

The amount of tonnage laid up in New Zealand waters is reflected in the reduction in the number of surveys carried out and certificates issued during the year. Thirteen vessels were surveyed for the first time during the year ending 31st March, 1934, of which one was a home-trade vessel and twelve were restricted-limits vessels. The home-trade ship was the s.s. "Awarua," a steam-tug built for the Bluff Harbour Board in 1932 to replace the motor-tug "Southland." The "Awarua" arrived in New Zealand in November, 1932, and was first surveyed by the Department in May, 1933. She is a well-equipped modern steam-tug propelled by two sets of triple-expansion engines capable of developing 1,200 indicated horse-power. Steam is supplied by two water-tube boilers working at a pressure of 180 lb. per square inch. The vessel opened out well during the survey and appears to be satisfactory in every respect. The only sea-going vessel built in New Zealand during the year was the auxiliary yacht "Morewa." She was built of wood at the yard of Mr. C. Wild, Auckland, for a northern owner. The vessel is not subject to survey, but, being over 25 tons gross, the plans were examined and approved by the Department. Her tonnage is 51 tons gross and 5 tons register.

Two hundred and ten vessels were surveyed for efficiency and seaworthiness under section 226 of the Shipping and Seamen Act. There were also 18 tonnage and other surveys making a total of 228 surveys carried out in addition to the usual annual surveys, compared with a total number of 190 additional surveys in the previous year. Three vessels, the s.s. "Kurow," s.s. "Waitomo," and s.s. "Tofua," were sold to Eastern buyers and were put in a satisfactory condition for voyages to China and Japan. Two vessels, the s.s. "Welcombe" and "Dalmore," loaded the first full cargoes of bulk grain lifted in New Zealand. The erection of the necessary shifting boards and the stowage of the cargoes were examined and passed by the Department's Surveyors before the vessels were cleared at the loading-ports.

A major casualty occurred on the 30th May, 1933, when the American vessel, "Golden Harvest," grounded on Barrett Reef, Wellington Harbour. The vessel remained fast for twenty-four hours and was refloated with the assistance of tugs and under her own power. The vessel returned to Wellington where, on discharge of a portion of the cargo, she was dry-docked on the 8th June for examination and repairs. Fairly extensive damage was sustained to the hull plating and the ship's structure in the fore-peak, No. 1 hold, and Nos. 1 and 2 double-bottom tanks. After extended negotiations, a contract for reconditioning the hull was let to a Wellington firm of ship repairers. The work was carried out to the satisfaction of the Department's Surveyors, and the vessel was refloated after a stay of six weeks in dry dock. Other seaworthiness surveys of overseas vessels included the "Tasmania" (leak in No. 1 hold), "Parracombe" (in collision), "Daleroy" (hull damaged through stranding on a reef on voyage to New Zealand), "Kent" (defective propeller), "Port Fremantle" (broken crank-shaft), "Orari" (fire in exhaust pipes), and "City of Canberra" (fire amongst coal).

The art of welding has made rapid progress in recent years, and the use of electric welding in ship building and repair yards has developed at a rate comparable with its expansion in other industries. Circular instructions were issued to the surveying staff during the year with regard to the use of arc welding for ship repairs.

No alteration has been made in the load-line of any of the eight vessels to which international load-line certificates have been issued this year by the classification societies.

REGISTRATION OF SHIPPING.

On the 31st December, 1933, there were on the Register of Vessels in the Dominion 56 sailing-vessels of 4,809 tons register, 211 steamers of 97,847 tons register, and 249 motor-vessels of 8,939 tons register, as compared with 58 sailing-vessels of 5,380 tons register, 225 steamers of 103,185 tons register, and 236 motor-vessels of 8,800 tons register at the end of the previous year.

The number of seamen employed on board was 3,431, as compared with 3,560 for the year 1932.

GOVERNMENT SHIPPING OFFICES.

In the Government Shipping Offices the administration of the Shipping and Seamen Act has been efficiently carried out. Appended is a statement showing the number of seamen engaged and discharged at the various ports during the year, and the fees received for such transactions. The total number engaged and discharged was 9,613 and 9,519 respectively, as compared with 8,830 and 8,694 respectively during the previous year. The transactions at the four main ports were as follows, the figures in parentheses being those of the previous year.

Port.	Engagements.	Discharges.	Fees.					
			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Auckland	2,626 (2,701)	5,338 (2,813)	484	0	0	(513)	19	0
Wellington	4,534 (4,014)	4,499 (3,675)	804	0	0	(685)	5	0
Lyttelton	623 (439)	641 (433)	106	6	0	(73)	4	0
Dunedin	395 (352)	397 (406)	70	14	0	(74)	4	0

ENGAGEMENT OF SEAMEN.

This service has been maintained. A record of seamen applying for work is kept for the purpose of filling vacancies.