

of seagoing ships, 44 were masters and engineers of steamships plying within restricted limits, 12 were masters of fishing-boats and cargo-vessels up to 25 tons register, 19 were engineers of seagoing ships propelled by oil-engines, and 40 were engineers of similar vessels plying within restricted limits. The Shipping and Seamen Amendment Act, 1909, which came into force on the 1st May, 1911, made provision for granting certificates of service to masters and engineers of oil-engine boats up to 6 tons register who had served in the respective capacities for at least a year before the coming into operation of the Act, and who applied for them within six months of that date. Under this provision 790 certificates as master and 769 as engineer were issued during the year.

Regulations have been made for the examination of candidates for certificates of competency as masters of sailing-ships in rivers and harbours.

Under the provisions of the Shipping and Seamen Amendment Act, 1909, any person who has served as master or engineer of a steamer plying within extended river limits prior to their being reduced in area may continue to serve in those capacities within what were the extended river limits before the reduction was made. The reduction of the Auckland extended river limits which has been made since the Act came into force does not, therefore, affect masters and engineers holding river certificates who were plying in the old limits before reduction.

Power is given by the Shipping and Seamen Amendment Act, 1909, to the Minister to exempt any steamer plying exclusively on any lake, and any steamer plying within river and extended river limits, from carrying a certificated master or engineer, and during the year exemption from carrying certificated master and engineer has been granted to two vessels, from carrying a certificated master to three vessels, and from carrying a certificated engineer to nine vessels.

Captain S. G. Stringer, Assistant Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, Wellington, has been appointed an Examiner of Masters and Mates, and Captain O. J. W. Lake, Harbourmaster at Napier, has been appointed Examiner of Masters of River Steamers and of Masters of Sailing-vessels in Rivers and Harbours.

Appended are returns showing the certificates granted.

*Registration of Shipping.*—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. On the date mentioned there were 244 sailing-ships, of 35,651 register tonnage, and 361 steamships, of 114,973 register tonnage, as against 254 sailing-ships, of 38,631 register tonnage, and 352 steamships, of 112,475 register tonnage, which were on the register on the 31st December, 1910.

*Survey of Ships.*—Prior to the Shipping and Seamen Amendment Act, 1909, coming into force, all home-trade sailing-ships and also vessels propelled by gas, oil, fluid, electricity, or any mechanical power other than steam up to 5 tons register were not required to undergo periodical survey, but the Act referred to altered the law and provided for annual survey, giving, however, an exemption in the case of home-trade sailing-vessels up to 5 tons register, and all fishing-boats and pleasure yachts up to 10 tons. This was a much-needed reform, as prior to the Act coming into operation the Department had no effective control over these vessels, unless it had reason to believe they were unseaworthy. As the number of vessels affected is very large, the work of survey has been considerably increased, and the number of survey certificates issued by the Department is much larger than formerly. During the year certificates have been issued for 252 steamers, 166 oil-engine vessels, and 89 sailing-vessels.

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

Auckland: River limits—Rangitoto Channel inside Rangitoto Reef, Tamaki Strait, to Koherunui Point and Waiheke Channel; extended river limits—inside a line from Hautapu Point to Shearer Rock, and thence to Tawharanui Point.

Gisborne: Restricted limits for fishing-boats between Portland Island and Cape Runaway.

Napier: River limits within 2 nautical miles from light on eastern side at entrance of the harbour, and extreme limits between Portland Island and Cape Turnagain.

Port Underwood.—River limits inside a line from Robertson Point to the southernmost point of Ocean Bay, and extended river limits between Port Underwood and Blenheim.

Preservation Inlet: River limits inside a line from Cavern Head to northernmost point of Coal Island produced to land on the opposite shore, and extended river limits inside a line from Gulches Head to Puysegur Point.

Captains Dowd, Brown, Kasper, Lake, and Collins have been appointed to act with Surveyors of Ships in fixing the load-line of vessels employed in carrying cargoes of sand, shingle, gravel, cement, and other dead-weight.

The life-saving appliances rules have been altered to provide that oil-launches up to 40 ft. in length carrying passengers within river and extended river limits may carry a reduced number of life-saving appliances. In making the life-saving appliances rules, those made by the Board of Trade have been followed, except when the circumstances of the Dominion appeared to require modification. The principal departure which we have made from the Board of Trade rules is to require ships' boats to be provisioned. In view of the "Titanic" disaster, it will be advisable to review the rules in regard to the number of boats to be carried, and this will be done.

The following fire-extinguishing appliances have been approved for use on motor-boats, viz.: Minimax, Merryweather, Empire Crown, Dick's Little Fire Queen, Favourite, Handy, Kemik, Matther and Platts, Millar's, New Era, Simplex, Star Motor Extinguisher, Vigor, Quenchee, Rex, and Invicta.

Appended is a return of the vessels to which survey certificates have been issued.

Captain C. M. Renaut, Surveyor of Ships at Auckland, has been appointed an Inspector of Compasses.