

The "Kosmos" and "N. T. Nielsen-Alonso," both Norwegian owned, held no New Zealand license, but were licensed by the Norwegian Government, as were also the "Sir James Clark Ross" and the "C. A. Larsen."

The following table shows the number of whales captured and barrels of oil taken in each of the years indicated :—

Season.	Whale Factory.	Number of Whales.	Barrels of Oil.
1923-24	"Sir James Clark Ross"	221	17,791
1924-25	"Sir James Clark Ross"	427	32,165
1925-26	"Sir James Clark Ross"	531	37,700
1926-27	"Sir James Clark Ross"	254	22,800
1926-27	"C. A. Larsen"	532	47,500
1926-27*	"N. T. Nielsen Alonso"	450	36,000
1927-28	"Sir James Clark Ross"	616	48,000
1927-28	"C. A. Larsen"	839	76,000
1927-28*	"N. T. Nielsen Alonso"	725	58,000
1928-29	"Sir James Clark Ross"	545	49,000
1928-29	"C. A. Larsen"	795	73,000
1928-29*	"N. T. Nielsen Alonso"	765	63,500
1929-30	"Sir James Clark Ross"	450	30,820
1929-30	"C. A. Larsen"	1,082	77,000
1929-30	"Southern Princess"	874	61,370
1929-30*	"N. T. Nielsen Alonso"	745	56,000
1929-30*	"Kosmos"	1,822	116,000
		11,673	902,646

* Unlicensed factories. Records have not been authenticated.

NOTE.—One barrel = 40 imperial gallons.

The average take of oil of each of the three floating factories engaged in the 1928-29 season was 61,833 barrels, while for the 1929-30 season the average for each of the five factories operating was 68,238.

The higher average per ship is accounted for mainly by the fact that the newer vessels were larger and more modern in factory and chasing equipment.

The season generally was an unusual one. In the early part what whales were caught were comparatively thin and the ice conditions were distinctly worse than previous seasons. The pack ice was impassable until a later date than usual, consequently those factories which endeavoured to force a passage through lost a great deal of fishing time and received considerable damage, the "Southern Princess" losing one of her five catchers while the "Kosmos," which early gave up the attempt, and was operating with seven very fast catchers, took by far the biggest catch. It is understood that the "Southern Princess" will not be operating in the Dependency during the coming season.

The whaling operations in the Ross Sea, the increasing number of expeditions and whales taken and the fear that the stock will be depleted at a rate greater than natural reproduction will be able to balance, has been the subject of a good deal of discussion during the past year.

Apart from the fact that whales, if not taken in the Ross Sea, will probably be taken somewhere else, the financial aspect of the matter will certainly act as a regulator to some extent. These expeditions cost a very large sum of money to fit out and operate, and a bad season, either as to sea and ice conditions, or shortage of whales, may easily result in loss so serious that the number of expeditions will be reduced or operate in other waters. There is evidence of this in the case of the "Southern Princess" whose owners, as a result of last season's experience, have decided to operate elsewhere.

The Department has been seriously concerned in the matter of preservation of the fishery ever since the first visit of an unlicensed factory in the 1926-27 season when the questions of regulating catching-capacity to stocks and compelling the extraction of oil from the whole carcass was taken up with the Home authorities. It was realized that as all the catching could be done in international waters, which were free to all, effective regulation in all necessary respects could be achieved only by international agreement. The Norwegian Government has made its own law on the subject, but this is limited practically to requiring all Norwegian vessels to be licensed and to observe certain regulations designed to prevent waste.

The question has been under consideration by the Economic Committee of the League of Nations, with the result that a committee of experts was set up and met in Geneva in the spring of this year. This committee has drawn up a draft convention for the consideration of the various Governments concerned. As this follows very much, in practical matters, on the Norwegian law, it would seem there is good ground for hoping that a definite forward step will result. It would not at this stage be appropriate to discuss the draft convention in detail except, perhaps, to say that it falls short of regulating killing-power—that is to say, regulation of the number of vessels which may engage in whaling under license; but logically that seems to be the next step to look forward to. It should be realized that there are many difficulties in the way, and by reason of the question being an international one the progress towards the end which we desire to see will not be speedily reached.