

JANUARY 14, 1910

age was more than accounted for by the loss in the sockeye pack on the Fraser River, which was only 450,000 cases, against 837,000 in 1905. On the Puget Sound the sockeye catch was 962,000 cases, against 1,100,000 in 1905. Doubtless there were less fish actually running than usual, although there were other causes for the smaller pack, taking Fraser River and the Sound together. The fish came so late that at the end of the close season on the 27th August, there had not been half the usual catch on the Fraser, and many fishermen stopped work at this time, so that the late run was partly lost. Again on the Canadian side the close season in each week was increased to 42 hours and rigidly enforced, with other restrictions, while on the United States side whatever may be the Federal regulations nominally, there were really no restrictions. The weather also favoured the Sound, causing the fish to remain there longer than usual and thus enabling twenty-five to thirty per cent. of the Puget Sound catch, a much larger percentage than ever before, to be taken by purse seiners using power boats. Our own regulations seem to be both adequate and efficiently enforced, but unless the United States joins us both in making and in enforcing regulations looking to the preservation of salmon fishing in these waters, disastrous results, for which there will be no excuse whatever, must follow. In salmon fishing in other Canadian waters the catch was somewhat less than in 1908, and this is also true of halibut fishing so far as Canadian vessels are concerned. Herring fishing is growing satisfactorily and promises to be an important feature if properly cared for. Poaching by United States vessels still continues, although the Dominion Government has done something towards the protection of our waters. If foreign vessels are allowed to take immense catches of halibut in our waters, it is only a question of time when these fishing areas will be seriously depleted. We get precisely the same statement as to the facts, whether from Prince Rupert or from Vancouver, and there can be no doubt but that we must act with greater vigour and employ a larger number of government cruisers. Elsewhere we give figures showing the enormous money value of the salmon catch of the Pacific Coast waters.

Much new land is being brought under cultivation for fruit, whether in irrigated areas or elsewhere. In the Okanagan valley the trees suffered from frost and the yield was not more than forty per cent. of what it would otherwise have been. Elsewhere the crops were also less than normal because of the cold winter, and the whole quantity marketed was naturally small, although very important and often very profitable to the district concerned. It is the future which promises large figures for this industry. The purchasing power of the adjacent provinces will be enormous, and the areas being planted in British Columbia promise large quantities. Transportation and systems of packing and marketing are the most serious problems, and these are receiving the keen interest of the Government.

New areas, suitable for agriculture and grazing, are being brought into prominence, and having regard to the high price of land, the cost and scarcity of labour, the physical difficulties of clearing and lack of transportation facilities, the growth of settlement is very satisfactory. Few parts of the northern world will give so generous a response to the labour applied to the land as British Columbia.

In many of the towns and cities there is the same activity in building and the same advance in real estate values as elsewhere in Canada. Unfortunately, as elsewhere, many inexperienced people are speculating in real estate on a margin, and generally it is in real estate at a distance, about which they know practically nothing except the roseate promises of the promoter. In Vancouver and Victoria building permits show a large increase, the figures in Vancouver being about \$7,000,000 for 1909, against less than \$2,000,000 in 1904, with an unbroken record of increases in each successive year between these dates. The assessed value of property in Vancouver which in 1900 was less than \$20,000,000, was in 1909 over \$72,000,000, while the great growth in clearing houses figures has already been mentioned. Speculation in real estate is inevitable with such facts to promote it, but it is hardly possible for Eastern people to understand the prices which are being paid. They simply do not bear any relation to the past experience of such a city as Toronto, and those who invest should surely not do so

unless they feel that they have personal knowledge of the property or have every reason to place full confidence in their advisors. The probability that speculators will be punished for the excessive prices being paid for outlying properties in this city is almost the only cloud over the prosperity of the province at the moment. Transportation other industrial subject, and the prospect for a great increase in mileage is excellent. The financial position of the province is now so strong that it can well afford to help sound undertakings of this kind, especially as the opening up of many most promising districts depends absolutely on railway facilities.

UNITED STATES.

In the three Pacific Coast States in which we are directly interested the conditions are not markedly different from those of Canada. The business of the year was much better than that of 1908, and even if disappointing in the rapidity of recovery in some branches, at the end of 1909 almost all kinds of business were doing as well or better than in 1906. The year was marked by two of the so-called Expositions, which in new countries do much to advertise resources and industrial possibilities. At Seattle the Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exposition was a complete success. Although sensibly moderate in size, it was visited by 3,700,000 people, and appears to have done good to the whole coast; the authorities were able to pay their obligations and to return something to those who as shareholders projected the enterprise. The City of San Francisco also, by the Portola Festival, celebrated the discovery of the bay by Gaspar de Portola, and incidentally the recovery of the city from the great earthquake.

In lumber the recovery has been slower than was expected. As elsewhere, a growing improvement took place as the year progressed, and the outlook for a prosperous year in all branches in 1910 is excellent.

The wheat crop of Oregon, Washington and Idaho was 61,000,000 bushels, against 40,210,000 in 1908 and 60,242,000 in 1907. The price has been so high that the farmers have doubtless made much more money out of this crop than in any preceding year. California and Mexico are now becoming such large consumers of Pacific Coast wheat that European shipments are declining.

Fruit growing of the same character as in British Columbia is already developed on a large scale in Washington, and the business thus far has done so well that large new areas are being added yearly. Reliable statistics are not yet obtainable, but apparently about 300,000 acres are already under irrigation, with about 50,000 acres in addition in process of completion. Of this irrigated land about 40,000 acres are already in orchards, and this is being added to at the rate of about 20,000 acres each year. The value of orchards in full bearing is about \$1,500 to \$2,000 per acre and the profit is naturally very large to justify such prices. This will decrease when larger areas come into bearing, but some idea of the future value of the irrigated areas in Canada may be gained from the fact that the total value of crops of all kinds, fruit, alfalfa, timothy, roots, etc., in Yakima County, Oregon, for 1908, was \$25,776,000. In California the fruit industry is doubtless the most important at the moment. The yield of the less the most important at the moment. The yield of the past year was not nearly as large as the unusual crop of 1908, but the year was a normal one. Shipments of fresh fruit have been larger than ever before and up to the middle of November reached 15,000 car loads. The shipments of citrus fruits from Southern California also exceeded all previous records, having been for the season ending 31st October, 38,971 cars against 28,500 in 1908. The pack of canned fruit is only about two-thirds of that in 1908, but this is because of the abnormal condition and that year. The market is now in excellent condition and has recovered from the excessive stocks created in 1908.

All that we lost in the salmon catch of the Fraser River, Oregon gained in Puget Sound, and the year was the largest on record except 1901. On the Columbia the catch was smaller than in 1908 and in the Alaska rivers it was also slightly less. But prices have been excellent, and although this is the quadrennial year in which part of the canned stock has usually to be carried over, this year the stocks are practically all sold. In order to emphasize the desirability of conserving our own fisheries, it may be well to give the quantities caught this year: