

Special inspection was also made of the oyster-beds at Mangonui, Whangaroa, Bay of Islands, Whangarei, and Hauraki Gulf, and the toheroa beds on the beach north of Kaipara Heads. The Chief Inspector assisted with the hatching and liberation of quinnat salmon in the Wairau River (Marlborough), and made a special visit to Te Anau in connection with the run of Atlantic salmon in the Upokororo and other tributaries of the Waiau, and also made three visits of inspection to the Government quinnat-salmon hatchery at Hakataramea.

From the annual reports supplied by the Collectors of Customs and Inspectors of Fisheries at the various ports it appears that stormy weather on the east coast of both Islands hindered fishing operations at intervals during the year, and at such times the supply coming forward was quite insufficient for market requirements, and the price of fish both wholesale and retail ruled very high. Fish on most of the fishing-grounds have been plentiful, and when weather conditions were favourable the markets were well supplied. During the year the fishing-fleet has been increased by the addition of another up-to-date steam trawler brought out from England by Monro Bros., of Auckland.

The total quantity of oysters marketed from the Foveaux Strait beds was 27,280 sacks, the wholesale value of which was £17,467. The quantity picked from the rock-oyster beds in the Auckland District was 7,323 sacks, valued at £7,702 10s.

The total quantity of oysters taken from all beds was 34,450 sacks. Of these, 2,390 sacks of Foveaux Strait oysters were exported, and the balance, 32,060, was consumed in the Dominion.

The following proceedings were taken for breaches of the Fisheries Act, viz.: The owners of the s.s. "Kapui" were fined £1 and costs for breaches of the Act; H. C. Wilkins was convicted and ordered to pay 7s. costs for fishing without a license; F. Quintal was convicted and fined £5, and costs 7s., for using explosives to kill fish; George A. Macdonald, taking oysters at Russell, fined £5 and 17s. costs; A. C. Harding, taking oysters at Mill Island, fined £3 and 7s. costs; Mrs. Jane Purser, Mrs. A. Purser, Joan McNeil, and Alice Lumberg, taking oysters from Beasons Island, each fined £1 and £1 18s. costs; E. Craddock, fishing from an unlicensed fishing-boat, catching whitebait in an illegal manner, fined £1 and 7s. costs on each charge; Thompson, Milcich, and Alderton, for taking undersized fish, each fined £1; and for using undersized trawl—Thompson fined £2, Milcich and Alderton fined £1 each; Thompson, for not having the number of port of registry on fishing-vessel, fined £2 and £3 12s. expenses.

#### FOVEAUX STRAIT OYSTER-BEDS.

The Inspector of Fisheries at Bluff reports that oysters were plentiful on the beds. The quantity taken for the year exceeds the total of the previous year by 2,734 sacks. The quantity exported shows an increase of 770 sacks; and the quantity sold in the Dominion exceeds the previous year by 1,964 sacks.

#### ROCK-OYSTERS.

The beds picked in the Hauraki Gulf last season were part of Waiheke, Ponui, Pakihi, Motutapu Islands, and part of the Cabbage Bay section and of the Coromandel coast. At Bay of Islands the beds picked were part of Kerikeri, Te Mongonui, Purirua, and Manowaru. The beds at Whangaruru, Whangarei, and Great Barrier were also picked. As will be seen by the return of oysters picked and marketed, the total quantity picked for the season was 7,323 sacks, which shows an increase of 163 sacks on the previous season.

A number of oyster-pickers were again taken from the Bay of Islands to assist in picking the beds in the Hauraki Gulf, and Mr. Edmonds from Bay of Islands was in charge of the work.

Oyster-cultivation work was continued at Bay of Islands during the summer months. A total of 2,587 yards of rock walls was built in suitable bays in the Kerikeri estuary, and the rocks of the walls built in Kerikeri and Orokawa in 1920, 1921, and 1922 were turned. The amount spent on cultivation work for the season amounted to £384 7s. 9d.

At Bay of Islands there was a very good "fixing" of spat on the under-side of the rock walls which were built during the previous three years, but in Te Kumu Bay the "fixing" during the last two seasons, both on the natural beds and also on the rock walls which were built there, was poor.

The beds in the Whangarei Harbour and part of the Coromandel coast, which had been closed for over twenty years, were picked and yielded a good quantity of oysters of first-class quality.

In previous reports I have referred to the increasing difficulty of protecting the beds, particularly in the Hauraki Gulf.

During the last five years there has been a very great increase in the number and size of pleasure-launches in Auckland, in the number of public picnics, summer boardinghouses, and summer residences, and this all means a tremendous increase in the number of people who roam about the gulf and live in the vicinity of the oyster-beds, and consequently a yearly increase in the quantity of oysters which are poached every year. At Ostend and some other parts on Waiheke Island, where summer and weekend villages have come into existence during the last few years, the beds in the vicinity are fast being depleted. The question of providing additional staff for inspection and protective work is at present receiving attention.

#### ATLANTIC SALMON.

The Atlantic salmon are now solidly established in the Waiau River, and during the past angling season they have provided good sport for visiting anglers, particularly in the Upokororo and Eglington tributaries.

From these rivers a total of fifty-six salmon were caught. The Department's hatchery near the lower end of Lake Te Anau has been put into working-order, and at the present time the Manager of the Hakataramea Salmon-hatchery and an assistant are engaged in collecting salmon-eggs. So far, about fifty thousand eggs have been collected, and there are good prospects of securing a large quantity.