

The Year's Shipping.

Taken all round, the shipping trade of the port of Auckland for the past year has been wholly satisfactory, and well up to the average of the previous year's. There was noticeable activity in the Home trade, while trade with New York, though not quite as good as in the preceding twelve months, has been a great factor in swelling our commerce overseas. The Islands trade has developed, and the intercolonial trade also has shown marked improvement, with the exception perhaps that there was a slight falling off in arrivals of coal boats from Newcastle. The Customs returns for the year are as follows:—January to March: Inward—55 vessels, 104,832 tons, of which 38 were steamers, with a tonnage of 98,438, and 17 sailers, with a tonnage of 6414. Outward—47 vessels, 78,762 tons, of which 31 were steamers, with a tonnage of 70,612, and 16 sailers, with a tonnage of 8140. April to June: Inward—55 vessels, 112,741 tons, of which 41 were steamers, with a tonnage of 106,086, and 14 sailers, with a tonnage of 6655. Outward—47 vessels, 77,558 tons, of which 31 were steamers, with a tonnage of 71,144, and 16 sailers, with a tonnage of 8108. September to December: Inward—69 vessels, 133,285 tons, of which 51 were steamers, with a tonnage of 125,955, and 18 sailers, with a tonnage of 7330. These figures compare with the previous year's as follows:—January to March: Inward—65 vessels, 125,454 tons. Outward—49 vessels, 77,724 tons. April to June: Inward—50 vessels, 105,235 tons. Outward—47 vessels, 77,107 tons. July to September: Inward—60 vessels, 116,023 tons. Outward—53 vessels, 88,076 tons. Sep-

tember to December: Inward—64 vessels, 106,350 tons, of which 46 were steamers, with a tonnage of 101,790, and 18 sailers, with a tonnage of 6560. Outward—60 vessels, 81,177 tons, of which 27 were steamers, with a tonnage of 74,963, and 13 sailers, with a tonnage of 6314.

The returns for the quarter ending December 31st last have just been compiled, and will be of interest. They show that a total of 69 vessels, aggregating 133,285 tons, and having 3389 men as crews, was entered inwards. Of these 51 vessels, of 125,955 tons, and 3714 men as crews, were steamers, and 18 vessels of 7330 tons and 175 men as crew were sailers. Eight steamers came from the United Kingdom, two steamers from Victoria, 19 steamers and 13 sailers from New South Wales, one sailer from South Australia, 10 steamers and one sailer from Fiji, one steamer from Norfolk Island, one sailing vessel from Natal, eight steamers from United States, four steamers from Friendly Islands, and one steamer from Japan.

During the same period 66 vessels, of 95,509 tons with 3303 men as crews, were entered outwards, and of these 36, of 57,515 tons, with 3104 men as crews, were steamers, and 20, of 7994 tons, with 199 men as crews, were sailers. Two steamers were cleared for the United Kingdom, five sailers for Victoria, 12 sailers and 21 steamers for New South Wales, one sailer for South Australia, one sailer for West Australia, four steamers for Fiji, one steamer for Calcutta, five steamers and one sailer for United States, three steamers for Friendly Islands.

The nationalities of vessels entered inwards are as follows: British, 15 steamers of 50,478 tons; colonial, 18 sailers, of 6292 tons, and 26 steamers, of 36,657 tons; American, 10 steamers, of 38,820 tons; Norwegian, two sailers, of 1033 tons.

In the corresponding period last year there were entered inwards 64 vessels of 108,356 tons and 3342 men as crews, made up of 46 steamers of 101,790 tons and 3108 men as crews, and 18 sailers of

6566 tons and 174 men as crews. The number of vessels entered outwards then was 50, of 81,177 tons and 2957 men as crews, 37 of 74,363 tons and 2818 men as crews being steamers, and 13 of 6314 tons and 139 men as crews being sailing vessels.

A separate return states that three steamers were entered and cleared for Cook Islands, and one steamer was entered and cleared for Niue.

Shooting Affair.

SENSATIONAL OCCURRENCE IN CUSTOMS STREET.

At noon on December 31st a sensation was caused in Customs street East, Auckland, by a strange shooting affair, the motive of which is wrapped in mystery. Outside the Britomart Hotel an elderly man known as Jimmy Scanlan was standing on the footpath when, it is alleged, a man named Walter Bracewell rushed out from the hotel, and, holding a pistol close to Scanlan's face, shot him through the jaw. The bullet appears to have gone out again through the mouth. It is alleged that Bracewell then ran away to a lane close by and shot himself. Policemen and doctors were hurriedly summoned, and both men were carried into the hotel. They were here attended by Drs. Bull and Porter, and taken away to the Auckland Hospital in a cab.

Bracewell's wound was only skin deep, the bullet having grazed the right side of the forehead without entering. But on the other side of the forehead there was the mark of a blow inflicted apparently by a fist or through a fall. Bracewell was stunned, but Scanlan remained quite conscious, and expressed the opinion that he had swallowed the bullet.

Bracewell, who is an engine-driver by trade, and until seven months ago in the employ of the Railway Department, is

a married man living in Ireland-street, Ponsonby. When arrested he made no remark, being dazed by the bullet wound apparently. He was asked for his revolver, and he said: "I haven't got it. The other man's got it. Take me inside. Please wipe the blood off my face." When he was taken to the hospital, and somewhat recovered his senses, he seemed to be totally ignorant of what had happened. He said he believed that somebody had hit him, and he knew nothing of the matter that had caused such a sensation.

The victim of the affair, Scanlan, said that he was leaning quietly and inoffensively against the wall of the hotel, when Bracewell came out and spoke something to him—he didn't remember what—and then deliberately pointing the revolver at him fired. He did not know the man, and had never seen him before, nor did he speak to him on this occasion. He had done nothing to provoke the attack.

Nothing seems to show a motive for the shooting of Scanlan. It is probable, as Bracewell had been out of work for some time, the fact had preyed on his mind, and he was not altogether responsible for his actions.

The affair created a great sensation, and a big crowd gathered round the hotel in a few seconds, and hung about it till the men had been removed to the hospital. The latest bulletins from the hospital state that both men are fairly well, and no dangerous symptoms are visible.



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