

by one vessel, was 2,907 cwt. (27·7 per cent. of total), of which 1,838 cwt. was snapper and 998 cwt. tarahiki. The total for line fishing was 1,591 cwt., of which 53 per cent. was snapper. A new vessel operating a purse seine for pelagic fish is still at the experimental stage.

Napier.—Out of the total of 17,865 cwt. for this port, 13,929 cwt. was landed by the trawling fleet, which consisted of one steamer and twenty motor-vessels. These vessels have operated farther afield than formerly, some working grounds as far distant as Poverty Bay under the compulsion of adverse weather conditions and poor fishing on the local grounds.

Wellington.—The return of a steam-trawler in December provides a prospect of improved fish supplies for the future. A motor-trawler operated from the port for seven months, landing 901 cwt., or 6·4 per cent., of the annual total. The Island Bay line-fishing fleet was hampered by abnormally bad weather and landed for the year a total of 11,018 cwt., or 78·6 per cent. of Wellington's total supply from its own fleet, which was 756 cwt. less than last year's total. Wellington has always been the principal centre for the supply of warehou, a fish which swims in shoals and is usually captured in nets when the shoals move, or are driven by predators, into shallow bays. The quantities that are caught are subject to considerable variation from year to year, and their abundance, or their inshore occurrence, seems subject to cycles. The records of landings show a peak period during 1936 to 1938, and then they rapidly declined, reaching another peak for the period 1941 to 1943, which now appears to be again on the decline, and this year's total catch of 507 cwt. is only half the average of the annual totals for the previous three years.

Lyttelton.—The total landings amount to 16,221 cwt., valued at £42,527, an increase of 15·5 per cent. in quantity and 22·4 per cent. in value over the previous year's figures. The main increases are shown for tarahiki, ling, and flounders.

Timaru.—With a total quantity for the year of 13,022 cwt., which is less than the previous year's total by 2,876 cwt., the catches landed by trawlers amounted to 8,142 cwt., by Danish-seiners 1,804 cwt., and by lining vessels 3,076 cwt. The greatest relative decline is shown for Danish-seiners with a difference of 704 cwt., trawler landings are down by 375 cwt., and line catches by 797 cwt. To what extent the decreases are due to curtailment of fishing operations by such factors as the weather or to other causes is a question that cannot be fully answered without investigation. In the case of the trawlers and liners there were fewer operating in the whole-time class and more in the part-time class, but with two more licensed trawlers and one additional liner in the fleet. Diminished catches by the two Danish-seiners, especially noticeable in respect of soles, flounders, and red cod, cannot be ascribed to a less intensity of fishing, and must be regarded as an indication of reduced stocks of fish on the grounds.

Port Chalmers.—The annual catches by the various methods of fishing over the last four years are given below:—

	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.	1944.
	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.
Steam-trawling	12,069	12,011	7,648	5,980
Motor-trawling	11,388	10,241	7,349	9,463
Line-fishing (motor-vessels)	5,508	11,070	6,282	7,648
Line-fishing (row-boats)	15	9	1
Net-fishing (motor-vessels)	85	11	33	21
Net-fishing (row-boats)	674	255	202	151
Totals	29,724	33,603	21,523	23,264

The increased total over that for the previous year arises from somewhat better catches of barracouta, flounder, soles, groper, and elephant-fish. Diminished supplies are shown for red cod, tarahiki, pioke (dogfish), and ling, and the general production is substantially below that of the year 1942-43, especially with regard to steam-trawler and line catches.

EXPORTS AND IMPORTS

Imports of fish for the year amounted to the small total of 10 cwt. of the class "smoked, dried, salted, &c.," valued at £193, and, in addition, tinned fish valued at £98 was re-exported.

The total value of New Zealand fish and shell-fish that was exported in 1944 was £126,976, which represents a substantial increase on the previous year's corrected total of £110,685.

Totals for the principal classes are given below (last year's corrected figures in parentheses):—

	Quantity.	Value.
		£ £
Oysters, fresh	21,100 (424) doz.	578 (20)
Fish, frozen	16,628 (16,438) cwt.	73,500 (70,019)
Crayfish, frozen	1,921 (nil) cwt.	6,608 (nil)
Fish, smoked, dried, &c.	3,319 (2,754) cwt.	20,476 (16,574)
Fish and shell-fish (tinned)	181,338 (285,221) lb.	25,814 (24,072)
Total values	126,976 (110,685)