

3.—The Government and the Fisheries.

Upon the organization of the Government at Confederation, the administration of the Canadian fisheries and marine was placed in the charge of a Department of the Dominion Government, which then exercised complete jurisdiction over the fisheries under the supervision of a Cabinet Minister, with a large staff of inspectors, overseers and guardians to enforce the fishery laws. The expenditure of the Dominion on the fisheries in the fiscal year 1925-26 was \$1,560,166 and its revenue \$264,546. In 1882, 1898, 1913 and 1920, decisions in the courts considerably altered the status of jurisdiction as between the Dominion and the provinces. Today the Dominion controls the tidal fisheries of the Maritime Provinces and British Columbia and the fisheries of the three Prairie Provinces. The non-tidal fisheries of the Maritime Provinces and Ontario and both the tidal and non-tidal fisheries of Quebec are controlled by the respective provinces, but the right of fisheries legislation for all provinces rests with the Dominion Government.

Conservation.—River and lake fisheries certainly, and sea fisheries probably, if left to themselves, conform to the economic law of diminishing returns. The Canadian Government, accordingly, has had for a main object the prevention of depletion, the enforcement of close seasons, the forbidding of obstructions and pollutions and the regulation of nets, gear and fishing operations generally. In addition, an extensive system of fish culture has been organized, the Dominion at present operating 32 hatcheries, 7 subsidiary hatcheries and 4 salmon-retaining ponds at a yearly cost of about \$350,000, and producing over 700,000,000 eggs, fry or older fish per annum, mostly B.C. salmon and whitefish. The young fish are distributed gratis if the waters applied for are suitable.

Scientific Research.—Stations under the direction of the Biological Board of Canada for the conduct of biological research into the numerous complex problems furnished by the fisheries are established at St. Andrews, N.B., and Nanaimo, B.C.; Toronto, McGill, Queen's, Manitoba, British Columbia and the chief Maritime Province universities send workers to both stations, chiefly professors and trained specialists. The life-histories of edible fishes, the bacteriology of fresh and cured fish, improved methods of handling and preparing fish, and numerous other practical problems have been taken up and scientific memoirs and reports issued.

Direct Assistance.—For the rest, the action of the Government has been in the way of rendering direct assistance in specific cases of difficulty. Experimental reduction plants were operated for some years to encourage the capture of dog-fish. For some time also, an expert was engaged to conduct a series of demonstrations of the Scottish method of curing herring, with a view to improving the Canadian cured product. Under authority of the Fish Inspection Act, systems of instruction in improved methods of fish-curing and barrel-making and inspection of the cured product have been conducted by specially appointed officials for some years. A quarterly bulletin on the sea fisheries is issued for the benefit of the trade. Finally, a fleet of armed cruisers patrols the coastal and inland waters for the prevention of poaching and the enforcement of regulations.

During the war it became desirable to increase as far as possible the consumption of fish, reserving the less perishable animal foods for export to our allies. The government, therefore, undertook to provide for the rapid transit of sea fish on its railway lines to the markets of the inland provinces, and by a publicity campaign to stimulate the consumption of fish. Much was accomplished in this direction, and the present annual per capita consumption of fish in Canada is estimated at upwards of 25 pounds.