

ried down the coast to Puget Sound or San Francisco before they can be dried, as there is too much rain on the coast and islands south of Alaska to dry the fish properly. Such is the statement made by our citizens who have been there. But, on the other hand, we have the statement that the Indians of this coast live to a great extent in the winter upon *dried* fish.

In the early history of the New England fisheries it was thought very important that our citizens should have a right to dry their fish upon the coast of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, but now they dry no fish there. And the cod fishermen of Marblehead, who fish on these banks, commonly make two voyages to the banks and bring their fish home to dry. As soon as the fish are caught they are split and salted in the hold of the vessel, and in this way brought home, where they are unloaded and dried while the vessel returns to the banks. In the same way the fishermen from San Francisco can make three trips each year.

Salmon are very abundant in all the rivers, and are more caught than the cod by the natives. There are also many salmon in the Sacramento and Columbia rivers, and probably the supply from these rivers is quite sufficient for the present population of the Pacific coast. The Hudson Bay Company formerly sent many salt salmon taken in the Columbia to the Sandwich Islands. But now that market has failed on account of the poverty of the natives, who were the chief consumers.

In regard to the herring of this coast it need only be said that the natives catch them by means of nails driven into a pole, and each nail brings out a herring. A friend who does not tell fish stories, says he has seen them in such schools that he could not row his boat through them. Lapepede regards the herring as "*une de ces productions dont l'emploi décide de la destinée des empires*;" and the great Cuvier has recorded that the government of all nations possessed of any sea-coast where that fish is known has given special attention and encouragement to its capture, regarding such occupation as the finest nursery for the formation of robust men, intrepid sailors, and skillful navigators, and so of the highest consequence toward the attainment of maritime greatness.

Up to the present time furs have been the chief product of this country, and all the occupation that has ever been made upon it has been made by the Russian American Company, which was vested with the exclusive right to trade with the natives for furs. This Company has some fifteen or twenty different trading-posts, of which New Archangel, Kodiak, St. Michaels, and Unalaska are the chief. At these posts they not only buy what furs are brought to them, but the natives, especially the Aleutians, are hired as servants, and employed as hunters under the direction of an officer of the Company.

In the early history of this Company furs were more easily obtained than now, but for the last twenty years the supply has been very

constant. * Sir George Simpson gives the following as the Company's receipts for 1841: 10,000 fur seals, 1000 sea-otters, 12,000 beavers, 2500 land-otters, 20,000 sea-horse teeth.

Since 1841 the Company have established posts in the interior and obtain a greater variety of skins. The following table shows the value of the various skins at New Archangel during the last year:

Sea-otter.....	\$50 00
Marten (American sable).....	4 00
Beaver.....	2 50
Bear.....	4 50
Black fox.....	50 00
Silver fox.....	40 00
Cross fox.....	25 00
Red fox.....	2 00

The Hudson Bay Company have a post in this territory, which is situated near where the Youkon flows into the Kwickpak, and is called Fort Youkon. The Company find this one of the most profitable of their posts, and have not had any difficulty with the Russian Company in regard to its occupation: for although it is beyond the boundary line, yet it is so far in the interior that it does not to any considerable extent interfere with the trade on the coast.

The chief market for the furs obtained by the Russian Company is China, where they exchange them for teas. The furs from Fort Youkon are packed across the continent to York Factory on Hudson Bay, and from there sent to London, where they are sold to be scattered over the world.

If these Companies can find it profitable to establish trading-posts whose supplies they must bring across continents, and whose products must return the same way, certainly we can carry on the same trade from San Francisco, which is within ten days' sail by steam of the mouth of the Kwickpak. The Government will not probably grant a monopoly of this trade, and it will be left free to all. The effect of this will be that, for a few years, the number of furs obtained will be largely increased; but that afterward the supply will be considerably diminished, on account of the indiscriminate killing of all fur-bearing animals—old and young, male and female. Chartered companies, where they have had the exclusive control, have in various ways prevented the killing of the female and young animals, and so the prices have not been brought down, nor has the number of fur-bearing animals diminished. But when the trade shall be open to all, the Indians will kill every thing which they can sell to traders, who will be anxious to buy whatever they can sell at a profit, without regard to the future supply.

It does not appear that the Russian Company have been so successful in the management of the fur-trade as the Hudson Bay Company have been, and considerable complaint has been made in Russia in regard to their management. But this complaint does not seem to be so much that the Company has not managed its own interests well, as that it has done little or nothing to improve the country, and to make