

In September of this year a slight addition is to be made in the examination in chart for second mate of foreign-going and mate of home-trade ships, and a more important addition is to be made on that date for certificates of competency as only or first mate of foreign-going ships, and for masters of Home-trade ships, who will be required to work a question in both current sailing and reduction to soundings, and to show proficiency in the method of fixing a ship's position by horizontal sextant angles, using a station pointer for plotting it on the chart. A *Gazette* notice of these changes was issued in December, 1909; and at the same time a notice was issued that on and after the 1st January, 1914, the standard of form-vision required by the Marine Department will be raised, and that after the 1st March, 1910, any person serving or intending to serve in the mercantile marine, or in fishing-vessels, may be tested by the higher standard, and any holder of a certificate of competency who passes the new test may have the fact of his passing indorsed upon his certificate. These and other alterations which have been made in the examination since 1906 are embodied in a new revised book of regulations which will be issued very shortly.

I have, &c.,

HAROLD S. BLACKBURN, E.

Principal Examiner of Masters and Mates.

The CHAIRMAN, Marine Fish Hatchery, Portobello, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF MARINE.

Marine Fish Hatchery and Biological Station,

Portobello, Dunedin, 11th May, 1910.

SIR,—

I have the honour to state that since the last annual report valuable work has been done at the Portobello Hatchery in the hatching and liberating of large numbers of ova of lobsters and edible crabs. The success attained by Mr. Anderton, the Board's Curator, has been very remarkable, especially considering that for the greater part of his time he has worked single-handed. The results he has secured compare very favourably with those of the most highly equipped stations elsewhere, and are due to his extreme care and unremitting attention. But further progress at the station has been arrested by the want of funds with which to go on with the work for which the station was established—viz., the introduction and naturalisation in New Zealand waters of desirable food fishes from other parts of the world. My Board asked the Government to make a small grant for the subdivision of the ponds and a few slight extensions. With the expenditure of a very small sum of money, the station will be fitted to cope with any work likely to be undertaken for the next few years. As it is, the forthcoming hatching-season of the lobsters and crabs will severely tax its resources, and the results cannot be so satisfactory as would be the case were there more pond and tank accommodation available.

I would again point out that the Board exercises the severest economy in its management, and in order to keep down expenses gets all the secretarial work done by its own members. If the national importance of the work undertaken were realised more fully than is the case, there would be sufficient funds forthcoming to meet the exigencies of the case.

I enclose Mr. Anderton's report to the Board. In this the Board think that he more than justifies the valuable observations which he has made from time to time on the native food fishes. Without such knowledge the attempt to introduce foreign food-fishes runs a great chance of failure, and the absolute necessity for it, in view of any proposed fisheries legislation, has been insisted on over and over again.

I have to report that at the present time the station is in remarkably good order, and all possible work is in a very forward condition

I have, &c.,

GEORGE M. THOMSON, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Marine, Wellington.

30th April, 1910.

SIR,—

I have the honour to present the following report of operations at the Marine Fish Hatchery, with particular reference to the hatching of the English lobsters and crabs, from the publication of the last report, 30th May, 1909, to the present date.

A full account of the previous season's hatching will be found in the report of the Marine Department for 1908-9, and it will be unnecessary for me to enter again so closely into the details of the habits of the lobsters and crabs. The facts as given in that report have been verified this season, and a few additional particulars, the thorough understanding of which are absolutely necessary for successful work, will be found under their own headings. The monthly reports that have been furnished have given an outline of the work undertaken each month. In the present report I will endeavour to give an account of the year's operations—successes, failures, and mistakes—under the following headings: General, Lobsters, Crabs, Local Fishes, &c. Should the Board consider that this report is not of sufficient general interest to warrant its publication in any form, I beg to suggest that the manuscript and drawings be returned to the station library for future reference. A considerable amount has been added to our stock of knowledge relating to local fishes, and copious notes will be found, when required, in the station log.