

(No. 35.)



1881.

T A S M A N I A .

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y .

SALMON COMMISSIONERS :

REPORT FOR 1880.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, July 19, 1881.



To His Excellency SIR JOHN HENRY LEFROY, Knight, Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Companion of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Lieutenant-General in the Army, Administrator of the Government of the Colony of Tasmania, &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY.

Since their last Report your Commissioners have continued to receive evidence of the rapid increase of the various species of *Salmonidæ* in the Rivers of the Colony.

It may be interesting to record the fact that, for the first time in the River Derwent, fishing for Salmon with rod and line has been successfully practised in the salt water between Bridgewater and Austin's Ferry.

Great numbers of migratory species have been captured by means of graball nets in the estuary of the Derwent, one of which was estimated by its captor to have weighed at least 10 lbs. It is unfortunate that this specimen was not preserved for examination, as its capture was effected below Droughty Point, almost at the entrance of the river; and as no pronounced specimen of *salmo salar* of that weight had previously been caught, it would have been very satisfactory to have known the true character of the fish in question.

In October, as in former years, Smolts again made their appearance in the River Plenty on their way to sea; but in consequence of the diversion of the river by flood, the numbers which entered the shoots leading to the Ponds were less than on former occasions. Your Commissioners have caused some of these fish to be retained in a special pond, in the hope that they will deposit Ova, and thus enable their progeny to be placed in other rivers of the Colony. Should the experiment prove successful there will be no difficulty in rapidly stocking other rivers with migratory salmonoids.

It has been observed when captured migratory species are introduced into our breeding ponds and permanently retained there, that at first, during the migratory season, they make considerable effort to escape from their confinement. It has also been noticed that although they continue to present a healthy outward appearance, yet if the forced imprisonment is prolonged the generative organs are seriously affected, for they invariably become perfectly sterile. These observations may be of much interest to ichthyologists and to others interested in the natural history of introduced fishes.

During the year 1880, 23,000 Ova were supplied to the other Colonies, and 2350 Fry were distributed in various rivers of this Colony. The Commissioners are always prepared to supply the requirements of any locality upon application being made to them.

Your Commissioners have great satisfaction in reporting to Your Excellency that the revenue derived from sale of Ova during season 1880, and for fishing licences during season 1880-81 (ended 1st May last), was more than sufficient to cover the cost of the establishment.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
The Expenditure was			292	9	6
The Revenue—						
Sale of Ova.....	105	0	0			
Fishing Licences	191	0	0			
				<u>296</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Your Commissioners are aware that poachers are still very numerous; but the number of licensed rod fishermen having increased from 138 in season 1876-77 to 382 in the season just closed, is a satisfactory proof that the offenders are not now so numerous as formerly.

Your Commissioners regret to have to record the death of Mr. Thomas Giblin, who was for many years an active and zealous member of the Commission. They have also to record the untimely death by drowning, on 4th December last, of their water-bailiff, Aaron Ashwood, who had for a lengthened period faithfully performed the duties of his office. His son Aaron Ashwood has been appointed to the vacancy.

ROB. CAR READ, *Chairman*.
 HENRY BUTLER.
 A. G. WEBSTER.
 W. A. B. JAMIESON.
 W. TARLETON.
 MATTHEW SEAL.
 A. RIDDOCH.
 W. A. B. GELLIBRAND.
 H. WEEDON.

30th June, 1881.

RETURN of the Distribution of Ova and Fry from the Breeding Ponds, River Plenty, during the Year 1880.

OVA.	
New Zealand.....	2000
New South Wales.....	2000
Victoria.....	14,000
South Australia.....	5000

FRY.	
Dunorlan.....	300
Launceston.....	500
Rivers in Glamorgan.....	450
Emu Bay.....	500
River Plenty.....	600

PHILIP S. SEAGER, *Secretary to the Commission.*