

The percentage of passes was very high, and this is due entirely to the painstaking work of the Directors. The radical alteration in the set-up of the "Admiralty Abridged Almanac" and the introduction of G.H.A. of the sun and G.H.A. of Aries will throw additional responsibilities on to the Directors.

I am pleased to report that the Director, Wellington School, has been restored to health after an absence of three months on sick-leave.

SHIPPING CASUALTIES

The number of casualties on or near our coasts is shown in the table and summary at the end of the report. Magisterial inquiries were held in five cases—*i.e.*, m.v. "Eastgate," launch "Renehou," m.v. "Port Waikato," tug "Te Awhina," launch "Sambo" collision, and s.s. "Holmlea."

ENGAGEMENT OF SEAMEN

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

SICK AND INJURED SEAMEN

The total amount paid by shipowners to sick and injured seamen under the provisions of the Shipping and Seamen Act, 1908, and amendments was £19,529 5s. 7d., as against £16,765 10s. 10d. for the previous year, an increase of £2,763 14s. 9d.

REGISTRATION OF SHIPPING

On the 31st December, 1948, there were on the register of vessels in the Dominion 43 sailing-vessels of 3,515 net tons register, 122 steamers of 64,052 net tons register, and 308 motor-vessels of 32,603 net tons register, as compared with 45 sailing-vessels of 3,547 net tons register, 136 steamers of 65,252 net tons register, and 297 motor vessels of 26,290 net tons register at the end of the previous year.

The number of seamen employed on board was 2,637, as compared with 2,691 for the year 1947.

LIGHTHOUSES, RADIO BEACONS, ETC.

The Department's proposals for the establishment of further navigational aids and improvement in some cases on existing stations has been prosecuted with the utmost energy. The delivery of the necessary materials from overseas has caused delay, but, in general, good progress has been made. Estimates have been approved, and specifications are in course of preparation, for complete electrification and installation of standard radio beacons at Tiri Tiri, East Cape, Portland Island, Godley Head, Taiaroa Head, and Dog Island. At Baring Head a modification of the electrical equipment has been commenced, and the distribution line is being constructed to enable this light to be connected to the Hutt Valley Electric-power Board's system. Construction work is completed for new automatic lights at Motuara Island, Gibson Point, and Slope Point, and delivery of equipment is anticipated within a few months. Specifications are being prepared for similar installations at Slipper Island, Ohau Point, Cape Farewell, and Bushey Point. The equipment has come to hand, however, for conversion of Cape Egmont Lighthouse to electric operation. At Whangaroa Head a fixed light has been installed: conversion to flashing characteristics will be made when equipment comes to hand. The construction and installation of a new light in Tauranga Harbour is almost completed. As an assistance to vessels plying on Lake Taupo, four automatic lights have been installed. At Awanui Harbour a small electric light on a buoy is under construction. Plans have been completed and work will commence shortly on new