

Apprentices

21. Applications were called for fifteen apprentices at the beginning of 1947. Forty applications were received and twelve selected for entry, fitting, boatbuilding, and electrical trades again proving the most popular. During the year three apprentices who had been absent on military service revived their contracts, and seven apprentices completed their training and qualified as tradesmen.

Dockyard Agreement for Working-conditions

22. The existing Dockyard agreement expired on the 4th February, 1947, and negotiations are taking place regarding its renewal.

General

23. The greatest difficulty has been experienced in maintaining the staff of the Dockyard, particularly in respect of skilled tradesmen, due mainly to the extreme shortage of labour generally; and this has been accentuated by the restricted rates of pay payable under the Dockyard agreement. As these rates are very little in excess of the corresponding award rates, many men have been attracted to private employment which offers higher rates of pay and other inducements, and as a result many of the best tradesmen have left the Dockyard employment. The cessation of overtime in the Dockyard has also resulted in workmen leaving, as considerable overtime is available in outside firms. Although, therefore, the actual working-conditions in the Dockyard compare favourably with any in New Zealand, this in itself does not offset the more favourable pay and overtime rates available in the commercial world.

SECTION XII.—H.M.N.Z. DOCKYARD AND NAVAL BASE

DOCKYARD WORK

The main items of work carried out during the year were as follows:—

Major Refits: H.M.S. "Black Prince," H.M.S. "Whitesand Bay," and H.M.S. "Alacrity."

Minor Refits: H.M.N.Z.S. "Achilles," H.M.N.Z.S. "Bellona," and H.M.S. "Opossum."

Routine maintenance was carried out on all H.M.N.Z. ships as requisite.

Conversions: H.M.N.Z.S. "Hautapu" was converted for work in conjunction with the Canterbury project, and H.D.M.L.s 1191 and 1193 were converted for "Tamaki" liberty service.

2. *Work for other Government Departments.*—During the year a considerable amount of work was undertaken on behalf of other Government Departments. Some of the largest items were:—

Conversion of "Tawhai" as a fishing trawler for UNRRA.

Major refit of "Maui Pomare."

Refit and reconditioning of "Matai."

Repairs and maintenance to civil aviation launches.

Manufacture of 8,500 mail-bags for the Post and Telegraph Department.

Manufacture of kit-bags and aprons for the Rehabilitation Department.

Manufacture of mine skips and mine tubs for the Mines Department.

Manufacture of hand rails for the Tangiteroria Bridge.

Manufacture of jack bodies for the Public Works Department.

DOCKYARD PROJECTS

3. Major projects were completed during the past year, and only minor works remain to be completed. Details of the individual projects are as follows:—

(a) *Road.*—The road round the head of the dock was sealed, and the roading at the store area, North Yard, completed. The Stanley Bay entrance road was well advanced, and the road in the Fairmile area commenced.