

neers under section 27 of "The Shipping and Seamen Act, 1903," as amended by "The Shipping and Seamen Act Amendment Act, 1905." The time within which applications for these certificates could be made expired on the 18th July last, and therefore there will be no more of them issued.

The regulations for the examination of masters and mates have been amended and consolidated, and the regulations for the examination of engineers are now under revision.

Captain Atwood, Assistant Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at Auckland, has been appointed an Examiner of Masters and Mates to assist in the examination work at that port, and Captain Goertz has been appointed an Examiner of Masters of fishing-boats up to 5 tons register at Tauranga. There are a good many fishing-boats at that port, and this appointment will do away with the necessity of candidates having to go to Auckland for examination.

It may be of interest to mention that one of the persons who obtained a certificate of competency during the year was a woman, Miss J. A. McKegg, of Henley, having passed the necessary examination, and obtained a certificate as engineer of a restricted-limit vessel propelled by gas, oil, fluid, electricity, or other mechanical power than steam. This is the first instance in which the Department has granted a certificate to a woman.

Tables showing the persons who have received certificates, and the classes and grades of the certificates, are appended.

*Registration of Shipping.*—Appended are tables showing the vessels registered in New Zealand, and the number of men and boys employed in them.

*Survey of Ships.*—Certificates have, during the year, been granted to 263 steamers, 52 oil-engine vessels, and 14 intercolonial sailing-vessels. A return of such vessels is appended. As regards sailing-vessels, those engaged solely in the coastal trade are not subject to compulsory inspection, and I would again urge that the law should be altered to provide that all sailing-vessels shall be surveyed annually. This would tend to the safety of both life and property.

Mr. Robert Duncan, who was previously Principal Engineer Surveyor, has been appointed Chief Surveyor of Ships under "The Shipping and Seamen Act, 1903," and it has been decided that the survey of the deck and deck equipments, &c., of steamers and sailing-ships which undergo periodical survey is to be carried out by the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at Dunedin and by the Assistant Superintendents at Wellington and Auckland.

The life-saving appliances have been amended to provide that it shall not be necessary to carry a lifeboat in the case of home-trade sailing-ships up to 100 tons gross, and steamers up to 200 tons gross which are employed in landing and shipping cargo on and from beaches and which carry a surf-boat properly equipped and provisioned. This alteration was necessary, as the vessels must carry surf-boats for their work, and it was found to be practically impossible for them to carry lifeboats as well. A further alteration has also been made, providing that fishing and trawling vessels which do not carry passengers need not carry a lifeboat if they carry an ordinary boat fit to carry all persons on board.

Regulations have been made as to the equipments to be carried by home-trade sailing-ships and sailing-ships plying within restricted limits, and also to insure that sailing-ships bound to Australian ports shall carry sufficient provisions for the voyage. A warrant has been issued declaring that vessels propelled by oil, gas, fluid, electricity, or any mechanical power other than steam shall be subject to the provisions of the Act relating to steamships.

It is sometimes found that there are flaws or other defects in the shafts of steamers which are not bad enough to require the shaft to be replaced by another. These can be watched by our Surveyors in the case of steamers trading within the colony, and in the case of those trading to overseas ports instructions have been given that Surveyors are to issue to the master a document setting forth the nature of the flaw, the method taken to repair it, and any conditions that should be observed at any port of call. This Department will, at the same time, be supplied with particulars, and advised of the vessel's destination, and of any intermediate ports of call in order that the authorities at these ports may be advised of the position to enable them to keep an eye on the shafts.

Prosecutions have been instituted and fines imposed in the following cases—viz., the owner of the s.s. "Paiaka," for sending the vessel to sea without having her surveyed for a certificate; the owner of a launch at Hokianga, for not carrying life-belts; the master of the s.s. "Rob Roy," for carrying sheep on deck without a license; the masters of the s.s. "Kopuru" and "Tangihua," for going beyond the limits allowed by their certificates; the master of the schooner "Joseph Sims," for not furnishing a certificate that his vessel was ballasted, and the ballast stowed as required by the regulations; and the owners of the s.s. "Eagle" for carrying more passengers than allowed by her certificate. An inquiry was instituted under section 239 of "The Shipping and Seamen Act, 1903," into a charge made against the master of the s.s. "Squall" for a breach of subsection (4) of section 203 of the Act in not rendering assistance to the s.s. "Muritai" when the latter vessel was making distress-signals off Manukau Bar, but the case fell through because the "Squall" was not registered in New Zealand, and the Act only makes it an offence if the vessel which does not render assistance in such a case is registered in the colony. It would be advisable to alter the law so as to enable an inquiry to be held in the case of the master of any vessel who fails to render assistance to a vessel in distress.

*Deck-cargo.*—The regulations have been amended as regards the quantity of cargo, especially timber, that may be carried on deck by sailing-vessels built for carrying large deck loads, and to enable home-trade steamships and steamships trading between New Zealand and the Chatham Islands to carry such a number of live-stock on deck as a Surveyor, after inspection of the vessel, is satisfied may be carried with safety to the ship and the people on board.

*Ballast.*—Regulations have been made providing that the master of every British ship shall see that his vessel is properly ballasted, and that material likely to shift is secured by proper shifting-boards, and power is given to detain a ship which is improperly or insufficiently ballasted.