

10. Please supply the dimensions and engine-power of the "Pieter Faure," her equipment for fishing and exploration ?

10. Particulars not supplied.

11. Are all vessels engaged in fishing registered and licensed, and what license fee is charged ?

11. All vessels employed in fishing for market are both registered and licensed.

#### FISHERY BOARD FOR SCOTLAND.

##### MEMO. *re* STATISTICS.

Various European authorities have indicated their commendation of the model on which the Board's fishery statistics are drawn up, and also of the completeness of the information afforded.

Previous to 1885 the only returns available related to the number of persons employed in the fisheries, the number and tonnage of the boats engaged, and the quantity of fish cured and branded and exported. These statistics were collected by the Board for the whole of Great Britain from 1809 up to 1849, fishery officers being stationed at various ports for this and other purposes.

In 1849 the Board's officers in England were withdrawn, and in 1868 their connection with the Isle of Man came to an end. In 1885 an Act was passed empowering the Board to obtain returns of all fish landed, and these were first published in the annual report for 1886. They were subsequently completely remodelled (1892) and greatly amplified, and in their present form afford a very fair criterion of the actual condition of the fisheries.

The subject may be conveniently treated under three heads, viz.: (a) The staff employed in collecting and collating the returns; (b) the system of collection; and (c) the principle followed in abstracting and collating the statistics for the Board's annual report.

##### (a.) *Staff employed in collecting and collating Returns.*

For administrative and statistical purposes, the Scottish coast and adjacent islands are divided up into twenty-seven fishery districts (see map). These districts are administered under the supervision of the head office by an outdoor staff, consisting of a General Inspector (resident in Edinburgh), an Assistant Inspector (stationed at Inverness), ten first-class officers, and twenty-two second-class officers. In each district there is a resident officer and an office, but the district of Aberdeen is in charge of three officers, and the district of Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Wick, Shetland, and Stornoway are in charge of two officers.

These officers were first appointed in 1809, under the provisions of 48 Geo. III, c. 110, and their duties have been greatly added to from time to time by fresh legislation. The principal duties are collecting returns, preparing reports on the state of the fisheries, and on any special fishery problems or any question of public policy regarding fisheries arising in their districts, enforcement of the Acts and regulations relating to the preservation of order at sea (including lettering and numbering and lighting of fishing-boats), and Acts and by-laws regulating different methods of fishing, administering the herring-brand, testing and stamping herring-measures, and settling (in a quasi-judicial capacity) cases of damage by one fishing-boat to another or to fishing-gear. The west coast officers are now also the Registrars of fishing-boats on that coast, having taken over that duty from the Customs officers a few years ago.

All candidates for fishery officerships must possess a practical knowledge of the industry, and, with that end in view, must serve an apprenticeship as coopers and curers. If suitably recommended, the Board, on the occurrence of a vacancy, put them through the test of an examination in practical knowledge, and, if they successfully emerge from that ordeal, they are called upon by the Civil Service Commissioners to go through a limited competition in literary subjects, the candidate securing the greatest number of marks in both examinations being the one appointed.

For the purpose of obtaining returns of fish landed from the different fishing-creeks and villages, the officer is authorized to appoint local correspondents, whose names and occupations he intimates to the head office. The person usually selected is the one most closely connected with the industry, such as the harbourmaster, local fish-curer, fish-salesman, fisherman, or stationmaster.

During the currency of the great summer herring-fishery, when a larger portion of their time is occupied in examining barrels of herrings presented for the brand, the officers in charge of the principal districts are allowed to appoint temporary clerks to assist them in collecting and collating returns and in other clerical work, at a salary of not more than 18s. a week, the provision in the parliamentary vote for that purpose being, for the present financial year, £70.

In Aberdeen district, which (excluding herrings) is by far the most important fishing-centre in Scotland, the three officers are assisted by two permanent clerks. These clerks devote the whole of their time to the collection of statistics at the market, a certain portion of which is placed at the disposal of the Committee for North Sea Investigations.

Here I would wish to express my firm belief in the value of full and accurate statistics as the best aid in the solution of sea-fishery problems, provided that—(1) They are spread over a fairly long period; (2) they are collected by or under the supervision of thoroughly reliable and disinterested persons having a practical knowledge of the industry; and (3) they are analyzed by officials with an open mind, free from theories and preconceived ideas as to the conclusions to be arrived at.

##### (b.) *The System of Collection.*

(1.) *Means-of-capture Returns.*—These returns are classified under the heads of steamers and sailing-vessels. The former are again divided into trawlers and herring drifters and liners, and information is given as to their registered tonnage, length of keel, and value. The extent and value