

ment Act. Not the least important are provisions which seek to clarify powers to prescribe the persons and things required to be licensed under the Fisheries Act and the circumstances in which they will be required to be licensed.

#### RESTRICTION OF CRAYBOAT LICENSES

As mentioned on page 101 of last month's issue, the Minister for Fisheries approved a recommendation of the Fishermen's Advisory Committee that the number of boats engaged in the taking of crayfish be restricted. As a result of this decision, no additional licenses will as a general rule be issued after March 1, 1963, except for boats that had been crayfishing immediately prior to that date. Although special cases will be treated on their merits, it is not expected that many exceptions will be made. The new policy has been introduced to protect the existing economic standards in the fishery, and to resist further tendencies towards over-fishing.

Although we are convinced that the restriction is necessary, it will create a number of administrative problems. Together with the recently imposed limitation of the number of trawlers allowed to work the Shark Bay prawning grounds, it will bring new pressures to bear on our administrative machinery. Actually, these strictures presage a new era in fisheries management in this State, as they represent a departure from the past practice of unrestricted participation in any fishery. The legislative amendment already referred to herein foreshadows limitation of the number of pots which any one vessel may use. We anticipate that such a measure must be a concomitant of the limiting of the number of boats. Without the one the other will be of little value.

Already over-taxed by growth in past years in the inspectorial and research sections, the administrative and clerical sections of the Department will have the greatest difficulty in coping with the expected flow of additional work. All field staff are asked to keep this in mind in their dealings with Head Office.

#### WHALING

In their report to shareholders for the year ended March 31, 1962, the directors of Nor'-West Whaling Company Ltd. announced that the company had suffered a net loss of £8,471. In the previous twelve months, the net loss sustained had been £8,014. Notwithstanding these adverse results, the directors recommended payment of an unchanged dividend of

7½ per cent and foresaw better times for the company through the development of the prawning industry in which it expects to play a leading role.

The directors also revealed that the sperm whaling trials had been disappointing and that only 26 had been taken. Contrariwise, the Cheynes Beach Whaling Company, at Albany, has been able to develop sperm whaling on a profitable basis and last month announced the purchase of two modern whale-chasers to replace existing vessels. The new chasers were acquired from a Queensland company which recently ceased operations. They are sister ships and are reported to be more powerful and faster than the present chasers. It is understood that they operated in the Antarctic before they were acquired by the Queensland concern.