

Prosecutions have been instituted and fines imposed for being in possession of undersized fish, for illegally taking oysters, for carrying firearms in a fishing-boat, and for assaulting an Inspector. In one case the Inspector at Auckland found a boat containing flounders which had recently been taken by stalling. The boat, nets, and fish were seized and forfeited. There was no one with the boat, the owners having apparently gone away when they saw the Inspector coming.

Mr. R. Henry, Caretaker at Kapiti; Captain J. B. Hall, Harbourmaster at Foxton; Mr. A. Hooker, Acclimatisation Society's Ranger, New Plymouth; and six members of the Police Force, have been appointed Inspectors of Sea-fisheries.

Portobello Marine Fish Hatchery.—The five-years period for which a grant of £250 a year was made for the maintenance of this hatchery expired on the 31st ultimo, and it is, therefore, necessary to decide as to what is to be done to provide funds for the future. The Hatchery Board has been successful in introducing lobsters and crabs from Great Britain, from which large numbers of ova have been obtained, hatched out, and the fry liberated in Otago Harbour. It has also obtained large numbers of ova from flounders and soles, and liberated the fry in the harbour. Besides this, it has carried out a large amount of experimental work, and has been in correspondence with Great Britain in regard to the introduction of sea-fish. It will thus be seen that good work has been done by the Board, and that it is desirable that it should be in a position to continue its work. To enable it to do this, funds will have to be provided by the Department. A report received from the Board is appended.

As regards the experiments which are being made in Great Britain in connection with the question of the feasibility of introducing British sea-fish, the Chief Inspector made some inquiries when in England recently, and a report by him is appended.

Seals.—The close season for seals has been extended until the 30th June, 1910, and the question as to making an open season and granting licenses to take seals is under consideration.

Salmon.—A further vote was taken last session for the introduction of Atlantic salmon, and as ova could not be obtained from America one million were ordered from Great Britain, and Mr. L. F. Ayson, Chief Inspector of Fisheries, was sent to England to bring them to New Zealand. The number required could not be obtained for one shipment, and therefore they had to come in two. The first lot, of 499,800, came by the "Turakina," in charge of the chief and second engineers of the vessel, and arrived in first-rate condition. They were taken to Lake Te Anau, where they were hatched out, and the fry were liberated in the Upukororu River. The number of ova which went bad on board the "Turakina" was 29,228, and the deaths from the time of unpacking until liberation of the fry were 23,465. The fry liberated numbered 447,104. Mr. Ayson brought out the second lot of 500,000 by the "Rakaia." It had been arranged that this shipment should come by the "Corinthic," an earlier steamer, but that vessel was unable to take it, and some of the ova which had been collected before it was known that the vessel would not be able to take them had to be kept in a cool-chamber for the "Rakaia." As this portion of the ova was overripe when the vessel reached Dunedin, it was decided to send it to the salmon-station at Hakataramea, where it commenced to hatch out two hours after being put in the hatching-boxes. The whole of the "Rakaia's" shipment was in ten cases, of which three went to Hakataramea and seven to Te Anau. The number of fry hatched out from the two shipments was 932,104, being 447,104 from the ova by the "Turakina," and 485,000 from those by the "Rakaia." This is a very good result indeed considering that many of the ova were taken very late in the season, and that a portion had to be kept in store in England waiting for the steamer. A report by Mr. Ayson on the ova is appended.

Last season, 78,400 ova were taken from quinnat salmon running up the Hakataramea River. Frequent floods prevented more being taken. The river is now being netted for ova, and it is anticipated that a quarter of a million will be obtained and hatched out at the Hakataramea Station this season if the run of fish is as good as it was last year.

During the year the following fish have been liberated from the ponds at the Hakataramea Station: viz., 43 four years old, 199 three years old, 611 two years old, 14,624 one year old from imported ova, 8,000 one year old and 51,000 three months old from ova taken from fish in the Hakataramea River.

Trout.—Regulations regarding trout-fishing have been made for some districts, and amended in the case of others. Last season the Department collected 1,095,000 brown-trout ova in the Temuka and Opihi Rivers for acclimatisation societies which required them. A charge of 5s. a thousand was made to defray the cost of collection, &c. It is proposed to collect a further supply of ova on similar terms for the societies that require them during the coming season.

When the Chief Inspector went to England for the salmon-ova the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts arranged that he should bring out some minnows for the purpose of increasing the food-supply for trout, but he was unable to arrange for a shipment. Appended is a report made by him in regard to the introduction of this fish.

GEORGE ALLPORT, Secretary.

The Hon. the Minister of Marine, Wellington.

The PRINCIPAL EXAMINER OF MASTERS AND MATES to the SECRETARY, Marine Department.

SIR,—

Office of the Principal Examiner of Masters and Mates,
Customhouse, Wellington, 27th May, 1909.

I have the honour to submit my annual report on the examination of masters and mates in New Zealand.

The work, as usual, has been carried out by the Examiners at the four principal ports in a satisfactory manner, and I am very pleased to have as my colleagues in the examination work