not run.

Q. How did you know that it was a good year if you did not catch fish?—A. Well, there were several canneries running; I think Mr. Ewen packed 20,000 cases. I have no theory for off and heavy years; I don't think anybody can tell. We know fish come in and spawn and then young fish go out, but that is about all we can tell. They are never seen at sea.

Q. They are caught at sea, though?—A. Well, I have been told they are never seen.

Q. You would not call the Georgia Straits then a sea?—A. Oh, no; we know all fish coming are seen as they enter the Straits of Fuca, but they are never seen outside, nor ten miles outside there, but the moment they enter the Straits they are seen, and the Indians begin to catch them then.

Q. But the three last years have been pretty good?—A. Yes; a good average.

Q. Did you look forward to 1889 as being a good year?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. It was a late run, was it not?—A. Yes; they came in late and ran late; they were running after we closed down.

Q. And what do you think of the coming year?—A. Oh, an off year; a very poor year, but last year we got more fish than we expected.

Q. And you look forward to 1893?—A. As a heavy year; but the last two poor years have been exceedingly good.

Q. In 1889, which you called a first-class year, the pack was 414,294 cases; in 1890, 409,464 cases; that was not much of a falling off from 1889?—A. I think it is, however, about 330,000 in 1890, about 90,000 cases less than the former year.

Q. And of the 409,464 cases, 241,889 of them were taken in the the Fraser River in 1890—more than half of the whole?—A. Yes; last year the Fraser River pack was about 165,000 cases; your reports are not just exactly correct.

Q. But we got the information from the cannery themselves?—A. Oh, well, a variation of a few thousand cases would not make much difference; a man may give in a few more cases than he should.

Q. Oh, I always thought they were disposed to give rather less than more?—A. Oh, Mr. Wilnot, the cannery are not disposed to give anything lower; they are not afraid of anything that way.

Q: What do you say of licenses being granted to all British subjects, resident fishermen in the country?—A. I would not object to any of them getting licenses; but I don't know anything about it; I have got nothing to do with it. I think it is for this commission to find out whether they should have any. I think I would give them all a license.

Q. But I think you equally bound to answer even if the question regards the canneries or fishermen?—A. Oh, well, I think each fishermen should get a license.

Q. Should they be given to all applicants, or to British subjects, residents of the country?—A. Oh, to British subjects, residents of the country; I don't think every one should come in here and get a license; I think in the United States they follow that plan.

Q. What is your view in regard to canneries being limited, instead of twenty-five licenses to twenty or fifteen?—A. Well, I think it would hamper their business.

Q. From being so exclusive as at present? If fifteen or twenty licenses is the maximum would you not be able to get sufficient fish to supply the canneries from the outside fishermen?—A. I don't think so; I think a canneryman should have a sufficient number of boats to protect his industry.

Q. But if you had no licenses you would get all the fish you want?—A. Well, I would not like to be in the business; if we have licenses we know what we can rely on.

Q. If any limit is made, what limit would you say to the number of boats permitted to fish on the Fraser River?—A. Oh, I don't know.

Q. But you stated you think we should give unlimited licenses?—A. Well, I don't think it would increase the number of licenses very much; everybody is not going up to apply for licenses; I think there was 900 or over in 1882.

Q. That was a good year too?—A. Yes; it was a second year but an extraordinary good year; I think there was about 900 boats—something like that—I know there was a very large number.

Q. But then the limit of late, the outside limit of all has been from five to six hundred?—A. I think so.

Q. And that only admitted of about sixty or so outside white fishermen to use boats?—A. Oh, there was more than that.

Mr. McNAB.—Not over that, for you see out of the hundred or rather hundred and fifty, three freezers had thirty and then forty went to the Indians.

Mr. ENGLISH.—Well, there was about seventy white men, do you draw the line at colour?

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well you do in fish—you put up nothing but red salmon (laughter) however, do you think Indians entitled to fish and get licenses?—I do certainly—the same as other men.

Q. Are they not employed in the canneries—do you not employ them?—A. Yes; I have one Indian who has fished for me ever since I had a license, but generally I do not think it does Indians any good if all get licenses—I don't think it good to give them too much money.

Q. Then, why do you employ them?—A. Because we have to—we cannot import labour from the east and employ them for one or two months only. These people come from all parts of the country and bring all their belongings and fish for five or six weeks and then go home again—white people would not do this.

Q. Do you furnish Indians with gear and money to get licenses?—A. Oh, yes; we furnish them in everything—grub, nets and everything else.

Q. Is it the habit of sending Indians to the departmental office for licenses, and that the Indians are still under the control of the canneries?—A. Well, I have heard it but don't know of it. I have gone there myself and made application and paid money for licenses for Indians, but only in one or two cases.

Q. Do you employ Indians and whitemen outside of your own boats at day pay, or on shares?—A. Whitemen have a "lay" or share and Indians we pay by day wages.

Q. Do you give them the full market value of the fish?—A. I make a bargain with them before we begin.

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Q. What was the price last year?—A. I paid six and a half cents and reserved the rest for gear—Mr. Ewen was paying 20 cents.

Q. What did you pay outside licenses?—A. Some I paid twelve and a half cents, some fifteen.

Q. Then the difference between these men with a "lay" and outside men would be about one-half?—A. About one-half.

Q. And if these people who had a "lay" had licenses they would have got twelve and a half or fifteen cents?—A. Yes; if I wanted the fish.

Q. Then the difference between men who get licenses and those who do not is one-half?—A. No; he has to get his gear.

Q. But as to the price of fish?—A. Oh, yes; but he may lose a net the first night, if he has a "lay" I have to give him another net.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. What is the price of a net and boat?—A. The boat and outfit about \$50 or \$60, the net about \$90.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. How long do nets last?—A. Generally only during the sockeye run.

Q. And the outfit for a fisherman would be about \$150?—A. I would say from \$150 to \$175.

Q. Have you taken any observations, or can you express an opinion in regard to the operation of the hatchery and artificial breeding of fish as a benefit to the river?—A. Well, I certainly think it a benefit; I have an idea that the increase in the last three or four years—that the hatchery has something to do with it—of course I don't know, but I don't see, though, how anybody can help thinking it a benefit.

Q. Have you any knowledge if it is a benefit elsewhere on the coast?—A. I know it has been beneficial on the Sacramento River; the fisheries there were totally ruined by mountain deposits covering the spawn, and they were replenished by the McKay Hatchery, and the catch of fresh fish there is now very great.

Q. Then you think artificial breeding of fish an advantage?—A. Why, I certainly do. When first I came to this coast there was no shad—now there is plenty of them on the Pacific coast.

Q. You know, as a matter of fact, that shad are now disposed of in the markets of San Francisco, and that they were not indigenous to the waters of the Pacific?—A. Plenty of them, and there was not a shad here before; I don't think there is any doubt as to the success of the artificial fish culture.

Q. Do you think the system should be extended?—A. Yes; I think there should be hatcheries on the Thompson, Fraser and Harrison Rivers.

Q. Well, now, what do you think of offal?—A. I think the best thing you can do with offal for all concerned is to put it in the river.

Q. As you do at present?—A. Well, it might be improved upon by putting it in deeper water; at present it is put on the bank in some places, but if put in deep water it will be taken away. The canneries are generally built near the water, or over it, so as to accommodate steam-boats coming up to the factory. At my place we have plenty of water; we loaded two ships there this summer.

Q. You are the last cannery down the river?—A. No; there are two below me. I don't think offal can be handled differently; if it can be profitably, cannerymen would be only too glad to handle it, and you cannot do anything by putting it on land; it would drive people out.

Q. Is it not used now in an oil factory?—A. Yes; but I don't think they are doing much with it; the cannerymen would gladly transport it if any one would take it.

Q. Do you think it wise of the Government to encourage capital to come here to dispose of offal?—A. Well, if on the east coast it might be profitable, but I don't think it would be here.

Q. Do you always find packing fish profitable?—A. Well, one year I lost \$17,000.

Q. Other years you have made profits?—A. Well, we could not lose all the time; I think I have about as much as I started with, and have got a living all the while.

Q. When you first commenced salmon canning here was it profitable?—A. It was very profitable the first year; the second year it was unprofitable, but we did not understand it.

Q. Well, but don't you think this oil factory would be profitable when they learn how to work it?—A. Well, I don't think there is enough oil in it (*i. e.* the offal) to make it profitable.

Q. Well, but your local Government here is trying to encourage Crofter immigration, and one of the features is this industry of converting the offal into oil, &c., now, would there not be a big field for their operations?—A. Well, there would be lots of offal anyway, but there is not enough oil in offal to work profitably—the oil is in the fish, not in the offal.

Q. Do you know the menhaden or herring of the Atlantic Coast?—A. I know the herring here—I don't know the menhaden.

Q. Well, all along the coast of the United States on the Atlantic seaboard they have sixty or seventy large canning establishments to catch herring for turning them into oil and making fertilizers? A. Well, they would have markets for it there, but I don't think it could be profitably employed here.

Q. What do you think of it (*i. e.*, offal) as regards health?—A. I think for a sanitary purposes it should be put in the river—all light stuff would be eaten by fish. The heads and tails would never rise to the surface—the current is so strong it takes them all out.

Q. If it lodges along the bays and sloughs is it not offensive?—A. Well, sometimes, if decayed—all animal matter is when in that state.

Q. Have you heard of diseases being encouraged by these deposits?—A. I have not heard of it—in 1882 I had camps with four or five hundred persons in it, and Indians, you know, are not generally very clean—whitemen were there too, but I didn't see any sickness resulting from it.

Q. Do you think the white population would be more sensitive to it?—A. Well, they are more sensitive to anything of that kind.

Q. Can you suggest anything to do with this offal?—A. Put it in deep water.

Q. This is not generally done now?—A. No.

Q. Are canners desirous of putting it in deep water?—A. Oh, I think so—it would be a tax upon them but they would have to stand that—they have generally to stand everything that comes along, even the Government.

Q. Is this offal frequently taken in nets at the mouth of the river?—A. Well, I have so heard it stated here, but I never heard it complained of—I suppose sometimes they catch a little in their nets.

Q. What makes nets get useless after one season?—A. Slime off fish and the hot weather.

Q. Then if slime off fish and heat of the weather injures nets, would not an additional amount of it injure them more?—A. Well, you don't get much slime from the offal—I never heard any of my men complain—I have had men fishing in the river for the last fifteen years and never heard it.

Q. And then nothing but the heads and tails and bony parts would get in the nets?—A. Yes; nothing else. I have seen Chinamen go with a bucket where the offal was going in and get a bushel and a half of suckers and small fish that were feeding on the offal, in a very short time.

Q. So you think then that offal is not injurious to man, or the fish in the river?—A. No; not if put in the deep river—we had a camp on one side of us and an Indian camp on the other—we drink Fraser River water and my family never had any sickness—but the only way is to put it in the channel of the river.

Q. And you think cannerymen are prepared to do that?—A. I think they are quite willing to do anything that is right.

Q. You know then that it has been contrary to law?—A. Yes; but by permission of the department it has not been contrary to law.

Q. Was the refuse thrown in last year?—A. Yes, sir.

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Q. And no permission to do so?—A. Yes; I think so—I think the Minister gave permission to suspend the regulation.

Q. No; not so?—A. Well, I think, if I am not mistaken, the department wrote the Inspector that the throwing in of offal last year would be allowed, like in 1890.

Q. I may say that you are in error in that respect, because I know that it was not granted. You think the only way then is to put it in the deep channel of the river?—A. Yes.

Q. And that there it would be harmless?—A. Well, I don't say it is harmless—it might do good. The Chinamen in the factory are all fat fellows and I think the sweet smell in the cannery makes the cannerymen fat, (laughter.)

Q. Well, you are certainly a good specimen, (laughter) Well, what do you think of the effects of saw-dust in the streams?—A. Well, I think it is injurious—they have laws in the United States to prevent saw-dust going in—I always understood it hurts fish by getting in their gills.

Q. Well, but they also have laws in the United States that offal shall not go into the rivers either?—A. Well, but where do they can anything but oysters.

Q. Washington, Oregon, &c.?—A. Well, but they don't enforce it—I know they throw offal in and I have heard that young salmon hatch from where the offal is thrown in.

Q. Oh, well, that is so far beyond a possibility and next to an absurdity that we will not discuss it—eggs could not be hatched unless ripe?—A. Well, it might have been ripe—I have been told by parties who have seen it that young fish come from where offal was thrown in.

Q. Do you think it a proper principle, that of transferring licenses?—A. Oh well, I don't think it makes any difference to the department whether a man sells his license or not.

Q. The department makes nothing out of it—it is the public?—A. Well, nor to the public—I think perhaps after all it might be better to have licenses not transferable.

Q. What do you think of the equality of fees—should they be alike everywhere?—A. I think they should all be uniform—all the fishermen uniform with canners, and each should be uniform among themselves.

Q. What are your views as to fishing limits on the Fraser River?—A. Well, I don't think that makes any difference to the department—I think things in that line should remain as at present—I don't think there would be any fishing above Stave River.

Q. But you must not say "any difference to the department;" the department is simply the mouth-piece of the public?—A. But the department is holding this commission for the public.

Q. What do you think of the close season?—A. I think the close season correct, and ample for the protection of the salmon.

Q. What do you think of it from the stand-point of morality?—A. Well, I don't think you should change it; the present Sunday close season is quite right, and a man can be quite good enough from Saturday night until 6 o'clock Sunday night. I have seen men come out of church and pile up hay; I don't think these fellows that are always too good are always the best; there are half a dozen ways of being good; you can be too good, you know.

Q. And you can be too bad?—A. And you can be too bad. (Continuing). I think all these fish, you know, return in the shape of offal, whether they are killed or not (referring to the numbers that die up river.)

Q. You are a member of the Board of Trade?—A. The Board of Trade of Westminster? Yes.

Q. Are you aware of what generally transpires there?—A. No; I am not a good attendant.

Q. It is a public body?—A. It is composed of merchants here.

Q. No; fishermen?—A. Well, not unless you call us fish traders.

Q. Have you read a document from a public officer regarding matters on the Fraser River?—A. Yes; I have read the document.

Q. Are you aware in what it says that exaggerations and misstatements were made?—A. Yes; I think it is very much exaggerated, especially the cut you made.

Q. Well, that officer made the statement that five cans were made out of an eight pound salmon?—A. Well, I don't say fish are all eight pounds; some are, but many are less, and then you must remember all the salmon we catch don't go into cans, and the waste as given is too much.

Q. Three pounds out of eight?—A. Well, I don't know that it is; your cut was misleading.

Q. Oh, but I see (looking over report British Columbia Board of Trade), this is from the Board of Trade of Victoria; do you belong to that?—A. No; it is the Board of Westminster I belong to.

Q. Well, here is this statement that that report was exaggerated, and yet every member who has come before us and sworn has borne out those statements. Have you anything else, sir, to say?—A. No; I don't think so at present; if I think of anything again, I will come before you.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Yes; if any new matter that is important, it would be a good thing to get one man to represent you in any new matter and let him come before us.

Mr. WILMOT.—Very well, that will do, Mr. English.

Mr. DAVID MELVILLE addressed the Commission, and requested permission to make a statement, which was allowed.

Mr. MELVILLE.—I wished to say that there are eight persons who came to the country—some before me, and some after, from Scotland, who have gone back because they could not get a license.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Are you aware of your own knowledge that they came here to become residents and fish?—A. Yes; two came with me—some applied twice, some three times, and some that were fishermen in Scotland went back to fish there.

Q. You have stuck to it here?—A. Yes.

Q. Do you attribute that to the improper way the licenses are distributed at present?—A. Yes; because we cannot get them.

Q. You have nothing further to say?—A. No; nothing else.

Q. Very well, sir, that will do, your statement is duly recorded.

The Commission was thereupon declared adjourned by the Chairman at 12.15 p.m., to meet again at the same place at 10 a.m., on 25th February.

Mr. Commissioner Wilmot and Mr. Winter, secretary, spent the afternoon in visiting the fish hatchery at Bon Accord, returning to Westminster about 6.30 p.m.

6th Day's session.

NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C., 25th February, 1892.

The Commission assembled in the Court house and was called to order by the Chair at 10.15 a.m.

Present:—Mr. S. Wilmot, presiding: Mr. Sheriff Armstrong, Mr. C. F. Winter, secretary.

JOHN WAGNER, of New Westminster, a native of Canada, four years resident in British Columbia, and a fisherman, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Now, Sir, have you anything special to relate?—A. Well, only as regards Captain Grant's license. I understand that it has been stated here that I bought a license from Captain Grant and paid \$50 for it.

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By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. No ; What has been said is that a man bought a license from Captain Grant and paid him \$50 for it ?—A. Well, when I was going down the river fishing Captain Grant and I have been good friends ever since I have been in the country, and he was going away to Vancouver, and would not be able to use his license, and he asked me if I could not arrange with some fisherman to take it on shares, and he told me he would want about the seventh fish for the use of the license, and after I went down I found it very difficult to get any fishermen to give them—they said it was too much—and I looked around for over a week and could not get any one to take it, and in the meanwhile the man who stated it here was a partner of mine, and I reasoned the thing that unless my partner and I took up the license and worked it no one would do so, and we thought it the best thing to go and get a net and rig it up the same as the canneries and take one-third for our share and give two-thirds for running it. I went to Mr. Ladner and got a boat and we gave it to a man to work, but he only caught one humpback or so and I took it away from him, but the other man did better, and when we wound up there was about \$90 over, after paying for the net and all. Then when we came up I reasoned with Nellis (?) and thought the least he could give Captain Grant for the use of his license was \$50, and thought that he should give \$50. Well, he thought it too much, but I thought Captain Grant should get this much, so we took \$20, apiece and gave Captain Grant \$50.

Q. It is true that he paid you \$25 for half of Grant's license ?—A. Oh yes ; out of the \$90 the gear made—that is exactly the statement I have to give.

MR. GRANT.—(from the audience). Oh not so, he paid me.

MR. ARMSTRONG.—No ; he didn't.

MR. GRANT.—Well, I thought that was it.

MR. WILMOT.—Are you a practical fisherman ?—A. Well, I have been fishing for three years.

Q. With licenses of your own ?—A. Yes, for two years of my own.

Q. Where else have you been fishing ?—A. In the Island of Cape Breton.

Q. Can you give an idea of the quantity of fish taken during each year ?—A. Well, the first year I fished for the British Columbia cannery I think we put in eight thousand fish.

Q. What year was that ?—A. That was three years ago, '89.

Q. A good year ?—A. Yes, sir ; that was a big year here.

Q. What did you catch fishing here that year ?—A. Well, a little over nine thousand—I had a better outfit.

Q. That is you and your help-mate in the boat ?—A. Yes ; we could have taken more, but the canneries limited us—they could not handle them.

Q. Well, but those that they could not handle, what did you do with those ?—A. But we don't fish then, sir.

Q. You were notified before hand ?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. What did you get for fish in '89 ?—A. Ten cents apiece—we had to allow the cannery for the boat and net—we got about six and a half cents.

Q. In '89, however, you got eight thousand fish and sold them for ten cents each ?—A. Yes ; one third to the cannery and six and a half cents to myself and partner.

Q. What was the buying price of fish that year ?—A. 10 cents, sir.

Q. In '90 you had a boat of your own and you caught nine thousand fish ?—A. About 9,000.

Q. How much did you get for those ?—A. Ten cents.

Q. How much in 1891 ?—A. I didn't fish for the canneries at all last year.

Q. Did you fish at all ?—A. Yes, in the spring, but fish run so bad I could not make wages out of it and having a family I quit it and went to other work.

Q. Do you fish night and day ?—A. Yes : we call it tide work—when the tide suits we go.

Q. When the cannerymen have their own men employed will they work a greater number of hours than ordinary fishermen ?—A. Yes ; I think they do—they go out at an early hour in the morning and again at night.

Q. Then one boat in the cannery has two sets of men to work it, while the ordinary fisherman has but one?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. That is an advantage, then, over ordinary fishermen?—A. Well, I think so.

Q. But would this favour cannerymen, or men working alone?—A. Well, I think cannerymen would have the advantage, because a man has got to sleep some time.

Q. When working in 1890 you caught 9,000 salmon; have you any idea what a boat similarly situated, but working with two sets of men, would have taken in the same time?—A. Well, they should have put in more if working as much as contract men would; they should have caught fully one-third more.

Q. Well now, those eight and nine thousand salmon you caught, what would they average?—A. Well, I think the first year they did not run as large as the second year I fished.

Q. But in 1889—were they big fish?—A. They were mixed; but I think would be about six pounds.

Q. What in 1890?—A. About the same.

Q. Have you ever weighed fish?—A. No, sir.

Q. How do you come to the conclusion that they would be six pounds?—A. Well, we never weigh them; we count them when giving them in to the canneries.

Q. Well, would a conclusion of seven or eight pounds be incorrect?—A. No; I would not think so; I never weighed them; I have handled many fish east, and might judge them before, but I could not say exactly about the salmon.

Q. Then your average for three years would be about eight or nine thousand; would that be a fair average for boats working along with you?—A. Yes; I think that would be about the average.

Q. How many have you known to be taken with one boat for a season?—A. I have heard of as high as 11,000 fish taken in one year.

Q. And you think your catch would be about an average for fishermen who were industrious, and while you might get between eight or nine thousand, a cannery boat should have taken between one-third and one-half more?—A. Yes; provided they worked like us.

Q. Did you ever work in a cannery, or about one?—A. No, sir.

Q. Have you formed any idea about offal being thrown in?—A. Well, that is something I never gave much heed to, but if the offal is thrown in where the tide can take it away it would not be injurious, but it would be worse for nets and the fishermen—that is my opinion.

Q. Then it is not thrown into the channel now?—A. Not that I know of; it would be injurious to the nets; we get some of it in the nets now.

Q. Where do you fish?—A. At the mouth of the river, but it was up the river where the offal affected our nets.

Q. Do you know of any unpleasantness, offensiveness, or illness arising from offal being on the shore?—A. Yes; it throws off a very bad smell, but I don't know if it is injurious to health.

Q. Is it better to live in good air than foul?—A. Yes; I think so, but while it makes a bad smell I don't know as it is injurious to health.

Q. Do you think it has any effect on fish?—A. No, sir; I don't think it has any effect.

Q. Do you think saw-dust has a bad effect?—A. Well, I don't know—I know in the rivers at home where saw-dust and refuse from mills has been thrown in, the trout, once plentiful, have been driven away.

Q. Is there any offensive smell from saw-dust in the water?—A. Not that I know of.

Q. Do you know what effects there are from saw-dust in preventing the fish from going up?—A. No, sir; I don't, but I think if saw-dust is thrown in in large amounts, it must effect the fish, and if offal is thrown in it might have some effect perhaps—not on salmon but on other fish—I know, for on cod-fishing grounds if fishermen clean fish and leave it on the grounds, fish will all leave the grounds. I know of some of our best fishing grounds being spoilt by refuse being thrown on the grounds.

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Q. And the universal belief down east is that offal effects the fishing grounds?—A. Well, yes.

Q. Is there anything in the water here that would prevent the bad effects found in the east?—A. Well, the water is dirtier here.

Q. And more dirt added to it would help it, you think?—A. I don't think it would help it any.

Q. And do you think residents and British subjects should get licenses?—A. I think that all actual fishermen and residents and British subjects should get licenses.

Q. Would one license be sufficient?—A. Yes; I think so—where so many in the river.

Q. If one licenses would do the ordinary fisherman how many would you say for the largest allowance for a cannery?—A. I don't know, sir; you see I don't understand what it takes to carry their business on.

Q. Well, but if one boat produces 8,000 fish, then if twenty boats were fished at the same ratio that yours was they would get one hundred and sixty thousand fish. Do you know how many fish will make a case of canned fish?—A. No, sir; I have no idea—not the least. I never worked in a cannery—I never saw a case of salmon filled, except by going through a cannery—but that is all.

Q. It is said that it takes about ten or eleven—so that twenty men fishing like yourself that year would have produced 16,000 cases for a cannery at that rate of so many fish?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have you any idea with regard to the effect of seining fish—whether seines are more injurious or less injurious for catching fish than gill nets?—A. Oh, yes; we blame seining for destroying the fish on our coasts at home—we used to have abundance of mackerel before Americans came, but after that the fish all left.

Q. What effect would a seine have if drawn at the mouth of a river—(seines)?—A. I think it would be injurious to fishing—it would take more fish than a gill-net, but I don't think it would suit the fishermen here. It takes the fish too much by surprise and the fish get frightened and leave the river. The seine draws everything within its reach—with a gill-net many escape, but the seine takes all kinds, big and little, and even fish they are not fishing for, and fish get killed, die, &c. I have fished about thirty years and think seining more injurious than the gill-net.

Q. Its effect in the mouth of a river—is that very serious?—A. Yes; I think it would be.

Q. Are the mesh of seines and gill-nets about the same size?—A. No, sir; seines have quite a small mesh and take big and little—everything within its reach.

Q. If seines were used for catching salmon along the coasts here, should the meshes be the same as the gill-net, if used for salmon alone?—A. Well, I don't think it would suit—they have generally smaller mesh.

Q. Why a smaller mesh?—A. Well, I have always seen smaller used.

Q. But if a gill-net is used at 5½ for sockeye—a seine with three-inch mesh—would it be more destructive?—A. Yes; it takes so many more small fish—it would take both large and small.

Q. And gill-nets at 5½ would take medium sized all through—a small fish would pass through?—A. Yes.

Q. What do you think of the Sunday close season, do you think it just?—A. Well, fishermen don't think it so well, but it suits cannerymen very well on account of getting away with fish on Saturday and cleaning up the cannery, &c., but it does not suit us fishermen.

Q. Why?—A. Well, we fishermen don't like to leave home Sunday night—the old law suited us better—from Saturday night to Monday morning.

Q. But if the cannerymen did not fish on Saturday and if you fished on Saturday what would you do with the fish?—A. We don't fish on Saturday.

Q. But if you did?—A. Well, if they would not take them why we could not fish for them, but what I alluded to is the fishermen would rather have the old law.

Q. All Sunday a close season?—A. Yes, to twelve o'clock Sunday night would be better.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. But if you fished on Saturday and the canneries took fish what would they do with them?—A. Well, they would have to work all day Sunday.

Q. And you only fish half Sunday—don't you think that better than the canneries working all day Sunday?—A. Well, I don't know—I speak from my view—I would prefer keeping the Sunday, if possible.

Q. Do you think it injurious to the canning industry if the close season is made from six o'clock Saturday to six o'clock Monday morning?—A. Well, I don't know.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Otherwise speaking, would they be able to get sufficient salmon from 12 o'clock Sunday night for the canneries to commence business on Monday?—A. Yes, I think they would. I know plenty of fishermen on this river who didn't go fishing until 12 o'clock and yet when they wound up they had just as many fish as those who commenced at 6 o'clock Sunday night. I have had to fish Sunday night myself—we have to do it.

Q. Then you think by having a law which allows one man to fish on Sunday night, it brings other men who don't like to fish into a bad habit?—A. If it can be avoided I think it a bad habit, but if it could be avoided I think it should be avoided.

Q. Have you any ideas as to an annual close season?—A. Well, I am not very well posted on that matter.

Q. Have you made any observations as to the effect of the artificial breeding of fish?—A. No, sir; none.

Q. You know there is a hatchery here—have you any ideas as to its benefit or otherwise?—A. I think it should not be otherwise than a benefit.

Q. Why?—A. Well, I think it would have a tendency to increase fish.

Q. What is your idea as to the value of boat licenses—should one part of the province have a discriminating fee in its favour—should all be alike?—A. I think all should be alike—a man on the Skeena or Naas should be in the same position as one on the Fraser river.

Q. Do you think that applies to canneries as well?—A. Yes, all licenses should be the same.

Q. Have you anything further to state?—A. No, sir.

Mr. ALEX. EWEN (speaking from the audience).—I would like to say that this gentleman says he only fished his license a short time in the spring—that goes to show that there are more licenses than are really worked.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, but the canneries are applying for double the number.

Mr. EWEN.—But it depends on the year—sometimes we don't require them, but often we do. This last witness says he only fished the license a short time—practically it may not have been fished the usual length of time.

(Voice from the audience, Mr. McLashan).—Yes, it was fished.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—No more interruptions now, please.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, if the man didn't fish the licenses himself he may have let it out on shares, etc.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Don't talk to him—not unless he is under oath. We cannot discuss matters this way.

Mr. EWEN.—I consider I am under oath yet.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Well, we don't want any dispute here or any arguments—I will not have it.

Mr. WILMOT.—And I think we should disabuse the minds of gentlemen that because they have taken the oath they are under oath for all time—the oath only applies to the time a man is giving his evidence.

Marine and Fisheries.

JOHN ROSS, a resident of New Westminster for sixteen years, a native of Great Britain, and a fisherman for sixteen years, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Have you any special matter, Mr. Ross, that you wish to say in regard to licenses ?

—A. I have had licenses for the last two years.

Q. Where did you fish ?—A. At Sea Island on the North Arm.

Q. What depth of net did you use ?—A. Thirty meshes.

Q. Is that the usuzi net used there ?—A. Yes ; from twenty-five to thirty meshes.

Q. Is that the same sized mesh net Indians use ?—A. Yes.

Q. What quantity of fish have you taken there on an average at that point during a season ?—A. I have averaged between three and four thousand sockeye—we fish nothing else but sockeye down there.

Q. Are the fish that you get there disposed of to the canneries ?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. What is the usual price ?—A. Sometimes ten cents—sometimes fifteen.

Q. What the last two years ?—A. Fifteen cents—Mr. Ewen was giving twenty, I believe.

Q. Out of the number of Indians on the ranch down there, what number get licenses ?—A. Ten.

Q. And if all obtained licenses ?—A. Thirty-four.

Q. Do all want licenses ?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Would it be beneficial ?—A. Yes ; I think so—if no limitation all should get licenses.

By Mr. Armstrong :

But any Indian with no boat and net ?—A. Oh, well, of course if fishermen or Indians have no boats and nets they get them from the canneries and pay for them in fish.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Has a person who gets a license an advantage over those who have not ?—A. Yes ; of course they have, especially lately—years ago it was different—a man could make more by the day than on a license—that was when the river was open to everybody.

Q. Then men made more wages when the river was open to everybody than when a certain number of licenses was established ?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. How have you observed about offal—is it all thrown in at Sea Island ?—A. Yes, sir, I don't think it effects fish.

Q. How about men ?—A. I don't think it injures anybody—I have been about it for sixteen years.

Q. If the offal law was carried out it would effect you, would it not ?—A. I suppose you throw your offal in the same as the canneries ?—A. Oh, I don't know as it would—I would just as soon do anything with it if there was a rule.

Q. Is it not easier to throw it in the river ?—A. Oh, yes ; if a man cleans a fish for himself he just goes down and throws the offal in.

Q. Are fish as plentiful as years ago ?—A. I think they are more plentiful.

Q. Can you assign a reason for that ?—A. No ; I cannot—they are more abundant than years ago.

Q. You catch more of them ?—A. Yes ; and they are more abundant.

Q. Do you know anything of artificial breeding of fish ?—A. No, sir ; I don't know anything of that.

Q. Do you think it an advantage to have hatcheries established on the river ?—A. I think it would do good in course of time.

Q. What do you think of the Sunday close season ?—A. I think there should be a close season—the present one is about right as it is to everybody—the Sunday should be closed.

Q. You have something to do with Indians, have you not ?—A. I have had a good deal to do with them since I have been in the country.

Q. You are not officially connected with them in any way—interpreter or anything ?
—A. No, sir ; not at all.

Q. What do you think of granting licenses to everybody who applies for them ?—
A. I think it fair if there is no limitation.

Q. But if there is a limitation ?—A. Oh, British subjects only.

Q. What about transferring licenses, is it right ?—A. No, sir ; I don't think it is
—a man who gets a license should be an actual fisherman and employ his own boat and
net.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Don't you think all should get licenses who have a boat and net of their own ?
—A. I think so—yes.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. What is your idea as to the fee for a boat, should it be the same to all fisher-
men ?—A. Yes, all fishermen.

Q. And the same to fishermen and canners ?—A. Yes ; all the same and the same
on all rivers.

Q. You have been delivering fish to canners—have canners any advantage over you
or men having a license for one boat by reason of having four men to work a boat ?—A.
No ; I don't think it is.

Q. Then four men don't catch more fish than two ?—A. No ; they generally don't
—men working by the day don't generally catch more than two men working by
contract.

Q. But cannot four men relieve one another ?—A. Yes ; but men working by the
day don't work as well as others.

Q. Then a boat with four men cannot catch more fish than a boat with two men ?
Additional men don't make any difference then ?—A. I don't think it makes any
difference.

Q. Rather hard on those who hire four men to do two men's work, is it not ?—A.
No ; but they hire Indian labour to get the women and others to work in the cannery.

Q. But would the four wives of the four men be engaged in the cannery ?—A. Yes ;
and the children too.

Q. Have you any idea with regard to the method of fish being put up in the can-
neries ?—A. I don't understand you, sir, I have been around canneries all the while.

Q. Well, do you know of the system pursued when fish are brought to the can-
neries ?—A. Yes, they are brought in scows to the wharf.

Q. What then ?—A. They start to clean them on the wharf.

Q. Is it under cover ?—A. Yes ; they are thrown up from the boats and then
cleaned.

Q. Are they just taken out from the pile and cleaned on a table ?—A. Yes.

Q. What next occurs ?—A. They are headed and gutted and passed over to another
crowd—the heads are cut off and then the Klootchies take the fish and gut them—then
they go through water and then they are cut up and these go to the salt table.

Q. What is done with the head, tail and entrails ?—A. They go down to a crib
below the cannery—it goes off the table into a hole and if there is no boat underneath
it falls into the river.

Q. Are canneries built on piles ?—A. Yes.

Q. The piles are pretty numerous ?—A. Yes ; but they generally have cribs
underneath.

Q. Does the water go through these cribs ?—A. Yes ; they are made of planks.

Q. Does the water pass through ?—A. Yes ; the water passes through with the
tide.

Q. What is the usual average size of sockeye ?—A. From seven to eight pounds—
some years they are bigger than others.

Q. When the heads and tails are taken off and the entrails taken out, how is the
fish cut in pieces ?—A. With a kind of long revolving knife.

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- Q. Are they cut up to a special size?—A. They are cut to fit the cans.
- Q. How many slices of salmon would they get for cans?—A. Well, I could not say—four or five—about that according to the size of the fish.
- Q. But fish are all of the same size—very nearly, at least?—A. Well, I suppose so.
- Q. Now if any person should say that was not so, they would not be correct, would they?—A. I should not think so.
- Q. You are not giving an exaggerated account, are you. It is not misleading?—A. No, sir, I am giving an account as near as I know.
- Q. It is very interesting work, is it not, to see a cannery running?—A. Yes, sir.
- Q. What probable number of men would you think necessary to carry on the business when you catch four or eight thousand fish?—A. It depends on the size of the cannery—some have as high as 200—sometimes they cannot get the men on any consideration.
- Q. Of these 200 what number might be whitemen?—A. Well, some years—Ewen's is as big as any cannery on the river and he employs as many as he can get.
- Q. But would there be any others than for the retorts and bosses? How many of these?—A. Oh, eight, ten, twelve—the rest Klotchmen, Indians and Chinamen.
- Q. What principally?—A. Principally Chinamen.

By Mr. Armstrong :

- Q. Working inside?—A. Yes.
- Q. Don't you think there is as many Indian women and Indian boys as Chinamen in some canneries?—A. Well, no; they cannot get them, they get as many as they can.
- Q. Then you think about ten whitemen would be the proportion to the average cannery?—A. Yes.
- Q. Chinamen—do they fish outside?—A. No, sir.
- Q. Indians generally and whitemen?—A. Yes, sir, all colours— all nationalities.
- Q. What do you mean by "all nationalities"?—A. Well, Greeks, Italians, Chilians Sandwich Islanders, &c.
- Q. Would these be fishing on their own licenses?—A. Most of them fish on their own gear.
- Q. Say that a cannery having its 200 persons, employs about ninety inside—they would be Indian women, Chinamen, boys, &c., with about ten men to manage the whole thing inside and a number of boats fishing outside for the cannery would be Italians, Greeks, and others—what would be the proportion of outside foreigners to the 200?—A. Well, I could not answer that. There is quite a number on the river.
- Q. Do you ever do any sea fishing?—A. No, sir.
- Q. Well, do you think the Indian Chief we had up made a mistake when he said there was not so many fish as there used to be?—A. Well, I don't know, the Indians always say that, but I don't think they really know.
- Q. Is there anything else you would like to put in?—A. No; nothing else.

Captain C. GRANT who had given evidence on the 20th February, (p. 81.) was recalled and sworn.

By Mr. Wilnot :

- Q. You have been a fishery guardian under the Government?—A. Yes, sir.
- Q. What was your beat of operations?—A. From Mr. Ewen's cannery up to Stave River.
- Q. Oh, your duties were not below—not down the river?—A. No, sir.
- Q. Who is guardian down there?—A. Mr. Green.
- Q. In your duties as guardian what course did you pursue to see that boats licensed by the department are only used?—A. The boats are numbered—they have numbers on the sides of the boat.
- Q. In starting out at six o'clock Sunday night, what is the course pursued?—A. Well, they get ready with boat and net about four or five o'clock and wait until six.

Q. Do all start out at once?—A. Oh, well, some will get out and lay on the oars ready to start.

Q. How do they know the time?—A. Most of them have watches.

Q. Are you supposed to be there?—A. Yes; I have known a case—three or four years ago—when a man started out at four o'clock. I had him brought up and he was fined accordingly.

Q. Are watches all kept pretty much alike?—A. Well, I would not like to say that.

Q. Have you known of any instance where a boat numbered in 1890 as a certain number would fish with the same or other number in '91?—A. Not as I am aware of.

Q. Are the numbers all put on each year?—A. Yes; I can tell if a number is new.

Q. But suppose a man got No. 18 license in '90 and might get No. 23 in '91—would he change the number?—Well, I don't know if he would.

Q. Well, how do you know if that is his right number?—A. Well, I get a book from the office, and I look at it and see if it is the same number.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. And the number of the license don't always correspond with the number on the boat?—A. No, sir; last year I saw a boat which did not agree with the book, and I asked him about it, and he said Mowat had given him the license, and I hauled him up.

Q. But, for instance, if No. 18 was the boat and license last year and he got a license for the same boat this year No. 23, would the boat's number be changed?—A. Oh, yes; he would re-paint the number.

Q. Then the number of the license and the number on the boat corresponds every year?—A. Yes.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. You have been a guardian how long?—A. Four years.

Q. During those four years has there been only one conviction for improper numbering?—A. Only two that I have had. I have to settle many quarrels and disputes, &c.

Q. What is the limit they have to fish apart?—A. The length of a net from one another. They very often get one ahead of the other and that is not according to law.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do they generally leave one-third of the river open?—A. Well, yes; up here they do very well—perhaps not so well lower down.

Q. Is there any other guardian down the river except Mr. Green?—A. Mr. McDonald was last year on the North Arm.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Is that where the Indians fish?—A. It is the Arm on this side—the North Arm of the Fraser River—McDonald was guardian there—he takes in from down below here a piece all the way down to the mouth—I take from Mr. Ewen's cannery up to the head of Harrison Lake—I went up with the steam launch—generally Mr. Ewen's to Mission. I take in Pitt River and Stave River—Pitt River always.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do you find many violations of the law?—A. No, sir; not many—sometimes little quarrels—they keep to the routine of their business.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. You are not troubled then with many infractions of the law?—A. Well, I am around, and these men would rather stop off at the proper time than lose boat and net.

Q. And that was the only case of seizure during your term of service—four years?—A. Yes, sir.

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Q. What was the decision of the Magistrate in this case of the boat and net?—A. Well, the man could not speak good English—he pleaded off—I think they telegraphed to Ottawa—I don't know exactly how they settled this.

Q. And was he fined any sum of money?—A. I think he was fined the expenses.

Q. Then the penalty was nothing?—The law is penalty so much and nets confiscated?—A. Oh, yes; I am wrong sir—I took some nets from a man of the name of Lecroix—I was sent up there and I found nets set across a creek, and I went to the Siwash and said what was he doing with nets—he said they were not his and belonged to a man up here, but he said they didn't belong to him, they belonged to the Siwash—and I hauled them (the nets) into the boat and brought them down—so they fined him, and he paid the fine.

Q. Then a system is pursued that a person who offends against the law—as far as your knowledge goes—he may have to pay the penalty of the court but pay no fine.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Well, you see the magistrate is generally lenient when a man does not understand English, &c.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. Are you aware if any instructions came direct from Ottawa to let the man off?—A. No, sir; I gave it into the hands of the magistrate and he settled it.

Q. Well, what I want to show is persons violating the law they get off as easily as the canners do about the offal—the law is of no avail?—A. Well, I don't know what the reason was—he was sick, I think, too.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Well, Mr. Chairman, I cannot agree with you—I think the law as regards fishing is as strictly carried out, as much as in any other country.

Mr. WILNOT.—I can understand that a citizen of the country here would naturally stand up for his mountains.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Well, there has been so little violation of the law that there has been few convictions.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. How long would it take you to go from Ewen's to the Mission?—A. Oh, four or five hours—it depends on the tide.

Q. Well, how can you tell if Sunday fishing is not done?—A. Well, of course I cannot see all the way at once—I do what I can and often I am out all night.

Q. Well, I only say this to show that it is absurd to have one man to attend to so many miles of river and expect the law to be carried out—how far is your beat?—A. Forty miles.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Oh, of course, it is impossible for him to be here and at Mission at the same time—there should be more guardians.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. You are on duty the whole season?—A. No, sir; I used to get on four or five months—this season I was to get seven months.

Q. What time do you commence?—A. About 26th March.

Q. And end when?—A. September—after that I go to the Hatchery.

Q. And how do you get up and down the river?—A. With the steam launch.

Q. It is possible there might be many infractions during the night as regards these numbers on the boats?—A. Well, there might be—I look pretty sharp during the night, but still there might be infractions.

Q. Numbers might be changed and you would not know anything about it?—A. Well, I generally look sharp after them—I know the men and the numbers—I get a book from the department with every man's name and number.

Q. But that does not prevent a man from having two numbers—well, that will do, unless you have something further to ask the witness, Mr. Armstrong?—A. No; I have nothing further.

Mr. WILNOT.—Very well, that will do Captain Grant.

On the request being made by the chairman for any further witnesses now to come forward :

E. A. WADHAMS.—I would prefer giving my evidence to-morrow when Mr. Higgins is here.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Well, I don't think that is right—I think it a reflection upon the Commissioners present?—A. Oh, now ; I don't mean that, but I would like Mr. Higgins to be present.

Q. Well, but here are Commissioners appointed to come here, and if Mr. Higgins is not here it is not our fault—suppose Mr. Higgins is not here to-morrow—would you give your evidence at all?—A. Well, I would give it if my evidence is necessary—I only state it as a preference—if it is offensive, why—

Q. Oh, no ; it is not offensive—we simply state it because the court is now sitting?—A. Well, I understand that the evidence was given at our convenience somewhat.

Q. No, sir ; at the court's convenience—but we cannot delay the court?—A. I don't wish to delay the court—you see we had nothing to do here yesterday afternoon and we heard you were coming here to take evidence to day.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—And we now have nothing to go on with this afternoon.

Mr. WILMOT.—And Mr. Higgins cannot get here until two o'clock to-morrow?—A. Well, as regards my own feelings I would prefer giving it before the whole board. I am willing to give it this afternoon—I have stated my wishes in the matter and I now leave myself in your hands, but would it put the Commission to inconvenience if I gave my evidence in Victoria.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Well, we do object to taking evidence on Fraser River fisheries in Victoria—I don't see why I should go to Victoria and hear evidence on Fraser River fishing and I am not going to do it if I can possibly avoid it, and I don't think the gentlemen engaged in business here are treating this part of the country fairly in insisting on going to Victoria to give their evidence, (suppressed applause from majority of audience.)

Mr. WILMOT.—Order, order, gentlemen, (continuing to Mr. Wadhams). Because, if a man tells the truth he can tell it here just as well as in Victoria, and if there are any influences being brought to bear it should be avoided and if those influences are at work to prevent a New Westminster man giving evidence here it should be prevented.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—We would like to have your evidence to-day.

Mr. WADHAMS.—I have been charged with discourtesy, but I don't think it all on one side—I am willing to give my evidence now.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Well, but, Mr. Wadhams, don't say we implied discourtesy?—A. Well, I was charged with discourtesy—I would rather give my evidence to the full board.

Q. Well, but you certainly did throw reflections on the two Commissioners here, for it seemed as if you thought they were incompetent?—A. Well, I will be willing to give evidence this afternoon—I am in the hands of the Commission.

Mr. WILMOT.—Very well—this Commission is adjourned until this afternoon at one o'clock.

The Commission adjourned at 12.10 p.m.