

forms are transferred to a ledger in which an account has been opened for each curer, and these are transferred again at the close of the year to an annual return for transmission, together with the relative books, to the head-office.

(4.) *Cured Fish exported.*—Similarly with regard to exportation; a curer desiring to ship his cured herrings, or cod, ling, &c., must give formal notice of his intention to the local fishery officer, and furnish him with the number of barrels and half-barrels which he means to export, the tonnage and nationality of the vessel employed, and the number of crew engaged, and the port to which the herrings, or cod, &c., are being consigned.

(5.) *Miscellaneous Returns.*—These are obtained by the local officers during their annual survey and by corresponding with the parties engaged in the subsidiary industries to the fishing industry.

In conclusion, it may be stated that, while the local correspondents receive allowances varying from only 5s. to £7, they take a keen interest in their duties, deeming it an honour to be selected to perform duties of an official nature, and consequently taking a pride in securing that the information supplied by them shall be as accurate as possible.

(c.) *Collation of the Returns.*

At the close of each year the fishery officers have to forward their returns to the head office, where the staff proceed to check them and abstract figures for the annual report. All errors discovered are noted and subsequently intimated to the officer affected.

ROTORUA AND TAUPO TROUT FISHERIES.

SIR,—

Wellington, 17th September, 1912.

As instructed by you, I have made an inspection of the Lake Taupo and Rotorua trout fisheries, and I have now the honour to supply the following report on their condition and recommendations for their future working.

TAUPO.

I first visited Lake Taupo, arriving there by coach from Rotorua on the 16th August. The following day I hired a launch from Mr. Ryan and commenced a detailed inspection of all the rivers and streams of any consequence flowing into the lake. I made an examination of the mouths of each, and going up-stream as far as time would allow in order to get as good an idea as possible of the volume and character of the water and bottom, and also of the number and size of trout which were running up at this season. At Tokaanu I hired a trap and went up the Tongariro River a considerable distance, and also inspected Chase's Creek and the Potu Stream, tributaries of the Tongariro. I am forwarding with this a lithograph map of Lake Taupo, on which I have noted a description of the size and character of each river and stream.

On the 19th and 20th I inspected the Whangamata and Whakaiapo Streams, and had an opportunity of handling a large number of trout which were being netted by the Manager of the Auckland Acclimatization Hatchery for spawning. All the streams flowing into Lake Taupo have a pumice bottom at their mouths, but some distance up a number have a shingle and rock bottom. The longest and heaviest rivers flow into the lake on the east and south sides; these take their rise from the Kaimanawa and Ahimanawa Ranges, and from the indications along their banks and from reports it would seem that they are subject to heavy floods at certain seasons. The streams on the west and north sides are smaller and shorter, and not nearly so subject to floods.

Trout.

I saw considerable numbers of spawning trout in all the streams, but they were most numerous in the Waitahanui, Hinemaia, Tauranga-Taupo, Waimarino, Chase's Creek, Waihora, Whangamata, and Whakaiapo. No exceptionally large fish were seen in any of the streams, and I would estimate the average weight at about 6 lb. In the Whakaiapo, where I had an opportunity of handling a large number of fish, the average weight of unspawned fish would be about 5 lb. The fish were rather uneven in size in this stream, and a good many ill-conditioned fish were seen. In size and condition the fish resembled those I handled for spawning in the Ngongotaha, Utahina, and Fairy Creek in 1906. In the Whangamata the fish were more even in size, and the average weight higher and fewer ill-conditioned fish. I estimate their average weight at about 6½ lb.

I met all the old residents of Taupo and Tokaanu who have taken a keen interest in the fisheries from the time trout were first planted in the streams and lakes in the district, and the general opinion expressed was that the natural feed for trout has during the last few years decreased very much, the *kokopu* (*Galaxias fasciatus*) and some other indigenous animals on which the trout feed largely having almost disappeared; that there has been a very large increase in the number of trout during the last three or four years, and that there has been a considerable decrease in the size and condition of the trout, some stating that it was noticeable five years ago, but all agreed that the deterioration has been distinctly noticeable during the last three years.