

fish, gurnard, and tarakihi. There are 56 boats registered at Napier, 12 of them being trawlers, and 2 trawlers registered at Wellington fish in the district. There are one freezing-works and one curing-shed in the district.

The supply of fish at Wellington has been poor. Flat fish have been exceptionally scarce At the present time the trade is more depressed than it has been for many years.

Queen Charlotte and Pelorus Sounds: The principal fish taken during the year in these sounds have been hapuka, blue-cod, and flounders. Barracouta, butterfish, garfish, kingfish, moki, kahawai, and herring have been taken in smaller quantities. There are 38 licensed fishing-boats engaged in the industry, some of which are reported to have done very well; whilst others have only been obtaining fair catches. Most of the fish caught have been sent to the Wellington market.

The Inspector for the Otago and Canterbury districts reports that there has been a depression in the industry, caused mainly by the scarcity of fish. Owing to the improvement made in the class of fishing-boats and gear now in use, many portions of the coast formerly untouched have been visited, and, as a consequence, a better variety of fish has been taken. The municipal authorities of Dunedin have undertaken to establish a market in the city, which it is hoped will have the effect of doing away with unnecessary expense, and increasing the catches of deep-sea fish. Some marked improvements have been made in the boats and gear used, and a number of new boats have been placed in commission; but the output of the canning and preserving factories has not increased. Kingfish, although not so plentiful as during the previous year, have been taken in fair numbers. Groper, trevalli, tarakihi, schnapper, moki, and barracouta have been taken, but some of them have disappeared from their old haunts. Soles, flounders, and flat fish generally have been as plentiful as during the previous year, but there has been a scarcity of blue-cod.

Fair quantities of marketable fish have been taken at Moeraki, Oamaru, and Timaru. Great improvement has taken place at the last-mentioned place, and to cope with the increasing business the South Canterbury Company has erected a suitable building capable of storing 500 tons of fish. These premises are fitted out with the latest improvements in freezing plant. From Akaroa deep-sea fishing has been carried on, but only with moderate results. Two vessels are engaged in trawling from Lyttelton, and during the year they have been able to make a little headway. Seine-fishing is carried on with good results at Sumner, Redcliffs, and New Brighton. Very good catches have been taken at Kaikoura.

The value of frozen, potted, and preserved fish exported from Dunedin during the year was £3,116, most of it going to Australia.

The number of boats employed in Canterbury and Otago was 371.

At the Bluff the industry showed an improvement on the previous year. The principal kinds of fish taken were blue-cod, flounders, trevalli, groper, trumpeter, and moki. 8,963 cwt. of frozen fish, valued at £13,509, and 3,348 lb. of preserved fish, valued at £150, were exported from the port during the year 1909; and 3,572 cwt. of fresh fish, valued at £3,654, were distributed throughout the Dominion. Flounder-fishing within the harbour is not so good as formerly, and fishermen complain that large numbers of small flounders are destroyed by black swans. Eighty-five fishing-boats were registered and licensed at the port. Their total tonnage was 590 tons. Three of them were steamers, and seventy-five were fitted with oil-engines. Most of the boats have refrigerators.

New oyster-storage beds and wharf have been erected on the west side of the harbour. 379,267 dozen oysters, valued at £2,901, were exported, and 1,263,825 dozen, valued at £7,900, were distributed throughout the Dominion.

*Whaling.*—The whaling-stations in New Zealand are at Whangamumu, Tory Channel, Kaikoura, and Campbell Island. Hump-backed whales are caught at Whangamumu, and all their products are utilised. Last season sixteen whales were taken, which produced 80 tons of oil, 20 tons of manure, and 10 tons of bonedust.

Right and humpbacked whales are taken at Tory Channel, from which the oil and whalebone are the only parts utilised. Not more than two or three whales are usually obtained at this station.

At Kaikoura a few right whales are usually taken during the season, of which the oil and whalebone are the only portions utilised.

At Campbell Island whaling was started by a party of Tory Channel whalers, who caught thirteen right whales. Only the oil and whalebone were utilised.

Messrs. Cook Bros., who own the station at Whangamumu, are procuring an up-to-date whaling-vessel, built by Smith's Dock Company, at North Shields. They propose to use it at Whangamumu during the coming season, beginning in June and ending in October, and later on to use it at Campbell Island.

*Portobello Marine Fish Hatchery.*—A report by the Chairman of the Board in regard to the hatchery is attached. During the year this Department made a grant of £250 for working-expenses, and £250 for the erection of a cottage for the assistant, &c. Good work is being done at the hatchery, and it is advisable that the necessary funds should be provided to enable it to be carried on.

*Salmon.*—It is too early yet to say what will be the result of last year's importation of Atlantic-salmon ova. It is recognised by pisciculturists that success cannot be assured by one year's importation, and that it is therefore advisable to go on importing until there is time to see that the fish become acclimatised. This was the course adopted in the case of the quinnat salmon, and the success of the Department's action is undoubted, as the fish now go up the Waitaki River and its tributaries every year in large numbers to spawn. I recommend that another shipment of Atlantic salmon ova be obtained from Great Britain next season.