

The new and additional work in the home-trade examinations which came into force last year has made no appreciable difference either in the number of candidates applying for examination or in the number of passes; the effect of the new work in the examinations should lead to greater care on the part of the officers in determining their distance off different points of land, and will, I trust, tend to educate the home-trade master in the matter of checking the deviation of his own ship's compass by astronomical bearings, instead of trusting too implicitly to the annual adjustment, which is always liable to change.

I would again draw attention to the fact that the law still allows a man with only a river-steamer certificate and one year's service in a harbour, lake, or river to command passenger-vessels running to all parts of the extended limits, such as between Auckland and Whangarei, and that to save expense an owner of a small passenger-steamer may occasionally be tempted to run in these limits without the requisite experience. The differences existing between the qualifications required for master of sailing-vessels under 25 tons register carrying passengers in river limits and that required for master of river steamers of any size is very marked. The former are required to have four years of service at sea or in extended river limits, and some knowledge of the ship's compass, deviation, and the chart, whereas the latter are only required to have one year's service in any river or harbour, and are not required to have any knowledge of the compass or chart.

No candidates have applied during the last year to be examined in the compass syllabus, or for the certificate of extra master.

One candidate for colonial pilot passed successfully, and one failed for colour blindness.

I have, &c.,

HAROLD S. BLACKBURNE.

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