

ful for a time, and some large catches were reported, but since January flat-fish have been reported as scarce, and the catches have been considerably below the average.

Trawling with auxiliary oil-launches is still being carried out in the shallower water off the Wairau Bar, in Cloudy Bay. Following on the results obtained in Tasman and Golden Bays during the prospecting cruise of the "Nora Niven," the New Zealand Fish Supply Company has lately sent that vessel out to these trawling-grounds, and has obtained very good results. There is no doubt that the fine trawling-grounds in Tasman and Golden Bays and in the neighbourhood of Cook Strait will, within a few years, be regularly worked by a number of trawlers.

In Wellington, as well as in the other principal cities in the Dominion, the want of a fish-market is very much felt. Such markets in the principal cities would be a boon to the fishermen and the public, and would assist materially in the organization and development of the fishing industry. It would end the very general complaint by fishermen who work at a distance from a market that they are unfairly treated by the fish salesmen who receive their fish, and it would bring the fisherman and the public into closer contact, with the result that the former would receive a better price for his fish and the consumer would get his supply at a lower rate than at present. Such markets should be provided by the municipalities, and Mr. Ayson recommends that the Department should approach the city authorities at Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland, with a view to having this matter taken up.

The following is the purport of reports received from the local Inspectors:—

The principal fish caught in the Bay of Islands district have been schnapper, flounders, barracouta, hapuka, butterfish, garfish, and crayfish. Besides these, rock-cod, mullet, kahawai, trevalli, kingfish, parori, tarakihi, maumau, and yellow-tail have been taken. The catch has been very much larger than during the previous year, especially in schnapper and crayfish. Sharks have been numerous, and have at times been very troublesome to fishermen through getting entangled in their nets. The number of fishing-boats was fifty-three, being two more than during the previous year. They range from $\frac{2}{100}$ ton to $4\frac{2}{100}$ tons, and with their nets and outfits are valued at £1,700. Their crews number 180, composed of 77 Europeans and 103 Maoris. There are two mullet-canning factories, one at Purerua and the other at Russell. There are three smokehouses in the district.

At Hokianga fish have been plentiful and in excellent condition. The principal fish taken have been schnapper, mullet, kahawai, flounders, whitebait, rock-cod, kingfish, and herring. Mussels, pipis, and cockles, and escallops abound on the coast, and crayfish are taken in fair quantities. Thirteen licensed fishing-boats were at work last season. There are thirteen smokehouses in the district.

There are eighteen licensed fishing-boats in Manukau Harbour, and a very fair quantity of flounders, mullet, and schnapper have been taken.

At Auckland the fish-supply has been fully equal to the demand. Schnapper, flounders, kahawai, trevalli, and gurnard have been plentiful, but mullet have been exceptionally scarce. Seventy-five fishing-boats, employing 160 men, have been fishing out of Auckland, and there are five fish-curing establishments at Auckland, one at Kawau, and one at Great Barrier Island.

At the Thames about forty-five boats and 100 men are engaged in fishing. Most of the fish are taken in nets, and the principal kinds caught are flounders and schnapper. The supply has been generally equal to the demand, and during last summer flounders were taken in such large quantities that the demand was exceeded. There are two fish-curing establishments and one fish-freezing chamber at the Thames.

At Kaipara schnapper, mullet, and flounders have been very plentiful. There is one canning-factory and three smokehouses in the district. Twenty-two fishing-boat licenses were issued during the year.

During the year three new steam-trawlers were registered at Napier, which makes the number now engaged in trawling from that port thirteen. The catches have been good, and show no sign of diminution. The industry at this place employs about a hundred persons, and it is in a flourishing condition.

In Westland there has been a good season for whitebait, and both canning-factories were very busy for about three months. There was not much other fish caught, flounders, red-cod, and herring being the principal kinds taken. There are five registered fishing-boats in the district.

In Canterbury and Otago there has been a steady all-round improvement in connection with the fishing industry. New boats, gear, and appliances are continually coming into use, and catches have been on a larger scale than formerly. Freezing and preserving works have been enlarged, and the turnover has increased. In Canterbury large quantities of whitebait have been taken in the Waimakariri, Cam, Styx, Avon, and Heathcote Rivers. The principal fish taken at Akaroa are flounders and shellfish. An improved crayfish-canning works has been erected at this place. Good catches have been taken at Timaru. The principal fish taken have been groper, kingfish, and blue-cod. There has been an increase in the quantity of fish taken at Oamaru, Moeraki, Port Chalmers, and Catlins. At present five new motor fishing-boats are being built at Dunedin. Owing to the improved class of boats in use grounds hitherto unvisited are now worked. The following statistics will give an idea of the importance of the industry in these districts: Number of fishing-boats in Canterbury, 240; Otago, 142. Number of men employed fishing in Canterbury, 300; Otago, 385. Number of retail shops and restaurants in Canterbury, 25; in Otago, 60. Number of assistants in fish-shops in Canterbury, 104; in Otago, 337. Number of fish-hawkers in Canterbury, 8; in Otago, 75. Canning and preserving works in Canterbury, 1; in Otago, 38. Number of hands employed in such works in Canterbury, 10; in Otago, 211.

During the year 172,384 lb. of frozen and potted fish, valued at £5,117, were exported from Dunedin.

In the absence of the local Inspector of Fisheries the officer in charge of Customs at the Bluff reports that the fishing industry at that port is steadily increasing. Eighty-six fishing-vessels,