

In the final analysis of a necessarily brief review of the history and progress of the inspection of machinery legislation and the engineering measures taken for the prevention of machinery accidents, one may ask whether it has all been worth while and beneficial in its results to employers and workers. It is now an established fact that "safety" pays. It has been authoritatively stated that the total cost to an employer of an accident to a workman is four times the direct cost—that is, four times the cost of medical and compensation costs. There is also the monetary loss to the victim of an accident to be taken into account even when he receives some compensation, and also the physical and mental torture suffered by him and his dependants. An industry which has an unduly high accident rate must pay higher insurance premiums; it cannot maintain uninterrupted production and quality of work; it does not attract a good class of workman, and cannot, therefore, produce efficiently and cheaply. There is evidence in the voluntary support given by them to national safety first associations that enlightened industrialists support this view.

Acting on the lessons learned from these accidents and by the dissemination of knowledge by the Inspecting Staff of the technical appliances necessary for safety, the Department hopes to retain the confidence and co-operation of machinery owners and workers, and anticipates that accidents will continue to decrease in number and severity as they have done in the last sixty years.

EXAMINATIONS OF LAND ENGINEERS, ENGINE-DRIVERS, AND ELECTRIC-TRAM DRIVERS.

These examinations were held at the various offices of the Inspectors of Machinery throughout the Dominion at the regular intervals provided for in the regulations. In addition, a few special examinations were granted, but the holding of special examinations is not encouraged, as it is considered that the regular examinations are of sufficient frequency, and, except in very exceptional circumstances, candidates are expected to arrange that they may attend the scheduled examinations.

The full list of places where the examinations were held is shown in an appended return, as also is the number of candidates examined at each place. The classes of certificates for which examinations were held were—Extra first-class stationary engineer, first-class engine-driver, second-class engine-driver, steam winding-engine driver, electric winding-engine driver, locomotive-engine driver, traction-engine driver, locomotive- and traction-engine driver, electric-tram driver, and electric-tram driver (one-man car).

The total number of candidates examined was 311. Of this number 216 were successful and 95 failed in their examinations. 252 certificates were issued, which includes 216 to successful candidates in their examinations, the remainder being replacements and issues under the provisions of sections 53, 59, and 62 of the Inspection of Machinery Act, 1928.

PROSECUTIONS.

During the year proceedings for offences under the various statutes administered by the Department were instituted in 32 cases. Prosecutions under each Act were as follows: Fisheries Act, 24; Harbours Act, 1; Shipping and Seamen Act, 4; Inspection of Machinery Act, 3.

FISHERIES.

The report of the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, which is appended, deals exhaustively with the operations of this Division during the year.

The sale of rock-oysters for the 1933 season showed an increase on the sales of the previous season, the number of sacks marketed being 4,717, and the proceeds of sales £5,336 19s. 3d., as compared with 4,414 and £5,046 17s. 8d. The quality of the oysters was, on the whole, very satisfactory.

WHALING.

The position with respect to the International Whaling Convention is that it cannot enter into force until the ninetieth day following the receipt by the Secretary-General of the League of Nations of ratifications or accessions on behalf of eight members of the League or non-member States, including Norway and Great Britain. While some sixteen countries have deposited the necessary instruments of ratification or notices of accession, Great Britain has not yet done so, although advice has been received by Government that it is hoped to do it in the near future.

The Convention has been signed on behalf of New Zealand, and the necessary steps in the matter of ratification and of introduction of the necessary legislation will be taken in due course.

With respect to the local whaling-stations, that at Whangamumu took 3 whales only, and these were caught during the taking of a moving-picture film. These whales produced 3 tons of oil. The whaling-station in Tory Channel took 41 whales, giving a yield of 205 tons of oil. The total catch from the two stations in the previous season was 18 whales only, yielding 92 tons of oil. The decreased operations were, as stated in my last annual report, due to inability to dispose of the previous season's production. It is understood that sales had during the past year shown better results, and it is expected that the operations during the current season will be on a larger scale.

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L. B. CAMPBELL, Secretary.