

mere. Much of the shooting done is for the market, and it appears desirable that there should be some restriction in order to prevent such wholesale slaughter as now takes place on certain shooting-grounds every season.

Some more systematic method is also greatly needed to prevent poaching, which is carried on in a wholesale manner in many districts. As pointed out in the Department's last annual report, much might be done by utilising the services of members of the Police Force, Stock Inspectors, and Rabbit Agents to prevent breaches of the Animals' Protection Act and Fisheries Conservation Acts.

The dates for opening and closing of the fishing seasons require amending. The season, especially in the northern districts, opens too early and closes too late. At Rotorua the fish have not ceased spawning on the 1st October, and they have commenced again before the season has closed. The season in this district should certainly not open before the 1st November, and should close on the 31st March.

The trout-fishing at Rotorua has been particularly good during the 1903-4 season. At the suggestion of this Department a register was kept showing the catches made in Rotorua Lake and adjacent waters. At the close of the season the record showed that 6,952 trout had been caught, aggregating a weight of 13 tons 13 cwt. 3 qr. 21½ lb. Amongst the fish taken were many weighing 12 lb. to 18 lb. Enormous as the registered catch was, it is considered that probably a third more was actually taken, as many fishermen failed to supply the required particulars. The total quantity of trout taken from the lakes and streams in this district is therefore calculated at close on *twenty tons*.

Many of the greatest catches were made by trolling on the lake. I am of the opinion that indiscriminate trolling, with a bait, should not be permitted. There is most excellent fishing at Rotorua, which is proving a great attraction to visitors from abroad, but if the indiscriminate trolling is allowed to continue it is very probable that the fishing will not remain good for more than a few seasons. I would recommend that a trolling-area in the lake should be strictly defined.

BIG GAME.

The matter of introducing new varieties of game suitable for rugged and non-settled regions is receiving attention. Several valuable gifts of sport animals have been received. Recently five "thar," or Caucasian mountain-goats, presented by the Duke of Bedford, arrived from London by the s.s. "Corinthic." Six goats were originally shipped, but one was lost overboard. The thar are now on Somes Island, and it is proposed to liberate them in the early spring in some mountainous country not yet definitely decided on. These animals are similar in their habits to the Spanish wild goat. Their most distinctive feature is the horns, which are black and large, and directed upwards and backwards in a single plane, with the tips widely separated and generally directed downwards. The base section of the horns is triangular, and ornamented in front with knobs. Six Japanese deer, also presented by the Duke of Bedford, are expected by an early steamer. The thanks of the Government are due to Mr. St. George Littledale for the very valuable assistance he has given in obtaining these fine sporting animals.

A number of wapiti, the large North American deer (*Cervus canadensis*), have been presented to the colony by President Roosevelt, of the United States. Inspector Moorhouse of this Department has been sent to America for the purpose of attending to their safe transport. When these animals have increased in sufficient numbers they will provide excellent sport, both for our own people and for visitors from abroad.

VISITS OF INSPECTION.

Since last annual report the Superintendent made visits to the Kawhia and King-country districts, Te Aroha, Rotorua, the Bay of Plenty, the Urewera country, &c., in the North Island; and also at Hanmer Springs, the Southern Lakes, Milford Sound, and Stewart Island.

ST. LOUIS PURCHASE EXPOSITION.

In the short time at its disposal prior to the opening of the great Exposition at St. Louis, U.S.A., the Tourist Department (in conjunction with the Department of Industries and Commerce) arranged an exhibit well representative of the colony's varied scenic attractions, its excellent sport and its industrial resources. The exhibits were shipped to America by the s.s. "Sierra" in April. Space has been allotted to New Zealand at the Exhibition in the Palace of Agriculture, and the Forestry, Fish, and Game Building. The exhibits sent by the Department included a great many choice photograph enlargements, and oil, water-colour, and pastel paintings depicting scenery, cities, industries, &c., throughout New Zealand; pictures of typical Maoris and Maori life; sporting trophies, consisting of many splendid stags' heads and some monster trout; specimens of Maori carving, weapons, and utensils; and a large quantity of attractive literature and advertising matter calculated to catch the tourist's eye.

The colony's office at the exhibition is well supplied with Government Year-books, copies of annual reports of the various Departments of public utility, statistics dealing with the progress and development of the country, and data useful to those who think of settling in New Zealand. The exhibits of agricultural and other produce made by the Department of Industries and Commerce are a valuable adjunct to the Tourist Department's display, and the whole exhibit should be of considerable service as an advertisement for the colony.

The following is a list of principal exhibits sent to the Exposition and displayed in the New Zealand courts:—

Industries and products: Bales of four grades of New Zealand phormium-fibre; binder-twine made from phormium-fibre; a large and varied assortment of flax dressed by Maoris; a large variety of Maori kits coloured with Native dyes; a large exhibit of rabbit-skins, showing all varieties; exhibits of wheat, oats, barley, peas, beans, cocksfoot, rye-grass, white and red clover, timothy and cow-grass seeds; different classes of grain in sheaves; different qualities of tallow;