

which was subsequently passed. A considerable number of these certificates have already been issued under authority of this Act, and applications for them continue to come in from all parts of the Colony. I should here observe that when certificates of service for foreign-going ships are issued, the persons to whom they are granted are informed that such certificates have not the same force as certificates of service issued in the United Kingdom; that they are not recognized by the Board of Trade, and that they are only valid in New Zealand and in New South Wales; but that it is probable that the other Australian Colonies will also recognize them.

12. *Wrecks and Casualties.*—The number of casualties to shipping that occurred on the coasts of the Colony in 1871–72, was 38, of the aggregate tonnage of 3,104, being considerably in excess both in numbers and tonnage of the casualties of the previous year, during which there were 27 casualties, of 2,173 tons; but the loss of life was less, being only 11, against 27 in 1870–71. Of these six belonged to the unfortunate schooner “Rifleman,” which sailed from Lyttelton on the 10th October last, never afterwards to be heard of; and three comprised the crew of the schooner “Ocean Bird,” which vessel capsized off Stevens Island in April last. The severe gale which was experienced at Taranaki, Nelson, and Wellington, on the 10th, 11th, and 12th of November last, added several to the list of casualties for the year.

13. The usual return of wrecks from the Wreck Register will be found with the Appendices hereto; together with a Wreck Chart, showing the places at which the several casualties occurred. In the return of casualties will be found particulars of two wrecks which took place at a distance from New Zealand—viz., the “Indiaman,” a Swedish vessel of 1,200 tons, which was totally lost at Easter Island, latitude 27° 9' 30" S., longitude 109° 25' 20" W.; and the “Sea Breeze,” belonging to Auckland, of 70 tons, totally lost at Starbuck Island, in latitude 5° 24' S., longitude 155° 50' W. The Master who was in command of the “Sea Breeze” when she was lost, was the same person who had his certificate cancelled in Auckland in February, 1870, for stranding the cutter “Marwell,” on a rock off the Island of Tiri Tiri. This circumstance shows the necessity that exists for bringing into force the Regulations above referred to of requiring that vessels shall be commanded only by Masters holding certificates; for if Masters can be appointed to vessels after having had their certificates cancelled, it is obvious that the prospect of punishment for neglect, by the suspension or cancellation of certificates, will soon be regarded with indifference, and that one of the main objects of holding official inquiries into wrecks will thus be defeated.

14. *Corrections of Charts.*—Representations reached the Department lately from various sources that Cape Turnagain was about six miles to the southward of the position assigned to it on the Admiralty Chart and in the New Zealand Pilot. Being aware that a trigonometrical survey of the Province of Hawke's Bay had lately been made under the directions of the Inspector of Surveys, I wrote to that officer requesting him to be good enough to furnish such information as he was able respecting this error in the chart, in order that I might forward the particulars to the Hydrographical Department of the Admiralty, for the purpose of having the chart corrected. Captain Heale at once responded by sending the true latitude of the Cape (40° 29' 47", instead of 40° 22', as given in the New Zealand Pilot), which was forthwith published in a “Notice to Mariners.” He has since forwarded a tracing from the Trigonometrical Survey Map, showing the coast from Black Head to Castle Point, together with an Admiralty Chart on which the true position of Cape Turnagain is given, and with the coast line corrected; these corrections will be transmitted to the Admiralty as soon as I receive a corrected outline of the coast from Castle Point to Port Nicholson, which the Chief Surveyor of the Province of Wellington has kindly promised to supply as soon as the topographical map of that part of the Province, now being compiled, is completed.

15. The only Marine Surveying done during the past year has been the fixing of the position of the “Ahuriri Reef,” near Waikouaiti Bay. A plan of this reef, together with all necessary information to enable mariners to avoid the dangerous ground in its vicinity, has been forwarded to the Hydrographer of the Admiralty.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM SEED,

Secretary of Customs.

The Hon. the Commissioner of Customs.

(Enclosure.)

Customs Department (Marine Branch),

Wellington, New Zealand, 13th April, 1872.

SIR,—

Referring to the Despatches of the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies of the 26th August, 1869, and the 25th May, 1871, relative to “The Merchant Shipping (Colonial) Act, 1869,” and in obedience to the direction contained in the last-named Despatch, that all correspondence arising out of the instructions enclosed therein should be carried on direct with the Board of Trade, I have now the honor to report the steps that have been taken in this Colony for carrying into effect the provisions of section 8 of the Act in question.

2. The Act was proclaimed in New Zealand on the 4th of May, 1870. Copy of Proclamation enclosed herein.*

3. An Act was passed by the General Assembly of New Zealand, intituled “The Merchant Ships Officers Examination Act, 1870.” Under this Act, regulations for the examination of masters, mates, and engineers for certificates of competency, were made on the fourth of January last, and were at once promulgated in the *New Zealand Gazette*. Copies of these regulations are enclosed herein.† It will be seen that they are almost a literal transcript of the Board of Trade Regulations.

4. Examination papers, specimens of which are forwarded herewith, have been prepared on the model of those issued by the Board of Trade.

* *New Zealand Gazette*, 1870, p. 25.

† *New Zealand Gazette*, 1871, p. 32.