

Boat-slips.—Port Jackson ; Wade River ; Bragg's Bay, Stewart Island ; Mill Bay, Mangonui Harbour ; Rocky Bay, Waiheka ; Bravo Island, Stewart Island.

Timber-booms.—Dargaville ; Tangawahine Creek, Kaipara.

Bridges over Navigable Waters.—Turanganui, Gisborne ; Oputuru Creek, Raglan ; Wairoa River, Dargaville ; Avon River, New Brighton.

Reclamations.—Evaus Bay, Wellington.

FISHERIES.

During the year the Chief Inspector of Fisheries visited the following fishing-grounds and oyster-beds : Hokianga, Whangape, Bay of Islands, Whangaruru, Whangamumu, Whangarei, Kaipara, Manukau, Hauraki Gulf, Coromandel, Great Barrier, Thames, Tauranga, Cook Strait, Marlborough Sounds, Picton, Blenheim, Lyttelton, Kaiapoi, Lake Ellesmere, Timaru, Oamaru, Moeraki, Port Chalmers, Molyneux Bay, and Invercargill.

In connection with oyster-cultivation work, special inspections were made of the oyster-beds at Bay of Islands, Whangarei, Great Barrier, Hauraki Gulf, Kawau Island, Mahurangi, and Coromandel coast.

Visits were also made to the Government Atlantic-salmon Hatchery at Te Anau Lake, and Waitea Creek Hatchery on the Wanganui River, and also to the Quinntat-salmon Hatchery at Haketarama, Maori Creek, and Pembroke. An inspection was made of the Haast River on the West Coast, crossing over the Haast Pass to its headwaters and following it down to its junction with the Landsborough.

The annual reports received from the Collectors of Customs and Inspectors of Fisheries show that, taking the year right through, fish have been plentiful on the usual fishing-grounds, and good catches have been made by fishermen.

The catching-power at Auckland has been largely increased by the number of launches which have given up set-net and line fishing and gone in for the more up-to-date method of Danish seining. The number of Danish-seining vessels this year numbers 22, as against 3 the previous year. The large steam trawlers which tried seining last year in the Hauraki Gulf found that the cost of working such vessels at this method of fishing was too great, and they have all gone back to trawling, and with the exception of one small trawler all the vessels now using the Danish seine are motor-power launches. A good deal has been said about the destruction of immature fish by Danish seiners, but experience has proved that even with a 3½ in. mesh in the wings and cod end of the net very few small snapper or tarakihi are taken, and with a 4 in. mesh there are practically none ; so it would seem that the depletion of the fish-supply in areas where this method of fishing is employed can be guarded against by fixing a mesh of net which will allow all fish below a certain size to pass through. In fine weather good hauls have been made by the seiners throughout the year—as an instance, two launches working off the Coromandel coast : for three hauls one had 3 tons of fish, and the other for two hauls fully 2 tons, all the fish being well over the regulation size.

Extensive new works for Sanfords Limited were finished and opened in February last. This is the largest and most complete plant for handling fish in the Southern Hemisphere. The most up-to-date facilities for cleaning, packing, and curing fish are provided, with a complete plant for the extraction of fish-oil and the manufacture of fish-fertilizer and fish-meal, and also a large ice-making plant.

Foveaux Strait Oyster-beds.—In his report the local Inspector at Bluff says : “ The oysters this season are plentiful and in good condition. The total quantity taken from the beds was 23,796 sacks ; of these, 522 sacks and 360 cases of opened and frozen oysters were exported to Melbourne, and the balance, 23,274 sacks, were disposed of in the Dominion. The total wholesale value of the season's catch was £14,873.”

Rock-oysters.—The beds picked last season in the Hauraki Gulf were part of Ponui, Waiheke, Pakihi, Brown's, Rangitoto, Matu Tapu, and Rakino Islands, also part of Mahurangi and the south coast. The beds on Coromandel coast and Great Barrier Island, and the Kaipara beds, were also picked. The only oysters picked at Bay of Islands was 161 sacks for local sale. The reason for not picking for the Auckland market was because the principal beds had a very heavy crop of oyster-spat, and the mature oysters could not be picked without destroying large quantities of these small oysters, and also because the Bay of Islands men were employed picking at Kaipara and Hauraki Gulf throughout the season. The beds all over the Bay of Islands are in very good condition and will yield over 3,000 sacks for market this season. All the oyster-cultivation walls are now heavily covered with oysters : from those built in 1921–22 the Inspector says quite 200 sacks of first-class oysters will be taken for market this season. With the splendid fixing of young oysters on the walls built it is safe to say that within four years the Department will get back all the money spent on cultivation work, and have miles of permanent beds in localities where neither rock nor oysters ever existed.

The Whangarei beds are in splendid condition, and it is expected that over 400 sacks can be taken for market this season.

The Kaipara beds yielded 2,011 sacks for market last season. These beds are very extensive, and with proper protection and careful picking can be greatly improved. This season there is a good fixing of young oysters.

The Hauraki Gulf and Great Barrier beds are improving year by year. They were lightly picked last season from both localities ; 4,346 sacks were taken. The beds were left in good heart, and it is expected that they will yield quite the same quantity this season.

Since the appointment of an Inspector for the Coromandel coast the beds are showing steady and satisfactory improvement ; 323 sacks were picked last season, and the Inspector expects to take well over 400 this season.