

The all-ports average rate of discharging overseas vessels increased slightly from 12·15 tons per gang per hour in 1946–47 to 12·53 tons per gang per hour for the year 1947–48. This rate cannot be considered to be satisfactory, and there is plenty of room for improvement. The low rate of discharge is not, however, entirely due to the men, as there are other factors involved such as congestion of wharf and railway goods-sheds, multiplicity of marks, &c.

(ii) COASTAL VESSELS

The all-ports average rate of handling coastwise cargo for the year 1947–48 was 13·6 tons per gang per hour for Union Steam Ship Co. vessels and 15·94 tons for other coastal vessels, compared with 13·54 tons and 16 tons respectively for the previous year.

There has been a falling off in the rate of handling coastwise cargo at Auckland during the last three years and at Wellington last year. The rate of work at Auckland compares unfavourably with the rates of work on Union Steam Ship Co. vessels at other main ports. A comparison is shown hereunder :—

Port.	Rate per Net Gang-hour.			
	1944–45.	1945–46.	1946–47.	1947–48.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Auckland	12·45	11·29	11·06	10·83
Wellington	15·91	15·86	15·74	14·29
Lyttelton	14·69	15·02	14·50	14·31
Dunedin	14·75	13·84	13·30	14·75

The variation in the rates of work at each port is due not only to the men employed, but also to the facilities available at the port, method of handling, &c.

It is gratifying to record a marked improvement in the rate of handling coastwise cargo at Dunedin, where the rate of work on vessels of the Union Steam Ship Co. increased from 13·3 tons per net gang-hour in 1946–47 to 14·75 tons in 1947–48, while the rate for other coastal vessels increased from 15·46 tons per net gang-hour in 1946–47 to 16·84 tons in 1947–48.

(iii) GENERAL

The Commission's figures for rates of work are calculated according to the times when loading or unloading operations are actually proceeding, and the times occupied in removing or replacing hatches, in shunting operations, and in weather or other delays are not taken into account. Unfortunately, in Auckland and Wellington, and to a less extent in Lyttelton, there appears to be a tendency for the times so occupied to increase, with the result that the amount of work done per paid hour is less in proportion to the work done per net hour than was formerly the case.

(b) OVERLOADING OF PORT FACILITIES

During the calendar year ended 31st December, 1947, a total of 8,412,000 tons of cargo was handled at New Zealand ports, as compared with a total of 7,683,000 tons for the year ended the 31st December, 1946, and as compared with 8,165,000 for the year 1938. This shows an increase of 729,000 tons handled last year compared with