

HATCHERY.

A very successful season was experienced at the hatchery. The usual free contributions of ova were made to various societies, and large numbers of rainbow fry were liberated in the rivers of the Tongariro National Park. Sales of ova were made to societies throughout the North Island and to New South Wales. The output for the season consisted of 1,475,000 ova and 578,000 fry, as against 1,020,000 and 625,000 last year.

ANIMALS PROTECTION ACT.

Acclimatization Districts.—The boundaries of Wanganui and Waimarino Acclimatization Districts were redefined.

Shooting Season.—Open game seasons were declared in every district but one—Opotiki. Licenses to sell game were not issued. Requests for open seasons for paradise duck were declined, but in cases where the birds, through increase in numbers, were doing damage to crops permits to destroy them for limited periods were issued to individual owners.

Deer.—Special seasons for culling purposes were declared in Otago, Waitaki, and Wellington Districts. During the ordinary season good heads were secured in most districts. It is probable that deer-culling will have ere long to be dealt with in a comprehensive manner.

Sanctuaries and Protection of Birds.—Three new sanctuaries were declared.

Permits to Import Game Birds.—Authority was given to import several species of different birds for confinement in the Zoological Gardens at Wellington.

Strong representations were made by the North Canterbury Acclimatization Society, representing several South Island societies, for authority to import "black game" from the British Isles. Black game belong to the genus "grouse." There is a black grouse and a bird known as the "black cock," the female being known as the "grey hen," the two latter being generally known as "black game." This permission was at first declined, it being considered by some experts that this species of birds were destructive to crops. Subsequently the Board of Agriculture decided that there was no objection to the importation of these birds, and it was decided to give the authority asked for.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT.

Inspection.—During the year excellent work has been performed by the Inspectors who are engaged solely on inspection work, and in many instances a high standard of diligence has been exhibited by part-time officers.

Prosecutions.—Several prosecutions were made of persons using faulty or unstamped scales, while in one instance a coal-merchant who persisted in selling coal by the bag and not by weight, after being warned, was prosecuted and fined by the presiding Magistrate.

Legislation.—It is hoped to introduce new legislation at an early date, the present Act being very defective. One important respect in which the present Act is so defective is the question of short weight. The only legislative provision on this matter, which has a direct bearing on the cost of living, is contained in the Sale of Food and Drugs Act. That statute makes it an offence to sell short-weight bread, but does not touch short weight of other commodities. The need for stringent provisions, preferably as part of the Weights and Measures Act, is clearly shown by the number of people who come to Inspectors with goods to be weighed and measured.

RECORDS OF NEW ZEALAND COMPANY.

Through the courtesy of the Under-Secretary, Department of Lands and Survey, many records of the New Zealand Company have been received from the district offices of his Department, and have been stored in a fireproof building. Mr. Cowan, at present engaged in writing up the history of New Zealand wars, has also undertaken the work of classifying the records, the more important of which are to be housed in the Turnbull Library.

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS AND CINEMATOGRAPH FILMS OF MAORI LIFE.

Arrangements were made to secure more records and films at the Native gathering at Rotorua on the occasion of the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, and it is further proposed that the experts shall annually visit the different Native localities in search of records and films of every phase of Native life and custom.

TURNBULL LIBRARY.

Opening of Library.—The cataloguing and arranging of the library having reached an advanced stage, the Minister approved the opening of the library during the first week of the session.

Archives.—Some time ago the Board of Science and Art recommended that the early archives of the Dominion be stored in the Turnbull Library, and on completion of the fire-resisting work it is probable that the request will be agreed to.

Donations.—In addition to manuscript biographies donated by His Honour Mr. Justice Chapman, the Rev. W. J. Comrie, Miss J. H. Edwin, and Mr. E. N. Story, two mounted pictures, dated 1863, of the first gunboats in New Zealand waters—the "Rangariri" and the "Pioneer"—were presented by Mr. H. Baillie, of the Wellington Municipal Library; while the late Mr. James Mackintosh, on behalf of a few friends and admirers of the late Mr. Turnbull, presented one of his (the late Mr. Turnbull's) chairs to the library. The chair is made of teak from the deck of the "Inconstant," which struck a rock at Wellington entrance in 1850, and was eventually beached where the Bank of New Zealand now stands.

HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND WARS.

Good progress has been made with the preparation of a standard history of the wars in New Zealand, embracing the pioneering period between 1840 and 1872. Volume 1 was completed at the beginning of this year and is ready for the printer, and volume 2 will be ready in July, volume 3 to follow in about six months. The author, Mr. James Cowan, has devoted considerable time to a systematic exploration of the various campaigning grounds in the island, and the topographical notes secured in this field-work are combined with full narratives by the many expeditions and engagements.