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BRITISH COLUMBIA
FISHERY COMMISSION

REPORT

1892



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Marine and Fisheries.

REPORT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA FISHERY COMMISSION.

To the Honourable CHARLES H. TUPPER,
Minister of Marine and Fisheries,
Ottawa.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit the report of the Chairman of the British Columbia Fishery Commission, which contains the following matter:—

- (1.) Introductory résumé of the growth of the salmon fisheries of the province, with statistics of their development, and values from 1876 to 1891.
- (2.) Reference to the appointment of the Dominion Superintendent of Fish Culture in 1890 to examine into the salmon fisheries of the Fraser River.
- (3.) Reference to the appointment, by Order in Council of 23rd December, 1891, of three Commissioners to further investigate and report upon necessary fishery regulations relating to the salmon and other fisheries of British Columbia, consisting of the Hon. D. W. Higgins, Mr. Sheriff Armstrong and Samuel Wilmot, Esq., with a brief reference to their work.
- (4.) The Chairman's remarks in relation to the proceedings, and the conclusions arrived at by the Commissioners at their final meeting at New Westminster on the 19th March, 1892.
- (5.) Copies of the Fishery regulations in force in British Columbia prior to the appointment of the Commission on the 23rd December, 1891.
- (6.) Copies of the additional regulations, over and above those just mentioned, which are now in force in British Columbia.
- (7.) Copy of the regulations as carried by the Commission and recommended to be adopted by the Department of Marine and Fisheries for the better preservation of the salmon and other fisheries in British Columbia.
- (8.) The minutes of the proceedings in detail, together with the evidence taken under oath from fishermen, cannerymen, dealers and others interested in the fisheries of British Columbia.
- (9.) Minutes of discussion at the final meeting of the Commissioners, for considering the evidence and forming a code of regulations thereon for submission to the Honourable Minister of Marine and Fisheries.
- (10.) Copy of the code of regulations so adopted by the unanimous votes of the Commissioners or otherwise.
- (11.) Copy of a minority report by the Hon. Mr. Higgins, in relation to some of the regulations.

Respectfully submitted,

WM. SMITH,
Deputy Minister of Marine and Fisheries.

BRITISH COLUMBIA FISHERY COMMISSION.

REPORT

OF

MR. SAMUEL WILMOT,
CHAIRMAN.

(1.) INTRODUCTORY.

The regulation and supervision of the fisheries of British Columbia, particularly the very important salmon fishing industries on the Fraser River and other inland waters, have for some years past been objects of much solicitude to the department, but owing to a variety of causes the regulations from time to time adopted as best suited for the conservation of these important sources of wealth to the community, have not met with that endorsement and approval on the part of those most interested in their preservation as had naturally been expected. Delegations waited upon the Minister, and petitions were from time to time received from the canning companies representing the necessity of rescinding or amending these regulations and substituting others, many of them in direct opposition to the recommendations and reports of the local officers of the department in the province. Hence the desire of all parties for the appointment of a Commission to investigate and take evidence on all matters appertaining to the fisheries of the Pacific province, in order that the department might formulate regulations for the control of the different fisheries, upon data obtained through an uninterested and unbiassed medium.

Before detailing the work of the Commission which was appointed, a short résumé of the growth of the principal provincial fisheries may not be out of place here.

The fisheries of British Columbia have, ever since the first explorers and traders visited the country, been noted for their wonderful extent and richness; and the annual migrations of the salmon in such immense numbers, up the rivers from the sea to the spawning grounds, have been a source of never-failing interest to travellers and others who have seen them in countless thousands, during the summer months, pushing up stream, overcoming all obstacles, in obedience to that instinctive law of nature which compels them to seek suitable localities for the reproduction of their species.

From time immemorial the aborigines looked upon the season of the arrival of the salmon as the grand harvest, and immense quantities were annually taken and preserved for use during the interval of winter, and that long period during which, although fish were always present in the streams, yet they were not caught with the same facility as during the great runs of "saw-kay," or red salmon, in the months of July and August.

Notwithstanding the improvident and reckless modes of fishing practised by the Indians, and though the quantities of fish caught by them were in the aggregate large, still, comparatively speaking, they were very small indeed to the numbers which formed the great salmon runs that yearly passed up river to the spawning grounds.

Following the gradual settlement of the country, fishing operations, more or less extensive, were inaugurated, and the white man's ingenuity taking the place of the crude methods of the Indians, advantage was soon taken of this great source of wealth and food which the rivers of the province, and especially the Fraser River, provided at their doors.

At first the market for these fish was much restricted, the settlement being sparse, and the absence of any suitable means of communication with the outside world precluded any attempts at export of a product which in quantity far exceeded the requirements of the local demands.

In the States of the Union to the south of the International Boundary, however, where the same profusion of fish wealth abounded, the preservation and shipment of fresh fish in cans had been successfully accomplished, and the industry of preparing canned salmon and shipping it to foreign markets, had been initiated, and was well under way, with excellent prospects of remunerative success, when in 1870 his business was established on the Fraser River, by the erection of two small canneries, whose pack that year aggregated 7,247 cases (one case consists of 48 one-pound cans).

From this small beginning in 1876, the salmon canning industry has grown to one of the first magnitude, the pack of salmon in the Province of British Columbia in the year 1889 amounting to 419,211 cases, representing a value of \$2,414,655. This was the product of thirty canneries, of which sixteen were operating on the Fraser River. In the following year, 1890, owing to a depreciated market, due largely to the competition of Alaskan canneries, the output was not so large, being only 414,500 cases, valued at \$2,387,519, and in 1891, with thirty-eight canneries in operation, of which twenty-two were on the Fraser River, the salmon pack only reached the total of 316,054 cases, the value of which was placed at \$1,517,060. In explanation of this falling off, however, it may be mentioned that owing to a glut in the European market, consequent on the large packs put up by the canneries in the two preceding years, not as many fish were taken as might otherwise have been the case. The Fisheries Inspector for British Columbia, however, reported that, had the canneries desired to do so, fully 625,000 cases might have been obtained. A drop in the price of canned salmon from 12 to 10 cents per one-pound tin also largely accounts for the decrease in value of the product of 1891, under that of the years previous.

From the two small canneries in 1876, employing only about 100 persons, the industry has expanded to the extent that in 1891 there were over 6,500 persons employed directly by the canneries, and the number of other persons indirectly benefited correspondingly large.

But while the salmon fishery and canning industry is the most important as yet of the fisheries of the Pacific province, they are by no means the only ones of value—the herring, halibut, oulachon, sturgeon and rock cod all being of prime importance, and but awaiting a corresponding development to show excellent returns for the labour and outlay requisite for their capture and treatment.

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The halibut fishery has attracted considerable attention during the past two years, and valuable fishing banks, richly stocked with this commercial fish have been discovered, and though not as yet worked with much vigour, considerable quantities have already been shipped in ice to the eastern cities of Canada and the United States, and notwithstanding the many transportation difficulties and drawbacks, the prices realized give promise of a large increase in the business, and a corresponding benefit to the province in the early future. In 1890 the value of halibut captured and used fresh was placed at \$31,840 for 636,800 lbs., and in 1891 the catch had increased to 1,130,000 lbs., valued at \$56,500.

The total value of the fisheries of the province for 1890 was reported by the Inspector at \$3,481,432.29.

(2.) In 1890 Mr. Samuel Wilmot, Supt.-General of Fish Culture for the Dominion, acting under instructions from the department, paid an official visit to the Fraser River during the height of the salmon fishing season and made an inspection of most of the different canning establishments on the Fraser River, which were at that time in full operation.

The run of salmon in 1890 was very heavy and the opportunity afforded the inspecting officer to obtain a full and comprehensive view of the conduct of fishery matters upon the Fraser River was very favourable. Mr. Wilmot's report to the Government was adopted and published in the annual report of the department for 1890. The report, however, produced much criticism from many of the salmon canners, and their agents, who complained bitterly of the representations which were made by Mr. Wilmot regarding the wholesale destruction of fish and the universal custom which prevailed of throwing all offal from the canning establishments in the river contrary to law, as well as the conclusions arrived at generally in his report.

(3.) With a view of determining the accuracy of this report, as well as obtaining data and information on many other points respecting the river and deep sea fisheries of the province of which, until Mr. Wilmot's report was made, the department had previously been uninformed, a Minute of Council, based upon the recommendation of the Honourable the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, was approved on the 23rd of December, 1891, appointing a Commission consisting of Hon. D. W. Higgins, M.P.P., Speaker of the British Columbia Legislative Assembly, Wm. Armstrong, Esq., Sheriff of New Westminster, B.C., and Samuel Wilmot, Esq., Superintendent of Fish Culture for Canada, "to inquire into and report upon the Fisheries and Fishery Regulations in the Province of British Columbia."

Mr. Charles F. Winter, of the headquarter staff of the Fisheries Department, was detailed for duty and accompanied the Commission as secretary.

The Commission was convened and held its first session at the Court House in New Westminster, B.C., on the 19th February, 1892, Mr. Samuel Wilmot being elected chairman, and proceeded at once to take sworn evidence from day to day and hear testimony from the actual fishermen and other interested parties in regard to all matters affecting the fishery interests of the province.

On 2nd March an adjournment was made to Victoria, where sessions were held daily in the rooms of the Civic Board of Trade until the 10th March, when the Commission adjourned to Nanaimo and held meetings in the town hall there; from thence

the Commission went to Vancouver ; and then again to New Westminster, where the final meeting of the Commissioners was held on the 19th of March to consider and draw up their report and recommendations to the department.

But previous to this a trip by steamer down the Fraser River to the open waters of the Gulf of Georgia was taken by the Commission to obtain personal knowledge regarding the location and surroundings of the several canneries and other fishery establishments on the river.

The work of the Commission throughout was very considerable, as will be seen by the minutes of proceedings which show that the number of witnesses examined before the Commission was 112. Of these 71 and a delegation from the New Westminster Board of Trade, were heard in New Westminster, 20 in Victoria, 7 in Nanaimo, and 14 in Vancouver.

Whilst the great majority of the witnesses were actual fishermen, there were also cannerymen, their agents, and others interested directly in the fishing industries, and many others also of different occupations who volunteered their evidence, and in most cases, owing to the long residence of these parties in the province and their varied fishing experiences in all parts of the Pacific coast, their testimony was found to be most valuable.

An analysis of the occupations and callings of the witnesses will be found in the minutes hereto appended.

Much, if not the greater portion, of the value attaching to the evidence adduced at the various sessions of the Commission was by reason of the length of time the witnesses have been in British Columbia, during which their experience had led them to form their opinions and views more accurately in regard to the subjects under investigation. Their names and periods of residence will also be found in the minutes attached.

The witnesses were all British subjects, 85 of them being natives of the British Isles, Canada and Australia, while the remainder claimed various countries as their birthplace. With the exception of two native Indians and a naturalized Italian all understood and spoke English, and with these exceptions an interpreter was not required.

(4.) The undersigned further submits the following particulars as the result of the deliberations of this Commission, together with the report and final decision which the Commissioners arrived at, in forming the series of fishery regulations which were recommended to be adopted by the Marine and Fisheries Department. These conclusions and the regulations submitted were formed upon the basis of the large amount of evidence which was taken in the leading cities of British Columbia, where the principal fishing operations were carried on, and where the larger proportion of the practical fishermen resided.

The proceedings connected with this investigation were free and open in every particular, as it was deemed expedient by the Commission to allow the utmost freedom of expression of the views of the actual, and practical fishermen, as well as of the cannerymen, and all others who were interested in the fishing industries of British Columbia.

When the Commissioners' sittings were closed to the public, and after all available evidence had been taken under oath, the three Commissioners met by appointment, at the city of New Westminster, on the 19th March last, when a draft of regulations was

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submitted for consideration and discussion, with the view to making any alterations or amendments thereto before their final adoption and submission to the Honourable Minister of Marine and Fisheries at Ottawa.

By a reference to the minutes of proceedings will be found each of the regulations, No. 1 to 24, which were fully discussed by all of the Commissioners, and in the main almost unanimously agreed to, excepting a few clauses on which the Honourable Mr. Higgins voted nay, and others which he asked further time to consider.

The twenty-four regulations as agreed to, *pro* and *con*, will be found hereto attached, which the Commissioners adopted by the following expression of opinion:

"The above sections from 1 to 24 were duly considered by this Commission and the record of their unanimous adoption, or otherwise, is agreed to by the Commissioners by their signatures which are hereto attached."

(Sgd.)

"SAMUEL WILMOT,
Chairman.
"W. J. ARMSTRONG,
"D. W. HIGGINS,
"Commissioners."

For the more easy and ready comprehension of the lengthy evidence taken under oath, which covers upwards of one thousand pages of type-written matter, the analysis of the evidence will be found in the minutes of proceedings, showing the number of witnesses, their residence, their occupation, their nationality, together with the names of the witnesses and the pages where their evidence is to be found.

There is also a minority report attached, given in by the Honourable Mr. Higgins, bearing date 29th March last, which embodies his views for dissenting from some of the clauses which were carried by the majority votes of the Commission. This minority report will be found appended to the majority report at the end of the minutes of proceedings.

Satisfactory reference is here made with regard to the conduct and efficiency of Mr. Chas. F. Winter, who acted as secretary to the Commission, and also as the sworn stenographer and type-writer, in taking and recording all evidence, the fulness and accuracy of which is highly commendable.

The several meetings of the Commission in the various cities in which they were held in British Columbia created much interest, and were uniformly well attended, and gracefully acknowledged on the part of the fishermen and other inhabitants as a boon granted to them by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, to look into the actual position of the salmon fisheries on the Fraser River and elsewhere in British Columbia.

It may be said, however, that the number of witnesses examined, represented a portion only of the public who were interested, and largely attended the meetings of the Commission from day to day. The local press also gave prominence to the matters under consideration, and with the exception of one or two of the meetings only, in the city of Victoria, the utmost satisfaction and harmony prevailed.

Respectfully submitted,

SAMUEL WILMOT,
Chairman, British Columbia Fishery Commission.

—P.S.—With the view to a better understanding of the position of the fishery regulations as applied to the salmon fisheries in British Columbia, prior to the appointment of the Commission, and as they are at present, the several regulations as they now stand will be found hereto attached.

S. W.

REGULATIONS IN FORCE RELATING TO SALMON FISHERIES IN
BRITISH COLUMBIA PRIOR TO THE APPOINTMENT OF THE
FISHERIES COMMISSION ON THE 23RD DECEMBER, 1891.

SALMON FISHING.

1. 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 the Province of British Columbia.

Provided always, that Indians shall at all times have liberty to fish for the purpose of providing food for themselves, but not for sale, barter or traffic, by any means other than with drift nets or spearing.

2. Meshes of nets used for capturing salmon shall be at least five and three-quarter inches extension measure, and nothing shall be done to practically diminish their size: provided always that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries may order larger meshes to be used at such times and places as may be in his opinion necessary for the protection of the fisheries.

3. (a.) Drifting with salmon nets shall be confined to tidal waters, and no salmon net of any kind shall be used for salmon in fresh waters.

(b.) Drift nets shall not be used so as to obstruct more than one-third of any river.

(c.) Fishing for salmon shall be discontinued from 6 o'clock p.m. on Saturday to 6 o'clock p.m. on the following Sunday, and during such close time no nets or other fishing apparatus shall be set or used so as to impede the free course of fish, and all nets or other fishing apparatus set or used otherwise shall be deemed to be illegally set and shall be liable to be seized and forfeited, and the owner or owners or persons using the same shall be liable to the penalties and costs imposed by the Fisheries Act.

(d.) The use of seines for the purpose of catching salmon is prohibited in the waters of British Columbia.

4. (a.) Before any salmon net, fishing boat or other fishing apparatus shall be used, the owner or persons interested in such net, fishing boat or fishing apparatus shall cause a memorandum in writing setting forth the name of the owner or person interested, the length of the net, boat or other fishing apparatus and its intended location to be filed with the Inspector of Fisheries, who, if no valid objection exists, may, in accordance with instructions from the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, issue a fishery license for the same, and any net, fishing boat or fishing apparatus used before such license has been obtained, and any net, fishing boat or fishing apparatus used in excess or evasion of the description contained in such license shall be deemed to be illegal and liable to forfeiture, together with the fish caught therein, and the owner or person using the same shall be also subject to fine and costs under the Fisheries Act.

(b.) All salmon nets and fishing boats shall have the name of the owner or owners legibly marked on two pieces of wood or metal attached to the same, and such mark shall be preserved on such nets or fishing boats during the fishing season in such manner as to be visible without taking up the net or nets; and any net or fishing boat used without such mark shall be liable to forfeiture.

5. (a.) The Minister of Marine and Fisheries shall from time to time determine the number of boats, seines, or nets, or other fishing apparatus to be used in any of the waters of British Columbia.

(b.) The total number of licenses for salmon fishing in the Fraser River shall be limited to 500, and of this number 350 shall be allotted among the canneries in operation on the Fraser River in the season of 1890, the allotment thereof to be based, in the cases of the old canneries, upon their average respective packs of the last three seasons, and in those of new canneries upon the estimate of the Inspector of Fisheries of the reasonable working capacity of such new canneries.

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For all licenses up to twenty, inclusive, a fee of twenty dollars each shall be charged, and for any number in excess of twenty which, under the proposed allotment any cannery may be entitled to take up, a fee of \$50 for each license shall be charged. Should any of the 350 licenses above referred to remain unissued, they shall be allotted on the basis already stated, to the canneries applying therefor, at a fee of \$50 for each license, and in cases there should not be a sufficient number to permit of this being alone, they may be issued by the Inspector of Fisheries, in such manner as he deems equitable upon payment of the last-mentioned fee; the remaining 150 licenses to be issued at \$5 per license to the proprietors of freezers on the river and to fishermen, as the Minister of Marine and Fisheries may authorize, no fisherman, however, to receive more than one license.

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.

FISH OFFAL.

Fish offal, or any other deleterious substances shall not be thrown into or allowed to pass into, or remain in any water, or river or stream—nor shall sawdust or mill rubbish be drifted or thrown into any stream frequented by fish in British Columbia—See sec. 14, Fisheries Acts.

The following regulations for the salmon fisheries of British Columbia are in addition to the above and are now in force in that province :—

REGULATION OF JUNE 1, 1892.

1. That all *bond fide* fishermen, being British subjects and actual residents of the province, shall be entitled to obtain one (1) license to fish, upon payment of the sum of \$20 for such license.
2. That each freezing establishment, actually engaged in the freezing and exporting of fish, shall be entitled to obtain not exceeding seven (7) licenses, and that the fee for each license shall be \$20.
3. That each establishment engaged in the actual business of shipping or exporting fish in ice, or otherwise, but not in the manner of freezing or canning, shall be entitled to obtain not exceeding three (3) licenses, at a fee of \$20 each license.
4. That each and every local trader or dealer in fish for home consumption, in cities, towns, or country, actually engaged in such traffic, shall be entitled to obtain not exceeding two (2) licenses, at a fee of \$20 each license.
5. That salters and smokers of fish who carry on this specialty in curing fish for domestic or foreign markets, and not engaged in the fishing business in any other way, may be entitled to obtain two licenses upon the payment of a fee of \$20 for each license.
6. That every actual resident settler (with his family residing with him) shall be entitled to obtain one (1) license to fish, upon payment of \$2 for the same; and shall be permitted to fish in any of the waters of British Columbia, except in any prescribed limits at the mouths of rivers or streams, or during the close times; every such settler shall be a British subject, and such license will only permit of fishing for family use, but not for sale or barter.
7. That each canning establishment, actually carrying on the canning industry, shall be entitled to receive twenty boat licenses to fish as its maximum number; and that the fee payable for each such license shall be \$20, to apply everywhere alike throughout the province.
8. All the persons so mentioned in all of the above sections as entitled to receive licenses shall be *bond fide* resident British subjects and the actual proprietors of the business for which the licenses are obtained.
9. That all licenses so obtained shall not be transferable under any conditions whatever, without the consent in writing from the Department of Marine and Fisheries.

COPY OF THE REGULATIONS, 1 TO 24, RECOMMENDED BY THE BRITISH COLUMBIA FISHERIES COMMISSION TO BE CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF MARINE AND FISHERIES OF CANADA.

From the evidence taken under oath from numerous parties in relation to the subject of the fisheries at the cities of New Westminster, Victoria, Vancouver and Nanaimo, the following conclusions were come to on the subjects contained in the several paragraphs herein, which are numbered from 1 to 24, and are recommended to be adopted by the Fisheries Department of Canada, for the conservation and maintenance of the fishing industries of the Province of British Columbia. The recommendations are as follows :—

1. That each canning establishment, actually carrying on the canning industry, shall be entitled to receive eighteen boat licenses to fish as its maximum number; and that the fee payable for each such license shall be \$20.

2. That each freezing establishment, actually engaged in the freezing and exporting of fish, shall be entitled to obtain not exceeding seven licenses, and that the fee for each license shall be \$20.

3. That each establishment engaged in the actual business of shipping or exporting fish in ice, or otherwise, but not in the manner of freezing or canning, shall be entitled to obtain not exceeding three licenses, at a fee of \$20 each license.

4. That each and every local trader or dealer in fish for home consumption, in cities, towns, or country, actually engaged in such traffic, shall be entitled to obtain not exceeding two licenses, at a fee of \$20 each license.

5. That all *bonâ fide* fishermen, being British subjects and actual residents of the province, shall be entitled to obtain one license to fish, upon payment of the sum of \$20 for such license.

6. That every actual resident settler (with his family residing with him) shall be entitled to obtain one license to fish, upon payment of \$2 for the same; and shall be permitted to fish in any of the waters of British Columbia, except in any prescribed limits at the mouths of rivers or streams, or during the close times; every such settler shall be a British subject, and such license will only permit of fishing for family use, but not for sale or barter.

7. That the regular annual close time for salmon fishing in any of the rivers or streams of British Columbia shall be from the 1st October to the 1st March following in every year.

That the weekly close time for fishing for salmon or other fish in the waters of British Columbia shall be from 6 o'clock a.m. on every Saturday till 12 o'clock midnight on the following Sunday.

8. That the limitation for the size of mesh of salmon nets and the period in which such sized nets shall be used, shall be as follows :—

A net with a $7\frac{1}{2}$ inch mesh for capturing spring salmon to be used from 1st March to 15th August. A net with a mesh not less than $5\frac{1}{2}$ inch mesh for sockeye, coho or other salmon, may be used only between 1st July and 1st October.

The above meshes are extension measure.

9. That all licenses so obtained shall not be transferable under any conditions whatever, without the consent in writing from the Department of Fisheries.

10. That the tidal boundaries for all or any fishing for commercial purposes connected with canning, freezing, or exporting of salmon, shall be at Pitt River, and at a line across the Fraser River at Whonnack Creek :—above these two points on the Pitt and Fraser Rivers, netting or fishing for commercial purposes as above described, is forbidden.

11. The use of seines for capturing fish of any description is wholly forbidden at the mouths of all rivers or streams within certain limits thereof as may be laid down by the Department of Fisheries.

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12. That there shall be no discrimination with regard to the numbers of licensee, nor the fees payable for the same, for canners, or others, throughout the waters of British Columbia.

13. That the throwing of fish offal or dead fish, saw-dust, mill rubbish, or any deleterious substance into the rivers, or other waters frequented by fish, is alike injurious to these waters and to the inhabitants residing along the same; and therefore the laws relating to the prevention of offal and deleterious substances being thrown into such waters should be enforced in the interests of the community at large.

14. That it would be expedient, for the improvement of the fisheries in British Columbia, that additional fish hatcheries to the one now in existence should be built in well selected localities on the upper branches of the Fraser River, the evidence before this Commission being largely given in this line.

15. That the great destruction of herring now practised to supply a few crude oileries on the coast and elsewhere, should be prevented by departmental enactments, and thus avoid the too great and rapid depletion of an important factor as bait for carrying on the deep sea fisheries of the British Columbian coast in the future.

16. That the halibut fisheries on the coast of British Columbia, now assuming great importance from the successes which have attended the catches lately made and their introduction into the markets of Boston and elsewhere on the Atlantic coast, demand the husbanding care of the Government for the advancement of this new industry which bids fair to give additional wealth to the inhabitants of British Columbia.

17. That the inclination on the part of the fishermen is to increase the killing capacity of the drift net by giving it greater depth than appears necessary for fairly legitimate fishing, and as the depth as shown now varies from 30 to 60 meshes, and in order to place all fishermen upon the same footing in their fishing operations, and to guard against too excessive destruction of the salmon, the drift net for sockeyes should be limited to a depth not exceeding 50 meshes.

18. That doubts having arisen with regard to the actual meaning of subsec. 8 of section 8, chap. 95 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, it is desirable in the interests of river fishing in British Columbia with reference to leaving portions of the river free from fishing, that not more than one-third of the river should be left open.

19. That the system now prevailing along the coast of killing vast numbers of dog-fish expressly for the use of the livers of said fish for oil purposes only, should be discontinued, unless the bodies of these fish are utilized in the same manner.

20. That salters and smokers of fish who carry on their specialty in curing fish for domestic or foreign markets, and not engaged in the fishing business in any other way, may be entitled to obtain two licenses upon the payment of a fee of \$20 for each license.

21. That a suggestion is made to the department for the advisability for further protection of the fisheries, that a sufficient number of additional guardians should be appointed, to enforce the fishery laws.

22. That it is expedient, in the interests of the Fraser River fisheries, that the early runs of the quinnat and sockeye salmon should be captured from which to obtain their ova for artificial breeding in the hatcheries.

23. That the introduction of shad, oysters and lobsters into the waters of British Columbia from the Atlantic coast, is most desirable, and that the Department of Fisheries be requested to institute such means as will bring about this most desirable enterprise.

24. That whereas the native oyster is found in some localities along the British Columbia coast, and as they are becoming rapidly decimated by the action of a few fishermen and Indians, regardless of consequences, it is desirable that the Fisheries Department should take speedy action to prevent their extermination by establishing proper close seasons, and encouraging persons who may be desirous of entering into the business of oyster culture.

NOTE.—The consideration and adoption of the above regulations from 1 to 24, together with discussion and votes taken thereon by the Commissioners, will be found in the minutes of proceedings hereto appended.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA SALMON FISHERIES COMMISSION

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RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

AND

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, &c.

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ANALYSIS OF WITNESSES HEARD BY THE COMMISSION.

At New Westminster there were heard	71	witnesses and a delegation from the New Westminster Board of Trade.
At Victoria there were heard	20	witnesses.
At Nanaimo do	7	do
At Vancouver do	14	do

In all 112 witnesses.

The great majority of these witnesses were persons of many years' residence in the province and their experience in connection with the fisheries extends over a considerable period, as appears from the following:—

25	witnesses had been residing in B.C. for 30 years and over.
16	do do over 20 years but under 30.
19	do do over 10 years but under 20.
21	do do over 5 years but under 10.
18	do do over 2 years but under 5.
1	do do under 1 year.

and 12 witnesses did not state their length of residence.

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By occupations the witnesses were divided as follows:—

Canners and agents of canneries	15
Cannery managers and book-keepers	2
Fishermen	50
Farmers	7
Merchants and traders	7
Fish dealers (fresh fish)	7
Freezers	2
General merchant and cooper	1
Hotel-keeper	1
Master mariners	2
Physicians and surgeons	6
Indian Reserve Commissioner and Indian agents	3
Fishery officers	3
Civil engineer	1
Barrister 1, Chemist 1	2
Butcher 1, Accountant 1	2
Promoter of colonization companies	1

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The witnesses were all British subjects and were natives of the following places :—

England.....	29
Scotland.....	18
Ireland.....	3
Ontario.....	13
Quebec.....	1
Nova Scotia.....	6
New Brunswick.....	3
Prince Edward Island.....	2
British Columbia :	
Whites.....	3
Indians.....	2
Newfoundland.....	4
Australia.....	1
United States.....	5
Russia.....	3
France.....	1
Holland.....	1
Greece.....	2
Portugal.....	2
Norway and Sweden.....	4
Italy.....	2
Germany.....	1
Not given.....	6

Marine and Fisheries.

COMMISSION FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF MATTERS IN CONNECTION WITH THE SALMON FISHERIES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C., 19th February, 1892.

First Day's Session.

The Commissioners appointed for the investigation of matters connected with the salmon fisheries of British Columbia, etc., met, by permission of the Honourable the Provincial Secretary, in the Court-house, New Westminster, at 2 o'clock p.m.

Present :

The Honourable D. W. Higgins, of Victoria, B.C.; Sheriff W. J. Armstrong, of New Westminster, B.C.; S. Wilmot, Esq., Superintendent of Fish Culture for the Dominion of Canada, and Mr. C. F. Winter, of Ottawa, secretary.

Upon request by Mr. Wilmot, the secretary read the Orders in Council appointing the Commission as follows :—

"CERTIFIED COPY of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, on the 25th of August, 1891.

"On a report dated 10th August, 1891, from the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, stating that he has received a communication signed by all the representatives of the Province of British Columbia in the House of Commons, representing that fishery regulations, which may be well adapted to other provinces, are not always applicable to British Columbia, and urging the necessity of appointing a Commission for the purpose of collecting information on the subject of the existing regulations in British Columbia, and especially with regard to the alleged injurious effects of throwing fish offal into the water.

"The Minister, in connection with this matter, states, that during the course of an official inspection made last season, the Superintendent of Fish Culture ascertained that the practice of throwing offal in the water, although prohibited by the Fisheries Act, was general.

"It is deemed unnecessary here to deal at length with the injurious effects of such a practice, suffice it to say that it is universally condemned in England, as well as in other European countries. British Columbia canners, however, claim that it can do no harm to the salmon industry, as it is, they say, at once consumed by small fish or carried to the sea by the swift current in the Fraser River. But, on this point, the officers of the Fisheries Department are of opinion that such a condition is untenable, owing to the enormous quantity of refuse, amounting to no less than 8,733,000 lbs. each season.

"The Minister observes, that apart from this consideration, fully one-fourth of this considerable mass of fish matter, thus thrown away, consists of good wholesome food, wantonly destroyed and lost for human wants. This loss represents an equivalent of 277,489 salmon, which are thus allowed to go to waste and pollute the water. Most, if not the whole of this refuse could be profitably used for making fish-oil or guano, thus opening new fields to other industries. Settlers along the Fraser River also complain bitterly of the pollution caused by this offal and of the stench which arises therefrom.

"The Minister appends a memo. containing a synopsis of present and past regulations in force in British Columbia, together with such regulations as have been proposed but not adopted.

"The Minister, in view of certain peculiarities of the Pacific fisheries, their great value, and of the request on the part of members of Parliament, to which reference has

been made, recommends that a Commission, consisting of the undermentioned gentlemen, be appointed to inquire into and report upon the fisheries and fishery regulations in the Province of British Columbia, viz :—Charles T. Dupont, Charles G. Major, and Samuel Wilmot, Esquires.

"The Committee submit the same for Your Excellency's approval.

(Sgd.) "JOHN J. MCGEE,
"Clerk, Privy Council."

Messrs. Dupont and Major having signified their inability to act upon the Commission, the following minute of Council was subsequently approved by His Excellency, and which was also read by the secretary, as follows :—

"CERTIFIED COPY of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, on the 23rd of December, 1891.

"The Committee, on the recommendation of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, advise that the Order in Council of the 25th August, 1891, appointing Messrs. Charles T. Dupont, Charles G. Major and Samuel Wilmot, Commissioners to inquire into and report upon the Fisheries and Fishery Regulations of the Province of British Columbia, be cancelled.

"The Committee on the same recommendation advise that Mr. David W. Higgins, of Victoria, and Mr. William J. Armstrong, Sheriff of New Westminster, together with Mr. Samuel Wilmot, be appointed a Commission for the above-named purpose.

(Sgd.) "JOHN J. MCGEE,
"Clerk, Privy Council."

The secretary then read a letter of instructions addressed by the Honourable Charles H. Tupper, Minister of Marine and Fisheries, to the Commissioners, and which was as follows :—

"OTTAWA, 27th January, 1892.

"GENTLEMEN,—By virtue of an Order in Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor-General on the 23rd December, 1891, you have been appointed Commissioners to inquire into and report upon the Fisheries and Fishery Regulations of the Province of British Columbia.

"I have directed that Mr. Charles F. Winter, Secretary to the Deputy Minister of Fisheries, should be detailed to act as secretary to your Commission.

"In view of Mr. Wilmot's position as Superintendent of Fish Culture in Canada, and his position in my department, I would be glad, should it meet with your approval, for him to act as chairman during your deliberations.

"It is desired by me that while you should be free to inquire into the subject of regulations generally for the fisheries of British Columbia, in such way as you deem best, all evidence or information offered you shall be, as far as possible, made part of the record of your proceedings. Mr. Winter, as a short-hand writer, will be able to take down such evidence as you may wish to hear. After you have acquired such information as you desire, I would be glad to have such draft regulations as you may agree upon, with such arguments as you have to offer in support of them, and if it is not possible for you to agree, I would be glad to have regulations from each, or any two of you, supported in the same way.

"While I am not at present authorized to pay out of the public funds more than the expenses which you may incur for the purposes of the inquiry, I may say to you that it is my intention to submit for the consideration of His Excellency in Council, when the Estimates for the next Session are taken up, an item covering a proper allowance to you, in the nature of an honorarium.

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"I need not impress upon you the necessity for bringing your deliberations to a close as speedily as possible, though at the same time I have no desire that you should unduly hasten the work.

"I have the honour to be, gentlemen,

"Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.)

"CHARLES H. TUPPER."

It was then moved by Mr. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Armstrong, that Mr. Wilmot take the Chair.

Mr. Wilmot, on doing so, thanked his colleagues for their confidence, and explained that the Minister's suggestion was made in view not only of his (Mr. Wilmot's) long experience in connection with piscatorial matters, but also in case of the occasional absence from the sessions of the local Commissioners, he considered it would be better to have as presiding officer the Commissioner who would be quite sure to be present at all the sittings of the Commission.

Mr. Higgins and Mr. Armstrong concurred in this view.

Commissioners Higgins and Armstrong questioned the powers of the Commission under the Orders in Council read by the secretary, and considered a legal opinion as to their power to summon witnesses and administer oaths should be secured.

The secretary stated that he was aware the Minister had previously appointed Commissions by Order in Council, under authority of chap. 115 of the Revised Statutes, and by which witnesses were summoned and oaths administered.

It was agreed that the question should be referred to the legal firm of Corbould, McColl, Wilson & Campbell, for a decision as to the powers of the Commission, before proceeding to take evidence.

Upon the question of programme and the more particular matters to be taken up,—

Mr. Wilmot submitted a memo. of matters for investigation and upon which Mr. Tupper had made marginal notes. (Fisheries file No. 8478—'90). The points more particularly to be taken up were:—

(1.) Offal.

(2.) The limitation of number of nets in the Fraser River, their length and size of mesh.

(3.) Whether licenses, establishing the number of them which shall be given, to canners, to regular fishermen, to freezers and to settlers.

(4.) The close seasons, annual and weekly.

(5.) Fishing limits in the Fraser, shall they be reduced from what they are at present?

(6.) Shall licenses be granted only to resident British subjects, or to any person applying for them?

(7.) Whether a discrimination of fees for licenses should be made as between canners or other fishermen on the Fraser River, and those fishing on or at the estuaries of other rivers in British Columbia.

Mr. Armstrong stated that he also had been considering the matter to be inquired into and had drawn up a few questions in the line in which he thought inquiry should be made, and which he read to the Commission as follows:—

(1.) What depth of net should be allowed for fishing in the Fraser River?

(2.) Should fishing for canneries be allowed outside the mouth of the river?

(3.) Should the offal go into the river or be otherwise utilized?

(4.) Should all canneries have the same number of licenses?

(5.) How many licenses should each cannery have?

(6.) Should licenses be of an uniform price for canneries throughout the province?

(7.) Should any but British subjects of twelve months' standing have a license?

(8.) How many licenses should be issued to fishermen outside of canneries?

(9.) Should Indians have licenses to fish for the canneries, and if so, how many?

(10.) Should residents along the river who do not make fishing a business have licenses to fish, or should they be allowed to fish for their own consumption without a license?

(11.) What capacity are the canneries?

(12.) What does it cost during the average run of fish to put up a case of 48 one-pound tins—get details of expenditure.

The Commissioners agreed to conduct the inquiry upon the general lines embodied in both Mr. Armstrong's paper and the memo. of Mr. Wilmot.

On the question of "open" or "close" meetings,—

Mr. WILMOT.—"Well, the next question would be, shall the meetings be open to everybody and everything?"

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—"Yes, sir."

Mr. HIGGINS.—"Press and all?"

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—"Yes, sir, press and all, if these things need ventilation let them have it. If we close our meetings, then after we are done there would be sure to be a great cry about it and no matter how fair and honest we conducted the matter, we would be given no credit for it. I think it would be well to get all interested in canneries to give evidence, then take freezers and then fishermen; if we get canners, freezers and fishermen in here together we won't be able to keep them from talking and disputing."

Mr. WILMOT.—"Oh, well, we must keep order—no discussion must take place to interfere with what is going on before the Commission. The only thing in regard to the press is that if matters are under discussion here and it appears next morning perhaps different to what it really is, it would throw some discredit upon the investigation."

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—"Oh, but we are not discussing these matters with anybody else. We are getting answers to certain questions and then we will discuss the case and not before—at any rate that is my view."

Mr. WILMOT.—"Very well; but these interests of canners and fishermen are very conflicting. Now if some canners are present and some fishermen, would it not prevent the latter from giving that free and open evidence which otherwise they would give?"

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—"Well, if we find that anything like that occurs we can ask the gentlemen to withdraw, but I cannot consistently say I would have it with closed doors. What do you think, Mr. Higgins?"

Mr. HIGGINS.—"Well, I think it should not be altogether closed, except something like what Mr. Wilmot suggests should occur. I would prefer an open meeting—if we find such has any deterrent effect on any witnesses we can easily remedy it."

The Commission thereupon decided to sit with open doors.

After discussion and on formal motion of Mr. Higgins, it was decided that the hours of sitting of the Commission should be daily from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., and that the Commission sit this evening from 8 p.m. to 10.30 p.m., to take evidence—future evening sittings being determined daily.

The secretary being despatched for one of the members of the legal firm to whom it had been decided to refer the question of the powers of the Commission, returned with Mr. McColl (Corbould, McColl, Wilson & Campbell). Mr. McColl, after perusing the papers, stated that it was quite clear to him that the present Commission had full power, under authority of Chapter 115 to summon witnesses and administer oaths, and all persons so summoned were bound to appear and answer all questions submitted to them, and all parties so summoned and not appearing could be placed under arrest and tried for the offence. Mr. McColl also approved of a form of oath submitted by Mr. Wilmot and to be taken by all witnesses examined, and which was as follows:—

"I..... solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will truly answer all such questions as may be put to me and also give such information as may be within my personal knowledge to this Commission relating to the salmon or other fisheries of British Columbia now under consideration:

"So help me God."

Upon request of the chairman, Mr. Winter, the secretary of the Commission took the following oath:—

"In the matter of a certain Commission directed by an Order in Council dated 23rd December, 1891, directed to David W. Higgins, W. J. Armstrong, and Samuel

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Wilmot, to inquire into and report upon the fisheries and fishery regulations in the Province of British Columbia, and in the matter of Chapter 115 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1886,

"I, Charles F. Winter, the stenographer appointed by the Minister of Marine to act as secretary in the matter of the above Commission, do make oath and say, that I will truly take down the evidence that may be given in above Commission and faithfully perform all the duties that may be required of me by said Commissioners to the best of my ability :

"So help me God."

Upon the question of issuing summons to witnesses, it was decided to accept all voluntary evidence first and not issue any summons unless in case of actual necessity.

The Chair having declared the Commission ready for the taking of evidence :—

JAMES WISE, of New Westminster, appeared and after being duly sworn :

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, gentlemen, we will proceed. Mr. Wise, have you any suggestions to offer or statement to make ?

WITNESS.—My principal object in coming here is this : This fishing business is a very mixed business—it is very dissatisfactory to a great many, and in fact two years ago when a farmer could not fish himself or let his sons do so, it was very near making a great deal of trouble—when the free people on the banks of the Fraser could not catch a fish at their own doors, why we might as well be in Russia or Ireland, or some other country of that description. (Laughter.) Then a telegram came to late Inspector Mowat to give licenses for \$2. I have not much other information to give you, but I would prefer answering questions if you will ask them upon any particular point you may require.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Are you in the fishing business ?

WITNESS.—No, not now. I sold out to Mr. Ewen four years ago. I had a plant that cost me \$1,000 and applied for licenses, but I could not get one. I was one of the first fishermen on the river, as both you gentlemen (to Messrs. Armstrong and Higgins) know, and worked the industry up from its infancy. I am not in the fishing business at present, but would like to go into it next season, but if I put money into plant and then cannot get a license, well, I don't want to have anything to do with it.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Have you ever been in the canning business ?

WITNESS.—I was in the cannery business ten years ago.

Mr. HIGGINS.—What is your opinion as to mesh of nets. Is the present mesh satisfactory ?

WITNESS.—Oh, yes, but I think nets are a secondary consideration ; you want nets here that will catch the fish and you must arrange it according to their size. The reason I make this remark as to size is that I have found spawn in a four-pound salmon and it was just as well fitted for spawning as that in larger salmon.

Mr. HIGGINS.—What do you think of catching fish in the mouth of the river ?

WITNESS.—It is very detrimental and stops fish from coming into the river. It stops them in this way, Mr. Higgins, it stops them when they are active and lively and in the prime of life, and they are held back until they are not in such good condition.

Mr. HIGGINS.—But are they not caught at the mouth of the river ?

WITNESS.—Yes, they are caught, but their course to the river is often deflected away and they go to other places and we lose the fish to that extent. I have seen Indians who have told me they have seen our fish going up to Comox and other rivers where they were not until some seven years ago. They are a very timid fish, but of course in the last extremity will go up notwithstanding all barricades, &c. The breeding time is exhausting to any animal or fish and all these bars which the fish try to pass must make them more weakened. Let the fish get into the river and they will not go back ; they will go on up and spawn. Then protect your spawning grounds properly—this, I think, is the great question.

Mr. HIGGINS.—What do you think about licenses ? Is the present system satisfactory ?

WITNESS.—Well, it may be partly satisfactory to a few, but it is only so to a small minority. There is nothing in any other part of Canada or the States where a monopoly

is given to the few like here. What we want here is a hardy class of industrious working people to come and settle here with their families. Many have come with their families but they could not get a license and then they are under the thumb of men who only give small pay, for they get Chinamen and Indians next to nothing. This system is driving away the best of our people. The only way you can keep them is to give them licenses.

Mr. HIGGINS.—What change would you suggest?

WITNESS.—I think you should give a license to every British subject who applies for one. A man who puts up 100 or 200 brls. of salmon will help settle our country. If this plan was adopted this country would be settled thickly and it would drive out the Chinamen.

Mr. HIGGINS.—You were one time, I think, largely in the pickling line?

WITNESS.—Yes, I have pickled and salted salmon and sent them to all parts of the world. I shipped salmon on the old "Dominion," probably you remember her. That was when I first sent to the Australian markets. I then went into partnership with Ewen & Wood and we bought out Mr. Legg and then sold out to Ewen.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Where did you catch your fish?

WITNESS.—Well, I fished in the mouth of the river and away up above Ladner's.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Where did you sell?

WITNESS.—Oh, I sold over here, not far away.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Where did you clean your fish?

WITNESS.—On the bank of the river.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Always on the bank of the river? Was it where the offal could go into the river?

WITNESS.—Yes, there was no other place to put it. There seems to be no idea but putting it in the river; still, it should be put elsewhere—it would be good to put on the land, would it not.

Mr. HIGGINS.—They say not; that has been tried and found a failure years ago.

WITNESS.—Yes; it was tried, but the smell was most objectionable and it was a failure. Now, I think, if the offal was put in scows and carried out to deep water it would be at once carried away and give no trouble.

Mr. HIGGINS.—What effect do you think it has on salmon? What becomes of it?

WITNESS.—Oh, I don't think it hurts the salmon. It goes in the river, and there are thousands and thousands of little fish that eat up a great deal of it.

Mr. HIGGINS.—What kind of fish are they?

WITNESS.—Mainly suckers and such like. As far as its doing any injury to the fish I don't think that it does any harm, but other matters, such as sawdust, I think, do harm.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Did you ever dredge near a salmon cannery and find any heads or putrid matter in the water?

WITNESS.—Oh, yes; I have dipped up salmon heads, guts, &c., but if stirred up it all goes in twenty-four hours. We have a five knot current here, and two tides in twenty-four hours, and a pure stream of cold water coming from the mountains.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Did you ever go up to the head-waters of the Fraser River at a time when fish were dying, and see many?

WITNESS.—Yes; I have seen them in thousands, dead and dying, and from the way in which the heads and tails of the dying ones were worn and bruised it would be impossible for these fish to get up or back alive.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Then what becomes of them; do they go to increase the already large amount of offal in the river below?

WITNESS.—Yes; but they are mostly swept away. I have seen them in a few places down here—in some very thick—but the current takes them away. I have seen spawning salmon in the Thompson River and other places, and have seen them rooting up places to spawn, and there is another point about it, I do not think it well for this country to have a law protecting the trout. For commercial purposes they are no good, and they really destroy more salmon spawn than anything else. They root up the spawning places and eat the spawn and also the little fish, and are very destructive.

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Mr. ARMSTRONG.—For what purpose, Mr. Wise, would you require a license to fish—for canning, salting, freezing, or sending fresh fish away?

WITNESS.—Oh, I think if a man wants a license he will be sure to sell his fish to a cannery. Now, when I was with Ewen we ran to our full capacity, and then had tubs ready and never threw away fish.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Well, now, you say every person should have a license; would that not tend to decrease the fish?

WITNESS.—Oh, no; I think they are just as plentiful as ever they were, just as many as long ago. Then you have a check on the fishing, namely, the close time.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—But you would like to pack up on Sunday what you catch on Saturday?

WITNESS.—Oh, well, it is necessary to work on Sundays in this country.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—The main point I want to get at is this: You say that the fish that go up never return, and that as long as sufficient numbers get up to spawn in sufficient quantities, it is enough to keep up the supply in the river?

WITNESS.—I don't think our large spring salmon ever return. They go up 400 or 500 miles, and are the best kind to be allowed to breed.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—It is your opinion, then, that if 500 boats were fishing there would be just as many fish as if but fifty boats were fishing?

WITNESS.—Oh, well, I would hardly say that; of course the more they are fishing the more fish must be caught, but I do not think any harm could be done to the salmon in the Fraser River. They are just as plentiful now as when I came here in 1862.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—They are just as plentiful now as when only forty or fifty boats were fishing?

WITNESS.—Yes; they are just as plentiful, but the spawning beds should be watched and protected.

Mr. WILMOT.—You state that you applied for licenses, and could get none; what was the cause? Was it because all the licenses were taken up?

WITNESS.—I applied to Mr. Mowat for ten licenses—well, says he, you can't get them, but put in your application. I waited, but I got no licenses.

Mr. WILMOT.—Have you ever assigned any cause why you did not get them? Was it from a personal point, or were all the licenses given out?

WITNESS.—Well, I never followed it up, anyway I didn't get them.

Mr. WILMOT.—Are you a farmer, you say the farmers should not get licenses?

WITNESS.—But you don't understand this country. There are many people settled along the river, but who always depend upon the river—they don't farm.

Mr. WILMOT.—But then do you think that a settler living as you state should pay as much for his license as another person engaged in commercial traffic?

WITNESS.—I am hardly prepared to answer that. I think in this way: I think the license fee should be as low as possible, nothing more than enough to defray expenses.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, do you think \$2 too high?

WITNESS.—Oh, no, \$2 is nothing at all.

Mr. WILMOT.—Very well; now as to the mouth of the river: is it not the most destructive place for killing fish?

WITNESS.—Yes, it is the worst place.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—You might define the mouth of the river as it really is for your fishing purposes?

WITNESS.—Well, the limit should be as near the mouth as possible.

Mr. WILMOT.—Yes; but where is the mouth of the river, is it four miles from the lighthouse?

WITNESS.—There are two points of land at the mouth—it should be from one to the other.

Mr. WILMOT.—Then you are under the impression that fishing at the mouth has a tendency to drive fish away.

WITNESS.—Yes, it has a tendency. Indians have told me that they have seen fish in other places forced away from the mouth of our river.

Mr. WILMOT.—Then you think excessive fishing at the mouth drives fish to other points?

WITNESS.—Yes, it drives them away.

Mr. WILMOT.—And this injures the fisheries?

WITNESS.—Yes, certainly. Those fish would otherwise come into the river.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Now about the net—what depth of net do you fish?—A. Well, I think you should leave the net to the fishermen. There are snags in the river—you cannot fish very deep nets.

Q. Yes, but what I want to get at is—there is no limitation at present to the depth of net. Now there are many nets across the river of a certain depth; does this not act as a wall? Should not the depth be regulated as well as the length? Do you not think the depth should be fixed?—A. I am not prepared to say—the net should be left to the fishermen.

Q. Then would you give fishermen free liberty to fish with what must practically be a barricade to fish?—A. Well, but let me tell you the Fraser River is full of snags. You cannot fish a very deep net, and I have found that most of the fish will strike in from the middle up. Not one in ten will be caught from the middle down.

Q. Well, but some are caught—if we regulate a certain depth some would escape. At present you sweep everything before you, do you not?—A. Well, very few fish are caught from the middle of the net down. I don't care much about the net. I think the net is a small matter—we can catch all the fish we want with fifty mesh nets.

Q. Did I understand you to say that you think the canners have too large a monopoly of the river?—A. Oh, no, I didn't say that. Oh, no, the canners have got all the licenses, but I do say that every *bonâ fide* British subject should have a license if he wants to fish.

Q. Then you think if there were more licenses issued there would be more settlers come along the river?—A. Yes; that would be the result. I say, give licenses to all who want them—to everybody. You see we have Japs, Chinamen and all sorts of riff-raff, and what we want is that our own good countrymen living here should get licenses if they want them.

Q. Do you think it advisable to issue licenses to, say, young men who may fit out a boat and then get Chinamen to fish it for them?—A. Yes; everyone should have a license—you can't prevent a man from hiring whom he likes.

Q. And you are under the impression that the offal is not injurious to fish? A. No; it is not injurious to salmon—of course it is injurious to other things.

Q. Yes?—injurious to the farmer and settler along the river?—A. Well, I would not say to whom it is injurious. It is probably more or less injurious to people along the river; but it is not injurious, I believe, to the salmon.

Q. You think that there are great numbers of little fish that eat up the offal? What is the size of these fish?—A. Oh, from half an inch to six and eight inches long.

Q. Do you think it possible for these little fish to eat the heads of salmon thrown in the river?—A. Oh, well, you get several hundred hungry little fellows eating at the head of a salmon, and I tell you it soon goes.

Q. Do you think this offal remains at the bottom of the river?—A. Well, no; I don't think it remains there; it floats off—the current takes it away.

Q. Now, how about the Sunday close time?—A. I do not think there should be any change.

Q. But at present six hours are worked on Sunday; do you think this should be continued?—A. I think that is all right—I am not so conscientious as all that.

Q. Then there is a portion of Sunday when you should fish and a portion when you should not fish, eh?—A. Well, I think there should be one day of rest; perhaps it would be as well to have no fishing on Sunday.

Q. Is there anything further you would like to say?—A. No; only to repeat that our people should be able to get licenses if they want them—that is the great trouble.

Marine and Fisheries.

J. BATCHELOR, of New Westminster, presented himself before the Commission, and was duly sworn.

WITNESS.—I was connected with the British Cannery last year, and I wish to make a statement before you. We are out of the canning business now, but I come before you because I think it my duty to come and say what I think about these licenses. Now last year there were several men came from Newfoundland and we put them on the river with other fishermen. They were good fishermen—they fished for us and we were perfectly satisfied with them. They refused to go out to work on Sunday night. The whole reason of the desire for Sunday night fishing is to get fish to keep the cannery busy on Monday morning. These men refused to go out on Sunday night until after midnight. They are good men in every respect and for the last two or three years have been applying for licenses but could never get them. Now there are others that we have who go off to Seattle and other places and work in the States and yet they can get licenses. This is very hard. These Newfoundlanders are a very desirable people to get out here; they are fine, healthy, strong fellows; they build houses and are in every way excellent citizens, and yet they are debarred from getting licenses.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Why did they not get licenses, Mr. Batchelor?—A. Well, I don't know—we applied for them and tried to help them, but we could get nothing.

Q. Where did they have to apply?—A. At the Fisheries office here. I may say that these men are at the present time working on the streets, &c.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Then you think it more desirable to hold out inducements to get solid, substantial men to come here to fish?—A. Yes; being *bona fide* British subjects, all should get licenses. Now, these men can make their own boats and nets and are in every way entitled to licenses.

Q. And do you think that fishermen keeping the Sabbath should be given a preference?—A. Well, I would not like to say anything as to that—I merely came here to give evidence on behalf of these men whom we had found so thoroughly trustworthy, and whom I consider very harshly treated. Fishing and building boats and nets is their only occupation, and it is very hard indeed to keep them out of licenses.

Q. Then you think that actual fishermen and *bona fide* fishermen should get licenses in preference to all others?—A. Yes.

Q. You are quite of the opinion that a great many people of that class have not been able to get licenses. Did you ever hear them express any opinion as to why they did not get licenses?—A. Oh, they were not personally objected to. The order came to allow the old fishermen the licenses and that shut out the others. I am quite sure that some of those old ones were not entitled to these licenses, but still they got them, and the good men were denied licenses. Now, these men talk of going into seal fishing and other occupations, and it is a shame that such good men should be obliged to go away.

Q. Then you think people who now get licenses are transients—they go away after?—A. Well, I don't know exactly enough to say that.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Who represents the cannery you sold?—A. The Anglo-American Packing Company.

Q. But who is in charge of it now.—A. Mr. English is manager.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Are you of the impression, Mr. Batchelor, that it is injurious to have too much fishing at the mouth of the river, and that it prevents the entrance of fish into the river?—A. Well, Mr. Wilmot, if I was now in the business I would give information, but as I am now out of it altogether, I would rather not give you information.

Q. Well, but I think it would not be out of place for you now, as a disinterested party, to give us your opinion?—A. Well, I prefer not to say anything now—we are

out of the business. My only object in coming here was for the sake of those people whom we employed and who I consider were very harshly treated. I would not care to speak on any other points, as I now have no connection with the business.

Q. Well, but, Mr. Batchelor, may I put it in this way: Your object is to see good fishermen come here—now would it not be equally as well if there is too excessive fishing in any portion of the river, that it might interfere with these men, and why not give us the benefit of your opinion on this matter?—A. Well, I would certainly prefer not speaking, however, if I am called upon later I shall be glad to say what I think. About the men of whom I have spoken, I felt it my duty to come and represent the great hardship under which they have laboured. They cannot do much other work, and have been born and bred fishermen.

Q. Do the cannery employ these men?—A. I am sure they would if they knew them, but they are not yet well known. Some have been already engaged—they are wholly fishermen and are excellent men.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Could you see these people and ask them to come here? Their evidence would be valuable.—A. Yes, I can; I will see them. I'll make a point to do so.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Did these people apply to Mr. McNab for licenses last year?—A. Yes, they applied, but they were told they could not get them.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Where was your cannery situated?—A. Just below Mr. English's.

Q. But where did you fish? At the mouth of the river?—A. Well, all the way down, often out in the Gulf.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Where did you catch the greatest number of fish when you were fishing?—A. Through Canoe Pass down to the mouth of the river.

Q. The best fishing then is just at the mouth of the river, is it not?—A. Well, it just depends what kind of run there is. In a good run you can catch just as many opposite the town here.

Q. What do you think of the regulation of nets? Would you advocate restricting them to a certain depth?—A. Well, it altogether depends on the location in the river. The most established mode of fishing is, I think, with forty meshes extension.

Q. What kind had they before?—A. It entirely depends on the channel of the river, some more, some less. We used thirty, thirty-five and forty.

Q. Would a forty-mesh net be twenty feet deep when in the water?—A. A mesh is about five inches, and the present mesh used is very suitable for the fishing. I desire to keep nothing back, but being out of the business now I don't think I should go into any matters that do not affect me.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. How far is Ladner's from the mouth of the river?—A. Well, I think the first buoy would be the mouth of the river. I don't know the distance from Ladner's. I don't know how far it is. I suppose about a mile or two. I really don't know.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. What do you think of everyone having a license?—A. Well, I don't wish to go into this question.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. What do you do with your offal?—A. We put it in the river.

Q. Do you think it hurtful to fish?—A. Oh, no, not at all; it never hurt the fish. It is taken right away at once by the tide. We never see the offal washed back. We dumped tons and tons of it and it all went away.

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Q. But does it not leave deposits?—A. Sometimes, but it all goes. You must remember we have to drink that water; it is brackish, but we catch rainwater as well, and I can tell you we don't want to hurt the water. Then look at the numbers of dead fish up the river, at Chilliwack, &c. There are great numbers of them, and they don't seem to hurt the river. The crows and other birds seek after them and eat many of them.

Q. Well, but do these dead fish ever come down the river?—A. Oh, I suppose some do, but I never took notice of them; they all seemed to disappear.

Q. You think fishing should be confined to British subjects only?—A. Well, I don't see how any one else has any right to take fish.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. What class of people did you generally employ in your factory?—A. Chinamen, Klootchmen.

Q. Whom?—A. Indian women and Chinamen, and then the fishermen were all kinds; Greeks, Italians, &c., apart from the whites.

Q. What proportion of these Greeks, &c., would there be—that is, in proportion to the whites?—A. Well, it is impossible for me to tell. We have not time to bother to see who these people are.

Q. What number of hands did you employ in your cannery?—A. You will find it all given in the census returns. I could not say. We might have had 100 Chinamen, and forty or fifty Klootchmen, and about eighteen or twenty boys.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Do you think twenty boats sufficient for an ordinary cannery?—A. Some years it is, some years it is not.

Q. Then you consider it advisable to decrease the number of boats according to the season?—A. Well, I would not like to give any opinion on that. I do not want to interfere with anything connected with the fishing business, because we are out of it. I only wanted to speak for the better class of men. It is not right that these men should walk about with their hands in their pockets and all sorts of riff-raff get licenses.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Could you get these people here? We would like to see those who are representative men?—A. I will be glad to make it a point to see them and tell them to come in.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, what do you think of the Sunday fishing? Do you advocate fishing on Sunday?—A. Well, I wouldn't say; I simply say our men would not fish for us on Sunday.

T. W. HERRING, of New Westminster, appeared before the Commission and presented the following written statement, which was ordered to be entered in the record of proceedings:—

"To the Honourable Board of Fishery Commissioners.

"GENTLEMEN,—Knowing that you are now sitting in this city on the Fisheries Commission, may I be allowed, as an old resident and fisherman of British Columbia, to offer a few suggestions which would be an undoubted benefit for the fisheries in particular and British Columbia in general.

"1. I should suggest that no discrimination should be shown in the cost of licenses on the different rivers of British Columbia, but they should be all of an equal cost and good on any river of British Columbia, cost to be determined by the Fishery Commissioners, whether \$5 or \$20, and that no license should be granted to any one not born a British subject. This would keep out Japanese, Chinamen, and other foreigners who are no good to the country.

"2. I would suggest that nets for spring fishing for the first two months in the year should be of an uniform depth and of not more than fifty meshes.

"3. That licenses should be non-transferable, as several have been issued out of the limits to parties who are not fishermen, to the detriment of the fishermen.

"4. That the river should be locked as at present, but that licenses should be more equally divided than at present, consistent with the limitation. Canneries should be limited to fifteen licenses apiece, which with the present canneries on the Fraser River, twenty-two (22) and two more making application (24) would allow 120 or more licenses to be distributed among the fishermen without causing any harm to the cannery people.

"5. I would recommend that fresh fish dealers, salteries and fish-freezing establishments be limited to five licenses apiece, provided they can show to the satisfaction of the fisheries inspector that they have at least the necessary equipments for salting not less than 200 barrels and that the boat and nets are their individual property, and that if they cannot come up to these regulations no license should be granted to them.

"6. I would further say that these regulations should apply to all rivers of British Columbia and that all rivers should be governed by these regulations.

"7. I would further suggest that the present close season for trout should be reversed—that it should open from the 1st of October to the 1st of March only, as our markets are at that time bare of fish on this coast and trout are only fit for the market then. Also that there should be no limit to the quantity taken, as they are very destructive to the salmon spawn.

(Sgd.)

"T. W. HERRING.

"NEW WESTMINSTER, 19th February, 1892."

The above communication was read by the secretary previous to its being ordered to be entered in the record.

Mr. HERRING was duly sworn.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. We will be glad if you will just answer a few questions that will be put to you. Can a man under the present regulations by any species of subterfuge or underhand work, hold more than one license? Can it be done?—A. No, sir. I do not think it can be done. Any man getting one license, he could not do so without violating the law, except he got more than one license.

Q. How could he get more than one?—A. Well, the cannery people might number the boats in duplicate and so give a man more than one. It has been done under the present system.

Q. Why is there no check upon these people? Are the licenses not stamped?—A. No, they are not stamped. A counterfoil is kept by the fisheries inspector.

Q. What do you think of the practice of having Sunday as a close time?—A. From 12 o'clock Saturday till 12 o'clock Sunday night? I think it very good—I will be willing to abide by that regulation.

Q. You say in your paper that nets should be of an uniform depth of fifty meshes, for the first two months of the year, why do you say that?—A. Because we are fishing in tidal water and the water comes very slack. Some parties use nets of from fifty to seventy meshes, because they find it advisable to use them—they use these nets below the city; from here down to the Gulf, sixty and seventy meshes are used and more fish can be caught, and they can double and treble us in one week this way. There is a decided opinion amongst the fishermen that they should use any kind of net with which they can catch fish.

Q. What do you think of fishing outside the mouth of the river? Do you think it injures the runs of fish in the river?—A. Well, I could not say. I would not think it injurious in a big year; it might be in a bad year. There are so many fish the canneries get swamped with fish, and men get salmon they cannot handle. One throw of the net fills the boats and then they go to the cannery. I have known a boat to be filled at 9 a.m., and as the Indians are paid wages they don't bother to do any more that morning, and often wait until 2 or 3 o'clock before taking them to the cannery.

Q. Then in a short season it would be injurious to fish outside?—A. In a short year the nets are constantly working and it would be injurious.

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By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. And the majority of years are short ?—A. Well, we have different years—next year is expected to be a big year.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. What was '89 ?—A. '89 was the big year, '90 the next and in '91 the fish were just double what they were the fourth year before.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Now, if this year's catch is double what it was four years ago, you will consider that the fish are increasing, will you not ?—A. If the fish are double what they were four years ago I will believe the hatcheries are doing great good.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. You will be willing to go in for more of them then, will you ?—A. Yes ; it will be sufficient proof of their effectiveness.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. What are you now ? Do you work for a cannery ?—A. I am a fisherman now.

Q. As to this offal that goes into the river, do you know anything about it ?—A. Yes, I know something about it.

Q. What is its effect on fishing ?—A. I think at the mouth of the river its effect is very bad. Down there it floats down and lines the banks and gets foul of the nets—heads and guts, &c. It destroys the nets more than salmon do and makes the river water filthy—not fit for use unless cooked—if you were to drink it in the cannery season it would make you sick. We used to cook it like tea in order to drink it.

Q. Is it not a fact that many fish die up the river ? They become offal then too, do they not ?—A. Yes, but I have never seen many of them, they go to pieces. There was a time before the hot springs on the Harrison River were closed the fish would come up and leap and jump into the air and fall dead. There were hundreds and hundreds of them and we used to fish there and often picked them up half cooked—after death they were just as good as if they had been caught in the nets.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Did you work in a cannery ?—A. Yes.

Q. What was the average size of the fish caught ?—A. Some were about 7 pounds and some about 9 pounds.

Q. All through they would average about 8 pounds, then ?—A. Yes, about that.

Q. How many fish are taken to make an ordinary can ?—A. Well, nine fish go to a case, with this average it would be five and three-eighths cans to a fish. You see there is the head off and the guts out and the tail off. Sometimes they used to use the tail part. A machine cuts the fish into parts to fit the cans, but in good years the part near the tail all goes as offal.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. How long does it take before this offal disappears ?—A. Well, offal is something like a body that goes in the river—it takes so many days before it disappears. Some time ago the cannerymen used to make cribs to keep this offal in, but now it goes to the bottom and rises after a time when the bladders burst.

Q. Well, now, is it a fact that other fish eat this offal ?—A. Oh, yes ; thousands of them ; suckers and sturgeon are feeding on it all the time. It is great fun fishing for sturgeon ; they come to eat the offal, and at Ewen's cannery we have often had great sport fishing for them.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. You state in your paper that fifteen licenses are sufficient for a cannery ?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. What do you mean—that they can carry on a fair business with that number?
—A. Yes; they can protect themselves. They can carry on business with fifteen licenses; they will get as many fish as if they had twenty.

Q. Then, if they had forty licenses it would but prevent the sale of a large quantity of fish from outsiders to them?—A. If they were allowed forty licenses, or even twenty-five, in a good year it would run them to their full capacity. Now, for instance, when the limitation was made and 350 licenses were given to canners, that was a good year, and Mr. Ewen was allowed twenty boats of his own. He was scared he would not get enough fish, and he had twenty-two outside boats—I was one of them myself—and the contract was that he was to take each and every good fish put on his wharf, and when the fish ran thick he could not take them, and so he had to lay up his own boats, and he even went so far as to threaten all of us that the cannery would be ruined and run down, and he tried to stop us from fishing.

Q. Then the twenty boats of his own would have been quite sufficient?—A. Yes; but he was trying to make too sure; the twenty would have been quite enough, but he wanted fish from outsiders too.

Q. Then you think twenty boats would be quite enough for any cannery?—A. Yes.

Q. Well now, when they get such large quantities of fish what do they do with them?—A. Well, if they have outsiders more than they can control, they haul off their own boats.

Q. When they get more fish than they want, do they ever throw them away?—A. Well, not now. I have known it to be done though; scow loads at a time were dumped overboard; these were caught, and when brought to the cannery it was found to be shut down until they were ready to go on.

Q. You don't know of that being done of late years?—A. No, not now; they withdraw their own boats.

Q. When fish are very plentiful do they make the same number of cans out of one fish?—A. Oh, well, they cannot help themselves; the knives cut all alike.

Q. But could it not be done?—A. No.

Q. Well, but when the fish are coming in very plentiful is it not probable they would cut off more of the head and tail than when fish are scarce?—A. No; they don't do that; the fish are always cut the same way.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. But you have said already that in a plentiful year three inches of the tail is thrown away?—A. Yes, that is true, the last piece goes off instead of into the can.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. And in small years this would be used up?—A. Yes. Now I will give you an instance. Just imagine a boat to bring in 1,000 fish—one boat for one shift—about three hauls of the net. I was afraid I was going to be cut off and fished for five hours. I took 1,014 fish and delivered them to the cannery.

Q. But if all others were catching fish in the same proportion would it not overstock the cannery?—A. Oh, yes, certainly, but then they shut down and limited us.

Q. What did you do with the fish that were not taken?—A. Oh, they took all the fish we caught that day.

Q. What did you get for the fish?—A. Ten cents each.

Q. What year was that?—A. The year before last—the first year the limit was on—1889, I think.

Q. Yes; that would be 1889. What was the price of fish this last year?—A. There was a difference. Mr. Ewen paid 20 cents, others paid 12½.

Q. What made the difference?—A. Well, when the syndicate was formed on the Fraser River, he had arrangements made with them that they were to get his pack for three years, and the canneries they bought out—the proprietors of these canneries—they were to run them the same as before, with a certain interest in the cannery, or sold out entirely, with the agreement that they were not to build any more canneries on the Fraser River in three years, and outsiders who didn't come into this arrangement—Mr. Ewen, he reserved his own cannery, but all the rest were included—well,

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I can't say for Mr. Todd, he was, I think, outside of it. It was a special arrangement, but it did not work somehow or other; and Mr. Ewen, he had sold 44,000 cases of salmon before the fishing started, and I suppose he knew his own business and understood the capacity of his cannery, and of course he paid for fish accordingly.

Q. I notice you say in your memorandum that all the licenses should be the same cost. Some, then, are different?—A. Yes; on the Fraser River it is \$20, and on the Skeena it is \$5.

Q. Are the same cannerymen engaged on the Skeena as on the Fraser?—A. Yes, sir; and why should we not be allowed to fish on the Skeena as well as cannerymen. We are excluded.

Q. But do you mean to say that if any man on the Skeena wants to get a license he cannot do so if he pays the \$5?—A. No, sir; but I contend we have just as much right to fish there as cannerymen, if we like. Now, last year I wanted to fish on the Skeena for salting purposes, and made application. I got a reply on the 15th July, refusing, after all the fishing was over. Now, my brother fishes on the Skeena, and he tells me that out of 100 licenses there only forty were taken up by actual fishermen. The cannerymen put in Indian names and got these licenses besides their own.

Q. In other words the cannerymen got all the licenses?—A. Yes, sir, virtually they did.

Q. What do you mean by the river being locked? I don't quite understand that.—A. Why, the present system of limitation of licenses.

CHAIRMAN. Oh, yes; I see. Well, now have you anything further to tell us?—A. No, sir; I think I have gone over all the points on which I wished to speak.

JOHN E. LORD, of New Westminster, after being duly sworn, presented the following written statement which was read and ordered to be entered in the record of proceedings:

“(Undated.)”

“SIRS,—The cannerymen, fishermen, and those interested in the fishing industry can appreciate the action of the department in sending a Commission to inquire into the wants of the fishermen, and if possible to meet their views so as make the industry a success. The men who form the body of fishermen are, with few exceptions, not a class to be recommended, being constituted of every nation, creed and character. Under the present license law these men get licenses, while men from the Eastern Provinces, Newfoundland and Scotland are prohibited—these men being born fishermen and coming to the country hoping to follow their occupation are disappointed and are forced to turn their hand to some other occupation for a living and their services are lost to the development of the fishing industry. On this account, if any other, the limit should be taken from licenses; any British subject being a fisherman and intending to fish, on making application should obtain a license, the price to be not more than \$5, and for the year. For the protection of the salmon, the close time from Saturday at 6 a.m. to Sunday at 6 p.m., is sufficient for all purposes. The present size of nets are well suited for their purpose. There should be no embargo on the taking of salmon trout or steel-heads, lake or river trout in the season; numbers now being taken against the law, few more would be taken if the law allowed. They are very numerous and the most deadly enemy of the salmon fry, in fact their taking should be encouraged and so increase the run of salmon. As regards offal from canneries, when we consider the great amount of salmon which die and putrify on all the streams running into the Fraser River away to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, the cannery offal is as a drop in the bucket, in fact the large portion of offal consumed by the large and small fish, and only that dumped in still and shallow water can be counted injurious to health and very slightly injurious to the salmon. Sawdust and other offal is far more injurious and should be prohibited being put in the river.

"*The Hatchery*.—The present site is not the best. Harrison Lake is preferable for all purposes. The time for taking ova is too late. Ova has been taken from the salmon after the canners refused to can them. The first run is best and strongest. Spring salmon should be propagated as they are the most marketable and no attempt has been made to propagate them.

"Canneries should have ten licenses each, and then only those in full operation. Markets, five licenses; freezers, five licenses. They all should depend more on the fishermen."

(Not signed.)

Mr. LORD.—Gentlemen, I speak in this manner because I believe it for the benefit of the river, and if we ever want to build up British Columbia with a class of good fishermen like we have where I came from—I belong to Halifax, N.S.—we should give licenses only to *bond fide* British subjects, men who would make homes and live here, and help build up the country. The present licensees are mostly foreigners and strangers who come from a distance, but have their names first on the list, and they go away and do no good for the country.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. But how do these people get these licenses?—A. Oh, well, don't ask me that; I don't know, but somehow the inspector we had—he that is dead and gone, he was too eager to please and to make things easy for all, and first come was first served. Now, the great trouble has been that the canners have endeavoured to gain complete control of the river. Last year they were working to get Japs here and settle them, and our own people would be done out of all work in connection with the salmon fisheries.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Do I understand you don't limit the number of licenses beyond one to the ordinary fishermen? For instance, these men who are coming here to settle; is one license sufficient for them?—A. When the canneries are working the whole of the fish is given to the canners, and they could always get a sufficient supply of fish from outside fishermen who would sell the fish, and one license would be ample.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. This traffic in licenses strikes me as a very serious thing?—A. Yes, it is, and something should be done. Now, it is this way: Many men succeed in getting licenses, and then they go and sell them to the highest bidder.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Then you consider that licenses should not be granted to any one except *bond fide* British subjects intending to fish?—A. Yes; only those intending to fish.

Q. Well, now, there is another class—the small farmer who gets a license for \$2?—A. I have no objection to any settler getting a license in that manner, but if he goes into traffic and sells to others, he should be on the same footing as all fishermen; but every resident fisherman and British subject should get a license, if he requires one.

Q. Now, as regards the canners, would you limit the number of canneries?—A. No; let there be no limit; throw it open to all. The market will regulate the matter. Now, there will be a couple of new canneries put up this year, and I think none of them should be granted more than ten licenses.

Q. And if they wanted more fish, they should buy them from the fishermen, you think?—A. Yes, they should—the fishermen can sell to no one else—they must look to the canners for sales.

Q. And the people employed in the canneries—they are not our own people—not resident citizens?—A. Not one of them, they are all Japs, Chinamen, Klookties, Siwashas, &c.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. But they could not afford to employ white men in this work.—A. Yes, sir, they could—I will tell you—in about six weeks they do all their work. Now, what would be

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a month's extra pay to men like the canners? They pay \$1 a day to the Indian women and \$2, say, to the white boys. The extra money for good white men would be a small affair to men making their thousands like the canners do.

Q. But do you know the cost of putting up a case of salmon?—A. About \$2.50 for one case.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—I think it takes \$4 nearly.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Have you been in the canning business?—A. No, I have not. I am a fisherman.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Oh, well, we can still take evidence from you as to the cannery work.—A. Well, I cannot speak with much authority on that.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—I don't think your suggestion as to breeding the spring salmon is a good idea.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, I may say that when we first started breeding salmon here we thought of taking up the spring fish, but the canners and others said that the other fish was the most desirable.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Yes, I may say that Mr. Wood at my table to-day said that in England the demand was for the red fish and that the spring salmon would not take in the English market.

Mr. WILMOT.—Yes, that is a remarkable fact. I know, when there at the International Fisheries Exhibition, Atlantic salmon of a light colour was not thought anything of.

Mr. LORD.—Now, in regard to the hatchery they established here—it might just as well work all the year round as not.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, I may say on that point I have recommended for some time that we should catch the early run of fish and impound them until ripe, but somehow this view has not prevailed. Now you have spoken of another fish—the steel-head—is it a salmon?—A. It is a salmon very much like the Labrador salmon and the greatest enemy of the commercial salmon. But I do beg of you that you will let us catch the trout. They are only brought in in the winter season, but then it is against the law.

Mr. WILMOT.—Our experience in eastern waters shows that by so much killing of the better kind of fish has resulted in the lower kinds increasing and becoming more numerous.

Mr. LORD.—Now another point—I do think the licenses should run for the whole year.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, that would not result in so much danger here as in the east.—A. It would not interfere with the spawning of the salmon, because at other times than the cannery fishing time we would have to go down to the mouth of the river to catch our fish, and we would not prevent the spawning.

Q. This trout you speak of—what is it like?—A. Oh, a big fish, often as heavy as thirty pounds, and very much like the Scotch and Labrador salmon.

Q. Have you anything you wish to say further?—A. No, I think I have exhausted my remarks.

The Commission adjourned at 5.45 p.m. to meet again at 7.30 p.m.

19th February, 1892.

The Commission assembled at 7.45, and at once proceeded to business.

Present:—Mr. S. Wilmot, in the chair; Mr. Higgins, Mr. Armstrong, and Mr. Secretary Winter.

WILLIAM COSTIGAN, of New Westminster, presented himself and was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Now, do you desire to give a statement of your views direct?—A. As far as I can.

Q. Yes, well, make them as concise as possible.—A. I wanted to say that I have been four or five years here fishing on the river. I applied for a license on and off, but could not get one.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. To whom did you apply?—A. To the fisheries inspector.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. Was any reason given?—A. No; except that the number of licenses to be issued had been granted. Then I see men—not fishermen—on the river who get licenses and who sell them to other people for \$50. They didn't fish these last two years to my knowledge.

Q. Well, what next, sir?—A. Well, I don't know of anything else—I can't get a license, and I want one.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Do you know who sold these licenses?—A. A man named Ross got a license from another man and paid \$50 for it.

Q. And did he fish under that man's name?—A. He fished under that man's name—he had his boat. Grant, the man who had charge of the river, sold his license to another here.

Q. To whom?—A. To Peter Nelson.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Who did you say was the first man who got the license?—A. Well, Ross got the license from another man.

Q. Could you get him and bring him here?—A. I could let him know.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. Have you anything further?—A. No, sir, I have nothing further to say.

Q. You follow the occupation of fishing, you say—if you don't get a license, what then?—A. I fish for the cannerymen—I have fished all my lifetime, pretty near.

Q. Do you consider the value of a license at \$20 is excessive?—A. I do.

Q. Do you consider the value of licenses now granted the cannerymen excessive for them?—A. It is according to circumstances. I don't say it is too much for them, but it is for an ordinary fisherman.

Q. Do you think, in the occupation you wish to enter, that one license is sufficient?—A. Yes; one license is sufficient.

Q. You have had something to do with the canneries—now the cannery you worked for would have how many licenses? Do you know?—A. Forty.

Q. What cannery was that?—A. Ewen's—he had two canneries.

Q. Were both running?—A. I don't know—I didn't fish alongside the cannery.

Q. How did they get forty licenses?—A. They had two establishments.

Q. Do you know the limit for the canneries?—A. Twenty boats last year.

Q. Are twenty boats sufficient for a cannery?—A. It is all according to the capacity of the cannery.

Q. Well, but take the ordinary cannery—are twenty sufficient?—A. No; not in proportion. It should be according to the capacity of the cannery.

Q. But suppose a man can fish twice as well as you can and he gets twice as many licenses as you?—A. But he cannot fish with two licenses.

Q. Do you see much offal thrown into the river?—A. Well, I don't have much chance to see—I just catch the fish and put them in the scow.

Q. You have never fished under a license at all?—A. Yes, last year I did, but it was another man's license.

Q. Did you buy it then?—A. No; we fished on shares.

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By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. What probable number of fish did you catch with that one license?—A. About 4,500.

Q. Were the fish taken from you regularly by the cannery?—A. Yes, regularly, only two days we were limited to catch only so many.

Q. Are you in the habit of taking the fish directly to the cannery?—A. Generally we go fishing in the morning and often would not get in till night.

Q. Were you at any time refused the fish you brought?—A. Not last summer.

Q. You have been previously?—A. Yes.

Q. What was done with those refused?—A. They were salted.

Q. They were not thrown away?—A. I don't know, I never saw any.

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

PETER NELSON, of New Westminster, appeared and was duly sworn.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. You have been represented as being a man who bought a license; have you it with you?—A. No, sir; but I have a receipt.

Q. Will you let me see it?—A. Yes, sir. (Hands to Mr. Higgins receipt as follows):

"April 18th, 1891.

"Received from Mr. Peter Nelson the sum of \$50 for one boat and use of license "No. 18 for the term of one year.

(Signed)

"JOHN WAGNER."

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Who is Wagner?—A. A fisherman fishing on the river.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Did you apply for a license?—A. I did, and didn't get one.

Q. What was the reason?—A. I don't know except that all were given out.

Q. Did you fish under the name of John Wagner?—A. Yes, sir.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. You were John Wagner for this season?—A. Yes.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Your boat was No. 18 and you passed for No. 18 also?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is this practice generally pursued?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Were you aware you were doing something wrong?—A. No, sir; I didn't think it was.

Q. What number of fish did you catch with this license?—A. Three thousand.

Q. Sockeyes? All of them?—A. All sockeyes.

Q. What establishment did you sell to?—A. I sold my fish to Mr. Ewen.

Q. Was there any day that you caught these fish that the cannery could not take them?—A. Yes; two days.

Q. What did you do with the fish not taken?—A. I didn't catch more fish. I took in my fish caught in the morning and they told me not to bring any more. I caught 40 more, but these I sold fresh myself.

Q. The fish you caught and kept yourself—where did you clean them?—A. On the bank of the river.

Q. Where did you leave the offal?—A. On the bank.

Q. Have you any idea of injurious effects being derived from offal?—A. I have seen it thrown into the river, but I don't know of any serious effects. I have caught refuse in my nets when fishing.

- Q. What effect has that?—A. I lost the net.
- Q. Do you think throwing offal into the river is injurious to the fish?—A. Yes; I think it prevents fish coming into the river.
- Q. You say also it spoils your net?—A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Why do you say it prevents fish from coming in?—A. There is a bad smell, and it keeps them from coming in.
- Q. Then you think there are two causes for injury—one stopping the fish from coming in, and the other the injury to your nets?—A. Yes.
- Q. What is the usual size of fish you catch?—A. As small as four or five pounds.
- Q. What size mesh do you use?—A. A six-inch mesh.
- Q. How many meshes deep was your net?—A. Forty meshes.
- Q. Could you fish satisfactorily with a less depth of meshed nets?—A. Yes, sir; I could fish in the channels.
- Q. In what portion of the net when you take it up do you find the greatest number of fish?—A. Oh, they are most all over.
- Q. As many at the bottom as the top?—A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Can you recollect what number you may have taken in one day?—A. I have taken 1,100 in one day.
- Q. In what time of the year would this be?—A. In July.

By Mr. Higgins:

- Q. You say that throwing offal in the river prevents fish from entering the river—how do you account for the last few years? There have been several heavy runs?—A. I don't know, sir; I can't tell.
- Q. Have you any idea as to it?—A. Well, some people give credit to the hatchery.
- Q. Do you think throwing offal into the river caused the big run?—(Laughter.)—A. Oh, no; it wasn't that.

By Mr. Wilmot:

- Q. About the hatchery—do you believe that yourself, or did you hear it?—A. I heard it.
- Q. Then you still say that you know there were other licenses disposed of as this was to you—do you know of any names?—A. Yes, sir; I can give one—Capt. Grant, the fishery officer.
- Q. He sold a license?—A. Yes, sir.
- Q. In your fishing did you fish principally down at the mouth of the river?—A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Are more fish caught at the mouth than elsewhere?—A. Yes, sir.
- Q. What do you call the mouth of the river—is it out two or three miles from the lighthouse?—A. No; from the second red buoy.
- Q. Do you think the fishing is too excessive at the mouth of the river for the benefit of the fishing above?—A. Well, plenty are sure to get up.
- Q. They are more easily caught at the mouth, are they not? Why is this?—A. It is easier to get them, and it is nearer to the canneries.
- Q. Is one-third of the channel kept open?—A. I don't know.

By Mr. Armstrong:

- Q. You say Capt. Grant sold his license; to whom did he sell?—A. To me and John Wagner. Wagner had the license and told me he would sell it to some one for \$50. Thus we had to pay Capt. Grant \$50.
- Q. But I don't understand; who had the license?

By Mr. Wilmot:

- Q. But let us understand this. Was the license issued by the inspector of fisheries to Capt. Grant?—A. Yes, sir; we took it together and fished, and paid Grant \$50.

By Mr. Higgins:

- Q. Is this man here—here in the room?—A. (After surveying the parties present.) No, sir; he is not here.

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By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Then do I understand that Grant gave a license to Wagner and Wagner sold one-half interest in it to you.—A. Yes, sir; that is it.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Do you know where Wagner is?—A. I think he is in town.

Q. Will you get him and bring him in to-morrow?—A. Yes, sir.

Mr. WILMOT—Very well; that will do, sir, if you have nothing further to remark.

KEKONI, a native of Finland, a fisherman and resident of New Westminster, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Well, what is your complaint?—A. I have this complaint to make: that I have been in this country four years, and have been trying to get a license to fish here, but could not get it.

Q. What is your nationality?—A. I am a Swedish Finn.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Are you a British subject?—A. Yes, sir, I am. I took the oath here in Westminster.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Have you a license of your own?—A. No; I could not get one.

Q. How did you fish, then?—A. I had to go to a cannery and get the privilege of fishing with a boat of theirs.

Q. Had you to pay anything for it?—A. I will tell you—the price of fish was 20 cents, but the cannery only paid 10 cents.

Q. Was that all the season through?—A. That was in the sockeye run.

Q. Then the canneryman sold you a license he had for 10 cents on each fish?—A. Yes; I got about 3,400 fish, and, of course, that gave to the cannery \$340 for the license and boat that were not worth \$100.

Q. Is this sort of traffic carried on with other fishermen?—A. Yes, with most of us. We were fishing for Mr. Ewen. He gave the highest prices. Others were giving but 6½ cents, and keeping 13½ on each fish. The reason of that is many cannerymen largely employ Japs. We have heard they are going to import many hundreds of them.

Q. But Japanese get less wages, don't they?—A. Yes; I know that for sure.

Q. Where did you fish?—A. Down at the mouth of the river.

Q. Why did you go there?—A. Because it is the easiest place to fish. You always have a good wind to sail up with, and the fish come in with the tide.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Who were you fishing for?—A. For Mr. Ewen.

Q. Well, was this 20 cents an universal price during the sockeye run?—A. No, it was not an universal price. Only two men on the river paid 20 cents; the rest, I believe, were paying 12½ cents to outsiders.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. How many meshes deep was your net?—A. Thirty meshes; that is the shallowest net on the river, generally.

Q. In your experience of fishing do you think that a 30 mesh depth of net is sufficient for ordinary fishing?—A. No, I don't say it is. It is better for the tide flats at the mouth of the river.

Q. And a deeper net further up the river?—A. Yes; and even in the channel down at the mouth.

Q. Would it, in your opinion, seriously hurt the fishing if 30 mesh nets were established altogether?—A. Yes; for in spring fishing you want deep nets—you want up to 50 mesh nets.

Q. And fish are taken in the lower part of the net as well as the upper?—A. Yes; especially in spring.

Q. Then, as there may be on some occasions, six, seven or nine boats going down the river, the 150 fathom nets would form a sort of continuous fence across the river?—A. Yes; but they are generally drifting with the tide. Yes, it would form a kind of fence.

Q. You think one license would be sufficient for the ordinary fisherman to carry on his work?—A. Yes, I do.

Q. What else do you do here?—A. In the winter time I do any kind of job I can get.

Q. What are you doing now?—A. I am doing nothing now—I am waiting for the fishing to commence.

Q. What induced you to come here—to settle, or was it the fisheries?—A. Yes; it was the fisheries. I was in the Eastern States first, in Massachusetts, and I got a Government pamphlet about British Columbia and I thought I would come out and try and do fishing.

Q. Have you ever got a license?—A. No.

Q. Have you applied?—A. Yes, but I didn't get one.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Do you know of any licenses being sold besides those mentioned to-night?—A. I believe it is a common habit.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Can you give us the names of any persons you know of?—A. I could give names of persons who get licenses but do not fish them—they give them out and get one-third of the profits.

Q. Give us the names?—A. Mr. John Ross got one.

Q. Do you know where he is now?—A. I saw him in town yesterday—I think he is living down at the cannery, but I am not sure.

Q. Do you know of any other?—A. No, but Mr. Munn here might be able to tell you.

Q. Oh, yes, but we want what you know—we will hear from him by and by.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. How long did you say you have been a British subject?—A. I got my papers in the month of June or July last year.

Q. What were your reasons for becoming a British subject?—A. Well, I intended staying in the country and of course it is no use unless you belong to it—one must become a British subject to get the full advantages of citizenship.

Q. Do you think you have got the advantages?—A. No, sir, I have not indeed.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. You say you had to pay 10 cents to the cannery for the privilege of fishing, or about \$300?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do the canners furnish you with boats and nets?—A. Yes, sir, they do.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. You say you have not received the full benefits of being a British subject. What do you think you ought to get—a license, for instance?—A. Yes, I should have got one. I don't think the canneries should get any licenses at all.

Q. But why not?—A. Oh, they are not fishermen, they are simply dealers.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. What is the cost of a boat and net?—A. Well, the boat and outfit will cost about \$140.

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Q. And do you not think that the cannerymen who gave you that boat and net should get something?—A. Yes, he should get something, but my rig cost \$100—ought he to get \$300?

Q. But do not fishermen sometimes lose their nets?—A. Yes.

Q. And then you have to find another?—A. No, sir, the cannerymen would give me another.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, sir, have you anything further to say?—A. No, I think not, except that I wish to get a license.

BENJAMIN MADISON, of New Westminster, presented himself and was duly sworn.

Mr. WILMOT.—Have you any distinct statement to make?—A. Well, I want a license, that's all.

Mr. HIGGINS.—But we have no power to give you a license.—A. Well, I will go away then.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Are you under the same circumstances as the last man who gave evidence?—A. Well, no. I want a license and want to get one. I applied, but could not get one.

Q. What was the reason—were all taken up?—A. No, sir. I sent in my application and Mr. Mowat told me before he died that there were none.

Q. You have fished every year? How did you fish?—A. I fished by the season for different canneries, mostly with my own gear and sometimes with cannery gear.

Q. Then the cannery gave you boat and net?—A. Yes, I fished for them and I got one-third share.

Q. Then the system pursued by cannerymen was to divide it into three shares?—A. Yes.

Q. How many fish did you catch?—Oh, I could not tell you—sometimes ten, sometimes twenty, sometimes more.

Q. But the average the season through?—A. Well, sometimes ten to twenty and sometimes more.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Do you think, Mr. Chairman, we should go on with this man's evidence? I do not.

Mr. WILMOT.—No.

A. Oh, sir, I don't mean anything: I just want a license, that's all.

JOHN McLASHLAN, a native of Scotland, now a resident of New Westminster, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, sir, will you please state what you desire to say.—A. Well, I have been in this country for the last three years and a half and have always applied for licenses, but could not get one.

Q. What was the reason, were you told?—A. Yes, last year I got a line from Mr. Mowat and he told me that they were given to more deserving persons. Before we left home a Government officer told us we did not need any licenses here and when we came out we found it different.

Q. What have you been doing since coming here?—Oh, anything I could get. I have been working on the Government wharf and have been working for the cannery as a net-man by day's work.

Q. Are there many white people engaged in the cannery besides yourself?—A. No, sir, only the foreman in the cannery and the one who looks after the retorts and another looks after the women, and another—perhaps ten white men altogether.

Q. What are the rest?—A. Chinamen and Klutchmen.

Q. What number of those would be working in the factory besides your white people?—A. Oh, about 60 Chinamen and 20 or 30 Kloodchiees, and some young Indian boys and girls, over and above these.

Q. Then about 100 altogether?—A. Yes, about that. Perhaps more, perhaps less.

Q. Is there any marked difference between the labour of the Chinamen and that of the white men?—A. Well, the white men do nothing as regards the fish. The white men look after the Chinamen and have the higher classes of work.

Q. What wages might you have received?—A. \$40 a month till the sockeye run and \$60 after that.

Q. Do you know the wages paid to the Chinamen?—A. I don't know; some are paid by the piece and some by the day.

Q. Then you have not fished on the river by yourself?—A. I worked for Mr. Ewen. We were to fish for 10 cents and pay 6 for his gear.

Q. Your complaint is, then, that you don't think you are dealt fairly with in not getting a license?—A. Yes, sir; I think cannerymen have too many licenses.

Q. Then you think Chinamen are injuring the whites?—A. Yes, sir; the Chinamen are spoiling this country. (Laughter.)

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Do you know of any traffic in licenses? Can you mention any names?—A. I do know of instances, but I can't tell names.

Q. Are they British subjects?—A. I don't know—he is an old-timer here—he gets two or three licenses.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Can't you get his name? Does he carry on business here?—A. No, sir; but he lives in the City Hotel. (Here one of the audience addressed the witness). I find his name is Fred Kaye.

Q. Oh, very well. Have you anything further?—A. No, sir; except that I'd like to get a license, that is all.

P. WALGRAN, a native of Sweden, now a resident of New Westminster, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. You say you are a Swede; how long have you been here?—A. I am a Swede, and have been here since 1882.

Q. You are a fisherman?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have you obtained licenses?—A. I never got one yet.

Q. What reason did you assign for not having got a license?—A. Well, I don't know—persons who have lived here a long time should get licenses first, I suppose. I have been fishing other men's nets on shares.

Q. Were they fishermen or cannerymen?—A. Fishermen.

Q. What did you pay for your share?—A. One-third.

Q. What number of fish did you catch last year?—A. Last year? A little over 3,000.

Q. What cannery did you sell to?—A. Mr. Ewen's.

Q. What was the share you gave for the privilege of fishing with his boat and net?—A. One-third.

Q. Did you on any days bring any more fish than the cannery would take?—A. No, sir; they always told me if they didn't want them before I went out again.

Q. Were you ever obliged to throw fish away?—A. No, sir; but I have been limited. The year before last I was limited to 500 fish a day.

Q. Is that a usual average?—A. No; previously you could catch more.

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Q. Do you mean by day twelve hours, or day and night?—A. Yes, sir; twenty-four hours.

Q. What is the depth of net you fish?—A. Forty meshes.

Q. Do you think there is overfishing at the mouth of the river that would be detrimental to fish?—A. No, sir; there is no room for all the fishermen—some are down the river and some are up the river.

Q. Do they divide in turns?—A. No, sir; they stay down or up.

Q. Are there more fish at the mouth than up the river?—A. The biggest number was caught last year up the river just above the town here.

Q. What is the average weight of sockeye?—A. About five pounds is, I think, a fair average.

Q. What is the average of the quinnat or spring salmon?—A. Ten pounds, more or less.

Q. You are dissatisfied because you cannot get a license—would you be satisfied with one license?—A. Yes, sir; that is all I can manage.

Q. Do you think the fee of \$20 is too high?—A. Yes, sir; it is too high for a man who has to make his living out of it.

Q. Then you think the difference between \$5 and \$20 would make a great deal of difference in a man's living?—A. Yes, sir; in slack years it would.

Q. What did you get for your fish?—A. 20 cents—or I got one-third of that really.

Q. How many years have you been fishing on the river?—A. Three or four years.

Q. Was last year expected to be bad?—A. Well, it wasn't near so good as the year before.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. But did all think it would be bad?—A. There are generally two good years and two bad.

Q. What do you think about throwing offal into the river?—A. Well, I don't know anything about that.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Your main complaint is because you cannot get a license?—A. Yes, sir; that is my trouble.

Q. Very well, sir, that will do if you have nothing further.

JAMES BEER, a native of England, a resident of New Westminster, and in British Columbia for twenty-six years, a general merchant and cooper by occupation, was duly sworn.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, sir, we will be glad to hear your remarks.—A. There has been, of course, of late years since the limitation has been put on licenses, considerable dissatisfaction on account of the injustice done to a great many, and my opinion is, after nearly thirty years in this country, that there should be a free right and open river to all British subjects who wish to fish, and have a boat and net; and as regards a close season, I believe that the close season is sufficient as it is.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. What do you mean by "close season"?—A. I mean the time in which the boats have to be out of the water—I believe that is sufficient for the purpose.

Q. Can you relate what that close season is now?—A. Well, I think it is from Saturday morning until Sunday night, and as regards an annual close season I do not think that necessary at all. My experience is that there is no danger of diminishing the supply of fish by the catching of them. I believe that if there were no fish caught in the river except what men would sell from door to door, that the river would not fully hold them. I consider that the spawning beds are overflowed with ova and that one

fish roots out the spawn of another and that possibly we do not get as many fish raised as we would if all were caught: and as regards the offal I don't think it any detriment to the fish, for if that was so the dead and dying fish would be enough to kill off the fish alone.

Q. May I ask you as to the Sunday time—do you think there are not a number of people here who think the Sunday should not be used for fishing?—A. Yes, I am one of those myself—but if injury is done to a great industry, I think it might be allowed.

Q. Then with your views, if a man wanted a hundred barrels—you are a cooper—do you think you would be justified in making them on Sunday?—A. No, I would not give them to him.

Q. I merely put it to you as an illustration.—A. But there is the difficulty, if the canners have no fish to go to work on on Monday morning before the fishermen can get to work, with such a very short season as we have, it would be very harmful.

Q. Then you consider there is no use in the close time as at present.—A. I do not think it necessary.

Q. But do you think it of use?—A. Well, I knew this river and the Columbia when there was scarcely any fishing at all and I was making barrels for salting, and I know we had great difficulty in getting salmon to fill the barrels.

Q. But were there as many fishermen then?—A. Oh, of course not, but still I don't think the fish could have been caught even if the fishermen were there.

Q. Now about the offal. You think it is no harm to fish—what harm is it, do you think, to the human family—does it create a stench?—A. Well, no; I don't think it does harm—I do not know of it.

Q. But would you not say from a sanitary point of view it might do harm if it created a stench?—A. Yes, I think it would undoubtedly.

Q. Have you any further remarks you wish to make?—A. No, I think I have told you the points on which I desired to speak.

LOUIS L'HENAFF, a native of France, a resident of Steveston, and a fisherman, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. How long have you lived here?—A. Twelve years. I am a fisherman and work for the canneries as a net-man.

Q. Have you ever fished under license by yourself?—Yes, sir. What I want to say is that for the last three years restriction has been made and I could not get a license. This is my only trouble.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Are you a British subject?—A. Yes, sir; I have sworn allegiance.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Are you a native of Canada?—No, sir; I am a native of old France.

Q. You have been fishing for the canneries—as boatman or netter?—A. Yes, sir; all I want to say is, I want a license. I have asked for one every year for the last four years, but have always been refused.

Q. Do you know of barter or sales of licenses?—A. Yes, I do, but I could not be definite about it.

Q. Do you think if you obtained one license it would be sufficient for all your wants?—A. Yes, sir; without transfer.

Q. What do you mean by that?—A. That I should use it, or leave it alone and attend to other business.

Q. What do you know about the offal? Is it a fact that all the offal from canneries is thrown into the river?—A. Well, certainly a lot is wasted and thrown in, but I don't know anything about that. I came here to live and let live. I want a license, that is all and I don't want to interfere with any one else.

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Q. Well, but what we would like you to answer is this: do you know or not that all the offal is thrown into the river?—A. No; not all, because some are making oil out of it.

Q. What cannery were you working for?—A. Oh, I have been working here for three years, and I have been on the Skeena River for two years.

Q. What course is pursued on the Skeena as to offal?—A. Oh, it is thrown into the river. That is the only place to put it.

Q. Do you think it is injurious to anything?—A. I don't think it is injurious to anything; it is food for other fishes; I don't think it hurts anything; it has been there for years; we have all drank of the water from the river for years and we have not died yet. This is not what is the matter; we want licenses, that is all. There is too much gambling in licenses.

Q. Well, how does it affect you?—A. Well, it throws me out of here. I had to go to the Skeena, but there the cannery had most of the outside licenses; they are divided among the cannery in somebody else's name.

Q. In what way do Indians fish there?—A. Under the cannery licenses—the cannery pays the fee—but now settlers are beginning to take up licenses.

Q. But you said all licenses were taken up by the cannery?—A. Oh, well, they were until very lately.

Q. What is the usual size of sockeye salmon up in the Skeena? Will they average about seven pounds?—A. About seven pounds when they come out of the water.

Q. How many cans will you get from one salmon there?—A. Oh, I believe about five cans, sometimes four and a half. I could not testify as to that; I am not a cannery; I am a fisherman; I never weighed them.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. What is the size of sockeye on Fraser River?—A. Oh, several sizes; I have seen some as high as 12 pounds.

Q. Well, what about the average?—A. All through about seven pounds.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. You cannot vouch for any exact statement as to the number of cans from one fish?—A. No; I never made statistics; I don't know.

Q. How many meshes deep are the nets used on the Skeena?—A. No deeper than 35 meshes; that is the deepest.

Q. Are any seines used on the Skeena?—A. No, all drift nets.

Q. Are fish caught there principally at the mouth or farther up the river?—A. Everywhere, except that they are not caught above tidal water.

Q. How far does the tide back up the water in the Skeena?—A. I have not been up that far.

Q. How wide is the river where most of the fishing is carried on?—A. About half a mile wide.

Q. Is the water more shallow there than up the river?—A. Yes; I think so, even the channel is shallow, and the fishing is carried on the same as here.

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

BERNARD BUCK, a native of Norway, a fisherman, and resident of New Westminster, is duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. Do you desire to make a statement?—A. Yes; I understand the cannerymen were going to ask for an increase in the number of licenses and let every man get a license, but if every man is to get a license, and the cannerymen get all the licenses they want, we could not make a living. It don't matter whether you are a fisherman

or not, the cannerymen are able to get licenses, and now they want more. If the cannerymen get more licenses and give them to others than actual fishermen, then we cannot make a living. I have fished under licenses; my only complaint is in the fear that the cannerymen will get more licenses; they get too many now. I have been working for Mr. Ewen, having charge of the whole cannery department, and I know that in a big run they could keep the establishment going in good order with 15 boats.

Q. And when there is a big run of fish and the cannery has 15 boats running, can you as a fisherman dispose of your fish?—A. Well, I only mentioned one instance and it was in the big run, and with 15 boats they had enough to keep the whole business going.

Q. Then the canneries have too many licenses and so affect seriously the livelihood of the fishermen?—Yes.

Q. But suppose you reverse it and say the cannery only have a few licenses and you have one each, would you not control the cannery?—A. No, not at all; we must sell to the cannery anyway.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. You think then the cannery should not have any licenses?—A. Yes; they could buy their fish just as cheap—we must sell our fish to the cannery.

Q. Then you will be able to dictate to the cannery and control the salmon fishing business?—A. No, I don't think we would.

Q. But capital should have some advantage, you know?—A. Well, they are too much protected now. I know all about them—I have worked for them long enough.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Do you know anything about the offal?—A. I could not tell you anything about that. I don't think it does any harm. I have fished right along where the offal was going down and caught fish just as well.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. How long does offal remain before disappearing?—A. Oh, the little fish eat it all up—it does not remain long.

Q. But if the cannery stops for a day or two, does the offal remain there?—A. No, I never saw it, except at the mouth of the river.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Oh, it gets there does it? We have been told that it injures the nets.—A. I have heard that.

Q. Suppose the offal gets into the net—would it not prevent the salmon from getting into that net?—A. I never saw any prevented from coming into the net.

Q. Were you fishing last year?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where?—A. Down at the mouth of the river. That is the place where we fish for sockeyes and cohoes.

Q. What was the average number of fish you caught during the season?—A. Something over 4,000 fish.

Q. What price did you get for them?—A. 20 cents.

Q. To what cannery did you sell?—A. Mr. Ewen's.

Q. Do you know of the sale of licenses to fishermen who could not get them through the proper officer? Do you know of fishermen who purchased licenses from others?—A. Well, I can't say—many fishermen fished on shares.

Q. What depth of mesh did you fish?—A. I had 45 meshes deep.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Curiously enough, all you men in your evidence speak of years of big runs—you don't speak of general averages—why don't you speak of other years?—A. Well, because there is nothing in it in other years—we don't make anything.

Q. How many boats do cannery want in a bad year, or if 15 boats would be enough in a good year? We want an average—we are being misled because we are

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hearing of only the big runs.—A. Well, in a big run the canners make bigger preparations for a big pack. We have two good years and two bad ones. In a big run they calculate on a big pack and make a great number of cans, and then they can get all the fish they want with their own boats—in a small run they want all they can get, and they run after us for the fish—we are very good men then (laughter)—in a big year we have to run after them.

Q. Would it not pay to salt the fish in the big years? Some canneries salt them in big years.—A. What canneries?

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Well, all, don't they.

WITNESS.—No, sir; some persons have salted salmon—they pay 5 cents for the fish.

Q. Do you know what it takes to put up a case of salmon?—A. Yes; about \$2.80—I am not a canner, but I consider that is about the price.

Q. How many fish fill a case?—A. Eleven sockeyes will fill a case.

Q. And what do they cost on the average?—A. They have been paying 10 cents since the limitation was put on, but before that one and a half or two cents.

Q. And how many would you catch with one net?—A. Some have caught as high as 8,000 or 9,000.

Q. The average price of fish is then, say, 10 cents. Now, what does it cost to clean the fish and put them up?—A. Well, I don't know the details. I understand it costs \$2.80 per case—this is as far as I know. I have been told it is \$2.80 by the cannerymen themselves.

Q. Oh, you are telling us hearsay evidence, are you? You should tell us nothing but what you know for a fact yourself.—A. James Wise told me.

Q. James Wise never had a cannery in his life—how many years ago is it since he had one?—A. It might be ten years or so or more than that—I was very young then.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Then you don't know when he told you?—A. I don't know exactly when it was—I have been here since 1875.

Q. Very well, but we don't want anything except what you know. We are not going to take down any hearsay evidence. Now, do you know whether it costs more to put up a case of salmon now than it did some years ago?—A. Oh, I cannot tell you that.

Q. But of course you know that it must cost more when 20 cents is paid than when 10 cents is given?—A. Oh yes, of course.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, sir, have you any more remarks to make?—A. No; I think not at present.

The Chairman then declared the Commission adjourned at 10 p.m., to meet again in the same place (Court-house, Westminster) at 10 a.m. 20th February.

NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C., 20th February, 1892.

Second Day's Session.

The Commission was called to order by the Chairman at 10 a.m.

Present S. Wilmot, Esq., in the chair; Hon. W. D. Higgins, Sheriff W. J. Armstrong, C. F. Winter, secretary.

FREDERICK KAYE, of New Westminster, a native of England, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, sir, we will be glad to hear any statement you may wish to make?—A. Well, it is rather a delicate question—if I should consider everything I have to—

Q. If you have any views generally you wish to state you may do so, you know.—
A. Well, sir, my general impression is that if you gave everybody licenses the matter would regulate itself. You should give everybody licenses, gentlemen, that is what is the trouble.

Q. Have you anything to say in regard to the disposition of the offal—the throwing of vast quantities into the river—what effect has it, in your opinion, upon the fisheries, or from a sanitary point of view?—A. Why, there is a multitude of small fish that devour it as fast as you throw it in—this is well known.

Q. Then you think that quantities of offal, amounting to millions of pounds, is all eaten up?—A. Yes; all of it—millions of pounds.

Q. What effect has it upon the inhabitants?—A. It is thought injurious by some, but I have drank the water of the Fraser for years and it has had no effect. I can only say that it never affected me—I don't know how other people are constituted.

Q. What about the limitation of the number of nets as to canners or fishermen themselves?—A. I think every man should get a license.

Q. You do not believe in any limitation whatever?—A. No limitation. Give every man a license. There is plenty of fish. I cannot go elsewhere and catch all I want. The fish from the Skeena came here last year.

Q. Would you say, in giving nets to all, to include foreigners?—A. Oh, no; decidedly not—no foreigners—give them to British subjects. They will soon get tired of getting them if it does not pay.

Q. Will one license each be sufficient?—A. Give him more if he has money and will put it into the industry.

Q. Are you of the opinion that it would be just and safe that licenses should be given indiscriminately, both as regards number and fishermen?—A. Oh, no; I would not give an unlimited number, but if a man has capital to put up a lot of fish, let him show proof and get more licenses.

Q. Then if a man has capital and wants licenses, he should get them and carry on business as he likes?—A. If he has the money to put up the fish, he should have the licenses; if he has not the means to carry on the work, he will not apply for what he can't use.

Q. Does this apply to fishermen and canners alike?—A. Yes; to both alike.

Q. What about the close season?—A. It is proper as now. It preserves the fish and gives fishermen rest. It works well.

Q. Are you an advocate that fishing should be allowed on Sundays?—A. No, sir; I am not.

Q. A close time then from six o'clock Saturday to six o'clock Sunday night?—A. Yes; and that is quite sufficient.

Q. Do you not think the whole of Sunday should then be given to the close time?—A. I think it proper, as far as I know of.

Q. What about an annual close season?—A. It would be good and proper; nothing can be better.

Q. What are your ideas as to limits of fishing on the Fraser River—should fishing at the mouth be curtailed?—A. Well, I don't really understand that.

Q. Well, at the mouth of the river—should there not be a limit where there should be no fishing?—A. You have no jurisdiction to do that, have you? If you cut—

Q. Never mind that. Do you think it advisable in the interest of the fisheries, that a portion of the river at the mouth should be excluded altogether?—A. It would be as well that a portion should be set off at the mouth. Of course, if you catch fish at the mouth, you drive them away to other places.

Q. Are you a practical fisherman?—A. I am, and I would like to meet the man that knows more about it.

Q. Should licenses be transferable, say to canners and others?—A. Well, the canners never fish their licenses; they always transfer them to Indians and others. A man should be allowed to transfer his license if he likes; suppose he takes sick, he must get another man to run it. If a license is granted it is mine, and I should do as I like with it.

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Q. What depth of nets do you use?—A. I fish with 30, 40 and 50 meshes.

Q. What standard would you say—suppose one fixed?—A. Thirty and 40 meshes would suit well.

Q. Are the fisheries in the Fraser River decreasing or increasing within your knowledge?—A. My dear sir, the last year's run you had was as big as ever seen—it stands to reason then that the fish must be increasing. This river would supply the whole world if there were fishermen enough to catch them.

Q. Have you any knowledge of facts of overfishing in the Columbia River?—A. The Columbia was never as big a fishing river as the Fraser.

Q. Then overfishing has no effect, you think?—A. In a long time it may.

Q. Then do you not think it would be good to make rules for the future?—A. Oh, well, it is immaterial to me 100 years from now.

Q. Then you don't think overfishing would affect the Fraser?—A. No; not in our time; of course it is bound to tell in time.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Mr. Kaye, how many licenses did you hold?—A. Two; I applied for two.

Q. Are they personally to you?—A. Yes; I used to get five.

Q. Were they issued to you as canner or fisherman?—A. As a fisherman. I sold my fish.

Q. Did you hold two licenses last year?—A. Yes; but I let them out. I was taken sick and I fished them on shares.

Q. Were you aware that you got two licenses while there were other men who did not get any?—A. Yes.

Q. How do you account for that?—A. Oh, I don't know.

Q. Who gave you the licenses?—A. Mr. Mowat.

Q. And you don't think the throwing in of the offal a bad thing—don't you think it has a bad effect?—A. No; I tell you there are millions and millions of fish, and the little fish are in myriads—you could catch a barrel of them in a minute without a net—that will show you how thick they are.

Q. Do you think there is as much offal goes in the river as dead fish come down?—A. Well, I cannot say how many dead fish come down; there are a great number.

Q. At what season of the year is that?—A. In September.

Q. Are they supposed to poison the river?—A. Oh, I don't think so—we often get them in the nets from the back part.

Q. Do you think cannery should be deprived of licenses?—Say 100 were given on the river—would you give all of the hundred to fishermen and none to cannery?—A. No; I would say give so many to cannery, and so many to the fishermen. The cannery can protect themselves.

Q. Well, if all were given to fishermen, would they have a monopoly?—A. Oh, yes; it would be like the Columbia River. The price of fish would be put up.

Q. You go in for giving licenses to all?—A. Yes; I would give them all licenses—if you do, gentlemen, the business would regulate itself. Give the poor man that wants to work a license, and if he does wrong with it, it is his lookout and not yours. If the business does not pay, he will get out of it.

Q. Have you known of Americans or foreigners fishing under licenses to the exclusion of British subject?—A. Well, I have heard of such things, but I cannot state so positively. I have known of a stranger to come in and go and become an Englishman in less than twenty minutes. I don't know how he did it, but it is a fact all the same.

Q. Well, it has been stated here that a resident of Washington has got a license here?—A. Well, I guess he went to a broker and fixed things. I have heard lots of things about such instances, but I cannot tell exactly.

Q. But then men who live here cannot get licenses?—A. Well, it has been done—I have known men get licenses who didn't know one end of the net from the other. I don't know how it is done. Then I have known lots of good men here who could not get a license.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. Was that not because the whole number of licenses to be issued were taken up?—A. Well, I don't know what the reason was—they could not get a license, that's all.

Q. Then you think everybody should get licenses?—A. Yes; everybody—the business will regulate itself.

Q. You speak of dead fish coming down the river—how were they coming?—A. Many were wriggling and nearly dead.

Q. Do you think if they got to the sea they would revive?—A. Well, perhaps, some would—I daresay they would.

Q. The proportion is so great they come tumbling and wriggling—is that your experience?—A. Yes; that is it.

Q. Would you say "all persons" who got licenses should include the farmer, settler, fisherman and Indian?—A. No; not by a jugful—if a man has another occupation he should keep at it.

Q. But these people are all residents, why should there be any objection?—A. If a man is a farmer let him stay at farming. I am a fisherman, I don't go farming.

Q. But would you not let him fish for himself?—A. Oh, yes; let him fish for himself, but he should not sell.

Q. Should the Indians get licenses?—A. Yes; God gave them the fish—the river belonged to them—they should have a license. They were the first people here and I don't see why they, of all people, should be deprived of the right to fish.

Q. Well now, can you express an opinion as to what would be a fair number of licenses for the cannery?—A. I beg your pardon, sir. I have never been in the cannery business. I could not say, and I would not like to hazard an opinion.

Q. Oh, very well, we thought perhaps you would like to give us an opinion—very well, if you have nothing further?—A. No, I have no further remarks to make, sir.

COWAN D. GRANT, of New Westminster, a native of Nova Scotia, and a master mariner, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. What are your views in regard to the disposition of the offal in the river?—A. I think if the offal is put in deep water it has no effect, but if put near the shore it might be dangerous.

Q. Where is the offal generally put, in deep water or along the shores?—A. In deep water generally.

Q. Are the canneries situated in deep water?—A. Yes; most of them are.

Q. Then as it floats down river it gets into the bays and sloughs?—A. Well, you don't see much of it—there are so many little fish that eat it up, and if in cribs it will be all consumed.

Q. Are there cribs in the canneries?—A. Yes, sir, most of them have them.

Q. Would small pieces of offal, such as entrails and small pieces, get out of the cribs? Are they sufficiently close to keep them from going out?—A. Well, so far as my experience goes, I never see any of it in the nets.

Q. Have you heard it gets in the nets?—A. Well, I don't know, I never saw it.

Q. What do you think of the limitation of nets? Should they be free to all in numbers, that is to anybody who applies?—A. I think so, sir, but not to foreigners.

Q. Do you think one license quite sufficient for the ordinary fisherman to pursue his operations?—A. Well, if a man has a contract it would be necessary to have more, perhaps, but if he is just fishing for himself one might do, but sometimes two would be better.

Q. Well, but if one got two and another four and so on it would be too numerous—would you not give everyone one each and be sure?—A. Well, perhaps one would be a proper number.

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Q. Have you any experience of the number required for canners to carry on their business?—A. Well, I don't know.

Q. You could not give an opinion as to the number required for an ordinary cannery?—A. No, sir: I don't know. In a big season ten to twenty boats would keep them, but in a poor season they would want more, perhaps double that.

Q. Then have you found about twenty or twenty-five boats the average?—A. I am not posted in the cannery business, and so I cannot very well tell.

Q. What do you think of the close season—is it correct as now?—A. Yes, sir; I think it is all right.

Q. Would you give all Sunday for a close season?—A. I think it would be better to have all Sunday till 12 o'clock.

Q. Can you express any opinion as to an annual close season—would this be advisable?—A. Well, at the end of the season the sockeyes get very thin and nasty, but our spawning grounds are off the Fraser—I don't think it matters.

Q. But if fish get past these nets and get to the tributaries should fishing be allowed there—on the tributaries?—A. We don't allow any fishing on the tributaries.

Q. Then you think there should be a close season?—A. Yes; on these tributaries. Q. Do you think there should be a portion at the mouth of the river where no fishing should be allowed—there is a large amount of fishing done there now?—A. Yes, a good deal, and of course it lessens the number which gets up.

Q. Would you allow any British subject to get a license?—A. Yes, sir; and the number should not be limited.

Q. Would you allow the canners to get as many as they want, and also fishermen?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Well, if the canners get all they want what effect would it have?—A. Well, it would hurt the fishermen's business for they depend on the canneries for the sale of their fish, but if every man was allowed a license it would regulate itself.

Q. Would a cannery, if it had sixty licenses ever employ an outside fisherman at all?—A. Well, I don't suppose they would.

Q. Then there should be some controlling power as between these industries—that would be fair, would it not?—A. Yes, sir; that seems but fair.

Q. Well, that could only be done by limitation. What do you think of this speculation in licenses—do you think it just, for often a deserving man cannot get a license?—A. This should not be done, but a man may have a partner. In the first place a man gets a license and a number, and he is liable for whatever may be done.

Q. In the course of your duties as a fishery officer, you must have noticed the nets, their length, depth, &c. What number of meshes in depth are generally used?—A. Thirty to forty, it depends upon the channel.

Q. Would it be safe to limit the depth of net?—A. No, sir; I don't think so.

Q. Do I understand that the fishermen here have certain localities?—A. Yes; some have.

Q. What portion of the whole number?—A. I cannot say exactly.

Q. And local fishermen should have depth of net to suit the water and the rest would have all alike?—A. Yes, and the average would be thirty and forty meshes.

Q. Do you think if the depth of net were lessened more fish would get up the river?—A. Well, I don't know about that, when Saturday comes the fish get up all right.

Q. When fish come in they strike the net, few get under it, very few get around it, those that do are caught by the next net, I suppose none get over it?—A. I have seen some jump over it.

Q. None get under it?—A. Well, I think some get under, though I do not think the fish take the bottom when they come in.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. In your experience of salmon do they swim low or high?—A. I think high, sir.

Q. You think then thirty or forty meshes—how many feet would that be?—A. About twenty.

Q. In hauling in your nets have you found most of the salmon in the meshes below or above?—A. They mostly strike the top of the net—sometimes lower down, but generally at the top.

Q. You are a practical fisherman?—A. I have been.

Q. Did you fish last summer?—A. I had a partner fishing—I got so many fish out of those that were caught.

Q. Have you any recommendation to make as to licenses going to certain people—do you ever act as broker or know of a traffic in licenses?—A. No, sir; I don't.

Q. Have you known American citizens to get licenses while men on the river got none?—A. No, sir; I don't know that, but I know plenty of men here who could not get licenses.

Q. How long have you been employed by the Government?—A. I have been on two or three years.

Q. Do you fish?—A. I did last year and two or three years ago.

Q. Are you still an officer of the department?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. In regard to the offal, you don't know of bad effects from it being thrown in?—A. No, sir; not here.

Q. Is it offensive?—A. No, sir; not in deep water.

Q. Is the number of salmon that die up the river very large?—A. Yes, sir, very large, particularly in the creeks.

Q. Then they are swept into the main river and go down until they dissolve?—A. Yes, sir.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. Have you ever seen fish in autumn floating down the river?—A. Oh, yes; I have seen lots of them.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. In regard to licenses—you say you think licenses should be given to every one, do you think they should be made transferable?—A. Well, my idea is you cannot fish alone, you must have a partner and I think it should be applicable to both.

Q. But as to the traffic in licenses?—A. Oh, well, I don't know as to that, but if I have a partner I don't see why I should not give it to him. The party getting the license is responsible.

Q. Have you known of anybody except fishermen to hold licenses?—A. No, sir.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. You say you had a license last year and fished it on shares—now, if any one stated you sold half of that license for \$25, would it be true?—A. No, sir; I was to get so many fish out of what were caught, I did not get money.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. In order to clear this matter up a little more—you made an arrangement with another man to get a certain portion of the fish?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Well, when you reckoned up did he give you fish or money?—A. Oh, he gave me the value of the fish in money.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. When were you appointed an officer?—A. On 25th of March.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. What pay did you get?—A. Sixty dollars a month and it lasted for seven months.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. What effect have steel-heads on salmon spawn?—A. A very bad effect, sir; trout also are very destructive.

Q. Then you think it a mistake to preserve the trout?—A. I do, indeed, sir.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. A great deal has been said about fish eating salmon spawn,—do these fish destroy the spawn on the beds or is it the young fish?—A. I have seen trout and steel-heads picking up spawn; I have not seen them rooting for it.

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By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Steel-heads are not preserved by law, are they?—A. Well, sir, trout are and steel-heads come under that.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. But no; steel-heads are not trout—a steel-head is a salmon?—A. Well, yes; I suppose, properly speaking, they are salmon.

Q. Are any steel-heads to be obtained at this season of the year?—A. I think they are coming in now—they generally come in about the first of March.

Q. If there are any of these steel-heads brought into town I would like to see some.

—A. I have not seen any yet.

Mr. Higgins.—We will be able to see them in Victoria.

Mr. Vienna, fish dealer, who was present, was invited to bring a steel-head, if he could procure one, for inspection by the Commission.

DANIEL J. MUNN, of New Westminster, a native of Prince Edward Island and a salmon canner, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. Would you prefer to make a statement, Mr. Munn, or shall we ask you questions?—A. Well, perhaps it would be better if you would ask any questions you may desire.

Q. Well, what do you think on this offal question?—A. Well, I don't believe that it is injurious to fish, that is to the salmon; I think that the scavenger fish do away with nearly all of it.

Q. What effect do you think it has from a sanitary point of view?—A. Well, when it is deposited in deep water I don't think it has any effect at all. The only place it might be injurious is where it accumulates in large heaps and the sun possibly gets at it, and in that way it might pollute the water. It would then become offensive.

Q. It is thrown in heaps, is it not?—A. Yes, it is sent out through shoots. We all make it a point to put it in deep water if we can.

Q. Portions remain in the heaps, I suppose?—A. When put in deep water it does not. At the "Bon Accord" we don't see anything of it after it leaves the floor.

Q. Well, as to the wind-bags and the parts of the entrails attached, do not these parts rise to the surface and float down the river?—A. I have never seen it—I don't think it does—I have never seen offal float—a dead fish will.

Q. Is it sent along the shores of the river or in the sloughs?—A. A portion of it will float.

Q. Then that will be the wind-bags, &c., won't it?—A. Yes, but the offal itself does not float.

Q. Will not the wind-bags have a portion of the entrails with them?—A. Oh yes, a portion of the entrails will be attached, but that applies only to exceptional cases; I have not seen much of it.

Q. Are there many residents living along the bays or slough, settlers?—A. Yes.

Q. What effect would it have on people living along the sloughs or bays?—A. I don't think it has any effect if the water is filtered.

Q. I mean the offal in the water—if you were a settler would you like it?—A. No, I don't think I would, but I think I would take water from a deeper channel and filter it. I don't think the water from the Fraser River is fit to drink at any time unless taken from a deep source: there is so much dung, sewage, filth, &c., of all kinds thrown in, or drifts in along the banks.

Q. You think that there are more injuries to the water than offal?—A. Yes.

Mr. MUNN—(continuing). I may say that to dispose of the offal in any other way than at present would be very expensive—indeed so much so that we would have to consider it, and I would not like to undertake to dispose of it either by going into an oil refinery or by taking it out to sea.

Q. Could you suggest a remedy feasible to carry out, to get rid of the offal?—A. Well, my way of looking at it is that it is not injurious to salmon: That if it is injurious to people living along the banks of the river, the municipalities might take hold of it as a sanitary measure—it is entirely a local matter, I believe, where there could be any cases of complaint, and this is why I think the municipalities should take it up instead of the Dominion Government hampering an important industry by imposing unnecessary expense.

Q. I may mention that it is a statutory enactment throughout Canada and in most countries that this offal should not be thrown into the water, and here where it is so generally done it is a question of great importance as to what remedy can be devised. Now you speak of the municipalities taking it up—one municipality might pass a law that it should not be done, while another might allow it—you must have some power that would be universal.—A. Well, I think the Dominion Government should not have this matter in hand. The Provincial Government might look into it. I know that many of the complaints are unfounded. I went to one man direct myself on the river, who raised quite a noise about the matter, and asked what he wished us to do. "Well," he said, "I would prefer to put it on my land—we have any amount of land it would benefit." "Well," I said, "if I take a scow load and put it on your land would you say nothing more about it?" "I would not allow it," he said. He knew very well that it would almost cause a pestilence because it would create lice and other vermin of all kinds and would destroy all the fruit trees in the country.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Well, suppose there was an oil factory, would it be very expensive to take the offal to the factory?—A. Well, it would not be so very expensive as inconvenient—when fish are running largely, we have all we can do to look after them.

Q. Now there is an oil factory started down the river, and if the offal could be manufactured, just to pay expenses and nothing more, would it not be a good thing? If all parties would take the offal to the factory, I think they could afford to work it up?—A. Well, we would be only too happy to go into that if it is feasible, and if it will pay. I understand that the factory you speak of does not pay, nor begin to pay. It does not get rid of the offal either. They cannot dry it properly, and cannot make it fit to ship.

By Mr. Wilnot :

Q. You stated that you had not heard of persons making complaint against throwing offal into the river. I may state that the city of New Westminster has made complaint as a public body, and many persons have done so, too, from a sanitary standpoint.—A. Well, I just wish to state, if I said I heard no complaints, that I have heard complaints, but I did not think them good authority.

Q. But the city of New Westminster—ought it not to be good authority?—A. Yes; but I think the water more hurt by the sewage going in than by the offal.

Q. If this complaint is made by the city of New Westminster, and made by the inhabitants and numerous others that it is a nuisance, &c., would it not be better for all the cannerymen to club together, and by some means—you could erect machinery, &c., by a small pittance each—not create such an injurious nuisance. I don't think it injurious to salmon coming in, unless it lodges in places on shallow ground here and there—it is more from a sanitary standpoint that I should view it?—A. I quite agree it would be a proper thing to do, but as a cannery proprietor, I am not willing to go into any business unless I have some idea of what the expenses will be. Now, about two years ago, Mr. Begg went around amongst different canneries and asked them to subscribe about \$1,000 each, in order that he could build an oil refinery; get scows to convey the offal, &c., and he, of course, was to have the management of it. We went into the matter thoroughly with him and found that he had no experience in the world, and that he knew nothing more than we did ourselves; so we refused giving our \$1,000 each. If we saw our way clear that so many dollars a season would dispose of the offal, and advance the general good of the country, &c., we would be only too happy to go into it; but every dollar you add to the cost of putting up our fish, makes it harder for us in competing with other canneries on the coast.

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Q. But if the law was carried out the penalty would be very great and every one of the canners would be subject to this penalty, and at any time the Government could come down and say this law must be enforced. Now, would it not be better to arrange this before the penalty is exacted?—A. Well, if other canners engaged in the business can make it pay I will be very willing to go into it with others, but as regards the "Bon Accord" (Mr. Munn's cannery) it will bear heavily upon us.

Q. Where is the "Bon Accord"?—A. Four or five miles up the river. It would be adding very much to the cost of working our cannery if we had to save offal in any way; but there is another point as well—we find it very hard when the run of salmon is on to get labour to take care of the fish in the cannery. It is not like as if we had four or five months in which to do our work—it must be done inside of a month and our labour must be collected inside of that time.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. But, Mr. Munn, there is the law—suppose we recommend that it does not be stopped—any man can come up and complain and the law must be enforced. Now, would it not be better for the cannerymen to do something to help better this state of things?—A. Well, as far as I am concerned I don't care to go into any business I don't understand.

Q. But there is the law?—A. Well, if the law says we *must* (emphatically) move off the river—all very well.

Q. Oh, no, I didn't mean that?—A. Well, I maintain if we have to go to the cost of taking care of that offal other than we do now it is tantamount to forcing us off the river.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, but in Washington and the United States there are penalties against the putting in of deleterious substances in rivers and streams?—A. Yes, if it is injurious to fish. They do throw offal in, in Washington, and if we have to take care of it we will be at a disadvantage with them. I agree that it would be well to take care of it if possible, but not in such a way as to put us to expense.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Change the law. Ask the Dominion Government to take care of the offal. I consider the Government should take care of the offal themselves. They should start oil factories, &c. They protect all kinds of industries, why should they not afford some protection to this important industry here?

Mr. WILMOT.—But as this is a matter affecting the Province of British Columbia, why should not the Provincial Government look after this?

Mr. HIGGINS.—Oh, no; the Dominion Government takes care of the fisheries, and if the offal is deleterious to health and is destroying rivers as places of residence, I think the Government should step forward and do something to prevent the bad consequences. I think you should not ask the cannerymen to do more than to deliver the offal at the oil factory.

Mr. MUNN.—Beyond all that, would it not be as well to have a medical officer inspect the river and have it settled whether this offal is really deleterious?

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Cod fishermen on the coast of Norway, England, Sweden, and, I think, in the United States, have been the principal parties in asking that offal should not be thrown in because it is deleterious to throw fish in on the coast on account of it driving fish away from their haunts nearer shore. Now, here, I don't think it is deleterious to fish coming up, but as a sanitary matter I should think it was decidedly so.—A. Well, I don't think it is as much injury as the sewage thrown in and the great numbers of dead fish that die up the river. The offal is a small matter compared with them. Then it might even be cheaper, if the offal law is to be enforced, to give the farmers better water—bring it down from above to them.

Q. Is it not a fact that the report that the habit of catching salmon at Point Roberts on the United States side and throwing large quantities of them away was harmful to the Fraser River and has been complained of by cannerymen as injurious to your river?—A. I have not heard of it.

Q. Because if this is injurious by being thrown out in the Straits, how much more is it injurious in the river itself when they are thrown in?—A. Well, I don't think so—I didn't take any account of that.

Q. Are not large numbers of salmon thrown away when you cannot put them up?—A. Not from our cannery, except once, when we threw away 300 salmon one Sunday night a year ago.

Q. In catching the quinnat, what do you do with the white salmon during the season?—A. We don't use them—we give them to the fishermen and they use them as best they can.

Q. Will they eat them instead of the red salmon?—A. Certainly; because they get them for nothing—they are equally as good.

Q. What proportion of white and red might there be?—A. I don't know exactly. In August there are more white than in early spring.

Q. And yet they are caught and not used?—A. The Indians use them for their own purposes; they are not wasted.

Q. Are they not frequently taken out of the net and thrown away?—A. It may be done to some extent—I have never seen it.

Q. When you carry on your fishing at the latter end of the season, do you not catch humpbacks as well?—A. Yes.

Q. What do you do with them?—A. They are thrown away.

Q. Then they become offal as well?—A. I suppose so.

Q. Are they very numerous?—A. Yes; we catch few sockeyes when the humpbacks are coming in.

Q. What about the cohoes; they come in later than the humpbacks, don't they?—A. They come in later. They are caught by fishermen, but we have no use for them in the cannery.

Q. What are done with the cohoes caught?—A. They are canned, but of late years we don't fish for cohoes.

Q. Are they fished for by any other persons?—A. By some for the fish markets.

Q. Are all consumed? Not thrown away?—A. They are not thrown away to any extent.

Q. If steel-heads are caught in nets while fishing for other fish, what is done with them?—A. They are canned with the other fish.

Q. Then the most valuable fish for canning is the sockeye?—A. Yes; we depend absolutely on the sockeye.

Q. With regard to the propagation of salmon for this river, do you think it best to breed only sockeyes and not any other kinds?—A. Well, I believe more information should be gained of the natural spawning grounds in the country before they should be artificially hatched, or anything of that kind. We don't know enough about the natural history of the salmon in the province. We ought to breed spring salmon because that is the best salmon.

Q. In connection with spring salmon are some mixed red and white?—A. Yes; you find them streaky.

Q. Are they a distinct species, do you think?—A. Well, I don't know. They seem just as good one with another, red or white, the only difference is the white one does not suit the taste of consumers. I would prefer seeing spring salmon bred.

Q. Has artificial breeding been beneficial to the river, do you think?—A. Well, I don't think it is yet beyond the experimental stage.

Q. As far as it is gone, what do you think?—A. I don't think we have enough information to say.

Q. How do you account for the big runs in some years?—A. Up to '89 and '90 there were always good years, except '86. I should say that the reason the run was so great last year was because the spawning conditions were much more favourable when the eggs were deposited on the natural grounds, as they were unfavourable in '86.

Q. '89, '90 and '91 have been large runs. Was it usual in former years to see consecutive years large?—A. Well, last year was better than any other year. With the hatchery as an experiment, I can understand that the big run of last year was owing to favourable conditions when spawn was placed in the rivers.

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By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. I suppose after this year's run you will be able to tell better?—A. Yes; I think so.

Q. What is the average weight of the sockeye you can?—A. I should judge about six pounds.

Q. Is it not a fact that all reports make the average nearer eight pounds?—A. I am not a judge of the weight of fish; I only know how many fish it takes to the case.

Q. What is the usual run of cans to a fish?—A. Well, in poor years four cans to a fish—in heavy years the fish are always smaller than in poor ones.

Q. Then one-third of a six-pound fish is offal?—A. Somewhere about that.

Q. Then if the average of salmon were eight pounds you would get five cans?—A. Yes; about that.

Q. Then the offal would be three pounds?—A. Yes; it is a matter of calculation—the bigger the fish the less the amount of offal.

Q. What would be the fair average quantity of cases put up at a cannery that would be remunerative?—A. Well, these are things we cannot tell much about; it all depends upon the market.

Q. Should a cannery commence operations or begin to work with machinery for less than 15,000 cases?—A. I think everybody should go into the cannery business if they want to.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. Well, suppose a man with a capacity of 20,000 cases, and he gets the same number of licenses as one who packs 10,000 cases, would it be just?—A. No; a man's pack should be consulted.

Q. Do you think 15,000 cases a fair number for twenty licenses?—A. I don't think any such arrangement should be made at all. This twenty license system is not a good one in the way it has been worked. It all depends.

Q. What do you say to unlimited licenses, both to canners and fishermen?—A. That is to say, that any person could get one or as many as they wish?

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. If you want ten as an individual you should get it? How would you work it?—A. Well, labour regulates all that, and then it would be putting the river on the same basis as any other enterprise. A cannery should have a number of licenses—not necessarily established—but as long as he can get as many as he requires.

Q. In the case of a cannery which shut down for the season, what then?—A. Well, they would not need any licenses. If there is an established law no one will take out more licenses than they require.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. Then a cannery should get a minimum number?—A. Yes; if it is necessary to establish a fixed number of any kind, but my principle is that a cannery or individual should get a license, or any number of licenses upon application and payment of the license fee.

Q. Then one canneryman could go and say, I want one hundred licenses; another says, I want ten—then the man with ten would have to rely upon the ordinary fishermen?—A. Yes; if you have a fixed number, but it depends upon the law you have—if you say there must be a limit to the number of boats on the river, there should be a minimum number, but I would do away with any fixed number on the river to fishermen or canners.

Q. Then the Government would have to put them up to auction?—A. No; not necessarily.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Well, I think this would pass the whole business into a monopoly.—A. Why, the fishermen can make it just as great a monopoly.

Q. Not unless they had capital?—A. Well, do you think cannery have absolute control of labour to run an unlimited number of boats? It is just this way: the cannery prefer having good contract fishermen to any other system so long as we can feel secure ourselves.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Very true, but you could dictate to the settler coming in if you had all the boats?—A. But where are we to get our labour for all these boats?

Q. But persons coming out to British Columbia from other countries, they cannot get licenses?—A. But if everybody could get licenses how would we have a monopoly? Just following out this principle, suppose the cannery were given a limited number and you gave licenses to everyone who came into the country, would not the fishermen have a monopoly? You are working on a wrong basis if you imagine a monopoly can be established by allowing free licenses on the river—let every fisherman come in and get a license and cannery get all the licenses they want.

Q. Well, suppose cannery were fixed at a minimum number of licenses, say fifteen or twenty boats the maximum number of boats a cannery could get, leaving it free for all cannery wanting to go into the business to get some, and one fisherman to get one license each. The cannery would always have enough to run their establishments, and if they wanted more fish they could buy from the fishermen. Would not this equalize matters?—A. That is a practical proposition; I cannot see though what difference it would make to my idea. I am reasoning for having a fixed number for each cannery, as our Indian labour must be given employment. They are the best kind of labour we can get. They come and bring their families with them, and these latter—their women and children—find employment inside the cannery. We require a certain number of boats each day, and we send them out. It is our loss if they do not bring in enough fish to pay. But at present with the limitation in the number of licenses, it prevents people coming in because they cannot get licenses. For instance, Bob Gardiner, a white man, fishing in 1886-87-88, he brought his family with him, and there was no limitation in the number of licenses in 1888, and it was not necessary to take out a license. In no particular name he fished on one of our licenses. His name did not appear on the books at the inspector's office, and next year he was refused a license because his name did not appear. Since then we have given some of his boys a boat to fish. When he found he could not get a license, he did not come down next year, and thus you prevent labour from coming. We require a certain number of licenses to encourage as much labour to come as possible, for of what value are green fish unless you can use them and have labour to put them up with?

Q. But would it not be better to induce white men instead of Indians?—A. Well, there would be room for all.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Our Indians are different to yours in the east. They work all the year round and spend their money in the country.—A. Now, there is another matter. We want this labour to take the place of Chinamen, but if the limitation continues how are we to do unless by employing Chinamen and other cheap labour? Now as to giving licenses to all, it does not matter as long as we can get a number of licenses and are sure of that.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. But if we gave you 100 licenses, we place fishermen at your mercy?—A. Oh, no; but when you give a limited number on the river it hurts all.

Q. Well, I believe the time is coming when the number of cannery on the Fraser should be limited?—A. Well, then, that will be a monopoly.

Q. But we must not place any one class at the mercy of the other?

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Is it a fact that a cannery gets twenty, thirty or forty licenses, as the case may be, and then hires licenses out, and when fish are worth 20 cents each, the fisherman gives his fish and gets but 10 cents each?—A. It is a practice to fish on shares; we never sold our licenses; we always did it on shares.

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Q. Then that man is hampered by getting 10 cents for his fish, for if he got a license himself he would get 20 cents?—A. Yes; of course it depends. We work on shares and make the arrangement with the men—now labour is scarce, we put two men to a boat and allow them 10 cents for each fish, although we prefer to buy our fish, and then they (the fishermen) are responsible for their own boat and net.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. You give them a boat and net when they fish on shares—how much do these cost?—A. Oh, \$140 for a boat and net; but as long as good labour is encouraged to come into the country we have no cause of complaint, but the way things have been working it has been injurious in every way.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. What would be a fair average catch of fish for a boat during the last three seasons?—A. It varies—sometimes 3,000 or 4,000.

Q. Statements were made yesterday that 3,000 and 4,000 were caught and delivered to the canneries?—A. Yes; that is correct.

Q. Then 700 of those salmon would equip a man, at 20 cents each?—A. Yes.

Q. And he would have then the difference between that, namely, 2,300 fish as his own individual profit?—A. Well, I don't see why the cannerymen should not go into a little speculation if they liked. We always make the best bargain we can; but there is one thing you must not overlook, namely, that 700 fish does not represent the cost of the fishing outfit, boat and license, net, waste, loss, &c. You must also take into consideration that these nets are snagged once, twice, or three times a year; and we have to have a man to look after these nets as well.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Is 20 cents the average price for fish?—A. No, sir; it is not—it varies.

Q. Well, what is an average price?—A. I have bought some at 20 cents, some at 15, and some at 10 cents—it changes.

Q. The average price would not be 15 cents, then?—A. No; not 15.

By Mr. Wilnot:

Q. What are your views in regard to the weekly close season?—A. I think our close season as at present is quite sufficient and I would strongly protest against any change.

Q. What is the object of the weekly close season?—A. The object was to allow fish to pass up the river.

Q. Not for keeping the Sabbath?—A. I suppose not—there is a double object though—I don't expect people to work on Sunday if they can avoid it.

Q. Cannerymen asked that the close season be changed by changing from Monday morning back to 6 o'clock Sunday night?—A. Just let me explain. As far as I know anything about it from the time I have been on the river from when I came here first up to '89-'90, there was 30 hours close time, from Saturday noon to Sunday evening at 6 o'clock. I have never asked nor desired any change from that. I may tell you that up to the two years ago when this change was made from Saturday evening to Monday morning at 6 o'clock there was more real work on Sunday than any time else, and when I told you we threw away 300 fish at the "Bon Accord" it was on account of asking our men to work on Sunday morning, and consequently it always was very difficult to get our hands out to work on Sunday. Why I object to extending the time to midnight Sunday would be that the guardians could not see if any fishing was going on. I believe the law should be fixed so all could see if it was enforced. They could see that no one went out before 6 p.m., but could not see if any went out at 12 o'clock.

Q. Well, if Sunday is worthy of being a holiday, and having work prevented on that day—query, why whole day or one-third?—A. Well, our season is only five or six weeks; we have to guarantee so much work to our hands—so many days' work, their food and their taxes.

Q. Yes ; but you entered into a speculation in establishing a cannery with all these things known ?—A. Yes ; but we feel we are having a hard time to compete with other parts of the coast. If we are pushed too hard we will have to leave the business. Alaska and the Columbia River are hard to compete with, and we should be treated liberally, not in such a little trifling way as to bother us with a few hours on Sunday.

Q. Oh, I don't think these matters are such trifles, they affect the whole community ?—A. I would only say that when you have to depend upon the short time—four or five weeks—you cannot stop at such little trifles. Sunday work is often necessary, but we wish to avoid it as much as possible.

Q. Then what you say is the present law is all right ?—A. I have the laws of the adjoining States here respecting the close seasons. I see the State of Washington has a weekly close time from 6 p.m., Saturday, to 6 p.m., Monday.

Mr. HIGGINS.—What is the weekly close time in Oregon ?

Mr. MUNN.—(Reading from his copy) Between 6 p.m. on each and every Saturday, and 6 o'clock in the evening of the following Monday.

Mr. HIGGINS.—What is the date of that statute you have ?

Mr. MUNN.—Eleventh of February, 1891.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. I would state that we have evidence here to show that the cannery themselves asked that the close season should commence at 6 o'clock Saturday morning and continue until 6 p.m., Sunday.—A. Yes ; but we considered that if the Government was bound to have six hours more than usual, we should have them on Saturday morning instead of putting them on Sunday night.

Q. What do you think of an annual close season ?—A. I think the Fraser River is amply protected now ; I would not advocate any annual close season.

Q. The State of California has a law prohibiting the taking of salmon from the 1st of August to the 1st of November. (Mr. Wilmot here read extracts from departmental file, No. 8478, in reference to this matter.)

Q. When do the humpbacks begin to enter the river ?—A. In September, though it is more difficult to go up the river in low water than when the rocks are covered. But there is a good deal of difference between the regulations on the Fraser River and those on the Columbia. On the Fraser River fishing is limited to tidal water ; on the other side, I believe, they fish very many miles above tidal water on the Columbia. On this side—the Fraser River—we have no pound-nets, traps, nor fish-wheels ; these have never been used here, since 1876 at least, and all are used on the other side. Then we have had a weekly close time of thirty and thirty-six hours since 1876, and over there it was never enforced until two years ago. Now these are three of the most important things, and which I consider will protect the river against any possible over-fishing.

Q. But why do the Columbia people say their river has been depleted by over-fishing ?—A. Well, they have never had the benefit of our laws. Then they never kept one-third of the river open.

Q. Is it kept so here ?—A. Yes ; I believe so always. Then there is the cost of licenses ; they don't have any charge at all. Then we have small meshed nets ; I cannot find anything over there regulating this matter.

Q. Is it not better for the fishermen to have small meshed nets ?—A. Yes ; but there is a possibility of burdening us down with too much law. We should be treated so as to compete successfully with the Columbia River.

Mr. WILMOT.—But I don't think you are being overburdened. I think the cannery have been able to make the canning business a most profitable one.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Yes ; I think so too.

The Commissioners adjourned at 12.30 p.m., to meet at 2 p.m.

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The Commission reassembled at 2 p.m. at the Court-house, New Westminster, the full board being in attendance.

Mr. MUNN, on being recalled :—

Mr. WILMOT.—Mr. Munn, you are still under examination. Mr. Sheriff Armstrong is desirous of asking you a few questions.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. Will you kindly tell us what it costs you to put up a case of salmon, that is the average cost?—A. Well, if that question should and must be answered all right—but I don't wish to divulge my business to the world. I don't think I should be asked that question.

Q. Well, it has been stated here that you can well afford to put up a cannery at a cost of \$5,000, and make \$20,000 by getting more licenses. Now, how are we to know that; how are we to get at the facts if we do not get authentic figures as to cost, &c., from you?—A. Well, if they did make a big strike out of the twenty licenses, it is certainly by the most favourable circumstances. It is only once to my knowledge that a great strike has been made and made with safety.

Q. Now, there were canneries put up this year; was not it in order to earn those twenty licenses?—A. Well, partly, and partly because cannerymen had found that their brand was worth more than their twenty licenses would supply.

Q. Well, if they make that many, why decline to give us the figures?—A. Well, that is the only year. I will give information to you in this way: If the market continues as at present—

Q. But give us the average for the time you were in the business?—Well, the average cost is about \$3.75 the case.

Q. What does it cost to ship them to England, on the average?—Well, I could not tell; I could not give you an average; we have damaged cargoes, &c.

Q. Well, but your average?—A. I have not figured it up.

Q. Well, but could you not let us know?—A. Well, I don't want to tell the world what I am doing. I will tell you this: that for the last 18 months the best salmon in England has not been above 18 shillings.

Q. Well, is \$3.75 a fair cost for getting good returns?—A. Well, I would not like to say. I don't think it costs much below that and other expenses will bring the cost up to \$4.50, delivered in England. Then there are reclamations that come back on us if they are not in good condition, &c. Certainly I should say that this extra expense is not less than 75 cents a case.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Have you any clear idea what cannerymen intend to do with the offal this year?—A. I don't know of any arrangement. As far as I am concerned I think, though the "Bon Accord" needs to be renewed, I shall not go in it to expend one single dollar upon the place until the offal question is settled, because if we are obliged to haul offal we will shut down and go down amongst the others below the city. We will regret this, because the advantages at the "Bon Accord" are excellent, with an abundant supply of good fresh water, &c., and naturally I feel anxious to know how we are to be treated; and if the offal law is going to be enforced, I feel it would be foolish for us to rebuild.

Mr. WILMOT.—Since hearing you this morning I have noticed an article in one of your papers in connection with the question of fish offal—samples which have been sent down to Ontario from British Columbia and analysed by Professor James of the Ontario Department of Agriculture. I will just read it.

Mr. Wilmot proceeded to read extracts from the article which, in the *Victoria Colonist* of 20th February, 1892, appeared as follows :—

FISH AS A FERTILIZER.

THE ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE REPORT UPON BRITISH COLUMBIA SAMPLES.—
AN INDUSTRY WHOSE DEVELOPMENT MEANS MUCH FOR THIS PROVINCE.

In the annual report of the Department of Agriculture of the Province of Ontario, for 1891, the following analysis appears from the Chemical Laboratory of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, by C. C. James, Professor of Chemistry.

Four samples of fish were brought east from British Columbia, by Mr. Alexander Begg, for the purpose of ascertaining the comparative value of each kind. The samples were placed in tin cases, and soldered. They reached Toronto in March, 1891. The cases were numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4.

No. 1 contained head and entrails of codfish.

No. 2 contained a whole dogfish.

No. 3 contained divided salmon, as cannery refuse.

No. 4 contained whole herrings.

Professor James reports that taken from the cases as received, they consisted of the following:—

	1	2	3	4
Water	70.11	77.17	77.04	77.50
Dry matter.....	29.89	22.83	22.96	22.50

By thoroughly drying, as far as was possible, the amount of water was reduced to about four per cent, so that in drying the material was reduced to about one-fourth of its original weight. The dried material gave the following by analysis:—

	1	2	3	4
Water	5.91	5.76	2.08	7.48
Ash.....	17.62	18.48	13.54	10.15
Organic matter.....	76.47	75.76	84.38	82.37
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Oil or fat	27.21	25.55	66.95	18.29
Nitrogen	6.32	7.80	5.55	7.96
Phosphoric acid.....	5.70	6.67	4.79	2.72
Potash.....	0.36	0.51	0.58	0.21

If the materials were deprived of their oil or fat and manufactured into a dried, well powdered fertilizer, without the admixture of anything foreign or additional, it would have about the following composition, as far as its most valuable fertilizing constituents are concerned:—

	1	2	3	4
Water.....	10.00	10.00	8.00	10.00
Nitrogen	8.50	10.00	12.00	0.50
Phosphoric acid.....	7.50	8.50	11.00	3.50
Potash.....	.50	.50	1.00	.30

An analysis by Arendt of Norwegian fish scrap gave of—

Moisture.....	17 per cent.
Nitrogen.....	10½ "
Phosphoric acid.....	4 "
Organic matter.....	72 "
Ashes.....	12 "

Other samples have shown more phosphoric acid (13 to 15 per cent) and less nitrogen (8½ to 9 per cent). Some of them were scrap that had been steamed to remove the oil.

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It will thus be seen that a most excellent fertilizer can be produced from any one or all of the fish refuse sent here for analysis, by (a) extracting the fat or oil, (b) removing the excess of moisture by drying, (c) thoroughly pulverizing. The fertilizer thus produced would be rich in nitrogen and phosphoric acid, but would be deficient in potash. To make a complete fertilizer of it an addition of sulphate of potash might be made. Without the complete extraction of oil and salt and effective drying, a finely pulverized guano cannot be obtained.

Norwegian fish potash guano thus produced contains as follows, according to Dr. Griffith's "Artificial Manures":—

	Cod and Potash.	Herring and Potash.
Nitrogen equal to ammonia.....	7 00	7 05
Phosphates (fish bone).....	20 00	8 00
Potash (sulphate).....	15 00	15 00
Magnesia.....	10 00	10 00
Sundry matter.....	1 00	1 00
Water.....	5 00	5 00

"These fish guanos are shipped from Jansen's works in the Lofoden Islands (Norway), and conveyed to England," and, according to the same authority, English fish guanos (without potash) sell from £5 10s. to £6 per ton. American fish and potash sells at from \$25 to \$35 per ton. Potash and phosphates are added to the fish refuse, and they contain from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of nitrogen; from 3 to 13 per cent of phosphoric acid, and from 3 to 6 per cent of potash. * * *

Prof. Storer, of the Agricultural Department, of Harvard, in his "Agriculture in some of its Relations to Chemistry," says: "The American fish guano is a product obtained incidentally in the manufacture of oil from a coarser sort of herring called the menhaden or pogy." Mr. Watt, of Aberdeen, in the report of the transactions of the Highland Agricultural Society of Scotland, for 1886, page 203, says: "The oil from the herring is serviceable for a great many industrial purposes—for the preparation of leather, in the treatment of vegetable fibres prior to spinning, in the manufacture of soap (which is the great use to which the analogous menhaden oil is turned in America), and for lubrication and burning."

Professor James says in relation to the commercial value of the material, that "from one ton of undried refuse and herrings there should be obtained at least 100 pounds of oil, and perhaps much more: and from 400 to 500 pounds of fish guano or fertilizer—the latter worth between \$20 and \$30 per ton, or the ton of raw fresh material should produce oil and fertilizer worth at least \$15, and perhaps \$20. On this question of value of production, Mr. Watt speaks as follows: "From 10 tons of average herrings in the fishing season there would be obtained $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons of oil perhaps, and two tons of fish guano. If, say, 300 gallons were obtained, which is a moderate estimate, and the price 2 shillings a gallon, which might probably be realized, the oil of 10 tons of fish would produce £30. Then there would be two tons of guano at £10 per ton. Thus, if estimates are at all trustworthy, something like £5 a ton might be realized through the manipulation of herrings as a raw material of oil and manure." The above value of £5 is, perhaps, too high for this country, but making allowance for that, our valuation of \$15 to \$20 per ton will not be much astray.

CONCLUSION.—From the consideration of the whole question, I am of the opinion that the manufacture of the refuse into 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 waters from being 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.

[Professor James is entitled to the best thanks of the people of British Columbia for his able and exhaustive report on a subject of so much interest to the province, as well as to the rest of the Dominion. On inquiry it is found that the Minister of Agriculture for Ontario had the analysis made at the Agricultural College free of any charge. It is further learned that Mr. Begg procured the samples of fish and took them to Toronto at his own expense.]

Mr. MUNN.—That gentleman undertakes to say that it would pay well. We should only be too happy to have that man's capital interested in the business. Besides that, if it is a contamination to the water, &c., if it is well that it should be used, why not go up the river and take the salmon that are found dead? There are a great many of them and I think there would be more money in it than there would be in taking the offal from the canneries. I would suggest this. We are anxious to have the regulations established on some permanent basis. From year to year we are in jeopardy—we don't know the number of licenses we will get, five, ten, or forty. It was varied in '89—some had forty, some eighteen, and so on according to the previous pack—the number was different. Last year, for instance, we had to order our material in October and the regulations for fishing were adopted in May, and, that I contend, was not giving our industry fair play, and the sooner it is settled the better.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do you think all canneries should have the same number of licenses?—A. I don't believe in establishing any number, either for the canneries or for individuals.

Q. But if an establishment were made should all have the same number?—A. No; that would not be equity—I think not.

Q. Then the person building the most extensive establishment should get the most?—A. Yes, I think a man putting up a big establishment would be in a better position to put up a better article.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Then a big cannery puts up a better article than a small one?—A. No, not necessarily, but it is a well-known fact that a person doing an immense business has more opportunities for making the article he is putting up a first-class article, and that his goods are well thought of in the market.

Q. Well, Mr. Munn, I think we have questioned you quite at length now—is there anything further you would wish to present to us?—A. I can think of nothing further just at present.

P. McTIERNAN, Indian Agent, of New Westminster, a resident of British Columbia for thirty-four years, was duly sworn.

Mr. McTIERNAN.—The reason of my coming here before you is that I want to make representations on behalf of the Indians of this country to the effect that they are not fairly treated. There are about 3,000 or 3,500 Indians fishing on the Fraser River and they have only forty licenses. Now, they bitterly complain about this, and I come before your Commission to see that you rectify this in some manner. They should get at least 100 licenses.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. If the licenses are unlimited and all fisherman and British subject get licenses, they would come under the same rule as others?—A. But there are only forty licenses granted at present; I have nothing more to say.

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By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Well, but are they prohibited from fishing?—A. Oh, no; they fish a day's work—the forty can sell fish to the canneries, while the others are obliged to work for the canneries at per day's pay. Some Indians make \$600 or \$800 a year and perhaps some \$1,000 a year—that is those who have licenses, and those who have not come home with purely nothing, and really these Indians are the bone and sinew of the country and they spend their money in the country too.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. They are preferable to Chinamen, are they not?—A. Ugh—(laughter)—there is not the slightest comparison.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. How is it they make more money than those who do not hold licenses?—A. Because they sell their fish for 10 cents, or whatever the price may be, and the men who work by the day get \$1.25 or \$1.50 only. Now, I could tell you that at Langley where they are a numerous and fine able-bodied lot of men, there is not one license, and the few licenses that are given are given to Indians of Coquitlam at Kitse.

By Mr. Wilmot :

I might read for your information that this is the present statute:—

"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 the Province of British Columbia.

"Provided always that Indians shall at all times have liberty to fish for the purpose of providing food for themselves, but not for sale, barter, or traffic, by any means other than drift nets or spearing."

Now this means if they ask for licenses they will be placed on the same basis as white men, but if fishing at all times for themselves they must not enter into competition with the white men. You see the intention is that the Indians being the first people of the country, they were given the privilege of fishing for their own use, but if they wished to get into trade and become a regular fisherman, they must take out licenses.

By Mr. Armstrong :

Q. How many out of the 3,000 Indians would be able to provide themselves with a boat and net?—A. I could not say—that would be left to themselves. I think at least one hundred on the Fraser River would so provide themselves.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. In all the fishery laws of the Dominion the Indian is given priority over the white man, that is an Indian may fish without a license as long as he does not trade or barter?—A. But that is just what the Indian wants—he wants licenses so as to sell.

Q. But the number being limited the Indians only get forty, but if the number was extended to all, everybody would get it?—A. But you see the Indians are entitled before any other parties, and they only get forty while the cannerymen get a large number. I tell you, gentlemen, it is a very hard matter, and I hope something can be done to improve it. Thank you, gentlemen, that is all I have to say. I simply came here to speak for the Indians.

GEORGE HOLLIDAY, a native of Scotland, now residing in New Westminster and living in British Columbia since 1858, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, sir, we shall be obliged if you will state concisely what you wish to say?—A. Well, gentlemen, I have very little to say except that we, as fishermen of British Columbia, would like to have an even show with the cannerymen. They have had the advantage since the limit was placed upon the number of licenses. Some few years ago there were 500 licenses issued. The cannerymen got 350 and the fishermen got 150—that is ostensibly they got 150, but I beg to differ with that statement about their getting 150—the freezers, the shippers and the market-men all had to come out of that, which is something like thirty or forty—and the Indians too, they had to come out of it and whom I don't consider legitimate fishermen of the river at all. The Indians never before took out more than three or four or five or six licenses, as can be seen from the returns—they came down here and fished for the cannerymen, and now as soon as ever a limit was put on they crowd in to get these licenses, and as the Indian Agent has just said they get forty, and these forty are almost equivalent to giving forty more licenses to the cannerymen, because very few Indians—one in ten—have their own boats and nets. The cannerymen pay the license fee and the Indian goes and fishes for the cannery for whatever they like to pay him—so this is just like giving them to the cannerymen. If you deduct these we have very few left and the cannerymen then with plenty of licenses have command of the river. Now, all we want is to take the monopoly from the cannerymen and give us a fair shake with them and so we can get fair prices for our fish. Last year we got fair prices because we had some little trouble with them. This thing about licenses—there has never been any trouble until the limit was put on. There is a great number of men here who used to fish for the cannerymen. They all want licenses now since the limit has been put on. Our great trouble is with the cannerymen and we have complained because they can close us down at any time.

Q. Then your view of the matter is that these forty licenses, stated as being obtained by Indians, are really the property of the cannerymen?—A. Almost wholly the property of the cannerymen because they are the men who go to the office and pay for these men's licenses, and of course you know when they pay for the license they will see that terms are made to get the money back.

Q. Then the cannerymen have complete control?—A. Of course; people have to fish for the cannerymen, there is no doubt of it the cannerymen give them the best they can, but the cannerymen every year meet and have an understanding, and they bind themselves not to give over a certain price for the fish, and of course they have command of the river, seeing they have almost all the licenses, as you can see by taking seventy from the whole number. On my license last year there was a notice that no more than 500 would be issued—now, there were more issued.

Q. To whom?—A. To these new cannerymen. Not one put up a can but they got licenses. This all hurts the fishermen and the river.

Q. Then it is an actual fact that the new cannerymen did not perform work in them?—A. Well, I cannot say from my own knowledge, but I never heard of one putting up one can. They may have done, it is more than I ever heard of; in fact I have always understood they were not in working condition.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. What you heard is no evidence?—A. Well, of my own knowledge I know that if they had been working I would have known it.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Why do you say an Indian should not have a license?—A. I do not say he should not have a license, but if he cannot pay for it it is equivalent to giving it to the cannerymen.

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Q. But if it is given to all?—A. Oh, well, if to all why give to the Indian too; he has as much right.

Q. How about transient men?—A. Well, I understood the limit was put on to keep this floating population away.

Q. But some do get licenses, don't they?—A. No; I don't think so. I only know of one, and he could hardly be called that—he used to live here—he is gone away.

Q. But one of the chief complaints is that Greeks and Italians, and other foreigners get licenses?—A. Well, I have not heard of it.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. But, would not these Indians be liable to sell their licenses to the canneries?—A. Well, I don't see it in that way; a man cannot sell a thing that he has not. The cannerymen go and pay for them; it is done through the office.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Do they get them in the names of certain men, or in their names?—A. In Indian names, and the cannerymen hold the licenses.

Q. Then you think it a fraudulent transaction to get licenses in another's name?—A. Certainly; there is fraud in it, but the Indian is interested in it and has got to fish.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do you think every British subject ought to have a license who applies for it?—A. No; I don't think so.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Why?—A. Because there would not be room on the river.

Q. Well, but would not those who found it unprofitable step out?—A. True; but one has to make gear, &c.

Q. How would you limit the matter?—A. Put the licenses high on outsiders; \$50 or \$100, and then they will not come in.

Q. What do you think of the offal that is put in the river?—A. I believe offal has more or less evil effects on the river. It contaminates the water, and keeps fish more or less from coming up the river. I know that even the most voracious fish—the dog-fish—if you come to put that on the fishing grounds you will drive your fish away. Salmon are a much more delicate fish, and lives in fresh water on suction, and it must find this offal bad; still at the same time it may help the salmon. It collects the small fish in great numbers, chub, perch, &c. They collect in great numbers at the shoots where the offal comes in, and the Chinamen are able to catch them in great numbers. Everyone knows that this offal fish is bad for the salmon ova on the spawning beds, and if great numbers of these are destroyed it must help the spawning of the salmon.

Q. Are the young fish that eat up this offal accustomed to go up on the spawning beds; do you think this customary?—A. I think they do go up to the spawning beds; it is not so far to the Harrison River, which is a great spawning bed.

Q. What size are these small fish?—A. Two or three inches up to twelve or fourteen.

Q. What effect, from a sanitary point of view, do you think the offal has?—A. I think it is bad in summer time when large quantities are in the river.

Q. Have you had any experience of the bad effects of offal getting into nets at the mouth of the river?—A. No.

Q. Do you think it is injurious to fish entering at the mouth of the river?—A. No; I don't know.

Q. But voracious fish like dog-fish, pike, &c., would eat it largely, but salmon, you think, it would affect?—A. Yes; I think so. They are more delicate altogether.

Q. Are you aware salmon invariably enter rivers with purer water than other fish?—A. Well, so far as my experience goes in regard to fish, we always consider the

salmon come back to its own rivers, so much so, that in Scotland we can tell to which river the salmon belonged. These fish when in the wrong river turn and go out again.

Q. Then the inference to be drawn from your statement is that if the Fraser River is polluted with too much offal it will prevent fish to a certain extent from coming in the river?—A. I have thought so, but there are such large quantities of fish coming in one cannot tell. In latter years there has been a run of sockeyes coming in after what is called the sockeye run is over—between the spring salmon run and the cohoes. You can tell the fish—they should have been on the spawning grounds from their appearance. Twelve or thirteen years ago I do not remember catching any of these fish, now we do.

Q. What do you think of the close season?—A. I think it quite necessary, so far as the weekly close time goes.

Q. What do you think of an annual close season?—A. I don't think it at all necessary on this river, because fish are going up pretty nearly the whole year, and as long as they are going up you are not interfering with the spawning grounds whatever.

Q. What depth of net do you fish with?—A. Sometimes forty, fifty, and sixty meshes, according to the places where I am fishing.

Q. Do you fish at the mouth of the river?—A. Largely, but I fish all over.

Q. Why at the mouth of the river?—A. Because fish come there first and have all to pass me before they get up to any other persons—that would be quite an object.

Q. Do you think too much fishing at the mouth of the river would have a tendency to scatter the fish?—A. It might, but there are so many little sloughs when the tide comes in, that plenty can get up.

Q. But if all were filled with nets?—A. But they can't do that—they are full of snags and you could not put the nets there—stationary nets might do it, but we are not allowed their use.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. You think to a certain extent offal is injurious to fish?—A. Well, I don't know—in some ways it helps them and in some ways it is injurious.

Q. In what way does it help them?—A. Because it gives a chance for Chinamen to destroy a lot of these little fish that otherwise would do harm to the spawning beds.

Q. Now, if this offal is injurious to the fish by contaminating the water, &c., what are we to say of the dead and dying fish that come down in such large numbers?—A. Oh, well, I don't know.

Q. Have you ever been up the river?—A. Well, Mr. Higgins, I have been up and down since 1858. I have seen lots of dead fish at Yale but never so many as they talk about, except the humpbacks in October. I have seen them going up to spawn so thick that you would really think you could walk across on their backs they were wedged in so thick. In the struggle to get up and in their more or less exhausted condition of course many died, but this thing of all the fish dying that go up the river before they spawn is all rot.

Q. Did you know the late Inspector of Fisheries, Mr. Thomas Mowat?—A. Yes, I knew him.

Q. Well, if Mr. Mowat stated twenty-five per cent of the fish lived to get back, or if he said only five per cent lived to get back, would it be correct?—A. No, sir, I don't believe him. I have been fishing longer than Mr. Mowat. I am a practical man and I don't believe it.

(Mr. Higgins then read extracts from a letter from Mr. Mowat to Judge Swan, in which Mr. Mowat stated his belief that not more than twenty-five per cent of the fish entering the river for spawning purposes and which were allowed to spawn, lived to get back to sea.)

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Have you ever seen many fish here floating down the river dead?—A. Oh, in fishing you will often get a number, that is towards the latter part of the run you will

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get odd ones, but very few sockeyes. There is a fish coming in—the “dog-salmon or quallah”—at first it is very bright but after a while it gets covered with fungus and look as if they were rotten. These and the humpbacks are worse-looking coming down the river. They get in the back of the net and when you pull it in you think the fish are dead, but they are alive though looking rotten. Sockeyes though seldom go back unless wounded or hurt.

Q. But have you ever seen good, sound salmon in June, July, or August floating down dead?—A. I have seen an odd one that has dropped out of the net—a heavy one will occasionally drop out of the net.

Q. But you have never seen any numbers of salmon floating down the river dead?—A. I have seen dead ones once in a while.

Q. Have you known any quantity of salmon being thrown away?—A. Not in later years; in former years a great number were thrown away, but not lately. Four years ago there was a very large run of fish. They got too many on hand and they asked us to stop for a day or two, and we stopped to give them a chance to clear up the cannery, &c.

Q. Then you say they threw away fish some years ago, but not now?—A. Yes, but not now.

Q. What about the spring salmon—they are white and red, are they not? What is done with the white?—A. They are generally given away to the Indians. We often salt them and sell them for what we can get.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. You know the steel-head?—A. Yes, what we call the salmon trout.

Q. Are they very destructive?—A. I consider them a salmon and one of the salmon family, only just a different species. They are a superior fish and some esteem them the finest fish that came into this river. The canners don't care about using them for the simple reason that the bone of the steel-head is harder than others and requires more boiling and therefore cannot be put up with other fish.

Q. Are trout injurious to spawn?—A. Yes, I know trout are.

Q. Then should the trout be cleaned out?—A. Well, as far as salmon are concerned, but I don't think the anglers would like that.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Never mind the anglers; we are here to look after the fishermen.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Do you think trout destroy spawn by eating it?—A. No; I think not; I don't think they eat it.

Q. The humpback salmon—they are caught along with the last run of sockeyes, are they not?—A. Well, they come in after the sockeyes—in between them and the cohoes.

Q. When humpbacks are caught along with sockeyes what are done with the humpbacks?—A. Oh, they are thrown away—you cannot do anything with them.

Q. Are they numerous?—A. Well, some years they are. I don't know whether they are of the same salmon family—the male is not at all like the salmon, though the female is. The male has a great hump and the scales are different, being as fine as any trout scales.

Q. Do you know that salmon undergo great changes in the river to what they are in the sea?—A. Yes; but these fish are very changed, there is but little difference.

Q. Then the humpbacks are sacrificed for a few sockeyes?—A. Yes; for sockeyes and cohoes. They come in differently from the salmon—they come in every third year, not every fourth year like the sockeye. Then they come in so strong you are glad to get rid of them in the best way you can, for they destroy your nets.

Mr. WILMOT.—Gentlemen, I may say that I ask these questions for knowledge, as I am not aware of the habits of these fish, and it has been represented to the department that great numbers of these fish are thrown away because they are not used for canning purposes, and I desire to find out for the department all the information we can gather in connection with the sources of fish food in British Columbia rivers.

Mr. HIGGINS and Mr. ARMSTRONG.—Certainly, Mr. Wilmot, certainly.

Mr. HOLLIDAY.—About the humpback, it is not that they are thrown away simply because cannerymen will not use them—they are of no use to any one else, except the Indians. They prefer them to any other of the salmon fishes, but the white people won't have them.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Are you of the opinion that young salmon would be at all engaged in eating up offal under the canneries?—A. I never saw any of them. I have seen them haul up these little fish and pile them up by the bucketful, but I never saw any young salmon among them.

Q. Well, now, sir, have you anything further you desire to state?—A. No; I think not. I think I have touched on all the points of importance in the industry.

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

D. H. PORT, a native of Ontario, a resident of New Westminster for five years, and a fish-dealer, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. Well, Mr. Port, we will be pleased to hear what you have to say.—A. Well, I have not prepared anything particular to say, but if you have any questions to ask me on any matters, I would prefer it that way and I will state my views as I go along.

Q. Very well, sir. Now, what are your views as to the disposal and effects of the offal in the river?—A. As affecting the fish business, I don't think it is detrimental to the river. The river is very cold and pretty swift, and the offal is carried down to sea.

Q. You are from Ontario, are you not?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is the river colder than rivers in Ontario?—A. Yes, much colder.

Q. Have you any knowledge of the temperature of rivers in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick?—A. No, not any great knowledge, but I think it colder than eastern rivers, except some mountain streams.

Q. Can you say anything in regard to the comforts and convenience of the inhabitants—that is, in connection with this offal?—A. Well, I can't say much on that subject; I have not observed it from that point of view, but I don't think it would affect any one.

Q. Have you fished at the mouth of the river?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have you seen offal there in the nets?—A. No, sir.

Q. It is then, you think, non-injurious as far as fish are concerned?—A. Not as far as fish are concerned. I don't know anything about it from a sanitary point of view.

Q. What is your view of the limitation of nets? Should there be a limitation to cannerymen or to fishermen?—A. I can simply give my opinion. I think that the protection of certain men or cannerymen by limiting the privileges of the river to them is unwise. I think if the industry will not pay a man to work, either as a fisherman or in a cannery, no one will work at it long.

Q. Then you think the license system should be thrown open to all?—A. Well, no, not to all, but to all residents and British subjects, with the judicious supervision of the inspector.

Q. Would you say that individual fishermen fishing with one boat should get a license, or would you give the privilege to all to get as many licenses as they liked?—A. Well, I think if the cannerymen have the privilege of putting out as many boats as they like, the fishermen should have the same privilege.

Q. But has capital no special privilege?—A. Oh well, a cannery would not spend anything more than they can make profits out of any more than the markets would what they could afford.

Q. But if the cannerymen had 100 licenses each, could they not get all the fish they wanted?—A. Yes, but they would have to employ labour to get them.

Q. But would they not be in a position to control the whole fisheries of the river?—A. Oh, I don't think so—they have never done that in the past—before the limit was put on the cannerymen had the same rights—the thing would find its own level.

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Q. Then do you think one license should go to the canner and one to each fisherman?—A. No, I think it should be this way: every fisherman and British subject, and every canneryman should be able to get as many licenses as they wish. If fishermen are enterprising and can afford to run two or three rigs, why, let them.

Q. But would not all combined be too much for the river to stand?—A. Well, the Government could look after that—the remedy would be the close time.

Q. That is just what this Commission is for. We want to get the amount of fishing on the river that is safe for the fishery?—A. Well, everyone wants to get licenses, but this is owing to the limit put upon them; they have, in consequence, a fictitious value and everyone naturally wants to get one. I was here in '87-'88 and then everybody who wanted a license could get one.

Q. Is the principle not in vogue here that a canneryman gets out his own supplies of licenses, say twenty, and then sends in names of Indians and others and uses them for the cannery?—A. Well, I suppose they do advance money to a good many fishermen.

Q. Then there is a sort of barter or sale of licenses after they are issued?—A. Yes, there is.

Q. Do you think it is wise to have a Sunday close season?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you think it sufficient as it is now?—A. I think it sufficient as at present, under existing circumstances—if the boats were double the close season would have to be enlarged.

Q. Then too excessive fishing would injure the river?—A. Yes; I think too much would hurt it. I think this: the amount of salmon actually caught by boats in this river and used, as far as we can find out from the fishery office returns, is very, very small in comparison with the numbers that go up the river.

Q. What record have you of those that go up the river?—A. Only our observation.

Q. But no facts?—A. No; I suppose a couple of millions of salmon would cover everything that is caught, even in a year like 1889, and yet that must be but a part of those that go on up.

Q. How do you know?—A. I speak of observation in the matter. In '89 I was up the river—at the last station on the river—and I know salmon were so thick there that the few that were taken out was simply nothing.

Q. What do you think of an annual close season?—A. I don't think it would apply here, as we are never allowed to fish on the spawning beds.

Q. Neither are they anywhere else?—A. Well, what I mean is the salmon only run in certain times—the sockeye in July and August, and the weekly close time I consider at present sufficient, and after the end of August the run is pretty well over and the canneries filled, or if not filled they have done work.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Do you think the first run coming up should be bred? Do you believe in artificial breeding?—A. Yes, I do; but I don't know if it makes much difference which kind you breed.

Q. Do you think the hatchery has been of any benefit to the river?—A. Well, I cannot say clearly on the subject; however, I think that enough has been proven in favour of the hatchery to warrant the continuance and perhaps even the extension of the work, but I have not been here as long yet as others to see.

Q. Do you fish yourself or employ others?—A. I employ others.

Q. How many licenses had you last year?—A. Ten.

Q. What as?—A. A freezer.

Q. The fish that are caught for you are frozen?—A. Frozen or shipped in ice.

Q. The whole fish goes away then does it not?—A. Yes; they go away whole.

Q. You have no offal, then?—A. No, sir, none at all.

Q. In the canning business a large proportion of the fish is thrown away; with the freezing process that is not the case?—A. No, sir.

Q. Is the freezing business growing or decreasing?—A. It is increasing, though it has been difficult this last year to do our work.

Q. Do you ship spring or sockeye salmon?—A. Spring salmon.

Q. What do you do with white salmon?—A. Well, they are of little value—we sell them.

Q. What are done with the white ones caught in the net?—A. There is no discrimination.

Q. How do you tell before bringing the salmon in?—A. The difference cannot very well be told without cutting them to see—though some fishermen can tell.

Q. What is your opinion as to what is done with white salmon caught in the net and known to be white?—Well, very few are thrown away—not 10 per cent of white are caught. We have found out during the last few years that so many white salmon come up in the fall that we don't fish the run. If circumstances were such as we could get white salmon in competition with codfish, or other cheap fish, we might do something, but the carriage is so great we cannot compete with the low grades of fish.

Q. Then your business does not hurt the river with any offal?—A. No, sir.

Q. You are not engaged in the canning business?—A. No; entirely in the freezing line. I have been listening to the discussion to-day and two or three times it has touched upon the fish dying after going up the river, and I would like to say a word upon that. In Mr. Mowat's letter I think you stated that he contented that salmon going to the Selkirk Mountains do not return. I must bear him out in that. I don't think that 10 per cent or 15 per cent come back from those high waters. The fish that do not go so far I think return in greater numbers.

Mr. WILMOT.—As evidence our overseers have marked fish which have been found next year.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Do you consume all the fish you catch with ten boats?—A. In most cases I did mainly—for a week or two during the height of the sockeye run it would be impossible to consume them all.

Q. What do you do with them?—A. We use all we can and then lay up our boats if the quantity brought in is too great.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. What might you get per pound for the salmon you send east to Toronto?—A. It runs from 12 cents up to 30 cents.

Q. Then an eight pound fish would be 96 cents. Now, if that same fish were canned it would be worth about 40 or 50 cents, would it not? Now, it appears the freezer not only makes no offal but gets a better price for the whole fish. Well, Mr. Port, have you anything further to tell us?—A. No, I think not just now.

JOHN BUIE a resident of New Westminster, was duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. It has been stated, Mr. Buie, that you can give some information upon the questions under consideration here. Are you prepared to give us it—if not, perhaps you would prefer being questioned?—A. Well, it might be better to ask me the questions.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. You were formerly fishery guardian, were you not?—A. Yes, for a number of years.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. What are your views as to the throwing in of the offal, Mr. Buie?—A. Well, really my views did not coincide with Mr. Mowat's. My own views are that it is almost impossible that it can be detrimental to fish. As a nuisance to the inhabitants, that is another matter, but I do not think it is hurtful to fish. Last night I was here and heard some stating that it was detrimental to fish, and I made a little calculation.

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Knowing the amount of water that goes down the river, I consider that the offal would not be one-half an ounce to a tank full of water the size of this room—(the Commission was sitting in a large room).—and that pure running water that does not go above 50 degrees in the summer time opposite this city.

Q. I suppose you are aware that a drop of prussic acid, if put in a bucket of water would have a bad effect?—A. Yes; but I still think that that would be even a bigger proportion than the offal in the river. It has a width of over 900 yards and over a depth of 20 feet and flows at the rate of four miles an hour.

Q. Then all the fish that die up the rivers would not affect it either?—A. It might affect it if on the spawning beds, but I cannot imagine how it can affect fish life in the river below here.

Q. But it might be injurious from a sanitary point of view—for instance, where offal lodges?—A. That is my conclusion.

Q. Have you known of its effects upon nets at the mouth of the river?—A. I never heard of complaints till last night. It is possible it might so affect the nets, but I never heard of it.

Q. What do you think of the limitation of licenses on the Fraser River?—A. Well, when I was on the river for about a year I thought then the river was liable to be over-fished, but the more I saw of fishing and the manner and way it was conducted, and the more I became acquainted with the Fraser, I thought the danger was less than I had imagined.

Q. Why did you change your mind on that question?—A. Because I used to think the nets would drag nearer the bottom, but after I saw men fishing I saw it was impossible to prevent the salmon coming in at the mouth of the river, no matter how many boats they put on. Each boat that undertakes to drift but wants a clear way and you cannot put them beyond a certain closeness.

Q. Then the nets no matter how placed would not prevent enough fish from reaching the spawning beds?—A. Well, of course they are thinned out—they must be. The question is, what would be the percentage of all the fish that come in that would be enough for breeding purposes. Whatever the decrease may be and however small the run it would be a surprise to the Commission if they were at Harrison River and see the numbers coming to spawn. The little lake looks also as if simply covered and the fish seem innumerable.

Q. Then you think the present amount of fishing by nets anywhere on the river is not severely detrimental, but to an extent it is detrimental?—A. No; I would not say that—I think it not at all detrimental.

Q. Well, you say scarcely enough go up to breed?—A. No, I don't say that.

Q. Would you consider it detrimental if as many again of licenses were issued on the river?—A. Well, I think the number of licenses issued does not control the amount of fish at all. Now, out on the sand heads they are just as thick as they can be when the fish are coming in, and before high water the fish are bound to come in—before, they cannot get through on account of the nets, but once they get in the river, they are in the channels too deep for the nets to catch them.

Q. Would it be detrimental if 1,200 licenses were issued—say there are 600 now?—A. Well, Mr. Wilnot, you don't understand it. If there was room for 1,200 nets they could fish the river just as well as now, and I don't think it would be injurious; it would be simply compelling them to have more boats and nets and not catching more fish.

Q. You would have no limitation then, either to canners, freezers or fishermen?—A. I would not say there should be any limitation—it is not required. Let them have as many licenses as the people want, both canners, freezers and fishermen.

Q. What do you think of the Sunday close time?—A. If there is any doubt of the number of boats overfishing the river, the weekly close time would compensate for it. I believe in the Sunday close season, that is even if that number of nets would have an injurious effect, the Sunday close season would open the gate for the fish anyway. Perhaps I may make myself plainer by saying that the Sunday close season and also the close season for sockeyes as now, would be quite sufficient for insuring a sufficient number of fish for going up the river.

Q. Well, then, how about an annual close season?—A. Well, the fish in passing up in the same day get beyond the fishing limit before spawning. There is a close season for sockeye-salmon now and which I think is a very good thing in protecting the last run of sockeyes that come in. We had in one year, from the 25th August to 15th September, or all of September. These were instructions from the department, and it was stipulated in the licenses for some years.

Q. You are acquainted with the description of nets used, are you not, Mr. Buie?—A. Yes; I know them.

Q. Five and a half inches extension—that is the law, is it not?—A. Yes; that is the law. It is the best mesh for catching the sockeye, and it would not be profitable to use a less size—salmon would not gill.

Q. Would it be injurious to use a smaller net?—A. Well, I don't know that the injury would amount to much, because the salmon do not come here as grilse. When the sockeye come here they are full-grown and matured, and though sometimes of smaller size—for instance, in the year of a big run twelve or thirteen fish are required to make a case of canned salmon, where ten would do in an off year, and even if the mesh was reduced, nothing would be caught except matured fish.

Q. So you think 5½ inch the right mesh for catching sockeyes?—A. Yes.

Q. Have you a knowledge of the two modes of fishing—gill-nets and seines?—A. Seines are used in salt water; they are not used on the rivers at all.

Q. Would it be just for a net three and a half inches in mesh to be fished in salt water while five and three-quarters is used in the rivers?—A. Well, I don't think it would, probably on account of other fish.

Q. You think five and three-quarters would catch young fish?—A. No: I don't think that.

Q. Why?—A. Because my impression is that the young salmon do not return here in any quantities.

Q. Do you think a seine would catch a greater number of fish than a gill-net?—A. Well, a gill-net would not catch fish where a seine would. The gill-net is used on rivers for drifting, and seines in salt water; they are not used on the Fraser River.

Q. In your experience as a fishery officer do you think the fishing limit in the river should be shortened. It now runs up to Pitt River bridge, and to North Hammond, on the main river?—A. Oh, I don't think it would be necessary to shorten it.

Q. Well, at the mouth, do you think it should be shortened where all the boats are?—A. Oh, I don't know, fish play at the mouth of the river.

Q. Do you think it a very destructive place?—A. There is no doubt a great many are caught there.

Q. And thus prevent fish from getting up the river?—A. Oh, yes; especially when fish are scarce. I have known them to have all the boats fishing, even up to "Bon Accord," and each boat to catch 400 or 500 fish.

Q. Well, Mr. Buie, if you have nothing further to tell us now, I think we have touched on most all the points?—A. Yes; no, I have nothing further just now.

Mr. HIGGINS.—I want to ask Inspector McNab about persons who get licenses other than British subjects. Can you give us any information about these parties, Mr. McNab?

Mr. McNAB.—I do not know of any but those who hold licenses as British subjects. There is one man who has got licenses for a number of years back. I was given to understand last year after he got his license that he had moved away and was a resident of Washington Territory, in the United States.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Is his name down for a license this year?—A. No.

Q. That is the only one you know?—A. That is the only one I know of.

Q. Can you point out on your books any men getting licenses who are not fishermen—men who get licenses year after year?—A. Well, there is R. B. Kelly.

Mr. ARMSTRONG.—I have known Mr. Kelly for a number of years. He is a resident of Westminster Junction. I know him very well.

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Mr. McNAB.—Mr. Kelly has held a license now for three years,—one license each year.

By Mr. Higgins :

Q. Do you know of any others?—A. George Robertson, license 124, he has not been a fisherman for the last two years.

Q. Has he taken out a license every year?—A. He had no license in 1890.

Q. What does he do?—A. He is a warden in the penitentiary.

Q. Have you ever received any instructions about issuing licenses?—A. Last year there were nine licenses in the office when I took it over, and all had been applied for in March.

Q. Are they transferable?—A. This year the licenses are marked "not transferable." In previous years they were transferred.

Q. Have you the book of licenses for last year with you, Mr. McNab?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Well, you might bring it here and let us go over the names with you, perhaps other cases might occur to you?—A. Very well, sir.

Mr. McNab then went over the list of last year's licenses, reading out the names of outsiders with whom he was not acquainted, and who in all cases except R. Morrison, of Vancouver, were recognized and specified as fishermen by persons present in the room. Mr. Morrison was stated to be a saloon-keeper.

Mr. Higgins.—Very well, that will do, Mr. McNab, thank you.

C. F. PRETTY, a native of Ontario, a resident of New Westminster for two years, a freezer and exporter of fish, was then duly sworn.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. We will be glad to hear any remarks you may wish to make, Mr. Pretty.—A. My main object in being here was to mention my views of the license system and to tell you what I think would be preferable to fishermen and cannerymen, and all interested therein, and also beneficial to the fisheries in general. It is as much to our object as any person. Firstly, my idea is to give licenses to every *bona fide* fisherman without limit, provided he is a British subject. That all cannerymen, freezers, salters, exporters, and such, should have a number of licenses limited to them and that that limit be considered in accordance with the quantity of fish they are capable of handling.

Q. Yes; but to limit the number of licenses to each of these business persons in accordance with the capacity of their establishment?—A. Exactly; a fair limit in that way would be to give them—say a cannery commands thirty licenses—well, I think they should have ten—that would be one-third, and they would be obliged to purchase two-thirds of their fish, which would give the fishermen a fair show. In the case of giving cannerymen all the licenses they wanted, they would not have to buy from the fishermen at all. I would not limit the outside licenses to fishermen—any British subject should have a license who applies for it.

Q. You think that would equalize the business?—A. Yes; I do. Twenty licenses, with their own in a good year—counting two good years in four—would give them all the fish they wanted.

Q. How do you think that would affect the present cannerymen and yourselves?—A. Well, I would be in the same position as the cannerymen. With the freezer I have at present erected, I can handle 60,000 salmon yearly, and of course, I have to depend upon outside fishermen as well as the cannerymen, and it would simply put us on the same footing, whereas, if we had all we want, we would hire Chinamen and others at less wages, and so monopolize the trade. But I think the fishermen should give us two-thirds of our fish. I don't want to monopolize the trade, and our fishermen should get a fair chance.

Q. In your estimation then, the trade hitherto has been a monopoly?—A. To a certain extent. If you give a large number of licenses to cannerymen and other establishments, they will certainly take but little from the fishermen, if any. As to their own boats, of course they should hire who they like to operate their ten boats.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Do you clean your fish before you send them off?—A. No, sir; we send the whole fish.

By Mr. Wilmot :

Q. What kind do you send?—A. It is my intention to use all kinds.

Q. Where are your markets?—A. Australia and England are the markets I intend opening up.

Q. Have you sent any to Australia?—A. Not yet. I hope to this year. I have just erected my establishment here.

Q. Where were you in business before?—A. On the Great Lakes, in the whitefish and salmon trout trade.

Q. And how far in your operations there have you sent the frozen fish?—A. We have not sent them very far as yet; but we intend putting on refrigerator vessels and ship to all parts.

Q. Then you will open up a new trade?—A. That is our intention, if possible.

Q. What is the capacity of your establishment?—A. The one just completed will hold 40,000 salmon, and this will be filled probably twice or three times in the year—shipping them off by the freezing process. We also intend to build in Vancouver, for traffic in the salt water fish, and will also take salmon from this river to Vancouver—that is, from the mouth of the river.

Q. Have you been doing this business here before?—A. I had the licenses I got last year and used them.

Q. And were the fish you caught, frozen?—A. No, sir; they were sold to the canners. I was simply learning about the river before going into the new business.

Q. How many licenses had you last year?—A. I had two.

Q. What number of fish did you obtain from two licenses?—A. They averaged 3,500 a boat in the sockeye run.

Q. Then with ten licenses you will get 30,000 to 40,000 fish?—A. Well, it is calculated this year will be even a poorer year than last year. Our capacity is 40,000 fish.

Q. Then ten boats would fill your establishment?—A. Oh, we might fill it two or three times in the season, but it depends.

Mr. WILMOT (to Mr. McNab).—Do you know where Mr. Port ships his fish?

Mr. McNAB.—To England and Germany.

Mr. WILMOT (to Mr. Pretty).—Have you any other observations to make, say, on the close season? What do you think of the weekly time?

Mr. PRETTY.—I think the time should be from Saturday morning at 6 o'clock to Monday morning at 6 o'clock, if the canners wish it.

Q. But would you object to commencing at 1 o'clock on Monday morning?—A. In that case the fishermen would start on Sunday night, but if it was fixed at Monday morning they would not commence until then.

Q. Well, then, on the same reasoning, if the time ended at 6 p.m., Sunday, it would take all the afternoon Sunday to get ready?—A. Oh, no; it does not take long to fix up the nets and boats.

Q. If the time was made till noon on Saturday would they have to work on Sunday?—A. No; I think not.

Q. Do the canners work after night?—A. I don't know. That is a question I am not prepared to answer.

Q. No? Oh, of course you are not in the canning business. Now, on the question of an annual close time?—A. I advocate no other close time except the Sunday time.

Q. Then would not that mean that at a certain season of the year you would be putting an unwholesome fish upon the market; for, of course you are aware that at certain seasons of the year all fish when approaching the time of spawning become unwholesome as food?—A. No; not at all, we must put good fish on the market or we lose our trade.

Q. But would fish be in good condition when in an advanced state of spawning?—A. We do not put up any fish but what will sell, and we have to go by the market. We don't send them fresh at these times, we salt them.

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Q. But then you are sending to the market unwholesome food for the public?
—A. Well, I don't know about that. I would not advocate any annual close season during which we could not catch any fish. At the spawning time they are beyond the fishing limit; we cannot fish for them, and I don't see why there should be any annual close season.

Q. Yes; of course there is, perhaps, a difference down here in a limit being placed upon the river at certain points, but how are your fish kept—in cold storage?
A. They are frozen and then kept in cold storage.

Q. Yes; well now, I think we have gone over the matter pretty well. Is there anything else you wish to present to us?—A. No, sir; I think not at present.

W. H. VIENNA, a native of Holland, a fisherman, and resident of New Westminster and British Columbia for thirty-five years, was duly sworn.

Gentlemen, I have but very few remarks to make, and they are in regard to the rotting of the nets in the river. I do not fish down below, but here opposite the town, the same rotting of the nets occurs.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. What is the cause of this rotting of the nets?—A. Catching the fish in the warm weather, and then some don't use them properly.

Q. Well, with regard to the offal in the river—what is your opinion as to its effects?—A. Oh, I think the small fish take it and eat it up just as fast as it comes down from the canneries—trout, chub, perch, suckers, and all kinds like that.

Q. Do you think the Chinamen are beneficial for destroying these fish?—A. Oh, well, they never come to my place to catch only, because they won't buy, and I won't have them around the place. If a Chinaman comes to my place to catch those small fish, and I know he never buys anything from me, I don't let him do any fishing.

Q. Oh, I see, not a customer, eh?—A. No, sir; Chinamen are not much customers anywhere.

Q. Do you ever get any offal rotting in your net?—A. No; not up here.

Q. What about the number of licenses to be given on the river?—A. Oh, I think every person who applies for a license should get one, that is if he is an actual fisherman.

Q. You don't think then that hotel-keepers or grocers should speculate in getting licenses and selling them to fishermen?—A. No; he should be an actual fisherman.

Q. And the one license would be sufficient?—A. Yes; for shipping or selling, I think the one license would be sufficient.

Q. What about the limitation of licenses to canners or freezers?—A. Well, I don't think they want any less than at present.

Q. Well, but would you give them unlimited numbers?—A. No; I would give them according to the size of the cannery—if a big one, many; if a small one, few; some canneries are double others.

Q. Then you think every British subject and actual fisherman should get licenses, and that the canners should get them according to the size of their establishments?—A. Yes.

Q. Do you think twenty licenses too many for the canneries at present?—A. No; I don't think it too many.

Q. You and your brother fishermen would not complain?—A. I think not, sir.

Q. What do you think of the Sunday close time?—A. It is a good thing. We all want Sunday to ourselves; I think it is a very good law.

Q. Do you think there should be any limitation as to place for fishing at the mouth of the river—do you think it a more dangerous place?—A. Well, we are divided on that. Sometimes we catch just as many fish here as at the mouth. After Sunday night, on Monday, we get more fish up here than anywhere, which shows that the fish have had a chance to get up.

Q. Are more boats fishing at the mouth than here?—A. Yes; I would consider it about six to one.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. When nets are stretched across the lower river do you find many fish come into yours?—A. Yes; apparently just as many—it depends a good deal on the tide.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. How many meshes deep do you fish?—A. Forty and fifty; it is very deep water just off here.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. What do you think of giving licenses to Indians who apply?—A. I have no objection, provided they buy their own boat and net. As a general rule the cannery advance money for these and so control the Indians.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, but if both white men and Indians are furnished with money by the cannery, how then?—A. Oh, well, if all are on the same footing it will be all right. There is one thing I would like to suggest about the white salmon. For some years I have bought all the white salmon I could get; I buy them cheap and ship them to the east to Winnipeg, Brandon, Kamloops, and other places, and of course if we sell them cheap enough we get rid of them.

By Mr. Higgins:

Q. Do you think white salmon as good as sockeyes?—A. For myself I like them very much better.

Q. Are the cannery the only people who will not use white salmon?—A. No; they don't use them—some have tried it. Mr. Holbrook tried it but there is no sale for them; still, they are a nicer fish.

Mr. HIGGINS.—Yes; I know in Victoria people won't take a sockeye if they can get a white salmon, but of course the desire of the market governs.

Mr. VIENNA.—We used to label them here lake trout, but still it appears that people do not care for them, they prefer the red colour. Mr. Brodie tried canning white salmon also, but I don't think it paid.

Mr. WILMOT.—Well, sir, have you anything further to state?—A. No, sir.

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

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, sir, I suppose we may proceed with the usual series of questions as in the case of other witnesses. What are your ideas in regard to the disposition of the fish offal in the river?—A. Well, sir, my ideas are that with regard to fish I do not think it much injurious.

Q. Well, regarding the benefit to the health or otherwise of the inhabitants?—A. I believe it injurious to the health of a person who drinks the water from the river. I just speak from what I find myself, and I know that I cannot get the same good health since drinking the water, and the stench from under the canneries is something frightful, especially when the tide is low, and every fisherman has got to drink this water along the edge of the river, and I know it affects us.

Q. Has it any effects, do you know, upon the cattle or any animals along the river?—A. I have no cattle; I am not a farmer, still I do think it injurious to the health of persons working on the river.

Q. At and about the canneries, then, offal causes a great stench and unpleasantness?—A. Yes.

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Q. You are a fisherman, you say?—A. Yes; I fish for the markets off the town, and in the sockeye season I fish at the mouth of the river.

Q. Has the offal, in your opinion, affected your nets in any way?—A. No; not at all.

Q. Or made any lodgment down there?—A. Oh, no; we see nothing but the little wind-bag which floats and this sometimes lodges in the nets.

Q. But you don't see anything else?—A. No; not at all.

Q. What do you think of the limitation of the number of nets?—A. I think there should be a limit.

Q. In what way?—A. There should be a certain number of nets. I don't say it should be open to everybody. I have no license myself, but I know at the mouth of the river there are as many boats as can fish there.

Q. Have you any idea why you do not get a license?—A. No; I have been told by the inspector that no licenses were granted to new-comers, but only to old licensees who had licenses before.

Q. You thought that a hardship?—A. I did think so and especially when so many licenses are given to cannerymen and freezers, fish markets and others, it is very hard that fishermen should have so few. They should have a fair share, say two-thirds of the licenses.

Q. You think an undue proportion of the boats fishing fish at the mouth of the river?—A. Well, no more could be accommodated—as many as can fish are there now.

Q. But when the present number is 500 how could you expect to get a license?—A. Well, I think the cannerymen and market people should be deprived of some and they should be given to the fishermen and persons who come here to settle. I don't mean to say that 500 is enough—I would increase that number, so that a fair number could go to the fishermen, while I would not throw the river open to everyone.

Q. Well, who would be the person not to get one?—A. Well, I cannot say—I speak for the protection of the fish.

Q. You think, then, the present number of boats at the mouth interferes with the fish coming up the river?—A. Yes; and I believe if it was thrown open, the 500 would soon be 2,500.

Q. Are you interested with regard to the close season at all?—A. Yes; I would like to see the Sunday close season close until the Sunday was over, not three-quarters of it, for as far as I can see about the Sunday not half of it is kept. Men get to work to get boats ready and get out on the river and wait until the time.

Q. Then you think the whole Sunday should be taken in?—A. I do; I have not fished these two years and I don't see it makes any difference to me. I think the same number of fish would be caught as if they did work on the Sunday.

Q. What mesh do you use? I mean in depth?—A. Forty meshes.

Q. And you think too many boats at the mouth of the river is harmful to the river fisheries?—A. Yes.

Q. And that there are too many boats there now?—A. Well, I would not say too many. I think there is as many now as should be. I may say I have been working for the cannerymen and have been treated very unfairly by them. I only got 10 cents for my fish, whereas the man who has his own license and boat gets 20 cents, but this last season I only got 6½ cents, the rest being taken off for to pay for the boat and net. This only leaves 3½ cents for myself and partner. If I had a license myself I could have sold to any one I liked.

Q. Was this the arrangement made before starting?—A. Oh, yes, we made the arrangement, but if the cannerymen had a larger number of licenses they would treat us and other fishermen even worse.

Q. And you have applied for two years past for the licenses?—A. Yes, and I have applied this year.

Q. And you had to go and fish for the canneries and take just what they wished to give you?—A. Yes, just what they wished to give me.

Q. Do you think that the licenses should be transferable?—A. No.

Q. It should be then to the actual fisherman, freezer or canner?—A. Well, the canneries, of course they hire us to fish for them under their licenses, but others should not be transferable.

Q. Do you see many dead fish when you are fishing?—A. No, not many.

Q. Well, you see some?—A. Yes, some.

Q. When do you see them, during the sockeye run?—A. Yes, but not a great many—they seem to have received injuries.

Q. Do you fish after the sockeye run?—A. No, because the canneries are closed down.

Q. And if you had licenses for yourself you could go on fishing for humpbacks, &c.?—A. Oh, we don't want the humpbacks.

Q. About how many fishermen—white men—are there on the river?—A. I could not give any idea.

By Mr. Armstrong:

Q. Are there a hundred?—A. Oh, yes, there are a hundred, perhaps two hundred would be an outside figure.

Q. Is the majority of fishermen employed by the canners, or with their own boats?—A. For the canneries.

By Mr. Wilmot:

Q. Well, two men to the boat would give one thousand men.—A. Well, Indians fish four men to the boat. I cannot tell the number of white men—I never thought particularly of that—quite a number of Japanese fish on the river.

Q. Well, there were 580 odd boats last year—that would be about 1,160 men, of which you think only two hundred were white men?—A. Well, perhaps that would be about the number—I don't know though—there are only about fifty licenses given to white men, that is white fishermen—more than forty go to the Indians on the Fraser River.

Q. Well, sir, have you anything further?—A. No, I think I have stated all I wished to.

The Chairman thereupon declared the Commission adjourned at 5.30 p.m., to meet again in the City Hall at 7.30 p.m.

20th February, 1892.

The Commission reassembled in the City Hall, New Westminster, at 7.30 p.m.

Present:—Mr. S. Wilmot, presiding; Messrs. Higgins and Armstrong, and the Secretary.

Mr. D. J. Munn handed in the following letter, which was read and ordered to be inserted in the minutes of proceedings, and to be taken as part of that gentleman's evidence given during the day:—

"NEW WESTMINSTER, 16th November, 1891.

"JOHN McNAB, Esq.,

"Inspector of Fisheries for British Columbia.

"DEAR SIR,—In response to your request of the 3rd instant, I, with pleasure, now submit you the information I received in regard to salmon when on my recent visit to Lillooet and to Seton Lake.

"The lake is drained by a stream called Seton River, which is about a mile in length; thence into Cayouse Creek and on a distance of two miles to the Fraser River.

"At the time I was there the streams were at a normal height. Some Indians were then scooping out salmon for a winter's supply, and I examined them carefully. They proved to be sockeye salmon, nearly all of which were female but contained no ova. They were very spare and discoloured, and though quite numerous were all endeavouring, apparently, to reach the lake.

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"On the river banks was a mass of decomposing humpback salmon, and I learned from Mr. H. Keary, that these had started to come in about the 12th of September, and ceased about the 1st of October. There was an unusually heavy run of them this year. As you are aware, it was the 6th or 7th of September when these fish were notable for quantity in the lower Fraser River, and the marvellous rapidity of their ascent through the cañons, against the rapids of the Fraser is thus pretty clearly indicated. The quinnat, or spring salmon moves towards the lake in an indifferent quantity from May until July, when the sockeyes make their appearance and continue up to the latter part of August. The second or fall run of sockeyes, such as I observed, have appeared only in every alternate fourth year, and after the humpback run off this particular year is over. They are always inferior in quality and appearance to the regular summer run of sockeye salmon.

"At the point of effusion from Seton Lake into Seton River the exit is narrow, shallow and the water fairly swift. Here the Indians congregate and scoop up immense quantities of sockeye salmon fry in the month of May, when these are leaving the lake and probably heading for the salt water. These salmon fry are sun-dried and stored for winter use. The Indian agent for the district, Capt. Mason, kindly procured some of them for me. They measured in length an average of about four and a half inches, with a proportionate thickness of body. The agent, I was told, endeavoured to impress upon the Indians the disastrous consequences of the wholesale slaughter of these fish, and admonished them to quit the practice for their own sakes, which he expected would be done. I inquired of various people in that vicinity about the quantity of fry leaving the lake, which they say occurs when the spring freshets are well under way, and they one and all agree that the quantity of fry going down is large or small in proportion to the quantity of sockeye salmon entering the lake the year previous. This would indicate that the fry are about seven months old when they depart for salt water. The trout here find no allurements in the angler's bait during the months of September, October and November, or while salmon ova is in abundance.

"The two consecutive heavy and two off runs of sockeye salmon have been regular, with one exception—1888—since the days of the miners in 1858, and back into the traditions of starvation years among the natives. It is also asserted by the closest and most intelligent observers here, that the run of salmon in recent years has if anything increased.

"I may add that this section of the country affords a most favourable opportunity for investigation into the habits of the salmon frequenting these waters and for collection of data, valuable from a scientific stand-point.

"The doubt, for instance, as to whether salmon ever return to salt water after having made ample provision against the extinction of their species by the deposit of their ova, could on Seton River be proved beyond dispute, and this strange and interesting phase of fatality conclusively determined. Observation would also add greatly to the knowledge we now possess of the young fry, by comparing those artificially hatched with those produced under natural conditions, and many other matters of information essential to a proper understanding of the conditions of supply, could be easily obtained, thus giving zest to further interesting research and inquiry.

(Sgd.) "D. J. MUNN."