

ADAMS RIVER SALMON RUN.

300 miles from its mouth, the Adams River, British Columbia, stages its annual near-miracle, the Salmon run. From the ocean, millions fight their way upstream, taking an average of fifteen days to make it. Males that haven't found a mate fight the more fortunate.

The female lays about 5,000 eggs at each place where she stops. The male fertilises them with a cloud of sperm, and then they swim further up, repeating the process till the female's exhausted and dies. All the fish die when the spawning's completed.

Indians in canoes spear them as the fish make their way up. For how many centuries they've been stocking their winter larder this way no one knows. They make an annual festival of it, which first drew the white man's attention to the harvest they could obtain by better methods.

The Indians have a time honoured way of preserving the salmon. They first clean the inside (while the men look on; a division of labour which more civilised people might copy) and that being done, hang the fish up to dry. Three weeks later they store them, till they fancy a nice bit of dried salmon in the winter. Meanwhile Canadians and Americans make twelve million pounds in a good year out of three hundred acres of spawning ground. Next spring the eggs will hatch out and millions of baby salmon will be swept by the current into the sea. In four years they'll return to the same spot and spawn for themselves.