

for recreational purposes, and gives certain necessary powers to the Council in the matter of control and administration of the area.

Whakatane Harbour Board Vesting Act.—This Act vests certain mud-flat areas in the Whakatane Harbour Board.

LIGHTHOUSE TENDER.

The work of tendering the coastal lighthouses and overhauling the buoys and beacons in harbours under the control of the Department has been efficiently carried out by the s.s. "Matai."

ADJUSTMENT AND INSPECTION OF SHIPS' COMPASSES.

The regulations for the adjustment of compasses have been carefully administered, and compasses continue to be maintained in a good state of efficiency. The results of the investigation of adjustments show that the work of Compass Inspectors and Adjusters has been carefully performed. In a few cases it has been necessary to exercise extra supervision on account of the changing magnetic force in the vessels.

ADMIRALTY CHARTS.

The stock of Admiralty charts maintained by the Department as agent for J. D. Potter and Co., London, has been further increased during the year by the addition of several numbers which have, at different times, been asked for. The charts now in stock cover a considerable portion of the globe and practically include all ports where vessels are likely to go after discharging in the Dominion.

After receipt of the charts from J. D. Potter and Co., Ltd., the numerous corrections necessary to keep them up to date are made here periodically, and to ensure that information received between dates of correction is available to purchasers, a list of Notices to Mariners affecting them is kept at each office for inspection.

New editions of Chart No. 3484, Bluff Harbour, and No. 2540, Bluff Harbour and New River entrance, No. 2411, Otago Harbour, and No. 1423, Port Nicholson, showing large corrections made from information supplied by the Harbour Boards have been issued by the Hydrographer.

COASTAL SURVEY.

The existing charts of the New Zealand coast are mostly based on surveys carried out as long ago as 1850, and are neither sufficiently accurate nor complete to meet the needs of modern high-speed shipping running closely to time-table. The Government has been in communication with the Admiralty in London on this matter, and it is expected that an Imperial surveying-ship will commence a resurvey of the coastline towards the end of 1936.

EXAMINATION OF MASTERS AND MATES.

During the year examinations were held in Auckland and Wellington, and were conducted in a satisfactory manner, and in accordance with the Imperial Board of Trade requirements.

Under the present regulations, which were introduced in 1931, the examination for each grade of foreign-going and home-trade certificate is divided into two main parts, a written part dealing with navigation (the more theoretical part of the syllabus) and an oral and practical part dealing primarily with seamanship. A candidate who passes in either the written or the oral part receives a partial pass, which holds good for six months, and is only re-examined in the part in which he failed. There is also an examination in signalling which candidates are allowed to take separately from the rest of the examination.

During the year the Richmond Nautical (Technical) School, Auckland, was approved as a "Shore School for Nautical Training," after inspection by officers of the Education Board and the Marine Department. Half of the time spent at the school will be allowed to count as sea service, with a maximum remission of six months in the case of boys attending the junior course before going to sea, and two months in the case of candidates who attend the senior course after having completed the larger part of the services required for a second mate's certificate.

Seventy-four examinations were held, of which seven were for signals only, one for Yacht Master in New Zealand waters, one for Colonial Pilot, and ten for Sub-Lieutenant, R.N.V.R. For certificates of competency the percentage of total passes was 66.0 (an increase on last year), 21.2 per cent. for partial passes, 6.4 per cent. for partial failures, and 6.4 per cent. for total failures. Four candidates passed for a square-rigged sailing-ship endorsement, and one for fore-and-aft sailing-ship endorsement.

EXAMINATION IN FORM AND COLOUR VISION.

These examinations continue to be held at Auckland, Wellington, Lyttelton, and Dunedin. During the year seventy-two candidates were examined, three of whom failed in the lantern test and one in the letter test. There were two special examinations during the year.

HELM ORDERS.

The new helm orders—*i.e.*, starboard and port in their direct sense—have now been in use since 1st January, 1933, and, so far, no accident resulting from confusion between the old and the new orders has been reported.

MARINE CASUALTIES.

During the year the casualties on or near our coasts varied considerably in their nature, and were fortunately attended with no loss of life. The majority of them were of comparatively slight importance, and were due to fire, collision, grounding in small harbours, heavy seas, &c. Preliminary inquiries were, when necessary, held by Superintendents of Mercantile Marine.