

Falmouth, and she was totally wrecked on Disappointment Island, one of the Auckland Islands. The master and twelve men were drowned, and the chief officer died on the island. The second and third officers and thirteen other members of the crew remained on Disappointment Island until the following October, when they managed to cross to Port Ross, on the main island, where they lived at the provision depot, which this Department maintains for castaways, until the Government steamer "Hinemoa" visited the island in November last when making her periodical visit to the Southern Islands to examine the depots and look for castaways.

The attached wreck chart shows where the casualties occurred.

*Weather and Meteorological Office.*—The work of this office has been carried out by Commander Edwin, R.N., with the assistance of the Rev. D. C. Bates, a clerk, and cadette. Information regarding the rainfall, &c., is regularly published, and arrangements have been made for the issue of an evening weather-forecast in addition to that issued in the morning. It is anticipated that the Department will be able to arrange during the present year for the issue of a monthly bulletin containing rainfall and other meteorological information. Last year, when a committee at Oamaru endeavoured to cause rain by the use of explosives, the Rev. Mr. Bates was sent down to observe the experiments on behalf of the Department.

*Government Steamers.*—The "Hinemoa" has carried out the work of attending to lighthouses, and overhauling, cleaning, and relaying buoys. She has also visited the Auckland, Campbell, Antipodes, Bounty, Kermadec, and Three Kings Islands to search for castaways and to examine the provision depots. On her visit to the Southern Islands in November last she took a scientific party, landed some of them at the Auckland Islands and others at Campbell Island, and picked them up on her way back. On arriving at Port Ross, Auckland Islands, on the 16th November, fifteen of the shipwrecked crew of the barque "Dundonald" were found at the provision depot. After supplying them with what they required the vessel proceeded on, and called for them on her return, and brought them to the Bluff. Extensive repairs have been carried out in the engine-room, and the vessel has been generally overhauled. The "Tutanekai" has laid a new telegraphic cable across Cook Strait, repaired existing cables, and laid new cables to Centre Island and Stephens Island. She has also attended to some of the lighthouses, and made a trip to the Southern and Chatham Islands and to the West Coast Sounds.

*Training-ship "Amokura."*—The vessel remained in Wellington Harbour during last winter, and the boys were trained on board. She commenced cruising on the 7th November last. The first cruise being for the purpose of enabling the boys to get their sea legs, the vessel cruised under sail and steam in Cook Strait and in the neighbourhood of the strait for twelve days, and, although there was a good deal of sea-sickness amongst the boys, they performed all the duties required of them.

The vessel left Wellington on her second cruise on the 6th December, and visited southern ports and Stewart Island, returning to Wellington on the 4th January. She then remained here until after the boys had had their midsummer holidays, and left on the 5th February for northern ports. Whilst she was at Auckland measles appeared on board, and the vessel had to be taken to Motuihi, where the boys were landed at the quarantine station. She remained there for a month, until the boys had recovered, and she had been cleaned out and fumigated. On coming out of quarantine the cruise was continued up as far north as Whangaroa, and the vessel then returned to Auckland, and took part in the Easter military manoeuvres. She returned to Wellington on the 7th instant, having called at Tolago Bay, Gisborne, and Napier on the way down from Auckland.

There are now sixty boys on board, and the majority of these are able to take their places in the ordinary work of the ship. Over twenty of them have been over twelve months on board, and these would be very useful to any shipowner desiring boys who have practical knowledge of ship life and work. They have shipped for two years; but, should suitable employment in other ships offer when the boys are considered by the master of the training-ship fit for it, they should, in my opinion, be given their discharge, to enable them to take such employment.

Under the present regulations, the Department's control over the boys will cease on the completion of their two years on the "Amokura," and, should any of them then take up shore callings, the object of the State in incurring the expense of training them for the sea would not be attained. In order to insure their going to sea when they leave the training-ship, it might be advisable to alter the regulations to provide that boys joining the ship in future shall bind themselves to continue at sea for either one or two years after completion of their time on the "Amokura."

The ship has been made as comfortable as her size and construction will allow, but she is not suitable for a training-ship in which the boys have to live on board continuously.

A new winch and windlass have been fitted on board.

Arrangements having been made for increasing the wages of engineers, greasers, firemen, trimmers, and seamen of privately owned steamers, similar increases have been given in the case of the steamers belonging to this Department. The cooks and stewards have also received increases of pay, and it has been decided that they are to be paid overtime when required to be on duty before and after certain hours in port.

*Lighthouses.*—The lighthouses have been inspected by Captain Bollons when the "Hinemoa" called at them with oil and stores, and I have visited those at Portland Island, East Cape, Cuvier Island, Ponui Passage, Bean Rock, Tiri Tiri, Moko Hinou, Cape Maria van Diemen, Kaipara, Manukau, Cape Egmont, Godley Head, Jack's Point, Moeraki, Taiaroa Head, Cape Saunders, Nugget Point, and Dog Island.

An incandescent burner has been installed at Stephens Island, with the result that a better light is given on a consumption of a little over a third of the quantity of the oil used with the 5-wick Doty burner. The result of the use of the incandescent burners in Jack's Point, Pencarrow Head, and Stephens Island shows that it would be advisable to instal similar burners in the other