

of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries in London. In this way the excellent work of the acclimatization societies would be fully recognized, and the Government would have the advantage of their knowledge and experience. But to continue the existing functions or confer new administrative powers upon such societies would impede that reform of the fisheries administration in New Zealand which is desired by all parties commercially interested, and by a majority, I am convinced, of the societies themselves, and certainly by the public generally. The responsibility should rest upon the chief of the Fisheries Department, acting directly under a responsible Minister of the Crown (Minister of Marine). But local knowledge and opinion would find voice; and the discussions arising at such conferences as I have suggested would enable expressions of opinion from the most remote parts of the Dominion to be made which would be of immense value to the officials. Centralization is, after all, a most effective method of economic public administration. A multiplication of local bodies serves no purpose which is not far better served by a Dominion Department. Money is wasted; energies are frittered away; there is no cohesion or uniformity in action; and the fish and fisheries suffer from a continuance of the present method of managing fisheries by means of local societies. It is stating a fact recognized by fishery authorities generally that the rival Fish Commissions in the various States in the United States and the activities of the local Fishery Councillors in Norway have really been a source of weakness and waste rather than advantage as compared with the unity of purpose, economy, and concentrated efficiency yielding the great results which have come from the work of such a Central Fisheries Bureau as that in Washington, U.S.A., or the Fisheries Department in Ottawa, Canada.

SYSTEMATIC SURVEY OF FISHING-GROUNDS.

In the course of my cruise round the New Zealand shores I had abundant evidence that there are untried areas open for exploitation, many of which may be expected to yield abundant supplies of fine species of food fish. I cannot too strongly recommend that such survey-work as has already been carried on by the Department of Marine should be continued and extended. Indeed, the whole coast should be explored and surveyed section by section, so that every productive fishing-ground may be made known. In most countries, owing to the extensive fishing operations having continued for long periods of years, the available fishing-areas are well known and the fishing fleets proceed without loss of time to the most productive grounds. In New Zealand there are many unknown territories in the inshore and offshore waters; and several trials made during my cruise on the "Hinemoa," on grounds practically unfished, gave evidence of valuable resources that are little known and have not been exploited. If a special vessel for such prospecting fishery-work were provided, it would take several years to accomplish the whole survey, but the results would be of untold benefit to the country, and would reveal the hidden fish resources, which I do not hesitate to say are far more extensive and valuable than is realized even by those engaged at present in the fisheries. The work would be of immense practical value, and might afford also the opportunity for some valuable scientific exploration. Results, both practical and theoretical, of the highest importance would certainly be secured. I had the duty of being a member of the staff on the first Fisheries Survey around the coast of Ireland over twenty years ago; and the results of the work carried on by the steamship "Fingal" under the Irish Government auspices have been evidenced in the great development of the Irish fisheries since that time. A systematic survey in New Zealand would, I am confident, be even more valuable and productive.

DOMINION PATROL SYSTEM.

With the existence of a Dominion Fisheries Department there would be a uniform and universal patrol system for the supervision of the fish and fisheries in New Zealand, and all districts alike would receive adequate benefit therefrom. At present, waters in the district of a wealthy acclimatization society receive more effective supervision and benefit than a larger district under an acclimatization society whose funds are meagre. There are at present probably under twenty fishery wardens who are in any way compensated by acclimatization societies for the serious work of discouraging poaching, and aiding in the improvement of the fish-supply. This implies that, were the existing staff stationed fairly evenly over New Zealand, each would have about 10,000 square miles of territory under his supervision. The present system is therefore an inefficient and absurd one. In Canada the whole country is divided up into inspectors' districts, each province having usually three or four Chief Inspectors with defined areas over which they keep a general supervision. They have under them a staff of sub-inspectors called Fishery Overseers, who have a limited number of rivers, adjacent sea-coast, and portions of lakes to look after. Both these classes of officers receive fairly substantial salaries. Each Chief Inspector devotes all his time to his official duties, and is provided with a central office and usually with one or more assistants, stenographers, &c. He receives a salary of from £200 to £600 per annum and travelling-expenses, or a *per diem* rate in some cases. Both the Chief Inspectors and the Fishery Overseers are appointed by Order in Council and cannot be removed except by the same authority, such Order in Council constituting them Magistrates or Justices of the Peace for the purposes of the Fishery Act. This system acts most effectively and enables offences to be dealt with promptly and efficiently; while it acts as a most potent deterrent to violations of the law. Under the Overseers, a large staff of temporary fishery guardians at 5s. to 10s. per day are employed during special fishing seasons, and especially during the spawning seasons of fish. All these officers (including the guardians when temporarily employed) submit monthly diaries to the nearest officer of higher rank. Printed forms are supplied to all these officers, in which are filled the details of the daily patrol performed by each, with space for making any remarks or recommendations. The third class of officers (guardians) report violations of the fishery regulations, giving details of the offence (name, &c.), and they have power to seize any gear illegally used. Such confiscated gear must be transferred to the Fishery Overseer or Inspector, who