

and to establish a fish-market. Section 9 empowers the Council to buy and sell sheep and to depasture the same on any of the domains, reserves, parks, gardens, or other lands held or controlled by or vested in the Council. This provision and section 10 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1918, which empowers the Auckland City Council to purchase and sell live-stock, machinery, and other farm requirements and produce in connection with any lands used by it for grazing or farming purposes in connection with its civic operations are interesting examples of how the carrying-out by the larger local bodies of their ordinary functions paves the way for operations that ordinarily are not considered within the scope of local-government activity.

As usual the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act contains sections which are really Local Acts. Passing by the validations and the general empowering sections already referred to, the following may be noted: Section 13, empowering the Onehunga and Mount Albert Borough Councils and the Mount Roskill and One Tree Hill Road Boards to meter ordinary as well as extraordinary water-supplies (requests made in the past by the Municipal Conference for the conferring of this power on Borough Councils generally have always been declined); Section 14, empowering the Avondale Road Board to make by-laws prescribing the route by which loose horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, or other animals may be driven along streets or roads within the road district. Section 59, empowering local authorities in Canterbury and Otago Provincial District to subscribe to the funds of the Canterbury Progress League or the South Canterbury Development League, or the Otago Expansion League, is interesting as showing the survival of the old provincial feeling and its direction to new ends. There has arisen an active feeling that there is still a community of interest which demands the co-operation of all within each province for the economic and civic advancement of every part of it. This working together of town and country within definite areas that are large enough to admit of action on a big scale, and yet compact enough to make for real community of interest, can only result in good not only for the provinces but the whole Dominion.

Reference has already been made to section 30 of the Appropriation Act, authorizing local authorities to contribute towards funds for the celebration of peace.

(2.) *Inland Fisheries.*

The improvement in condition of trout in Lake Rotorua has been maintained, and in consequence no fish was taken from it for sale. Lake Rotoiti was again utilized for supplying the local and Auckland markets, 19,163 fish, weighing nearly 25 tons, being sold. At Lake Taupo operations could hardly be described as successful in comparison with the previous season, though 10,060 fish, weighing about 12½ tons, were placed on the market, the decline being principally attributable to the work not being started until January and the increased number of poor fish taken. The bad condition of the Waimarino Road and delay in train services also told against success.

The public demand for the fish was as keen as ever, and it is satisfactory to note that the Department was able to sell it on the same terms as last year. In Wellington this ensured its sale to the public at 6d. per pound fresh and 8d. per pound smoked, these prices allowing dealers margins of 2½d. and 3d. per pound respectively.

New Markets.—An effort was made to meet numerous orders from Napier, but the reduced quantity coming to hand would only allow of small supplies being sent. The practicability of placing the fish on southern markets at a cost which would allow of its being sold to the public at a reasonable price was considered. A few years ago several small lots were despatched from Rotorua to Christchurch via Auckland, where they were frozen and sent on by steamer. Though sold at Rotorua for 4d. the cost to the purchaser on arrival at Christchurch was 1s. 6d. per pound. After investigation during the year it appeared to me that fresh trout brought on to Wellington in the usual way, repacked in ice in lots of not less than 4 cwt., might, after paying extra shipping, wharfage, and rail charges, be sold wholesale at the Christchurch Railway-station at 6d. per pound without loss to the Department. Next season, if the supplies coming to hand warrant the exploiting of a fresh market, it is hoped to despatch at least a few trial consignments to Christchurch.

Scientific Investigation.—Several of the lakes in the thermal regions have been stocked with more than one species of trout. With a view to ascertaining the present effect of this and, if possible, the ultimate result, a scientific investigation of the various species is being made by Mr. Phillipps, of the Museum Staff. Until his work is completed it is impossible to state whether hybridization has taken place to any extent, if at all. It is hoped, too, that Mr. Phillipps will be able to clear the doubt which exists as to the identity of the fish in Lake Taupo which, generally held to be Rainbow trout, are in some quarters thought to be either American land-locked or American steel-head salmon.

Fresh Stocks.—Excellent as the results have been of the Department's work in the last six years, it is considered that further improvement in the size of the fish in the lakes is dependent upon the introduction of fresh stock. None being available in Canada, inquiries are now being made in the United States for half a million rainbow trout-ova. The reduction that has been made in the number of fish will ensure a plentiful supply of food for the imported stock.

Hatchery.—As usual, the work at the hatchery was carried out under the difficulties inseparable from the lack of skilled labour. Despite this, 1,020,000 ova and 625,000 fry were sold and distributed, as against 780,000 and 350,000 last year.

The report of the Conservator is printed in the Appendix.

(3.) *Animals Protection Act.*

Acclimatization Districts.—The boundaries of Hobson Acclimatization District were defined and those of Hawke's Bay and Rotorua redefined. It is proposed to include in the Auckland District an area of Rotorua adjoining the Waimarino district,