

I went over some of the beds in the Hauraki Gulf, at the Bay of Islands, in January last, and found them in first-class condition. In the Bay of Islands, besides growing on the rocks in the usual way, large quantities of oysters are growing on small stones which form shingle-beaches in some of the bays, the floating spat having adhered to the stones.

In Hokianga Harbour, where the beds have been closed for some time, the oysters are still small, although quantities of them are mature, and it would, I think, be wise to pick some of them, as those on top are only smothering those underneath. The Kaipara beds are in fair condition, and if necessary a quantity of oysters can be got from them this season. The beds on the foreshore of that part of Kaipara Harbour, Kiakia Bay, Otamatea, for a distance of 50 chains from Te Kopua Point, have been set aside as an oyster-fishery from which Maoris may take oysters for their own food at all times.

The oysters taken from the Foveaux Strait beds last season met all requirements. Of those taken last year 361,225 dozen, valued at £2,984, were exported to Australia, and during the season about 1,674,680 dozen, valued at about £7,790, were disposed of in New Zealand.

*Toheroa*.—The canning of toheroas is carried on in the Kaipara district, and in order to preserve some of the beds for the use of the public who take them for their own use, the taking of this shell-fish for the purpose of canning or otherwise preserving, or for selling fresh, has been prohibited within half a mile on either side of Glink's Gap.

The following is the purport of the reports of the local Inspectors of Fisheries:—

*Chatham Islands*.—The fishing during the past year has been fairly successful, but the catch has not been quite so good as during the previous year. During the year about a thousand cases of flounders caught in the Te Whanga Lagoon were shipped to New Zealand. These fish were in rather poor condition, owing apparently to the lagoon being overstocked. Blue cod and groper are as plentiful as ever. There was a shortage of competent fishermen.

*Bay of Islands*.—The principal fish taken during the year were schnapper, mullet, flounders, maumau, kahawai, kingfish, and crayfish. These were very plentiful, and in some instances the fishermen had some difficulty in selling their catches at anything like remunerative prices. There are two mullet-canneries in the district—one at Purerua, in the Bay of Islands, and the other at Awanui. At the former place 545 cases and at the latter 174 cases were canned, the approximate value of which was £1 a case. The mullet are very plentiful, whereas a few years ago they were scarce. There are four smokehouses at which schnapper, maumau, and mullet are smoked. The number of fishing-boats registered at the port is fifty-five, whose crews total 129 persons, of whom eighty-nine are Europeans and forty Maoris. The humpback-whaling carried on by Messrs. Jagger and Cook during the season was fairly successful, fifty-six whales, which produced 270 tons of oil and 60 tons of bonedust, having been taken. Last season 5,558 bags of oysters were picked, and the beds look well for the coming season.

*Hokianga*.—The oysters on the beds are not large, but they are fairly plentiful. The principal fish caught were schnapper, mullet, kahawai, rock-cod, herring, moki, and terakihi. The condition of the fish was good, and schnapper and mullet were very plentiful, especially the latter. Mussels, pipis, cockles, scallops, and crayfish abound on the coast. There are several smokehouses in the district. Eighteen fishing-boats were licensed from March to December, 1913, and eight from January to March, 1914.

*Kaipara*.—Fish have been caught in fair quantities. Mullet and schnapper have been plentiful. Flounders have been plentiful, but trevalli and gurnet have not been caught in large quantities.

*Auckland*.—There are about a hundred boats, employing approximately two hundred and fifty men, engaged in fishing in this district, and there are in Auckland four fish-curing establishments employing fifty men. There is also one such establishment at Kawau, one at the Great Barrier, and one at Mahurangi, besides which Tapu and Coromandel each have a mussel curing and canning factory. Fish of all kinds except mullet have been fairly plentiful. Mullet are very scarce, and a close season extending over a term of years is recommended. The oyster-beds in the Hauraki Gulf are looking well, and it is estimated that about 4,200 sacks of oysters can be taken from them this year.

*Thames*.—There are about forty boats, employing approximately a hundred men, engaged in fishing in the Thames district, most of them being employed in net fishing. The supply of fish has been considerably lessened during the last two or three years owing to the large quantities of jellyfish which fill the nets, and make it very difficult to work them. Flounders have been very plentiful. Schnapper were very scarce last winter, but they have been very plentiful during the last six months.

*Napier*.—The fishing during the year was good on the whole. The supply of flat fish was very good. Besides flat fish the principal fish taken were trevalli, gurnet, schnapper, moki, terakihi, and kingfish; but there was a perceptible falling-off in the quantities of all these fish, except kingfish, as compared with former years. Hand trawling from the beaches was not so good as in former years, the weather-conditions not having been suitable. Two steam-trawlers have been added to the trawling fleet, and there has been an average number of eleven trawlers employed during the year.

*Pictou*.—The principal fish taken were rock-cod, hapuka, butterfish, moki, terakihi, warehou, trumpeter, and flounders; but the fishing has not been good, and it has been necessary for the fishing-boats to work well out in Cook Strait.

*Wellington*.—During the year the catches from the local fishing-grounds have been fairly good, although the supply of hapuku has fallen off slightly, owing, it is stated, to the discovery