

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

ROOM 425, HOUSE OF COMMONS,

THURSDAY, May 23, 1929.

The Select Standing Committee on Marine and Fisheries met at 11:00 a.m., the Chairman, Mr. Wm. Duff, presiding.

Mr. SINCLAIR (*Queens*): Would it not be well to ask leave to have the proceedings printed?

The CHAIRMAN: The suggestion is just to have copies for the members.

Mr. SINCLAIR (*Queens*): For leave to have the report printed.

The CHAIRMAN: We will deal with that afterwards.

Mr. SINCLAIR (*Queens*): I would move that we ask leave to have the report of the proceedings printed.

Motion agreed to.

W. A. FOUND, called.

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman, let me just say this word, that I will have to speak without reflection, as I did not know until this minute that I was going to be expected to make a statement of this kind. However, I am so familiar with it that I think possibly I can give you, if you will question me at any time on any matter not made clear, the information you may need.

Briefly, the situation is this: the Fraser River is, potentially, the greatest sockeye salmon producing area on this Continent, and for that matter, in the world. What the capability of the Fraser River is is measured by what was known in years gone by as the big years. Right there, let me say that from the earliest records that we have there was the peculiar phenomenon in the Fraser River, so far as the sockeye salmon fishery is concerned, of one very large run followed by three smaller ones. These came to be known as big years and off years. There are only theories as to the reason for this. Certain facts we know. One fact is that the sockeye salmon of the Fraser River is predominantly a four-year fish, that is, it reaches maturity; spawns and dies when it is four years old. Hence it is that on the progeny of the seeding of any one year depends, in the first instance, the run the fourth year thereafter.

About 100 miles from the mouth of the Fraser River, or a little over, there is what is known as the Great Canyon where the Coast Range and Cascade Range of mountains come so nearly together that the river is compressed through a great canyon, and emerges from that canyon through a narrow gate, caused by an out-jutting rock where the whole width of the river is not more than approximately 140 feet. The progress through that canyon which is 60 miles long, is always difficult to those who have not seen the salmon make their way against the obstacles that they must make; it would be almost inconceivable to realize the waters that they must progress against, and the falls over which they can go. The greatest difficulty in that canyon was not, as might be expected, right at that gate. It was inside the gate, and at a number of places farther on. That gate is known as Hell's Gate, on account possibly of its very turbulent condition.

[Mr. W. A. Found.]