

when round Separation Point the gale was so fierce that it was impossible to work the nets, and we had to return to Totaranui to shelter. The gale continued all day.

The weather having cleared on the 3rd October, we left the anchorage in Totaranui Bay at 4.30 a.m. for Golden Bay, where two hauls of the net were made with satisfactory results.

The next three hauls were made from the east of Farewell Spit to Stephens Island. Throughout these hauls the bottom was mud and soft sand, and the results were only moderate.

As the freezer was not working satisfactorily, after hauling up at station 171, we left for Wellington to discharge fish, coal, and have the freezer repaired.

The Department having reconsidered the question of prospecting the grounds in the north, decided to work a section on the east coast from the Hauraki Gulf northward, and the "Nora Niven" left Wellington at 4 p.m. on the 4th October, and arrived at Port Ahuriri on the 6th. Repairs having been effected, the vessel left for Auckland on the 9th October, but owing to heavy weather had to put into Hicks Bay for shelter.

We left Hicks Bay on 13th October and arrived at Auckland on the following day, but delay was occasioned here owing to the illness of Captain McAlister, who was ordered ashore by the doctor.

Arrangements having been made with the owners for another captain to be employed temporarily, Captain Neilson was placed in charge, and the vessel left Auckland at 4 a.m. on the 17th October to prospect outside the usual trawling limits in the Hauraki Gulf.

Tiri to North Cape.

Operations were commenced at a point three miles north of Tiri Island at 7.15 a.m. on the morning of the 17th October. During the day four hauls were made, the net being towed in a northerly and easterly direction. Good catches of market-fish were made, but owing to the bottom over which one haul was made consisting of "horse-mussel" or "razorback" shell, the net was much torn, and a large number of fish escaped. The weather was fine, with bright sunshine and smooth sea.

On the 18th work was commenced to the westward of Channel Island, and the net towed in a zig-zag direction to the southward of Little Barrier Island. Five hauls were made, but the results were in all cases poor. During the last haul the net was very much torn, having met with foul bottom. The following day, Saturday, 19th October, we returned to Auckland to discharge fish, repair nets, and engage two seamen.

All the ground covered appeared to be unsuited for trawling, the bottom consisting of horse-mussel, coral, and dirty mud.

After landing the fish, fifty-five cases, we left Auckland at midnight on Sunday, the 20th October, and commenced trawling off the Little Barrier at 7.30 a.m. on the 21st.

The net was towed in the direction of the Hen and Chickens and two hauls were made, but the result was poor, and the bottom of a dirty nature. I therefore decided to proceed to the North Cape, calling at Russell on the way, and work back to Auckland.

We arrived at Russell at 9.30 p.m. and left at 6 a.m. next day, the 22nd October, for the North Cape, arriving at Great Exhibition Bay at 3 p.m. Here we made two hauls with very poor results, and the bottom being rock the net was much damaged. Work was continued here on the 23rd, and four hauls made, closer inshore and on better bottom, these giving fairly good results.

On the 24th three hauls were made, but the results were poor, and the net was again much damaged through coming in contact with rocky obstruction. These hauls were made in Rangaunu, Doubtless, and Takau Bays, after which the vessel was headed for Russell, where we lay for the night. The following day we made two hauls in this vicinity, but in each case rocky bottom was encountered, and the nets in consequence were badly damaged, so I decided to proceed at once to Tiri Island and try a haul in that vicinity before returning to Auckland. The result of this haul was the largest catch yet made. Cleaning and packing the fish occupied us until arrival at Auckland, where we landed eighty-two cases.

Cape Maria Van Diemen to Manukau.

After taking in stores and coaling at Auckland the vessel left for the west coast of the North Island on the 30th October, arriving off Cape Maria at 8 a.m. on the 1st November, and during the day four hauls were made to the southward of the Cape. The results were somewhat disappointing. On the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th we continued testing the grounds, the net being towed in a southerly direction. Three hauls were made on the 2nd, two fairly good and one very poor. On the 3rd we made four hauls to the southward of Hokianga, ending nineteen miles south-east of Mangonui Bluff, and on the 4th four hauls were again made, the result of each day's work being two fairly good and two very poor catches.

On the 5th November work was commenced fifteen miles S. x S. from Kaipara Light, four hauls being made, ending abreast of Manukau bar. The result in each instance was a good catch—a total of forty-eight cases for the day, principally schnapper and red-gurnard.

We commenced operations on the 6th November at the north entrance to Manukau Harbour, the net being towed outwards; thence to the southward, finishing for the day seven miles south of Manukau south light. In all four hauls were made, two very good and two fairly so.

On the 7th November, after trying another haul which gave very poor results, we steamed into Manukau Harbour, arriving at 11 a.m.

All the grounds trawled over in this section were found to be excellent bottom, though the catches on the whole were somewhat disappointing. The total catch since leaving Cape Maria was 179 cases.

Manukau to Wellington.

Owing to difficulty in getting coal from Auckland by rail we were unable to leave Manukau until the 12th November at 2 p.m., and on reaching the Heads found the weather so bad that we had to