

The number of firemen, trimmers, and greasers to be carried by turbine vessels has been prescribed.

Proceedings have been taken and fines imposed for breaches of the law relating to seamen in the following cases—viz., J. Johnston, of Auckland, for unlawfully procuring a seaman; the master of the s.s. "Monowai," and the master of the s.s. "Oriana," for carrying seamen to sea without entering into an agreement with them; the owner of the s.s. "Rimu" and the master of the scow "Wanderer," for failing to send the articles of agreement and the official log to the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine; the master of the s.s. "Arahura" and the master of the s.s. "Corinna," for not posting up a copy of the agreement with the crew; the master of the s.s. "Athenic," for not discharging the men before the Superintendent, and for not giving certificates of discharge to five men who were transferred from his ship to the s.s. "Ionic," a ship belonging to the same owners. Prosecutions were instituted against the masters of the s.s. "Kittawa," of the s.s. "Canopus," of the s.s. "Koonya," of the s.s. "Mapourika," of the s.s. "Gertie," and of the s.s. "Kennedy," for going to sea short-handed, and convictions were recorded, but no fines were imposed. Proceedings were also taken against the master of the dredge "Timaru" for going from Timaru to Oamaru without the crew required by the Shipping and Seamen Act. The Magistrate dismissed the information, on the ground that the provisions of the Act as regards the crew did not apply to dredges. The Department appealed against this decision, and the Supreme Court allowed the appeal, with costs, and remitted the case back to the Magistrate, who imposed a fine of £10 and costs. A case against the master of the s.s. "Maheno," for employing seamen as trimmers, was dismissed on the ground that their employment was a case of emergency. It is proposed to provide in the Shipping and Seamen Bill that when in cases of emergency men are worked on ships in a capacity other than that for which they were engaged an entry of the fact must be made in the official log. Two seamen of the s.s. "Tokomaru" were convicted for absenting themselves without leave at Timaru, and were sentenced to seven days' imprisonment, to be returned to the vessel on the day of leaving port if she sailed before the expiration of the seven days.

It having come under the notice of the Department that fines imposed in New South Wales on seamen under New Zealand articles of agreement were paid to the authorities of that State, representations on the subject were made by this Department, with the result that the New South Wales authorities agreed to discontinue the practice of taking the fines.

*Masters, Mates, and Engineers.*—The report of the Principal Examiner of Masters and Mates on the examination of candidates is appended hereto. The Examiners of Engineers are the Inspectors of Machinery, the Principal Examiner being the Chief Inspector. For certificates of competency 362 persons passed their examinations, and 160 failed. Of those who passed, 199 were masters, mates, and engineers of sea-going ships, 71 were masters and engineers of steamships plying within restricted limits, 8 were marine-engine drivers, 6 were masters of fishing-boats and cargo-boats up to 25 tons register, 21 were masters of fishing-boats up to 5 tons register, 29 were engineers of sea-going ships propelled by oil-engines, and 28 were engineers of similar vessels plying within restricted limits.

The regulations for the examination of engineers have been amended and consolidated, and regulations have been made providing that on and after the 1st January, 1909, candidates for extra masters' certificates must, in addition to the ordinary examination in the method of signalling dealt with in the International Code and British Signal Manual, show practical proficiency in both the Morse and movable semaphore methods of signalling. This examination will also be open to officers holding, or candidates for, certificates of competency as master or mate as a voluntary examination. Candidates for all grades of certificates will also be required to be conversant with the Morse and semaphore alphabets and with the British Signal Manual.

Regulations have also been made providing that, on and after the 1st January, 1909, candidates for masters' and mates' certificates are to pass an examination in first aid to the injured.

Owing to the increase of the work at Auckland it has been necessary to appoint another officer at that port, and Captain T. A. Dykes has been appointed an Examiner of Masters and Mates and a Surveyor of Ships. Captain Beach has been appointed Examiner of masters of river-steamers and masters of fishing-boats up to 5 tons register at Tauranga, in succession to Captain Goertz, who has left the port, and Captain Cumming has been appointed Examiner of masters of fishing-boats up to 5 tons register at Gisborne.

Provision was made in "The Shipping and Seamen Act, 1903," as amended by "The Shipping and Seamen Act Amendment Act, 1905," for the issue of certificates of service to masters for vessels of similar class, tonnage, and trade to those which they had commanded for at least a year prior to the date on which the first-mentioned Act came into force. The provision that the certificates could only be for vessels of similar class, tonnage, and trade to those in which the qualifying service was performed prevents a man who performed his service in a sailing-vessel from commanding a steamer or an oil-engine vessel, although in the case of certificates of competency the holders of those for sailing-vessels are entitled to command vessels of other classes. I recommend that provision be made in the Bill which is being prepared to amend the Shipping and Seamen Act to place holders of certificates of service on the same footing as holders of certificates of competency as regards this matter.

Tables showing the persons who have received certificates, and the classes and grades of the certificates, and the certificates of exemption from examination as third-class engineer, are appended.

*Registration of Shipping.*—Appended are tables showing the vessels registered in New Zealand, and the number of men and boys employed in them.

*Survey of Ships.*—During the year certificates have been granted to 302 steamers, 77 oil-engine vessels, and 13 intercolonial sailing-vessels, which are shown in the appended return. I