

2. Since May, 1927, H.M.T. "Wakakura" has been employed in the training of Reservists, and in towing targets for the ships of the New Zealand Squadron while exercising in the Hauraki Gulf. She has proved of the utmost value in giving practical seagoing experience to officers and men of Class D, Royal Naval Reserve, Auckland Division, which cannot be obtained in a seagoing cruiser. It enables the compulsory training to be carried out by those men who cannot get away from their occupations to go out for fourteen days in the cruisers, and thus ensures that Royal Naval Reserve men, Class D, get seagoing experience. This is in addition to her primary function of instructional ship for mine-sweeping. The number of Reserve personnel that has been out in her for a week's training during the year is 12 officers and 147 men.

3. On 11th November, 1927, Commissioned Gunner H. F. Edwards, R.N., took over the command from Commissioned Gunner H. Melville, R.N.

4. H.M.T. "Wakakura" was, in February, 1928, of great value in sweeping with the sloops the area where the s.s. "Northumberland" was stated to have struck a rock.

5. It will be difficult for H.M.T. "Wakakura" alone to cope with the training of the Wellington, Otago, and Canterbury Royal Naval Reserve, Class D, Divisions, and it will be necessary in the near future to make provision for other vessels. These would also form the nucleus of a Mine-sweeping Service, and enable a thorough system of mine-sweeping instruction to be carried out throughout the Dominion.

(D) *H.M.S. "Philomel."*

The training of recruits and the depot-ship's work carried out in H.M.S. "Philomel" has continued very satisfactorily under the command of Commander F. C. Bradley, R.N.

2. I consider that H.M.S. "Philomel" is unsuitable as a training-ship owing to her age, and that she should be replaced by a shore establishment as soon as practicable, and plans for this are under consideration.

3. The Depot personnel have been fully employed in the refit of the ships of the New Zealand Squadron, and in the development and improvement of the facilities of the Naval Base.

(E) *R.F.A. "Nucula."*

During the year "Nucula" has been employed bringing oil fuel from San Pedro, California, to Auckland for the naval oil-fuel tanks and for H.M. Ships. Her importance was emphasized recently in the Samoan operations. The cruisers would have been unable to proceed to Samoa and remain in Samoan waters had no oiler been available to complete them with fuel while there.

2. During the periods when her services have not been required for lifting cargoes or fuelling the cruisers she has been paid off to save expense.

(F) *H.M. Sloops.*

H.M. Sloops "Laburnum" (Commander C. E. Brooke, R.N.) and "Veronica" (Commander R. H. F. De Salis, D.S.C., R.N.) visited ports on the coasts of New Zealand in April, 1927, and in May docked in Calliope Dock for half-yearly docking.

2. From May onwards both ships carried out very extensive cruises in the South Pacific islands, returning to Auckland in October to refit.

3. On 27th October, 1927, Commander F. N. Attwood, R.N., relieved Commander C. E. Brooke, R.N., in command of H.M.S. "Laburnum."

4. On completion of their refits in November and December both sloops proceeded for cruises to New Zealand ports, arriving at Wellington in March, 1928, where the annual musketry course was carried out at Trentham.

VI. VISITS OF WARSHIPS TO THE DOMINION.

The French Sloop "Cassiopee" visited New Zealand ports from 9th March to 14th April, 1928.

VII. DRILLS AND EXERCISES.

Every opportunity has been taken of carrying out gunnery, torpedo, and tactical exercises. These have included a competitive efficiency test between the cruisers, and landing operations carried out at Waiwera in which all seagoing ships of the squadron took part. It is hoped that in the future combined operations with the army may be possible.

I have, &c.,

G. T. C. P. SWABEY,  
1st Naval Member and Commodore Commanding  
New Zealand Station.

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