

9 a.m. from the same depth and character of bottom as the net was shot in. The net came up full of weeds, and contained very few fish.

Station 249 : After hauling up at station 248, steamed out N. x E. 15 miles, and shot the net for the next haul $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Stephens Island at 11.30 a.m. ; depth 55 fathoms, and bottom mud. Towed N.N.E. for 5 miles, and hauled up at 12.45 p.m. in 61 fathoms, mud bottom. The result of this haul was very poor, but the net came up practically free from weeds.

Station 250 : Weather threatening, with considerable sea running. Bottom being rather dangerous, we steamed N.N.E. for 12 miles, taking soundings. The net was put over for another haul at 2.30 p.m., $23\frac{1}{2}$ miles N.E. x N. from Stephens Island ; depth 70 fathoms, bottom mud. Towed on the same N.N.E. course for 4 miles, and hauled up at 3.45 p.m. in 72 fathoms, from the same mud bottom. This haul proved to be almost a blank, the only fish taken being 9 kingfish and 3 schnapper. As the weather came on very bad, a gale blowing, with a heavy sea, we returned to Guard's Bay for shelter, and anchored for the night.

December 3.—Station 251.—As the weather moderated through the night, we hove up anchor in Guard's Bay at 6.30 a.m., and steamed out on a N.E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. course for 15 miles, taking several soundings on the way out to ascertain the character of bottom. The net was put over for the first haul at 9.10 a.m., 9 miles N.E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. from Jackson's Head ; depth 55 fathoms, bottom coarse sand. Towed in a N.E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. course for 5 miles, and hauled up at 10.45 a.m., in 75 fathoms, from a coarse-sand bottom. The result of this haul was poor, the fish consisting of 20 red-cod, 24 kingfish, 9 hapuka, 1 shark.

Station 252 : After hauling up at station 251, steamed on a S.E. course, 5 miles, and shot the net for another haul at 11.50 a.m., 12 miles W. x S. $\frac{1}{2}$ S. from south end Kapiti Island ; depth 85 fathoms, bottom coarse sand. Towed N.E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. for 6 miles, and hauled up at 1.20 p.m. from the same depth and character of bottom as that in which the net was shot. The result of this haul was also very poor, only yielding 22 kingfish, 2 hapuka, 2 skate, and 6 sharks. After hauling up at this station the bottom was tested with the lead for a considerable distance, but found to be very soft and dangerous, similar to the bottom off Motunau Island during the first cruise, when two trawl-nets were lost. Considering the dangerous character of the bottom, and that the vessel has to be handed over to the owners at Wellington to-morrow, it was decided not to risk losing any gear by shooting the net again, so left for Wellington at 2 p.m., arriving at 9 p.m.