

fishermen. There are fifty-one fishing-boats belonging to the Bay of Islands, which employ 164 men.

In the Auckland District the supply of fish has been generally equal to the demand. Schnapper have been plentiful—in fact, they have been so plentiful since October last that dealers have had to limit the quantities taken from fishermen. Flounders were equal to the demand last winter, and have been very abundant during the summer and autumn. Mullet have been very scarce. It would appear that the time has now arrived when there should be a close season for this fish. Kahawai, trevalli, and gurnard have been abundant. There is now a good deal of fishing done from Tauranga, and there is a fish-curing establishment at that place. There are five such establishments at Auckland, and one at Kawau Island. In Manukau Harbour the principal fish caught are schnapper, flounders, and mullet, of which there has been a fair supply.

At Hokianga the principal fish caught are schnapper, mullet, kahawai, flounder, whitebait, kingfish, rock-cod, and herring, but they have been scarce during the year. The Waterfall Canning Factory has closed down during the year owing to the scarcity of fish. There are thirteen smokehouses in the district, every licensed fisherman having one. Since the closing of the oyster-beds there has been a marked improvement. The young oysters are coming on well.

In Kaipara Harbour mullet, flounders, and schnapper are caught, and they have been very plentiful during the year, mullet especially so. There is a canning-factory at Batley and a smokehouse at Sail Point. There are twenty-four licensed fishing-boats in the harbour, and four oyster licenses were issued.

The industry in Hawke's Bay is in a flourishing condition. There are ten trawlers engaged in fishing, and they give employment to forty men.

The industry appears to be in a languishing state in Canterbury. Two trawlers have been withdrawn from fishing, and the number of fishing-boats is decreasing. The principal places from which fish are obtained are Kaikoura, Lyttelton, Akaroa, and Kaiapoi. There is one smoke-house each at Christchurch, Lyttelton, and Kaikoura.

The Inspector at Dunedin reports that in all old-known fishing-places the catches have been good. In all shallow bays flounders and small fish are obtained in large quantities, and groper, kingfish, schnapper, barracouta, blue and red cod, tarakihi, trevalli, and moki are found along the coast from Oamaru to Chaslands. The difficulty of transport is a great drawback to the industry in out-of-the-way places. There are 140 boats employed in the district, 59 of which are propelled by oil-engines. There are 367 persons actually employed in fishing; there are 37 retail shops, which give employment to 193 persons; 120 persons are employed in fish curing and preserving works, 105 in fish-supper rooms, and there are 73 fish-hawkers. All the fish freezing and preserving works have been inspected, and found to be clean and sanitary in every respect. An oil and manure works has been established at Moeraki, where fish-offal is treated in a scientific manner, with the result that an extensive trade is carried on with farmers and others. The oil obtained is used by manufacturing chemists, and for feeding young cattle.

The principal fish caught on the Bluff fishing-grounds, which include Foveaux Strait, Stewart Island, Ruapuke, and other islands in the strait, is blue-cod, which are taken with hook and line, and flounders, which are netted in the harbours and bays. Sixty boats, a good many of which are fitted with oil-engines, are engaged in fishing, and some of them have refrigerators. There are five fish-freezing plants on the mainland and on Stewart Island, and 6,329 cwt. of frozen fish, valued at £9,552, was exported during the year.

Mr. J. Munro, of Whangarei, and several members of the Police Force in various parts of the colony have been appointed Inspectors of Fisheries, so as to give them the necessary power to enforce the provisions of the Sea-fisheries Acts and regulations.

As poisonous fibres of wool, &c., from a woollen-mill were killing the fish in the Cam River, the Department required the company owning the mill to take steps to prevent the poisonous matter going into the river, and this has been done by putting strainers in the mouths of the drains.

*Imported Fish.*—Another shipment of 500,000 quinnat-salmon ova and 2,000,000 whitefish ova has been obtained from the United States. Mr. Ayson, Chief Inspector of Fisheries, proceeded to San Francisco and brought the ova to the colony, and, considering the delay and difficulties which occurred on the voyage from San Francisco owing to the breakdown of the steamer, the shipment was very successful. Appended is a report on it by Mr. Ayson.

Whilst in California Mr. Ayson endeavoured to obtain a shipment of young striped bass, but was not able to do so. It is, however, hoped that on a future occasion we shall be able to obtain a shipment of this valuable food fish.

There appears to be no doubt that the introduction of salmon into the colony has been successful. As stated in my last year's report, quinnat salmon had been caught in the Waitaki River. This year fish which are undoubtedly quinnat salmon have been caught in the Hakataramea River, up which they are going to spawn, and the Manager of the Salmon Station reports that he has seen large numbers of them in the river. Fish which were believed to be sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) were taken in Lake Ohau. Specimens were sent to Sir James Hector, who reports that they are without doubt young sea-run sockeye. A copy of his report is appended. Three hundred thousand sockeye ova were imported from Canada in 1902, half of which were hatched and liberated in the streams flowing into the head of Lake Ohau, and the other half were hatched at the Hakataramea Salmon Station and liberated in the Hakataramea and Auhiriri Rivers, tributaries of the Waitaki.

During the year the following fish have been liberated from the ponds at Hakataramea—viz., 11 five-year-old sockeye; 7 four-year Atlantic, and 62 three-year, 21,281 two-year, and 224,647 one-year quinnat salmon. At the end of March there were in the ponds 50 four-year Atlantic salmon, and the following quinnat salmon: 169 three-year, 398 two-year, 19,793 one-year, and 476,027 fry. Since that date 290,000 quinnat fry have been liberated.