

Trout.—Last season the Department collected 945,000 brown-trout ova for acclimatization societies that asked for them, and supplied them at a charge of 5s. a thousand. It also collected and supplied 35,000 of the same ova to the Transvaal Government. Arrangements are being made to collect ova during the coming season on the same terms. Last year 100,000 rainbow-trout ova were supplied to the Queensland Government. These were collected by the Tourist Division of the Department of Agriculture, and packed and shipped by this Department.

The Hon. the Minister of Marine, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE ALLPORT, Secretary.

The PRINCIPAL EXAMINER OF MASTERS AND MATES to the SECRETARY, Marine Department.

Office of the Principal Examiner of Masters and Mates,
Customhouse, Wellington, 10th May, 1911

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit my annual report on the examination of masters and mates in New Zealand.

The work, as usual, has been carried out by the Examiners at the four principal ports in a satisfactory manner. I visited the Auckland and Lyttelton examination-rooms during the year, and found everything in very satisfactory order.

Notwithstanding the marked decrease in the number of candidates for foreign-going and home-trade certificates reported last year, due to the increased requirements of candidates in having to possess a knowledge of first aid to the injured, and some knowledge of the Morse and semaphore signalling, the increase in the last twelve months has been comparatively small—viz., only 26 per cent.; and this increase is due almost entirely to examinations in Auckland, where during the last few years the majority of the examinations have been held. The number of examinations for river-steamers and fishing-boats is practically the same as last year. By the Shipping and Seamen Amendment Act, 1909, fishing-boats up to 10 tons register are now exempted from the obligation to carry a certificated officer in charge of the vessel.

The Examiners as a rule have reported very favourably on the candidates' proficiency in the Morse and semaphore signalling, which is generally in advance of the actual requirement of the ordinary examination.

Only one candidate (Mr. Frank S. Horn) passed for extra master during the year. By the new regulations which came into force on the 1st October, 1910, this examination is more difficult than ever, and unless a candidate is a quick worker, as well as accurate, he is quite likely to fail for time. The construction of a plan or chart on Mercator's principle, as now given, requires a deal of thinking out and neat handiness, and the compass and bearings, &c., must all be plotted without the aid of a protractor. It needs a deal of care and patience. The additional work for the ordinary examinations, which came into force in September of last year, was mentioned in my last report. It is not likely to cause anxiety or much extra labour to intending candidates.

A few candidates have already voluntarily passed the higher standard of form-vision, which will come into force for all candidates when passing their first examination after the 1st January, 1914.

Boys, or parents intending to send their boys to sea, should note that unless they are in possession of a certificate of competency by 1st January, 1914, they will after that date be required to pass the new standard of form-vision as laid down in Appendix A of the regulations, whether they are coming up for a certificate of competency or for examination in sight-test only. In this examination the candidate will be tested with each eye separately, and he must not be allowed to use spectacles or glasses of any kind.

I have, &c.,

HAROLD S. BLACKBOURNE.

Principal Examiner of Masters and Mates.

The CURATOR, Portobello Marine Fish-hatchery, to the SECRETARY, Marine Department.

Marine Fish-hatchery and Biological Station,
Portobello, Dunedin, 13th May, 1911.

SIR,—

I have the honour to present the following (the fifth) annual report of operations at the Marine Fish-hatchery, from the publication of the last report (30th April, 1910) to the present date. Reports of previous years' operations will be found in the "Transactions of the New Zealand Institute," Vols. 38 and 39, and in the New Zealand Marine Department Reports for 1908-9 and 1909-10.

Lobsters.—Exact dates and particulars of casting, spawning, hatching, &c., were given in the report for 1908-9, and it will not be necessary to go too closely into these details again, further than to state that during both this season and the last the dates of these events have closely corresponded with those given in that report, and the fact that nineteen out of a total of twenty-one females spawned again during January, February, and March tends to support the theory of annual as against biennial reproduction.