

SMALL PETROL ENGINE HAS POSSIBILITIES

It was reported in the "Land" newspaper of Sydney in its issue of August 1 that a small American petrol engine had already made a big impact on the Australian market. Known as the "compact power unit", it had only recently been given its first Australian demonstrations. The engine develops $\frac{3}{4}$ h.p. at 6,300 r.p.m., and uses only one pint of two-stroke fuel per hour. It weighs $3\frac{3}{4}$ lb. and among other things is said to be capable of -

- * pumping water at the rate of 1,800 gallons an hour;
- * heaving a direct load in excess of half a ton;
- * drilling $2\frac{1}{4}$ -inch holes in hardwood;
- * digging 6-inch post holes, 30 inches into the ground;
- * delivering an electric current of 350 watts.

The manufacturers are a Los Angeles firm, said to be the world's largest makers of model aero engines. According to the report in the "Land", the range of the unit includes an electrical generator, centrifugal and impeller pumps, chain saw, timber and steel drills and winch and earth worm. The Company is also said to be developing a portable shearing head.

At present the motor is being sold with each appliance, as slight modifications are necessary for each unit, and prices range from £50. for the small pump to £130. for the winch. The report added that one hundred thousand of the units were sold in California alone since it came on the market late last year.

NOR'-WEST CEASES WHALING

Humpback whaling operations ceased at the Nor'-West Whaling Station at Babbage Island (Carnarvon) on August 8. This was announced last month by the Managing Director of the Company, Mr. R.B. Moore, who said that the whaling future of his company depended on the economic possibilities of catching sperm whales.

Mr. Moore said that only 64 humpbacks had been taken in the six weeks of the season, a drop of more than 200 on the figures for the corresponding period of last year. He said it had been brought home heavily to the company that humpback whales in the Antarctic had been depleted so much that they were just not available. He added that the company had taken 57 sperm whales for the season, most of them in June this year. As they travelled up to 200 miles off the coast compared with an average of 30 miles for humpbacks, greater costs were associated with the utilisation of this species.

Advice has also been received from the company that its prawn trawlers will cease operating for the season in Shark Bay on September 1. The company has been advised that all its prawn vessels may engage in crayfishing during 1963, subject to the usual 30th parallel restriction. Nor'-West has also been advised that if their vessels fail to engage in crayfishing, their licenses next year will be endorsed with the condition that the boats will not be permitted to take crayfish south of the 24th parallel.

Towards the end of the month, after his return from a meeting in London of the International Whaling Commission, Mr. Moore said that his Company would work closely with this Department and the C.S.I.R.O. in investigating the commercial possibilities of tuna fishing off the North-West coast. The most economical fishing methods would be investigated, he said, while markets would also need to be found. New boats and men with the necessary know-how would be required and for the venture to be profitable, big quantities of fish must be caught. Large concentrations of tuna occurred from 50 to 300 miles to sea, where they were being taken by Japanese longline tuna boats. He said that if an industry were established, it would be based at the Company's processing works at Babbage Island.

Overseas reports indicate that the tuna market in the United States is passing through a difficult time. Japanese interests who export large quantities of tuna to the U.S.A. noted with alarm the export of a large shipment of tuna to India. Apparently, it could not be absorbed at the time on the United States home markets.