

## AT A SALMON POOL.

We had stopped at a "cannery" near the head of Tongas Narrows, Alaska, to take on board two thousand boxes of salmon, and we had an opportunity to land and see the place where the fish are taken. A walk of half a mile through the evergreen forest brought us to the little river—it was hardly more than a brook—near the foot of a cascade fifteen or twenty feet in height.

The stream foams down over rugged ledges of pale gray slate, overhung by enormous firs, while fallen tree-trunks cross and half blockade it. At the foot of the rocks is a series of three or four picturesque pools of eddying water, about thirty feet in breadth and six or eight feet in depth.

Here, under the bright August sun, we beheld a marvellous spectacle!

The pools were full of restless, circling salmon, all pressing up to the foot of the falls. The foremost ones, bent crescent shape, were constantly leaping upward, some gaining the water above at the first spring, some falling back into the throng beneath to repeat their effort.

From the bay below other thousands were pressing up into the pools, impelled by the instinct which leads every salmon to return, after its ocean wanderings, to deposit its spawn in the river in which it was hatched.

Such was the pressure of the throng in the pools that the top of the mass of fish was at intervals lifted nearly out of the water, so as to suggest the idea that one might run across the pool on their finny backs. Yet all were in constant motion. Through the limpid water their dark purple backs reflected the richest of tints, with here and there the white gleam of a fish capsized in the press.

No one could witness such a scene without becoming intensely interested in it. One watched the frantic leaping of the beautiful fish with the same kind of feeling—as if one were trying to help the leapers by mental encouragement and muscular repression—which one has in watching a boat-race.

The more excitable spirits among us, men as well as women, shouted and screamed like school-children. Crouching and bending over the rocky verge of the pools, they clapped their hands when one of the fish succeeded in making a good leap.

It was a scene to carry long in one's memory; the white, dashing waters, the huge, dark-green overhang of the firs, the wild thronging of the salmon in the clear, cold pools, the dead and dying men, floating helplessly out in the eddies. Flapping ravens croaked overhead, bronzed dragon flies whirred above the water's surface.

To all this spectacle of animated nature, annually repeated here through thousands of years before no human spectators, add the unusual element of a hundred tourists from the steamer rushing about the pools, in the wildest excitement, hallooing, screaming, hastily rigging out rods, hooks and spears, and even cruelly firing into the poor fish with pocket revolvers—and the reader may be able to picture to himself the scene presented on this August afternoon.

The business of canning salmon is now rapidly pushing its way northward from the Columbia. At present there are nearly a score of "canneries" in Southern Alaska. They are generally situated in some deep bay, or arm, of the sea, surrounded by dark green mountains, or gray cliffs, capped with mist, and near the mouth of some river, or large brook. All these streams are the old-time haunts of the salmon, and here they are easily captured in nets and weirs.

The canneries are rudely constructed, but commodious sheds, beneath which is placed all the apparatus for dressing, packing and testing. This includes steam-power machines for filling the cans, ovens for heating, a tin shop for making the cans from sheet tin, and a carpenter's shop.

At the very picturesquely located cannery above mentioned we found two or three Americans in charge of the property. A gang of twenty Chinese were doing all the work, including tin-smithing, and testing the filled cans by heat, prior to sealing them. Indians are also employed, mainly to catch the fish and for chore-work. At some of the canneries the Indians are paid a stated price for catching—one cent a pound, or ten cents for each salmon caught.

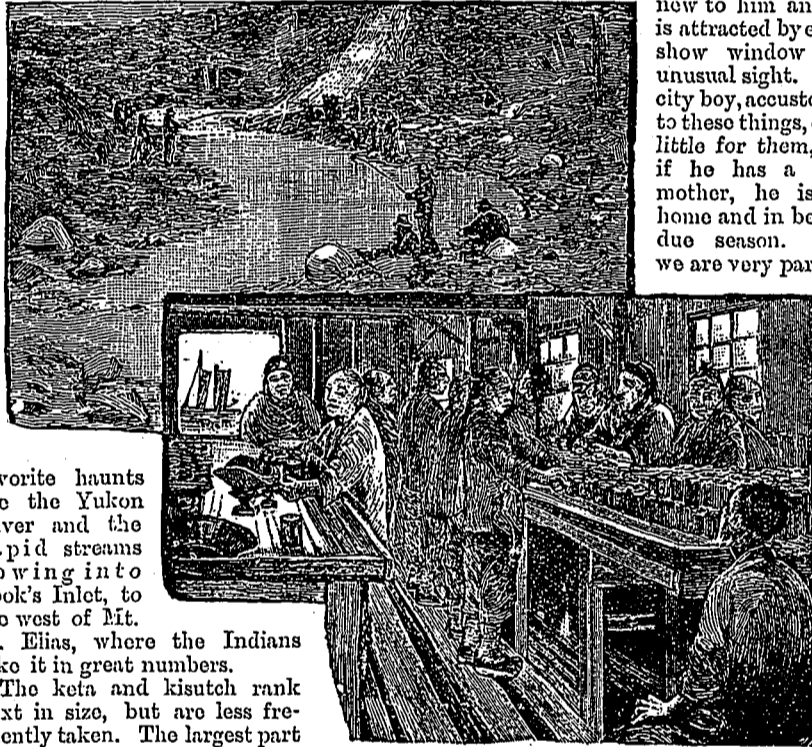
The salmon of these small rivers usually range, during the summer months, from four to ten pounds in weight. Almost every cannery either owns or hires a small tug-boat, for a tender, to bring in the fish caught at different points.

After the cans are filled with fish, they are put in ovens and raised to a temperature of two hundred and fifty degrees Fahrenheit, then tapped to let out the steam, and afterward soldered air-tight.

The average net profit to the cannery, this season, 1888, is estimated at five cents a can, and as a fair out-put is from sixteen to twenty thousand cases, of four dozen cans each, the gross profit amounts to about forty thousand dollars. Much of the Alaska salmon is shipped to Europe.

It is greatly to be regretted that, unless the method of fishing be changed, the salmon will be exterminated within a quarter of a century. It is another case of "killing the goose that lays the golden eggs." By the exercise of care and forethought, and by giving the fish a chance to propagate,—the supply of fish might be made to continue, undiminished, for centuries to come.

Five varieties of salmon ascend the rivers of Alaska, named by the Indians and Russians, in order to their size, chowicha, keta, kisutch, nerka, and gorbusha. The chowicha, or giant salmon, is the largest of all; it not unfrequently attains a length of six feet and a weight of one hundred pounds. Occasionally it is caught in the Columbia River, but its



SALMON-PACKING.

favorite haunts are the Yukon River and the rapid streams flowing into Cook's Inlet, to the west of Mt. St. Elias, where the Indians take it in great numbers.

The keta and kisutch rank next in size, but are less frequently taken. The largest part of Alaska canned and salted salmon is of the fourth variety, the nerka, or red salmon, the flesh

of which is the most popular in the markets of the world. No doubt the peculiar red color—a tint generally associated with the idea of salmon—has much to do with this preference. Good judges pronounce the flesh of this variety inferior to that of the chowicha and kisutch, which lack the salmon color.

The most northerly river of the globe which salmon are known to ascend is the Colville, in Northern Alaska, which flows into the Arctic Ocean, in latitude 71 deg. north. Kotzebue Sound, with the five or six rivers flowing into it, is the most northern place where salmon are taken in considerable numbers. Only one variety, the little gorbusha, or hump-backed salmon, reaches this latitude; but all five varieties are found as far north as Behring Strait.

Alaska is a true home of the salmon, and will undoubtedly be one of the great fishing-grounds of the world. Were these fisheries judiciously managed, no decrease in the enormous numbers of fish need be apprehended.

More fish now attempt to ascend the rivers during the spawning season than their waters will contain. In the tumultuous rush to reach the spawning beds, far up the rivers, countless thousands of salmon are pushed on shore, or left stranded in pools and small ponds, as the water lowers during the summer months.

Nature seems to have no pity for them.

In heaps and windrows, or scattered, innumerable, one by one, they lie rotting along the river and creek banks, the shallows and gravel bars. This destruction is nature's method of repressing the too rapid multiplication of the fish. The few thousand Indians who inhabit these wild regions, and who largely subsist on salmon, occasion no perceptible reduction in their numbers. Like the spring tides recurs every season the impetuous rush of eager, reckless, struggling fish, surging far up every bay, river and brook, from Cape Mendocino to Cape Lisburne. To utilize the excess, to save this waste of good fish and distribute it as food to all quarters of the earth, is the business which the Alaska salmon canneries have recently undertaken. It is an enterprise well deserving of success.—C. A. Stephens, in *Youth's Companion*.

## "THE BEST BOY'S STORY I EVER HEARD."

That was what a lawyer said about this story that I am to relate to you: "It is the best boy's story that I ever heard."

"We have had a good many boys with us from time to time," said Mr. Alden, the senior member of a large hardware establishment in Market street, Philadelphia, "as apprentices to learn the business. What may surprise you is that we never take country boys, unless they live in the city with some relative who takes care of them and keeps them home at night, for when a country boy comes to the city to

live, everything is new to him and he is attracted by every show window and unusual sight. The city boy, accustomed to these things, cares little for them, and if he has a good mother, he is at home and in bed in due season. And we are very particu-

came from. I used often to say to him, 'Jones, your memory is worth more than a gold mine! How do you manage to remember?'

"I make it my business to remember," he would say. "I know that if I can remember a man and call him by name when he comes into the store, and can ask him how things are going on where he lives, I will be very likely to keep him as a customer."

"And that was the exact case. He made friends of buyers. He took the same interest in their purchases as he took in the store, and would go to no end of trouble to suit them, and to fulfill to the letter everything he promised.

"Well, affairs went on this way until he had been with us eleven years, when we concluded to take him in as a partner. We knew that he had no extravagant habits, that he neither used tobacco, nor beer, nor went to the theatre. He continued, as at the beginning, to board at home, and even when his salary was the very lowest, he paid his mother two dollars a week for his board. He was always neatly dressed, and we thought it was very probable that he had laid up one or two thousand dollars, as his salary for the last two years had been twelve hundred dollars. So when we made him the offer to become a partner in the business, and suggested that it would be more satisfactory if he could put some money in the firm, he replied:

"If ten thousand dollars will be any object, I can put in that much. I have saved out of my salary nine thousand four hundred dollars, and my sister will let me have six hundred."

"I can tell you I was never more astonished in my life than when that fellow said he could put in ten thousand dollars, and the most of it his own money. He had never spent a dollar or twenty-five cents, or five cents for an unnecessary thing, and kept his money in a bank where it gathered a small interest. I am a great believer in the Bible, you know, and I always kept two placards in big letters up in the store. On one was this text: 'He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is much'; and on the other: 'He that is diligent in business shall stand before kings and not before mean men.' And Frank Jones' success was the literal fulfillment of those two texts. He had been faithful in the smallest things as in the greater ones, and diligent in business. That kind of a boy always succeeds," concluded Mr. Alden.

A small boy of ten, who had listened to the story with eager eyes, as well as ears, said: "But we don't have any kings in this country, Mr. Alden, for diligent boys to stand before?"

"Yes we do," laughed Mr. Alden. "We have more kings here than in any other country in the world. We have money kings, and business kings, and railroad kings, and land kings, and merchant kings, and publishing kings, and some of them wield an enormous power. This is a great country for kings."—*Mary Wager Fisher, in Wide Awake.*

## TWELVE HELPFUL RULES.

Here are some that have been tried with noticeably good effect.

1. Do not interrupt others in conversation unnecessarily.
2. Be unselfish.
3. Have courage to speak the truth.
4. Do not shirk.
5. If you have been to blame, do not try to throw the blame on some one else. "If she hadn't done so-and-so, it wouldn't have happened."
6. When you have used an article put it back in its place, especially if it is one used by the family in common.
7. Remember that by your conduct persons judge of your home training and home influences.
8. Be careful to meet your engagements promptly.
9. Be punctual at meals.
10. Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well.
11. Help others.
12. Let your friends feel that you can be depended upon to keep your word. It will be a comfort to them to have some one to turn to in time of need, and it will be a deep and lasting pleasure to you to know they have confidence in you.—*Ladies' Home Journal.*