

Appended to this report is a statement of the number of candidates examined at each examination centre for the year ended 31st March, 1948, showing the number of successful and unsuccessful candidates.

There is a general shortage of certificated engine-drivers, and difficulty arises in obtaining certificated engine-drivers for certain steam plants, particularly those situated in isolated back-country districts. The Department has met the shortage by granting temporary permits to uncertificated engine-drivers whose competency to take charge is vouched for by the district Inspectors of Machinery as a result of private inquiry and personal interview and in consultation with local Engine-drivers' Union officials. It is indicative of the short supply of certificated engine-drivers in a manufacturing town, and the public-spirited willingness of the citizens to do something to relieve the shortage, to cite a case of a Justice of the Peace, a retired iron-worker, aged seventy-two, who successfully presented himself this year for the examination for a Second-class Engine-driver's Certificate with the object of acting as a temporary engine-driver whilst permanent engine-drivers are absent on holiday leave.

EXAMINATION OF LAND ENGINEERS, ENGINE-DRIVERS, AND ELECTRIC TRAM-DRIVERS

These examinations were held during the year at the various offices of the Inspectors of Machinery throughout the Dominion at the regular intervals provided for in the regulations. In addition, a few special examinations were granted, but the holding of special examinations is not encouraged, as it is considered that the regular examinations are of sufficient frequency, and, except in very exceptional circumstances, candidates are expected to arrange that they may attend the scheduled examinations.

The full list of places where the examinations were held is shown in an appended return, as also is the number of candidates examined at each place. The classes of certificates for which examinations are held are:—

- Extra First-class Stationary Engineer.
- First-class Engine-driver.
- Second-class Engine-driver.
- Steam-winding-engine Driver.
- Electric-winding-engine Driver.
- Locomotive-engine Driver.
- Traction-engine Driver.
- Locomotive- and Traction-engine Driver.
- Electric-tram Driver.
- Electric-tram Driver (One-man Car).
- Cable-tram Driver.

The total number of candidates examined was 621. Of this number, 509 were successful and 112 failed in their examinations. Six hundred and fifty-eight certificates were issued, which includes 509 to successful candidates, the remainder being replacements and issues under the provisions of sections 53, 59, and 62 of the Inspection of Machinery Act, 1928.