

The special fisheries which give this region much of the prominence it possesses are the salmon, the whale, the oyster, the fur-seal, the shrimp, the cod, the crab, and the herring, in the order named. The value of the salmon fishery is about equal to that of all other fisheries combined, while the canning industry connected with the fishery has an annual output but little less in value than that of all the fishery products of the coast. The salmon are by far the most important fishes or fishery products of Alaska, Oregon, and Washington, but in the fisheries of California they are surpassed by whales, oysters, and shrimps.

A conspicuous feature of the fisheries of California is the entire absence of pound nets, trap nets, weirs, and other similar fixed devices. While it is true that a few fyke nets are employed in the Sacramento-San Joaquin delta, their use is so restricted and their importance so slight that they may be dismissed from consideration. The absence of this class of nets, which are such prominent factors in the fisheries of the other States of this region, is owing wholly to legislation. The State has shown a disinclination to permit the use of such appliances, and no very determined efforts have been made by commercial fishermen to secure the repeal of the existing prohibitive law. While the setting of fyke nets is enjoined, the law is not strictly enforced, for the reason that in the opinion of the State Fish Commission the obvious purpose of the act was to prevent the destruction of desirable food-fish, and especially immature fishes; whereas the few nets employed are set in such situations and under such conditions that on fish generally regarded as worthless, or nearly so, are or can be taken.

In no other region in the United States are the people more generally impressed with the beneficial results of artificial propagation and more ready to aid and approve any fish-cultural measures that are properly recommended. While the results of salmon-culture have in some places been marked and are readily acknowledged by fishermen and others, this alone is not sufficient to account for the widespread advocacy of fish-culture which exists among all classes and in all parts of the Pacific coast. We must look further for the cause. There seems little reason to doubt that to the marvelous success of shad and striped bass acclimatization on the west coast must be attributed the firm belief in fish-cultural work that pervades all localities in which fish is an article of food or an object of capture. One or both of these new species are well known in almost every accessible coast settlement in the three States, and they are an enduring testimony to the influence of man over fish production.

As may be readily understood, the time available for the inspection of the fisheries of the west coast was so short as to preclude a complete study of the subject, and it was necessary to restrict the inquiry to those places which afforded the best opportunity to see the greatest variety of fish and fishing in the shortest time, and to those fisheries possessing the greatest interest and importance.

The chief object of the visit to the Pacific Coast was to give the writer a proper conception of the principal phases of the commercial fisheries there carried on, in order to better equip him for the administration of the affairs of the division under his charge. A great many memoranda were made on the various aspects of different branches of the fishing industry, of which the following notes form a part. Much of personal interest to the writer that was noted, however, would not have sufficient importance to deserve mention in this report.

The notes herewith presented cover only a few of the fisheries of the west coast, and mostly relate to only a few of the phases of those branches which are considered. They represent the personal observations and researches of the writer, and are

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