



TWELVE THOUSAND CASES OF PACKED FISH

sea, and 50 lbs. of excellent meat rots upon the beach, because it happens to be white instead of red. Next Crow tosses in the sockeye. Beautiful shining fish these, of uniform size, each yielding some 4 lbs. of deep rose-colored meat—the best on the market.

The tallyman takes his little book and makes the following entries opposite Crow's number: "50 springs, 30 cents each; 100 sockeye, 10 cents each." Crow indulges in the luxury of a grim smile and deftly guides his boat to a mooring-post. Boat after boat contributes its portion until the scow is heaped. Then the cannery engine starts and a great elevator rattles between the scow and the rear of the cannery. Two Chinamen, with rubber boots and fish forks, clamber down the wharf onto the scow. Plop, plop, fall the fish from the elevator to the cannery floor, until the whole rear of the building is filled, the scow emptied and the boats all unloaded. The fishermen, after securing their boats, plunge the nets into the bluestone vats to cut the sea slime from the meshes, then stretch them on net benches to be dried by the sun and overhauled by the netmen.

At five o'clock next morning the shriek

of steam-whistles tears through the stillness and echoes and re-echoes along the rocky shore. The Indian dogs howl in sympathy and the village bestirs itself. From cabin and messhouse ascend spirals of smoke and volumes of vapor laden with odors of fried fish and pancakes. Another blast of the whistles and the cannery hands flock to their work. Such a conglomerate throng—old, withered, eagle-like Indians, who can make your hair bristle with their accounts of war and scalping festivities; Chinamen, bewigged and gabbling; Clootchmen (Indian wives); heavy-jowled and taciturn Indian girls making passes with long knives at the green "Chinks" and laughing loudly at the Orientals' evident alarm.

Inside the cannery all is hum and bustle. Two Chinamen, waist-deep in salmon, load the long cutting tables, along which are ranged numbers of their countrymen with gleaming knives. Deftly these living automats work. One sweep of the knife and the fish is bereft of fins and head. Another quick slash and the tail is severed, and the trunk slides through a hole in a partition into a trough beyond. Holes in the floor are provided for the exit of these heads and tails, but beside almost every vent there is