

Amendments of the Fishery Regulations have been made to prevent the use of hurdles to divert the course of whitebait when going up rivers; to permit the use of hand whitebait-nets with an opening of 9 square feet, and to allow them to be made of any shape; to allow trawling at the entrance to Kaipara Harbour up to a line drawn from the flagstaff at Pouto to the South Head; as to netting in the New River Estuary; to enable trout taken, smoked, and branded by the Tourist Department to be sold in the Dominion; and for defining the manner in which the tonnage of fishing-boats is to be ascertained.

The Natives along the East Coast between Tokomaru Bay and Hicks Bay complained that trawlers were working on their fishing-grounds, and asked that this should be prohibited; but the request was not acceded to, as inquiry showed that there was very little, if any, interference with their grounds.

Sergeants J. C. S. Willis, of Palmerston North, and J. Dougan, of Port Chalmers, and Constables C. S. Le Fevre, of Port Ahuriri, E. Driscoll, of Helensville, J. Horan, of Whangarei, W. Berry, of Thames, W. Richardson, of Lyttelton, and H. Scott, of Chatham Islands, have been appointed Inspectors of Fisheries.

*Seals*.—The close season for seals has been extended until the 30th June, 1912.

Returns showing the number of registered fishing-boats at the various ports, and the prosecutions for breaches of the Fisheries Act during the year, are appended.

*Portobello Marine Fish-hatchery*.—A report by the curator on this hatchery is attached. During the year the Department made a grant of £330 for maintenance, £50 for rent, repairs, and stores, and £250 for enlarging the ponds.

*Salmon*.—During the year another million Atlantic-salmon ova were ordered from Great Britain, and arrangements were made by the High Commissioner to obtain them from the River Wye; but, owing to floods, only 400,000 could be got from that river, and 600,000 had to be obtained from Germany. They came out in the s.s. "Ruahine," in charge of Mr. C. L. Ayson, manager of the salmon-station at Hakataramea, who went to England for the purpose. A special cool-chamber was provided on the vessel, which proved very satisfactory. The chamber was kept at a temperature of 34°, while an average temperature of 33° inside the cases was maintained during the voyage. The loss on the German (Rhine) ova from the time they were received until they reached Wellington was 41,334, and on the English ova 11,982. This result must be considered very satisfactory, especially when it is borne in mind that some of the ova had been in the packing-trays for eighty-three days. The loss with the Rhine ova would have been much smaller had not three trays been completely lost owing to the ova being too far developed when packed.

On the "Ruahine's" arrival at Wellington Mr. Ayson, Chief Inspector of Fisheries, took the ova to Lake Te Anau for hatching-out there. As the Rhine ova were nearest hatching they were unpacked first, and were found to be in very good condition: 4,250 were found to be dead, and 5,250 dead ones were picked out of the hatching-baskets later on. The packing of these Rhine ova was very rough, and Mr. Ayson considers it is wonderful that they reached New Zealand with such a small percentage of loss. The English ova unpacked in perfect condition. In the unpacking and first picking-over next morning only 475 dead ones were taken out. They were very nicely packed, and the material used was the very best that could be obtained. All the young fish have been liberated in the lake.

The collection of quinnat-salmon ova last season was not so satisfactory as in the previous season, which was principally owing to the low state of the spawning-rivers which flow into the Waitaki, caused by a very dry summer; however, 210,000 were obtained, and of this number 150,000 were sent to the hatchery at Kokotahi, Westland: 145,000 fry hatched from these 150,000 ova, and they were liberated in streams flowing into the Hokitika River, 70,000 being put into Harris Creek, 50,000 into Murray's Creek, and 25,000 into Duck Creek. Of the remainder of the ova, 25,000 were sent to Tasmania, where an attempt is being made to acclimatize the fish, the fry from 3,000 were liberated in the Seaforth-Mackenzie River, and the fry from 32,000 were reared at the station at Hakataramea for liberation in the river there. During the collection of the ova Chief Inspector Ayson, who was in charge of the collection, received valuable assistance from Mr. James Sutherland, manager of Benmore Station, who supplied him with a horse and personally assisted him in making an inspection of the Ohau River, and supplied all the willow-stakes required free of cost, and carted them, with Mr. Ayson's tools, across the Ohau River, a distance of twelve miles. Mr. Preston, owner of Halden Station, and Mr. Grant, of Gray's Hill Station, also gave Mr. Ayson valuable assistance during the two seasons he was collecting ova by allowing him to camp in the shepherd's huts, to take firewood, and to use tools, &c. The thanks of the Department are due to these gentlemen.

It is anticipated that a large number of ova will be obtained this season, most of which will go to the Kokotahi Hatchery. A further 25,000 will be sent to Tasmania, as the Government of that State has asked the Department to supply that number each year until the order is countermanded.

Last season two of the fish which were taken in the Twizel River, a tributary of the Ohau, were sent to Mr. E. R. Waite, Curator of the Canterbury Museum, for the purpose of identification, and in his report he states that they are quinnat salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), and that they were in full breeding condition, but, owing doubtless to the circumstance that our rivers are so much shorter, they did not exhibit that emaciated condition so characteristic of the same species breeding in the rivers of Pacific North America.

During the year the following fish were liberated from the Hakataramea ponds: Quinnat salmon—126 three years old, 821 two years old, 23,854 one year old, and 22,700 fry from the season's ova; Atlantic salmon—10,274 one and half years old. After the liberation of those mentioned above, 8,550 quinnat and 550 Atlantic fish remained in the ponds.