

Captain Wilcox, Assistant Superintendent of Mercantile Marine and Surveyor of Ships at Lyttelton, has been appointed an Examiner to enable him to conduct the examinations during the absence of Captain Marciel on leave, and Mr. A. E. Macindoe, Surveyor of Ships, has been appointed an Examiner of Engineers.

Appended are the reports of the Principal Examiner of Masters and Mates and lists of certificates issued during the year.

*Registration of Shipping.*—Mr. R. R. Walter, a Customs officer at Nelson, has been appointed a Surveyor of Ships so that he may measure ships for registration. Returns are appended showing the vessels registered in New Zealand on the 31st December last, and the numbers of seamen and boys employed on them.

*Survey of Ships.*—During the year certificates have been issued for 289 steamers, 82 oil-engine vessels, and 17 intercolonial sailing-vessels. In future all oil-launches and all sailing-vessels over 5 tons register engaged in the coastal trade will have to be surveyed annually, as this is made compulsory by the Shipping and Seamen Amendment Act, 1909. These surveys will considerably increase the work of the Surveyors.

Arrangements have been made with the United States and Canada under which New Zealand recognizes passenger or survey certificates issued in those countries, and they recognize our certificates.

The following limits have been defined to be river and extended river limits for steamers:—

Nelson: River limits to be the waters of the harbour inside the Boulder Bank.

Lyttelton: Extended river limits for fishing-boats to be between Motunau Island and Akaroa.

The Life-saving Appliances Rules have been amended in regard to the equipments for collapsible and other boats and life-rafts; as to the mode of stowing boats on passenger and emigrant ships when they carry eight or more boats; providing that chocolate which forms part of the provisions for boats must contain not less than 45 per cent. of cocoa-mass, and not less than 35 per cent. of cane sugar—the other 20 per cent. can be arrowroot or other substance.

The brigantine "Eliza Firth" was found to be unseaworthy at Kaipara, and was detained until the necessary repairs were executed.

Prosecutions were instituted by the Department in the following cases: The master of the s.s. "Waikana," for carrying too many passengers. He was fined £1 and costs. The master of the oil-launch "Maheno," for carrying too many passengers. He was fined £1 and costs. T. F. Hartley, J. Hancy, and John Teihi, for carrying too many passengers in their licensed boats in Hokianga Harbour. They were each fined 1s. and costs. P. Blundell was fined 10s. and costs for a similar offence. The master of the scow "Hauturu," for going to sea without the life-belts required by the regulations. A fine of £5 and costs was imposed.

*Deck Cargo.*—The duty of issuing licenses for the carriage of deck cargo has, by the Shipping and Seamen Amendment Act, 1909, been transferred from Collectors of Customs to Superintendents of Mercantile Marine. In order to prevent vessels carrying more cargo on deck than allowed by their licenses, arrangements have been made for them to be inspected before sailing. The performance of this duty has necessitated the appointment of another Surveyor at Auckland, owing to the large number of vessels that have to be inspected at that port. The appointment has been conferred upon Captain C. M. Renaut. The regulations governing the carriage of deck cargo have been consolidated and amended so as to bring them up to date.

*Deceased Seamen's Estates.*—Moneys belonging to the estates of twenty-two seamen, amounting to £135 19s., have been received during the year, and the sum of £136 0s. 8d. has been paid to relatives and other claimants. The sum of £16 8s. 6d., which has remained unclaimed for over six years, has been paid into the Public Account.

*Wrecks and Casualties.*—Tables showing the casualties to ships and an analysis thereof are appended. Those on or near the coasts of the Dominion numbered 76, representing 29,063 tons register, as compared with 83, of 47,857 tons register, in the previous year. The total wrecks within the Dominion were 3, of 1,110 tons register, as compared with 11, of 4,517 tons register, in the previous year. The number of lives lost was 7, as compared with 18 in the previous year. Of the lives lost, 3 were from the "Jessie Niccol" wrecked at Macquarie Island, one from the "Glenshee," outside New Zealand, and one each from the s.s. "Warrimoo," s.s. "Rarawa," and s.s. "Maori." In the three cases last mentioned the persons who lost their lives were passengers who disappeared during the voyage. Appended is a wreck chart showing where the casualties occurred.

*Coastal Dangers.*—Captain Bollons, of the s.s. "Hinemoa," discovered and surveyed an uncharted rock three-quarters of a mile south-west of Parrot Island, Dusky Sound. He also surveyed a shoal near the entrance to Paterson's Inlet, a rocky patch off the Cheviot Coast, and a rock off Evening Island, Stewart Island. Notices to Mariners giving the result of these surveys were published, and the Hydrographer to the Admiralty was notified, in order that the dangers may be shown on the charts.

The Department has long been impressed with the necessity for having more soundings shown on the charts to the westward of the Three Kings and between those islands and Cape Maria van Diemen, to the west of the Solanders, and to the western approach of Foveaux Strait, but hitherto it has been impossible to arrange for them to be taken. Arrangements have now, however, been made for the Antarctic vessel "Terra Nova" to take the necessary soundings off the Three Kings and between there and Cape Maria van Diemen while she is in the Dominion during the winter and spring, and, should time allow, the vessel will also take soundings in the vicinity of the Solanders and between Cape Campbell and Motunau Island.